

## Cohort 4 Evaluation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute

Prepared by the Office of Socially Responsible Evaluation in Education



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## Cohort 4 Evaluation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute

The Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute is an ongoing collaboration with the largest urban school districts: Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, Milwaukee, and Racine. WULI supports school leaders in the development of equitable leadership dispositions and practices through a professional learning series, leadership coaching, and networking. School leaders complete a final capstone project which documents their progression through the learning series and maps their journey to culturally competent leadership.

The 2021-22 program was the fourth cohort of school leads to engage in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. This cohort began with 25 principals. Ultimately, 17 finished the training and completed capstone presentations. The reasons some administrators did not finish are discussed later in the report.

The fourth Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute cohort was the second to be hosted online. There were no noticeably significant changes in Cohort 4 with one major exception. Cohort Four's curriculum contained a never-before explored topic: community and family engagement. This was done in response to feedback from prior participants, who indicated wanting more training in successful partnership-building with families and communities. Organizers used three sessions to hone-in on engagement.

Coaching worked to make the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute four pillars of culturally competent leadership explicit to participants: discovering self as an equity champion, developing cultural competence, building a school culture of excellence and with equity and designing a school improvement strategy for results. Coaching was provided according to the transformational coaching model, which guides participants through a process that helps them grow and “rewrite their reality”.<sup>1</sup> Coaching focused on uncovering beliefs and allowed participants to realize change in their practice and way of being. Coaching also positioned participants within larger systems, helping participants understand how context affects them and their schools.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.exceptionalfutures.com/what-is-transformational-coaching/>



In this report we share evidence of implementation and impact of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute and suggestions for moving the project toward impacting schools and communities.

## Evaluation Approach

The Office of Socially Responsible Evaluation in Education (SREED) at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee serves as the external evaluator of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Our evaluation of the WULI is focused on examining its implementation and impact. We leverage the following methods to this end:

1. *Participant observation and engagement* – A SREED staff person attended all Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute sessions. Participants who attended the 2021-2022 WULI sessions and capstones agreed to be a part of passive observation and engagement to better understand the implementation and potential impact of the program on their equitable practices. Several small group sessions were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for content that speaks to participants' experiences and impact.
2. *Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute attendance* – Program attendance indicates how much of the WULI content participants received.
3. *Coaching utilization* – The amount that participants utilized coaching supports suggests their continued engagement in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute outside of their direct participation in Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute sessions.
4. *Interviews* - Program organizers were interviewed about their experiences with the program. We had also planned to interview Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute participants and possibly teachers in schools about their experiences but in response to the time challenges experienced by participants, ultimately decided not to further place stress on their time with interview requests.
5. *The Equity Self-Assessment Tool (ESAT)* – Participants completed the ESAT assessment at the beginning, middle and end of their participation. This tool was specifically designed

by the Leadership Academy<sup>2</sup> to support the WULI and measures critical aspects of school leader effectiveness in creating an inclusive and equitable climate. The survey measures *Cultural Competency, Equity Champion, School Culture, and School Improvement*.

6. *The Wisconsin Educator Development Support and Retention Survey (WEDSR)*<sup>3</sup> – The WEDSR is a survey offered to all Wisconsin educators each spring. The survey measures critical aspects of school climate and culture that a school leader focused on equity and inclusion would possibly impact. Administrator respondents report on their school’s efforts to implement restorative justice, culturally responsive pedagogy, and family engagement. Administrators also report on their district’s support for promoting equity in schools. Teachers report on their perceptions of whether their school is welcoming to students and teachers from specific different backgrounds. Teachers also report on the extent that adults and students focus on equity, race, and racism in their interactions and learning. The equity-focus questions included in the WEDSR were derived from the Panorama Equity and Inclusion Survey.<sup>4</sup>
7. *The Wisconsin Equity-Focused Surveys (WEFS)*<sup>5</sup> – The WEFS is a series of surveys available to schools to use with students and families. Also derived from the Panorama Equity and Inclusion Survey, these surveys ask students to share their experiences regarding their interactions with adults and students in their school. They ask families to report on how welcome and supported they and their student are in their school.
8. *WISESTAFF Data* – The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction maintains records of all public school employees. These records are publicly available. The evaluation can use these records to examine the retention of program participants in their schools and the retention of teachers of color in schools represented in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.leadershipacademy.org/>

<sup>3</sup> [www.wedsr.org](http://www.wedsr.org)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.panoramaed.com/equity-inclusion-survey>

<sup>5</sup> <https://uwm.edu/sreed/wisconsin-equity-focused-surveys/>

## Supporting frameworks

Our work uses the **program logic model and Utilization-Focused Evaluation framework**<sup>6</sup> to guide how we answer the evaluation questions, collect and analyze survey data, develop potential recommendations, and ask critical questions. **Bolded** factors fall outside of the purview of the WULI, although they are essential to establishing equity. Evaluation reports will highlight the ways that the Department of Public Instruction can be instrumental in furthering these goals through their support of the WULI:

