

SCHOOLS AT THE CENTRE

*Findings from Case Studies Exploring
Seamless Early Learning in Ontario*



ZEENAT JANMOHAMED

KERRY MCCUAIG

EMIS AKBARI

ROMONA GANANATHAN

JENNY JENKINS



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

The Study



- Explores impact of FDK and EDP on educators, families and early years administrators
- Three Ontario regions, four school boards
- Mixed methods including surveys, interviews, focus groups and text analysis
- Research partnership between Atkinson Centre, school boards, regional governments, community stakeholders

Policy Context



- *With Our Best Future in Mind* (2009)
- Amendments to *Education Act*
- Merged children's services and education (FRP, PFLC)
- Introduction of new kindergarten curriculum

- Full day kindergarten (2010-2014) – 250,000 children
- FDK/EDP educator teams
- Created 10,000 new ECE positions (public sector)

- Parent entitlement to before and after school care
- Contracted- and school board- operated extended day programs

- *Revisions to the ECE Act*
- *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*

Case Study: Waterloo Region

- 2009 - Licensed care available in 28 schools with 1,523 spaces
- 2014 – EDP in 80 out of 87 schools serving approximately 4,000 children – fees lowered to \$24.50
- 53 Youth Development Programs offered by community providers + developed by Conestoga College
- Conestoga College modeled the transition as a child care operator to serving younger children and as a training institution to supporting ECEs in FDK/EDP settings
- Centralized fee collection and registry operated by the region assists families to access services

Case Study: Ottawa Carleton



- 2009 – Licensed care available in 44 schools
- 2014 – Extended Day and licensed child care in 100 out of 117 schools serving approximately 6,000 students – fees range from \$ 22.00 for OCDSB to \$ 32.00 for community
- To accommodate equity of service, Ottawa lowered the 12 child requirement to run an EDP to three children
- Also directly operates preschool programs

Case Study: Halton Region



- 2009 – Two school boards – Public and Catholic
- 2010 - Boards offered extended day in all year one schools where there was demand
- 2012 – HDSB contracted out after school programs due funding restrictions to 7 organizations – fees from \$31.00- \$42.70
- HCDSB – Contract with only the Y
- 2014 – Available in majority of schools
- School Boards have ‘no wait list’ policy but providers cannot find qualified staff
- ‘Record number’ of programs operating with directors exemption

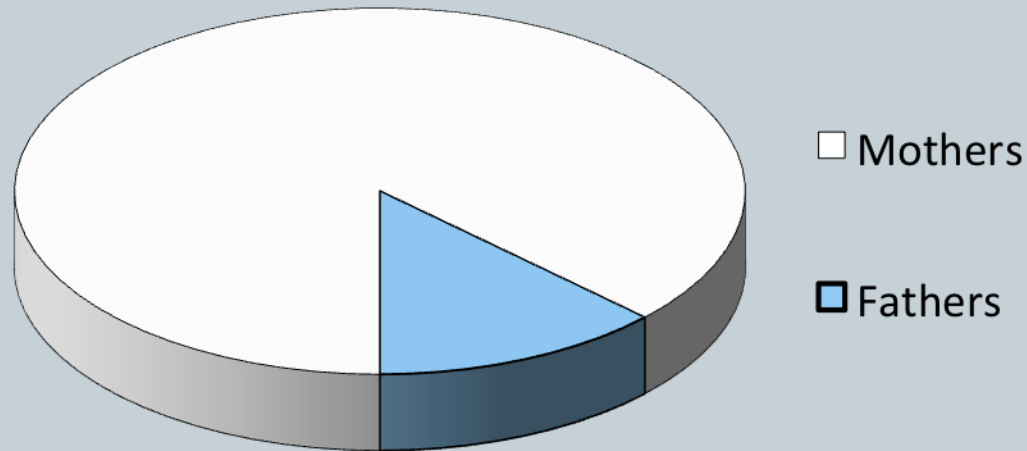
Key Findings



- Implementation challenges less significant compared to year 1
- PD opportunities for RECEs depend on administrator flexibility and school budgets
- Role of educators are becoming clearer
- Lack of PD, program planning time for RECEs a problem across all boards
- Limited knowledge about RECEs and play-based learning
- Significant pressure to ensure literacy and numeracy success

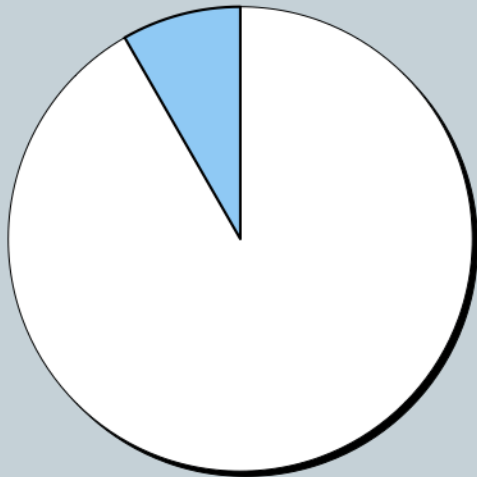
Parent Survey

- Surveys available online through the WRDSB, paper copies distributed by classroom educators
- First draw resulted in 133 parent responses



