

ECEAP Directors Pre-K Quality Survey Summary

The purpose of this survey of ECEAP directors was to learn about ECEAP contractor professional learning practices, continuous quality improvement processes, and instructional leadership in support of the high-quality teaching that bolsters children’s learning and development. The survey, conducted over two weeks in May 2017, is intended to provide information needed to complete the *ECEAP Pre-K Quality Improvement Self-Assessment* and inform next steps in amplifying ECEAP program quality. This *Summary* includes definitions, respondent data, highlights and results.

A. Definitions. The terms “high-quality teaching,” “instructional leadership” and “job-embedded professional learning” as used in this survey are described below.

- ***High-Quality Teaching.*** High-quality teaching in early childhood is intentional and effective in advancing the learning and development of all young children and significantly narrowing readiness and achievement gaps before children enter kindergarten. Structural policies such as group size and ratio, curriculum, teacher qualifications and compensation are necessary supports for high-quality teacher-child interactions, but they do not guarantee them. Ultimately, high-quality teaching depends a great deal on the strength of the organizational and instructional leadership supports for teachers’ continuous professional learning and improvement. ([the Ounce, High Quality Teaching in Preschool](#))
- ***Instructional Leadership.*** Instructional leadership focuses on building leadership among those with responsibilities for supervising pre-k teachers, guiding their practice, and/or facilitating job-embedded professional learning. Effective leadership is the driver of improvement, strengthening organizational conditions for effective teaching and learning. Effective leaders are strategically focused on children’s development and early achievement. They cultivate strong partnerships with families and support teachers to be effective in their work. They create a supportive and collaborative professional work environment focused on ambitious teaching and learning and the continuous improvement of practice. ([the Ounce, Organizational Conditions and Instructional Leadership](#))
- ***Job-Embedded Professional Learning (JEPL).*** JEPL is learning that is grounded in day-to-day practice and is designed to enhance professional practice with the intent of improving children’s learning and development. It consists of teams of professionals assessing and finding solutions for authentic and immediate problems of practice as part of a cycle of continuous improvement. Research confirms that routine, collaborative JEPL, focused on student learning and linked to curricula, is more effective than traditional, externally-driven professional development in changing practice and sustaining improvements. ([The Ounce, Job-Embedded Professional Leadership](#))

B. Analysis and Respondents. Results were analyzed overall and by contractor organizational type (school district, non-profit, etc.) and number of slots. The number of slots includes the total of both ECEAP and Head Start slots to discern any differences that would help to pinpoint needs and practices and needs. Including both ECEAP and Head Start in the slot counts was done to explore differences in infrastructure and likely levels of organizational support for quality improvement and professional learning.

The charts throughout this summary show either overall responses or responses by organizational type or size, depending on where trends or differences were found. This was done to provide readers with information for nuanced analysis.

Twenty of 54 ECEAP directors responded to this survey. As the numbers are modest, the analysis focuses on the numbers of respondents rather than percentages. Their organizational types and numbers of slots are noted below. A chart comparing respondent organizational types and sizes compared to ECEAP overall is on the next page.

- ***Contractor Organization.*** Nine respondents were from non-profits, four were from school districts, three were from colleges, three were from ESD’s, and one was from a family child care home network. Nine of the 20 were from joint Head Start and ECEAP programs. A comparison between respondents and all ECEAP contractors is shown in the adjoining chart.

- **Organizational Size.** Survey responses were divided into three categories based on their total number of ECEAP *and* Head Slots. Ten were large (200+ slots), five were medium (76-200 slots), and five were small (less than 76 slots). organizations often have more infrastructure for quality improvement and professional learning. In the charts below this is referred to as organizational size.

C. Highlights. According to the survey results, ECEAP programs have a focus on supporting teacher practice and quality improvement and a desire to do more to improve quality. Examples of supporting the practice of teachers and other staff explored in the survey were providing job-embedded professional learning and instructional leadership. Examples of specific quality improvement actions explored in the survey included “analyzing data with staff and stakeholders to inform professional learning and improvement,” “setting goals and plans to improve teaching and learning,” and “using a racial equity lens when analyzing data and setting goals.” There are relatively few differences among different types of organizations and program size (number of slots). This represents a strong baseline for the next steps in ECEAP quality improvement.