- a. Supportive state and district policies & procedures
- b. Principal evaluator support
- c. Shared school leadership that includes families, students, and communities
- d. Development, recruitment & retention of effective & racially diverse teachers
- e. Availability of services all students & families need to succeed
- f. Culturally-relevant curriculum & practices
- g. Positive behavioral practices [restorative justice].
- h. Support for social & emotional learning
- i. Communities are engaged in schools
- j. All families are viewed as partners in supporting student learning
- k. Trained principals remain in their schools
- l. **Continued Title II funding or transition to Title I funding**
- m. **School Board support**
- n. **School funding parity**
- o. **High-quality instruction**

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<sup>6</sup> Patton & Campbell-Patton. (2022). *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*. Sage publications.

## Implementation

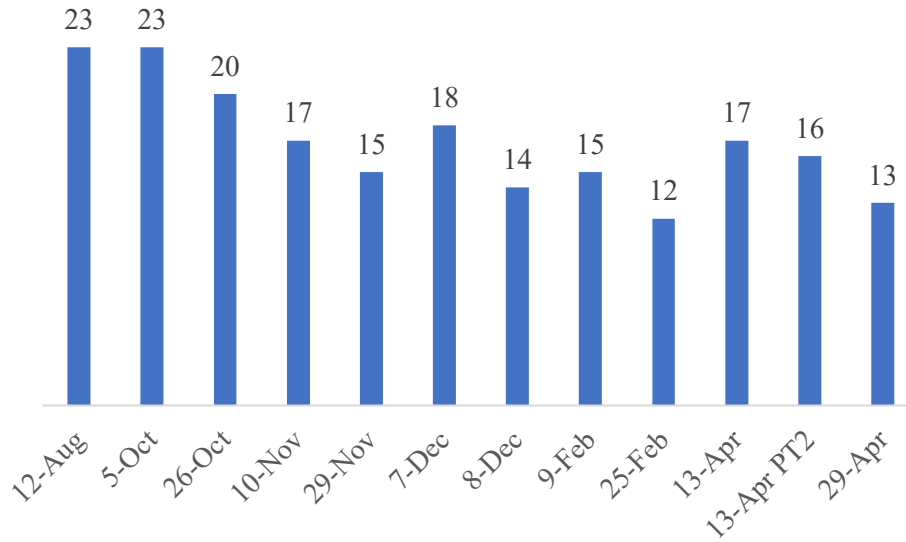
### Engagement

In previous years, the implementation of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute has been affected by external factors such as budget reductions and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cohort IV program was again impacted by external forces that affected the ability of participants to engage fully in the Institute. During the 2021-22 school year, staffing shortages affected nearly all Wisconsin schools but were severe in the urban schools represented in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. These staff shortages even limited the ability of the evaluation to measure the impact of participation on the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute on staff retention. It did not make much sense to connect staff retention to the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute when staff retention was a crisis across all schools.

The principal role is always stretched thin, having to wear many hats and fill in many gaps so that their school can adapt to and meet challenges. This was always a challenge affecting the time participants in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute have had to engage in the needed work that Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute asks of them. In response to this, the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute developed recommendations for how to protect the time of Cohort IV participants. However, there was a limit to what administrator participants could be shielded from. If there are not enough adults to cover school classrooms, administrators have to fill that need first. Further, real life situations affected the ability of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute to retain and engage administrators. One administrator moved. Another had medical issues. Others were simply overwhelmed with having to manage their school in an increasingly complicated education terrain. All of this is reflected in program attendance. Figure 1 shows how attendance shrank over time. The August 12 session was the program kickoff event. Programming started on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Although 25 school administrators had been contacted to participate, ultimately only 23 started the program and attended the Oct 5<sup>th</sup> session. Of the 23, 17 completed the program. Those who dropped out were mainly from Madison or Milwaukee; Only two Madison administrators and one Milwaukee administrator completed the Wisconsin

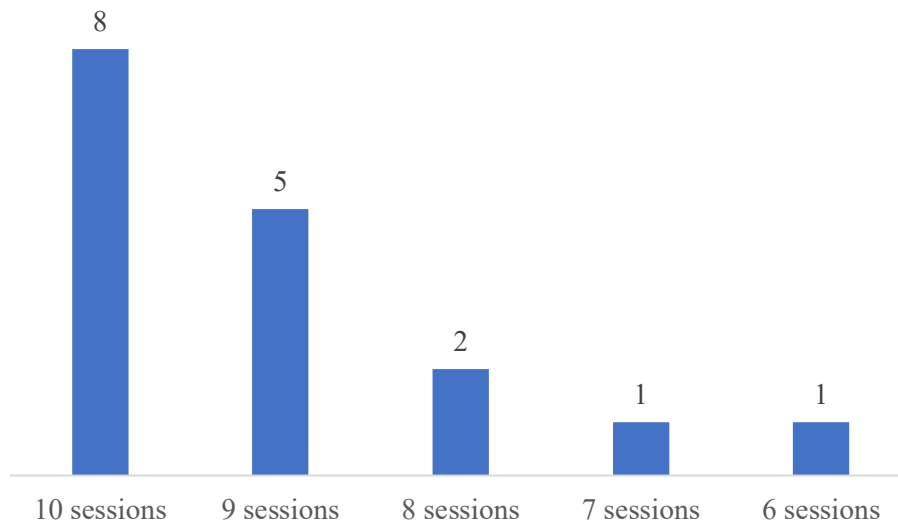
Urban Leadership Institute. Table 1 shows the schools represented among these 17 participants.