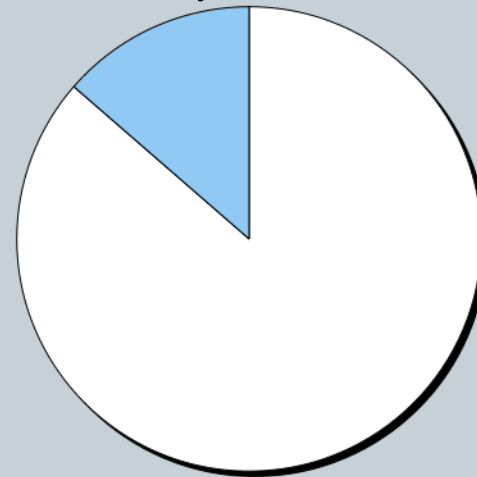
Parent Demographic

Marital Status



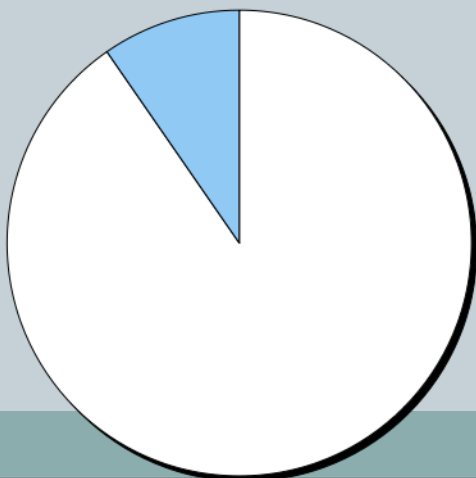
- Married
- Other

Country of Birth



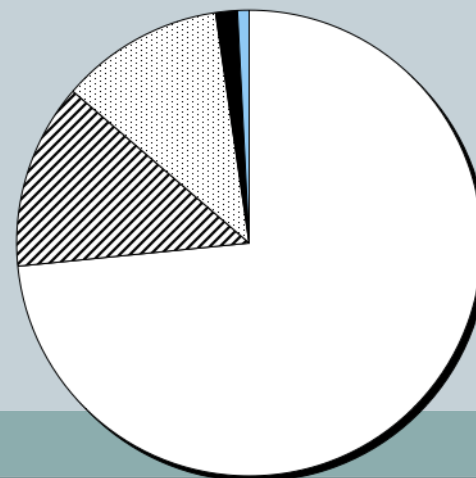
- Canada
- Other

Home Language



- English
- Other

Employment



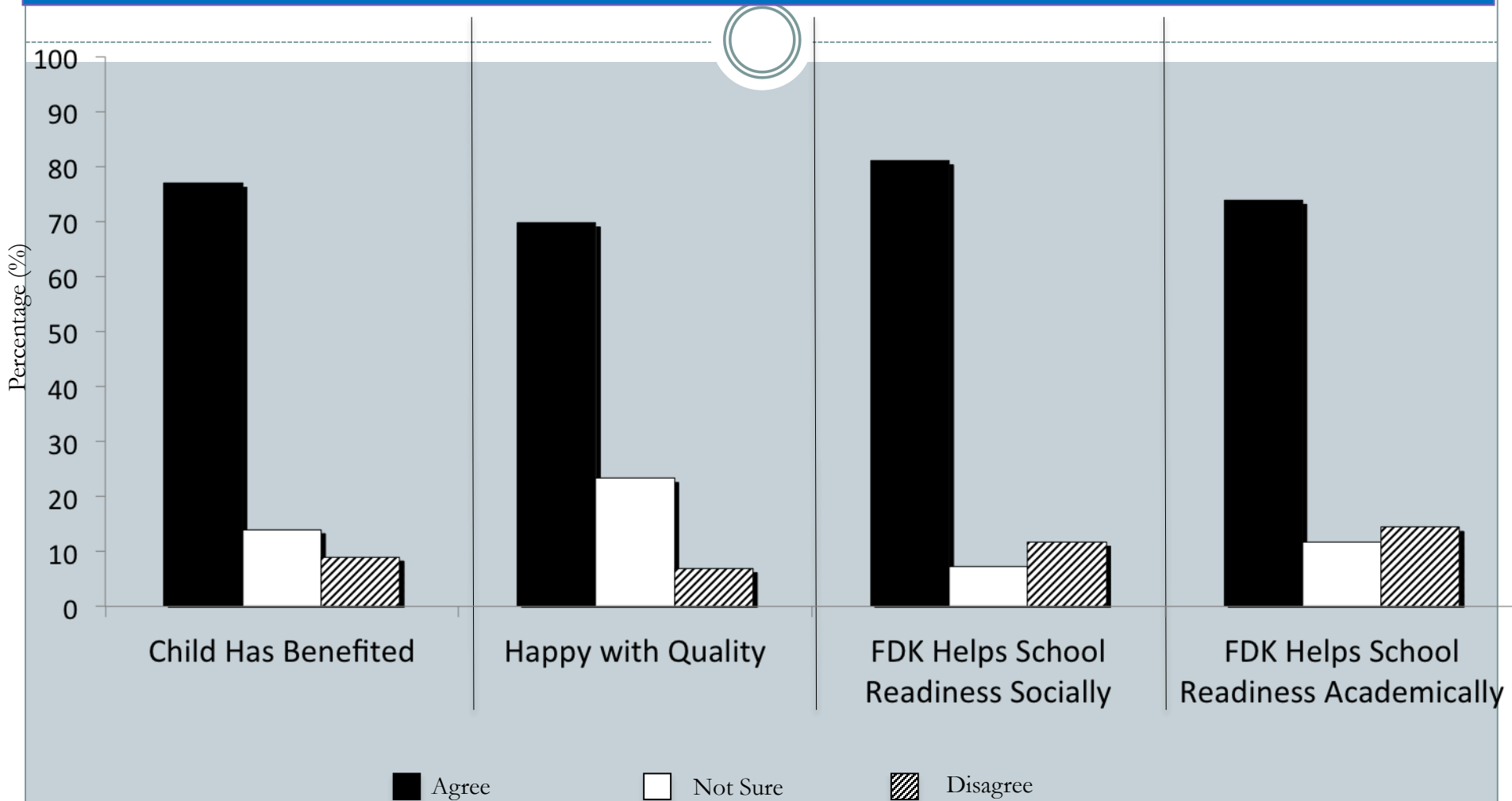
- Full Time
- Part Time
- Stay at Home
- Unemployed
- Student

