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Wisconsin Foundation for Educational Administration (WFEA)

Year 4 | 2021-22 Report



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About the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. WEC's team of evaluators supports youth-serving organizations and initiatives through culturally responsive and rigorous program evaluation. Learn more at <http://www.wec.wceruw.org>.



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Contents

5 Introduction

12 Findings

25 Summary and Questions to Consider

27 Appendices

- A New Building Administrator Academy Case Study
- B First Year Superintendents Academy Case Study
- C New Building Administrator Academy (NBAA) Logic Model
- D Building Effective Leadership Academy (BEL) Logic Model
- E WFEA Professional Learning Series Program and Organizational Changes

Section I

Introduction

Introduction

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) has evaluated the professional learning series offered by the Wisconsin Foundation for Educational Administration (WFEA) since 2018. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provided grant support to WFEA through Title II, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The funding enables the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA) and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (WASDA) to support a variety of leadership learning opportunities to school and district administrators.

As described in AWSA's Professional Learning catalog, the professional learning opportunities for the 2021-22 school year are based on a three-tiered structure:

- 1 Conferences that provide professional learning, information, and networking opportunities across the administrator standards (breadth);
- 2 Academies that provide focused training on targeted pillars and related high-leverage practices and competencies for leaders (depth); and
- 3 Coaching to further equip leaders with tools and strategies to lead effectively (reflection).

The WFEA contract is directed to Tier 2 and 3 activities and allows AWSA and WASDA to facilitate leadership academies, subsidize costs for eligible leaders to attend the academies (75 percent of the total cost of participants with an administrator license), and provide coaching for new principals and superintendents.

WASDA extends learning opportunities to new district leaders through their First Year Superintendent Academy and partners with AWSA to host the Supporting Principal Leadership (SPE) Academy.

This report builds on the previous three years of WEC evaluation activities and includes:

- A cross-academy descriptive study
- Two case studies on academies that support new school and district leaders:
 - New Building Administrators Academy (Appendix A)
 - First Year Superintendent Academy (Appendix B)
- Logic model development:
 - New Building Administrators (Appendix C)
 - Building Effective Leaders academies (Appendix D)
- A discussion with WFEA leaders to document changes they made in response to previous evaluation findings (Appendix E)

The purpose of this report is to provide formative feedback based on these evaluation activities to academy planners and facilitators as they plan for future academies.

In this report, we first provide an overview of the 2021-22 WFEA professional learning academies and the evaluation design and data collection methods. We then present findings from our evaluation activities. We conclude by summarizing the key findings and sharing reflection questions for the program planners and facilitators.

Overview of WFEA Professional Learning Academies

In 2021-22, WFEA offered thirteen academies, including three new academies. The Comprehensive School Mental Health academy is a team-based academy that replaced the Mental Health and Resilience academy, which was offered the previous two years. The Impactful Coaching: Advancing Your Skills webinar series was offered to participants as a standalone webinar or a series of webinars based on individuals' needs. The Mastering Leadership Academy (MLA) is an addition to the career-based learning series, following the New Building Administrator and Building Effective Leadership academies. For this first year, school administrators were invited to participate in MLA based on data that demonstrated they were impactful at closing gaps and growing student achievement. Descriptions of each of the academies are provided in Table I.

Table I: 2021-22 Academy Descriptions and Formats

ACADEMY	DESCRIPTION
Building Effective Leadership (BEL)	Training for school administrators on how to be a learning leader who is developing a learning organization. The academy helps create a professional learning network of peers to support ongoing work. Participants have the opportunity to work with a coach.
Comprehensive School Mental Health (CSMH)	New academy in 2021-22, replacing Mental Health and Resilience academy. Based on WI's School Mental Health Framework, district level teams assess their school's mental health system and use improvement cycles to make changes. Facilitated in partnership with DPI. Participants receive monthly coaching.
Data Leadership Academy (DLA)	Develops the capacity of school and district leaders along with their teams to lead continuous improvement efforts that focus on high-quality evidence-informed teaching, learning, and systems improvement. Participants utilize DPI's WISExplore in the academy. Facilitated in partnership with DPI.
First Year Superintendent (FYS)	Designed to provide just-in-time information for superintendents. In addition to training sessions, superintendents are paired with a coach that works with them for the entire year.
Impactful Coaching (IC)	Training on providing coaching and feedback for reflection.
Impactful Coaching: Advancing Your Skills (IC2)	A sequel to the Impactful Coaching Academy focused on increasing skills and engaging in coaching simulations.
Impactful Coaching: Advancing Your Skills webinar series	New academy in 2021-22, based on participant feedback. Webinars are topic specific and participants can attend all five webinars or register for select webinars.
Leading for Equity (LEA)	District- or school-level teams analyze district data and systems to identify problems of equity and develop action plans to address these problems. Facilitated by two individuals from ICS Equity.
Leading Professional Learning Communities (PLC)	Helping school leaders build or advance collaborative learning teams in their schools or districts. Specifically designed to help participants through unique challenges and targets areas such as leadership, assessment, and collaboration.
Mastering Leadership (MLA)	New academy in 2021-22. In this initial year, administrators were invited to apply based on demonstrated impact on student achievement. Participants develop skills to support continuous growth, address equity-based problems of practice, and network with peers.
New Building Administrators (NBAA)	Just-in-time learning for first year school administrators, plus resources and net-working with peers. Participants have the opportunity to work with a coach.
School Administrators Institute for Transformational Leadership (SAIL)	A two-year, team-based academy that helps school and district teams build focus and coherence in their improvement priorities. Teams work through a common root cause analysis process, develop a theory of action, and implement and monitor cus-tomized 100-day plans. A SAIL coach supports teams during and between sessions.
Supporting Principal Excellence (SPE)	Facilitated by WASDA and AWSA to equip superintendents, central office leaders, and others who directly support principals with the tools and practices that enhance principal performance in leading schools of equity and excellence for student success.

Source: AWSA Professional Learning Catalog

As noted in the table, several of the academies offer coaching. SAIL and CSMH offer team-based coaching; CSMH coaching is provided by the Wisconsin Center for Resilient Schools. Individual leadership coaching is offered to participants in NBAA, BEL, and FYS.

Overview of Evaluation

WEC researchers designed a mixed methods evaluation.

The evaluation is guided by two evaluation questions:

1. How are the academies designed to develop and support school and district leadership practices? What are the benefits from the professional learning and coaching support provided through the academies as reported by participants?
2. What are the potential impacts on leadership practices from attending WFEA professional learning academies?

Data Collection

The evaluation questions are informed by multiple data sources, including observations, participant surveys, document review, and interviews. In addition, logic models were developed for the NBAA and BEL academies to help inform possible outcomes analysis in future years.

Observations

WEC evaluators observed one session for each of the academies. Observers recorded notes and used a standardized observation protocol to collect consistent data across the academies. Observers collected data related to the materials shared with participants, slides used during instruction, the engagement of the participants, opportunities for participants to reflect on their learning, and how participants demonstrated mastery of the new learning.

Survey

We administered a survey to all school and district staff at the conclusion of each of the academies. Other types of attendees, such as CESA and DPI staff, were not surveyed because the funding through the grant is primarily directed for school and district leadership professional learning.

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to provide feedback about their experiences and allowed for common response categories across the academies. Following the initial invitation to respond to the survey, two reminders were sent via email. Across all academies, 1,147 school and district staff were invited to respond to the survey, and 474 did so, for a response rate of 41 percent. Response rates for each academy are presented in Table 2. Table 3 presents survey response rates by participant role. As shown, school administrators made up the largest number of respondents.

Table 2: School and District Leader Survey Response Rates by Academy*

ACADEMY	NUMBER INVITED TO RESPOND	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE RATE
BEL	26	17	65%
CSMH	176	48	27%
DLA	27	12	44%
FYS	38	29	76%
IC (cohort 1 & 2)	110	59	54%
IC Advanced	31	13	42%
IC Advanced webinars	41	16	39%
LEA	178	62	35%
MLA	40	34	85%
NBAA	82	42	51%
PLC	63	15	24%
SAIL	308	115	37%
SPE	20	9	45%
SPE virtual	7	3	43%
TOTAL	1,147	474	41%

*Registration lists were shared with WEC in September 2021. Some academies allowed for additional registration after that time, so the number of participants (shown in Table 3) and number of participants invited to participate in the survey (shown in Table 2) may differ from the final numbers of participants. In one instance, SPE, four participants registered for the in-person academy and then switched to the virtual academy. Surveys were administered only to school and district staff, not state agency or CESA staff, parents, or school board members.

Table 3: Survey Respondents by Role

N=474

ROLE	NUMBER OR RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
School administrator	198	42%
District administrator	89	19%
Teacher	70	15%
District or school-based coach	50	11%
Other *	67	14%

Document Review

We reviewed documents from each of the academies, including the AWSA Professional Learning catalog, registration data, the PowerPoint presentations and agendas from academy sessions, and handouts shared with participants.

Interviews

The NBAA and FYS case studies included interviews with participants to inform our understanding of participant perceptions of the academies and how they were currently using and anticipate using the knowledge and skills they learned. As part of the NBAA academy, interviews were also conducted with participant supervisors to learn if they observed changes in participant professional practice as a result of attending the academy. In addition, WEC researchers spoke with WFEA leaders to document changes made to the organization and academies based on previous evaluation findings.

Limitations

There are several limitations to consider when interpreting study results. First, due to resource considerations, we limited each academy observation to just one session. We recognize that sessions not covered may have yielded interesting examples of learning or challenges with the experience. A second limitation is the relatively low response rates to participant surveys; those responding may not represent the views of all attendees. Despite these limitations, themes from participant data on perceptions of academies and applicability of new knowledge and skills can inform future planning.

Section 2

Findings

Findings

Academy Participation

WFEA staff shared with WEC academy registration lists for each of the academies. Table 4 includes the number of school and district staff registered for each academy compared with the numbers of academy registrants in the past three years. As noted above, this report focuses on school and district staff. Agency staff, such as CESA, DPI, and Rtl Center often also join academies in order to further their learning and improve their ability to support school and district staff. As shown in the table, the 2021-22 learning series hosted the largest number of participants in the past four years.

