

# Iowa Department of Education Shared Visions Preschool Program

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REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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**College of  
Education**  
Center for Evaluation  
and Assessment

## The Center for Evaluation and Assessment

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
210 LINDQUIST CENTER, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52242  
COE-CEA@UIOWA.EDU  
WWW.EDUCATION.UIOWA.EDU/CEA

Prepared by Professor Liz Hollingworth, Director  
Dorian Olsen, Graduate Assistant  
Reuben Vyn, Research Intern

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## I. Executive Summary

The Iowa Department of Education Shared Visions Preschool Program is in the second year of a five-year grant cycle. This program is supported through an annual state appropriation: in FY16 the state allocation for Shared Visions Preschool was \$7,699,988.22. In FY17, the state allocation for Shared Visions Preschool (with a 3.75% reduction) was \$7,406,426.10.

This evaluation study was requested by the Iowa Department of Education (DE) to collect baseline data on participating teachers, sites, and students. To that end, evaluators from the Center for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) collaborated with staff from the DE's Early Childhood Department to conduct a program evaluation to identify the professional development needs of the Shared Visions teachers, to evaluate the extent to which teachers are using the Teaching Strategies GOLD® according to the grant requirements, and to document how assessment data are used by Shared Visions teachers.

To conduct this study, self-report data were collected from 65 out of 101 Shared Visions preschool lead teachers through the administration of an anonymous online survey. Additionally, other baseline data were collected by consulting Shared Vision Grant applications, year-end reports, renewal applications, and Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessments.

The following evaluation questions guided the evaluation activities and reporting:

- 1. What are the professional development and support needs of Shared Visions teachers?**
- 2. Are Shared Visions teachers utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD® as outlined in the grant requirements?**
- 3. Are assessment data used to facilitate program and student growth as well as improve classroom instruction?**

### Selected Findings:

- Most sites (88 %) use additional funding sources in addition to Shared Visions funding such as: Head Start, Statewide Voluntary Preschool for Four-Year Olds, Childcare Resource and Referral, and/or Special Education. Only 12% of the grantees utilize only Shared Visions funding for their entire programming needs.
- Most Shared Visions Preschool Program classrooms (65.5%) are located within a school district and meet over 6 hours a day for 5 days a week.
- Regarding professional development, teachers reported having received adequate professional development training on Teaching Strategies GOLD® and the NAEYC standards and accreditation process.
- Shared Visions teachers participate in an average of 50 professional development hours per year.

- The most commonly identified areas of need for professional development included how to collect portfolio items to demonstrate students' progress and how to use forms and reports to communicate information to families.
- Most Shared Visions teachers reported in the survey that they are able to get their questions about Shared Visions or Teaching Strategies GOLD® answered by their local administrator or peer teachers, however, nearly 10% (N=6) of teachers reported not having support from an AEA contact if needed. This was particularly noticeable in schools that were not part of a public school district
- Teachers overwhelmingly reported implementing the Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessments with fidelity, and utilizing the resulting data to inform their planning and instruction.
- 62 out of 63 respondents agreed that they use data from the assessments to inform classroom instruction, and all 63 respondents agreed that they use the data from the assessments to inform planning for individual students.

#### Data-based Recommendations:

- Offer professional development to teachers based on the topics for which they indicated needing more training
- Improve communication with teachers at the local level
- According to the survey responses, Shared Visions teachers would like professional development training on how to select items for inclusion in students' portfolios, as well as how to communicate student progress to families.

## II. Context Description

The Shared Visions program supports Iowa's young children with specific at-risk factors. The primary risk factor is income eligibility. Guidelines for the Shared Visions Preschool Program indicate that families must fall at or below the 130% poverty level. That means a family of four making at or below \$31,590 would meet income guidelines (Iowa Department of Education, 2017). At least 80% of children enrolled must qualify based on this criterion. Secondary eligibility factors<sup>1</sup> may account for up to 20% of children enrolled in the program.

School districts, non-profit licensed child care centers, Head Start agencies, community action agencies, and other public, non-profit agencies may apply for the competitive grants (Iowa Department of Education, 2016). Grants are allocated and renewed annually for a maximum of five years; however, funding may vary based on legislative budget allocations (Iowa State Department of Education, 2016).

The program is supported through an annual state appropriation to provide "quality preschool programming to low income, at-risk three, four, and five-year-old children" (Iowa Department of Education, 2017).

In the 2016-17 school year, the state allocated \$7.7 million to the Shared Vision Program, approximately 8% of all state allocated preschool programming funds (LSA, Issue Review, 2016), which funded sixty-seven applications for the Shared Visions Preschool Program, which served 1,399 children across the state of Iowa. (Iowa Department of Education, 2017). The awarded programs received their first year of funding for the 2015-2016 and are now in the second of a five-year grant cycle that ends in 2020.

Current grantees must ensure they are meeting program requirements (e.g., NAEYC accreditation standards and use of the Teaching Strategies GOLD® Online Assessment System) in order to demonstrate high quality programming and maintain funding. Grantees must demonstrate that they have accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) by the end of their second year of funding. NAEYC is the highest national program accreditation that a preschool program can achieve.

