Welcome and Updates

The meeting began with introductions. Carl then updated the group on research agenda progress. The first project discussed was the contextual mapping tool. Several members gave recommendations for similar tools or data that could be incorporated. These included: SAPE -- Title 1 funding data, VISTA (Kristine Nadolski as contact) and CESA 9 asset mapping, SEDA data at Stanford, Human Trafficking/Domestic Violence asset maps, child care maps from DCF, Uniform Crime Reports (Jared Knowles as contact). The Applied Population Lab at UW has also done similar work. This would be a good opportunity to work cross-agency.

The group mentioned the map could be valuable but it will not be enough to just present another map with layers and layers of data. If we want it to be valuable, we should provide some guidance and instruction about how to use the map as a tool to identify and frame problems and solutions.

Kerry provided an update on SLDS projects discussed at the previous WERAC: Knowledge Mobilization (KMb) and an evaluation of DPI's continuous improvement process (CIP). The CIP evaluation will be a component of KMb which is now officially funded through the SLDS grant. Annalee Good and Tony Chambers are the project leads.

Research Practice Partnerships

Eric and Beth described the Madison Education Partnership as an example of a sustained, institutionalized partnership. MEP began with the identification of mutual interest between the Madison superintendent and the director of WCER: WCER had concerns about access; Madison wanted more say in what was being researched. A lot of the early work concerned reaching agreement on a research agenda, setting ground rules (e.g., steering committee; waiting period and review for publication), and matching the skills and research capacity at WCER to things that Madison was both interested in and amenable to adapting their policies around.

MEP followed a research alliance model (e.g., Chicago and Baltimore). A key element to the model is the idea of shared research and leadership. An analogy was made--research partnership as interpersonal relationship: a true research partnership is a marriage while contractual work and one-off research projects are dates. They help build trust, but don't necessarily turn into a meaningful, long-lasting partnership. Neither is necessarily better than the other but they differ in what they can accomplish. Often, partnerships start out with more informal projects and communication, then get labeled partnerships later on; however, there is value to starting the work with an intentional eye towards partnership creation.

MEP receives a small amount of dedicated funds from the budgets of the participating entities. These funds are spent on a dedicated research assistant and a project manager. For Madison, at least initially, the contributions were in-kind from their research office on a "Prove-it" model.

The point was made that looking outside of UW for examples of successful relationships in Wisconsin is important. Private colleges often have relationships with the school districts in their

area. Carroll University and Viterbo University work with districts and CESA 9 principal development, respectively. The IRP/DCF and the PK-16 partnership were also mentioned as exemplars.

We discussed what DPI's role can be in education partnerships. A broker role may be appropriate. DPI could work with the districts to increase buy-in to the partnership process in the beginning. DPI can help introduce and match potential partners on interest, capacity and problems of practice (data from DPI's data inquiry journal can be mined to identify problems of practice). It was clear that a brokership role would need to be much more than simple introductions, a true brokership role would need to help the parties establish the ground rules and then provide ongoing mediation if issues arise. We should not underestimate the amount of time and effort successful brokering will take.

Moving forward with the DPI as broker idea, a strategy could be to start with a few seed projects (in a couple urban districts and a couple rural CESAs.) We could use the Network/Jack's contacts and would need to come in with some funding to support the initial projects. The funding could pay the brokership time as well as incentivize the initial research in order to build the trust needed to deepen the partnerships. Although we would focus on a small scope there would be statewide benefit if DPI publicized what was learned. DPI would serve as an amplifier for the research results through WISELearn and encourage uptake of successful research-based practices: "We learned a lot from CESA 9 and other CESAs might consider doing this yourselves."

Sustainability Brainstorming

After the working lunch the group went through the brainstorming idea list point-by-point. Carl began by asking whether there were any broad topics or ideas that were not represented. One identified omission was getting policy makers involved in the work. At CESA 9, legislators go to the monthly PAC meetings. Intentionality in getting legislators involved is important. La Follette's Committee Connect was provided as another example of a model to engage policy makers.

The future of WERAC was then discussed. It would be easy to continue (i.e., it does not cost much money to hold meetings) but may need to adapt focus to remain relevant long-term. One on-going task for WERAC could be informing DPI's future research agendas. For the last agenda, the broad areas came from Cabinet, and WERAC helped flesh them out. It was mentioned that round-table discussions (perhaps facilitated by researchers) with program staff may be more beneficial than the Cabinet approach because it would increase buy-in/feelings of ownership about research products throughout the agency.

We need to make sure that, at future WERAC meetings, everyone who should be at the table is represented. Groups that are not represented that perhaps should include: teachers, administrators, and representatives from Wisconsin's professional organizations (e.g. AWSA, WASDA). In the future, it may make sense to use a blended meeting structure--one with a video

conference component and where the membership is dictated, in part, by the purpose of the meeting.