Key Findings: Parents

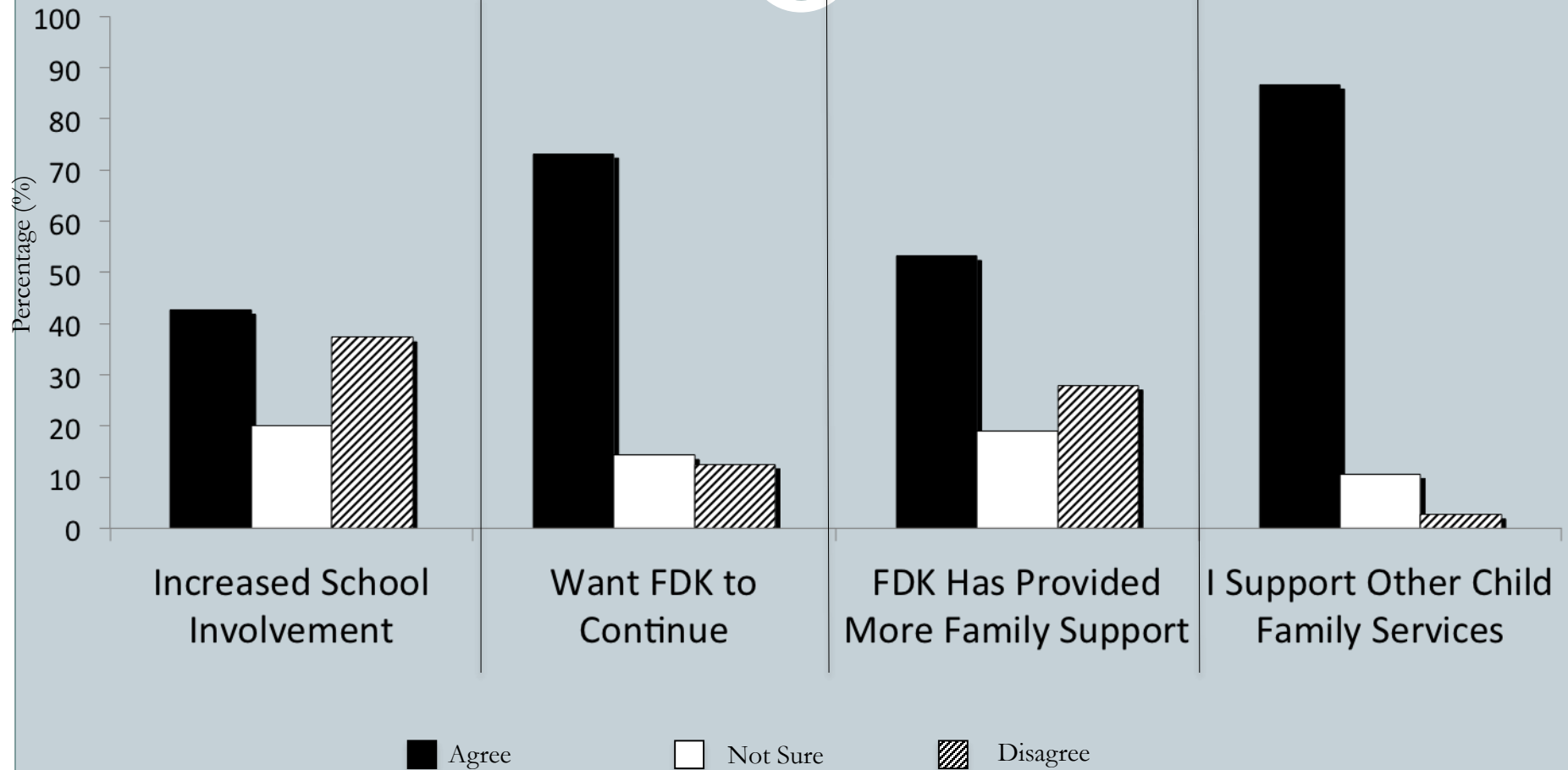
Survey and focus groups examined FDK/EDP impact on:

- Child and family life
- Impact on family stress levels
- Access to child care
- Parents' ability to work

Parent Satisfaction with Services

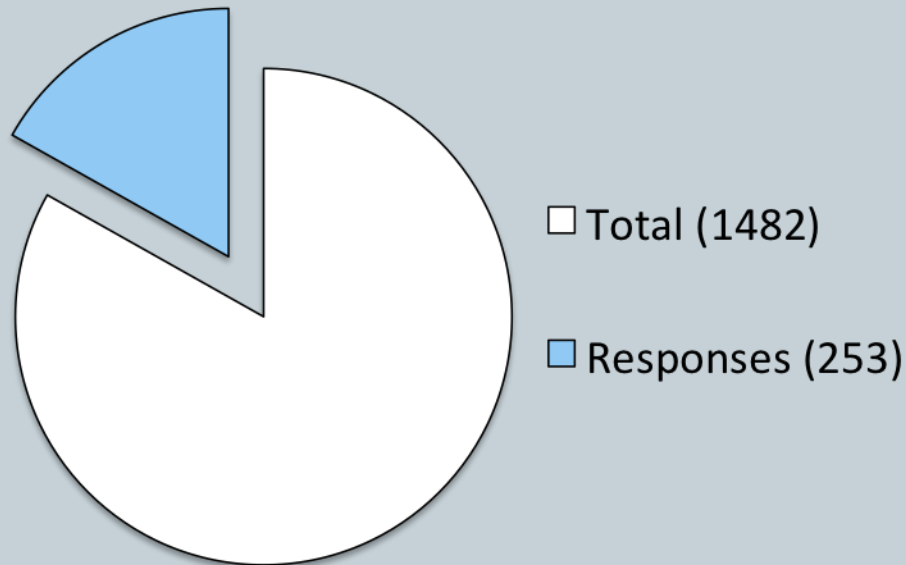


Parent Satisfaction with Services



Broadening Parent Input

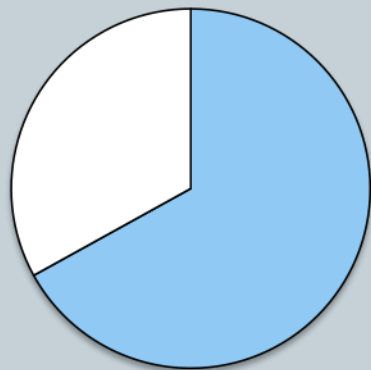
- Parents surveyed via the Region's child care subsidy list – 253 respondents