The specific components of NAEYC accreditation are physical environment, teaching, community relationships, families, curriculum, health, relationships, and leadership and management. To maintain accreditation, sites must submit an annual report to NAEYC and apply for re-accreditation every five years. The NAEYC accreditation requirement will hold for the current grant cycle, and upon the renewal of the five year grant cycle, new grantees will have the option to choose NAEYC accreditation, Head

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<sup>1</sup> At-risk factors are defined as a student who is functioning below chronological age in two or more developmental areas, one of which may be English proficiency, as determined by an appropriate professional; 2. Was born at biological risk, such as low birth weight (under 1500 grams—approximately three pounds) or with a diagnosed medical disorder, such as spina bifida or Down's syndrome; 3. Was born to a parent who was under the age of 18; or 4. Resides in a household where one or more of the parents or guardian: Has not completed high school; Has been identified as a substance abuser; Has been identified as chronically mentally ill; Is illiterate; Is incarcerated; or Is a child or spouse abuser . 5. Has other special circumstances, such as foster care or being homeless (Iowa Department of Education, 2016).

Start performance standards, Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, or other program quality standards determined by the DE (Iowa Department of Education, 2016).



All Shared Visions Preschool programs must be NAEYC accredited

In addition to quality program standards, grantees must also meet the following criteria as outlined on the Iowa State Department of Education webpage:

- At least 80% of students enrolled must meet income guidelines (primary eligibility: 281-Iowa Administrative Code 64.7 Child Development Coordination Council definition and purpose of Preschool Programs), while the other 20% of children may be over income but must qualify based on secondary eligibility factors (Iowa Department of Education, 2017).
- Follow Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment guidelines, ensuring checkpoints and data are entered for all Shared Visions students (Iowa Department of Education, 2017).
- Maintain a class ratio of 1 adult for every 8 children<sup>2</sup>



Shared Visions requires a

**1:8**

Teacher: Student  
**Ratio**

<sup>2</sup> Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program ratio is 1:10. For comparison, DHS licensed child care centers have a 1:8 teacher to student ratio for 3 year olds; 1:12 ratio for 4 year olds; and 1:15 for 5 year olds.

Teachers are required by Shared Vision Program Guidelines to submit three Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment checkpoints for all students in the fall, winter, and spring. With the Iowa GOLD® subscription, teachers enter program information and student data online which allows the DE to more easily monitor compliance of grantees and use the data for program improvement (Iowa Department of Education, 2017). The DE provides technical support on their webpage for teachers and programs in regards to how to enter data into the online assessment system as well as how to use Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment tools for program, classroom, and student growth and development.

### III. Evaluation Methods

The primary means of data collection and analysis was the Shared Visions Survey (see Appendix), which was developed with guidance from DE staff and administered to all Shared Visions lead teachers. Additionally, evaluators also reviewed and summarized findings from documents including Shared Visions grant applications, year-end reports, renewal applications, and Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment data.

#### Survey Methods

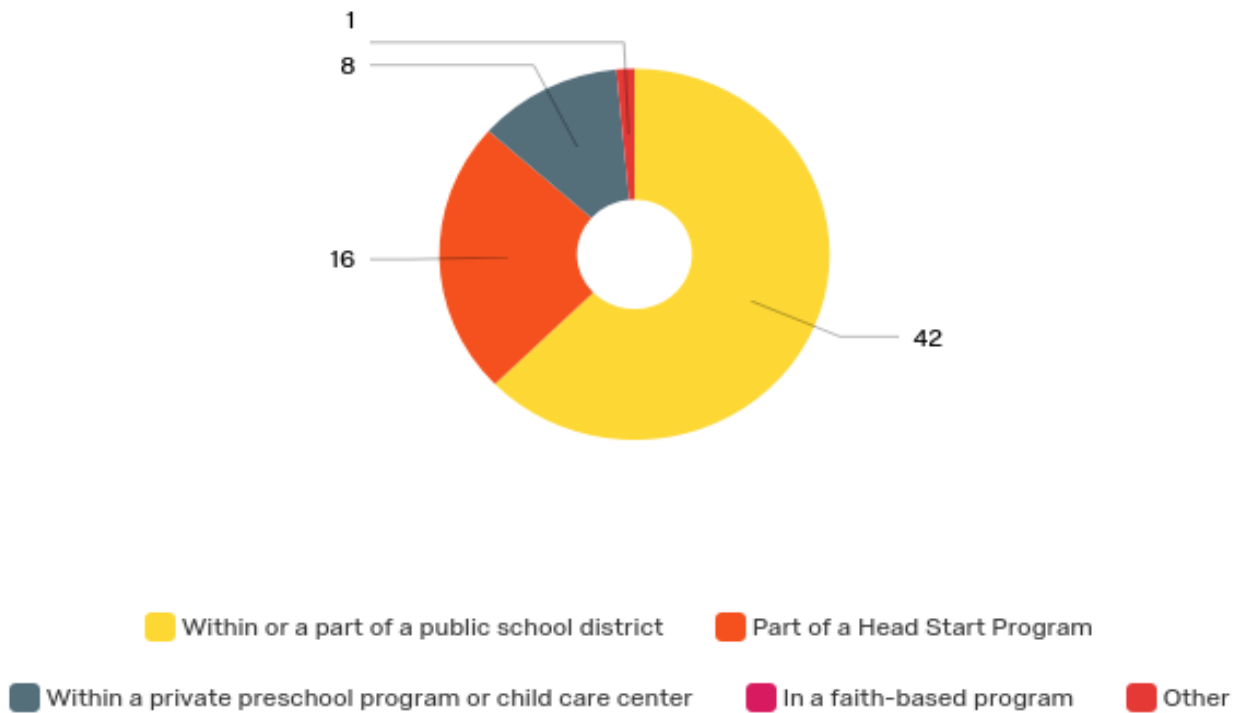
The electronic survey (see Appendix A) was developed with input from the DE staff to ensure that the questions would address the full breadth of information desired by the DE to make decisions about the Shared Visions program. The purpose of the survey was to collect detailed information about the sites and teachers, and also to directly address the three main evaluation questions outlined above. In the survey, participants were first asked:

- To share information related to their teaching background as well as the sites where they teach.
- To rate and to describe the type, amount, and quality of professional development they received by means of Likert scale responses and open-ended questions.
- To identify areas of additional training and to provide other general or specific feedback related to the implementation of the Shared Visions Preschool Program.

