

SCHOOLS AT THE CENTRE

Findings from Case Studies Exploring
Seamless Early Learning in Ontario

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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 George Brown College, Atkinson Centre, school boards, regional governments, community stakeholders

Policy Context

- With Our Best Future in Mind (2009)
- Full day kindergarten (2010-2014) – 260,000 children
- Legislation change (Education Act, College of ECE)
- FDK/EDP educator teams – created 10,000 new ECE positions
- Contracted- and school board- operated extended day programs
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

Case study: Ottawa-Carleton Region

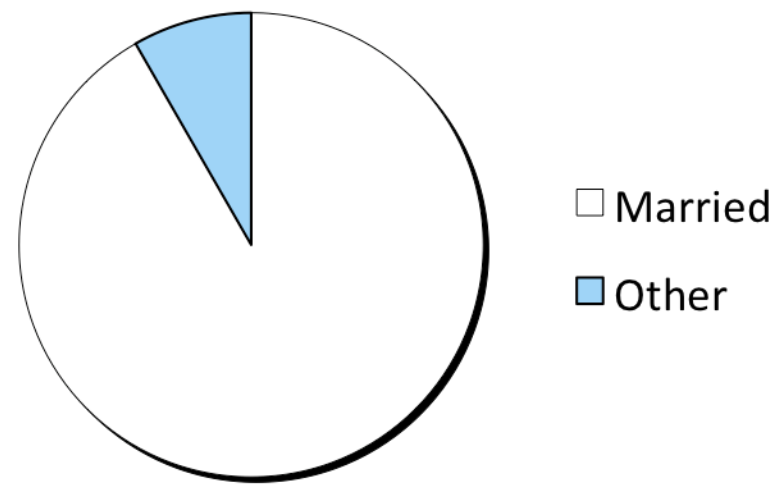
- 2009 – Licensed care available in 12 schools
- 2014 – Extended Day Programs in 100 out of 117 schools serving approximately 6,000 students
- Some boards also directly operate preschool programs

Case Study: Waterloo Region

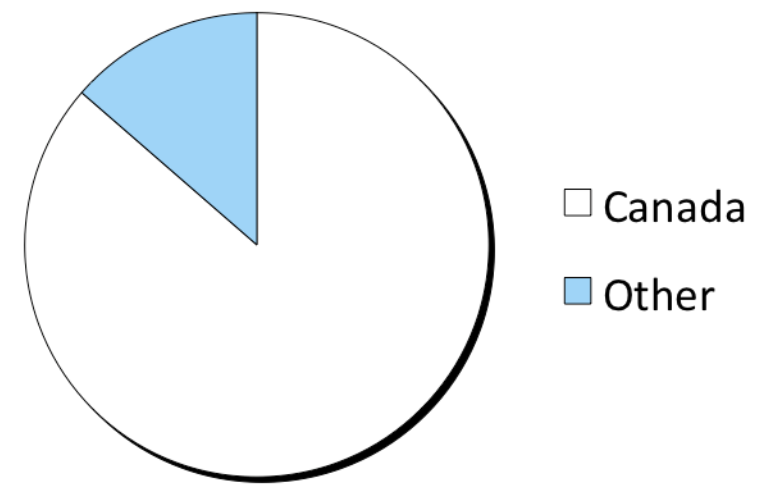
- 2009 - Licensed care available in 28 schools with 1,523 spaces
- 2014 – EDP in 64 out of 71 schools serving approximately 4,000 students
- 52 Youth Development Programs offered by Community Providers
- Centralize fee collection and registry operated by the Region assists families to access services