Figure 1: Session attendance



Regarding the administrators who completed their participation, most attended nine or ten sessions (Figure 2). All 17 participants completed their capstone presentation in June.

Figure 2: Number of sessions attended for each participant who completed the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute





Coaching was also affected by the challenges of balancing the pressures of their role as an administrator with trying to fully engage in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. There was some confusion among participants regarding if coaching was a required part of their participation in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Of the 17 administrators who completed their participation, only three engaged in all four planned sessions (Figure 3). In future cohorts, it is recommended that the coaching aspect of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute be presented to participants as a necessary component of their experience in the program.

Figure 3: Number of coaching sessions attended by each participant

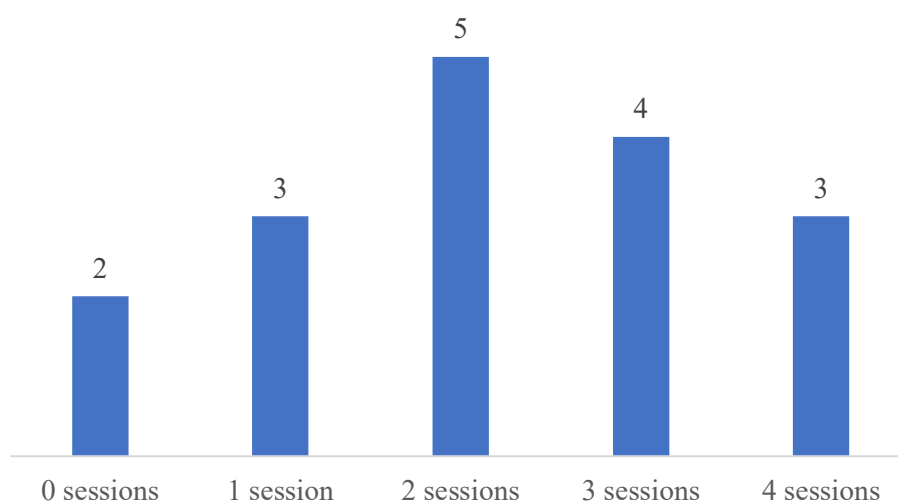


Table 1: Demographics of participants who completed the program

District	Principal identity		School
Milwaukee	Male	Black	Clemens Schools
Green Bay	Male	White	West High School
Green Bay	Female	White	Franklin Middle School
Green Bay	Female	White	Washington Middle School
Green Bay	Female	White	East High School
Kenosha	Female	White	Pleasant Prairie
Kenosha	Female	White	Kenosha School of Techn
Kenosha	Male	White	Mahone Middle
Kenosha	Female	Black /Latinx	Somers Elementary
Kenosha	Male	White	Edward Bain Creative Arts
Racine	Female	White	Park
Racine	Female	White	Wadewitz
Racine	Male	Latinx	Jerastad- Agerholm
Racine	Female	White	Goodland Montessori
Racine	Male	White	REAL
Madison	Female	Black	Kennedy Elementary
Madison	Female	U	Allis Elementary

## Sessions Narrative

The following sections details the contents of each 2021-2022 Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute session, highlighting their goals, key words and phrases, and what appeared to be the main takeaways for the participants:

### **Session 1 -- October 5, 2021: Introduction and discovering self as an equity champion, Part I**

Keywords: Race, narrative, white, students, staff, learn

In the very first session of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute's fourth cohort, participants jumped headfirst into thinking about and discussing their experiences with equity, race, and racism. We learn that although many of the principals work in districts that look like the global majority, that day may have been the first time they were asked to reflect on their personal identities in relation to their positions. Principal leaders were introduced to the concepts of core values-building within themselves and the ways their leadership dispositions impact their perspectives on values.

Witnessing the participants feeling challenged by the conversations brought to mind several ideas about the ways principals are prepared to lead schools in urban districts before coming into their positions. One principal in particular emphasized their lack of training in critical consciousness by saying, "I never really knew I was white until I started here," catching several nods of agreement from their colleagues.