A total of 101 preschool teachers from sites that received grant funding through the Shared Visions Preschool Program during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years were invited to participate in the survey via email on January 24, 2017. Teachers' names and contact information were obtained from the DE. The survey was kept open for three weeks, with reminder emails sent weekly to participants who had not yet completed the survey. The survey was closed on February 14, with a total of 65 teachers responding, a response rate of 65%.

The 65 teachers who responded to the survey work in Shared Visions classrooms housed in multiple settings: as part of a school district (42), as part of a Head Start program (16), within a private preschool program or child care center (8), and other (1). Two teachers selected more than one location.

## Shared Visions Classroom Locations





## Existing Program Documentation

The DE set up a database to store and share documents securely between the DE and CEA staff. The only people with access to this shared database were three members of the CEA staff and the DE. Documents that were included in the shared database included: Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment data, Shared Visions grantee applications, year-end reports, and renewal applications, and Kindergarten Literacy Assessment (KLA) data for every student who was funded by the Shared Visions grant in 2015-2016 and then attended kindergarten in the fall of 2016 by state ID, student's fall score, and whether they met benchmark or not.

## Documentation Analysis

The initial grant applications, renewal applications and year-end reports were used to describe the program and answer one of the evaluation questions: teacher qualifications (licensure, years of teaching, and professional development hours), program length of day, and the number of students, funding sources, and program location. The various sources of data as well as the evaluation questions that they each addressed are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1.

### *Data Sources and Evaluation Considerations*

Evaluation Considerations	Data Source				
	Shared Visions Survey	Grant Applications	Renewal Applications	Year End Reports	Teaching Strategies™ GOLD® Data
Program Description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
What are professional development and support needs of shared visions teachers?	✓				✓
Are Shared Visions teachers utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment data?	✓			✓	✓
Are assessment data used to facilitate program and student growth as well as improve classroom instruction?	✓				

#### IV. Purpose of the Evaluation and Roles of the CEA and DE

The purpose of this evaluation is to describe the Shared Visions Preschool Program’s program during the first two years and to provide recommendations that can inform program improvements throughout the latter three years of the grant cycle. According to the original service agreement between the Center for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) and the Iowa Department of Education (DE), the CEA staff provided research development, analysis, and reporting expertise. Meanwhile, the DE staff developed the evaluation questions and provided necessary data to facilitate the CEA’s evaluation. The parties agreed that FERPA guidelines would be followed, and that any data collected to evaluate the Shared Visions Preschool Program would be shared in a secure and confidential server provided by the DE. This project was determined to be “not research with human subjects” by the University of Iowa Human Subjects Office because information will be used for program improvement.

In addition to describing the program, which included summarizing teacher background and credentials, Quality Rating System (QRS) participation, length of school day, student demographics, location of program, and student participation, the following evaluation questions guided the evaluation activities and reporting:

1. **What are the professional development and support needs of Shared Visions teachers?**
2. **Are Shared Visions teachers utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD® as outlined in the grant requirements?**
3. **Are assessment data used to facilitate program and student growth as well as improve classroom instruction?**

The CEA and DE staff members met monthly to discuss the current status of evaluation activities and findings, as well as to ensure appropriate project guidance. Preliminary findings were reported to the DE orally in February 2017, and a draft written report for comment was provided in June.

#### V. Findings

The findings are organized according to the purposes of the evaluation. Overall, the 65 teachers who responded to the survey reported having received adequate training in Teaching Strategies GOLD® techniques, guidelines, and assessments. They also reported actively using the assessment data to inform their planning and instruction to meet the individual needs of learners in their classes. The areas of greatest professional development need they expressed included how to collect portfolio items, as well as how to report and share student progress with families.

##### **Description of the Program**

When asked if they participated in Iowa’s Quality Rating System (QRS), 42% of respondents (N=29) replied yes, with most of those reporting that they were part of a public school district. Table 2 provides a cross-tabulation of QRS participation by classroom location.

Table 2.

*QRS Participation and Shared Visions Location*

	Location	Does your program participate in Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS)?		TOTAL
		Yes	No	
<b>Where is your Shared Visions classroom located?</b>	Within or a part of a public school district	14	23	37
	Part of a Head Start program	10	3	13
	Within a private preschool program or childcare center	5	3	8
	In a faith-based program	0	0	0
	Other	0	1	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>59</b>

Based on the survey data, a majority of teachers (62.7%, N=37) indicated that their classrooms are located within a public school district. Other teachers reported being part of a Head Start program (N=13), a private preschool program or childcare center (N=8), or some other location (N=1). Nearly all programs offered class either four or five days a week (see Table 3).

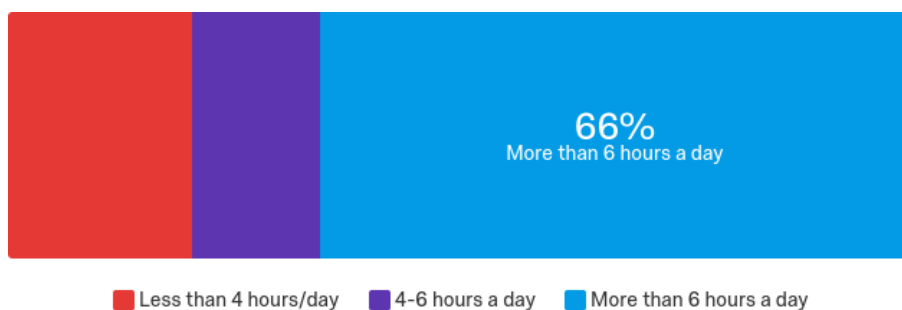
Table 3.

