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# *An Evaluation of the Denver Preschool Program: 2010-11*

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## Executive Summary

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The Denver Preschool Program (DPP) was approved by voters in 2006 to encourage families to enroll their four-year-old children in quality preschool programs so that the children would enter kindergarten ready to learn and thus increase the likelihood of their success in kindergarten and beyond. Since its first year of operation during the 2007-08 school year, DPP has made enormous progress toward these goals. In 2011, DPP achieved the following milestones

- A total of 173 providers, operating at 256 sites, were serving as approved DPP providers.
- A total of 5,915 children in 2010-11 received approval for DPP tuition credits.
- Of the 256 sites, 210 had received Qualistar ratings of 3 or 4 stars, the two highest ratings.
- The vast majority (about 92%) of DPP enrolled students were enrolled in top rated classrooms. A total of 5,432 children were enrolled in 3 or 4-star classrooms.
- In 2011, a total of 135 classrooms at 77 sites completed the re-rating process, bringing the total number of classrooms re-rated in 2010 and 2011 to 263.

Significant findings of this year's evaluation include the following:

- ***Enrollment in DPP appears to have leveled off.*** For two years in a row, DPP has enrolled about 5,900 children – 5,921 in 2010 and 5,915 in 2011.
- ***A decline in the amount of individual tuition credits did not adversely affect participation in DPP.*** Although average tuition credits have been reduced by 25-35% for the 2010-2011 school year due to tough economic times, this reduction has not appeared to adversely affect the number of parents and children participating in the DPP tuition reimbursement program.
- ***Although parents associate DPP with quality preschool, they do not have a good understanding of how DPP works and how it is funded.*** Most parents surveyed knew that DPP helped to increase access to preschools in the Denver area. Fewer realized that DPP provides tuition credits and supports preschool quality improvement. Very few could identify how DPP is funded.
- ***Parents are confused about the respective roles of DPP and DPS.*** Parents who use DPP tuition credits to enroll their children in DPS classrooms often do not understand that DPP is helping to pay for their child's education.
- ***Preschool providers are not as comfortable describing DPP as in previous years.*** Preschools have concerns about the structure of quality improvement support and the elimination of support for summer school. These may lead to discomfort with describing the program.
- ***Families are beginning to perceive preschool differently.*** Parents increasingly see preschool as important to a child's development, cognitive, social and emotional growth, and long-term success in school.
- ***Quality may be playing a bigger role as families select a preschool for their child.*** The data is beginning to indicate that quality may influence parental decisions about which preschool they select for their child.

While room for improvement exists, DPP continues to realize its goals and manage its financial resources in tough economic times. The organization has also assumed a leadership role in both local and statewide discussions of child care and preschool quality.

## Description of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP)

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The Denver Preschool Program (DPP) was created to encourage Denver families with four-year-old children to voluntarily enroll in quality preschool programs so that children can be successful in kindergarten and beyond. In November 2006, Denver voters approved the Preschool Matters initiative, under which the city collects a .12 percent sales tax that is set aside for DPP. Since January 2007, the city has collected between \$8 and \$11 million annually for the program, with over 80% used to provide tuition credits to parents of 4-year old preschoolers as well as to provide grants to preschools to improve the quality of their programs. Of the remaining tax revenue, five percent is used to administer the program and the balance is paid to contractors to undertake program operations and to evaluate the program. Although DPP began operating midway through the 2007-2008 school year, it did not become fully operational until the 2008-2009 school year. Thus, the 2010-2011 school year is DPP's third year as a fully operational program.<sup>1</sup>

### Program Design

DPP operates on the premise that preschool plays an important role in the behavioral and academic development of children and that participating in a high-quality preschool experience, even for only one year on a part-time basis, can have a long-term positive impact on a child.

To promote the dual goals of encouraging families to enroll their eligible children in preschool and encouraging preschool providers to improve the quality of the services they offer, DPP provides several different types of support. Assistance is distributed directly to preschools in the following ways: (1) as a DPP tuition credit to preschool providers on behalf of families, which reduces the tuition costs families must pay to enroll their children in preschools; (2) as a mini-grant to preschool providers, which pays for approved supplies and materials that improve the quality of their classrooms; (3) as professional development and education scholarships for preschool staff to improve their knowledge and skills; (4) as financial support for the quality rating assessment, a cost that would have previously been charged to the preschool provider; and (5) as financial support for coaching preschool providers through the quality improvement process.