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### **Session 2 -- October 26, 2021: Discovering self as an equity champion, Part II**

Keywords: Affinity groups, Equity Self-Assessment Tool, race, leadership

In their second session, participants completed their first round of the Equity Self-Assessment Tool, a survey developed for the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute by former collaborator, The Leadership Academy<sup>7</sup>. The survey is described as focusing "both on school and system leadership (collectively) and the district/school system as a whole. Users assess their progress along a continuum of behaviors and practices ranging from the least to the most desirable."

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.leadershipacademy.org/>

Principals reflected on their scores, with some surprised at their level of competency regarding each topic.

This session also introduced the affinity group as a potential tool to use with their own staff. The group separated into two groups: one for principals who identified as white, and the other for principals identifying as a person of color. The white affinity group contained the most participants, upwards of 80% of the entire cohort, thus making discussion less intimate than what some believe affinity groups should aspire. Nonetheless, principals left with an understanding of its execution and the importance of adapting to racial dynamics on the fly and an understanding of the affinity group concept.

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### **Session 3 -- November 10, 2021: Developing cultural competence, Part I**

Keywords: Students, courageous conversations, microaggressions, thought

In its third session, participants explored the task of the courageous conversation alongside their district-level leaders and Cohort 3 guests. Introducing the term microaggressions and the ways they appear in everyday life prompted the principal-district leader groups to think about the ways courageous conversations happen between themselves and their staff.

“How can this work be supported outside the WULI,” a facilitator rhetorically asks. A handful of the district’s leaders, having attended the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute in previous cohorts, felt passionately about the answers to their prompt. In one district-principal group, participants explored a document in which the district was given recommendations. Although that content was not explicitly shared with SREED, their discussion revealed their very intentional, formalized partnership-building processes between Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute participants past and present, district leaders, and their broader school-community – a characteristic unique to this particular district.

Toward the end of the session, participants spoke openly about their own racial narratives. The need for experiences talking through race, racism, and personal identity became more apparent in this workshop – a theme promptly brought to the attention of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute staff. Over time, principals were openly encouraged, deeply challenged,

and gently nudged toward developing language to communicate themselves with others on topics of equity.

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#### **Session 4 -- November 29, 2021: Developing cultural competence, Part II**

Keywords: Listening, staff, teachers, support

For its namesake session, participants delved more into, “what does it mean to be a leader for equity when we're interacting with our staff.” Having discussed their own leadership dispositions, racial narratives, and other personal identities in previous sessions, principals moved forward into reflecting on their approaches to working with staff. Particularly, principals asked questions like, “What are some practices I might need to lean to connect with teachers that I work with?” Using the frameworks provided by Leadership Academy, principals thought about how their approach to confront bias, conflict, and healthy communication. Principals took time for self-reflection and assess their skills as a listener through an equitable lens by asking, “How carefully have you listened to their needs and how can you be sure you're offering mutually beneficial relationship?”

Like in previous cohorts, starting the Developing Cultural Competence section of the curriculum appears to surface tensions between principals and teachers – particularly teachers with longer tenure than the principals. Overhearing how each principal reacts to their challenges brought to mind questions about how these conversations can yield long-term solutions. For more information on this analysis, see page ###.

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#### **Session 5 -- December 7, 2021: Building a school culture of excellence with equity, Part I**

Keywords: Single story, students, images

Sessions 5 and 6 took place during the same week after the long Thanksgiving week, quickly reacclimating the participants to the curricular intentions for the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. These sessions also appeared to be some of the most media heavy thus far, as principals digested content on implicit and explicit biases. As with cohorts past, facilitators introduced participants to the idea of the “Single Story,” a Ted Talk led by author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Principals were asked, “what are the implications of a single story, or a perspective led by bias without knowledge or experience, for students?” Leaders explored,

“How do you understand your own implicit bias? In what ways do these influence the story principals tell about their schools?”

Participants were also challenged via their media literacy as they were asked to analyze commonly used photos of children, celebrities, and locations poorly depicting their stories or emphasizing hurtful stereotypes. Principals were asked, “What is this photo attempting to depict? What are we really looking at?,” thinking about what's happening in the image that shown? What is that image perpetuating? Do you know the history of this image? Do you need more information?” This exercise, often used in teacher education programs in Wisconsin, seemed to be new to some of the principals and familiar to others. Their exploration into media literacy appeared to connect to their perspectives on students but brought up new issues with family and community perception. Facilitators made note to bring these issues up again in the Family and Community Engagement portion of the curriculum.

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***Session 6 -- December 8, 2021: Building a school culture of excellence with equity, Part II***

Keywords: Students, conversations, family, relationships

In the second of the December sessions, principals learned how to participate and execute an Ed Camp , a crowdsourcing strategy in professional development that “empowers educators to maximize professional learning experiences in the peer networks right within the room.” The principals decided to divvy their groups into three: one focused on students, the second focused on family and community engagement, and the third centered on leadership strategies for resisting harmful systems and structures.