*Shared Visions Program Frequency & Duration of Classes*

Frequency in days per week	Length of day			Total Number of Programs
	> 6 hours	4-6 hours	< 4 hours	
5 days / week (N=35)	29	4	2	<b>35</b>
4 days / week (N=28)	12	5	11	<b>28</b>
3 days / week (N=1)	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>64</b>

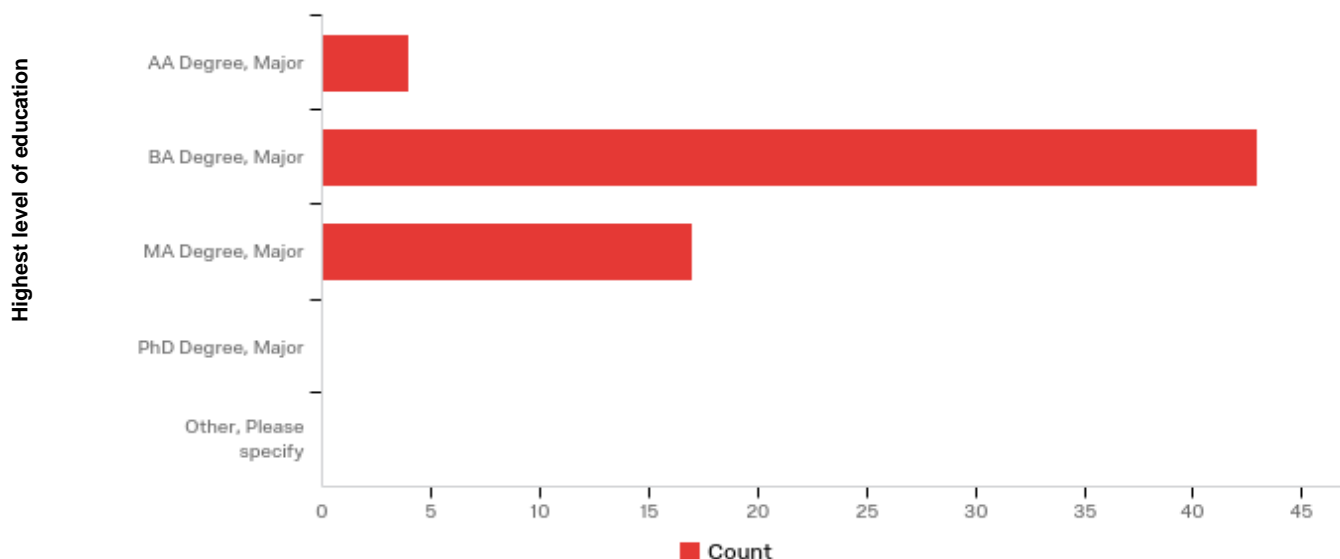
In approximately two thirds of all programs (N=42), students attended class for more than six hours each day, while in 14% of programs (N=9) children attended between 4 and 6 hours each day, and in 20% of programs (N=13) attendance was less than 4 hours per day. Slight differences occurred in length of day when considering the different classroom locations. For example, only 57% (N=24) of classes in a public school district met for more than 6 hours each day, while in Head Start programs this rate increased to 75% (N=12), and in private programs or childcare centers 88% (N=7) of classes met for 6 or more hours per day.

### Number of hours per day children spend in Shared Visions Preschools



### Description of the Teachers

Approximately two thirds of teachers (N=43) who completed the survey reported receiving a Bachelor of Arts (BA) as their highest degree earned, while 27% (N=17) completed a Master's degree (MA), and 6% (N=4) earned an Associate's degree (AA). In comparison, as reported on renewal applications and year end reports, 75% of Shared Visions teachers had a BA, 16% had a MA, and 9% had an AA degree. Of those who received an Associate's degree, documentation indicates all of them were employed by a Head Start program.



The majors of those with a BA mostly fell into two categories - Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education – with three teachers also receiving training in special education as a part of their

major. Of the 11 teachers who reported earning an MA degree, their program areas were much more varied and included, among others, Curriculum and Instruction, Education, Early Childhood Education, and Reading or Literacy. Of those with an AA degree, three were teaching in a Head Start program, and one was teaching in a private school or childcare center.

Table 4.