Table 4: Participant Registration by Academy

ACADEMY	18-19 REGISTRATION	19-20 REGISTRATION	20-21 REGISTRATION	21-22 REGISTRATION
BEL	n/a	27	12	26
CSMH/MHR	n/a	106 (MHR)	54 (MHR)	189
DLA	51	68	97	27
FYS	30	45	39	38
IC (cohort 1 & 2)	94	102	129	148
IC2	n/a	76	16	31
IC2 webinars	n/a	n/a	n/a	41*
LEA	55	222	331	178
MLA	n/a	n/a	n/a	40
NBAA	72	69	33	82
PLC	69	147	84	100
SAIL	182	232	210	314
SPE	40	44	19	16
SPE virtual	n/a	n/a	n/a	11
TOTAL	593	1,138	1,024	1,241

*Individuals who registered to participate in all of the webinars

Figure I: Participants by Role

Of the 1,241 school and district staff who registered for 2021-22 academies, the following were predominant role types:

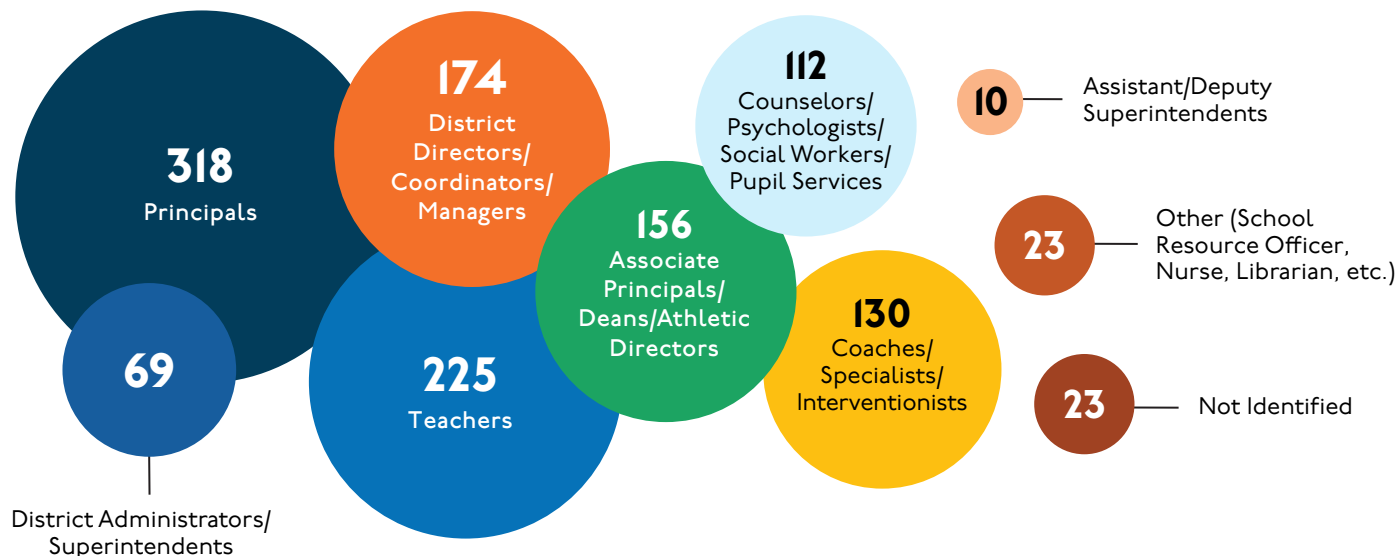


Table 5 displays the comparison of registration numbers by role reported in the 2020-21 and 2021-22. As shown, the overall percentages of principals, associate/assistant principals (APs), coaches, and district level directors

increased from 2020-21 to 2021-22. The percentages of teachers and District Administrators/Superintendents remained fairly consistent.

Table 5: Role Comparisons Over Two Years*

ROLE	PERCENT OF 2020-21 REGIS-TRANTS	PERCENT OF 2021-22 REGISTRANTS
Principals	20%	26%
Teachers	19%	18%
Associate/assistant principals	10%	13%
Coaches	7%	10%
District directors	7%	14%
District Administrators/superintendents	6%	6%

*counselors/pupil services and others were not included in the 2020-21 report

Figure 1 displays the geographic representation of participants by CESA. Similar to last year's findings, CESAs 2, 1, 5, and 9 had the largest number of participants. CESAs 11, 12, and 3, which include some of the most rural communities in Wisconsin, had the smallest number of participants. In attempt to address the additional hurdles rural and remote schools and districts face when considering attending a learning event, AWSA piloted a program to offer additional reimbursement for participants who travel more than 100 miles round trip to attend an academy. The reimbursement covered mileage and lodging costs up to \$100 per night.

WFEA has also engaged with Wisconsin's five large urban districts to build partnerships and encourage academy attendance. This effort resulted in Green Bay participating in SAIL and Kenosha sending its new principals to NBAA. In support of this work, AWSA hired a Director of Urban Leadership in 2021-22. One of the Director's tasks is to assess the 2021-22 academies from an urban district lens and develop a plan to increase support of and alignment with urban leaders' needs. In addition, starting in 2022-23, affinity groups for school leaders of color will be offered.

Figure 2: Participants by CESA

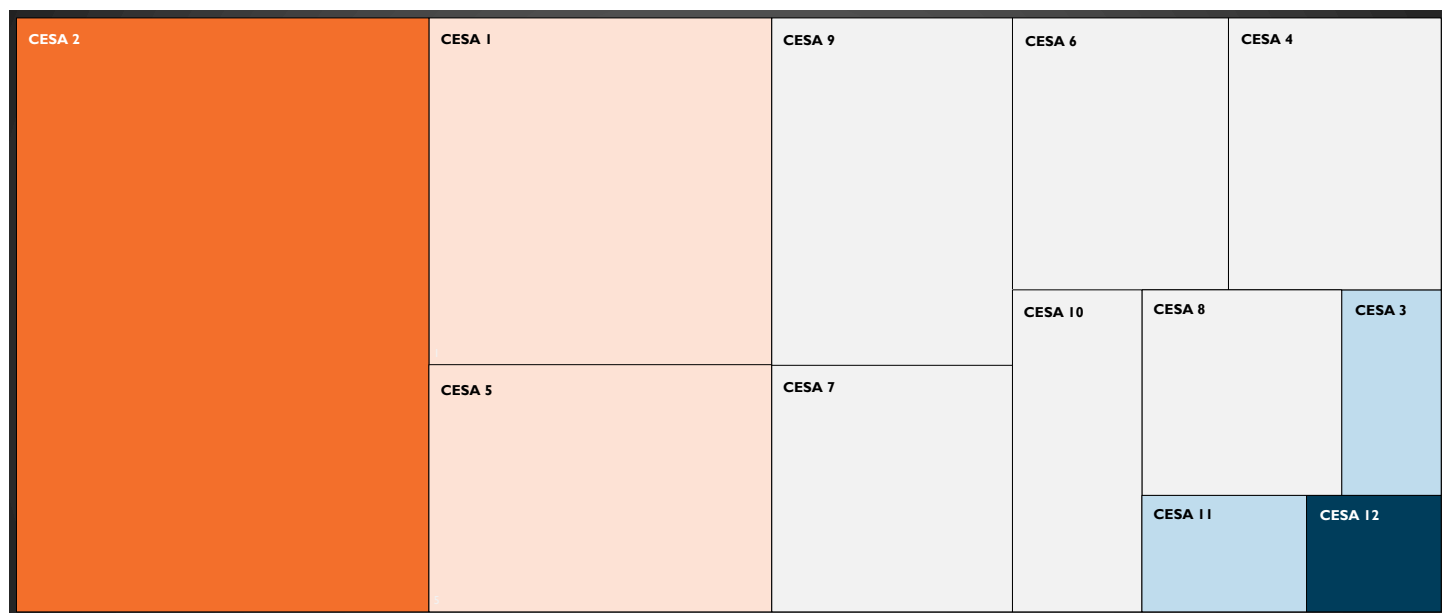


Table 6: Which of the Following Factors Motivated You to Select this Particular Academy?

Select all that apply, N=470

MOTIVATION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
To support district priorities	306	65%
To support my professional learning goals	271	58%
To support school priorities	271	58%
The academy was recommended to me by a colleague	125	27%
To improve on areas identified during prior evaluation discussions within my district's Educator Effectiveness process	54	11%
Other	32	7%

In the survey, participants were asked to share factors that motivated them to attend their selected academy (Table 6). Five motivation options were provided and participants were instructed to select all that applied. An "other" option was also provided. As shown, the top three motivations were to support district priorities, to support my professional learning goals, and to support school priorities.

Themes from the "other" responses included:

- Network/collaboration opportunity
- Required by district or grant
- Interested in the topic
- Invited or encouraged

Table 7: Survey Responses About Academy Support of Motivation to Attend

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DOES NOT APPLY BASED ON MY POSITION
The Academy supported my district's priorities. (n=451)	330 (73%)	111 (25%)	7 (2%)	3 (1%)	-
The Academy met my professional learning goals. (n=449)	332 (74%)	94 (21%)	18 (4%)	5 (1%)	-
The Academy supported my school's priorities. (n=453)	312 (69%)	79 (17%)	3 (1%)	2 (<1%)	57 (13%)

Participants of DPI's Research to Practice Inclusive Communities (RPIC) grant are required to participate in several of the academies, including LEA and IC. In addition, DPI's Title I and Special Education teams encourage identified districts and schools to participate in the SAIL academy to help with their continuous improvement activities.

In a follow-up question, participants were asked to share if the academy supported certain motivations for attending (Table 7). The majority of participants "strongly agreed" that the academy supported each of the motivations presented.

Academy Learning Structure

Each year academies are revised and refined by the previous year's participant feedback and facilitator experience. The move to offer all academies online in 2020-21 was particularly impactful on the design of the 2021-22 academies. Academy planners reported that they were working to find the balance between in-person and online sessions to best engage participants and capture meaningful learning. Some of the related changes included:

- The Supporting Principal Excellence and the Impactful Coaching: Advancing Your Skills academies each offered an in-person and an online option.
- The NBAA academy added online webinars between each of the in-person sessions.
- The FYS academy remained primarily online so that participants could meet more frequently without having to leave their districts (5 in-person sessions and 17 virtual sessions)
- The LEA academy opted to remain all virtual so that it could be more accessible to participants across the state.
- The CSMH academy was required to be virtual for all of the sessions except the final session because the academy is facilitated by DPI staff who were unable to travel.
- The SAIL academy had several teams ask to repeat a year of the academy as a result of many COVID-related distractions during 2020-21.

Resources were also modified and added as a result of lessons learned in 2020-21. For example, recorded academy sessions were provided to participants for those who missed a session or for purposes of reviewing content. One of the most substantial resources provided to participants was coaching, which was offered to participants at no additional charge with several academies (NBAA, BEL, SAIL, CSMH, and FYS). As a result of COVID-19, virtual coaching and in-person coaching sessions were made available in hopes of better addressing participant availability. Additionally, to encourage coaching, BEL participants were asked to sign up for a coaching session before the end of each training session. SAIL and CSMH provided team-based coaching, and coaches regularly checked in with their teams.

An additional change was the restructuring of the LEA and CSMH academies to focus on a systems-level approach to improvement work. The impetus for the change was to enhance communication between leaders and support aligned work.

Finally, as noted above, AWSA has broadened academy facilitation by hiring a Director of Urban Leadership. The Director supported the facilitation of current academies and will facilitate a new academy for the 2022-23 series, Leading Literacy Academy, and will create and lead an affinity group for leaders of color.

Participant Perceptions of Academies

Survey respondents were asked to reflect on their participation in academies and the applicability of the new knowledge and skills. As shown in Table 8, the majority of respondents found the academy they attended to be engaging, with an appropriate balance of facilitation and hands-on application. In addition, participants reported that the skills, knowledge, and strategies they learned were useful, and they felt confident they could apply them in their own context. Interestingly, although the academies do not heavily reference the state professional leadership standards, nearly 80 percent of the respondents at least somewhat agreed that the academies helped make connections between the standards and their professional learning, with 50 percent responding “strongly agree.”

Table 8: Survey Responses About Relevance and Impact of Training Experience

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DOES NOT APPLY BASED ON MY POSITION
The Academy goals were clear to me. (n=450)	365 (81%)	71 (16%)	10 (2%)	4 (1%)	-
The Academy was engaging. (n=447)	333 (74%)	93 (21%)	16 (4%)	5 (1%)	-
There was an appropriate balance between facilitation and practical (n=453)	344 (76%)	84 (19%)	16 (4%)	6 (1%)	-
There was an appropriate balance between facilitation and practical application for me to reach expected learning outcomes. (n=450)	339 (75%)	88 (20%)	20 (4%)	3 (1%)	-
I feel confident that I can apply learning from the Academy I attended within my context. (n=443)	339 (77%)	90 (20%)	10 (2%)	4 (1%)	-
Skills I learned in the Academy help with our local continuous improvement efforts. (n=447)	342 (77%)	96 (21%)	6 (1%)	3 (1%)	-
The Academy helped me make connections to the professional leadership standards applied by our district for principal evaluation and support (i.e., the Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership or CESA 6 EP/School Administrator Performance Evaluation System). (n=451)	225 (50%)	133 (29%)	21 (5%)	2	70 (15%)

Several key priorities have been identified in the state of Wisconsin by education leaders, researchers, and DPI. Table 9 highlights four of those areas: principal professional growth; educational equity; data use and root cause analysis; and mental health. As presented in the table, the majority of respondents agreed that the academy they attended supported their learning in the topic area and Respondents were asked if they would recommend the academy to others.