The family and community engagement room filled up the fastest, leaving the other two groups with three or fewer participants each. The facilitators adjusted the room to encourage more balance in their discussion. Throughout the course of the session, principals transitioned between groups often keeping conversations from other groups going but through the lens of their current group’s topic.

An interesting observation in connecting teacher hiring with school systems and structures occurred in the group for leadership strategies. One principal asks, “how do we change systems

within districts to encourage people to move to encourage the, you know, people become into districts” speaking about teacher hiring practices, “How can we allow [the teaching workforce] to be more diverse?” In the midst of a growing exodus of teachers from public education in Wisconsin, many principals were faced with the issue of combatting high turnover while also attempting to complete this workshop. Unlike in other cohorts, where busy principals are often asked to utilize better delegation skills to aid in their completion, facilitators recognized the difficulties and encouraged a group conversation on the topic once the EdCamp ended.

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***Session 7 – February 9, 2022: Developing a school improvement strategy for results, Part I***

Keywords: Community, connections, data, pandemic

After about two months, participants returned to engage in learning about family and community engagement. Through the lens of “Developing a school improvement strategy for results, program organizers emphasized the criticality of authentic engagement with students, families, and communities to start the long journey of building sustainable equitable practices in their schools. To start, facilitators asked principals to consider their sphere of influence, or the networks within and outside of their schools that connect them with the families and communities of their students. Using that conversation as a springboard, principals then formally created community asset maps, or visual representations of community resources and the ways the school is connected or can be connected to them.

School leaders appeared to find this exercise enlightening, as leaders in the same districts became aware of resources and contacts that they had not previously considered or had knowledge of their existence. This conversation also led to a group exchange about data collection – the best and worst practices when attempting to learn and build community in their districts and the best ways to utilize local community-based organizations to gain information. At its close, principals in one district scheduled a follow-up conversation to build more on their collective networks.

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***Session 8 – February 25, 2022: Developing a school improvement strategy for results, Part II***

Keywords: Parents, family, people, engagement rubric, communication

Using the content from session seven and the perceptions of families from session 5, facilitators created a space in which principals could openly discuss how their views and beliefs impact their approach to working with diverse families. In small mixed-district groups, one principal asks, “What are the beliefs we want to hold and consider and reflect on when it comes to families?”

School leaders imagined perfect school leaders-parent relationships and compared those imaginations with their realities. This exchange resulted in school leaders requesting professional development materials to encourage their growth in this area. And then we kind of thought about what that looks like sound like feel like in a perfect setting. We're going to think about what that means for our actual own building. And well, the way we're going to do that is we're going to look at a rubric.

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### ***Session 9 – April 13, 2022: Community and family engagement webinar***

Keywords: Community engagement, school-family, partner, engage

Continuing the trend of new curricular changes and partnership-building, the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute hosted a live webinar on community and family engagement featuring Wisconsin-based practitioners, evaluators, and academics with significant experience. School leaders prepared questions for the panelists prior to the event. The host used the questions to guide the content of the webinar. By the end of the webinar, participants left with cloud-based strategies and resources on how other leaders implemented plans for authentic engagement.

In the following debrief for the webinar, made specific notes of the various stages of family and community implementation, and call to action. School leaders homed in on their goal to use research-based strategies to organize and to continually improve their work on family, school and community engagement, with specific emphasis on the need for district and state-level support.

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### ***Session 10 – April 29, 2022: Conclusion***

Keywords: Equity, fish story, capstone, district

In the final session of Cohort 4’s process, participants reflected on their needs and next steps alongside their district leaders. “What's missing and what do we really stand on?,” school



leaders -district groups intentionally reflected on the need to continue this work together after participating in the institute. While some districts have formalized systems for former cohorts to connect, others made note of their lack, and made plans to meet in order to create them.

At the end, school leaders asked many questions on their upcoming capstone presentation. Considering some of the school leaders' reduced attendance in coaching sessions during this term, many expressed concern about their ability to successfully complete their projects in a timely, sufficient manner. Program organizers did their best to lull their anxiety, while coaches created impromptu coaching sessions that day to meet participant needs.

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### ***Capstone Presentations – June 14-15, 2022***

Cohort 4 participants presented their capstones organized by specific reflective prompts. Participants responded to the following prompts: How have you changed (mindset, beliefs, actions) as a result of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute? Provide specific example(s) with data and or an artifact (i.e. ESAT and Racial Narrative). What ways have you been intentional in having courageous conversations around the impact of race on equity with staff, families, and community? As a result of WI-ULI, what actions have been taken or implemented? What next steps do you plan to take after participation?

Priming the audience for their self-reflection, each of 17 presentations starting their presentations emphasizing the importance of vulnerability, especially in the online context. A few principals used their ESAT results to situate their growth, sharing anecdotes of courageous conversations to accent their scores. Others reflected on the importance of the Department of Public Instruction and district's emphasis on equity in the Danielson Framework. School leaders and their district leader listeners talked about how critical it is to establish an environment for courageous conversations even between each other when thinking about evaluation. In all, school leaders talked greatly about the ways they contextualized what they learned in the year to their school situations and the ideas they have for beginning to address them.