The next brainstorming idea discussed was expanding graduate student involvement at DPI. Several student groups were identified as potential sources for interns, artifact curators, researchers and presenters. They included: Evaluation Clinic Fellows, Interdisciplinary Training Program in Education Sciences Fellows, Advanced Opportunity Fellows from UW-Madison's College of Letters and Sciences, students enrolled in La Follete cost/benefit analysis courses, IRP Graduate Research Fellow, and practitioners enrolled in leadership training through CESA 9. Contacts for each of these student groups were identified and are listed at the end of these minutes in the action items.

Finalizing master MOUs and DUAs was the next topic. Carl is currently working on three master data sharing contracts. One is between DPI and IRP. Another is between DPI and WCER. The third will be between DPI and UW-System. Once the UW-System agreement is completed it can serve as a template for the others. Carl and Hilary will work collaboratively to get the DPI and IRP data sharing agreement completed as quickly as possible. The goal will be to establish more open-ended contracts. However, IRP has been moving towards shorter-term contracts, meaning there is likely to be a little maintenance work in the future to keep the agreements active.

The fourth sustainability strategy was finding additional sources of funding for current/future partnership activities. The group expressed interest in trying to secure another large, multi-year grant (e.g., another round of SLDS). Fiscal year '19 RFPs from the Institute for Education Sciences are available here (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2019_84305H.pdf). If IRP and the College of Letters and Sciences at UW-Madison are involved in the activities, we may be able to leverage university grant development resources. As for other funding sources, foundations could be a source for sponsoring smaller, specific research projects. DPI's contract with REL Midwest lasts another three years and we should look at ways they can help us meet our goals.

The Network is a more institutionalized partnership effort between UW-Madison and DPI that will continue. We need to find ways to engage the Network Fellows on research projects aligned to the DPI research agenda. DPI is interested in continuing many of the activities currently under the Knowledge Mobilization project but the effort should support the DPI coordinated improvement planning effort very directly.

The group discussed DPI's current efforts to make the confidential data request process more efficient and transparent. Standardizing data pulls and file/variable documentation has been a large part of this effort. When completed, each data element made available to researchers will be mapped to a CEDS code. DPI is considering adding stipulations in our DUA template to mandate use of IES's CEDS Connect tool (used to help facilitate cross-state dissemination of research results). The group expressed that the CEDS Connect tool may be applicable to some studies more than others and therefore, a case-to-case approach may be better.

How to strengthen connections between DPI and education preparation programs throughout the state was also discussed. Doing so would help us normalize the WISEdash tools into practice and better prepare teachers for the educator effectiveness and continuous improvement process they

will work within when they begin practice. DPI's Division for Academic Excellence and teacher education/licensing team will take the lead on any efforts.

Action Items

- Kerry Lawton and Carl will follow-up with the group's advice on existing asset mapping and data sources for the contextual map project.
- Move forward brokering idea and finding potential partners (2 urban districts, 2 rural CESAs). Develop a description of what DPI's role of a broker would look like.
- For the next WERAC meeting, Carl will work to coordinate with MAGRA, to the extent possible.
- Make the connections that need to occur to expand graduate student involvement:
  - Annalee Good will be the contact for coordinating graduate student work around research artifact curation. Get together with Tony Chambers and Scott Jones to see to what extent the Network Fellows program can also support the work.
  - Hilary will connect DPI to Jeff Smith re: involvement of IRP Graduate Research Fellows and faculty teaching Fall semester benefit/cost analysis course.
  - Jennifer Noyes will serve as the contact for engaging the Advanced Opportunity Fellows at UW-Madison Letters and Sciences.
  - Carl and Eric will work on involving current and future ITP cohorts.
  - Kerry Kretchmar will check with TEPDL/WACTE/WICTE on which IHEs might have graduate students interested in research.
  - Karen will be the contact re: involvement of CESA 9s principal development students.
- Carl and Hilary will work to get the master MOU between DPI and IRP completed.
- If we can involve L&S and IRP in another large grant, Jennifer and Hilary will reach out to involve grant development services in their offices or UW System.
- Carl will continue work on DPI-UW system and DPI-DCF MOUs
- Work with Kyle to see how the remainder of the REL contract can be used to support our research initiatives.
- [Not assigned] Contact Barbara Bales at UW-System for insight on whether UW education deans would be willing to help fund efforts.
- Kerry Lawton will connect Hilary, Annalee, Tony, Percival around incorporating non-education factors into the KMb work.
- Kerry Lawton will work with the CIP evaluation workgroup and Family Engagement workgroup on a repository of surveys/questionnaires around these topics.

- Jennifer will send Carl information/resources on redaction policy.
- Brad will make sure the scope of the CIP evaluation includes questions related to the efficacy the Data Inquiry Journal.
- Kurt will work with Sheila Briggs, Kerry Kretchmar, and Kimber Wilkerson on connection building between DPI educator preparation programs around the state. Sheila will be the driver of these efforts.

Miscellaneous Notes

- Re: Analysis of Text from Data Inquiry Journal. This might be perfect for David Shaffer's shop
- Brad suggested using the utilization lens for evaluations/research artifacts, i.e., no matter how awesome the research is, if it didn't change anything after 4 months, 6 months, 1 year, then it has no value.