Table 9: Participant Learning and DPI Priority Areas

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DOES NOT APPLY BASED ON MY POSITION
The Academy helped me make connections between the content and my goals as part of our local Educator Effectiveness process. (n=452)	207 (46%)	154 (34%)	20 (4%)	4 (1%)	67 (15%)
The Academy helped me develop strategies to address educational equity in my context. (n=450)	259 (58%)	159 (35%)	28 (6%)	4 (1%)	-
The Academy helped me learn about how the DPI Wisconsin Information System for Education (WISE) online tools can support my leadership practice. (n=448)	91 (20%)	165 (37%)	110 (25%)	53 (12%)	29 (6%)
The Academy helped me to develop strategies to address mental health issues in my context. (n=443)	144 (33%)	174 (39%)	92 (21%)	33 (7%)	-

Respondents were asked if they would recommend the academy to others. Responses to this question continue to be positive, with 96 percent stating they would recommend and 4 percent stating they would not recommend.

Table 10: Would You Recommend This Academy to Others?

N=429

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
Yes	411	96%
No	18	4%

Of the 429 individuals who responded to this question, 249 shared why they would or would not recommend the academy, and 235 respondents offered additional comments to explain why they would recommend the academy to others. The most frequently mentioned reasons are expanded upon below:

- Material covered in the academy was timely and applicable (n=56)
 - “I think the Academy provided a lot of high-quality instruction and concrete, applicable learning that new administrators can immediately utilize.”
 - “This is practical, hands-on and you leave with skills you can begin to practice and apply the next day.”
 - The academy provided the opportunity for participants to network and connect with others (n=56)
 - “It was helpful to hear from professionals who have lived this and learn from their experiences. It is also helpful to have common time to get together with other professionals experiencing the same challenges to brainstorm and support each other.”
 - “It also allowed me to build some strong relationships with a few other new superintendents in the area. I’ve learned that without building this network of support from other superintendents, the position could be a very lonely and stressful place. We lean on each other for support and guidance. The Academy pushed us to get off to the right start.”
 - The facilitators provided great insight and leadership (n=41)
 - “The depth of knowledge and expertise provided by each and every presenter was beneficial in my new role as superintendent.”
 - “The presenter was clear, organized and passionate in her delivery. She was authentic and engaging. I connected to her style and enthusiasm as well as the content.”
 - The academy provided valuable resources and tools (n=28)
 - “Great professional resources and information. Varied activities. Lots of time to work and apply new knowledge with the team with roadmap for guidance.”
 - “The academy provided us with the necessary resources and the practice time we needed to successfully learn and apply the material.”
 - The academy helped participants gain important knowledge (n=26)
 - “I feel it has supported my ability to develop a strong foundation focused on the areas that have the most impact on our student needs.”
 - “The clear, concise learning provided to team members about change processes and high leverage change facilitation are invaluable.”
 - The academy provided support to administrators in new roles (n=20)
 - “This academy was very supportive of my work as a first-year administrator. The pacing of the sessions and content aligned with my professional schedule within my first year. The presenters did an excellent job of sharing new information, their experiences, and on guiding important information. I highly recommend this Academy to all first-year leaders within a school district.”
 - “I firmly believe that every first-year superintendent should participate in this Academy. I cannot fathom navigating my first year without the support and guidance I’ve received from the Academy! They make you feel that you are not alone in this position and the mentors are drawing upon years of experience.”
- Other emerging themes for why participants would recommend the academy to others include the opportunity for team building (n=19); the academy structure (n=19); the opportunity for professional growth (n=18); the engaging content (n=18); the opportunity for reflection (n=11); and mentoring and coaching opportunities (n=7).

Fourteen respondents who said they would not recommend this academy to others offered additional comments to explain why. Emerging themes, including representative quotes, from the 14 additional comments include:

- Academy content and/or delivery that did not meet expectations (n=6)
 - “I don’t feel that I learned much new information regarding data inquiry or investigation. The sessions were far too long, and could have all been hosted virtually. The DIJ is not a realistic tool to use.”
 - “The facilitators did not always seem to be prepared and were not engaging.”
 - “The academy felt out of touch with the realities that districts and educators are facing on a daily basis. It is easy to observe a classroom teacher and set a goal for something that they could do differently to improve. However, it’s also easy to completely miss the emotional, behavioral and academic load that the teacher is carrying just to maintain order within their classrooms.”
- Academy content that was mismatched to where groups/individuals currently are (n=4)
 - “I think you should have something specifically for groups new to this work. It should not be predicated on having attended the July session or working on this for years. You need something specifically for new groups.”
 - “I felt that this academy was geared towards large districts with an immense amount of resources. Coming from a small school district with limited resources and in the beginning of putting systems in place, this did not meet our needs.”
- Needing to have a deeper understanding of academy goals and purposes before attending (n=2)

Of this group of participants who said that they would not recommend their academy, the majority attended either the LEA or CSMH academies, with a few attending SAIL or DLA.

Impact on Professional Practice

Survey respondents were asked to describe how they are applying the learning from the academy in their own context (n=310). The two predominant responses are highlighted below with quotes that illustrate the theme:

- Coaching (n=80): use of coaching strategies and techniques, implementing coaching conversations, and alignment of practices with Educator Effectiveness
 - “Development of our EE processes for better instructional coaching and improved best practices. Crucial Conversation coaching stems and PD.”
 - “The work around using the CEIQ [Claim, Evidence, Impact statement, Question] when giving feedback. We also have adjusted our observation form to meet the needs of the CEIQ.”
 - “One of my personal professional goals was to develop a system that provided more coaching support to teachers and more effective feedback. This academy supported that beyond my expectations. The information, resources, application and practice was so beneficial. I wish this would have been part of my principal prep program as well as part of the required EE training.”
 - “It is improving the coaching conversations that I am having with my staff and also in the way we talk about kids and families.”
- Goals (n=72): development and implementation of 100-day plans, goal development, alignment of school improvement plans and strategic plans
 - “The SAIL Academy help my school team prioritize goals as well as limit goals. This has helped our school stay focused in our mission and vision over the last two years. I believe that when we have been able to stay focused on just a couple of goals, we have been able to have more coherence as a staff as well as to explore and learn at deeper levels related to our goals.”

- “Our SAIL plan is connected with our School Improvement Plan and Educator Effectiveness priorities.”
- “Our cycles of improvements allow our school to plan alongside of our team who attended the PLC Academy and we are able to bring all of our work together to maximize collaborative teams, EE, and achievement of our school goals.”
- “We are setting our 22-23 goals based on the learning and work that we did at the academy.”

Three less dominant themes that emerged from this question include:

- Equity (n=26): Addressing equity
 - “I better understand the foundational shift that needs to occur in public education in order to achieve equitable outcomes for the students in my district. Also, we will be conducting an equity audit as a district this year and so learning more about what that means is very helpful!”
 - “My school has implemented the weekly Co-Planning meetings as a first step.”
- PLCs (n=17): supporting or creating PLCs
 - “We are engaging in PLC activities within each of our content areas.”
 - “The PLC academy brought the basics in to light and reminded me of those initial pieces that need to be in place before strong and effective collaboration can take place.”
- Mental health (n=14): Supporting student and staff mental health
 - “Developing a school-wide MTSS for SEL/ Mental Health”
 - “We were able to outline our MH referral pathway as a district. We also created resource maps at each level to determine what supports we have and where gaps may be present.”

Anticipated Challenges

When asked “what challenges do you anticipate in applying the learning from the academy,” the most frequently reported challenge, was “time.” Many of the participants who reported time as a challenge shared additional context to this response. For example, some shared that they needed more time for reflection; to further assess and develop their plan or goal; to practice the skill; to share and develop the knowledge of their peers; or simply to have enough time in their day to implement what they learned. The quotes below help to illustrate these sentiments:

- “We were not able to address all components of the WI MH Framework. We need to continue to dedicate time and effort to this as a district.”
- “Time. So much to do and not enough time to do it.”
- “Time to develop a quality plan for engaging all staff in the learning.”
- “Time to be reflective and revisit the materials down the road, but I am hopeful to make that happen.”
- “Time for guided practice & application.”
- “Developing high quality coaching strategies takes time.”
- “The biggest challenge is making the time in order to make it meaningful.”
- “Most of the challenges I see are finding the time in my day to implement many of the new strategies that I learned.”

Two other prominent challenges that were shared by respondents included 1) sharing knowledge, developing understanding and buy-in; and 2) staying focused on the work. Below are participant quotes related to each of these themes:

Sharing knowledge, developing understanding and buy-in:

- “The biggest challenge is getting some buy in from those who were not there and didn’t get the full effect of the academy.”
- “Teaching or convincing my local team or staff to adhere to a process vs. past practices that have/haven’t proved successful with results.”
- “Some of the only challenges I anticipate in applying the learning from the Academy have to do with helping my fellow administrators and teaching colleagues understand some of the concepts I learned, e.g., CEIQ.”
- “Sharing and getting buy-in from others since I attended as an individual and not with a team.”
- “Not all members of our team participated in the learning opportunities, which may hinder our progress. We naturally have different skill levels and knowledge of effective PLC practices and we are not unified as a district in our understanding, philosophies or approaches.”
- “Creating the same experiences for my small team, as they were not training with me.”

Staying focused on the work:

- “The biggest challenges are keeping instructional leadership at the forefront of everything and not getting overwhelmed by managerial tasks (lack of subs, covering classrooms, discipline issues, etc.) that can take away from focusing on instruction.”
- “Remaining focused on the work until it becomes second nature. Helping/coaching colleagues who attended to do the same.”
- “Keeping this at the forefront and implementing continuously.”

- “Continuing to focus on application of new skills rather than falling back into comfortable patterns.”
- “Continue to stick to it. There are so many things that come up that it is hard to sometimes remain rigid in my schedule with my big rocks and making sure my high priority items are being met every day.”

Additional Comments From Survey Respondents

Sixty-two survey respondents provided additional comments about their experience with the Academy. Of these responses, 11 included suggestions for improvement. Prevalent themes from these responses include:

- Preference of in-person versus a virtual format
 - “In my opinion, these meetings NEED to be in person. I would have learned a lot if we were together in person. This requires me to be off campus, thus not getting pulled away for other things happening across the district. I am hoping to watch the recorded sessions this summer to gain knowledge but this certainly does not lead to the same level of engagement or knowledge acquisition.”
- Suggestions to offer additional, specific supports
 - “Something to consider is a little more support for the smaller districts that have the superintendent doing most of the things that larger districts have support for. Good overall.”
- Comments on the material presented, that may be redundant or at the wrong level or amount
 - “As someone who has attended various AWSA offerings, some learning felt redundant and hard to justify the time away from my building”
 - “I started the Impactful Coaching academy, but found that as a new building administrator, this was more information than I could take in at the present time.”