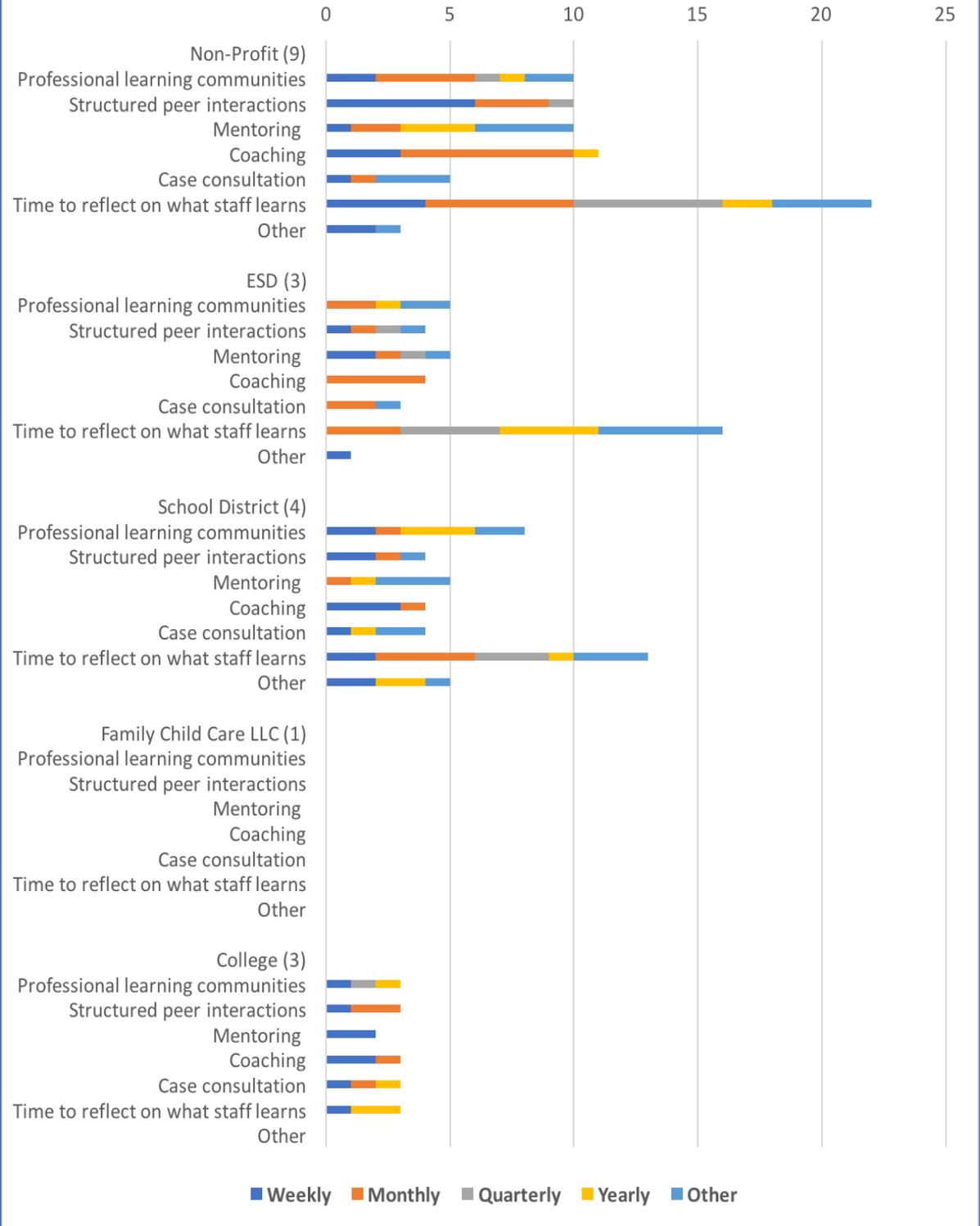
Respondents Compared to ECEAP Contractors Overall		
Contractor Organization Types	Number / % Respondents N=20	ECEAP Contractors Number/% N=54
Organization Type		
Educational Service Districts	3	7
School Districts	4	15
Non-Profits	9	21
College	3	6
Local Government	0	3
Tribe/ Tribal Organization	0	2
Joint Head Start ECEAP		
Joint ECEAP & Head Start	9	24
ECEAP only		30
Organizational Size		
Small (<76 slots)	10	25
Medium (76-200 slots)	5	14
Large (200+ slots)	5	15

1. **Most Programs Currently Engage in Multiple Quality Improvement Practices.** Most ECEAP contractors engage in quality improvement practices quarterly or more often. The most frequently used practice is “setting goals and making plans to improve teaching and learning” with (16) doing so monthly or quarterly. The least frequent practice is using a racial equity lens (with five not responding to the question and/or commenting that this is an area for growth).
2. **Most Programs Have Multiple Instructional Leaders in Multiple Positions.** Eight different types or positions serve as instructional leaders in ECEAP programs. Most programs have more than one instructional leader. Small programs tended to depend more on Early Achievers coaches as instructional leaders, medium programs on ECEAP coaches. Larger programs tend to use program managers or directors as instructional leaders and ECEAP coaches as instructional leaders. This has implications for coordination and for delivery of professional learning.
3. **Most Programs Provide Job-Embedded Professional Learning (JEPL) to Direct Service Staff.** Almost all respondents said that they provide JEPL for direct service staff. Most provide JEPL for teachers and some provide it for family support staff. Fewer provided it for center directors, program managers, coaches, health staff, instructional leaders and administrative staff.

As shown in the chart on the following page, proportions of programs using different methods varied somewhat by program size. All larger programs provided coaching, with more than half providing in-person professional learning communities and reflective supervision. Proportionally, mid-size programs used reflective supervision. About half of the small programs used in-person professional learning communities, coaching and mentoring.

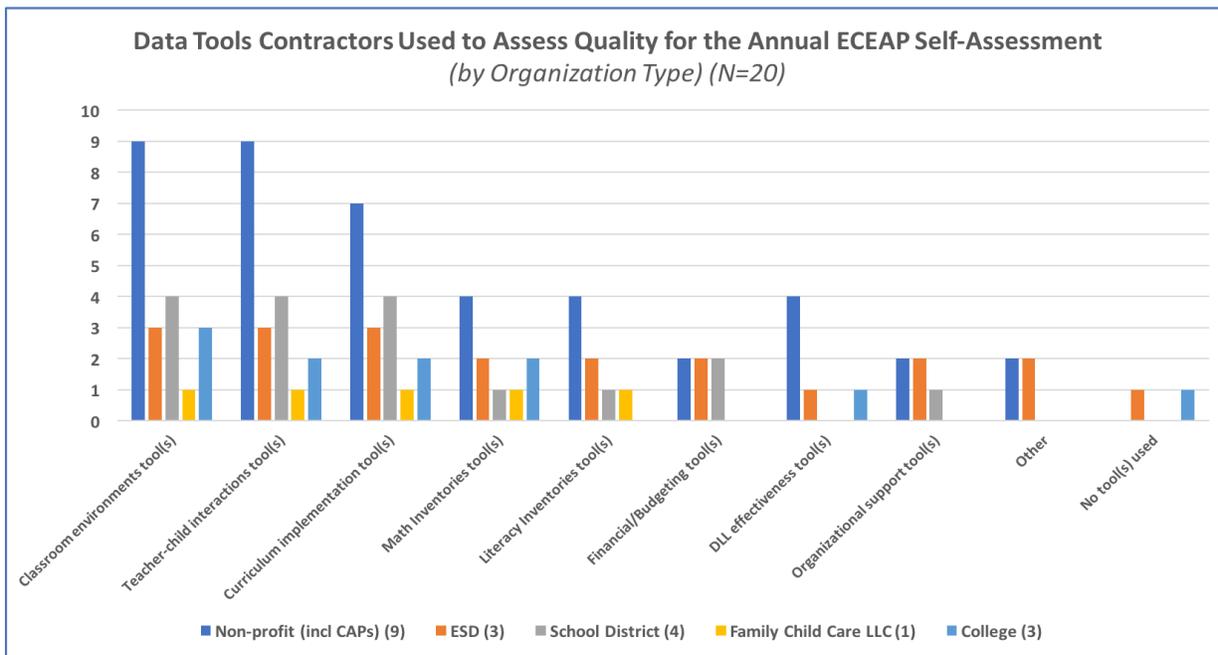
As shown in the adjoining chart, proportions of programs using different methods varied somewhat by program size. All larger programs provided coaching, with more than half providing in-person professional learning communities and reflective supervision. Proportionally, mid-size programs used reflective supervision. About half of the small programs used in-person professional learning communities, coaching and mentoring.