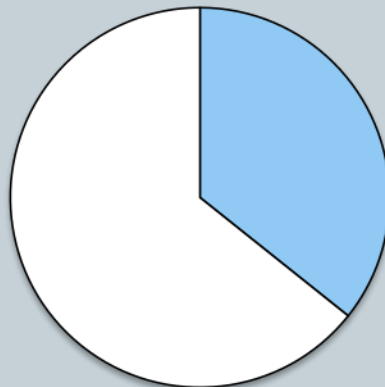
Parents Receiving Fee Subsidies and Parents on Subsidy Wait List



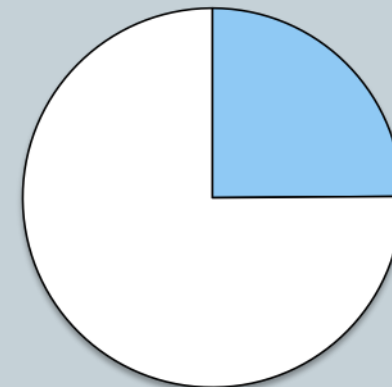
Child Care Source of
Financial Stress



Cost of Child Care
Reason for not Working



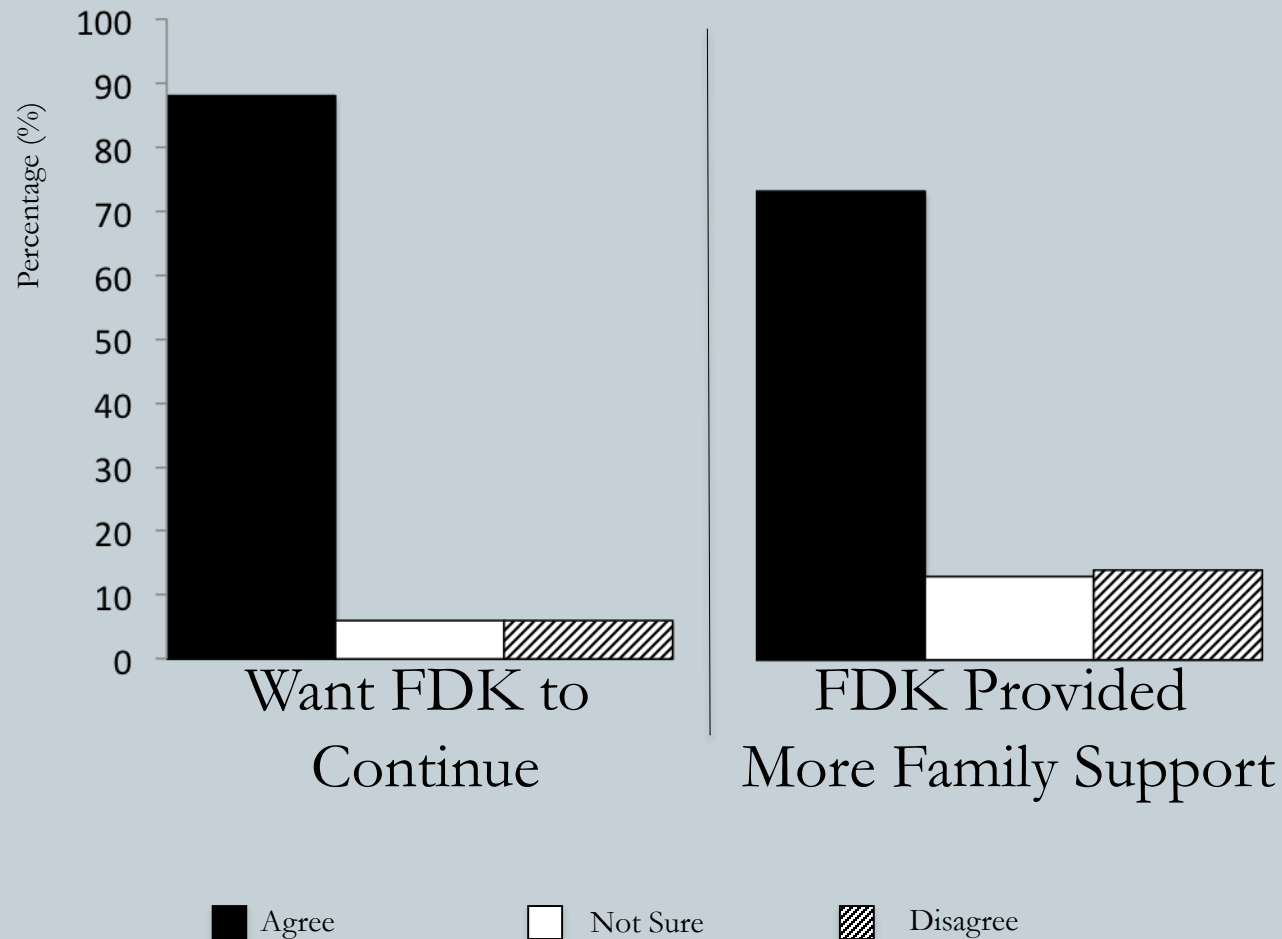
FDK affected
Decision to Work



□ NO

■ YES

Parents Receiving Child Care Subsidies are More Positive About FDK

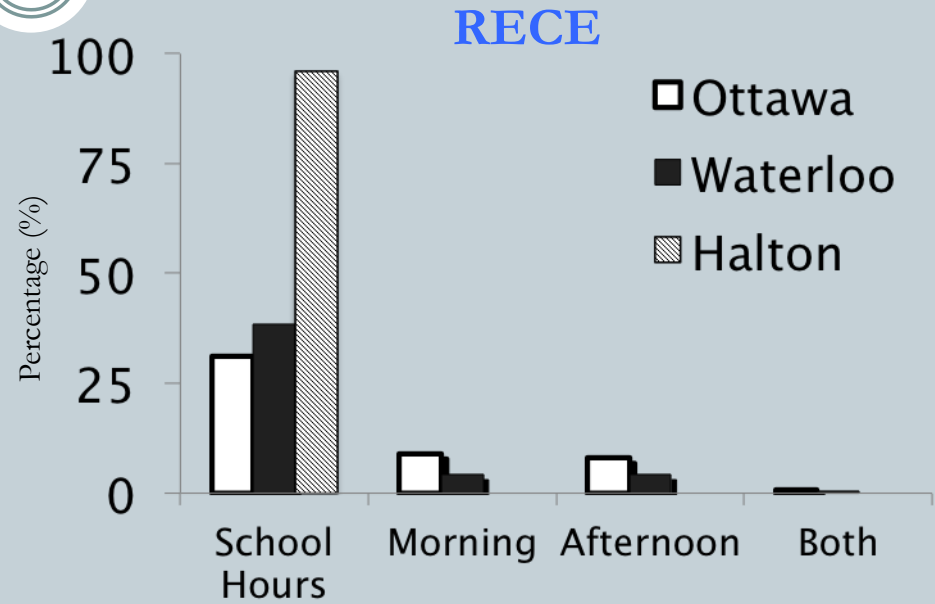
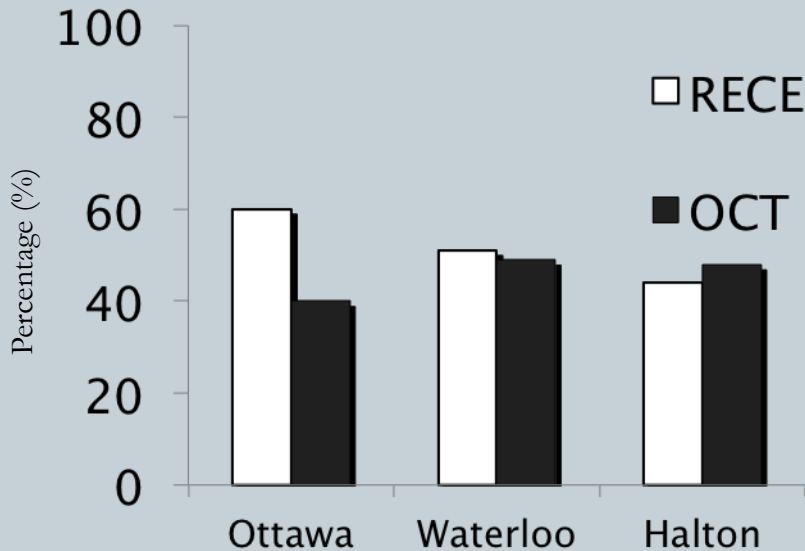