The other 51 additional comments were largely positive and included general thanks for what the academy offered; appreciation for the facilitators and presenters' expertise; thanks for the opportunities to network; and gratitude for the support provided, especially for those in new positions. Related comments include:

- "The facilitators, Joe and Tammy, have been and continue to create a legacy that for many, many years will be immeasurable regarding positive impact. How they challenge and grow and support so many leaders across the state is second to none. Clearly, they are experts with a deep passion for influencing those that influence thousands and thousands of others. WI professional educators are extremely fortunate."
- "The presenters' materials were relevant, thought-provoking, and important."
- "I have gained new connections that I hope will last for the remainder of my career!"
- "Thank you for offering relevant professional learning opportunities for Wisconsin administrators!"
- "Thank you to AWSA for providing this excellent opportunity for new administrators in Wisconsin to gain knowledge and feel more competent in challenging field."

Section 3

Summary and Questions to Consider

Summary and Questions to Consider

Academy planners continue to work to encourage participation and provide support to both rural and urban districts. This was demonstrated by the pilot program for rural district travel reimbursement, the purposeful outreach to urban districts, and the hiring of the Director of Urban Leadership.

Question to consider: How can academy facilitators and, where appropriate, academy coaches, tailor resources to address the specific and unique needs of rural and urban districts?

AWSA has developed a progression of career-based academies. Outside of those staged academies, as reported by participants and facilitators, certain skills and knowledge (e.g., data analysis or coaching skills) may be necessary prior to participating in particular academies (e.g., SAIL or PLC).

Question to consider: How can academy facilitators map out additional academy progressions or provide guidance to registrants about how to successfully navigate the professional learning offerings?

Academy planners co-facilitate and partner with DPI on two academies, CSMH and DLA, as well as co-facilitate the LEA academy with ICS Equity. Specific DPI teams also encourage participation in several of the academies.

Question to consider: How can partnerships with DPI and other professional organizations be expanded to align resources provided to school and district leaders in order to present a more unified and comprehensive improvement process?

Section 4

Appendices

Appendix A: New Building Administrator Academy Case Study

This case study of the New Building Administrator Academy (NBAA) is part of the overall evaluation of the Wisconsin Foundation for Educational Administration (WFEA) leadership professional learning series that is supported with Title II funding. The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) conducted the case in the Spring of 2022. The WFEA professional learning series is developed and facilitated by the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA) and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (WASDA).

Recent research re-affirms the importance of principal leadership and highlights key aspects of principal development that are associated with principal, educator, and student outcomes¹. Darling-Hammond and colleagues (2022) found that principal professional learning opportunities focused on leading instruction, managing change, developing people, and shaping school culture, and addressing diverse learner needs, has increased over time. However, the combination of such professional development with job-embedded learning and ongoing mentoring or coaching is not yet common. Principal turnover and retention represent another area of concern for leadership development and stability. According to a 20-year trend analysis, about 20% of Wisconsin principals move or leave their current school every year and approximately 30% of assistant/associate principals move or leave annually.² It is possible that, along with the increased demands on school leaders, the stress of managing schools during the Covid-19 pandemic may exacerbate principal turnover.

The NBAA provides support to new building leaders that may represent the primary induction opportunity available in some districts and augments induction activities for school administrators in many other districts. As such, the academy has the potential to create key foundational supports for new school administrators. WEC conducted this case study to highlight the support provided and participant experiences with the learning opportunity in order to inform AWSA and others interested in future school leadership development.

This case study builds on four years of observations, interviews, and survey data. Two main evaluation questions center the study:

1. How does New Building Administrator Academy support new building leaders (principals and assistant or associate principals)?
2. What are the perceived impacts on leadership practices from attending the NBA academy?

¹ Darling-Hammond, L, Wechsler, M.E., Levin, S., Leung-Gagne, M., & Tozer, S. (2002). Developing effective principals: What kind of learning matters? [report]. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/641.201>

² Carl, B., & Sim, G. (in draft). Labor force participation typologies and outcomes among Wisconsin public school principals, 1999-00 to 2020-21. [report] Region 10 Comprehensive Center for Wisconsin-Minnesota.

To address the evaluation questions, WEC conducted interviews with a small sample of participants and their supervisors (please see Appendix A for interview protocols), observed an NBAA session, and administered a survey to all of the 2021-22 participants. Eighty-nine participants registered for the academy. The registration list we received from AWSA and used for the survey included 82 participants. Of the 82 individuals sent the survey, 42 returned them completed, representing a 51% response rate.

This report first presents an overview of the NBAA, then findings from current participants about their experiences and how they utilized the learning. The report concludes with reflection questions for academy planners, facilitators and others seeking to support new principal leadership.

Overview of the New Building Administrator Academy

The NBAA's overall purpose is "to provide administrators who are new (or new to their school) with the skills, resources, and community of peers necessary to cultivate culture, assess systems, and understand the leadership necessary for the unique context of their learning organization" (NBAA presentation, August 2021, slide 72). It is designed for individuals who are in their first year as a principal or assistant/associate principal.

The academy provides new building leaders with an opportunity to learn about and apply tools and resources that help them set priorities and maintain focus upon them; develop an entry plan and identify ways to get to know their school culture/climate; practice instructional feedback; engage in practical experiences in a neutral setting; and network with colleagues from different districts and regions to build a sense of community and learn from peers. External, trained coaches are available to all participants if they choose to engage with one.

Working with program facilitators, we developed a logic model (see Appendix B) to articulate the program elements and how they are expected to meet the academies' objectives. The NBAA includes the following knowledge and practice objectives, with references to relevant standards of the national Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL):³

Knowledge Objectives

1. Gain practical knowledge in areas important to new leaders, including shaping school culture, supervising Educator Effectiveness, overseeing special education, managing budget and operations, and administering handbooks. (PSEL 5a, PSEL 5d)
2. Examine the value of a monthly checklist detailing specific administrative responsibilities through the course of a school year and demonstrate means for customizing this to the demands of the local context. (PSEL 9a, PSEL 9h)
3. Explore the potential applications and benefits of select change management and leadership tools upon local practice. (PSEL 10i, PSEL 7a)
4. Understand how to initiate/deepen access to a professional network, connecting with the people and resources that provide a growth and support system for an administrative career. (PSEL 6i, PSEL 2a)

Practice Objectives

Participants, through team-based products, will meet two or more of the following key practice outcomes:

1. Construct an entry plan that matches components of leadership to the unique contextual needs of the organization. (PSEL 8f, PSEL 9j)
2. Develop a high-impact weekly calendar that focuses on key year-one goals and prioritized efforts that emphasize proactive rather than reactive leadership. (PSEL 10, PSEL 9c)
3. Apply questioning techniques and coaching strategies that lead to teacher reflection on practice and impact. (PSEL 6e, PSEL 6f)

³ Available at: <https://ccsso.org/resource-library/professional-standards-educational-leaders>

Relevant WI School Leadership Standards

As referenced above, the knowledge and practice objectives include references to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), which represent national school leadership standards. The relevant WI leadership standards from the Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership (WFPL) and the standards adopted by CESA 6 for districts using their evaluation model, the School Administrator Performance Evaluation System are not referenced. For WFPL, these include: 1.2.1 Vision and Mission; 1.1.3 Performance Evaluation and Feedback; 2.1.2 Time Management and Priority Setting, 2.1.3 Professional Learning; and, 2.2.3 Change Management and Shared Commitment. The SAPES standards include 1. Leading for Student Learning; and, 6. Professionalism.

Learning Structure, Resources and Expectations

There were three in-person, day-long, sessions held in Pewaukee (August), Wausau (November), and Sun Prairie (April). Three webinars were conducted in September, October, and January. The overarching academy objectives guide each session and are referenced at the start of the session and at other points during the in-person days.

The in-person sessions included a mix of direct instruction, hands-on activities, opportunities for one-on-one and small group discussions, role-play and large group reporting out/discussions. Each session included a slide deck with links to additional tools and readings. Sessions referenced relevant practitioner-oriented resources as well as research derived publications (e.g., by John Hattie, Jon Saphier). The academy materials are available during the session year and remain available for reference in subsequent years.

Application activities included use of role play with vignettes and case studies. To promote participant engagement and broaden network connections, each in-person session included setting “appointments” with peers with whom they haven’t interacted. This was through “1-6 O’clock meetings.” These meetings allowed time to stretch and move, practice new skills, and meet new people. Participants were encouraged to use the resources in their context.

Topics covered during in-person and virtual sessions include:

- Developing an entry plan through engagement with supervisor, self-reflection on leadership competencies using School Leadership Paradigm, and gauging school context and culture
- Developing a high-impact calendar
- Special education leadership
- School budgeting
- Handbook administration and employee discipline
- Coaching conversations and strategies to support Educator Effectiveness, including effective feedback
- Establishing professional networks
- Self-care, resilience, compassion

The academy was facilitated by Joe Schroeder, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director, and Tammy Gibbons, Director of Professional Learning. AWSA Director of Urban Leadership, Yaribel Rodriquez, also attended the academy and provided support during activities, break out discussions, and make-up opportunities. In the past, three school leaders supported the role-alike breakout discussions. This year, two were unable to attend the sessions. One of the two changed jobs and was no longer a principal; the other withdrew due to constraints in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The third experienced principal was able to attend and, along with Joe, Tammy and Yaribel, facilitated the afternoon school-level discussions.

All NBAA participants have the option of engaging with an external coach. Coaches are current or retired school or district leaders who regularly meet with the new school administrators to provide individualized coaching support. Forty-eight participants took advantage of the coaching opportunity.

Participants are expected to practice by using the tools (i.e., entry plan, high impact calendar, coaching strategies) and report on their progress. The plans were referenced during subsequent sessions and were the focus of self-assessments during the last session. Participants must attend the sessions and complete the activities if they want to be eligible for the tuition subsidy of up to 75% of attendance cost, which is \$435 for AWSA members and \$585 for non-members.

Findings

Participation and Attendance

On the academy survey, participants (n=42) were asked how they learned about the academy. 45% of respondents said they learned about it through supervisor recommendation; 36% learned about it from the AWSA Professional Learning Catalog; 14% learned about it through colleague recommendation; and 5% learned about it through other methods. Of the two participants who learned about it through other methods, one reported that they had “previous experience with AWSA” and the other participant “searched online.”

Survey respondents were also asked to identify from a list of options what motivated them to attend the academy; they were allowed to select all that applied. As shown in Table I, the top motivation to attend the academy was to support professional learning goals, followed by supporting school (57%) and district (55%) priorities and due to recommendations (40%) from colleagues. The lowest indicated motivating aspect (14%) was to improve on areas identified during prior evaluation discussions, which makes sense because most new principals had not yet had an evaluation discussion with their supervisor.

Table I: Participant Motivation

MOTIVATION	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS (N=42)
To support my professional learning goals	83%
To support school priorities	57%
To support district priorities	55%
The academy was recommended by a colleague	40%
To improve on areas identified during prior evaluation discussions within my district's Educator Effectiveness process	14%

One survey respondent made an additional comment about their motivation to participate in the academy: “To network and develop connections with other new administrators.”

Findings from interviews conducted with five NBAA participants and four of their supervisors echo the survey results. All five participants reported that they attended the academy, at least in part, because their supervisor recommended it or signed them up for it. One participant had previous positive experiences with AWSA; another was motivated to “make connections with other new administrators;” and a third explained that they attended because their district supervisor recommended all three elementary principals attend “to create some common knowledge and get some collaboration time amongst us.” Supervisors also shared that they encouraged participants to attend because the supervisors themselves had benefited from mentors and networking with other principals early in their careers. As one supervisor explained,

I feel like networking is huge at the administrative level because we don't have a lot of colleagues [in the same role]. Each of us have a unique setting and role in that... finding people who you can relate to that have your same leadership responsibilities and being able to have that collaboration and share ideas or share your moments of frustration, those sorts of things. I think that's super valuable to help you keep perspective.