Parent Demographic

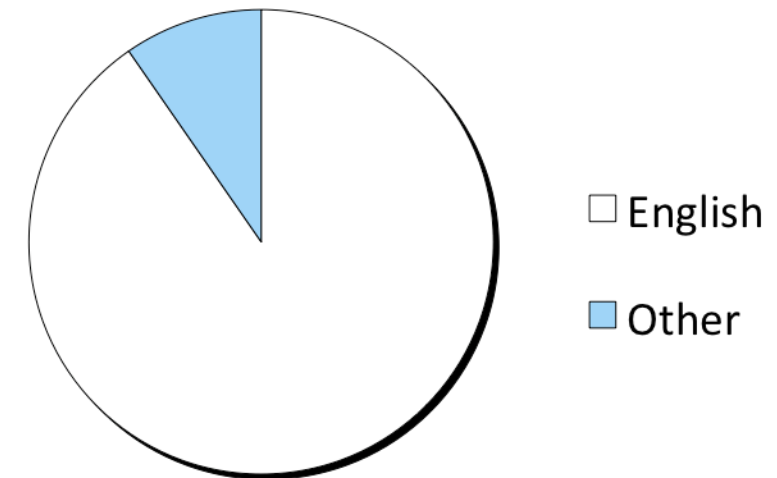
Marital Status



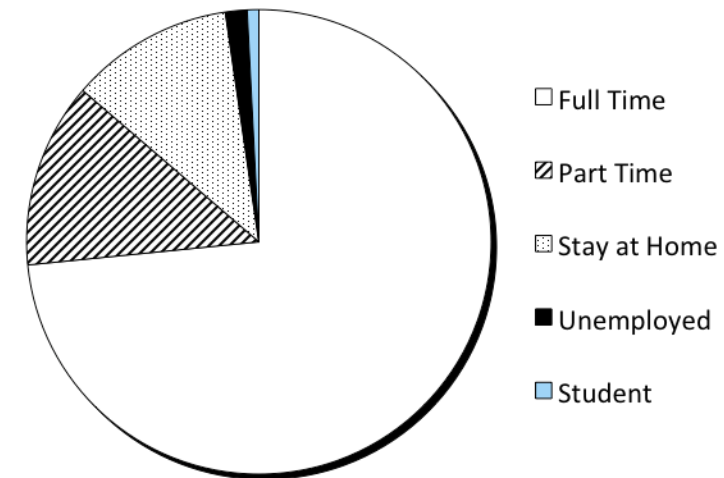
Country of Birth



Home Language



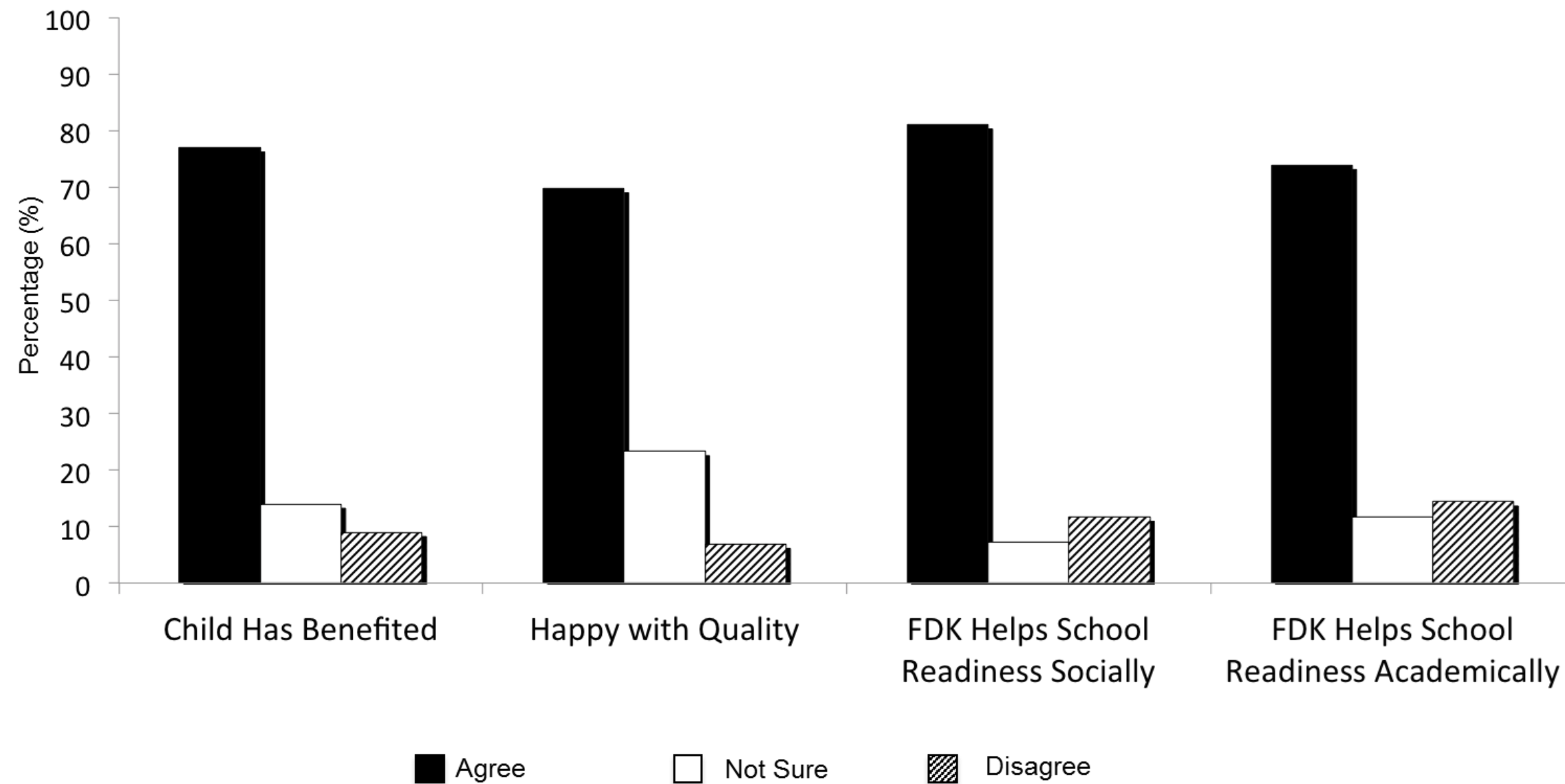
Employment



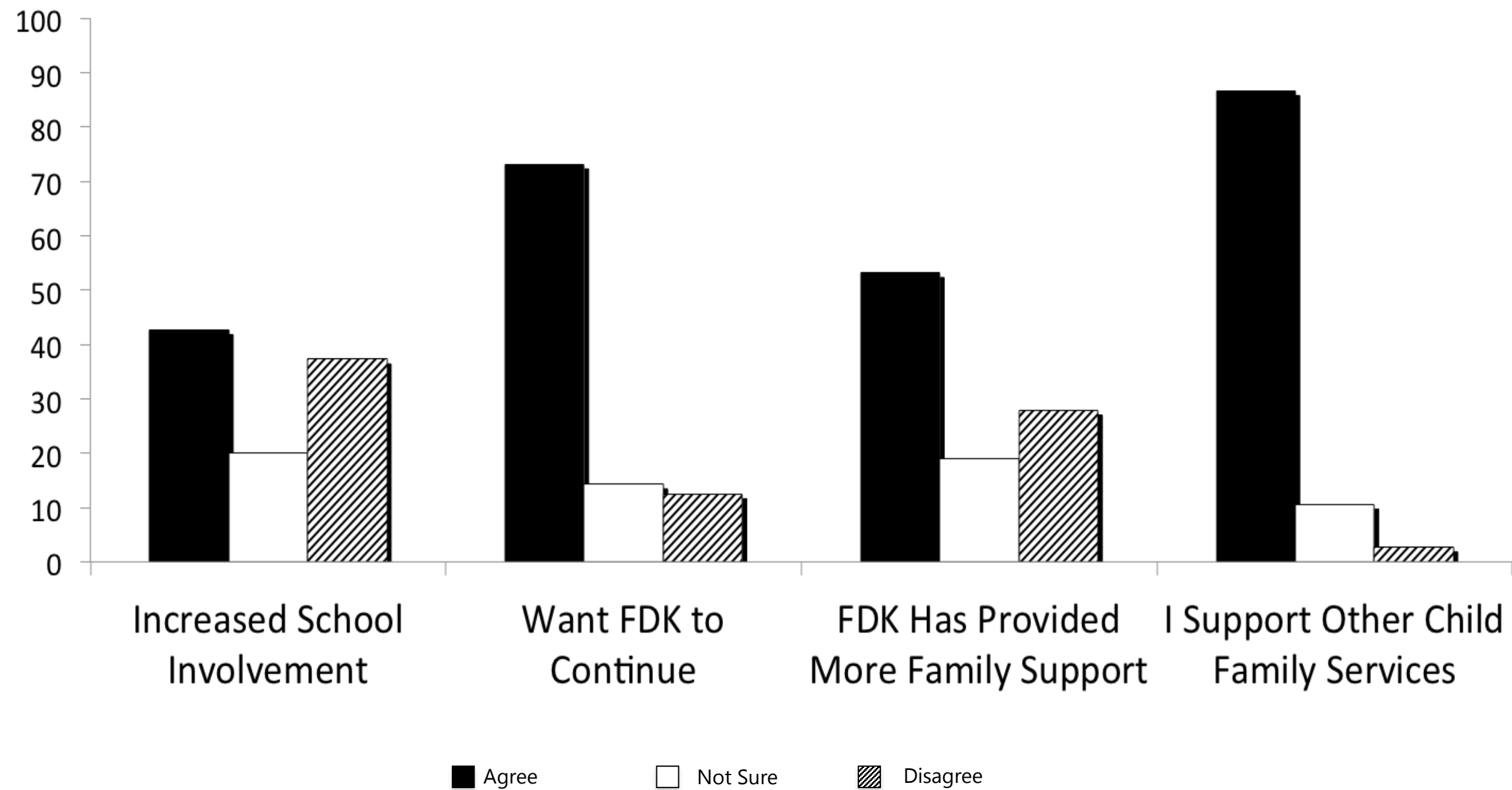
Key Findings: Parents