Of the topics covered in their capstone projects, Cohort 4 participants shared what they have done in their school this past year and what they will be doing moving forward regarding promoting equity by answering the following questions: "As a result of WI-ULI, what actions

have been taken or implemented?” and “What next steps do you plan to take after participation?”.

Regarding what they have accomplished this past year, most commonly, school leaders shared their capstone work in their school focused on “Building a School Culture of Excellence with Equity” (Table 2). One principal shared their steps toward shifting school culture and climate:

*“We built an equity team. We started off with a survey [...]we were talking about what our next steps would be as an equity team. How we can start building equity into our school, into our practices, how we can start connecting the community back with the school?”*

Table 2: “As a result of WI-ULI, what actions have been taken or implemented?”

Short term action dedicated to:	# of participants
Parent and community engagement	3
School culture and climate	10
Staff professional development and mentoring	4
Self-awareness in practice	1

Regarding what they plan to do moving forward, most outlined interventions that would involve sharing the information gained in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute with their staff, as well as discovering and implementing similar professional development around equity. One representative plan was shared by a participant:

*“I cannot wait for the other member of our admin team to be able to partake in [the WULI]. So then as a whole team we are [...], all trained up in this and we can really take our capstones and our learning and be able to put it into practice at our school in a unified way.”*

Table 3: “What next steps do you plan to take after participation?”

Long-term action dedicated to:	# of participants
Parent and community engagement	1
School culture and climate	6
Staff professional development and mentoring	18
Self-awareness in practice	1

## Impact

### Session Reflections

#### Self-awareness

Organizers aim to increase understanding of racism and its impact on individuals, schools, self, and society. Through introspection and awareness about their attitudes, emotion and behaviors, organizers hope principals gain a better understanding and sense of action regarding oppression. Through required attendance, small group discussions, pair sharing and other forms of group facilitation, participants are exposed to a number of critical strategies concerning school leadership, race and racism. Through small and large group discussions, it is evident that even in their early stages, participants are able to critically think and communicate their own racial identities along with the complexities in leading schools with that increased awareness.

#### Question on how observation relates to intent

- What remains to learned is how that ability to think and speak transfers to staff and students? In what ways do the leaders use and adjust tools in self-awareness and racial identity exploration with their staff?

- In what ways does it create long-term impact in teacher cultural competence, student engagement, and improved climate?

#### Stand-out quotes:

*“[F]or example, we have an equity team we meet regularly. We have started to select focus on our school. We've used our equity team to review our brand-new mission, vision and creed that we've put together through our guiding coalition. [...] so a lot of this year has been like taking what we've been talking about in WULL and applying it to moving forward intelligently and with purpose.” Session 4*

*“I am an equity champion. I am for myself, I am growing I'm learning this opportunity is wonderful for me because now I get to self-reflect. I get to reflect on my own biases growing up that I thought I didn't have again living in that bubble.”*

*“I think I have I have an awareness because I've been doing this thinking and learning I don't think I know everything. I don't know why I got five out of five on my first score for discovering self as an equity champion, but I do really think I use my voice I know that I can use it more.”*

*“One of the things that I always struggled with was my racial narrative and the lack of diversity in my background because of that, and I kind of came to realize, you know, what, guess my racial narrative has shaped me, but it doesn't define my perspective.”*

#### **Staff engagement key finding**

Coaches and facilitators aim to establish a learning community within the cohort with the intention of teaching principals how to create their own amongst staff in their schools. Program organizers attempt to teach principals the skills to lead “courageous conversations” about the everyday impacts and intentions of racial inequities in schools. In the 2021-2022 cohort, it became clear that program planners held true to their goals of promoting greater staff engagement on race, racism and equity in their schools.

Principals reported using many of the exercises in racial identity exploration and professional development with their staff. In some instances, turnover in principalship impacts the ways that principal leaders are able to build the relational trust with staff required for this work. In other instances, principals talk about the long-held tenure of some of their principals – many of

whom have taught in schools for more than two decades. They questioned the ways in which they can approach their more senior teachers about racial equity that doesn't ring toward a new program/initiative, rather long-term changes.

That said, it remains crucial to ask:

- In what ways are educators with the impact/notoriety of the principal being held accountable for their increasing self-awareness? District-level leadership and those teachers?
- In what ways can facilitators think about the varying ages/tenures of principal leaders in their approaches to this work?
- What role do racialized, generational understandings of race and racism play in schools?