Findings: Parent Focus Groups



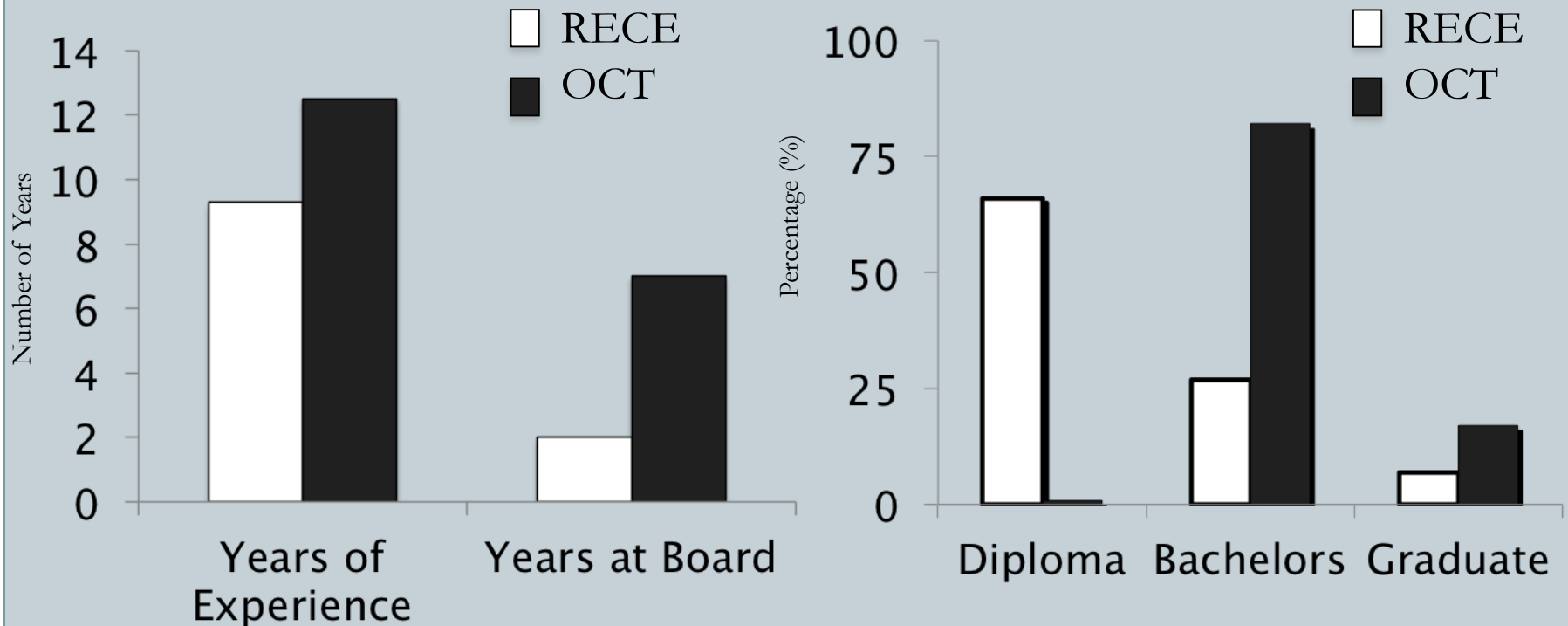
- Value play based learning
- Child and family life less stressful
- Want additional support for family through the school –families with higher needs
- Want programs for their younger children available through school
- Concerned about class sizes and the quality of food
- Equally divided as to whether FDK/EDP has increased or decreased parent involvement in child's learning

