

## Report E

# 4K Teachers in Community Approach and Comparison Districts: 2005-06

Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership

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March, 2006

For the Early Education Matters project, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families  
with funding from The Joyce Foundation



## 4K Teachers in Community Approach and Comparison Districts: 2005-06

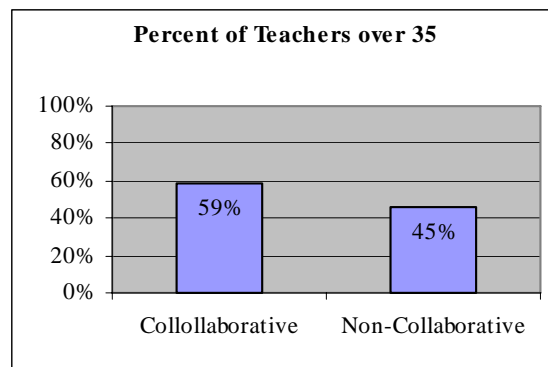
The fall, 2005 survey of 4-year-old kindergarten in Wisconsin included questionnaires to teachers and assistant teachers in 4K programs (the 33 community approach districts and the 32 randomly-selected comparison schools in districts offering 4K, but not in collaboration with Head Start or child care). These questionnaires were to be distributed by the administrator at one of the 175 sites included in this study (143 community approach sites and 32 comparison sites). We did not know exactly how many teachers there would be in these 4K districts, but sent what we believed would be a sufficient number of instruments per site; we encouraged administrators to distribute the questionnaires to all 4K teaching staff, no matter what position title people held. An online version of the questionnaire was also made available, and approximately 25% of teachers used that means to respond to the questionnaire.

We received teacher questionnaires from 73 teachers: 44 were from the community approach districts (noted as “collaborative” below) and 29 were from comparison districts (noted as “non-collaborative” below). Not all teachers answered all questions, but still these respondents provided a great detail of information about their work, their education and experience, their wages, and their professional development. Unfortunately, we heard from very few Milwaukee teachers – either because they were not provided the opportunity to respond or because they failed to return a questionnaire. Thus, the data on some demographics may be skewed toward respondents with higher income and more education.

### A. Teachers’ demographic information

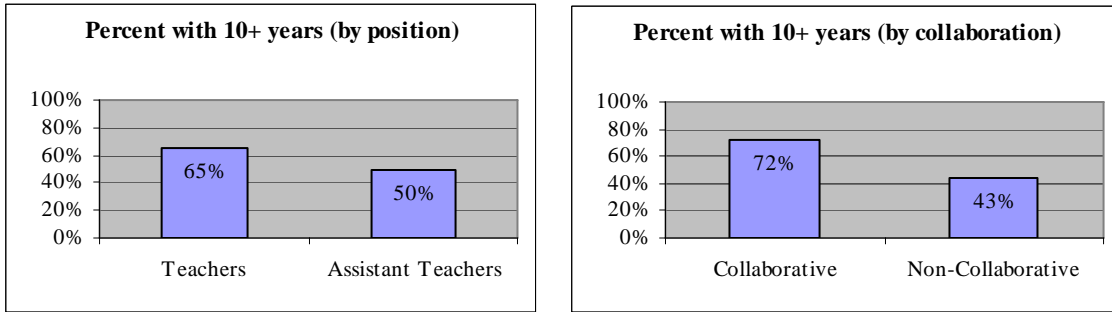
These 4K teachers were primarily mature adults: almost 60% of teachers in the collaborative districts and about 45% of those in the non-collaborative districts reported they were over age 35.

Figure 1: 4K Teachers 35 Years Old or Older



The 4K teachers responding to the questionnaires were also relatively experienced, with the majority of 4K teachers (65%) having been a teacher for more than 10 years (assistant teachers were slightly less experienced, with just about half reporting they had been a teacher for more than 10 years).

Figure 2: Teaching Experience among 4K Teachers



In terms of gender and race, this group of teachers was almost entirely female (99%) and 100% white race/ethnicity.