The survey included an item about attendance at the academy sessions. Of the 42 survey respondents, 81% said they were able to attend all the sessions. The survey did not differentiate between virtual (webinar) and in-person session attendance. Interview participants reported attending varying numbers of in-person and virtual sessions. Some reported challenges attending in-person events when their other principal was also out of the building and one participant reported difficulty participating in the virtual sessions when they were still in the school building because they would be “called out for certain situations that would come up.” Importantly, one participant reported they were unable to attend one in-person session, but fortunately, another principal in their district was able to attend:

...the middle school principal went to the one I missed, and she always brings me back material and tells me what was discussed or talked about, or a good session or topic that they brought up. And so, we always talked about the sessions afterwards, and we collaborate, so anything new that she learned or new strategies, she always talked to me about it.

Supporting Participants' Goals

In the interviews and on the survey, participants were asked questions about whether and how the academy supports their individual priorities and goals. On the survey, 86% strongly agreed and 14% somewhat agreed with the statement, “The academy met my professional learning goals.” Table 2 below contains survey results regarding participants’ overall experience.

Table 2: Participant Experience

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The academy supported my district’s priorities.	79%	21%	0	0
The academy supported my school's priorities.	86%	14%	0	0
The academy met my professional learning goals.	86%	14%	0	0
The academy goals were clear to me.	98%	2%	0	0
The academy was engaging.	90%	10%	0	0
There was an appropriate balance between facilitation and practical application for me to reach expected learning outcomes.	88%	12%	0	0

Interviewed participants reported a variety of individual professional goals going into their first year in their role. Four participants reported focusing on building relationships and understanding the school culture, and one said they wanted to “focus on teaching and learning and being involved in that part of being a leader.” Participants shared several key pieces from the academy that helped support their goals, including:

- 100-day planning
- A session on conducting evaluations and providing feedback to teachers
- Crucial conversations practice
- Having a coach to help identify priorities
- “Big rocks” scheduling

Several participants mentioned the “time management” piece as the most valuable part of the academy in supporting their goals.

Applying the Learning

Interview participants shared a variety of ways they have incorporated the academy learning into their work, including focusing on self-care; better understanding Educator Effectiveness and coaching; and implementing rapid cycle feedback, both verbally and written.

Interview participants’ supervisors were also asked to provide examples of how the academy has affected their supervisee’s leadership. Three supervisors provided specific examples:

- “I’ve seen growth in confidence, and also the ability to delegate and share leadership within their team structures in the building with confidence. And then, also, I’ve seen them not being afraid to have difficult or challenging conversations.”
- “One of the things that’s really important for [him] is to be able to see outside our four walls. He’s been a teacher in this district for 15 years and it’s all been under my leadership as principal, so now understanding from a different perspective (moving from teacher to administrator) ... that’s been the most helpful.”

- “One area I’ve seen her grow is how to handle difficult conversations with parents and kids, and with her, I think the biggest thing for building leaders is how to differentiate strategic thinking with more operational thinking. How to think three moves ahead, down the road.”

Survey statements related to participants’ learning application and strategies are located in Table 3. Participants most strongly agreed (86%) with the statement “The academy provided useful leadership strategies for me to implement in my context.” A large number (62%) strongly agreed that the academy helped them with strategies to address equity and somewhat less (41%) strongly agreed that helped them address mental health issues. Other responses were also positive, with a large number strongly agreeing that the academy helped them make connections to the professional standards applied in their context, and connections to their local Educator Effectiveness process (71%). The lowest response (33%) related to connections with the Wisconsin Information System for Education (WISE).

Table 3: Strategies

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The academy provided useful leadership strategies for me to implement in my context.	86%	12%	2%	0
The academy helped me develop strategies to address educational equity in my context.	62%	31%	7%	0
The academy helped me to address mental health issues in my context.	41%	43%	14%	2%
The Academy helped me make connections to the professional leadership standards applied by our district for principal evaluation and support (i.e., the Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership or CESA 6 EP/School Administrator Performance Evaluation System).	74%	24%	2%	0
The Academy helped me make connections between the content and my goals as part of our local Educator Effectiveness process.	71%	27%	2%	0
The Academy helped me learn about how the DPI Wisconsin Information System for Education (WISE) online tools can support my leadership practice.	33%	36%	19%	12%

Survey respondents were also asked to describe how they are applying the learning from the Academy in their contexts. Frequently mentioned applications include:

- Implementing instructional coaching
- Working to provide meaningful and effective feedback to teachers and staff, including using the CEIQ model
- Using impactful scheduling and calendar techniques, including big rocks scheduling, to help prioritize and focus
- Using EE information to help with observations and communication
- Using time management strategies
- Implementing stress relief and self-care strategies
- Setting goals for next year
- Making the most of networking connections

Further, interview participants were asked how they plan to apply learning from the NBAA in their professional practice next year. All participants reported they would continue to use learning from the NBAA next year, specifically in the areas of establishing priorities and scheduling; strengthening Educator Effectiveness and coaching; and improving feedback and offering support. Regarding the usefulness of the NBAA material moving forward, one participant said, “Every session, I didn’t think any of it was abstract. Everything they talked about, I could sit there and see how it was applicable.” Table 4 includes survey responses to questions about learning application.

Table 4: Application

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I feel confident that I can apply learning from the academy within my context.	86%	12%	2%	0
Skills I learned in the academy will help with our local continuous improvement efforts.	79%	21%	0	0

Helpful Elements

Interview participants were asked what academy element have been the most helpful to them. Four of five respondents reported that the community they built with other participants as well as the opportunity to share experiences and learn from others was the most valuable part of the academy; the fifth participant reported that the “big rocks scheduling” was the most helpful part of the academy. Related comments include:

- “[Working in small groups] was most helpful because it was another opportunity to really connect with others who are doing the work, to realize that you’re not alone in the situations you are facing. There are solutions that people have used that worked... There are people there to support what you’re doing.”
- “Last in-person session, we got a chance to connect with others who have similar job titles to ours to talk about what’s going well, what are some struggles along the way.”
- “I think going to the sessions and hearing principals from all across the state expressing some of the same concerns and hearing about their strategies [was the most helpful element]. You know that every day they’re walking the same walk that you are walking.”
- “I think the in-person networking and... hearing other people’s stories and that we are all in it together, and that people take different roles in their first year. I think people were really honest. You can read a book and it sounds easy, but it’s not the same. People were able to be vulnerable and up front with their learning and growing.”

Specifically, one participant suggested that the academy provide more time for differentiation between principals and assistant/associate principals: “The last in-person session, they offered one hour of just AP time. That was the most valuable time I think of the whole thing... being able to talk to colleagues about issues that we’re dealing with. [The principal and AP roles are] just different.”

One participant’s supervisor additionally suggested that the academy dedicate increased thought towards the difference between principals and assistant/associate principals:

We’ve talked about the uniqueness of an assistant principal... what is the support for becoming an assistant principal? I would love to have something from AWSA about how to manage having an AP; how to divide responsibilities; what should remain as principal; what should be whose responsibility... there’s a different dynamic there than just when you’re the building principal.

Also, regarding helpful aspects of the academy, one interview participant reported that it would be helpful for there to be representation from more large districts at the academy, although they acknowledged AWSA doesn’t necessarily have control over who attends:

... there were a lot of smaller districts there and smaller districts have a lot of different problems than larger districts, so I was hoping to see more big district schools (like Madison, Waukesha, Green Bay, Milwaukee) and those districts weren’t there. [My district] is in the middle... we have seven buildings. But some of these schools (from smaller districts) don’t have any assistant principals [making it difficult to relate].

Coaching

Three of five interview participants utilized the coaching offered by the academy. Of the two participants who did not utilize coaching, one said they had previously been a building administrator in a different state, but still fit the category of new administrator in WI, so they felt they did not need the coaching. The other participant said they did not utilize coaching “for no real reason.” The participants who did utilize coaching reported meeting with their coach at least monthly, virtually or in-person; they also reported that their coaches were available on an as-needed basis.

One participant shared that they focused with their coach on “providing some coaching ideas on things she’s seen work;” “difficult conversations with staff members and how to work through those;” and Educator Effectiveness. This participant shared that getting to work closely with someone who does “such an amazing job” but also has “balance in her life” has been “really impactful.” Another participant reported that they “don’t think anything was not touched on” with their coach, including preparing for board meeting presentations; (re)building relationships with staff members; curriculum; supervision; and how to establish yourself as a first-year principal.

All participants who worked with a coach reported positive benefits. One participant shared, “I think it was really nice to have that time that I knew I could get questions answered and it was somebody outside of my district so if I was having struggles, I could share those.”

Professional Learning Network

Interview participants reported appreciating the professional learning network (PLN) they developed with other NBAA attendees, although most reported not utilizing the PLN outside of sessions as much as they could. Those who shared stories of connecting with others at the academy reported connections due to sharing similar roles and/or sharing similar challenges. Participants also reported that they would feel comfortable using the NBAA PLN in the future as questions or issues arise, as one participant shared, “I haven’t had to reach out yet [to other participants], but at least I know who they are, and then, if I have to make that phone call, it’s not a cold call.”

Other District Provided Professional Learning/Support for New Leaders

Principal supervisors described several areas of professional learning support during our discussions. One supervisor described creating opportunities for principals to learn and collaborate together. Group attendance at the NBAA was one example the supervisor shared. Other opportunities included setting time weekly for principals

to meet with each other as a peer team. The supervisor encouraged them to challenge each other and provide mutual support. District leaders also meet weekly with the principals. Another supervisor mentioned working with novice administrators to identify and develop “...what they need and when they need it.” Two supervisors emphasized the importance of the AWSA academies providing structured professional learning and principal networking that is typically not available in small districts. Another supervisor mentioned the need for professional learning experiences tailored to assistant principals, since their roles may only be a subset of those principals engage in and/or need to be coordinated with principals.

District Use of Leadership Standards

During our discussions, we also asked NBAA participants and their supervisors about the leadership standards applied in their district for school administrator development. All but two participants specifically referenced the leadership standards represented by their Educator Effectiveness model, either the Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership or the CESA 6 EP standards. Of the two who didn’t first specifically reference the relevant EE standards, one talked generally about their district’s data-driven approach to leadership and that they are a community of learners. The other at first wasn’t sure the district used leadership standards, but then referenced the CESA 6 EP standards as well as an emphasis on leading for equity. No participant referenced the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership or the standards of the School Leader Paradigm, which are the leadership standards directly referenced in the NBAA. Despite the absence of reference to the WFPL or CESA 6 EP standards within the academy, as noted earlier, survey respondents indicated that they made connections during the academy between the learning content and their local leadership standards.

Key Findings and Questions to Consider

From participant interviews and discussions with attendees and supervisors, it is clear that the NBAA is a highly regarded professional learning experience for new principals and assistant/associate principals. Participants receive timely content, relevant resources, and active engagement with peers in sessions facilitated by respected faculty. They have access to tools within and beyond the academy timeline to draw upon during the second and subsequent years as new building leaders. Access to coaches extended the learning for those who took advantage of the coaching opportunity and several participants expressed interest in continuing with their coach. Although the academy is well established and has been refined over the years, this case has provided some additional insights that may further support NBAA participants or new leaders in general. We conclude the case with additional key findings and related questions.

Participation: Participants within the same district reported benefits of attending the NBAA with other administrators from their district. This allowed participants to fill each other in on any material if someone missed a session and to share time while traveling together. Further, sharing common language and planning tools helped administrators develop cohesion in the district. While participants from smaller districts may not have the opportunity to attend together, for medium or larger districts, this might be an option. How might AWSA inform district leaders and potential attendees of the benefit of attending in a same district group?