Types and Frequency of JEPL Offered By ECEAP Programs (by Organization Type) (N=20)



Note on Frequency: Some directors noted multiple frequencies on each type of JEPL, so frequencies may add to more than the number of directors responding.

D. Contractor Self-Assessment Data Sources. The responding directors noted that they use the nine data sources illustrated in the chart below for *their Self-Assessments*. Overall, almost all use classroom environment, teacher-interaction and curriculum implementation tools. About half use math inventories and slightly less than half use DLL effectiveness and organizational support tools. This holds for organizations of different sizes. Some also used tools such as the *Strengthening Families Self-Assessment* and parent feed-back, WELS (Web-based Early Learning Data System used for Early Achievers), and student data. The chart shows sources used by type of organization to explore whether data sources vary by organizational type, but differences are slight.



Data Sources. Respondents named the tools that they used. Responses are below.

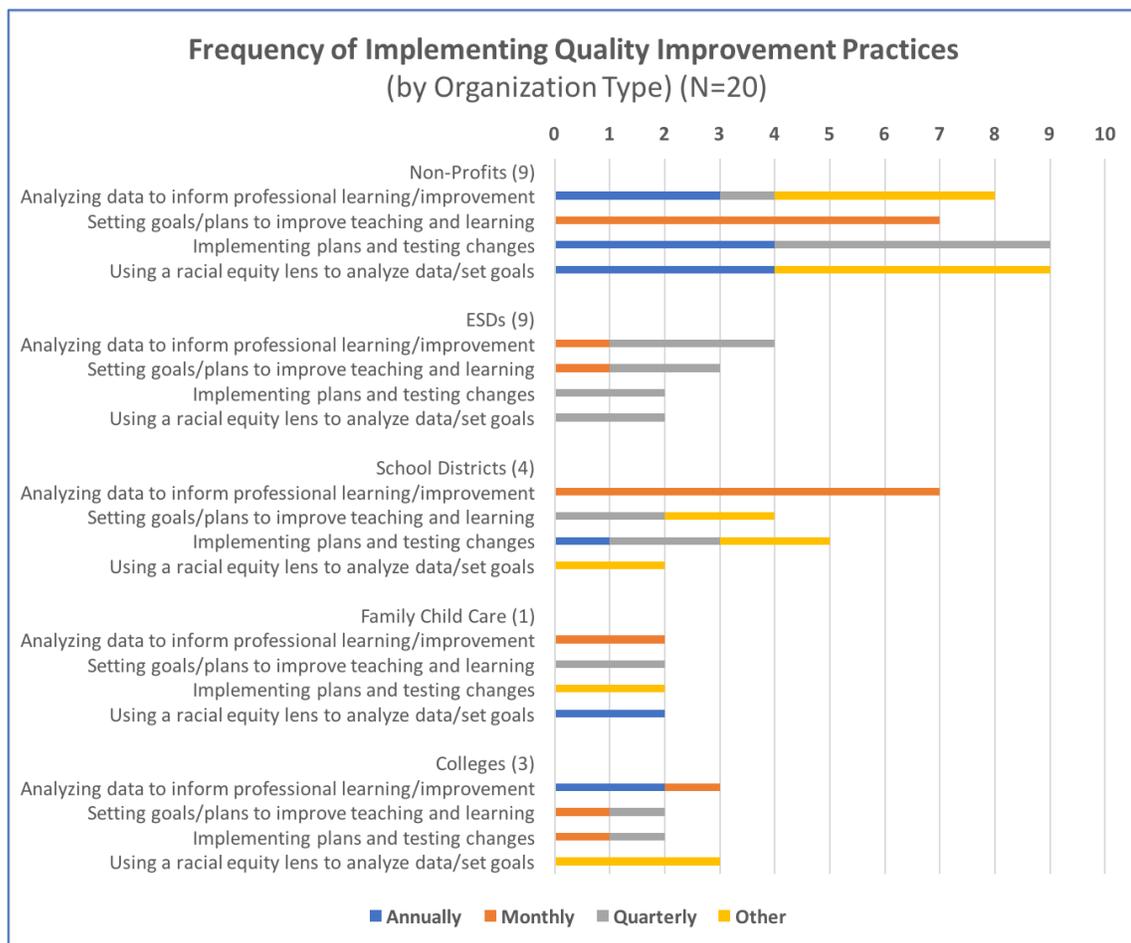
- Classroom Environment Data Sources.** *ERS* (16); *GOLD*® (2); Onsite monitoring (2); *DECA Reflective Checklist* (1); In-house checklist (2); *Creative Curriculum Checklist* (1); Reports in ELMS; *GOLD*® lesson plans; *ECEAP Performance Standards* (1); and, feedback from Parent Policy Council classroom representatives and parent groups participating in self-assessment (1).
- Teacher Interaction Data Sources.** *CLASS*® (7); *Creative Curriculum*® (11); *Early Achievers Guidelines*; and, *ECEAP Standards* (1).
- Curriculum Implementation Tools.** *Creative Curriculum*® tools (10); *GOLD*® (8); *High Scope* (1); *Estrellita* (1); *OWL*, *Dreambox*, *Second Step*, *Handwriting without Tears* student assessments (1)
- Math Inventories Tools.** *GOLD*® (4); *Creative Curriculum*® (2); Other (*OWL*, *Dreambox*, *Engage New York Math*) (2).
- Literacy Inventory Tools.** *GOLD*® (3); *Creative Curriculum*® (2); David Matteson tools (2); *ECERS/FCERS* (2); and, *Owl* (1).
- Financial/ Budgeting Tools:** Responses included a mix of budgeting tools and child learning tools. The budgeting tools noted were: fiscal and accounting departments (6); *Abila* (2); and, Other (*EXCEL*, *Expense summary*) (2). Child learning related tools included: *Dual Language Tools*; *GOLD*® (4); and, Other (*Estrellita*, *OWL*, *Dreambox*, *Teaching Strategies Checklist*) (2).
- Dual Language Learner (DLL) Effectiveness Tools.** This was the least used source of child learning related data used in developing the Self Assessments. Just less than half of the non-profits used DLL tools as did one-third of ESD's and colleges.
- Organizational Support Tools.** Each respondent named different tools: *Child Plus*; *Wipfli Work Culture Study*; staff surveys; *Early Achievers coach*; *Gold*® *Plus*; calendars; planning books; file boxes; Excel spreadsheets; calendars; planners and, *Organizational Health Inventory*.