Figure 3: Teacher Gender

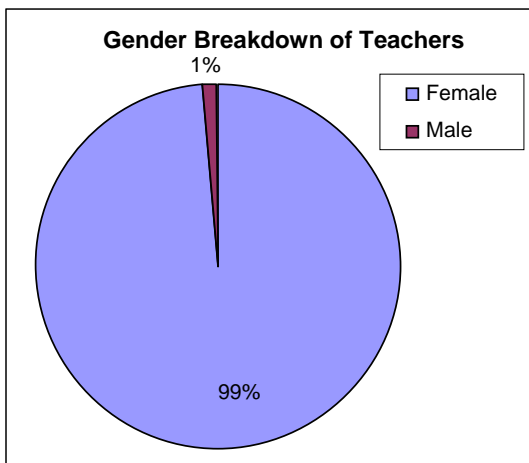
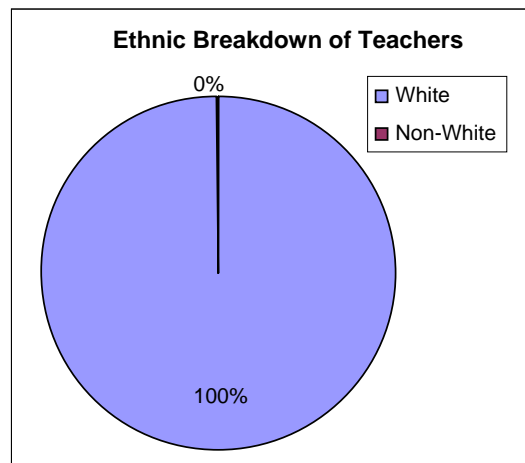


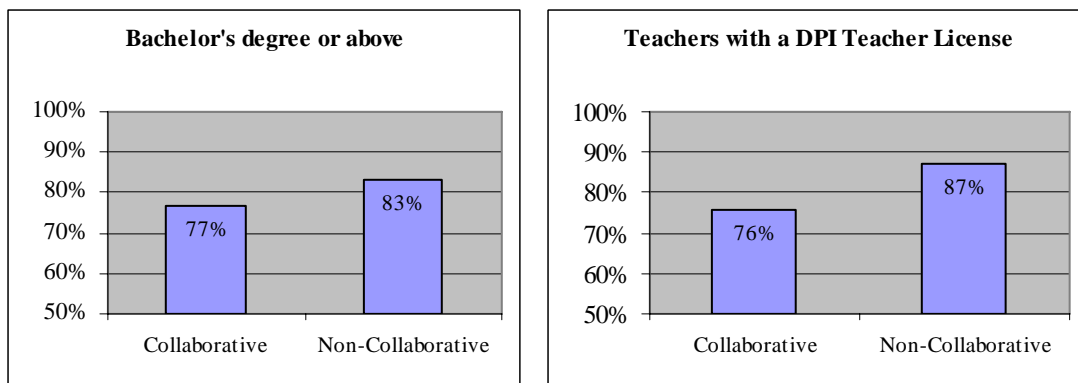
Figure 4: Teacher Ethnicity



## Education and licensure

In terms of their education, over three-quarters of 4K teachers said they had a Bachelor's degree, and about 20% had a Master's degree or above (see Figure 5). We also asked all teachers about their DPI teacher's license: over ¾ of the collaborative and over 80% of the non-collaborative teachers said they had a DPI license. While we asked for the type of license held, only a few (n = 31) reported the exact license type (the question may have been confusing since we asked for "license number" – which could mean an individual license number or the license type number, such as 080). Of the teachers reporting having a DPI license, specific license types included either a special educational needs/pre-K license, a regular special educational needs license, a "lifetime" license, or a license to teach grades 1-8. This is an area that will need further exploration, since the type of license to teach Kindergarten (and 4K) has recently been revised by DPI. Though the responses were almost unusable, they are included here because this was viewed as an opportunity to see how much 4K, child care, and Head Start are influenced by DPI licensure.

Figure 5: 4K Teacher Education



## Salaries and wages

Because we were asking income questions for teachers in child care, Head Start, and public schools – each with differing methods for paying teachers - we provided income options (either salaries for those who are non-exempt employees, say of a district, or wages, for those who are paid hourly). The data on salaries and wages show that many teachers in collaborative 4K earn well above the average for the early care and education field, with 68% of teachers as a group earning over \$30,000/year. However, only slightly over half of the teachers in collaborative 4K earn more than \$30,000/year while over three-quarters of teachers in non-collaborative 4K programs earn more than \$30,000/year (see Figures 6 and 7). Far fewer teachers in collaborative 4K reported salaries, as opposed to wages per hour. We had relatively few responses from assistant teachers, and they reported far lower income.

