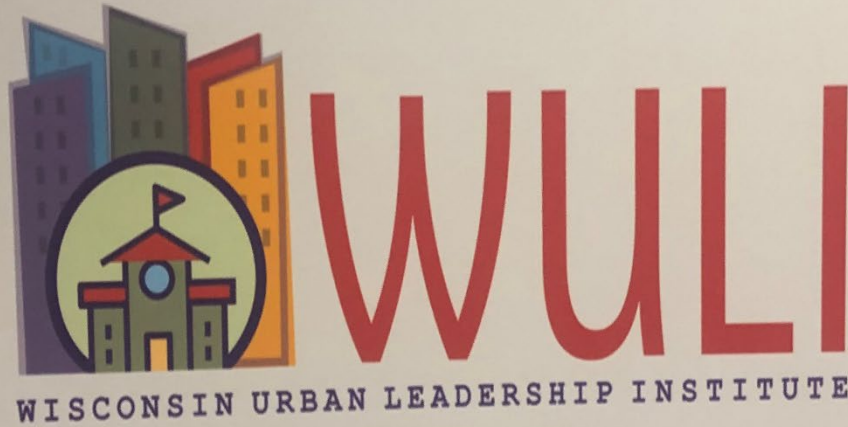


Welcome



A collaboration of
Wisconsin's five largest public
school districts



Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute 2019-20 Cohort II Evaluation Report

This study was supported by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. For more information about this report or about the evaluation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute, please contact Curtis Jones at jones554@uwm.edu or visit www.uwm.edu/sreed.

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Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute: 2019-20 Evaluation Report

The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute is an initiative that brings together the five largest districts in Wisconsin to tackle racial inequities in public education in the state. The initiative focuses on developing school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to lead for equity within their schools and within their district. The five largest districts in Wisconsin, Green Bay Public Schools, Kenosha Unified School District, Milwaukee Public Schools, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Racine

Unified School District, serve nearly half of the students of color in the state. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute was created to empower leaders to address the educational disparities between students of color and white students in the state, such as academic achievement gaps and disparate graduation, attendance, and suspension rates.

A formative, mixed method evaluation was begun during the pilot year of the program in 2018-19. This multi-year evaluation of the implementation and impact of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute on equity for students of color across participating schools and districts will address the five broad questions in the box to the right. The first three are explored in this report. The fourth and fifth will be examined over time.

1. What is the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute?
2. To what extent were the needs and assets of the persons who participated in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute aligned with the goals of the project?
3. To what extent is the implementation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute done with fidelity and quality? What did participants learn about equity? What impact did participants have on equity in their school this year?
4. After participation in the Institute, to what extent does it lead to improvements in the mediating factors that promote racial equity for students?
5. To what extent does the Institute lead to improvements in school and district racial equity for students?

What is the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute?

The five largest school districts (“Big 5”) began working together four years ago to develop strategies for promoting equitable educational opportunities for students of color. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute was the result of these efforts. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute seeks to disrupt the status quo that promotes inequitable educational opportunities for students of color, and thus bring about transformational change in Wisconsin.

School leader participants engaged in eight professional learning sessions, one orientation, and a presentation of a “capstone” equity-focused project. The series is facilitated by 4AM Consulting and supported by the New York City Leadership Academy (NYCLA) and equity coaches.

During the professional learning series, school leaders learn from activities, videos, and readings, engage in group discussions and role play, and identify an equity problem of practice within their school to address with an action plan. School leader equity problems of practice and action plans serve as a “capstone project” for the year and they each presented about their project to their fellow cohort members after the conclusion of the professional learning series.

A program theory was developed for the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute, and updated to reflect implementation changes made in Cohort II, that included a theory of change and theory of action in the form of a logic model. The theory of change describes the current situation that the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute seeks to address and how change is expected to occur. The logic model inputs, outputs and outcomes describe what the program does and what immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes will result. The hypothesized immediate outcomes for the program included for school leaders to increase their understanding about racism in education and examine their implicit biases, build a learning community and practice skills for leading conversations about racial equity, and learning to identify inequitable practices and policies and how to address them.

Although the program focuses on school administrators as the change agents within the current structure, it is unlikely that they alone will be able to create transformational change. Such transformational change requires buy-in and action on the part of stakeholders across all levels of education, including: state agencies, district leadership, school leadership, school staff, families, students and communities. To account for the complexity of addressing institutional and structural racism in an educational system, the logic model includes *Foundational Factors for Establishing Educational Equity* that are necessary for the program to achieve its long term goals, but that are not addressed directly by the program. Although the DPI and each of the Big 5 districts are working to address these Foundational Factors, an analysis of these activities is beyond the scope of this evaluation. A discussion of the importance of each is included in Appendix D.

A number of changes were made to Cohort II Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute in response to feedback from Cohort I. Some of the more noteworthy included:

Greater involvement of district administrators. One of the more important changes was to more intentionally involve administrator evaluators in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. One of the “Foundational Factors” outlined in the logic model is “School leader evaluator support”. From the first Cohort participants it was learned that their evaluator was not always clear on what their participation in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute involved and, because of this, might not be on the same page about what school leaders should be doing in their schools to promote equity. To better align the school leader evaluation process with the

goals of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute, Cohort II school leader evaluators were specifically invited to two sessions and to capstone projects presented at the end of the school year. Eleven district administrators attended at least one of these sessions.

Clarify the participant selection process. Cohort II participants were provided clearer explanations regarding why they had been invited to participate. Cohort I participants were unclear about the reason for being selected to participate and some interpreted their invitation as an indictment of their practice. In Cohort II, participation was presented upfront as an opportunity for school leaders to strengthen their leadership capacity.

A focus more on the coaching role. Cohort I coaches did not have the experience or training necessary to serve as a coach. In Cohort II, coaches were provided training for serving as an equity-coach during the summer before Cohort II started. Further trainings and reflection opportunities occurred throughout the school year. Together, these efforts served to develop a learning community among coaches. Further, Cohort II coaches attended program sessions and helped facilitate conversations between school leaders. This all shows a much more intentional and planned use of equity coaches to support school leaders in Cohort II.

Wisconsin-based facilitation. Wisconsin-based 4am Consulting played a greater role in the facilitation of Cohort II in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Facilitation duties were shared with NYCLA, who had been the primary facilitator in Cohort I. In the next Cohort, it is expected that 4am Consulting will serve as the primary facilitator.

Creating socializing opportunities. Cohort I participants were universally clear that they really valued the opportunity the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute provided them to work with other school leaders. In an effort to further the community developing among participants, a social dinner event was organized in December. Both Cohort I and II participants attended.

Connecting Cohort II participants with Cohort I participants. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute was intentional in providing Cohort II participants the opportunity to connect with and learn from Cohort I participants. Cohort I participants were invited to share their experiences promoting equity in their schools and districts. They also attended the social dinner event.