The DPP tuition credit is an amount of money available for children of Denver residents enrolled in qualified preschool programs the year before kindergarten. The size of the credit, which ranges from \$12 to \$539 per month, is determined by the following four factors:

1. The cost differential to run a preschool program at each of four different **quality levels**.
2. A family's **income level and family size**;

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this report, the 2007-08 school year will be referred to as 2008; the 2008-09 school year will be referred to as 2009; the 2009-10 school year will be referred to as 2010; and the 2010-11 school year will be referred to as 2011.

3. The amount of time a child attends preschool, which takes into consideration **attendance rates** and **extended-time** versus **full-time** versus **part-time status**; and
4. **Other support** available to the family to pay for preschool.

In order to obtain a tuition credit, the child's family first applies to DPP. Applications are then reviewed by a DPP contractor, ACS, to verify income, determine whether the child will attend full-time, part-time, or for an extended-day, and ascertain whether or not there are other sources of public revenue available to the family to assist with paying for preschool. If funds to help pay for preschool tuition are also available from other sources such as Head Start, the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) or the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP), the size of the DPP tuition credit is reduced by the amount provided by the other source. Once it is determined that the family and child are eligible to participate and the tuition credit has been calculated, DPP pays the money directly to the preschool provider. For any particular child, a provider cannot receive more than the amount of tuition charged.

### Provider Eligibility

To be eligible to receive tuition credits on behalf of children a preschool provider must be licensed by the state of Colorado, be a participant in DPP's quality improvement program, and serve children who live in Denver. The provider may be located outside the borders of the City and County of Denver. Licensure requires a criminal background check on all persons who work at the site, health and fire inspections, and 15 hours of training every year for staff in first aid, CPR, medication administration, and universal precautions.

### Program Improvement and Quality

DPP preschools must participate in a three-part quality improvement process which includes attendance at an introductory orientation, receipt of a quality rating, and development of a quality improvement plan. All participating preschools are assessed by and consult with DPP's quality improvement partner, Qualistar Colorado. Qualistar uses a four-star system that rates the quality of preschool classrooms in the following five areas: (1) learning environment, (2) family partnership, (3) staff training and education, (4) adult-to-child ratios, and (5) accreditation through a national accrediting agency. DPP recognizes that higher quality preschool costs more, and thus raises the tuition credit available as classrooms move from 1-star to 4-star ratings.

DPP also allocates funds to support quality improvement efforts for each of the participating DPP providers. These funds may be used to purchase classroom equipment, materials and other resources that improve the quality of both the indoor and the outdoor learning environments or to increase the level of education and training of the provider's classroom staff and administration. Tuition assistance and scholarships may be provided to enable staff to attend college-level early childhood education classes, college-level courses leading to an education-related degree, and for approved seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Coaching services are available from DPP to support those classrooms that have completed the Qualistar Rating process. In preparation for their first rating, new providers may also access up to a year of coaching services.

Sites that participate in DPP are required to go through a re-rating process with Qualistar every two years. The re-rating process allows for changes in quality to be monitored and maintains DPP's emphasis on quality improvement. (See Appendix F, *Analysis of DPP Provider Re-Rating Process*.)

## **DPP Organization and Staffing**

DPP is required to provide status reports to the Mayor's Office for Education and Children (MOEC), a Denver city agency. A seven-member board of directors and a 17-member board of advisors oversee the program. DPP has three administrative staff: a Chief Executive Officer; a Program Manager; and a Program Assistant. The current staff has worked together for the past year but the Chief Executive Officer was officially appointed to the position in September, 2011.

To attain a number of operational and policy objectives, DPP subcontracts with the following organizations: (1) ACS provides customer service support to parents, processes all tuition credit applications and time/attendance data for students, and makes the appropriate tuition credit payments directly to approved preschool providers; (2) Qualistar Colorado educates preschool providers on the DPP quality improvement process, monitors quality agreements between providers and DPP, and rates providers on a four-star scale; (3) Metrix Advisors provides financial analysis and projections for DPP; (4) the Denver Early Childhood Council, through a subcontract with Qualistar, monitors quality improvement grants and oversees coaching and technical assistance to providers; (5) Clayton Early Learning provides coaching services to preschool providers; and (6) Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) completes an annual evaluation of DPP, subcontracting with the Clayton Early Learning Institute to assess student progress. DPP also has contracted with public relations consultants for advertising, program outreach, and other services.