- The study examined FDK/EDP impact on:
 - Child and family life
 - Access to child care
 - Parents' ability to work

Parent Satisfaction with Services

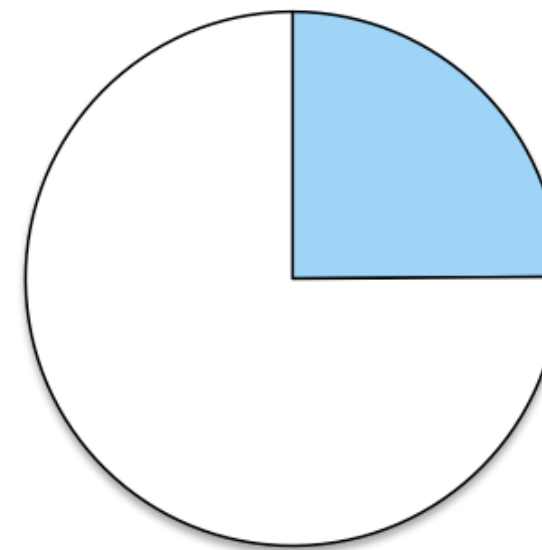
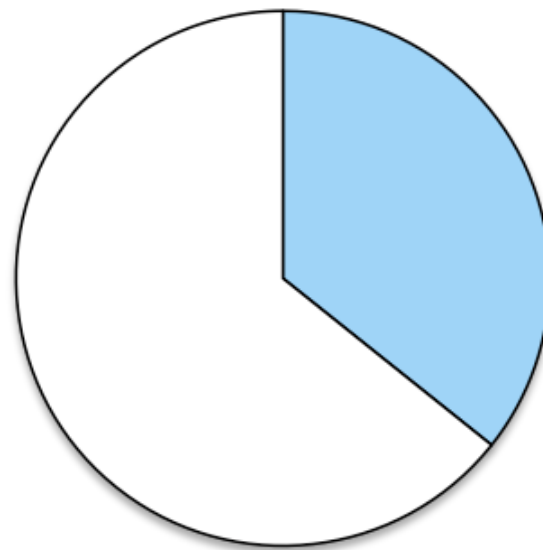
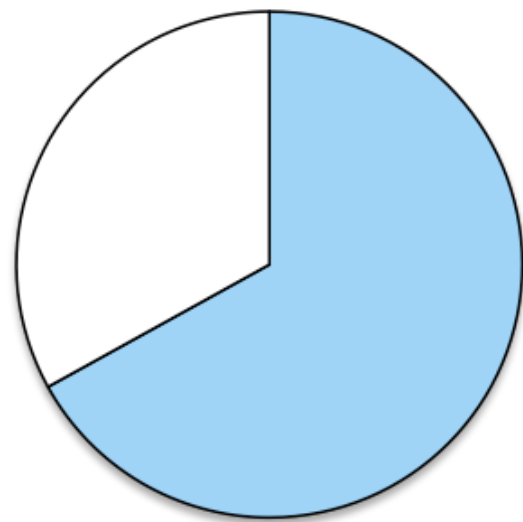