Figure 6: Teacher Salaries by Collaboration

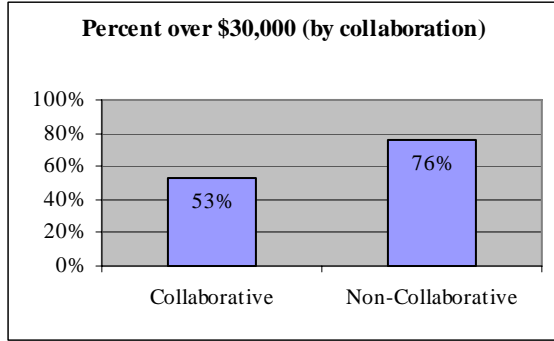
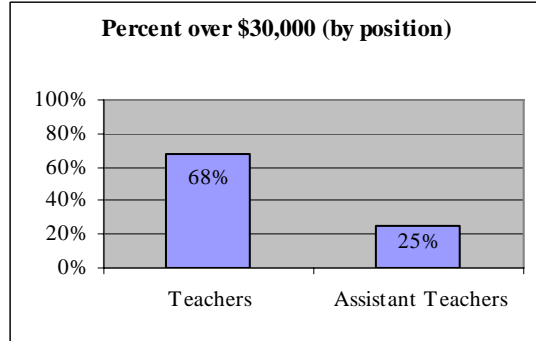


Figure 7: Teacher Salaries by Position



When we turn to hourly wage-earning teachers, we found that two-thirds of all teachers responding earned over \$13/hour (which would be about \$26,000/year for full-time work). None of the non-collaborative, comparison district teachers reported being paid hourly (see Figures 8 and 9). These incomes are in sharp contrast to the most recent child care workforce study (Brief #16, 2005) which reported an average of just over \$8/hour for all teachers in child care centers.

Figure 8: Teacher Wages by Collaboration

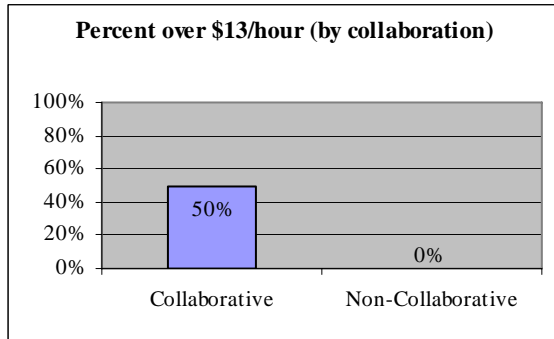
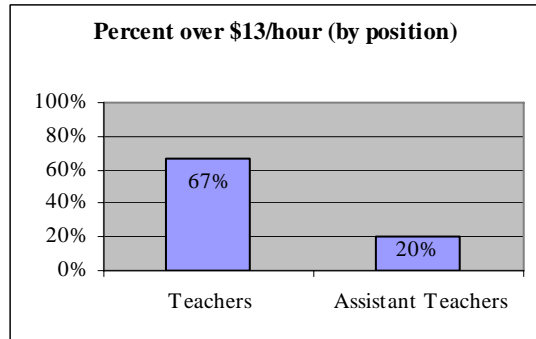
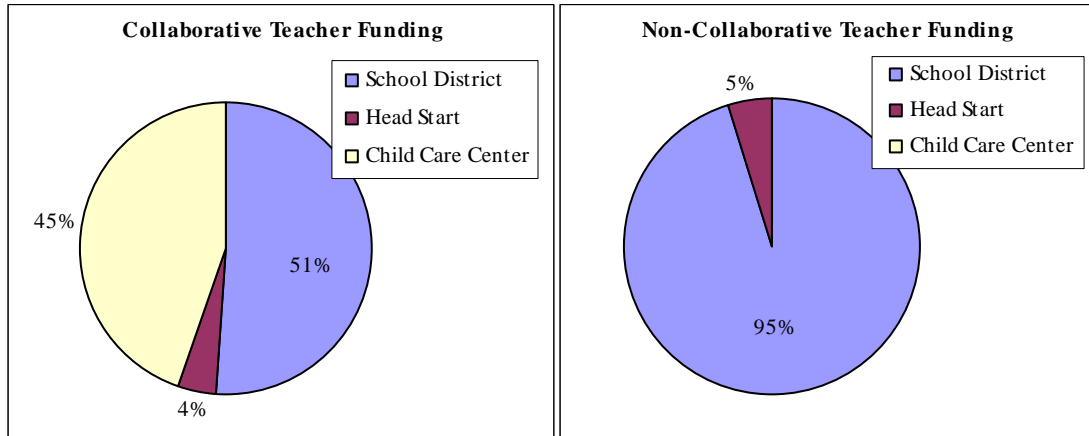


Figure 9: Teacher Wages by Position



When we examine teacher salaries by type of employer (school, child care, or Head Start), we see a clear pattern showing that the community approach districts are sharing their 4K dollars in ways that can be of value to child care and Head Start teachers. In the comparison (shown as non-collaborative) districts, a small percentage (5%) of teachers reported being paid by Head Start, with all the rest being hired and paid by the district (see Figure 10).