AWSA Academies Consistency: Participants and supervisors also reported benefits of experienced administrators attending other AWSA academies (e.g., BEL) while new administrators attended the NBAA. The common language and consistent tools that AWSA provides throughout their academies is beneficial to building cohesion in districts. AWSA promotes the leadership series as an opportunity to create continuity in learning. How might additional studies on the academy series inform district and state leaders about the potential impact of the series?

Leveraging standards for coherence: Supervisors and principals reported using local standards derived from the professional practice rubric of the state EE system to support principal learning. The academy focuses primarily on national PSEL and the School Leader Paradigm standards. Although all of these sources have common elements and likely derive from the same research on principal effectiveness, they may appear different and potentially limit coherence. See Appendix C for an example of how the knowledge and practice objectives align to relevant WFPL and SAPES standards. How might alignment be further promoted with the leadership standards applied at the district level to create coherence across the principal career continuum?

Assistant/Associate Principal Role: NBAA participants and supervisors noted the importance of having differentiated learning opportunities for principals and assistant/associate principals. What opportunities exist to design learning opportunities specifically for those in the assistant/associate principal role?

Professional learning network and coaching opportunities: While NBAA participants may not use their PLN immediately, they recognized the value and could benefit in leveraging the network over time. Principal supervisors spoke to the importance of having a strong PLN, especially one that includes those from other districts. Additionally, those participants who had coaches outside their district appreciated having access to a different perspective and participants felt they could be honest with their coaches. One of the benefits of the NBAA is connecting participants to other novice administrators as well as experienced administrators around the state. How can AWSA and other organizations encourage continued use of participants' PLN and coaching, particularly within geographic region or athletic conference, to lower feelings of isolation after completing the academy? What other ways could attendees be encouraged to connect with their NBAA professional learning network within and outside the academy?

Appendix A: NBAA Case Study Participant Interview Protocol

CURRENT PARTICIPANTS:

1. What motivated you to attend New Building Administrators Academy?
2. Were you able to attend all of the in-person sessions? Webinars? If not, why not?
3. We are interested in learning about connections between the experiences from the Academy and your priorities.
 - a. What were your main priorities as you entered this school year?
 - b. What skills or strategies did the NBA Academy teach you that support your priorities?
4. How have you incorporated the learning and resources from the Academy into your work?
5. What has been the most helpful to you? Please describe how you have used it?
6. Did you engage in coaching through the NBA academy?
 - a. If yes...
 - i. How frequently did you meet with the coach?
 - ii. What areas of focus was the leadership coaching?
 - iii. How do you believe the coaching impacted your leadership practice?
 - b. If no, why did you decide to not engage in coaching?
7. How have you utilized the network of peers from the NBA Academy?
8. How do you plan to apply learning from this Academy to your professional practice next year?
9. What plans do you have for further professional learning?
10. What leadership standards does your district use to support principal leadership development?
 - II. Finally, is there anything else you would like to share that we did not discuss?

SUPERVISORS:

1. Are you aware that _____ [principal/AP] attended the New Building Administrators leadership academy offered by AWSA?
2. From your perspective, what motivated _____ decision to attend the academy?
3. What information about the training has _____ shared with you?
4. Can you think of examples of how the academy has affected his/her leadership? Please describe...
5. How do you believe the changes will impact the principal's school?
6. How do you believe this training will affect his/her leadership going forward?
7. As you have new principals join your district, will you encourage them to attend this academy? Why or why not?
8. What internal support and development opportunities does the district provide novice school administrators?
9. What leadership standards do you apply in the development of school administrators?
10. Anything else that you would like to share about the NBAA Academy or school leadership development generally?

Appendix B: WFPL and SAPES Alignment with NBAA Knowledge and Practice Objectives

This table represents a crosswalk of the NBAA knowledge and practice objectives with the relevant Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership (WFPL) components and the CESA 6 School Administrator Performance Evaluation Standards (SAPES). The WFPL includes 2 domains, 5 sub-domains and 19 components that define school leadership practice. SAPES includes six leadership standards, each represented by multiple indicators of principal practice.

This crosswalk identifies the components from the WFPL and the standards from the SAPES that have the strongest alignment based on the academy description and related knowledge and practice objectives. It does not include all of the components and standards that may have a looser connection to the academy or that become apparent through specific activities or resources provided to participants. The purpose of this crosswalk is to assist communication and training efforts related to how the two principal leadership frameworks align with the academy and how the academy can support principals’ learning through the Educator Effectiveness process.

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES	PRACTICE OBJECTIVES	WFPL	SAPES
Gain practical knowledge in areas important to new leaders, including shaping school culture, supervising Educator Effectiveness, overseeing special education, managing budget and operations, and administering handbooks.		2.1.3 Personal Professional Learning 2.2.1 School Climate 1.1.3 Performance Evaluation and Feedback 2.3.2 Financial Management 2.3.3 Policy Management	6. Professionalism 2. School Climate 3: Human Resource Leadership 4. Organizational Management
Examine the value of a monthly checklist detailing specific administrative responsibilities through the course of a school year and demonstrate means for customizing this to the demands of the local context.		2.1.3 Personal Professional Learning 2.1.2 Time Management and Priority Setting	6: Professionalism 4. Organizational Management
Explore the potential applications and benefits of select change management and leadership tools upon local practice.		2.1.1 Professionalism 2.1.3 Personal Professional Learning	6: Professionalism
Understand how to initiate/deepen access to a professional network, connecting with the people and resources that provide a growth and support system for an administrative career.		2.1.3 Personal Professional Learning	6: Professionalism
	Construct an entry plan that matches components of leadership to the unique contextual needs of the organization.	1.2.1 Vision and Mission 2.2.3 Change Management and Shared Commitment	2: School Climate
	Develop a high-impact weekly calendar that focuses on key year-one goals and prioritized efforts that emphasize proactive rather than reactive leadership.	2.1.2 Time Management and Priority Setting	4. Organizational Management
	Apply questioning techniques and coaching strategies that lead to educator reflection on practice and impact.	1.1.3 Performance Evaluation and Feedback	3: Human Resources Leadership

Appendix B:

First Year Superintendents Academy Case Study

for the Wisconsin Foundation for Educational Administration



Contents

5 Introduction

8 Findings

15 Key Findings and Questions to Consider

Section I

Introduction

Prior to the start of the 2021-22 FYS academy series, facilitators reflected on what worked during the 2020-21 year and the feedback they had received, restructuring the sessions and the content based on those reflections. In the 2021-22 school year, 22 FYS workshops were offered; five were in-person, and the remaining sessions were virtual. The year kicked off with two, back-to-back, full-day in-person sessions. Over the course of the year, there were three additional in-person, all-day sessions aligned with the WASDA fall conference, the winter state education convention, and the spring WASDA educational conference, respectively. The virtual sessions were 90 minutes. All sessions were recorded and made available for participants to reference. For each session, knowledge and practice objectives were identified and shared with participants. Topics covered in both the in-person and virtual sessions included:

- School board
 - o Board relationships, roles and responsibilities, the annual meeting, and school board elections
 - o Open meeting laws
- Policy and legislative updates
- School finance
 - o Fund balance, financial management, and budget development
 - o ESSER funding
 - o Setting the levy and property tax bills
 - o How student counts impact school funding
- Communications and social media
 - o Community engagement
 - o Crisis communications
- Student achievement
 - o 100-day plans
 - o Equity and achievement for all
 - o Five levers to improve learning
- Leadership
 - o Change theory and creating an engaged workforce
 - o Shifting mindsets
 - o Executive presence
 - o Dealing with conflict
 - o Superintendent evaluations
- Human resources
 - o Contracts and contract renewals
 - o Staffing needs and salary
 - o Employee handbooks
- Legal counsel and guidance
 - o Public records law
 - o Student discipline and expulsion
- Referendum 101

The academy is facilitated by Kathleen Cooke and Michael Gallagher (KCMG Consulting). Dr. Cooke is a former superintendent, and Mr. Gallagher brings a business background with him to the academies. Several additional speakers present content regularly. Those include the Baird school finance team, Joe Donovan (Donovan Group), Kirk Strang, (Strang Law), Drew Howick (Howick Associates), Mike Julka (Boardman Clark), Jon Bales (WASDA), and Jim Rickabaugh (consultant). Other guest speakers included John Forester (School Administrators Alliance), Doug Witte (Boardman Clark), Laura Adams (DPI), Bob Butler (Wisconsin Association of School Boards), and over ten current superintendents.

All new superintendents in the state of Wisconsin are offered coaching support through WASDA. Of the 40 FYS participants in 2021-22, 38 engaged in coaching. Coaches are veteran or retired superintendents who regularly meet with the new superintendents to reinforce FYS content and provide individualized coaching support.

Section 2

Findings

Findings

Participation and Attendance

As noted above, 40 new superintendents enrolled in the FYS academy. When survey respondents were asked how they learned about the academy, the majority indicated they learned about it through a WASDA communication (76%), followed by a colleague recommendation (17%) and supervisor recommendation (7%). In follow-up, respondents were asked to identify from a list of options what motivated them to attend the academy; they were allowed to select all that applied. As shown in Table I, to support their professional learning was the top motivation for participating.

Several survey respondents made additional comments about their motivation to participate in the academy, including:

- “To be prepared to best serve my school district and community.”
- “To build a supportive network.”
- “I have a great deal of respect for Jon Bales and WASDA and wanted to learn from this group.”
- “Opportunity to have a mentor.”

Table 5: Participant Motivation

MOTIVATION	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
To support my professional learning	86%
To support district priorities	62%
The academy was recommended by a colleague	59%

Table 7: Participation in Virtual Sessions

PERCENT OF VIRTUAL SESSIONS ATTENDED	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
75% - 100%	62%
50% - 74%	24%
25% - 49%	3%
Less than 24%	10%

In our follow-up interviews, we also asked about motivation to attend. Responses were similar to those from the survey. Many shared that it was “strongly suggested” by peer superintendents and/or their predecessor. In addition, a couple interviewees noted specifically wanting to learn from Jon Bales and Kathy Cooke because they are “well known” as being resources in the field. Lastly, several indicated they knew it was a “good opportunity to learn and grow.”

The survey included items about attendance at the in-person sessions and participation in the virtual sessions. Of the survey respondents, 59% said they were able to attend all of the in-person events. Scheduling conflicts was the most frequently cited reason for not being able to attend an event, and participants specifically noted the April session as the most challenging to attend. When asked how many of the virtual sessions they were able to join, 62% said they were able to attend at least three-quarters of the sessions. Table 2 displays the breakdown of the remaining respondents.

Of the participants indicating they were unable to attend an in-person session, 80% responded that they did view the recorded session and that it was a “good resource.”

Table 6: Participant Experience with the Academy

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The academy supported my district’s priorities.	85%	15%	0	0
The academy met my professional learning goals.	85%	11%	0	4%
The academy goals were clear to me.	92%	4%	4%	0
The academy was engaging.	89%	7%	4%	0
There was an appropriate balance between facilitation and practical application for me to reach expected learning outcomes.	92%	4%	4%	0

Table 9: Participant Perceptions of Strategies to Address Key Issues

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The academy provided useful leadership strategies for me to implement in my context.	89%	7%	4%	0
The academy helped me develop strategies to address educational equity in my context.	52%	37%	11%	0
The academy helped me to address mental health issues in my context.	55%	37%	4%	4%

Table 8: Participant Perceptions of the Applicability of Skills and Knowledge Earned

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I feel confident that I can apply learning from the academy within my context.	89%	7%	0	4%
Skills I learned in the academy will help with our local continuous improvement efforts.	74%	22%	4%	0

The survey included a series of questions about participant experience with the academy. Specifically, participants were asked whether the academy met their motivation for attending; if the goals of the academy were clear; if it was engaging; and if there was a good balance between facilitation and practical application. Table 3 displays that the respondents overwhelmingly had positive feedback on the facilitation and instruction of the academy. It is worth noting that the “somewhat disagree” and “strongly disagree” response was the same individual, who also reported that they did not attend all the sessions and in the comments shared that they wished more of the sessions were in-person.