9. **Other Tools.** Each respondent named different tools: *Strengthening Families Self-Assessment*; parent observations; parent surveys; ELMS; *ChildPlus*; District classroom observation tool; Family Survey; pre/ post student lesson assessment; and, *ECEAP Performance Standards*.

Items one-three above are related to Early Achievers, which highlights the focus on Early Achievers ratings. ECEAP is now working on developing Dual Language Learner and math tools and training.

- E. **Quality Improvement Practices.** Directors responded that they used the following four practices with the frequencies noted in the chart on the following page. The most frequently used practice is “setting goals and making plans to improve teaching and learning” with (16) doing so monthly or quarterly. The least frequent practice was using a racial equity lens with five not responding to the question and/or commenting that this is an area for growth. This suggests that an increased focus on racial equity would be beneficial. No trends were seen based on the number of slots.

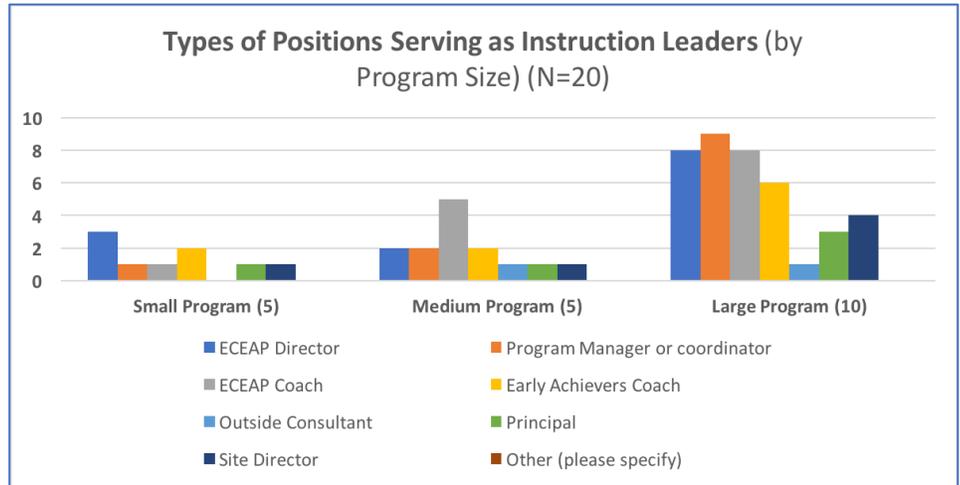
Responses suggest that a greater focus on the quality improvement cycle would be beneficial. For example, respondents did not show consistent high frequencies of both analyzing data to improve teacher/learning and setting plans to improve teaching/learning. Kindergarten readiness data illustrate the importance of racial equity to DEL’s goal that 90% of children will be ready for kindergarten by 2020 and that race and income will no longer predict success. The responses suggest that this, too, could benefit from a more intensive focus. This is underway through DEL’s Racial Equity Initiative.



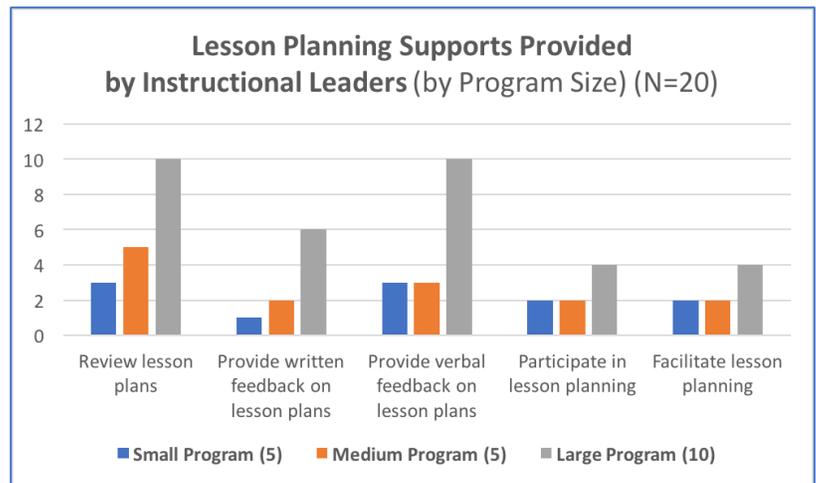
F. Instructional Leaders. As shown in the chart, eight different types of positions serve as instructional leaders. The survey asked directors to check all applicable options concerning the types of positions that serve as their instructional leaders. All but one of the 20 directors checked multiple responses. Overall, more than half use ECEAP coaches (14), ECEAP directors (13), program managers or coordinators (12) and Early Achievers coaches (10) as instructional leaders. However, substantial numbers use principals (7) and ECEAP site directors (6) as well. Others noted early learning content specialists (2), a family support specialist (1) and efforts to strengthen peer support (1).