Parent Satisfaction with Services



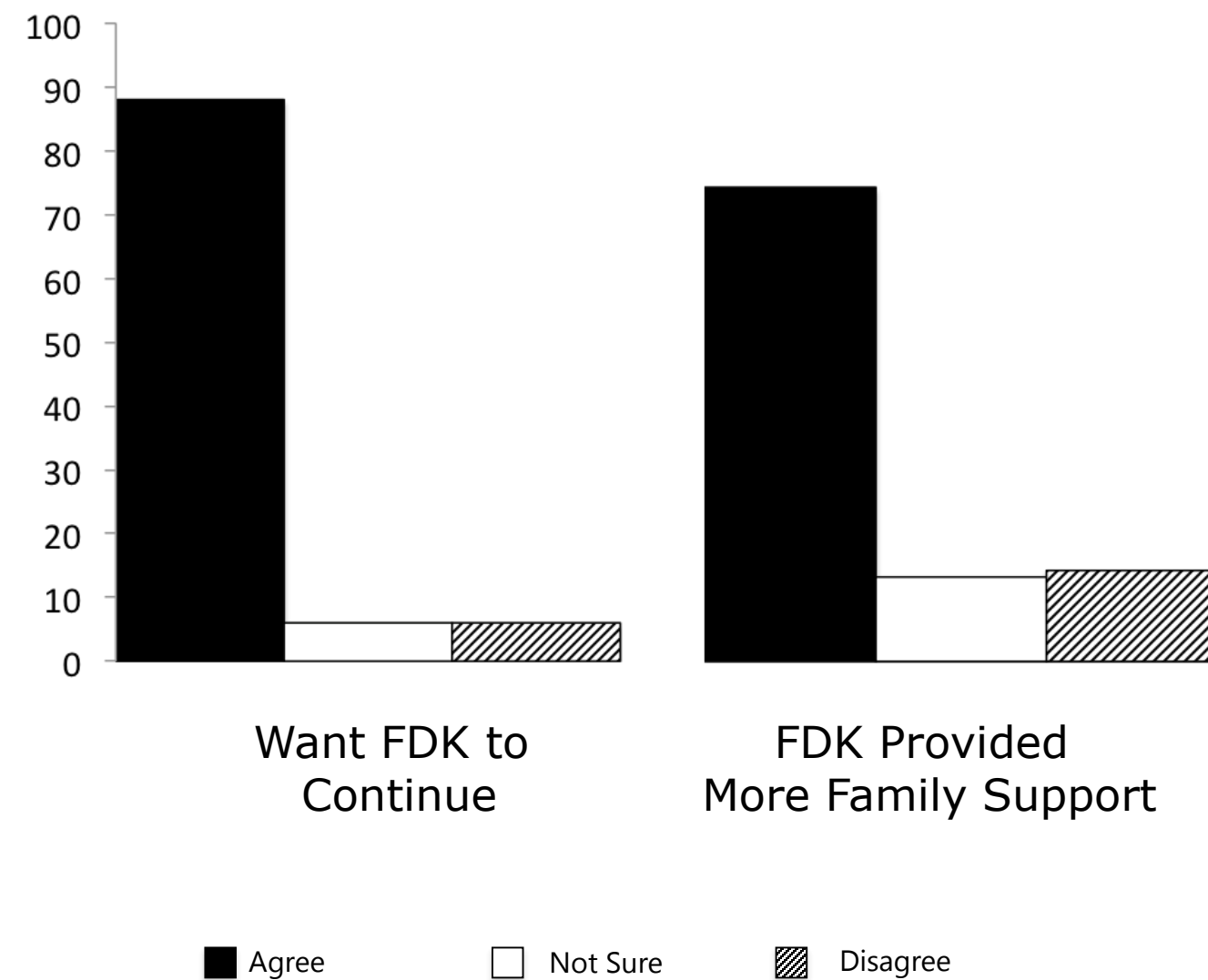
Parents receiving fee subsidies and parents on subsidy wait list

Child Care Source of Financial Stress Cost of Child Care Reason for not Working FDK affected Decision to Work