## **Status of DPP in 2010-11<sup>2</sup>**

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### **Number of Children**

Denver Preschool Program enrollment remained constant for the 2011 school year. Total enrollment in DPP for 2011 was essentially the same as the enrollment in 2010, 5,915 in 2011 as compared to 5,921 in 2010. The total number of preschool providers grew from 164 to 173 with services being provided at 256 sites (see Table 2 for most recent provider data<sup>3</sup>). Of the 5,915 DPP children, 4,076 (an 11% increase from 2010) received services at 85 Denver Public Schools (DPS) sites, while 1,759 received services from 152 center-based sites and 19 home-based sites. Thirty-two students were enrolled in both DPS and community sites during different times of the day. Table 1 shows the distribution of approved children enrolled in DPP-approved sites. Approximately 45% of DPP preschools enroll fewer than 10 students.

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<sup>2</sup> The information on participating students and their families was taken from the ACS database on August 16, 2011. The information on providers was taken from the Qualistar Colorado database on August 8, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> The totals in Tables 1 and 2 are not identical due primarily to changes that have occurred over the course of the school year or between school years. In the case of DPS, several sites have closed or moved their ECE classrooms to another site. Greenlee and Greenlee Extended Day are distinguished in provider data, but not reported as separate by parents as they apply to DPP. Several community sites have opened, closed, or moved from home-based to center-based. As a result of all of these changes, the totals do not align perfectly between these two tables. For grand totals, use the data in Table 2.

Not surprisingly, center-based and home-based sites both were likely to enroll fewer students per site than DPS sites.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1**

<b>DPP Students by Provider Type and Size in 2011</b>				
	<b># of Sites*</b>			
<b># of Children Enrolled</b>	<b>DPS</b>	<b>Community Center-Based</b>	<b>Community Home-Based</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1-9</b>	0	95	18	113
<b>10—24</b>	10	42	0	52
<b>25-49</b>	36	10	0	46
<b>50-99</b>	38	4	0	42
<b>100 or more</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	84	151	18	253

\*It is possible for a student to be enrolled in a community program for before- and/or after-school care in addition to being enrolled in a DPS provider for the majority of the school day. The totals in the table do NOT include the 32 students who were enrolled in both DPS and community sites.

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<sup>4</sup> DPS sites are likely to have multiple ECE classrooms running at an individual school. Some community providers have multiple sites and several have multiple classrooms, but the number of classrooms is typically fewer than the DPS sites. Home sites typically do not have “classrooms” and most often have 10 or fewer children.



## Number and Quality of Sites

While 82% of DPP preschool sites were 3- or 4-star-rated Qualistar programs in 2011, quality ratings varied substantially by the type of preschool. The vast majority of DPS preschools, 96.5%, were rated 3- or 4-star, while just 77.6% of community center-based preschools and 52.6% of home-based preschools were rated at 3- or 4-star. Of the home-based preschool providers, 10.5% currently participate in the “Intro to Quality” phase, which enables the provider to prepare for a quality rating assessment by working with a coach for a year. The distribution of preschools by quality rating and provider type is shown below in Table 2.

**Table 2**

<b>DPP Providers by Provider Type and Qualistar Rating in 2011</b>								
<b>Star Rating</b>	<b>DPS*</b>		<b>Community Center-Based</b>		<b>Community Home-Based</b>		<b>Total*</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1 Star</b>	0	0.0%	2	1.3%	2	10.5%	4	1.6%
<b>2 Star</b>	3	3.5%	25	16.4%	3	15.8%	31	12.1%
<b>3 Star</b>	64	75.3%	76	50.0%	10	52.6%	150	58.6%
<b>4 Star</b>	18	21.2%	42	27.6%	0	0.0%	60	23.4%
<b>Intro to Quality</b>	0	0.0%	3	2.0%	2	10.5%	5	2.0%
<b>Provisional</b>	0	0.0%	1	0.7%	1	5.3%	2	0.8%
<b>In Process/ Missing</b>	0	0.0%	3	2.0%	1	5.3%	4	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*It is possible for a student to be enrolled in a community program for before- and/or after-school care in addition to being enrolled in a DPS provider for the majority of the school day. The totals in the table do NOT include the 32 students who were enrolled in both DPS and community sites.

