

# Amy Schmidtke, EdD

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## EDUCATION

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### **Doctor of Education, 2020**

Educational Administration, University of Nebraska at Omaha

**Dissertation:** Influences on the Implementation of Guided Play Practices in Kindergarten: A Grounded Theory Study

**Specialty:** Early Childhood Education, Educational Leadership

### **Master of Science, 2005**

Elementary Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Concentration- Early Childhood Education, English as a Second Language

### **Bachelor of Science, 1997**

Elementary Education, University of Nebraska at Lincoln

Concentration- Language Arts

### **Nebraska Teaching Certificate**

Endorsements: Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3), Elementary Education (K-8), and English as a Second Language (K-12)

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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**Buffett Early Childhood Institute- University of Nebraska**

2016- Present

### ***Director of Educational Practice***

Directs systemic approaches to reduce achievement and opportunity gaps in early learning settings (Birth to Grade 3). Integrates applied research, instructional practices, and family engagement strategies to improve school, community, and child outcomes. Leads collaborations across district systems, focusing on leadership, instructional excellence, and family engagement.

### ***Director of Professional Learning***

Designed and oversaw professional learning programs, including webinars, communities of practice, and workshops. Developed facilitator guides and other resources for early childhood professionals to inform implementation of developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive strategies in practice. Collaborated with colleagues and school district teams to advance the School as Hub approach through capacity-building initiatives.

### ***Program Specialist – Resource and Program Development***

Created and refined materials for program initiatives and synthesized research-based resources to support district strategies and build a conceptual framework to guide the work of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. Collaborated with

principals and district leaders to implement the School as Hub model effectively.

***Educational Facilitator***

Provided instructional coaching, professional development, and consultation to educators. Supported developmentally appropriate practices for children (Birth to Grade 3) and helped address opportunity gaps through targeted initiatives.

**Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children**

2019- 2022

***Board of Directors Member***

Provided strategic governance and leadership to support the organization's mission. Partnered with NeAEYC staff and board members to evaluate outcomes, approve budgets and reports, and oversee critical organizational decisions.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**University of Nebraska-Omaha**

2017-Present

***Adjunct Instructor: Early Childhood Education***

Design and deliver undergraduate and graduate courses in early childhood education, including topics such as STEM and social-emotional learning. Collaborate with faculty to develop syllabi and select course materials. Facilitate lectures, discussions, and activities while providing constructive feedback to enhance student learning.

**Omaha Public Schools-**

1998- 2016

***Early Childhood Instructional Coach***

Led an instructional team of teachers and paraprofessionals to enhance program quality in preschool classrooms. Delivered professional development, coaching, and support for educators. Collaborated with family support staff to promote parent communication and involvement.

***Teacher: Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Classroom***

Developed and implemented developmentally appropriate curricula, focusing on cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional growth. Differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of English language learners and students with varying abilities.

***Early Childhood Resource Teacher: English as a Second Language, Title I Reading***

Provided targeted instruction for high-need emergent readers in kindergarten and first grade. Designed individualized plans to achieve literacy goals, collaborating with classroom teachers, special education staff, and families. Collected and analyzed data to monitor progress and inform instruction.

**Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE** 2008- 2014  
***Adjunct Instructor: Early Childhood Educator***

Taught courses in early childhood education, including online and in-person formats. Designed lessons aligned with NAEYC accreditation standards and supervised practicum students, providing guidance and assessments for their fieldwork.

**Williamsburg Village Child Development Center, Lincoln, NE** 1995- 1998  
***Infant and Toddler Teacher***

Planned and implemented age-appropriate activities focused on whole-child development. Conducted developmental assessments and supported children's growth through individualized care and education. Maintained compliance with state licensing requirements and NAEYC standards.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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Schmidtke, A. (Ed.). (In Press). *The intentional teacher: Choosing the best strategies for young children's learning* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). NAEYC.