NO YES

Parents receiving fee subsidies are more positive about FDK

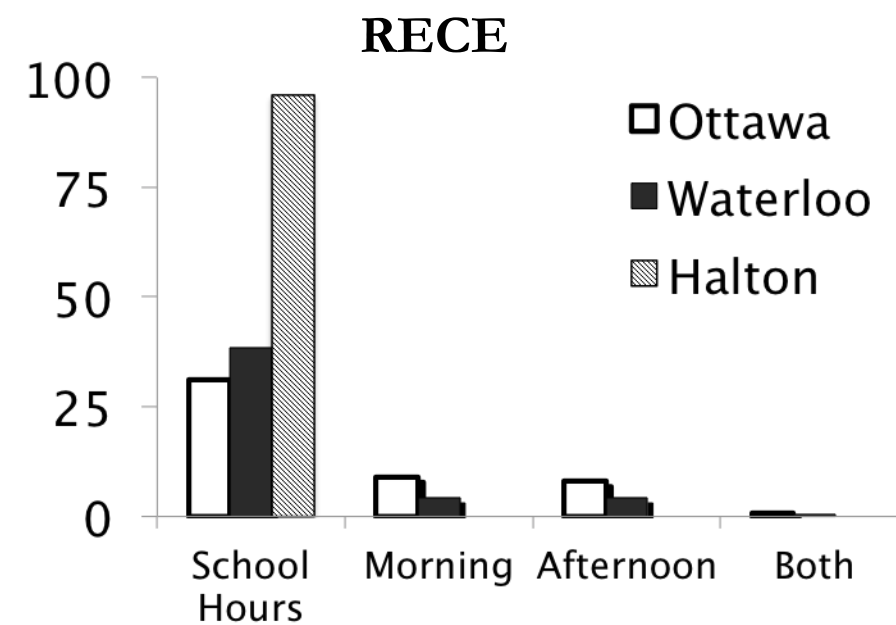
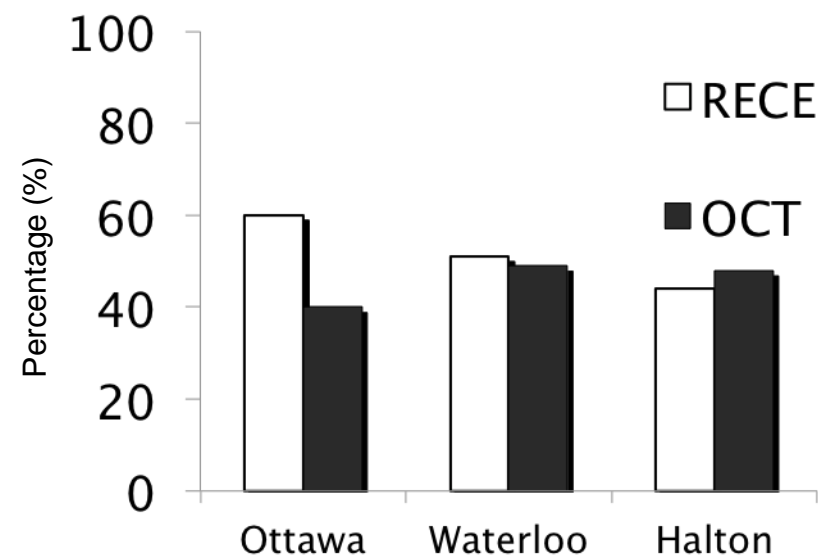


Findings: Parent Focus Groups

- Value play based learning – recognize link between play / children’s learning
- Want additional support for family through the school – particularly families with higher needs
- Want programs for their younger children available through school
- Some classes too structured for 3-5 year olds
- Divided as to whether FDK has increased or decreased parent involvement in child’s learning