Educator Profile



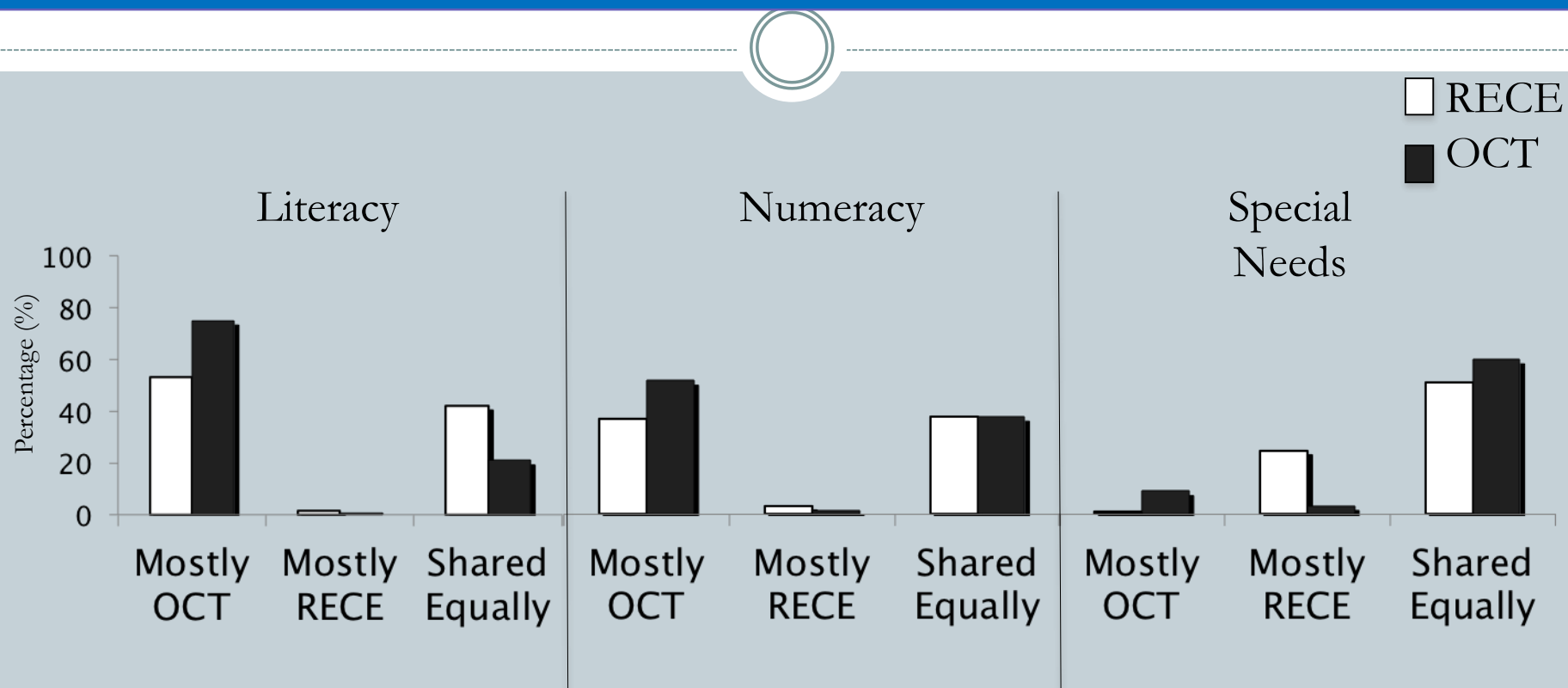
- Educator survey: 530 respondents/ 20% response rate
- RECEs work school hours more frequently in Waterloo, and more morning and afternoon shifts in Ottawa. Halton is exclusively school hours
- All EDP programs in Halton delivered by community providers

