POLICY AND 4K LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

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INTRODUCTION

- School leaders play an important role in supporting student achievement, well-being, and professional staff success (Slaby et al., 2005).

- Effective early childhood leadership is accepted as a key factor in achieving organizational improvement (Office for Standards in Education, 2008).

- Effective leaders who achieve great leadership inspire staff to collaborate, taking program ownership, and expressing their individual and collective voices (Carr, Johnson, & Corkwell, 2009).

OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

<u>Objectives</u>

1. Investigate Wisconsin 4K Policy from the perspective of school/site-based level leaders
2. Discuss how school/site level leaders frame policy makers intentions
3. Discuss how school/site level leaders support their teachers to carry out the intentions of policy makers

<u>Rationale of Study</u>

- Researchers note that early childhood education leaders often find difficulty in providing support to teachers while adhering to best practice for early education and care (Allred & Hancock, 2015).
- Leaders struggle to balance integrity, humility, and vulnerability when it comes to their approach to supporting early childhood teachers (Allred & Handcock, 2015) .
- This issue strengthens the importance to investigate how policies influences leaders in efforts to support 4K teachers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are best practices for principals or leaders to support for 4k teachers?

1) What policies govern leaders in their prospective settings?

2) How those policies influence early childhood leaders?

3) What practices do leaders use at their individual sites to adhere to 4k policy?

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Who is a leader?**
- As Covey (1991) states, to distinguish leaders from managers, leaders are those who have long-term vision, set direction for change, and inspire people to achieve results with followers.
- As teachers are also leaders within the classroom, skillful administrators inspire and support teachers to create successful learning communities (Goffin & Washington, 2007).

- **What is leadership?**
- The meaning of leadership is likely to be changed and conceptualized by situational, social, and cultural context and interpretative phenomenon (Hujala and Puroila, 1998).
- The role of leaders in diverse early childhood settings are multiple, leaders take on the role of guides, motivators, strategists, and business visionaries (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2012).
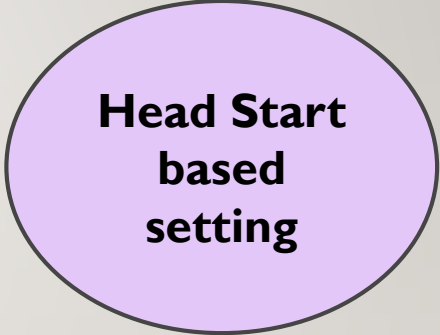
SITES AND PARTICIPANTS

Madison school district setting

University based childcare setting

Head Start based setting

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Policy Documents Analysis	Semi-structured Interview
- Department of Public Instruction - Madison Metropolitan School District - National Association of Education of Young Children - State of Wisconsin Child Care licensing - Department of Children and Families - City of Madison - Core Values for UW-Madison - Federal Head Start - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	- Director/principal of the 3 sites - Formal interview - Open-ended questions - Transcribing, coding, finding themes

POLICY DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS
- WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

- How Wisconsin State Policy fit into the context of different auspices
- Leadership preparation programs are influenced by 4K policy
- Higher Education Leadership Standards as policy
- There are no standards that addresses the practices and implications for leaders that lead 4K programs.
  - Standards are implied through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction that leaders should have been exposed to several standards in their leadership preparation programs that will be useful in their position as leaders in K-12 systems
- Disclaimer - Public School (direct) vs. Child Care (indirect) requirements

"the administrator manages by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to pupil learning and staff professional growth (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, n.d.)."

POLICY DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS
- MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT SETTING

- Wisconsin had developed a framework to inform policy detailing the expectations of a quality school level leader.
- Maximizing Student Outcomes through Teacher placement
- Policy Management
    - Avoid conflict
    - Maintenance of documentation
    - Informing Stakeholders
- Gatekeepers of Policy
    - School District Level Leaders
    - State Level Education Leaders
    - Federal and State Policy Makers

POLICY DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS
- UNIVERSITY BASED CHILDCARE SETTING

- Follows DPI Standards and Regulations

- NAEYC(National Association Education of Young Children) Early Learning Standards

- Core Values that align to the university(UW-Madison).