Moved to virtual. As with all of education, the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in the final two sessions being held virtually. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute adapted to this and provided participants during these sessions the opportunities to share their challenges trying to keep students and teachers engaged during COVID-19. Although this was and continues to be an extremely difficult and stressful time for everyone, educators and students have been especially affected. Coupling COVID-19 with the murder of George Floyd, magnified the need for the

Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Schools need leaders who understand how to productively talk about issues of racism and safety.

Best practices toolkit. The initiative created a best practices toolkit from the capstone project presentations for future participants to learn from, as well as for other school leaders across the state. This toolkit was created in response to participant feedback and should prove useful in providing school leaders greater direction for how to begin addressing equity in their school.

Figure 1. Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute Logic Model Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes

INPUTS	YEAR 1 OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES		
	Activities	Participation	Immediate (end of year 1)	Intermediate (end of year 2)	Long Term (within 3-4 years)
Participation of Big 5 districts ELLC Steering Committee Work group 4AM Consulting NYCLA PD locations & meals Title II funding Training materials	Kick Off PD sessions coaching support ELI needs assessment Problem of Practice & Capstone Project Capstone presentations	School leader participants from Big 5 districts coach participants	Increased understanding of racism & its impact on individuals & society Introspection & awareness about attitudes, emotions & behaviors regarding oppression Establish a learning community Build skills to lead courageous conversations about racial equity Identify inequitable practices & policies Develop an action plan to address a Problem of Practice Document efforts to lead for equity Develop sustainability plan Coaches are trained to facilitate growth of culturally competent leaders	Empower principals as equity champions Develop culturally competent leaders Build a school culture promoting equity Design school improvement strategy	Schools are racially inclusive & all students feel like they belong All students & families receive the supports they need to succeed Collective trust exists between schools, families & students Communities are strengthened Racial disparities in academic achievement, discipline & attendance are reduced

Figure 2. Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute Logic Model Assumptions and Foundational Factors

ASSUMPTIONS	FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS NECESSARY FOR ESTABLISHING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY	
<p>School leaders are critical to addressing disparities in educational experiences and opportunities for students of color</p> <p>Equity coaches will provide the necessary support and feedback for principals to develop cultural competence</p> <p>Students of color experience disparities in opportunities and achievement due to implicit biases, microaggressions and lowered teacher expectations</p> <p>School leaders will help school staff adopt a school culture promoting equity</p> <p>School leaders will continually work towards realizing long-term equity goals after their participation in Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute ends</p>	<p>Continued Title II funding or transition to Title I funding</p> <p>Supportive state and district policies & procedures</p> <p>School Board support</p> <p>School leader evaluator support</p> <p>Shared school leadership that includes families, students and communities</p> <p>Development, recruitment & retention of effective & racially diverse teachers</p> <p>School funding parity</p>	<p>Availability of services all students & families need to succeed</p> <p>High-quality instruction</p> <p>Culturally-relevant curriculum & practices</p> <p>Positive behavioral practices</p> <p>Support for social & emotional learning</p> <p>Communities are engaged in schools</p> <p>All families are viewed as partners in supporting student learning</p> <p>Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute-trained principals remain in their schools</p>

To what extent were the needs and assets of the persons who participated in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute aligned with the goals of the project?

The evaluation examined quantitative data about the school leaders participating in the 2019-20 Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute cohort. The 2019-20 cohort was diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, sex, experience in education and experience as a school administrator. Twenty-four school leaders participated; fifteen were principals and nine were assistant principals. Thirteen school leaders led elementary schools, four led middle schools, and seven led high schools. Five identified as Black, one as Latinx, and 18 as White. Thirteen identified as female and 11 as male. Nineteen had at least a master’s degree in education. All but three had at least 10 years of experience in Wisconsin public education. Half had worked within their current district for at least 10 years. Five were new to their district. All schools served by participants had near universal student eligibility for free or reduced lunch and included mostly students of color.

Fourteen of the 24 school leader participants had been provided performance feedback from their evaluator in the three years immediately prior to their participation in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. The results of these evaluations (presented below) suggest all participants were viewed as strong and effective school leaders across all aspects of the Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership (WFPL). Most Cohort II participants had been rated as a *Distinguished* professional (Figure 5). Clearly, Cohort II participants were partly selected to participate in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute because of their strong leadership.