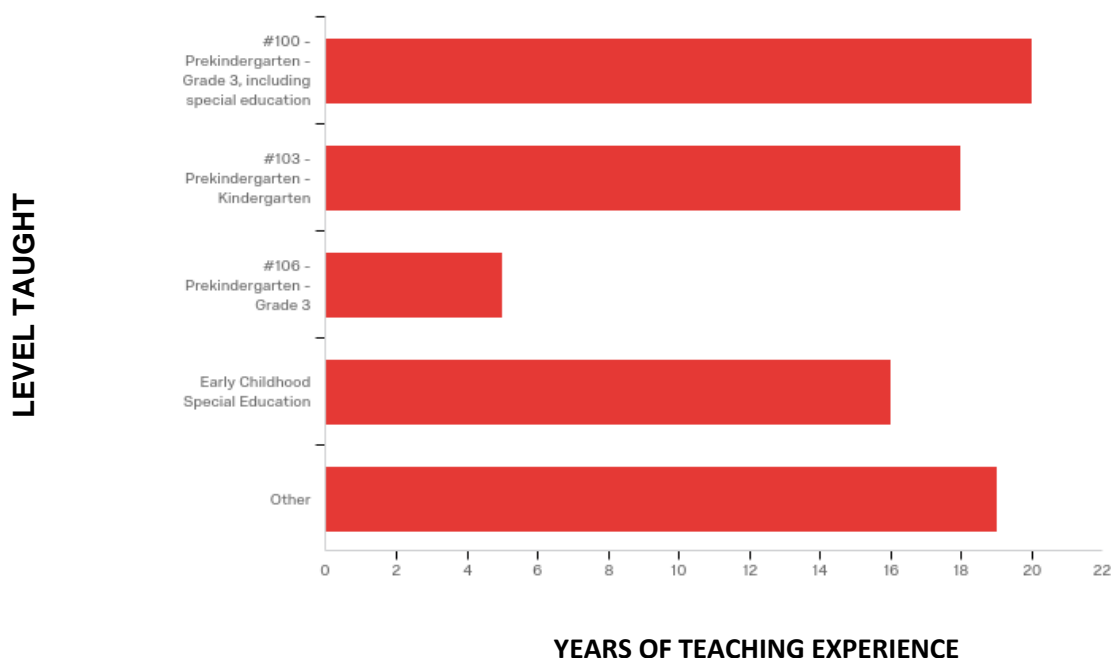
*Shared Visions Teachers' Education & Licensure Information*

Degree	Frequency (%)	Provided Majors
BA	43 (67%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary education (N=14)</li> <li>Early childhood (N=8)</li> <li>Special education (N=3)</li> </ul>
MA	17 (27%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum and instruction (N=2)</li> <li>Education (N=2)</li> <li>Early childhood education (N=2)</li> <li>Reading or literacy (N=2)</li> </ul>
AA	4 (6%)	

*Note: The response rate for the third column indicating majors was low and may not be representative of the entire sample.*

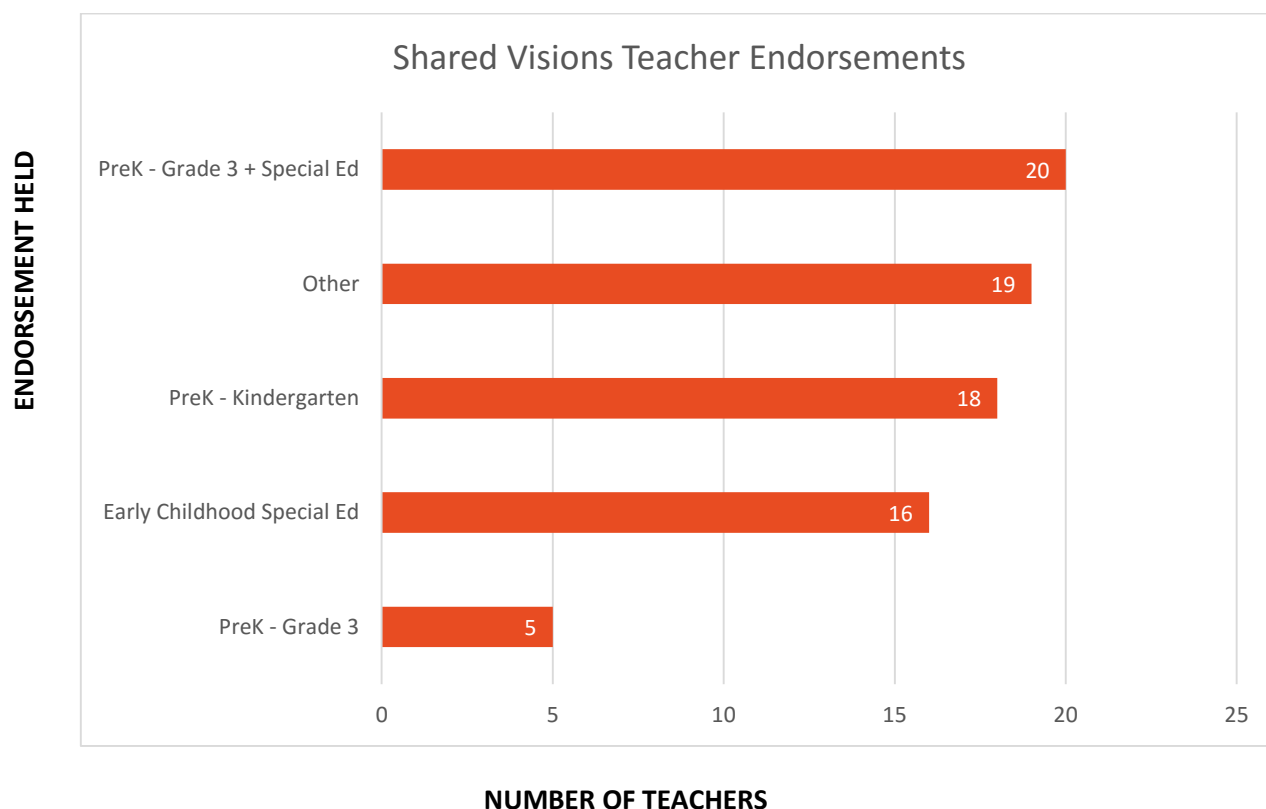
Of the 53 (out of a possible 65) Shared Visions preschool teachers who indicated their level of experience on the survey, most tended to be in the earlier stages of their careers. The total range in years of experience teaching in a Shared Visions preschool program was between 1 and 36. However, more than half (N=29) indicated that they had been teaching for less than five years, and thirteen had only one year of experience.