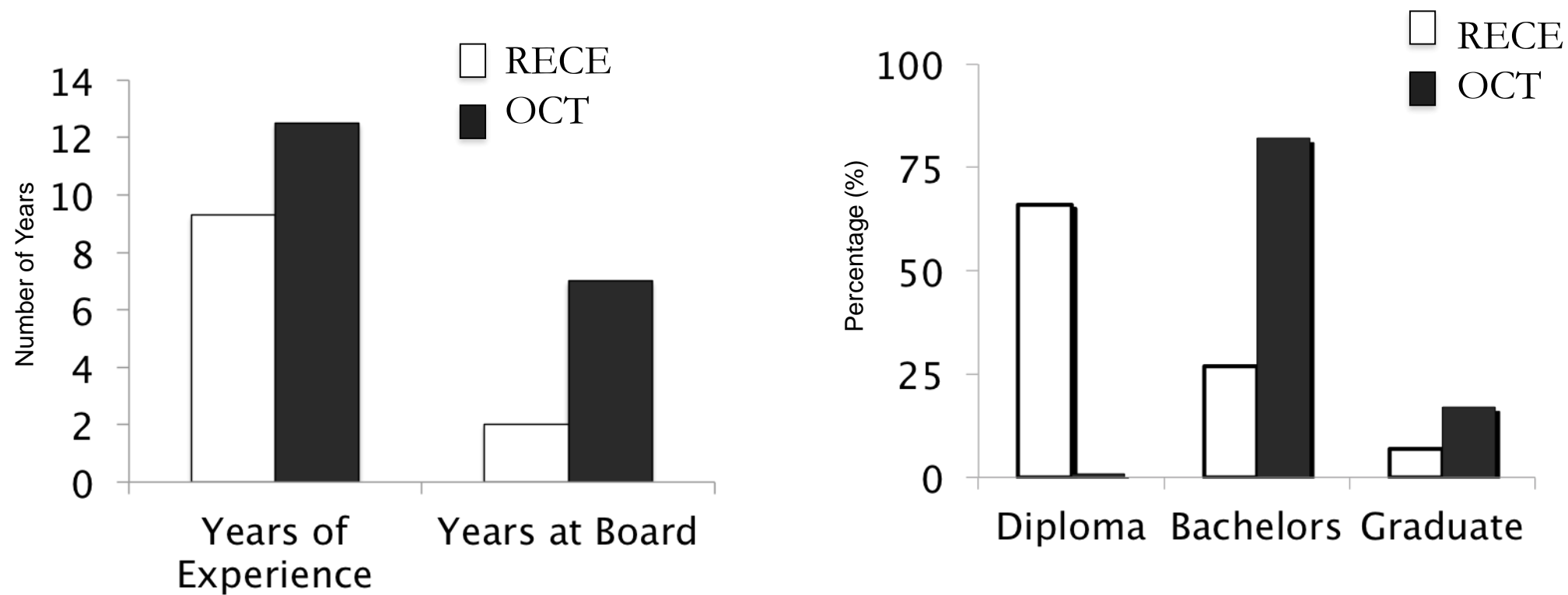
Educator Profile

- 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



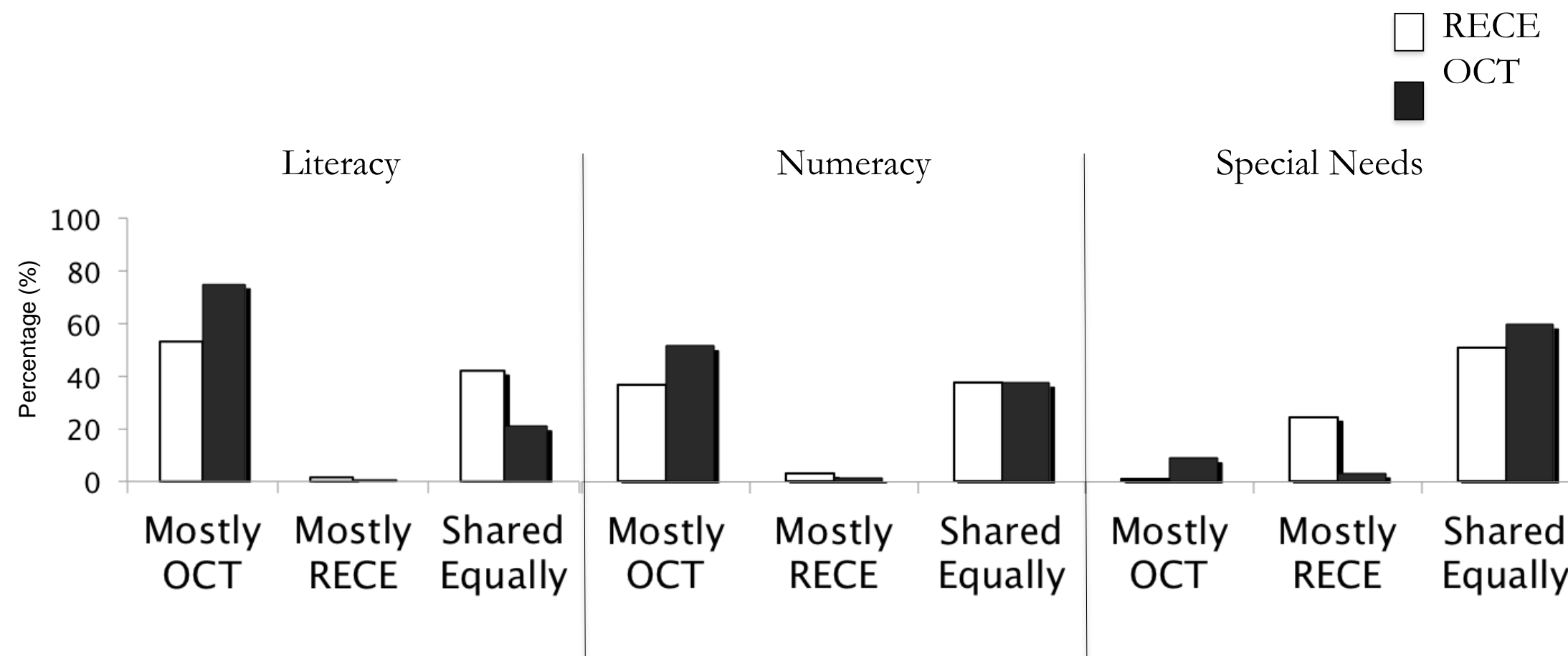
Educator Profile – 4 school boards

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



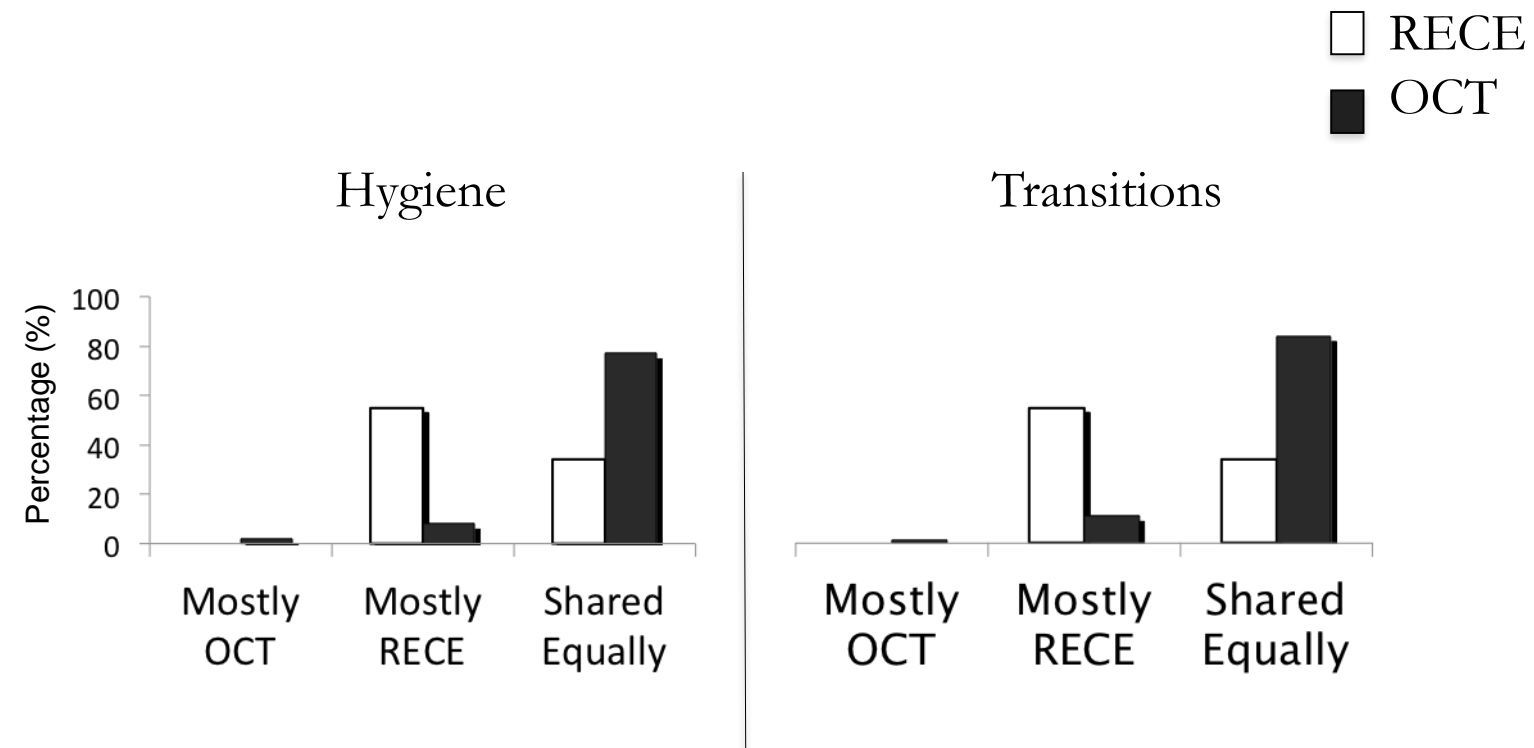
Educator Team Role Clarity

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



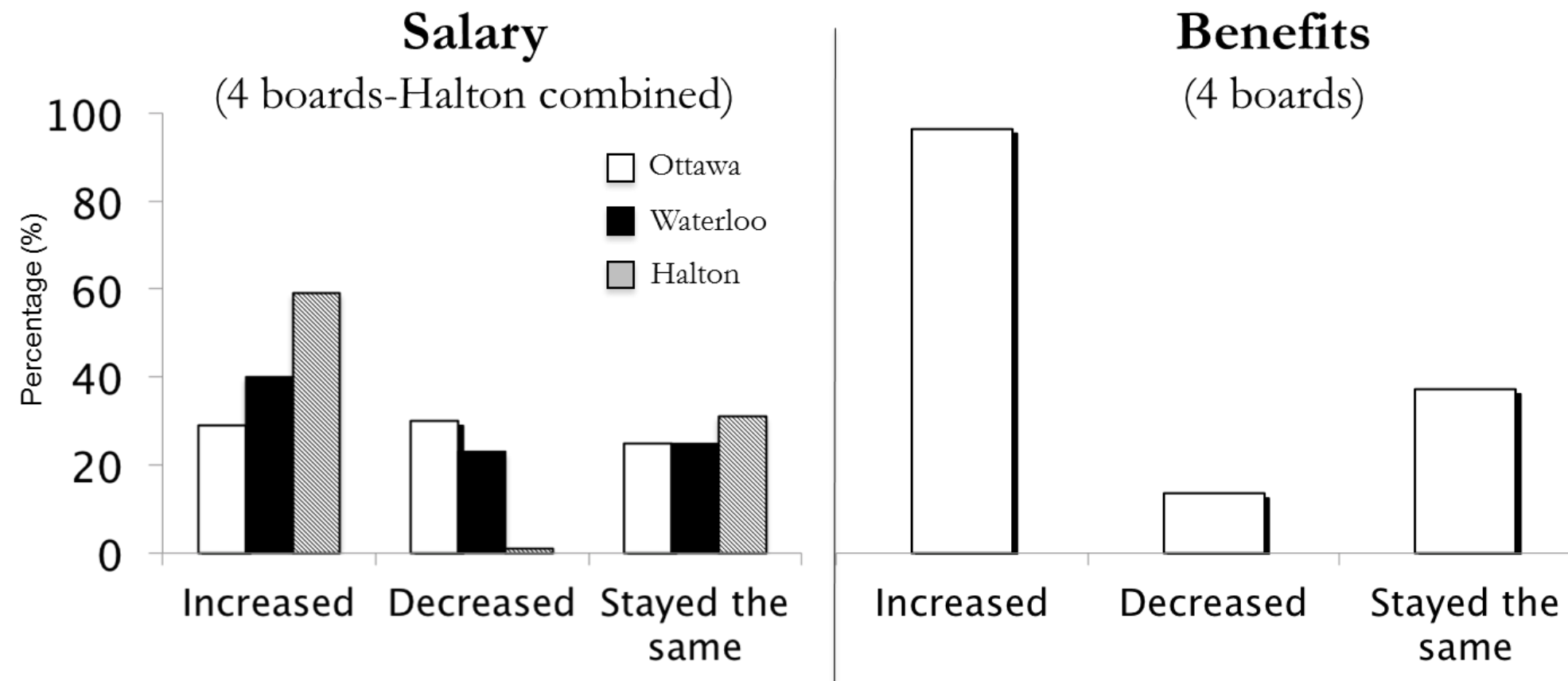