Educator Profile – 4 School Boards



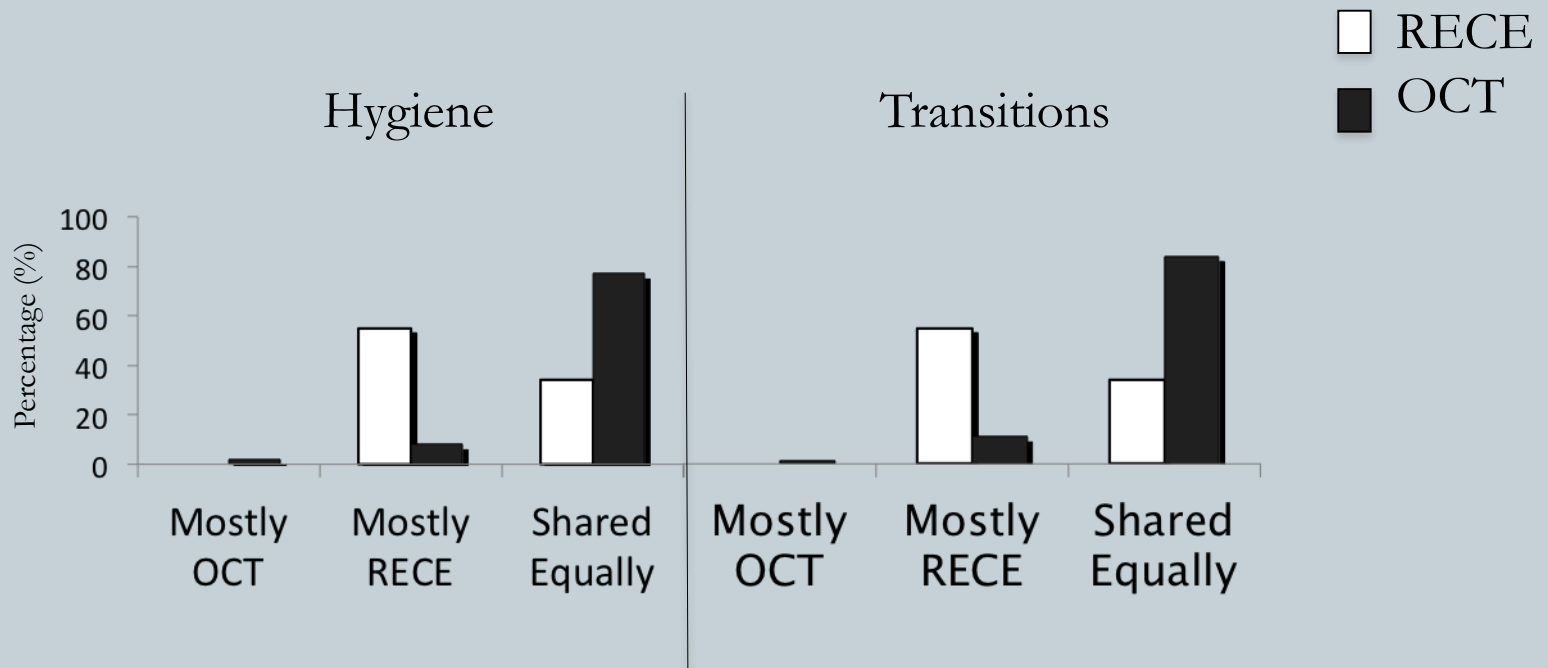
- Average experience and years at board of OCTs greater than RECEs
- Significant number of RECEs have an undergraduate degree in addition to ECE diploma

Educator Team Role Clarity



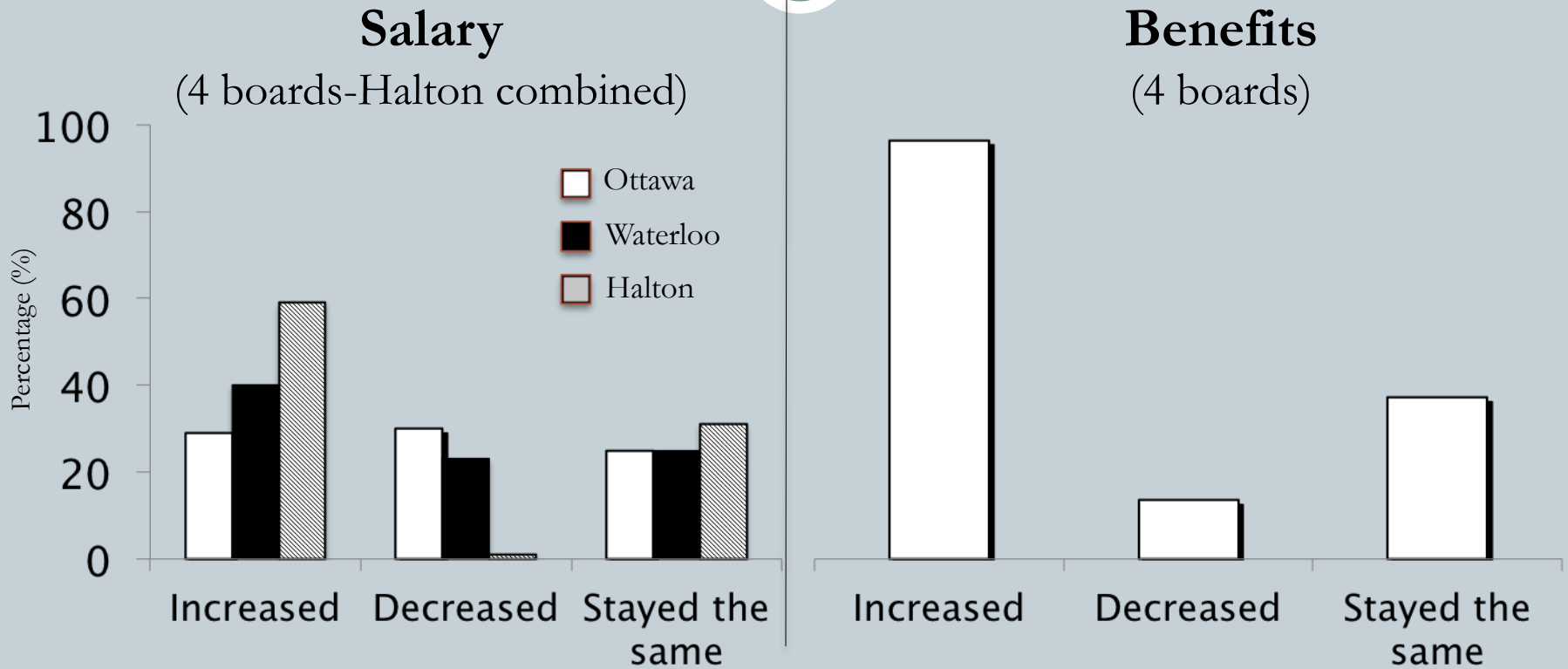
- Differences in the way that RECEs and OCTs view their roles in FDK