Snyder, K., Schmidtke, A., Jolley, T., Wells, M. Building and Sustaining Powerful Family and Community Partnerships using a School as Hub Approach. In Edwards, N.M & Miller, G.E. (Ed.), *Promising Family-School-Community Partnerships in Early Childhood Settings (Birth-8)*. Information Age Publishing. *(Proposal Accepted, Submission In-Development)*.

Snyder, K., Schmidtke, A., Wells, M., Jolley, T., Jabdoobirsingh, A. (Under Review). *Exploring Perceptions of Social Support: A Triangulated Qualitative Analysis among Staff and Family Members Involved in a School-Based Early Childhood Family Engagement Program*. Submitted to Child and Youth Services Review.

Schmidtke, A. (2023b). Prioritizing listening to and learning from families. In P. Brillante, J. J. Chen, S. Cuevas, C. Dunderf, E. Brown Hoffman, D. R. Meier, G. Mindes, & L. R. Roy (Eds.), *Casebook: Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood classrooms birth through grade 3*. NAEYC.

Schmidtke, A. (2022). A Qualitative Study of Kindergarten Teachers' Perceptions About the Influences of Professional Learning on Their Implementation of Guided Play. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2022.2064013>

## **GRANTS AND CONTRACTS**

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### **Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan**

2024-2025

### **Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties,**

#### **Principal Investigator**

Amount Awarded: \$8,526,802 (BECI) + \$5,510,198 (School Districts) = \$14,037,000  
(Total)

Design and lead implementation of an eleven school district initiative promoting advancement in district systems and school-based programs serving children and families from birth through Grade 3, targeting access to and quality experiences for children living in high concentrations of poverty in an effort to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

### **Omaha Public Schools Early Childhood Intensive Program**

2024-2027

### **Omaha Public Schools, Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties**

#### **Principal Investigator**

Amount Awarded: \$956,258

The project aims to close opportunity gaps for children in high-poverty areas by embedding high-quality, comprehensive early childhood education and family support systems from birth through Grade 3. By providing customized coaching, professional development, and leadership support, the project seeks to improve outcomes for children and families and build sustainable models for early childhood education that can be scaled across the district.

### **Early School Success Center**

2024-2029

### **U.S. Department of Education**

#### **Content Developer**

Amount Awarded: \$728,391

The Early School Success Content Center is a national initiative aimed at developing tools and services to support leaders in implementing research-informed strategies to improve school success for young children. The project focuses on ensuring equitable access, experiences, and outcomes for children and families, particularly by addressing inequities in early learning and K-12 education systems.

## **PRESENTATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

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Schmidkte, A., Luebbe, K., Anson, A. *Building the Foundation for Meeting Continuous Improvement Goals Starting in PreK*. Nebraska Department of Education Administrators' Days 2024. Kearney, NE.

Schmidkte, A., Daberkow, E., Burk, C., Jones, K., Anson, A. *Early Childhood District Support Plan - Systems of Support*. NeMTSS Summit 2024. Kearney, NE.