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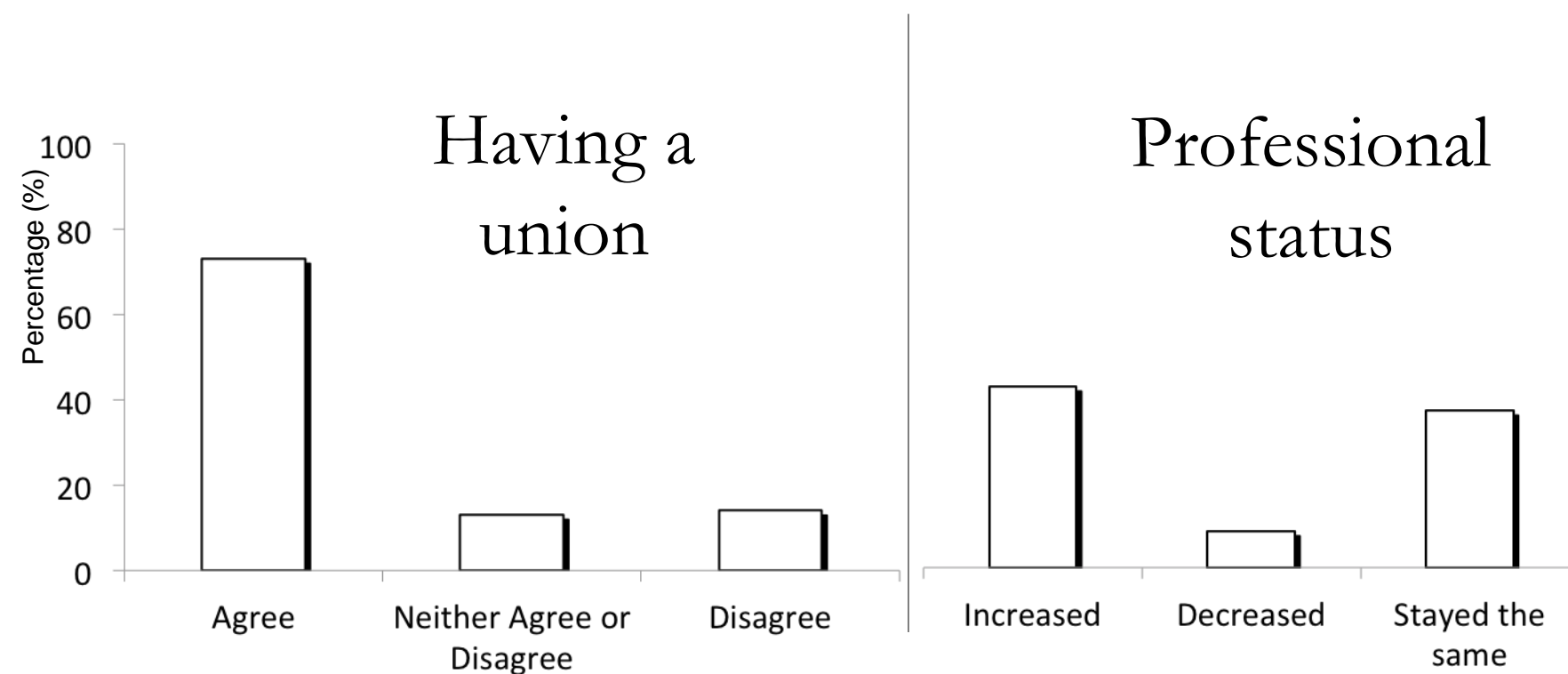
RECE Compensation

- Most RECEs' salaries increased or stayed the same Benefits have increased for most RECEs



RECE Working Conditions

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



Educator Interviews

- Boards have 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

Key Findings: Administrators

- PD opportunities for RECEs dependent 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 in school system
- Significant pressure to ensure literacy and numeracy success

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

Schools at the Centre

For more information,

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www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/Resources/Topics/Seamless_Day_Schools/index.html