Figure 3. WFPL Effectiveness Ratings - Human Resource Leadership

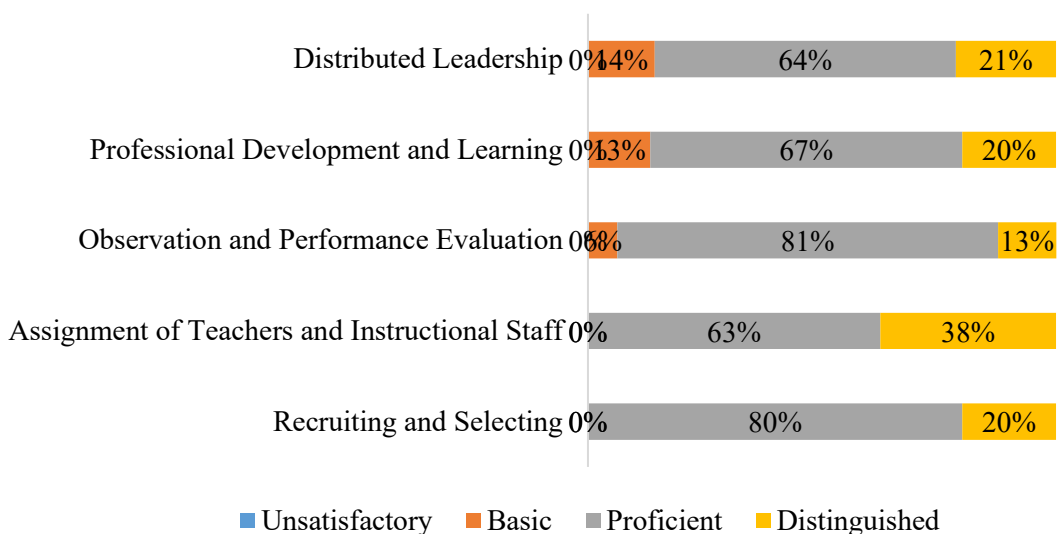


Figure 4. WFPL Effectiveness Ratings - Instructional Leadership

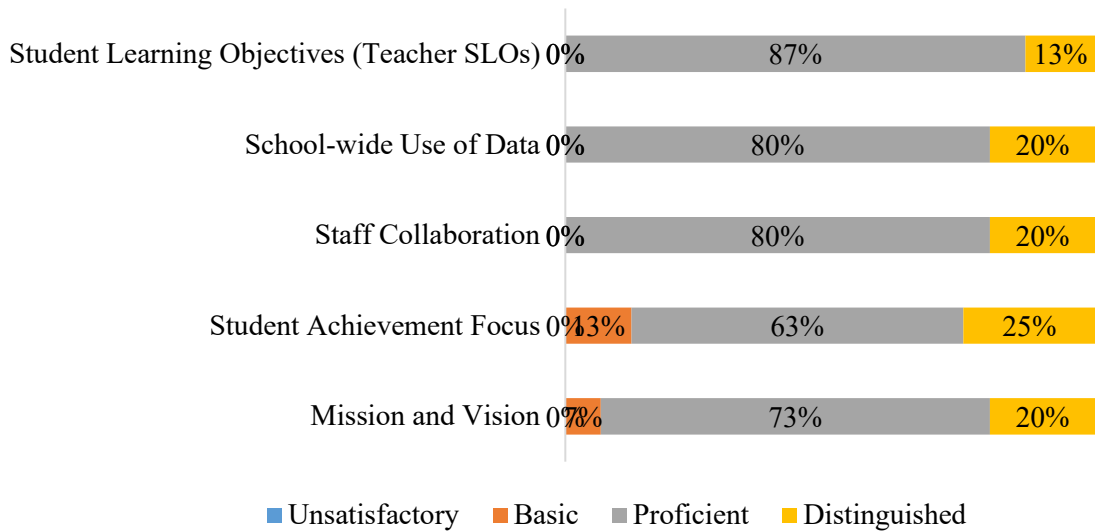


Figure 5. WFPL Effectiveness Ratings - Personal Behavior

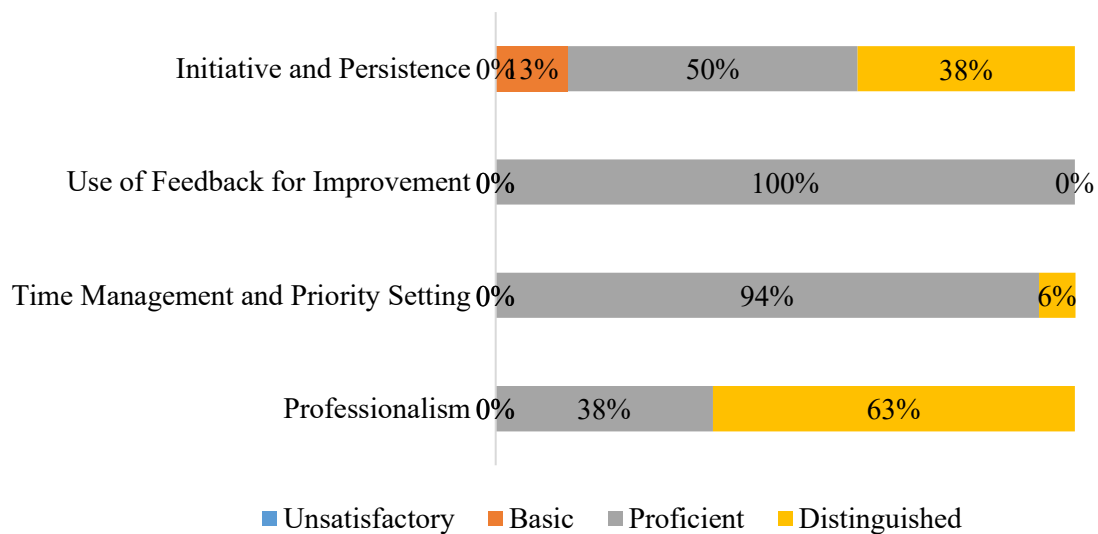


Figure 6. WFPL Effectiveness Ratings - Intentional and Collaborative School Culture

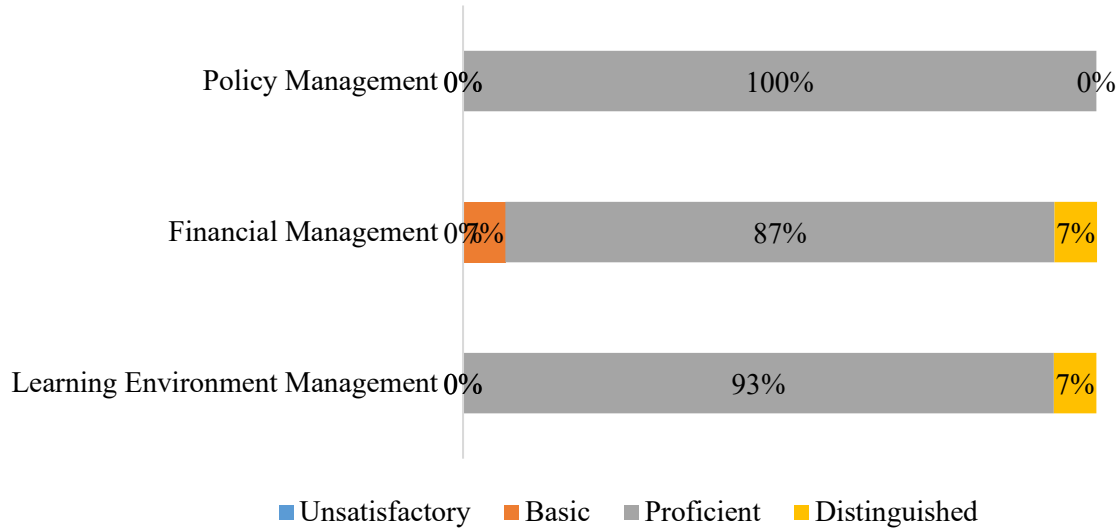
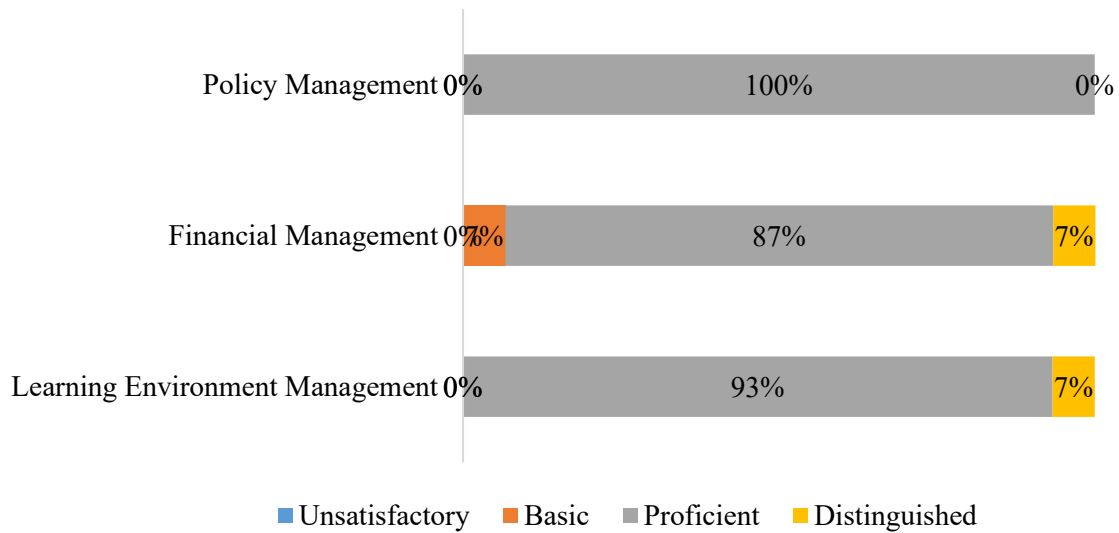


Figure 7. WFPL Effectiveness Ratings - School Management



To what extent was the implementation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute done with fidelity and quality?