This makes sense as larger programs are more likely to have systematic structures and training capacity than smaller programs. This would be useful to consider when developing the shared services alliances.

Small programs depended more on Early Achievers coaches, medium programs on ECEAP coaches, and larger programs on program managers or directors as instructional leaders.



1. **Coordination Among Instructional Leaders.** Where there was more than one instructional leader; over half met to coordinate their support for teachers monthly (11) or quarterly; (4) Few meet more often (3); and, two note no meetings among instructional leaders.
2. **Methods of Support for Lesson Planning.** The most frequently used methods were: reviewing lesson plans (18); and, providing verbal feedback on lesson plans (16). Next most frequent were: providing written feedback on lesson plans (9); participating in lesson planning (8); and, facilitating lesson planning (8). One director noted that methods vary by site. Other responses included: class visits and discussions; complete classroom observations on lesson plan implementation; TA on reflective practice; 1:1 support; coaching; and, individualized training as needed. All large programs reviewed and provided verbal feedback on lesson plans. No trends were found by organizational type.



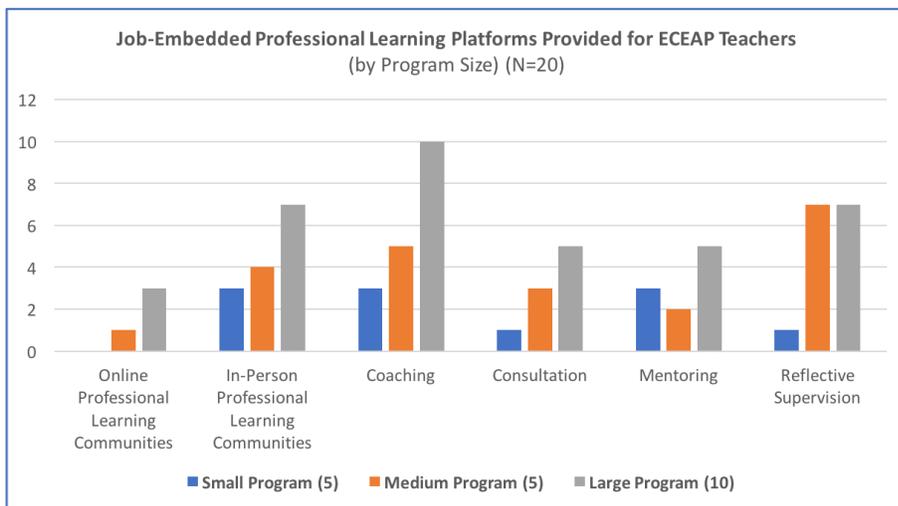
G. Job-Embedded Professional Learning (JEPL). Almost all respondents said that they provided JEPL for direct service staff (17-yes, 2-no). Most provided JEPL for teachers (15) and some provided it for family support staff (7). A few respondents said that they provided JEPL for center directors (4), program managers (4), coaches (4), health staff (3), instructional leaders (2) and administrative staff (2). (Responses may be incomplete due to an online survey issue.)

As shown in the chart on the next page, proportions of programs that used different methods varied somewhat by program size. All larger programs provided coaching, with more than half providing in-person professional learning

communities and reflective supervision. Proportionally, more mid-size programs used reflective supervision. About half of the small programs used in-person professional learning communities, coaching and mentoring.

Job-Embedded Professional Learning Platforms. Directors were also asked what platforms they used for JELP and the frequency of each.

1. **Teacher Peer Learning and Collaboration Frequency.** Over half of the 20 responding ECEAP directors noted that teachers meet for peer learning monthly (11). Some meet weekly (4), twice per month (2), or quarterly (2). One met less than quarterly.

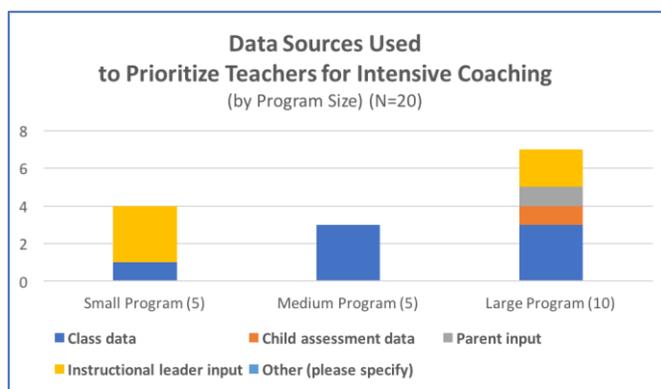


2. **Instructional Leader Frequency of Participating in Teacher Peer Learning.** As above, slightly more than half of the respondents, noted that instructional leaders participated in teacher peer learning monthly (11). Few met more frequently (weekly -4, twice monthly -2). One met less than quarterly.
3. **Frequency of Coaching for Teachers.** Most teachers received monthly coaching (13). Few received coaching weekly (3), and one each for “twice monthly”, “quarterly” and “less often than quarterly”.

Responses suggest a strong base from which to grow job-embedded professional development. Fewer of the small programs provided JEPL which suggests that this might be a beneficial area to grow through coaching, technical assistance or shared services alliances.