- City of Madison Accreditation Standards for Child Care centers and School-age programs

- Developmentally Appropriate Practices Standards.

- Additional Written Policies (OCCFR-UW Office of child care and family Resources)

  - Define the roles and responsibilities of the administrators, teachers, programs and staff.

POLICY DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS
- FEDERAL SETTING (HEAD START)

- Congressional legislation regarding federal head start

- Policymakers intentions

- Head start leaders are shaped by the federal laws and regulations

- Head Start policy impacts leaders at the site level when providing quality programing

- Leaders are expected to focus on program quality and effectiveness

- Federal government influences how Head Start frames state level 4K policy

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

- Reported over different three Auspices

- Linked policy document analysis to auspices

- Findings used as framework for policy recommendations and implications

FINDINGS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT

- **Application and Implementation of Policy**

- **Professional Judgement**

- **Structural and Logistical Support**
- **Instructional Support:** Professional learning, Educator effectiveness, Reflective feedback
- **Emotional Support:** Trust and Value Teacher Professionals

FINDINGS FOR UNIVERSITY BASED SITE

- **Curriculum and 4K Program**

  "I would say that the policies support 4K children's success are x approaches like play-based curriculum focuses on social skill development.

- **Assessments and 4K Program**

  "I work with the teachers to come up with an alternative way for them to assess. Instead of pulling the teachers from the classrooms to do their assessments, we as the administrators sit with children and do their assessments. I administer the PALS. "

- **Employee Trust**

  "I do not know. I make a point to not interfere with their work in the classroom. I know teachers get nervous why an administrator walks around and check on them. I do not require them follow lesson plans in certain time. If those children are getting their education with the best practices, I do not require them to return the lesson plans to me. I trust them. Teachers know what is best for their children. I do not know how they describe me but I hire the best teachers and trust their expertise. I hope they know that I trust them."

FINDINGS FOR HEAD START SITE

- **Responsive Leadership**

    "I walk the talk, I wouldn't ask anything of them I wouldn't do myself, I vacuum, I do all the teacher duties in the classroom. So, if a kid comes in and has a accident and it's on the carpet, I'll clean it. I've been in their shoes, but not with this clientele before. "

- **Collaboration**

    "I put the agenda 3 days in advances so that they can add things they want to talk about, additional things, and then we go through it all, we going to be having an open house and we talked about the week the young children."

- **Effects of Policy**

    Sites with Multi-level policy adherences

- **Professional Development**

    "So, we been doing PLC groups for the teachers to kinda learn from other teachers, what works for you, what are some of the activities, we are looking at fall assessments and winter assessments, and did they achieve more in their math area, so we have school readiness goals that are math and literacy based."

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Policy needs to closely align to curriculum ,assessment, and developmentally appropriate practices for leaders to provide targeted support.
- Provide principals and school leaders the flexibility and funding to use substitute teachers at their discretion.
- Principals/school leaders need to create spaces for teachers to collaborate
- EC policies for 4K programs should be written to support leaders to support families and children
- Policymakers must be open to reassess the 4K program assessments in order to align to DAP
- Policy needs to support children learn best with child initiated and teacher supported curriculum,4K curriculum objectives need to give importance to the socio-emotional development of the children in ECE.

CONCLUSION

- All three sites commonly follow policies set by DPI through MMSD. As the study result showed that ,EC leaders found difficulty in providing support to teachers with their multiple roles while adhering to best practices for ECE in 4K programs.
- Reassessment of the 4K curriculum and assessment techniques will give a tremendous support to the leaders and the teachers as well as the students of the 4K program in three sites.
- All those multiple roles may overwhelm the leaders. To combat this leaders are engaging in cultures of shared governance in leadership.
- Further research is needed in the area of early childhood leadership.