Stand out quotes:

*"...Not really knowing the staff and the staff not really knowing me. I think there's definitely been this struggle of that relational trust that you just get from knowing people and that has been really challenging like not having a lot of opportunity to get to know staff."*

*"So with the staff, I did an exercise with them about the lens, looking through other people's lens and the different categories and that really helped out with a lot of conversations with parents who felt that they were misunderstood or they were angry because nobody could see through their lens. And when we have those conversations with staff, they could take a step back and not be as like so defensive."*

*[Referencing when talking with staff] Some of the famous word choices in the beginning of the year were I have black family members. And I would say well, that that let's let's talk about what that means and how it relates to this conversation*

*"In what ways have you been intentional and having courageous conversations around the impact of race on equality with staff and family members? [...] So that's sort of biggest challenge for me. All staff meetings last year was focused around race space and talking about race. Our main focus was on recognizing our own conscious biases. I really wanted teachers to identify their own personal biases. I wanted them to have an understanding of who our students are the real life challenges that they face each day."*

### **Student impact key finding**

Coaches and facilitators acknowledge the inherent ways in which race and culture impacts schools, students, teachers, etc. From the ways in which students arrive in the space, to the ways teachers and principals interact, cultural messages are the baseline of working in Wisconsin schools. Through their work in the WULI, organizers attempt to reduce racial disparities in academic achievement, discipline and attendance. In recent sessions, principals appear to think of their students as the main purpose for their work and the core to their approach to racial equity work. Through discussion of their problems to trouble shooting strategies, principals keep their students are the forefront.

*Stand out quote:*

*“ [In all of their great efforts and successes so far] it is so broad to figure out all those pieces that we didn't know. [T]here's so much that is just starting to loop for people, [and] it has just been a really big net. Like how can this focus down and look effective?”*

Question on how observation relates to intent

- What remains to be understood again are the impacts/experiences of students on a day-today basis?
- What concrete examples can be provided by principals or their staff that demonstrate a reflection of their training?

Next steps

- Going forward in Cohort 5, we suggest using these questions for each observation to guide particular activities within each session's goals.

## **WEFS**

It was ultimately decided that we would not use the WEFS to help evaluate the impact of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. The results of the WEFS would inform the long-term outcomes listed in the logic model that “Schools are racially inclusive & all students feel like they belong”, “All students & families receive the supports they need to succeed”, and “Collective trust exists between schools, families & students”. These results are expected to be realized in schools and communities three to four years after an administrator participates in

the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Although this was the fourth year of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute, only the first and second cohort of participants fit the idea that this impact would be expected at this time. It was also considered using these results to establish a baseline of student and family perceptions and experiences regarding their school but ultimately this was decided against as well. There was also a concern with burdening schools with additional data collection. We will revisit the use of the WEFS as a possible evaluative tool for subsequent project cohorts.

## **WEDSR**

We were able to identify seventy-seven current and former schools lead by Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute participants that administered the 2022 WEDSR Survey. Overall, 37% of teachers, or 1,021, in these 77 schools completed a survey. However, participation was not evenly distributed across the 77 schools (Table 6). All Milwaukee schools had very high response rates while few Kenosha schools participated in earnest. So, while the results would provide a good measure of how adult practice had changed in Milwaukee schools to be more focused on equity and inclusion, it would not be a good measure in many of the other schools. Given these limitations of the data, we decided against using this data source to estimate the impact of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute on adult practices in schools. We will revisit the use of these or similar data in subsequent evaluations of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute.

## **ESAT**

As previously mentioned, Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute participants were asked to complete The Equity Self-Assessment Tool (ESAT) at the beginning, middle, and end of their participation in the project. This survey is mostly designed to provide school administrators with insight into their own strengths and growth areas for becoming an effective change agent focused on equity in their school. However, the data are also useful for measuring the growth of participants as they progress through the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute. Table 4 summarizes the numbers of participants who completed this assessment at the three time points. Nearly all (22) completed the beginning of year assessment in October. Nearly all (18) of

the participants who remained in the project completed it in February as well. However, only about half (8) of the participants who completed the project completed it at the end of the year.

Table 4: ULI Participation Completion of the ESAT

	Start of ULI	Mid Program	End of ULI	Total
Green Bay Area Public School District	4	4	2	10
Kenosha School District	5	5	3	13
Madison Metropolitan School District	4	3	1	8
Milwaukee School District	4	1	0	5
Racine Unified School District	5	5	2	12
Total	22	18	8	48

Our impact analysis focuses on growth demonstrated by the eight participants who completed both a start of program and end of program survey. The ESAT measures self-identified competency in four areas: Cultural Competency, Equity Champion, School Culture, and School Improvement. For each question, school leaders report on the extent that the positive equity trait or practice is true for them. Their responses range from 1 “Not at all” to 5 “Completely”. For the purpose of this paper, responses were averaged for each of the questions that make for the four measured competency areas. Table 5 presents the average start and end of Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute scores for the eight participants.