**Over 50% of the teachers have taught for 5 years or less in a Shared Visions Preschool Program.**



The licenses held by Shared Visions teachers, as self-reported in the survey, vary greatly. Nearly one third of teachers (N=19) reported having multiple endorsements, with the most common supplementary endorsement being Early Childhood Special Education (N=10).

Of particular note, is that nearly half of respondents (N=32) indicated that they had some form of Special Education Endorsement. Of those respondents who selected “Other”, the most commonly occurring licenses in this group were either Reading (N=9) or Elementary Education (N=3). Additionally, a majority (N=10) of respondents who selected “Other” also reported having another endorsement.



### Professional Development Needs of Shared Visions Teachers

In the survey, teachers were asked five questions pertaining to their current and desired professional development opportunities. In addition to being asked about the number of hours and types of professional development opportunities they engaged in on average each year, they were also asked to respond to Likert scale, multiple choice, and open-ended questions where they could identify areas in which they would like to receive additional support.

Slight differences were observed when comparing participation in professional development according to teachers' level of education (see Table 4). For example, those with an AA degree (N=4) averaged between 31 and 45 hours per year, while those with a BA degree (N=43) averaged between 46 and 60 hours per year, although they were more evenly spread out among all categories of the spectrum. Finally, more than 80% (N=13) of those with an MA degree reported participating in 46 or more hours of professional development each year.

Table 5.

*Teacher professional development by level of education*

Hours of professional development per year	Highest Degree Attained					Total
	AA	BA	MA	PhD	Other	
0-15	0	3	0	0	0	3
16-30	1	8	2	0	0	11
31-45	2	8	1	0	0	11
46-60	1	8	7	0	0	16
61-75	0	9	3	0	0	12
Greater than 75	0	7	3	0	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>63</b>

SHARED VISIONS  
TEACHERS  
PARTICIPATE IN MORE  
THAN  
**50**  
HOURS OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT PER  
YEAR

Teachers reported participating in a variety of professional development opportunities, most were offered either on-site (N=54) or by their Area Educational Agency (N=35). The number of hours spent in professional development varied greatly, ranging from 0-15 through >75 hours, with an **average of 50 hours per year.**

In the open-ended survey question asking about any additional professional development opportunities they would like to be made available, **four of eleven teachers indicated a strong desire to learn more about addressing the individual needs of students in a diverse class.** Their requests for guidance were focused on how to best support both low achieving students as well as English Language Learners. For example, one teacher expressed that they would like to learn, **“How to support all the students in my classroom that contains regular ed. students and special ed. students.”**

The desire to improve their instruction beyond the requirements of the program were echoed by another teacher who expressed the following, **“I would like to have an opportunity to have an outside person observe my teaching and environment and offer suggestions of areas I could work to improve even more.”** Thus, the current professional development being requested by teachers extends beyond the procedural aspects of administering the program and into more advanced areas of instructional support.

#### **Utilization of Teaching Strategies GOLD®**

In order to verify adherence to Teaching Strategies GOLD® guidelines and assessments, self-reported data from the survey was compared against existing database records. In the survey teachers were asked to respond to statements about various applications of Teaching Strategies GOLD® using a Likert scale (see Table 6) where Strongly Disagree = 1, and Strongly Agree = 5.

In the survey, teachers generally expressed feeling confident in their knowledge of Teaching Strategies GOLD®, as well as their ability to faithfully implement the curriculum in their classrooms. For example, nearly all respondents strongly agreed with the following two statements: “I understand Teaching Strategies GOLD® objectives and dimensions for each developmental age



and area,” (mean of 4.7) and “I complete the checkpoints at the required time frames for Teaching Strategies GOLD®,” (mean of 4.94). The weakest observed score in this list of statements describing teachers’ use of Teaching Strategies GOLD® was in response to the statement, “I reference the Iowa GOLD® Online Procedures to assist with use of the assessment system” (mean of 3.52). This may need to be explored further; however, based on earlier responses indicating their satisfaction with training and familiarity with the program, this response may be indicative of their level of confidence in administering the assessments.

With respect to the type and amount of training related to the Shared Visions program, teachers reported receiving the appropriate training on Teaching Strategies GOLD® (mean of 4.48) and felt confident that they could carry out the curriculum and assessments (mean of 4.84). In fact, when asked in the survey if they felt that they would benefit from additional training on Teaching Strategies GOLD®, teachers were rather indifferent; they neither agreed nor disagreed (mean response rate of 2.95). However, when asked about the areas in which they would like additional training, teachers readily indicated that they wanted to learn more about how to report and share student progress with families (N=20) and collecting portfolio items (N=20). Table 6 provides response rates for each of the feedback types.

Table 6.

*Teacher Feedback on Training & Implementation of Teaching Strategies GOLD®*

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. I would like more training on Teaching Strategies GOLD®	9	13	21	14	7
2. I reference the Iowa GOLD® Online Procedures to assist with use of the assessment system.	6	6	17	19	16
3. I use the data from the assessments to inform planning for individual students.	0	0	0	21	42
4. I use the data from the assessments to inform classroom instruction.	0	0	1	20	42
5. I received training on how to use data in Teaching Strategies GOLD® to inform instruction.	0	3	4	18	39
6. I received training on how to implement Teaching Strategies GOLD®.	0	5	3	12	44
7. I complete the checkpoints at the required time frames for Teaching Strategies GOLD®.	0	0	0	4	60
8. I add preliminary ratings when entering documentation.	2	2	7	12	41
9. I understand Teaching Strategies GOLD® objectives and dimensions for each developmental age and area.	0	0	1	17	46

## Improving Classroom Instruction with Assessment Data

In the survey, teachers were asked to respond to two statements about their use of assessment data (see Table 6). Their responses were overwhelmingly positive, with most indicating that they strongly agreed (N=42) with both statements, indicating that they use data to both facilitate individual student growth and to modify and improve their instruction.