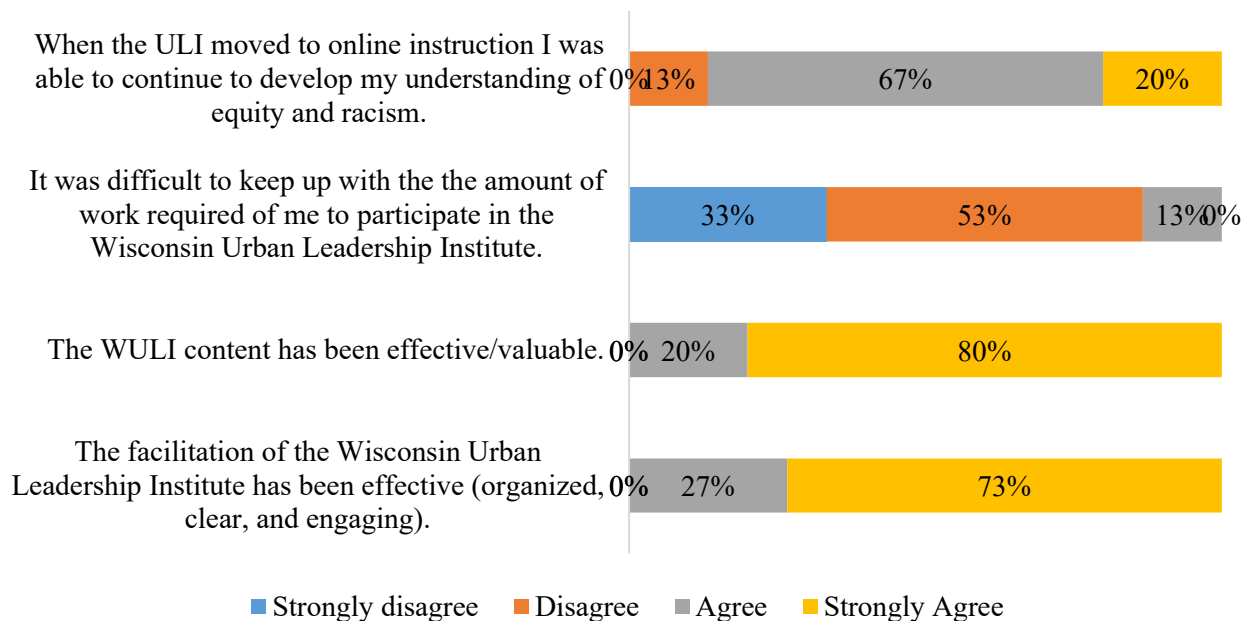
Nearly all school leaders completed the training and attended nearly all of the sessions.

There were 24 school leaders recruited to participate in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute; all completed the training. Seventeen attended at least seven of nine sessions.

School leaders felt the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute included effective content and was facilitated well.

In the year-end survey, all respondents *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that the facilitation was effective and that the content was effective and valuable. In contrast to Cohort I participants, very few reported having trouble keeping up with the amount of work required. This was true even after the initiative moved online because of COVID-19; 87% reported that they were still able to develop their understanding of equity and racism once sessions moved online. On an open-ended question about how the program could be improved, participants expressed a desire for more school leaders to receive this training and placing a greater focus on intersectionality and equity regarding other identities as well.

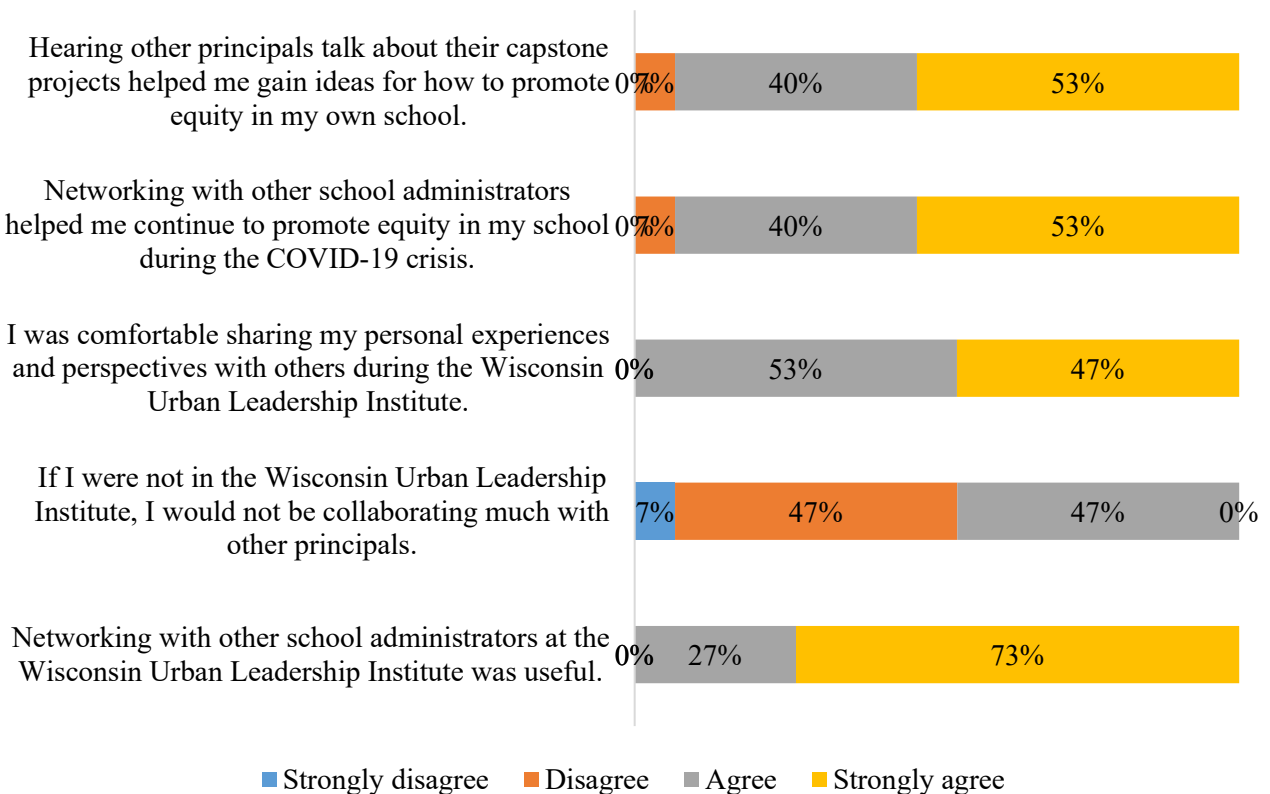
Figure 8. Cohort II perceptions of Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute facilitation (*Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.*)



The opportunity to network and collaborate with other school leaders across all five districts was greatly appreciated and valued by participants.