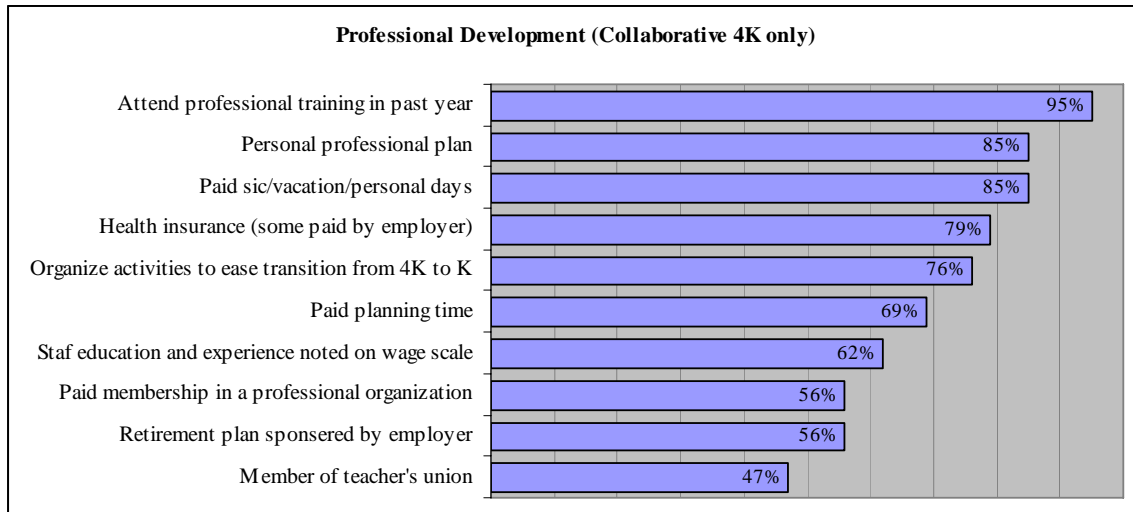
Figure 10: 4K Teachers' Employers



**Professional development**

We asked teachers in various types of community approach settings – no matter which entity was their employer - to describe their professional development practices, those activities or employee benefits that promote professional growth as teachers. The community approach district teachers' responses follow in Figure 11. Nearly all teachers (95%) had participated in professional training, credit-based courses, and/or conferences within the last year. Over half were members in a professional organization, less than half were members of a teacher's union. Just over two-thirds of teachers reported they had paid planning time to prepare for the 4K program (for an average of 3 hours/week of paid time). The data are reported for all teachers, whether hired by public schools, Head Start, or child care.

Figure 11: Professional Development Activities/Benefits



## Curriculum

We asked teachers what curriculum they used for the 4K children. It was clear that the non-collaborative districts primarily use their own or the district's curriculum (93% of these teachers said they did so). Across all settings, teachers reported using the Creative Curriculum (just over one-third of teachers), Work Sample Analysis (10% of teachers), or the High/Scope curriculum (3% of teachers) (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Curriculum Used for 4K Classrooms

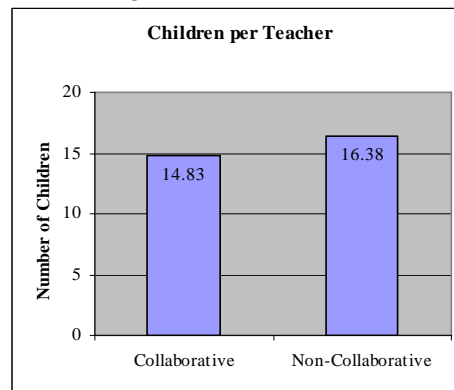
Curriculum	Total		Collaborative		Non-Collaborative	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
High/Scope	2	2.90%	2	4.35%	0	0.00%
Work Sample Anal.	6	8.70%	4	8.70%	2	8.70%
Creative Curriculum	28	40.58%	23	50.00%	5	21.74%
Project Approach	3	4.35%	1	2.17%	2	8.70%
District-Defined	22	31.88%	13	28.26%	9	39.13%
Your own curriculum	45	65.22%	30	65.22%	15	65.22%
Other	13	18.84%	10	21.74%	3	13.04%
No Answer	3		1		2	
Total Answered	69		46		23	

\*NOTE: Teachers were allowed to select more than one curriculum.