### Feedback about Shared Visions Program

As part of the survey, teachers were given the opportunity to express additional thoughts or comments related to the program. Of the eleven of respondents who provided additional comments, four were very positive about the program and expressed enthusiasm for the impact it has had on students. One teacher wrote: **“I truly believe that this program is important to the children of our community. Having been in the program for over 20 years, I have seen kids go from having no idea what you do with a book, because they never had one in their home, to being honor students in high school and college. I hope this program continues as it is so greatly needed.”** Another teacher reported, **“This program makes a big difference to our refugee and immigrant families.”**



*I have seen kids go from having no idea what you do with a book, because they never had one in their home, to being honor students in high school and college.*



Most other responses had to do with utilizing the QRS rating scale (N=3) or experiencing logistical challenges (N=2). One teacher also offered constructive criticism that may inform future decisions for how, and in what settings the program would be most suitable. The teacher wrote, “My program is 3 hours, 4 days/ week. It is very difficult to collect, record, enter, and score 32 children using the GOLD® assessment tool. I feel this tool is very useful for full day, full week daycare settings, but not appropriate for 2-1/2-day Preschool Programs.”

## VI. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

In order to ensure continued success of the Shared Visions Preschool Program, the following data-driven recommendations are centered on ways to improve the support and professional development provided to all Shared Visions teachers. Additionally, suggestions are made to increase the level of detail in future data collection procedures to more richly describe the program’s implementation and accurately portray the impact it has on the variety of teaching and learning environments. Recommendations are organized by the three evaluation questions.

### 1. What are the professional development and support needs of Shared Visions teachers?

- The current training and professional development offered through the Shared Visions Preschool Program appear to be adequate in supporting teachers’ implementation of Teaching Strategies GOLD® guidelines and assessments. As indicated by participants’ survey responses, *attention and resources should be directed toward supporting teachers in using the family and communication tools available through Teaching Strategies*

GOLD®. In addition, teachers' open-ended responses indicated a *need for greater professional development in meeting diverse student needs in the classroom.*

- According to the survey responses from Shared Visions teachers, it would be advantageous to *develop targeted professional development in the areas of how to select items for inclusion in students' portfolios, as well as how to communicate student progress to families.* Additionally, teachers indicated there was a *need for training on how to use the family communication tools* available to them in the Teaching Strategies GOLD® online assessment tool. **We recommend training for teachers on communicating with families to ensure teachers feel confident in their ability to communicate the growth of individual learners to parents.**
- If teachers are given *training in how to communicate with families* regarding their child's progress in the class, this may serve to increase the connection between home and school while also more broadly promoting and maintaining the positive image of the Shared Visions program.

## 2. Are Shared Visions teachers utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD® as outlined in the grant requirements?

- Most Shared Visions teachers reported in the survey that they are able to get their questions about Shared Visions or Teaching Strategies GOLD® answered by their local administrator or peer teachers, however, nearly 10% (N=6) of teachers reported not having support from an AEA contact if needed. This was particularly noticeable in schools that were not part of a public school district (see Table 7).

Table 7.

*AEA support by location of Shared Visions classrooms.*

		Where is your Shared Visions classroom located?					Total
		Within or a part of a public school district	Part of a Head Start program	Within a private preschool program or child care center	In a faith-based program	Other	
Do you receive support or have contact with an AEA consultant if needed?	Yes	38	15	6	0	1	57
	No	3	1	2	0	0	6
Total		41	16	8	0	1	63

- In order to ensure the implementation fidelity of the program’s guidelines and assessments, **it may be advantageous for an AEA contact to reach out to individual teachers and establish lines of communication** such that all Shared Visions teachers know who to contact regarding questions they may have about the program.
- 3. Are assessment data used to facilitate program and student growth as well as improve classroom instruction?**
- 62 out of 63 respondents agreed that they use data from the assessments to inform classroom instruction, and all 63 respondents agreed that they use the data from the assessments to inform planning for individual students.
  - A discrepancy in data was noted between the final Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment data, and the year-end reports, which could be a result of teacher error when entering students into the GOLD® assessment system, or when moving students from one classroom to another during the year. **It may be necessary to address with teachers how to handle fluctuations in program enrollment.** Additional technical support or training regarding how to enter students into the GOLD® online assessment system, and how to move students during the year would help ensure that the number of students entered into the GOLD® online assessment system matched those entered as receiving Shared Visions Preschool programming in the year-end reports.
  - While the Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessments appear to have broad support from Shared Visions teachers, there may need to be room for adjustments to program requirements based on the unique characteristics of individual classes or teachers. For example, *it may be important to consider ways to reduce the time devoted to assessment in classes that meet for fewer than four hours per day, in order to allow teachers the greatest amount of instructional time possible.*

### Future Data Collection Recommendations

In order to ensure consistency across the variety of forms entered in the database, which will aid in future evaluation efforts, it may be beneficial to implement systematic naming conventions. In the current instance of documentation, for example, there were some programs that were named by district on the renewal application, by teacher in Teaching Strategies GOLD®, and by school in the year-end report. Ensuring that programs’ or grantees’ names are used consistently on all reports would provide greater clarity regarding program participation and streamline future evaluation activities.