All of the survey respondents *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that networking with other school administrators was useful and that they were comfortable sharing their personal experiences during the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Additionally, 93% *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that they gained ideas for promoting equity in their own school from other school leader capstone projects. Further speaking to the need for networking opportunities provided by the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute, over half (54%) indicated that they would not be collaborating much with other principals if not for their participation in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute.

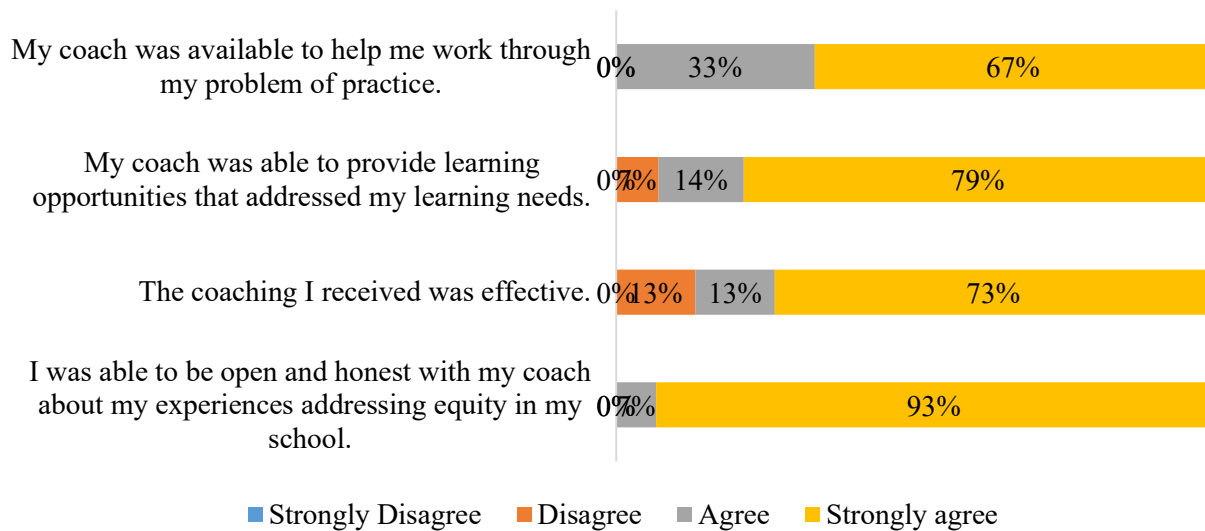
Figure 9. Cohort II perceptions of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute professional learning community (*Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.*)



Equity coaches effectively supported the growth of school leaders.

All nine coaches were former principals who identified as female. Five identified as Black or African American and four as White. On the year-end survey, 93% of school leaders *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that they were able to be open and honest with their coach, 86% felt coaching was effective, 93% felt their coach provided them with learning opportunities, and all felt their coach supported their problem of practice.

Figure 10. Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute coaching (*Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.*)

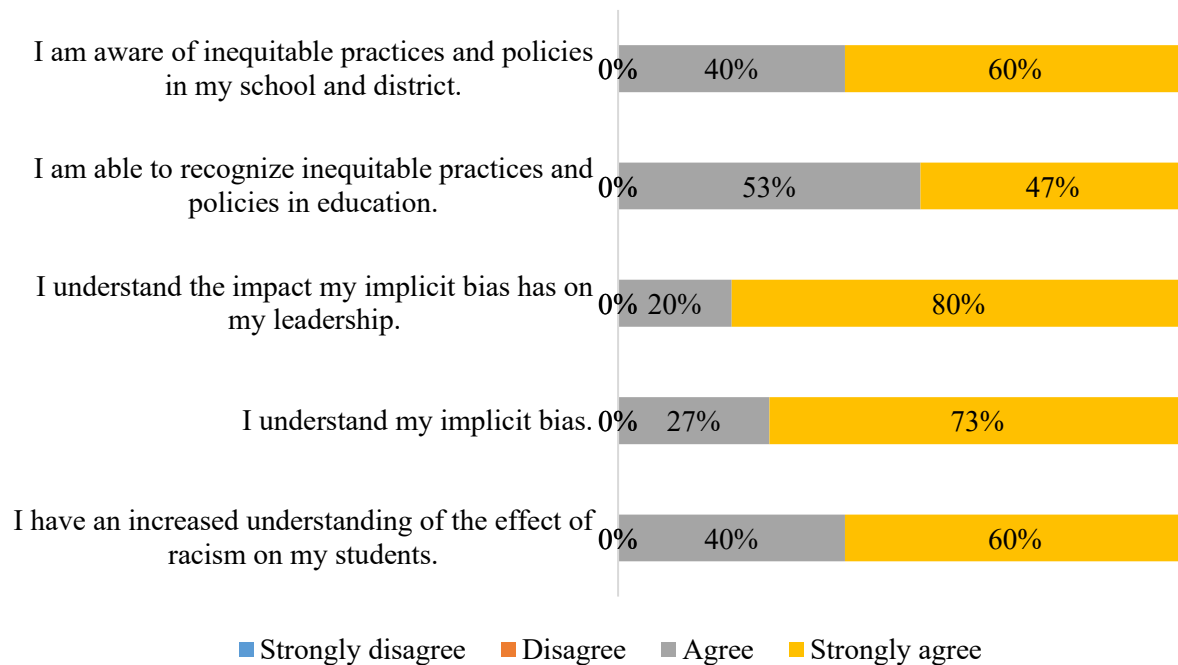


What did participants learn about equity?

School leaders completed the training with a strong understanding of their own biases and how racism impacts education.

All of the respondents *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* on the year-end survey that they understand their implicit biases, its impact on their leadership, and how racism impacts their students. Further, all school leaders reported understanding how to recognize inequitable practices and policies in their district and across education more generally.