Survey items also asked participants to reflect on whether the academy provided them with strategies to address a number of issues identified by the Department of Public Instruction as key for district and school leaders. Those issues include leadership, mental health, and equity. Table 4 presents the responses related to each strategy. Even though some of these strategies were not specifically or fully addressed in the FYS academy, as shown in the table, participants agreed that they developed strategies to address these areas.

Finally, survey respondents were asked if they felt confident in applying what they learned in their local context and if the skills they learned would help them with local continuous improvement efforts. Responses are presented in Table 5.

All survey respondents reported that they would recommend the academy to others. The reasons respondents would recommend the academy can be grouped into three themes: networking, facilitation, and generally positive feedback. Examples include:

- Networking
 - o “This is a great opportunity to get to know other first year administrators, networking and collaboration is always valuable!”
 - o “The networking is HUGE. I made great connections and developed a support system.”
 - o “The connections I made to other superintendents was incredibly valuable.”
 - o “The opportunity to network with other first year superintendents and experienced ones was invaluable.”
- Facilitators
 - o “The facilitators are empathetic and approach their work with professionalism and optimism.”
 - o “Kathy Cooke is amazing! She is a wealth of knowledge and consistently reminds us that ALL means ALL.”
 - o “The depth of knowledge and expertise provided by each and every presenter was beneficial in my new role as superintendent.”
 - o “Excellent leadership from Kathy and John. Wonderful presentations throughout.”
- General feedback
 - o “It is 101 for any new district administrator. It’s been some of the best professional development I’ve had in education.”
 - o “The academy was exactly what I needed to help ground me and guide me through my first year in the superintendent chair.”
 - o “This has been a great group of leaders assembled to support new superintendents. I cannot imagine my year without this resource.”
 - o “I firmly believe that every first year superintendent should participate in this academy. I cannot fathom navigating my first year without the support and guidance I’ve received from the academy.”

Applying the Learning

In both the survey and the follow-up interviews, participants were asked to discuss how they are applying the learning from the academy, how their practices may have grown or changed as a result of attending the academy, and what skills or strategies they learned that supported their first year as superintendent. Across the survey and interview responses, four topics were identified as key takeaways that participants have applied: legal guidance, school finance, referendum planning, and relationships with school boards. Related to school finance, one of the interviewees shared:

My practice has grown. I don't know where to start. I'll try to pick the best example I have. It's an area that I continue to try to grow in because it's an area that's not one of what I would consider strengths. To understand the importance and the urgency of working through the finances of the district. A solid understanding of what those are, and how they work, who to go to when you have questions... So just knowing and working through, talking through WASDA and in my superintendent cohort about finances, is probably an area that I did grow in. And so that was probably my best example of where I needed it, and it really was impactful. Now, one of the first things that I asked is, how does it impact the budget?

Another participant described increased confidence around legal requirements:

The takeaway was just kind of an empowering, yep, you've got your legal basis covered...it was a confidence builder, maybe more than anything, to know that I had the right legal framework. I don't know how many times in board meetings this year or in closed session I was able to pull out policies, state statutes, or court standings. Those are things that we discussed during the academy.

A final example highlights those individuals who discussed relationships and communicating with their school boards. One interviewee said, "I think the biggest thing I learned was how to communicate with my board and my board president."

Interviewees were also asked what resources have been most helpful back in their local context. Many stated that they reference the PowerPoint slides and handouts that they received over the course of the year. One superintendent said, "I'm constantly going to the academy resource page and pulling up previous presentation and making sure that I'm following the letter of the law and a number of things." Several also stated that they re-watched particular sessions related to topics that they were currently addressing.

Additional Supports

When interviewees were asked about resources and support, without being prompted, each mentioned that the coach they were paired with was the most valuable resource. One interviewee stated that their coach was "extremely helpful." Another stated that coaching was a "great opportunity." Participants also reported that they appreciated "having another person to be able to bounce some things off of," and that having that as a resource was "powerful." Most stated that they met with their coaches monthly and that the coaches came with an agenda aligned with the academy sessions but were also responsive to whatever needs or questions they had. Participants also appreciated the "feedback" they received from the coaches and mentioned that "it was a good professional push, but encouragement and support at the same time." In 2022-23, all second year superintendents will be offered a second year of coaching support through WASDA. During 2021-22, a few superintendents requested coaching during their second year, which was approved on individual case basis. The superintendents whom we interviewed indicated that they would like to continue working with their coach, although possibly less frequently (e.g., quarterly versus monthly).

Although interviewees and survey respondents indicated that networking was one of the elements that they found most valuable about the academy, when asked how they utilized their network of peers from the academy, it was typically limited to in-person sessions and conference sessions. Outside of those events, the superintendents we interviewed reported that when they reached out for help, they typically reached out to superintendents in their athletic conference. For example, one superintendent articulated:

I had great relationships built this year with surrounding superintendents. And I have [a] network from...previous to starting this job that I could go to. I felt like I created a really good network, and I've got a whole group that...I will I'm sure, for years to come connect with at conferences...and touch base with. I would say again, I was really fortunate with my area network here. And I didn't have any of those new folks in my area. But I connected well with those, and connected with a second year superintendent in my area. We had regular conversations as well. So good connections built through that, but not necessarily those go-to connections.

Section 3

Key Findings and Questions to Consider

Key Findings and Questions to Consider

The First Year Superintendents academy provides timely support to new superintendents with content that is relevant to their role and responsibilities, networking with peers and experts in the field, and individual coaching. The supports and resources offered through the academy are well received by participants, and all the participants that we surveyed and interviewed stated that they would recommend the academy to future superintendents.

Participants reported that the learning was relevant to their local context and impacted their leadership, specifically around school finance, knowledge of legal requirements, planning and implementing referendums, and relationships with their school boards.

In order to strengthen the participant experience and alignment between FYS and other professional learning academies, how can facilitators, where appropriate, align content and resources with those that DPI and AWSA teach and reference? Examples may include the WISE suite of tools including the Data Inquiry Journal, root cause analysis, equity, and social emotional learning. Doing so could help new district leaders sort through the multiple signals that come from different levels of the education system and support coherence.

In addition, other research that WEC has conducted on principal support and evaluation has identified the need and want by principals for feedback from their supervisors. If time in the academy allows, how could feedback training support new district administrators as they begin supporting their principals?



Appendix C: New Building Administrator Academy (NBAA) Logic Model, April 2022

GOAL: To provide administrators who are new (or new to their school) with the skills, resources, and community of peers necessary to cultivate culture, assess systems, and understand the leadership necessary for the unique context of their learning organization.

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (YEAR 1)	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES (YEARS 2-3)	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES (YEARS 4-5)
Experienced leadership facilitators from AWSA, plus the addition of a new AWSA facilitator, and 3 practicing school administrators (2 principals and 1 AP)	Facilitators plan instruction, reflect on participant feedback, and adjust if necessary Participants: Attend three-full day sessions and 4 webinars Receive just-in time learning focused on:	Facilitators lead 3 full-day sessions plus 4 webinars Roughly 70 principals and APs participate Each participant develops and documents: An entry plan and self-assesses their plan	Facilitators develop skills, respond to feedback and provide diverse leadership experience Monthly connections lead to higher participation, more networking and relationship building Participants: Identify their school's most critical problems	Sustainable and responsive facilitation Participants: Implement collaborative inquiry cycles to address problem of practice Improve communication with stakeholders Participants adhere to their created calendar	Build capacity of additional AWSA facilitators For those that progress through the AWSA leadership continuum (NBAA, BEL, MLA): School leadership retention in participating districts Student and staff wellness improves
Title II funding supporting coaching and tuition subsidy	strategies for building relationships with stakeholders; how to assess local culture; personal and organizational management systems; socio-emotional leadership; instructional leadership; and equity leadership	High-impact weekly calendar Coaching plan	Clearly communicate their "why," through multiple channels Develop clear processes for time and task management	Utilize coaching techniques and feedback methods that impact teacher growth Utilize knowledge of school culture change efforts	Improved teaching
Participant tuition	Develop plans and calendars to support their first year; engage in coaching conversations diads and triads; and identify their school's most critical problem of practice	NBAA objective self-assessment	Apply questioning techniques and coaching strategies that lead to educator reflection on practice and impact	Participants understand the value of ongoing professional learning and enroll in BEL or other career-based academies (Data Leadership, Leading PLCs, or academies from other organizations)	Improved student outcomes, reduction of student opportunity gaps
Special education presentations by DPI		A school culture assessment	Accurately assess school culture to help inform change efforts		
DPI School finance resources		Identification of school's most critical problem of practice	Share resources and connect with their professional learning network		
First year principals and APs		2/3 of participants engage in optional coaching	Participants engaged in coaching receive aligned, individual support that further grows their practice		
Leadership coaches	Network with peers			Participants areas of previous coaching need are now areas of competence or strength	
Selected readings and resources*	Optional monthly coaching support from current and former principals				

ASSUMPTIONS:

- First year school administrators need guidance, support, and coaching
- District provided support varies across districts
- School administrators will attend sessions
- Participants will apply the learned knowledge in their own context

CONTEXT:

- Average # of new school administrators in WI every year
- Leading through a pandemic and the impact on school
- Highly political current context of education

*Selected NBAA readings and resources:

- School Leader Paradigm
- The First 90 Days in Government by Peter H. Daly and Michael Watkins
- Being Vulnerable and Strong at the Same Time by Joe Schroeder
- Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ by Daniel Goleman
- A Principal's Guide to Special Education, by David F. Bateman & C. Fred Bateman
- Leading for Equity: Our Mission Continues Despite CRT Turmoil by Joe Schroeder
- Moving the Needle: Leveraging Legitimate EE Flexibility to Grow Teacher Practice and Student Learning by Joe Schroeder
- Balanced Analysis, The Skillful Leader and The Skillful Teacher
- Deepening Your Learning Leadership Through Balanced Analysis and Feedback by Joe Schroeder
- Malina Piontek employee handbook and employee discipline resources
- Selected coaching resources

Appendix D: Building Effective Leadership Academy (BEL) Logic Model, April 2022

GOAL: To equip established administrators with the supports needed to effectively sustain culture, build systems, and develop a learning organization, while affording the self-care necessary to build a sustainable career as a learning leader.