H. Prioritization of Teachers for Intensive Coaching. Almost all directors said that they have a system in place to prioritize teachers for intensive coaching (yes-17, no-2). To do this, most depend on CLASS® data (13). Some (8) use instructional leader input, with others using, child assessment data (5), and parent input (3). The four who relied on a sole source used guidance from instructional leaders. The two who replied “no” noted that they are developing these systems. (Responses may not be accurate due to an issue with the online survey.)

1. **Data Sources Used to Prioritize Teachers for Intensive Coaching.** As shown in the adjoining chart, CLASS® data was cited as the most frequently used source to prioritize teachers for intensive coaching (13). Others used: instructional leader input (9); child assessment data (6); and, parent input (3). As shown in the chart, larger programs used more data sources. Medium programs depended on CLASS® data and small programs mostly used instructional leader input.



2. **Frequency of Coaching per Month for Prioritized Teachers.** Almost half of the directors said that they provided coaching to prioritized teachers monthly (9). Others did so weekly (4); twice monthly (1); and, less than quarterly (1). There were no evident trends related to contractor type or number of slots, except that a small program was the only one to state that they provided this coaching less than quarterly.

3. Duration of Coaching for Prioritized Teachers. The most frequent duration of coaching was 1-2 hours per week (7); followed by less than one hour per week (6); and, 3 or more hours per week (3).

This was a very strong response. A next step might be to research best practices and embed this in training, coaching or technical assistance.

- I. **Scheduled Time per Month for Teachers to Plan Lessons.** Responses about scheduled time for teachers to plan lessons varied widely from “sixteen or more hours per month” (8); to “8-15 hours per month” (4); to “less than eight hours per month” (7). There were no discernable trends by organization type or size. Interestingly, small programs had both some of the largest number of hours (20 per week) and smallest (5 per week) allotted for planning. Of the nineteen directors who responded, fifteen said that this included time with the classroom team (for example, teacher aide or assistant) and five said that it did not.

Here again, this was a strong response. This compares to Early Achievers standards¹ which call for teaching teams to have one hour per week or four hours per month of planning time.

- J. **Training.** Directors were asked which of the seven methods and information sources shown in the they used to determine what training is provided to direct service staff. Most used all sources shown in the chart except for parent input (8) and promising practices (2). No comments were offered concerning the types of promising practices.

Methods and Information Sources Used to Determine Staff Training (N=20)	
Method / Information Source	Responses
Parent Input	8
Staff Input	20
Provided by the State	12
Connected to Early Achievers	18
Data Informed	15
Research-Based	13
Promising Practices	2

1. Methods for Determining Effectiveness. Directors were also asked an open-ended question about how they determined the effectiveness of the training. Fifteen used more than one method. Almost all used multiple methods. Almost half used observations and coaching feedback to determine effectiveness (9). This was followed by staff feedback on the training (8), and coaching feedback (6). Two noted that they were working to develop methods. No trends were seen by organizational type or number of slots.
2. Languages in Which Training Is Provided. Directors were asked in which languages (in addition to English) they provide training. Four responded that they provide training in Spanish. Two responded that they would provide interpretation/translation if needed. None responded that they provide training in Arabic, Amharic, Russian, Somali or Vietnamese.

It was positive to see that the directors are using multiple sources to decide on training for direct services staff. This a high bar from which to consider next steps.

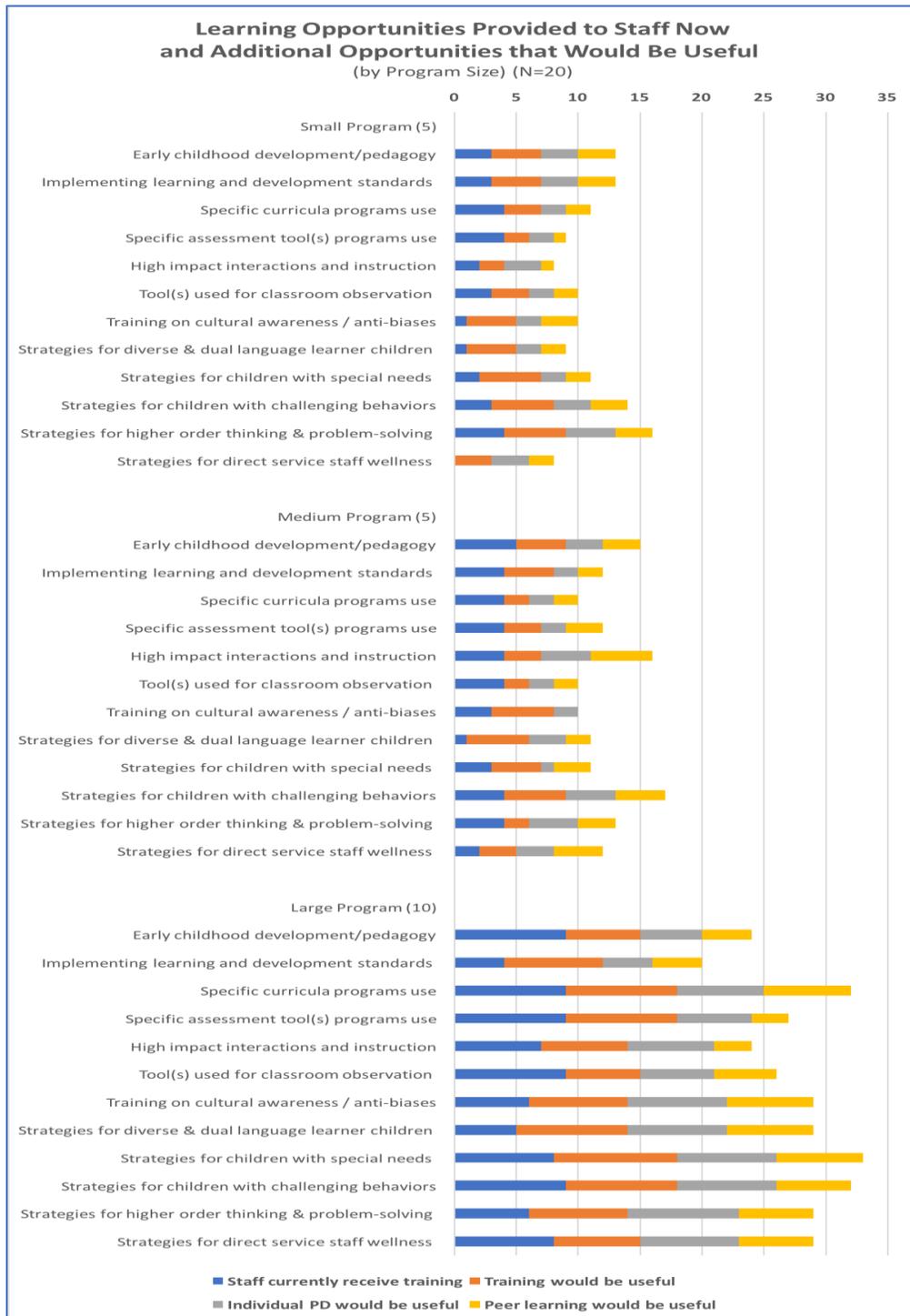
- K. **Learning Opportunities for Direct Service staff.** Directors were asked which of the twelve types of learning opportunities shown in the chart on the next page (by organizational slot size) are provided for direct service staff and what additional opportunities they think would be useful. Responses for each are noted below.

1. Direct Service Staff Currently Receive Training in These Areas
Overall more than half said that direct service staff receive training (e.g. workshops, training, conferences, college courses) in these areas.
 - a. Early childhood development and pedagogy specific to Pre-K - Yes (17)
 - b. Specific curricula programs use - Yes (17)
 - c. Specific assessment tool(s) programs use - Yes (17)
 - d. Tool(s) used for classroom observation - Yes (16)

¹ Guide to the Interactive Rating Tool, IRR # 31

- e. Implementing state’s Pre-K learning and development standards in relation to curriculum - Yes (11)
- f. High impact interactions and instruction - Yes (13)
- g. Training on one’s own cultural awareness and anti-biases - Yes (10)

It was positive to see how many contractors provide training on topics “a” to “d.” (The state provides training on “b”, “c”, “d” and some of “f” above in curriculum trainings.)



2. More Training for Direct Service Staff Would Be Useful in These Areas

Overall more than half said that more training (e.g. workshops, training, conferences, college courses) in these areas would be useful for direct service staff.

- a. Training on one's own cultural awareness and anti-biases - Yes (17)
- b. Implementing state's Pre-K learning and development standards in relation to curriculum - Yes (16)
- c. Specific curricula programs use - Yes (14)
- d. High impact interactions and instruction - Yes (12)
- e. Early childhood development and pedagogy specific to Pre-K - Yes (14)
- f. Specific assessment tool(s) programs use - Yes (14)
- g. Tool(s) used for classroom observation - Yes (11)

Response options "f" and "g" are where the most trainings are offered for Early Achievers and rating readiness, so it makes sense that desire for more training in these areas is a bit lower. With consideration to current training provided, the highest priorities for more training might be areas "a", "b" and "e". Response option "b" is the low hanging fruit as could easily be incorporated into current curriculum training.

3. More Individual Professional Development Would Be Useful for Direct Service Staff in These Areas

Overall more than half said that more individual professional development (e.g. coaching, consultation, mentoring) in these areas would be useful for direct service staff.

- a. Early childhood development and pedagogy specific to Pre-K - Yes (11)
- b. Specific curricula programs use - Yes (11)
- c. Specific assessment tool(s) programs use - Yes (10)
- d. High impact interactions and instruction - Yes (14)
- e. Tool(s) used for classroom observation - (10)

This, coupled with the analysis of training responses noted in 2 above, suggest a pathway for training and job-embedded professional learning going forward.

4. More Peer Learning Would Be Useful for Direct Service Staff in These Areas

Overall more than half said that more peer learning (e.g. community of practice, professional learning community) in these areas would be useful for direct service staff.

- a. Specific curricula programs use - Yes (11)
- b. Training on one's own cultural awareness and anti-biases - Yes (10)

There were slight variations in learning opportunities for instructional leaders based on program size (number of slots) as shown in the chart on the following page. For example, there was more interest in individual professional development in large programs than in small- and medium-sized programs.