In subsequent phases of program evaluation, it may also be useful to include classroom observations and/or interviews with Shared Visions teachers in order to develop a richer description of how the program guidelines and assessments are implemented in practice. Selecting a representative sample of teachers from among the variety of locations where they teach and the type of experience and endorsements they hold could provide greater understanding of the impact of the program’s components, and the teachers’ facility at the point of instruction. By adding these evaluation tools in future years, there would be a more nuanced understanding of how the program affects instruction and student outcomes, which may also lead to more detailed feedback and recommendations for continued success of the program.

## Appendix A – Survey Instrument

*Greetings,*

*The Iowa Department of Education would like your input and feedback to help them determine how things are going across the state of Iowa in regards to the Shared Visions Preschool Program. You are being asked to complete this survey because you are listed as a current lead teacher in a Shared Visions Preschool Program. Please fill out this survey about your experience with the Shared Visions Preschool Program.*

*Your name will not be tied to your individual answers. Your answers will be kept confidential.*

*If you have questions about this survey, please contact:*

*Dr. Liz Hollingworth*

*liz-hollingworth@uiowa.edu*

*Thank you for your time!*

**1. Where is your Shared Visions classroom located?**

Within or a part of a public school district

Part of a Head Start Program

Within a private preschool program or child care center

In a faith-based program

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**2. How many hours per day do children attend?**

Less than 4 hours/day

4-6 hours a day

More than 6 hours a day

**3. Please indicate your highest degree level:**

AA Degree, Major \_\_\_\_\_

BA Degree, Major \_\_\_\_\_

MA Degree, Major \_\_\_\_\_

PhD Degree, Major \_\_\_\_\_

Other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Which endorsements do you have?**

#100 - Prekindergarten - Grade 3, including special education

#103 - Prekindergarten - Kindergarten

#106 - Prekindergarten - Grade 3

Early Childhood Special Education

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**5. I have taught in a Shared Visions Preschool Program for:**

Years \_\_\_\_\_

Months \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Respond to the following items regarding the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards. Indicate your level of agreement for each of the statements from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I understand the NAEYC accreditation standards.					
The training I received on NAEYC standards and the accreditation process helped me implement those standards.					
NAEYC accreditation has improved the quality of our program.					
Our classroom works to ensure we are always compliant with NAEYC standards.					

**7. Respond to the following items regarding Teaching Strategies GOLD<sup>®</sup>. Indicate your level of agreement for each of the statements from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I understand Teaching Strategies GOLD <sup>®</sup> objectives and dimensions for each developmental age and area.					
I add preliminary ratings when entering documentation.					
I complete the checkpoints at the required time frames for Teaching Strategies GOLD <sup>®</sup> .					
I received training on how to implement Teaching Strategies GOLD <sup>®</sup> .					
I received training on how to use data in Teaching Strategies GOLD <sup>®</sup> to inform instruction.					
I use the data from the assessments to inform classroom instruction.					
I use the data from the assessments to inform planning for individual students.					
I reference the Iowa GOLD <sup>®</sup> Online Procedures to assist with use of the assessment system.					
I would like more training on Teaching Strategies GOLD <sup>®</sup>					



**8. I would like additional training on:**

How to implement assessments

Understanding the objectives and dimensions

Collecting portfolio items

Using family components such as the family conference form, family central, and reports that share children's progress

Using preliminary ratings to assist in finalizing checkpoints

Understanding how assessment results can improve inform my classroom instruction

Understanding how assessment results can inform planning for individual students

Other, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Respond to the following items regarding interactions with your administrator related to the Shared Visions Preschool Program. Indicate your level agreement for each of the statements from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My teaching is observed by my administrator.					
My administrator discusses my observation with me.					
The feedback I receive from my administrator supports my professional growth.					
My administrator understands the requirements of the Shared Visions Preschool Program.					
My administrator is supportive of the Shared Visions Preschool Program.					
My administrator listens to my questions and concerns and adequately addresses them.					

10. On average I am observed by an administrator \_\_\_\_\_ times a year.

11. How many days per week do children attend your classroom?

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

12. On average, I participate in \_\_\_\_\_ hours of professional development in one year:

- 0-15
- 16-30
- 31-45
- 46-60
- 61-75
- Greater than 75

13. Of those hours, estimate how many were:

- Part of a free in-service training at your site: \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a free training offered by Child Care Resource and Referral: \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a free training offered by Iowa State University Extension: \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a free professional development at the AEA: \_\_\_\_\_
- Able to be used for continuing education hours: \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a paid professional development opportunity at an AEA: \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a college class used toward a certificate, degree, or endorsement: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Include description and number of hours): \_\_\_\_\_

14. Please respond to the question below from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I feel that I am provided appropriate professional development:					

15. Please specify any professional development opportunities you would like to have available.

16. If I have questions about the Shared Visions Preschool Program requirements, NAEYC accreditation standards, or Teaching Strategies GOLD<sup>®</sup> I usually get the information from: (check all that apply)

Other Shared Visions preschool teachers

My administrator/site manager

AEA staff

State Department of Education website

Early Childhood Consultant at the State Department of Education

Childcare Resource and Referral Staff

Other \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you receive support or have contact with an AEA consultant if needed?

Yes

No

18. Does your program participate in Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS)?

Yes

No

If yes, what level has your program achieved? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Please add any additional comments regarding the Shared Visions Preschool Program below.

*We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.  
Your response has been recorded.*