- Dundorf, C., Roy, L., Schmidtke, *Better Together: Using the fourth edition of NAEYC's DAP book and the DAP Casebook in Higher Education and Professional Development*. NAEYC Annual Conference 2023. Nashville, TN.
- Dundorf, C., Roy, L., Schmidtke, *A. Real Cases. Real DAP. Using the DAP Casebook to Engage Students and Colleagues with Developmentally Appropriate Practice*. NAEYC Professional Learning Institute 2023. Portland, OR.
- Schmidtke, A. (2022, November). *Guided Play in Preschool and Kindergarten*. NAEYC Annual Conference 2022. Washington DC.
- Schmidtke, A. (2022, November). *The Influence of Leadership, Professional Learning, and Collaboration on Developmentally Appropriate Practices*. NAEYC Annual Conference 2022. Washington DC.
- Schmidtke, A., Heller, E. (2021, June). *Future Ready from the Start: Digital Literacy in Early Childhood*. 2021 Future Ready Nebraska Conference. Virtual.
- Schmidtke, A., Wisneski, D. (2021, March). *Promoting Guided Play Practices in Kindergarten through Focused Professional Learning and Teacher Self-Assessment*. Presented at the Association for the Study of Play's 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Virtual.
- Schmidtke, A., Pistillo, M.B., Colwell, A. (2020, February). *Incorporating an Early Childhood Philosophy into a Standards-Based World*. Presented at the ESU 13 Mid-Winter Conference. Scottsbluff, NE.
- Schmidtke, A., Parr, K. (2019, November). *Early Childhood Social Emotional Learning*. Presented at the Nebraska Paraeducator Conference. Kearney, NE.
- Lopez Anderson, C., Bodensteiner, K., Reinsch, K., Schmidtke, A. (2019, June), *Leading for Quality, Continuity, and Equity in Schools as a Hub for Birth through the Elementary Years*. Presented at the NAEYC PLI Conference. Long Beach, CA.
- Schmidtke, A. (2017-2019). *Series: Advancing Purposeful Play in Kindergarten*. Workshop series presented to Omaha Public Schools' cohort of kindergarten teacher leaders. Omaha, NE
- (2017, May and 2017, September). *Powerful Interactions during Purposeful Play*.
  - (2018, February). *Listening, Questioning, and Promoting Wonder during Purposeful Play*.
  - (2018, May and 2018, September). *Observation, Documentation, and Using a Developmental Continuum during Purposeful Play*.
  - (2018, October). *Social Emotional Learning during Purposeful Play*.
  - (2018, December). *Promoting the Development of Children's Executive Function during Purposeful Play*.
  - (2019, February). *Guided Teacher Self-Assessment of Purposeful Play Practices*.

- (2019, April). *STEM and Purposeful Play*.

Marr, L., Schmidtke, A. (2018, October). *Practicing Mindfulness with Young Children*. Presented at the UNK Early Childhood Conference. Kearney, NE.

Heath, D., Schmidtke, A. (2018, February). *Learning Social, Emotional, and Academic Skills with Picture Books*. Presented at the Celebrating Young Children Conference. Omaha, NE.

Schmidtke, A., Anson, A. (2017, October). *English Language Learners in Kindergarten: A Perfect Fit!* Presented at the ESL Fall Conference. Omaha, NE.

Schmidtke, A., Looper, N. (2017, April). *Using the CLASS to Coach with Impact*. Presented at the Teachstone Interact Conference. Austin, TX.

Looper, N., Schmidtke, A. (2017, April). *Our Collaborative Walk with CLASS*. Presented at the Teachstone InterAct Conference. Austin, TX.

Schmidtke, A., Looper, N. (2016, April). *Coaching with Confidence in Early Childhood Programs*. Presented at the Celebrating Young Children Conference. Omaha, NE.

## **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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- Reducing achievement and opportunity gaps in early childhood education through professional learning, play, and instructional practices.
- Developing and implementing effective family engagement strategies and systemic approaches to enhance early learning outcomes.
- Promoting equitable access to quality learning experiences and sustainable early childhood practices from birth through Grade 3.
- Advancing educational leadership and leadership development in early childhood settings.
- Fostering social-emotional learning in early childhood programs.
- Exploring the intersection of family-school-community partnerships to support holistic child development and success.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATIONS**

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Participated in and earned certification as applicable in:

- Certified observer in Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- Certification in Facilitating Attuned Interactions Model (FAN)

- Coaching methodologies
- Nebraska Teaching Certificate with endorsements in Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3), Elementary Education (K-8), and English as a Second Language (K-12)

## **AFFILIATED PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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Participates as an active member of professional organizations supporting early childhood education and leadership, including:

- American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
- Learning Forward
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC), served on the Board of Directors.

## **REFERENCES**

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Upon Request