The vast majority of students in both community and DPS preschools were enrolled in 3- or 4-star rated programs. Eighty-four percent of students who attended community center-based preschools and 95% who attended DPS preschools were in 3- or 4-star-rated preschools. Seventy-nine percent of the students enrolled in home-based preschools were enrolled in 3- or 4-star-rated preschools. The distribution of students by quality rating and provider type is shown below in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Number of DPP Students by Provider Type and Qualistar Rating in 2011 (Student Count & Percent in Specified Rating)										
Star Rating	DPS		Community Center-Based		Community-Home-Based		Both*		Total*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1 Star	0	0.0%	10	0.6%	1	2.1%	0	0.0%	11	0.2%
2 Star	184	4.5%	238	13.5%	1	2.1%	0	0.0%	423	7.2%
3 Star	2,893	71.0%	837	47.6%	37	78.7%	25	78.1%	3,792	64.1%
4 Star	987	24.2%	645	36.7%	0	0.0%	7	21.9%	1,640	27.7%
Intro to Quality	0	0.0%	10	0.6%	4	8.5%	0	0.0%	14	0.2%
Provisional	1	0.0%	7	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	0.1%
In Process/ Missing	11	0.3%	12	0.7%	4	8.5%	0	0.0%	28**	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,076</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,915</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*It is possible for a student to be enrolled in a community program for before- and/or after-school care in addition to being enrolled in a DPS provider for the majority of the school day. The totals in the table include the 32 students who were enrolled in both DPS and community sites.

\*\*Total is not the sum of the provider type totals because provider type data is missing for one individual.

An important indicator of the success of the DPP program is the growing number of students enrolled in high-quality preschool programs. As illustrated in Table 4 below, in 2008, 575 DPP students were enrolled in a 3- or 4-star-rated program; by 2011, 5,431 students were enrolled in 3- or 4-star-rated programs. As the number of students participating in DPP has expanded, the percentage of students enrolled in 3- and 4-star programs has remained above 85%, with a percentage of 91.8% in 2011, a 6.4% increase from 2010. This data also shows a steady decline in the number of 1-star-rated sites across the city over the past three years. Below, Table 4 shows the comparisons of DPP students by star rating across all school years, and Figure 1 presents a graph reflecting this data.