## Ratios

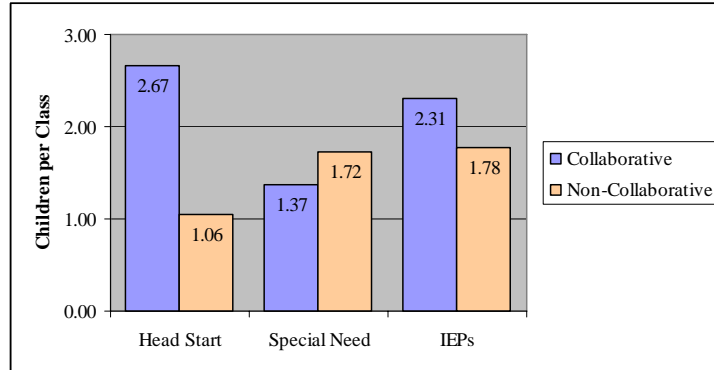
It is always difficult to say with certainty how child to staff ratios are implemented in early childhood programs because, from day to day, children are in attendance at different times of the day, for different schedules of the week. The number of children per classroom was asked for in both the 4K Administrator Questionnaire that was part of this 4K survey, and also in the teacher questionnaire. Across all 175 sites (32 non-collaborative and 143 in the community approach (collaborative) sites), we found an average of about 15:1 (children to adults), though there was great variation in the range of children to adults, ranging from 5:1 to 25:1. In the community approach sites, the ratio was an average of 14.83 children per teacher, while in the non-collaborative the ratio was 16.38 children per teacher (see Figure 13). Child care licensing rules specify 13:1 for that age group; high quality standards for child care centers recommend 10:1. Figure 13 combined all types of community approach districts (Head Start collaborations with 1-2 sites, child care collaborations with 1-2 sites, and combinations of Head Start, child care, and public schools with 3 –11+ sites) to compute the overall ratios.

Figure 13: 4K Ratios



In addition to reporting on the number of children in their classrooms, teachers also reported on the number of low-income children receiving Head Start funding, the number with identified special needs and the number with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), for children with disabilities. These teachers reported that an average of 2.27 children in their 4K classrooms had special needs, and 1.8 children had an IEP (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Head Start, Special Needs, and IEPs



## Schedules

It would not be surprising to learn that the majority of 4K teachers work part-time, and most work part-year (because schools do not usually offer 4K in the summer). The majority, however, (62%) of the teachers in the collaborative 4K programs have 4K classes 5 days a week, while the percentage of teachers in the non-collaborative, comparison 4K programs having 5/day/week classes is only 37%. The daily schedules, and the start and stop hours of the program, will be further analyzed – but it appears that the majority of 4K programs are offered 2.5 hours/day for 2-4 days/week.

Figure 15: Daily 4K Classroom Schedules

Days per week	Total		Collaborative		Non-Collaborative	
	Count	Percentile	Count	Percentile	Count	Percentile
2	11	10.58%	5	7.81%	6	15.00%
3	3	2.88%	2	3.13%	1	2.50%
4	35	33.65%	17	26.56%	18	45.00%
5	55	52.88%	40	62.50%	15	37.50%
No Answer	40		30		10	
Total Answered	104		64		40	

## Conclusion

The 4K teachers in this study of community approach and comparison districts were mostly experienced, well paid, and mature teachers. They would, in all likelihood, have professional expectations influenced by having some amount of paid health care, retirement, and being part of a wage/salary scale that recognizes degrees and years of experience. These teachers mostly work part-time, though the child care teachers pointed to their larger number of work hours per week.

Teachers' comments about their involvement in the collaborations reveal – sometimes – not enough understanding about the expectations of the community approach, with the public school personnel more in touch with what goes on than the community approach Head Start or child care sites.

4K can be seen as a positive value to the teachers because of the salaries and community collaboration role, though it is an uncertain designation. In the two-years of the EEM project, we found 51 sites at the start of the project, 78 sites at the end of Year I, and 143 sites at the close of Year II. In the process, however, we learned that two districts had closed their 4K programs, and there was considerable shifting and expansion of 4K classrooms within districts from year to year. Thus, the role of “4K teacher” may be tenuous and subject to decisions made at the district, rather than the school, level.

The future of 4K teachers will also be affected by professional development efforts for child care and Head Start teachers, and discussions within teachers' unions about pay, benefits, and expectations. Further definitions of “4K community approach” will evolve, and it is hoped that information about the types of teacher training and professional development needed for quality pre-kindergarten experiences will help inform that process.