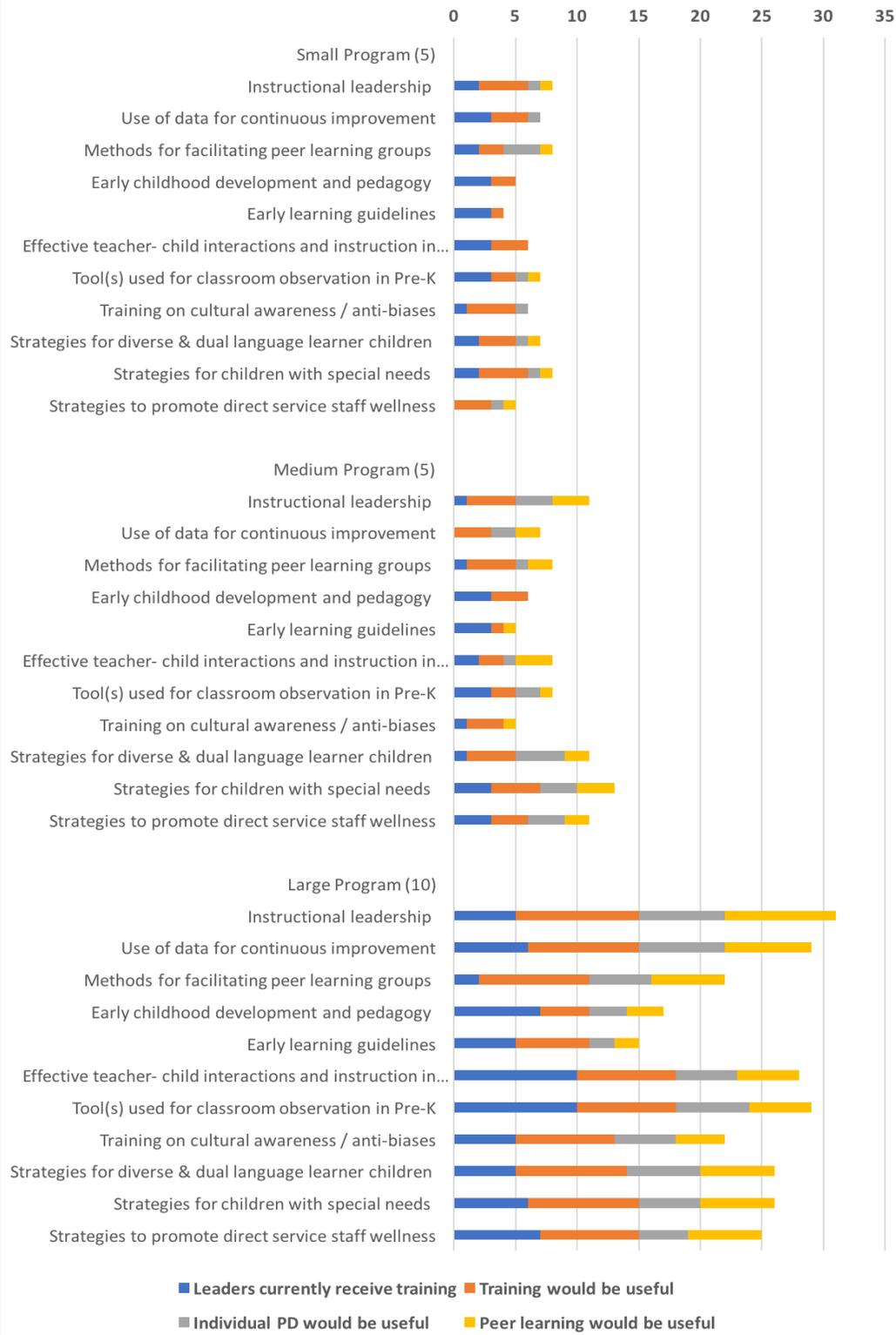
L. Learning opportunities for Instructional Leaders. Directors were asked which of the twelve types of learning opportunities shown in the chart on the next page (by organizational slot size) are provided for instructional leaders and what additional opportunities they think would be useful.

1. Instructional Leaders Currently Receive Training in These Areas

Overall more than half said that instructional leaders receive training (e.g. workshops) in these areas.

- a. Tool(s) used for classroom observation in Pre-K (e.g. CLASS®, ECERS) - (16)
- b. Effective teacher- child interactions and instruction in Pre-K - (15)
- c. Early childhood development and pedagogy - (13)
- d. Early learning guidelines - (11)
- e. Strategies that support the learning and development of children with special needs (including challenging behaviors) in inclusive settings - (11)
- f. Strategies that promote direct service staff wellness and avoidance of burnout - (10)

Learning Opportunities Instructional Leaders Receive Now and Additional Learning Needed to Improve Practice (by Program Size) (N=20)



2. More Training for Instructional Leaders Would Be Useful in These Areas

Overall, more than half said that more training (e.g. workshops, training, conferences, college courses) in these areas would be useful for instructional leaders.

- a. Instructional leadership - (18)
- b. Strategies that support the learning and development of children with special needs (including challenging behaviors) in inclusive settings - (17)
- c. Strategies that support the development of children who are dual language learners and represent diverse backgrounds and cultures - (16)
- d. Use of data for continuous improvement - (15)
- e. Methods for facilitating peer learning groups (community of practice, professional learning community) - (15)
- f. Training on one's own cultural awareness and anti-biases - (15)
- g. Strategies that promote direct service staff wellness and avoiding burnout - (14)
- h. Effective teacher- child interactions and instruction in Pre-K - (13)
- i. Tool(s) used for classroom observation in Pre-K (e.g. *CLASS*[®], ECERS) - (12)
- j. Strategies that promote direct service staff wellness and avoidance of burnout - Yes (12)

3. More Individual Professional Development Would Be Useful for Instructional Leaders in These Areas

Overall, more than half said that more individual professional development (e.g. coaching, consultation, mentoring) in these areas would be useful for instructional leaders.

- a. Strategies that promote direct service staff wellness and avoidance of burnout - Yes (12)
- b. Instructional leadership - (11)
- c. Strategies that support the development of children who are dual language learners and represent diverse backgrounds and cultures - (11)
- d. Use of data for continuous improvement – (10)

4. More Peer Learning Would Be Useful for Instructional Leaders in These Areas

Overall, more than half said that more peer learning (e.g. community of practice, professional learning community) in these areas would be useful for instructional leaders.

- a. Instructional leadership - (13)
- b. Strategies that support the learning and development of children with special needs (including challenging behaviors) in inclusive settings - (10)

There were slight variations in learning opportunities for instructional leaders based on program size as shown in the chart on the following page. For example, the interest in peer learning appears to increase with program size. ECEAP has not yet focused specifically on training and professional development for instructional leaders. So, these responses are a useful starting point. When developing the training and job-embedded professional learning it will be important to consider the multiple types of professionals who serve as instructional leaders and what, if anything, different is suggested for methods of supporting instructional leaders such as directors and principals who were multiple hats.

M. Challenging Behaviors. Directors were asked to share the name of the formal approach they used to support children with challenging behaviors - if they had adopted one. Those who responded noted use of: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (9); Conscious Discipline (6); Pyramid Model (4); Building Blocks (2); and, Other (Second Step, CPI and one noting that the approaches were only used in some sites) (5). There did not appear to be trends based on program size or organizational type.

Questions? Contact ECEAP@DEL.WA.GOV