Educator Team Role Clarity



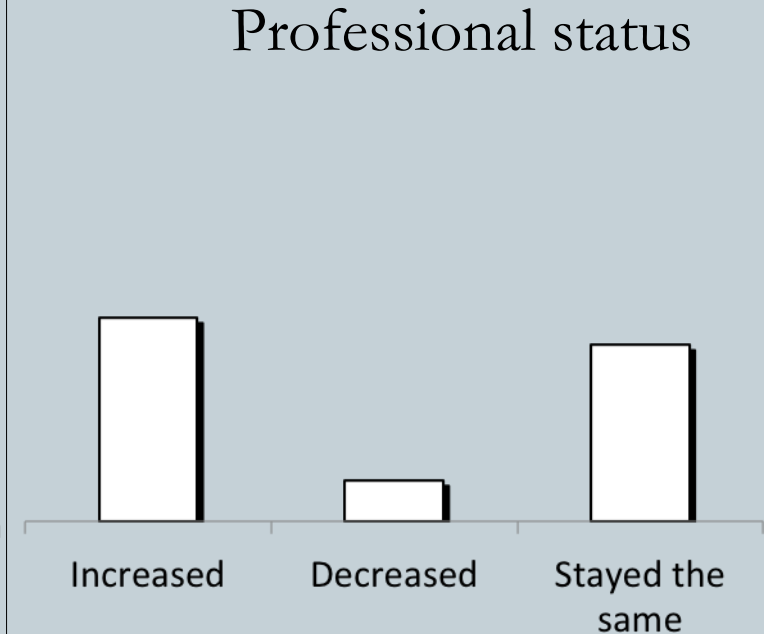
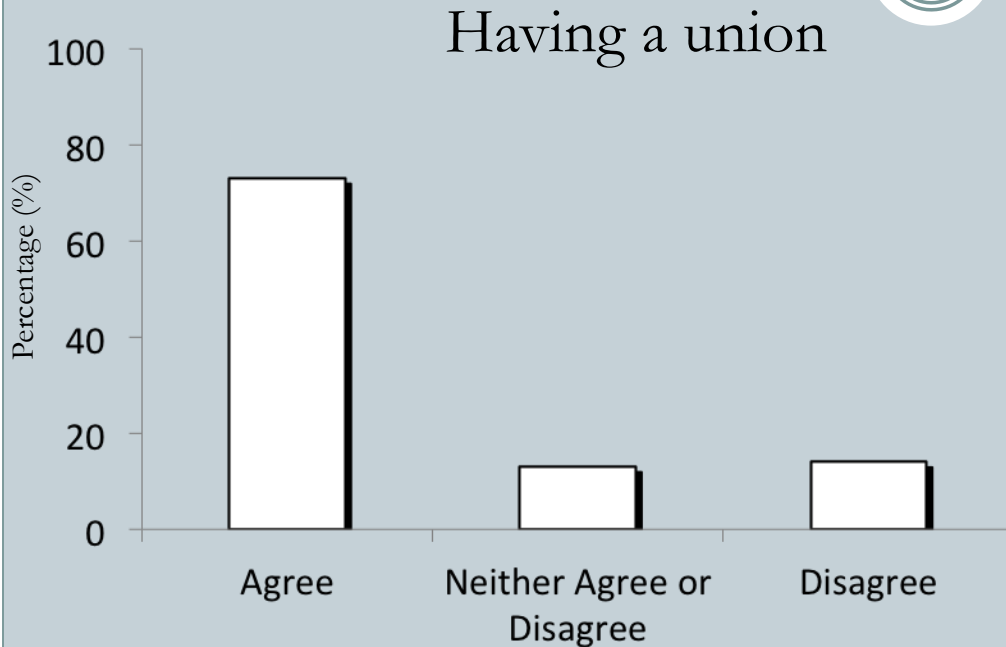
- Differences in the way that RECEs and OCTs view their roles in FDK

RECE Compensation



- Most RECEs' salaries increased or stayed the same particularly in Halton, but in Waterloo and Ottawa significant numbers saw a decrease
- Benefits have increased for most RECEs

RECE Working Conditions



- More RECEs agree that having a union has improved their working conditions
- Almost all RECEs felt their professional status has increased or stayed the same

Contract Comparison



Contract Provision	ETFO (Waterloo)	OSSTF (Ottawa)
Scope of agreement	DECEs and occasional DECEs	Special memorandum of understanding for ECEs
Salary	Experience grid - \$20.09 to \$26.27. Supply and letter of permission - \$18.54	Starting salary \$19.48, no salary schedule
Preparation Time	Within the core hours of work	n/a

Contract Comparison



Contract Provision	ETFO	OSSTF
Pension Plan	OMERS or OTPP (for RECEs with teaching credentials)	OMERS or OTIP for employees with 10 or more month
Vacation	Paid by-weekly based on years of service starting at 4% up to 10% after 16 years	15 working days
Benefit Plan	Dental (50%), health/life/ADD up to \$25,000 - 95% employer paid. LTD 100% paid by RECE	Health, dental, long term disability, life insurance up to \$45,000
Number of times RECE is mentioned in agreement	348 times	None in collective agreement. 16 in letter of agreement

Educator Interviews



- Boards with appointed principal lead and/or ECE manager – important factor in team building
- Educator teams vary in capacity, knowledge
- Limited access to professional development and planning time difficult for ECEs — further strain on educators' capacity to build partnership
- Children with special needs require additional support — core day EA does not extend to EDP

Schools at the Centre: Resources

The full report, videos and presentations
can be viewed at:

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/>



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Schools at the Centre: Partnership



Waterloo Region District School Board
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
Halton District School Board
Halton Catholic District School Board
Region of Waterloo

Lyle S. Hallman Foundation
Atkinson Foundation
Lawson Foundation

Atkinson Centre, University of Toronto
School of Early Childhood, George Brown College



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Schools at the Centre



For more information:

zeenat.janmohamed@utoronto.ca

www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/

Follow us on Twitter @AtkinsonCentre



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION