

WERA TASK FORCE *Global Research in Extended Education*

Topic of the invited symposium: Collaboration in extended education

Chairs: Haiqin Ning, Marianne Schüpbach, Jennifer Cartmel, Kirstin Kerr

As student populations become increasingly diverse, providing inclusive and equitable education has become a critical global priority. Achieving this requires intensive, purposeful collaboration across educational institutions and among diverse pedagogical professions (Speck, 2020). However, effective collaboration is often intertwined with differing educational objectives, institutional constraints, and distinct professional paradigms (Griffiths et al., 2021). This complexity is especially evident in extended education offerings that extend the regular school day to support student learning, development, safety, and well-being (Schüpbach & Lilla, 2025). This symposium presents recent empirical findings on the dynamics of collaboration among different educational disciplines, professions and institutions. The symposium features four international perspectives.

Paper I: Interdisciplinary collaboration in school mental health: a scoping review

Integrating mental health and wellbeing services in schools has the potential to improve students' socio-emotional wellbeing, engagement in learning and education outcomes. This scoping review aimed to establish and synthesise the current evidence base in relation to the junction of education and mental health and wellbeing practice. A systematic search and screening of peer-reviewed and grey research literature was conducted and resulted in the identification of 56 relevant sources. Extracted data was analysed using descriptive and qualitative synthesis via content analysis. The largely exploratory and qualitative studies examined a range of influences on interdisciplinary collaborations. Enablers and barriers were interconnected and related to interprofessional relationships, the role of teachers and administrators in collaborations, territorialism, or the perceived practice divide between education and mental health, resourcing issues and the need for role clarity, appropriate training and structures and processes which support joint working. Insights gained may inform practice, policy, and research at the evolving intersection of education and mental health and well-being practice.

Paper II: Enhancing Multi-professional Collaboration to Support Socially Disadvantaged Students with Migration Backgrounds in All-day Primary Schools: Perspectives of State-Level Educational Governance Stakeholders

Multi-professional collaboration is a key quality feature of inclusive extended education, essential for addressing diverse student needs. However, current research, particularly in German-speaking regions, often examines the enabling

conditions for this collaboration without specifically addressing the needs of disadvantaged students, especially those of low socioeconomic status from migration backgrounds. This study explores the perspectives of state-level educational governance stakeholders on the enabling conditions for successful multi-professional collaboration. Through focus group discussions conducted across four German federal states, we analysed and juxtaposed the viewpoints of educational administrations and support systems. The results reveal the highly complex and intertwined nature of these enabling conditions, highlighting critical areas of consensus and divergence between the two groups. Notably, the findings surface an underlying “inclusivity controversy” and identify school leadership as the “hidden engine” driving successful multi-professional collaboration.

Paper III: Coordination and Collaboration between School-Age Care Centres and Schools in Japan

Although 51.2% of School-Age Care (SAC) centres in Japan are located within elementary school premises, collaboration and coordination between SAC and school education remain far from easy. Securing time for meetings between SAC staff and school teachers is often challenging because SAC in Japan is part of the child welfare system, distinct from elementary schools in organisation and function. However, sharing information about children's physical and mental health and coordinating facility use are daily SAC needs. It is increasingly important to clarify how SAC and elementary schools can collaborate to support children's growth.

In this presentation, we examine the possibilities and challenges of establishing a system of collaboration and cooperation between SAC and elementary schools in Japan under these circumstances. Our analysis draws on two case studies and interviews conducted with SAC staff. Examples from urban areas demonstrate how collaboration with schools is positioned within diverse, government-led mechanisms for coordinating SAC. Examples from rural areas illustrate methods of facility-level collaboration between SAC and schools, mediated by assessment sheets.

Paper IV: Perceived professionalism of parents about extended education providers as foundation for mutual trust and collaboration between two groups

As afterschool programs increasingly complement formal schooling, establishing a cooperative partnership between these two key stakeholder groups has become essential. Drawing on qualitative, semi-structured in-depth interviews with parents, this study explores parental perceptions of professionalism among afterschool instructors as a foundational element for fostering mutual trust and collaboration between parents and extended education providers.

The findings indicate that parents' recognition of professionalism is anchored in the institutional legitimacy of formal school settings. This environmental trust provides a baseline for reliability, even amidst limited direct interaction. Beyond formal

WERA Focal Meeting in Taiwan, October 15-18, 2026

qualifications, parents evaluate professionalism through indirect experiences—such as children's feedback, student engagement, and instructional consistency—and heavily emphasize relational dimensions, including instructors' responsibility, empathy, and responsiveness. Crucially, the study reveals that when parents perceive high professionalism, it actively diminishes psychological barriers and bridges the communication gap between home and the afterschool sector. Effective, professional communication further reinforces this perception, creating a positive feedback loop.

Discussant: Marianne Schüpbach

References

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