Table 5: Descriptive statistics of ESAT scores for participants with start and end survey results

	Equity Champion		Cultural Competency		School Culture		School Improvement	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Start of ULI	4.0	0.5	3.7	0.3	3.4	0.4	3.1	0.7
Middle of ULI	4.1	0.4	3.6	0.4	3.5	0.4	3.4	0.6
End of ULI	4.2	0.5	3.8	0.6	3.8	0.4	3.3	0.6

These results suggest small growth, as measured by the ESAT, for these eight participants. The largest growth was seen in school leader practices around developing an inclusive and equity-focused school culture. Moving from an average score of 3.4 to 3.8 represents a large change, considering the standard deviation was only 0.4. This one standard deviation improvement suggests the eight school leaders who completed the program felt they were much more capable of creating such a school culture and climate. These results align with participant focus on creating an equitable and inclusive school culture in the majority of capstone projects. Inferential statistics were done as well to analyze these results but were not included due to so few participants with data.

### Summary

The evaluation of cohort four of the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute again demonstrated that participants developed critical skills for acting as change agents in their school and districts. The education context in Wisconsin and nationally posed a challenge to participants for completing their engagement and to the Institute for engaging school leaders. This resulted in reduced participation and engagement of school leaders. Those that completed the program received critical guidance and support for moving their school toward a more equitable and inclusive place.

It will be important that evaluative systems be agreed upon that will allow the project and DPI to understand the sort of change that is occurring in schools. The Wisconsin Urban Leadership

Institute is at a critical place in its development. If it is to be sustained, we must reach beyond current participants to understand more than its immediate impact and find ways to make it more impactful for schools. This will likely also require developing systems that go beyond one year of participation for a school leader. What can the project do to consolidate and support the learning that is occurring in Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute sessions during the years after? The answer to this question might also clarify the ways that the evaluation can develop information systems that track changes in schools beyond one year.

Table 6: WEDSR School participation rates

District	School name	Rate	Responses	Teachers
Green Bay Area Public	Baird El	16%	7	44
	Danz El	21%	9	42
	Doty El	37%	10	27
	East Hi	64%	52	81
	Franklin Mid	15%	8	55
	Jackson El	11%	3	28
	Kennedy El	23%	6	26
	Langlade El	4%	1	23
	Nicolet El	67%	18	27
	Northeast WI Sch of Innovati	40%	6	15
	Red Smith K-8	27%	15	56
	Sullivan El	19%	9	47
	Washington Mid	35%	19	55
	West Hi	26%	15	58
Kenosha	Bradford Hi	20%	16	80
	Brass Community Sch	40%	12	30
	Bullen Mid	16%	9	55
	Edward Bain Sch Creative Art	10%	3	29
	Harborside Acad	40%	16	40
	Indian Trail HS & Acad	13%	13	103
	Lance Mid	7%	4	56
	Mahone Mid	9%	6	65
	Pleasant Prairie El	0%	0	27
	Prairie Lane El	4%	1	28
	Somers El	7%	2	30
	Southport El	5%	1	22
	Tremper Hi	17%	15	86
	Wilson El	17%	2	12
Madison Metropolitan	Allis El	24%	8	34
	Franklin El	29%	7	24
	Huegel El	29%	10	35
	Jefferson Mid	24%	8	34
	Kennedy El	29%	10	35
	Lake View El	7%	2	27
	Lapham El	50%	8	16
	Leopold El	17%	9	52
	Marquette El	64%	7	11
	Memorial Hi	21%	23	110
	Mendota El	15%	4	26
	Toki Mid	64%	27	42
	Van Hise El	33%	9	27

	Whitehorse Mid	17%	5	30
Milwaukee	Audubon Hs	89%	25	28
	Barbee Montessori School	82%	14	17
	Bradley Technology And Trade	91%	49	54
	Bruce School	94%	17	18
	Bryant School	89%	16	18
	Clarke Street School	80%	12	15
	Clemens School	74%	17	23
	Elm Creative Arts School	70%	14	20
	Forest Home Avenue School	76%	37	49
	Franklin School	97%	28	29
	Hartford University School	87%	20	23
	Kluge School	68%	19	28
	Milw German Immersion School	93%	26	28
	Morgandale School	100%	30	30
	Pulaski Hs	89%	54	61
	Reagan Hs	83%	55	66
Roosevelt Ms	82%	14	17	
Washington Hs Of Info Tech	92%	34	37	
Racine Unified	Bull Early Education Ctr	12%	2	17
	Fratt El	18%	7	38
	Gilmore Fine Arts Sch	27%	14	51
	Horlick Hi	27%	25	91
	Jefferson Lighthouse El	16%	5	31
	Johnson El	14%	5	35
	Knapp El	62%	20	32
	O Brown El	26%	9	34
	Schulte El	18%	4	22
	Starbuck - An IB World Sch	41%	19	46
	Wadewitz El	15%	7	48
	West Ridge El	27%	8	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>2786</b>

## Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute Logic Model