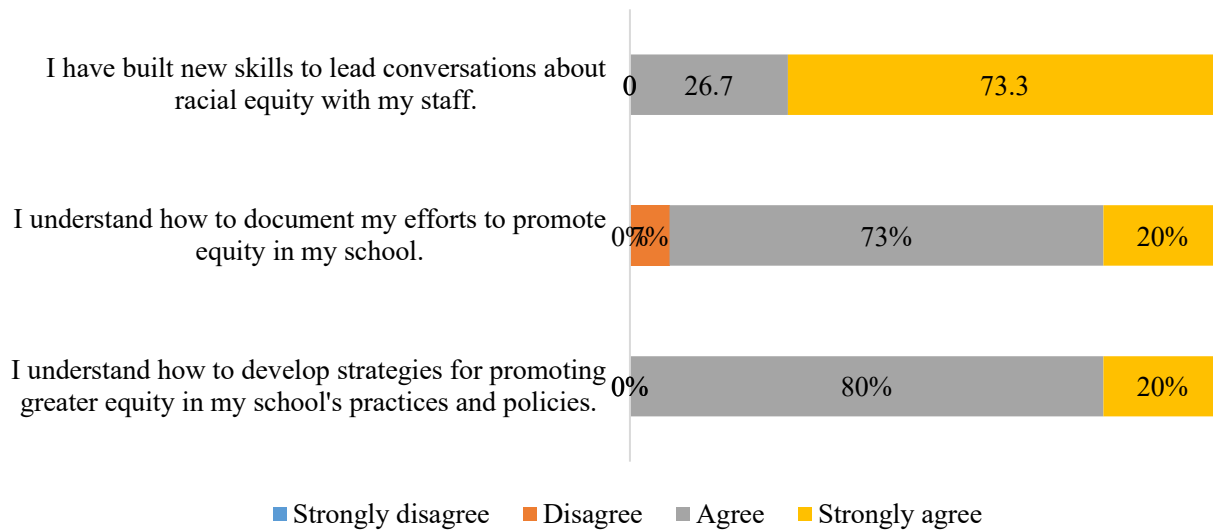
Figure 11. Increased understanding of racism & its impact on individuals & society (*Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.*)



School leaders completed the training with greater confidence that they have the skills necessary to promote equity in their school.

All of the respondents *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that they understand how to develop strategies for promoting equity in their school and they are more skilled at having conversations with their staff focused on racial equity. All but one felt they understood how to document their efforts.

Figure 12: Developing skills in promoting equity (*Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.*)

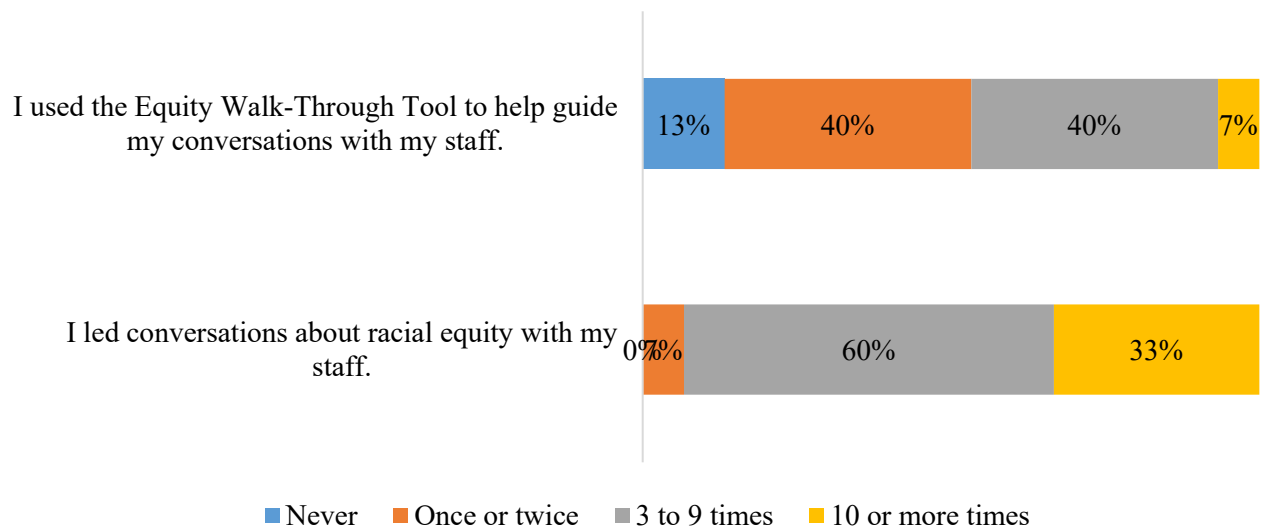


What impact did participants have on equity in their school this year?

Participants already started to apply their equity skills, by leading conversations about racial equity with school staff.

While it is still early to expect changes to have occurred in schools, school leaders have already begun to apply what they have learned in their school. 93% of school leaders reported leading at least one conversation about racial equity with their staff and most (87%) used a walk-through tool, provided as part of the training, at least once to help guide their conversations.

Figure 12: School leaders working to change their schools (*How many times did you engage in the following this year?*)



Capstone projects provided Cohort II participants with valuable experience addressing equity in their schools.

93% of participants agreed that “capstone project helped prepare me to develop strategies and document my efforts for promoting equity in my school.” Because of COVID-19, capstone presentations were delivered virtually in the summer. All participants still completed their capstone projects. Further, Cohort II participants were asked to provide other participants critical verbal and written feedback after each presentation. Each participant received a summary of written feedback that served to reinforce what was accomplished:

“The connection between your lived experience and your commitment to making a difference for all kids is evident and strong.”

“You took an important step of changing up some of the historical context of your school through adjusting group roles and implementing equity circles.”

And challenge participants to continue and extend the work:

“In your next steps, consider how the work you've done and continue to do - What are your hopes for impacting staff practices, attitudes and beliefs? Think how that can be measured as it is so powerful!”

“Continue to include the voice of students and families into your planning. This may mean having to adjust some of the structures and plans that you have put in place.”

Summary

It is clear that the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute provides school leaders with an effective experience that helps them develop the skills necessary to be an equity champion in their school. The second Cohort benefitted from many of the lessons learned from the first Cohort.

- Participants understood better why they were there.
- Participants were better able to manage the required work load.
- Cohort II participants had the benefit of learning from Cohort I participants.
- Coaching was greatly improved.
- There were more opportunities to collaborate and build trust with other school leaders.
- Engaging district administrators in the Institute lead to school leaders feeling better supported in their districts.

Together, these results demonstrate how the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute is evolving to improve and increase its impact on school leaders and schools.

In Cohort III, the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute will continue to be delivered virtually. It is unclear how this necessary change will affect the experience and learning of participants. Part of the success of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute has been due to the strengths of relationships and trust that have developed between participants. It is not clear how much of that can be accomplished virtually. However, given the reactions of Cohort II participants to the switch to virtual, it seems that much of it can be. Participants have and will continue to support each other. There has never been a time in our lifetimes when this has been more needed.

Next Steps

Our multi-year evaluation will continue to document, as we are able, the extent that the Institute leads to improvements in the factors that promote racial equity for students and ultimately if we see improvements in school and district racial equity for students of color. COVID-19 complicates this work. It is not clear when the evaluation would be allowed into schools to document changes in school culture and outcomes related to participation in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Further, because COVID-19 is continuing to have a monumental impact on school culture and climate, it will be extremely difficult to measure any incremental change occurring because of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute.

It is also not clear what student outcomes could be used to document impact. This spring, after COVID-19 closed schools, few schools continued with testing and school attendance became a very messy metric. Many schools served by participants simply remained closed or have struggled to engage with students. All of this is to suggest we may be further away from answering these evaluation questions:

1. After participation in the Institute, to what extent does it lead to improvements in the mediating factors that promote racial equity for students?
2. To what extent does the Institute lead to improvements in school and district racial equity for students?