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (YEAR 1)	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES (YEARS 2-3)	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES (YEARS 4-5)
Experienced leadership facilitators from AWSA	Facilitators plan instruction, reflect on participant feedback, and adjust if necessary	Facilitators lead 6 full-day sessions	Facilitators develop team and individual skills to co-plan, respond to feedback and deliver meaningful sessions	Sustainable and responsive facilitation	For those that progress through the AWSA leadership continuum (NBAA, BEL, MLA):
Title II funding supporting coaching and tuition subsidy	Participants: Attend three, 2-full day consecutive sessions in July, November, and February	30-50 principals, APs, and district directors participate	Participants shift from surviving to thriving, and from reactive to intentional, as an effective and balanced learning leaders who are developing a learning organization	Shifted practice becomes institutionalized	School leadership retention in participating districts
Participant tuition	Receive learning focused on: addressing complex issues of school culture using the School Leader Paradigm; clarifying and integrating who you are and what you do to maximize your purpose as a learning leader, including self-care; identifying key school stakeholders to develop shared, distributed leadership; leading systems change to improve learning through shared, distributed leadership (PLCs); and coaching for equity	Each participant: Identifies 1 equity-based problem of practice	Participants: Apply cycles of inquiry to improve teacher practice and student learning	Participants: Apply and monitor continuous cycles of inquiry focused on critical problems of practice and build capacity in teachers to initiate improvement strategies	Student and staff wellness improves
Selected readings and resources*		Develops 3 100-day plans	Operationalize time and process management techniques into a high-impact weekly calendar that promotes proactive leadership	Sustains practices that align with high-impact calendars that support inquiry cycles, safeguard leadership priorities, and include key management routines	Improved teaching
Early career principals and APs	Network with peers	Participates in rounds of equity coaching role-play	Refine key shared leadership structures	Distributed leadership strategy results in staff teams taking responsibility for important behavioral, curricular or instructional decisions	Improved student outcomes, reduction of student opportunity gaps
Leadership coaches	Participants document work in BEL Journal; create 100-day plans; develop high-impact weekly calendars	Completes 1 school culture assessment	Develop knowledge and skill in growth-focused supervision and critical conversations	Embed growth-focused supervision and critical conversations into daily/ weekly leadership	Improved operational efficiency
	All participants engage in a post-session coaching session with a BEL facilitator	Developes 3 high-impact weekly calendars	Assess school culture to help inform change efforts	Implements and monitors a system of peer conversations around goals that improve practice	Collaborative teacher teams take ownership of successes and short-comings and take actions to address it
	Participants have the opportunity to work with a personal coach on a monthly basis at no additional cost	Completes 1 self-rating of BEL Leading Objectives	Develop habits and disciplines of self-care that help lead an effective and sustainable career	Understand school culture and utilize that knowledge in change efforts	Non-defensive and public sharing of adult practices and coaching conversations permeates through the school
		Documented self-reflection throughout each session	Participants that engage in coaching receive aligned, individual support that further grows their practice	Embed habits and disciplines of self-care that help lead an effective and sustainable career	Effectively address any remaining instances where student-focused culture is compromised
				Participants areas of previous coaching need are now areas of competence or strength	Model self-care, community self-care develops and increased compassion and resilience in the school
					Participants are able to identify and provide needed coaching supports to others

ASSUMPTIONS:

- School administrators will attend sessions
- Participants are seeking strategies to lead and not just manage schools so that positive impact on students increases
- Participants will apply the learned knowledge in their own context

CONTEXT:

- High level of principal turnover
- Leading through a pandemic and the impact on school
- Highly political current context of education

* Selected readings and resources:

- Time for Change, by Anthony Muhammad and Luis Cruz
- Transforming School Culture by Anthony Muhammad
- Decision making protocols
- Wallace Study: How Principals Affect Students and Schools
- School Leader Paradigm
- An Integrative Approach to Leader Development by David Day, Michelle Harrison, and Stanley Halpin
- One Word: that will change your life by Jon Gordon, Dan Britton, Jimmy Page
- Dare to Lead by Brene Brown
- In the Arena, Daring to Lead with a Whole Heart by Joe Schroeder
- Assessing Impact: Elevating Staff Development by Joellen Killion
- Leverage Leadership 2.0
- Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students by Zaretta Hammond
- Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change by Anthony Muhammad
- Leading for Equity: Our Mission Continues Despite CRT Turmoil by Joe Schroeder
- Shaping School Culture by Terrace Deal and Kent Peterson
- Embracing the Power of a Both/And Mindset as a Bridge to a Better Place by Joe Schroeder
- Compassion Resilience Toolkit
- Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at work by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, & Thomas Many
- The Big Book of Tools for Collaborative Teams by William Ferriter
- Continuum of Self-Reflection by Pete Hall & Alisa Simeral
- CEIQ Feedback Structure
- Transformational Coaching Stems by Elena Aguilar
- Sentence Stems for Healthy Conflict by Elena Aguilar
- DPI Coaching Competency Practice Profile

Appendix E: WFEA Professional Learning Series Program and Organizational Changes, 2018-2022

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) has evaluated the professional learning series offered by the Wisconsin Foundation for Educational Administration (WFEA) since 2018. As part of each annual evaluation report, WEC includes key findings and questions for academy planners and facilitator consideration. As part of the 2021-2022 evaluation, the findings and questions from each year's report are summarized into the following five topic areas: attendance, facilitation, extended learning, alignment with state identified priorities, and participant learning needs and support. WEC evaluators identified observed changes related to the five areas and shared these with program leaders to confirm the changes or provide updates. This memo summarizes the changes identified as a result of the evaluation. The final 2021-2022 report may include additional key findings and questions to consider.

Attendance

Recommendations

1. Increase the diversity of attendees (specifically, more rural and urban participants, different regions in the state, and non-white school and district leaders)
 - a. Encourage participation from school and district leaders new to offerings (not repeat attendees)
2. Increase communications about Title II funded academy reimbursement to potential participants and confirmed participants
3. Encourage team participation versus solo participation in order to increase impact and address challenges related to use of learning in larger school or district context
 - a. Provide guidance to possible participants on team composition

Reported Changes

Leaders from WFEA have engaged with Wisconsin's five large urban districts to build partnerships and encourage academy attendance. These districts are some of the most diverse in the state. This has resulted in Green Bay participating in SAIL and Kenosha sending its new principals to the New Building Administrators Academy. In support of this work, a Director of Urban Leadership was hired in 2021-22. One of the Director's tasks is to assess the 2021-22 academies from an urban district lens and develop a plan to increase support of and alignment with urban leaders' needs. Finally, starting in 2022-23, affinity groups for school leaders of color will be offered.

In order to encourage attendance from rural and remote principals, in 2021-22, a pilot program offering additional participant reimbursement program was tested. For those participants who travel more than 100 miles round trip to attend an academy, their mileage and lodging costs for up to \$100 per night were reimbursed.

Title II subsidy information for all academy participants (75% of the total cost of participants with an administrator license) is shared in the professional learning catalog and reiterated to participants during academies.

Communications in the professional learning catalog have also become more intentional and specific about team participant composition. For example, the Leading for Equity academy is for either district level teams or school level teams. The catalog states that district teams should include: the Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Special Education/Student Services, Technology Director, Business Manager, HR Director, District Principals, Associate Principals, and other district-level staff, such as Learning Coordinators. For school level teams, the catalog states that participants should include: Principals, Associate Principals, Student Services Staff, Teachers, and other school staff. Another example is the Comprehensive School Mental Health academy. Again, the catalog indicates that the academy is designed for district level teams and makes suggestions for team participants.

Facilitation

Recommendations

1. Increase alignment across academy facilitators
2. Address the capacity of current facilitators
3. Diversify academy facilitators

Reported Changes

In order to increase alignment across academies and facilitators, specifically for those academies that are facilitated by Department of Public Instruction (DPI) staff, Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) staff or consultants from Integrated Comprehensive Systems for Equity, training scope and sequences are collaboratively developed with WFEA leaders and the external facilitators. Also, an WFEA leader hosts and co-facilitates alongside the external facilitators.

For the first three years of WEC’s evaluation activities, WFEA professional learning academies were primarily facilitated by Joe Schroeder and Tammy Gibbons. As noted above, in 2021-22, a Director of Urban Leadership was hired to support outreach to urban leaders and to build the capacity of the WFEA facilitators. In addition, capacity has been addressed by adding facilitators for specific academies, for example, SAIL has grown from two to currently seven facilitators.

During academies, facilitators often highlight the work of school leaders from across WI. In academies this year, facilitators tried to highlight the work of leaders of color. Additionally, WFEA is trying to develop the skills and capacity of participants to grow into facilitators and coaches who can support the professional learning academies. For example, participants of the Mastering Leadership Academy were asked to share their knowledge and skills with the field by drafting articles on their leadership practices and to present at leadership conferences. Two of the now seven SAIL facilitators were first SAIL academy participants. Academy facilitators reported noticing that during academy sessions, leaders of color have been reaching out to new Director of Urban Leadership.

Extend learning

Recommendations

1. Encourage/increase the use of coaching for those academies that include coaching
2. Leverage participant learning activities in-between sessions
3. Support participants with ways to communicate their learning with supervisors
4. Extend learning into a second year, follow-up, or refresher academy

Reported Changes

Since the start of WEC’s evaluation activities, learning has been extended in two meaningful ways. First, a refresher/ sequel to the Impactful Coaching academy, Impactful Coaching: Advancing your Skills, was introduced in 2019-20. Second, the principal pipeline series was expanded to include the Mastering Leadership Academy (MLA). The MLA is the fourth academy in a series, following Aspiring Administrators, New Building Administrators (leaders in their first year) and the Building Effective Leadership (leaders in 2nd through 5th year).

Coaching continues to be offered to any member of the professional association for a fee as well as through specific academies: SAIL, NBA, BEL, MLA and CSMHA. As a result of COVID-19, virtual coaching and in-person coaching session are available in hopes of better addressing participant availability. To encourage coaching, BEL participants are asked to sign up for a coaching session before the end of each training session. SAIL and CSMHA provide team-based coaching and coaches regularly check-in with their teams.

To further support learning activities between in-person, full-day sessions, facilitators of the NBA academy added webinar sessions to cover specific topics.

Over the past couple of years, several academies have been restructured to provide a systems-level approach to improvement work. For example, LEA and CSMHA are both systems-level academies that encourage team participation with both school and district leaders. The impetus for the change was to enhance communication between leaders and support aligned work.

Alignment with state adopted leadership standards and processes

Recommendations

1. Support participants making connections between the content and Educator Effectiveness processes to enhance growth opportunities
2. Use leadership standards adopted by WI so that leaders can better see how the learning can support their professional growth and development
3. Engage with DPI so that resources are aligned and support a clear and actionable roadmap for improvement

Reported Changes

WFEA leaders partner with DPI on several academies, including the Data Leadership (DLA) and CSMHA. Both of these academies utilize DPI tools and resources and are facilitated by DPI and staff. In addition, academy facilitators and the State's WISExplore team have worked together to maximize the use of these tools and resources across all academies. The DPI's Special Education team provides resources and support for principals attending the NBA and BEL academies. References to DPI's Educator Effectiveness System are made within several academies, including the NBA, BEL, Supporting Principal Excellence, and Impactful Coaching academies, specifically related to teacher observations, feedback, and coaching conversations.

Participant learning needs and support

Recommendations

1. Shift instruction and content to address participant learning needs
2. Address real-time issues while not taking away from academy content

Reported Changes

Academy facilitators collect exit tickets after every academy session, reflect on feedback and themes, and make adjustments to academy content and instruction as appropriate. At the conclusion of academies, facilitators meet together to collaboratively review, reflect, and revise academy content.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitators have also increased access to online resources and recordings of sessions to review or view if a participant missed a session, and shifted some sessions to online webinars. They are working to find the balance between in-person and online sessions to best engage participants and capture meaningful learning.

Facilitators have also observed the need for participant pre-work and have built in the expectations for several academies. Where relevant to the academy, participants are asked to use WISExplore to review data and identify root causes of key problems of practice. Academy content asks participants to build on that knowledge using new skills and learning. Over the course of the academy sessions, participants are asked to continually apply the learning in ongoing inquiry cycles with the hope that the learning becomes job embedded and impacts their practices and dispositions.

Finally, facilitators have intentionally worked to grow the professional learning networks within each academy, particularly in the career-based academies (NBAA, BEL, MLA). These networks allow participants to build relationships with colleagues outside of sessions to provide an additional layer of support.