While the negative impact COVID-19 is having on schools is clear, perhaps this time could provide an opportunity to examine what we want the schools students return to, to look like. The truth is that our schools before COVID-19 were not working for the majority of students of color. Hence the need for initiatives like the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. This could be a chance to truly examine how we want our schools organized and work to realize that vision. This might be the time in our history to honestly look at what is needed to create the environment needed to authentically address the racism and bias plaguing our school system. The Foundational Factors document summarizes some of what needs to happen to accomplish this (Appendix D). If we move toward strengthening our schools in these ways, school leaders will have a much clearer path to realize the long-term outcomes of creating inclusive schools that are

trusted by students and families, supportive of all students and families, and where racial disparities can be reduced.

Appendix A: Evaluation

Socially Responsible Evaluation in Education (SREed) at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, is evaluating the implementation and impact of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute on equity for students of color across participating schools and districts. The leadership team for this evaluation project consists of Dr. Curtis Jones at SREed, Katharine Rainey at DPI, and Dr. Ruben Anthony at the Urban League of Greater Madison. Additional input has been sought from a variety of stakeholders, including all five participating urban school districts, throughout the project.

A variety of evaluation methods are being leveraged to provide the DPI, program planners, and participating districts with actionable information that documents implementation, identifies facilitating and inhibiting factors for effective implementation, promotes more effective implementation, and greater potential impact on equity for students of color.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation focuses on the following five broad questions with various data collection methods and analyses planned to address each question:

1. What is the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute?
2. To what extent are the needs and assets of the persons who participated in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute aligned with the goals of the project?
3. To what extent is the implementation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute done with fidelity and quality? What did participants learn about equity? What impact did participants have on equity in their school this year?
4. After participation in the Institute, to what extent does it lead to improvements in the mediating factors that promote racial equity for students?
5. To what extent does the Institute lead to improvements in school and district racial equity for students?

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation uses mixed methods to examine these questions. This includes direct observation of program activities, participant surveys, participant interviews, document review, and ultimately, school visits and student/teacher data analysis. The evaluation of Cohort II was to include participant interviews but these were shelved to not burden administrators who were addressing their school's response to the COVID-19 crisis. The evaluation in subsequent years will conduct school visits. These will occur once schools open back up after COVID-19.

Appendix B: Program Theory Overview¹

SITUATION ANALYSIS	INTERVENTION GOALS	ACTIVITIES	HOW CHANGE HAPPENS	INTENDED OUTCOMES
History of racist practices & policies in U.S. public education	Increase understanding of racism & its impact on individuals & society	Activities, videos, and readings in PD sessions	Education about structural and institutional racism	Empower principals as equity champions
Structural oppression becomes internalized as implicit bias and unexamined white privilege System of oppression is socially learned & reinforced	Introspection & awareness about attitudes, emotions & behaviors regarding oppression Engage with cohort members to build skills in leading courageous conversations about racial equity	Activities, videos, and readings in PD sessions Discussions and role play during PD sessions Coaching sessions ELI needs assessment Develop Problem of Practice for Capstone Project	Self-awareness provides foundation for culturally competent leadership Confront racism	Develop cultural competence
Institutional racism occurs through inequitable practices and policies disadvantaging students of color	Identify inequitable practices and policies Implement an action plan to address Problem of Practice	Activities, videos, and readings in PD sessions Discussions and role play during PD sessions Coaching sessions Examine disaggregated data to identify racial disparities, ELI	Dismantle inequitable practices and policies	Build a school culture promoting equity

¹ Adapted from Shapiro, I. (2002). *Training for Racial Equity and Inclusion: A Guide to Selected Programs*. Washington, D.C.: Aspen Institute.

<p>Institutional racism is complex, entrenched and will be perpetuated without sustained efforts to dismantle it</p>	<p>Document efforts to lead for equity</p> <p>Develop plan for sustainability</p>	<p>results and school and district goals</p> <p>Develop action plan aligned to Problem of Practice</p> <p>Activities, videos, and readings in PD sessions</p> <p>Discussions and role play during PD sessions</p> <p>Coaching sessions</p> <p>Capstone project reflections on problem of practice and recommendations for next steps</p> <p>Develop Equity Roadmap/ Sustainability Plan</p>	<p>Create systems and structures to promote equity</p>	<p>Design school improvement strategy</p>
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Appendix C: Logic Model

INPUTS	YEAR 1 OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES		
	↗ Activities	Participation ↗	Immediate (end of year 1)	Intermediate (end of year 2)	Long Term (within 3-4 years)
Participation of Big 5 districts ELLC Steering Committee Work group 4AM Consulting NYCLA PD locations & meals Title II funding Training materials Time	Kick Off 10 PD sessions 4 coach trainings 2 coaching visits per month ELI needs assessment Problem of Practice & Capstone Project Capstone presentations	27 principal participants from Big 5 districts 9 coach participants	Increased understanding of racism & its impact on individuals & society Introspection & awareness about attitudes, emotions & behaviors regarding oppression Establish a learning community Build skills to lead courageous conversations about racial equity Identify inequitable practices & policies Develop an action plan to address a Problem of Practice Document efforts to lead for equity Develop sustainability plan Coaches are trained to facilitate growth of culturally competent leaders	Empower principals as equity champions Develop culturally competent leaders Build a school culture promoting equity Design school improvement strategy	Schools are racially inclusive & all students feel like they belong All students & families receive the supports they need to succeed Collective trust exists between schools, families & students Communities are strengthened Racial disparities in academic achievement, discipline & attendance are reduced

ASSUMPTIONS

Principals are critical to addressing disparities in educational experiences and opportunities for students of color

Equity coaches will provide the necessary support and feedback for principals to develop cultural competence

Students of color experience disparities in opportunities and achievement due to implicit biases, microaggressions and lowered teacher expectations

Principals will help school staff adopt a school culture promoting equity

Principals will continually work towards realizing long-term equity goals after their participation in Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute ends

FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS NECESSARY FOR ESTABLISHING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Continued Title II funding or transition to Title I funding

Supportive state and district policies & procedures

School Board support

Principal evaluator support

Shared school leadership that includes families, students and communities

Development, recruitment & retention of effective & racially diverse teachers

School funding parity

Availability of services all students & families need to succeed

High-quality instruction

Culturally-relevant curriculum & practices

Positive behavioral practices

Support for social & emotional learning

Communities are engaged in schools

All families are viewed as partners in supporting student learning

Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute-trained principals remain in their schools

Appendix D: Foundational Factors Necessary for Establishing Educational Equity

The Foundational Factors were identified from a review of school turnaround strategies that focus on promoting equity. Information about the Foundational Factors is presented below. Many of the factors were borrowed from the literature on Community Schooling (<http://www.communityschools.org>) and Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports (DPI, 2017).

In Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports, equity in education is defined as a system in which “every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income (DPI, 2017).”

Continued Title II funding or transition to Title I funding

Sustained funding will be necessary for the initiative to continue to train principals to be equity champions each year to reach all principals with the participating districts. Currently, Title II funds are allocated for this purpose. It may also be possible to transition to Title I funds if empirical evidence suggests the initiative is positively impacting student outcomes.

Supportive state and district policies & procedures

The Educator Effectiveness process is one example of a state and district policy that can either promote or inhibit racial equity. At the state level, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction promotes teacher and principal evaluation processes that emphasize growth rather than accountability. Ultimately though, districts decide to what extent the processes on educator learning. When the process is focused on growth, educators have the space to work to address the needs of all students and families. When focused on accountability, there is a tendency to try to explain away students’ lack of success as individual or family deficits. When this happens, schools move away from equitable practices.

School Board support

School boards determine the policies schools have to implement. In that way, school boards can represent a facilitating or inhibiting agent for equitable access to educational opportunities for students of color. Related, if changes are needed, school board members would have to buy in to the purpose of the changes. As such, school boards should be engaged in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute so that members better understand its goals and the opportunity they have to promote equity in their district.

Principal evaluator support

Principals participate in the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness evaluation system. As part of this, a district administrator provides both formative and summative feedback to each principal about their leadership and practice. As such, it is critical that district administrators both understand the goals of Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute and understand what changes they should be observing in principals and their schools resulting from their participation. Principal evaluators have the opportunity to consolidate principal learning from the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute and to support principals' continued development and their efforts to improve equity beyond their participation.

Shared school leadership that includes families, students and communities

Schools that share leadership are more democratic and inclusive. This is critical when trying to develop partnerships across racial and ethnic lines. Community Schools have a common vision with organizational structures that create the broad participation of families, students, teachers, principals and community partners for shared responsibility, decision-making and ownership of making progress toward that vision (Maier, et al., 2017).

Wisconsin's Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports defines strong shared leadership as representative teams with responsibility to lead and oversee implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports at the school and district levels (DPI, 2017).

Development, recruitment & retention of effective & racially diverse teachers

Students perform better academically when they are matched with an educator of the same race or ethnicity who can serve as a role model and advocate, can leverage shared culture in the classroom and hold high expectations for students (Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015). However, in Wisconsin we have a shortage of teachers of color; fewer than 5% are teachers of color. Even in schools comprised entirely of students of color, only a small percentage of teachers are nonwhite. Any comprehensive effort to improve equity in educational opportunities for students of color must also address equity in the teacher workforce.

School funding parity

Although the system of education funding allocations in Wisconsin was already an inhibiting factor for addressing educational equity in Wisconsin, due to the emphasis of local funding sources, over state funding sources, the passing of ACT 10 further exacerbated the problem. After ACT 10, the burden to fund public schools was placed even more on local communities. To better meet the needs of all students across the state, the Blue Ribbon Commission on School

Funding released recommendations to the Legislature in January 2019 to improve school funding in Wisconsin, including to increase funding for special education students and for students from low-income backgrounds. Ultimately, any system where poorer schools receive less funding will result in continued equity imbalances across the state.

Availability of services all students & families need to succeed

Community Schools establish partnerships with community organizations to provide comprehensive services to address the individual student and family academic and nonacademic needs, such as health services, early childhood education, employment services, transportation assistance and housing and food assistance (Maier, et al., 2017).

Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports defines a continuum of supports for students that includes “high quality instruction, collaboration, and strategic use of data of varying intensity to equitably address the needs of every learner (DPI, 2017).”

High-quality instruction

High quality instruction requires teachers to meet students and families where they are and build supports and learning opportunities that challenge all students regardless of race. Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports defines high quality instruction as “curricula, teaching practices, and learning environments [that] are standards-based, evidence-based, engaging, differentiated, culturally responsive, and data-driven (DPI, 2017).”

Culturally-relevant curriculum & practices

One of the defining elements of equity in Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports is that schools “use practices, curriculum, and policies that respect the identities and cultures of learners and families served by schools (DPI, 2017).” DPI also offers a model for becoming culturally responsive that includes making a commitment to equity, gaining knowledge about cultural differences and acting as a leader to promote practices that respect students’ cultures (DPI, Sept. 2017).

Positive behavioral practices

As one characteristic of Community Schools, positive behavioral discipline practices emphasize restorative goals and support rather than punishment. It is no secret that students of color are typically disciplined at a greater rate and more severely than white students (REFERENCE). Thus, the more punitive-minded a school’s discipline policy and practice, the more it exacerbates inequity. Systems that promote equity focus on restorative justice and social and emotional

supports, which promote student growth, safety, and a positive school culture and climate (Frankl, 2016).

Integrated student supports

The Aspen Institute defines social and emotional development in Pursuing Social and Emotional Development Through a Racial Equity Lens: A Call to Action as being comprised of “specific skills and competencies that people need to set goals, manage behavior, build relationships, and process and remember information (2018).” Furthermore, social and emotional skills and competencies develop within organizational contexts and relationships and so depend upon the culture and climate to facilitate development (Aspen Institute).

Communities are engaged in schools

Community Schools establish partnerships with community agencies to expand learning time and to provide services to families and students. Communities organize and advocate to improve schools and to reform school and district policies (Maier, et al., 2017).

One of the defining elements of family and community engagement in Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports is that schools “partner with community agencies to create more comprehensive and accessible supports for learners and families, beyond the limits of the school day and school year (DPI, 2017).”

All families are viewed as partners in supporting student learning

Community Schools partner with families in a variety of ways including giving families the information they need to support students academically at home, communicating frequently about student progress, asking families to volunteer for school activities, and providing family members access to services at the school to promote their own well-being (Maier, et al., 2017).

In Wisconsin’s Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports, family and community engagement is envisioned as “families and communities are active partners and key collaborators in achieving the goal of success for every learner (DPI, 2017)”.

Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute-trained principals remain in their schools

For Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute-trained principals to build a culture of equity, they will have to remain in their schools. However, it is common for the most effective principals to be promoted to other district positions. Principals may not stay in their building long enough to realize their equity goals. For the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute to impact school equity, principals will need to be in their schools long enough to realize their goals. However, given that

some principals invariably will retire or move on to other positions, Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute will need an on-boarding process for new principals that positions them to continue equity work.

Appendix E: Outcomes Chain

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Principals understand racism & its impact on individuals & society

THEN



Principals are self-aware about attitudes, emotions & behaviors regarding oppression

Principals have skills to lead courageous conversations about racial equity

THEN



Principals are equity champions

THEN



Principals lead with cultural competence

Principals identify inequitable practices & policies

THEN



Principals develop an action plan to address a Problem of Practice

THEN



Principals document efforts to lead for equity

THEN



Principals develop sustainability plan

THEN



Foundational Factors are assessed and improved

THEN



Principals build a school culture promoting equity

THEN



Principals design a school improvement strategy

THEN



Schools are racially inclusive &
all students feel like they
belong

All students & families
receive the supports they
need to succeed

Collective trust exists between
schools, families & students

THEN



Racial disparities in academic achievement, discipline & attendance are reduced

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