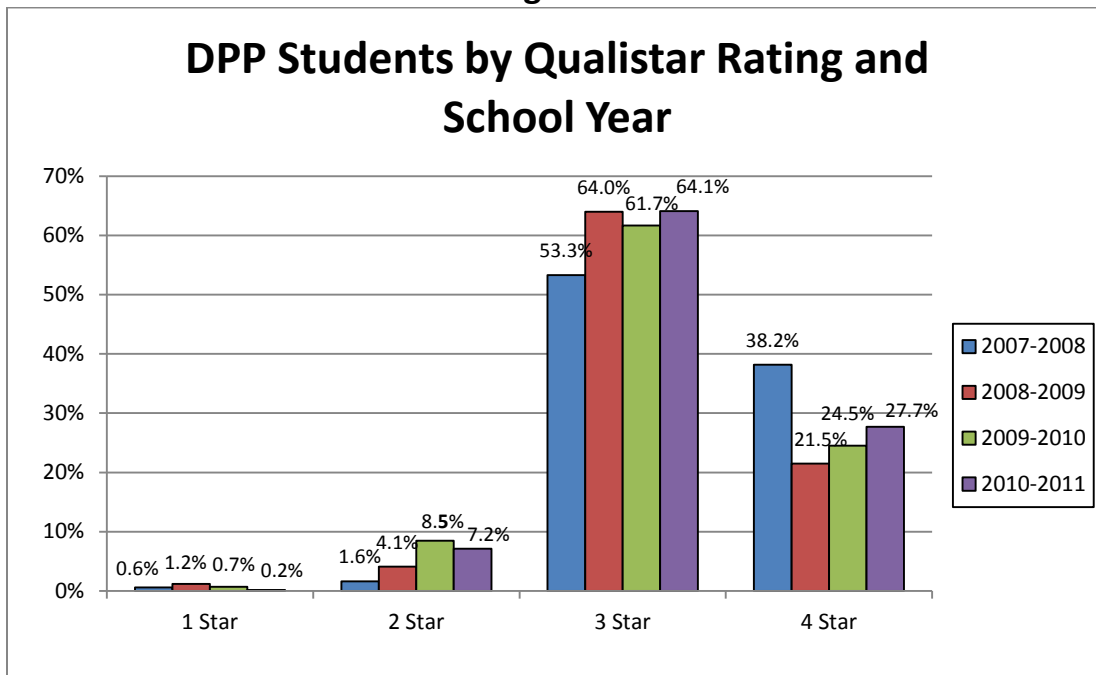
**Table 4**

Number of DPP Students by Qualistar Rating and by School Year								
Star Rating	2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1 Star	4	0.6%	62	1.2%	43	0.7%	11	0.2%
2 Star	10	1.6%	209	4.1%	504	8.5%	423	7.2%
3 Star	335	53.3%	3,253	64.0%	3,654	61.7%	3,792	64.1%
4 Star	240	38.2%	1,092	21.5%	1,451	24.5%	1,640	27.7%
Intro to Quality	0	0.0%	190	3.7%	97	1.6%	14	0.2%
Provisional	1	0.2%	3	0.1%	6	0.1%	8	0.1%
In Process/ Missing	38	5.7%	274	3.2%	166	2.8%	28**	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,083</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,921*</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,915*</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*The totals in the table include the 52 students who were enrolled in both DPS and community sites in 2010 and the 32 such students in 2011.

\*\*Total is not the sum of the provider type totals because provider type data is missing for one individual.

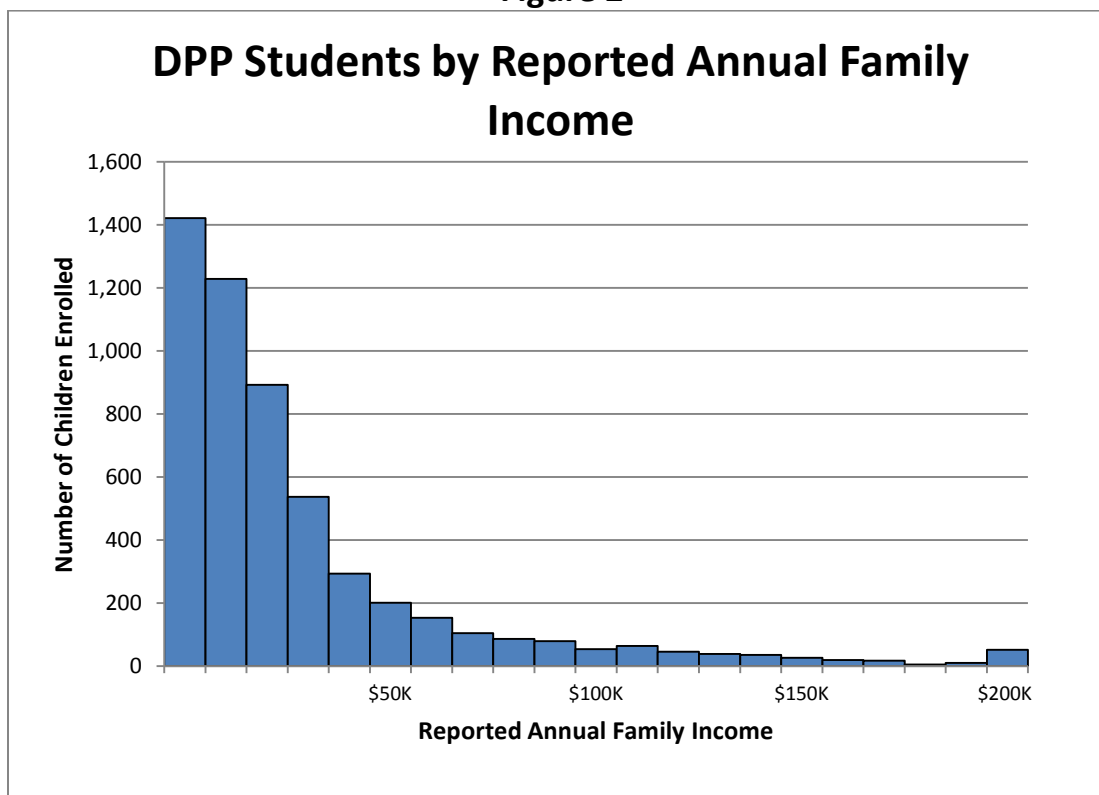
**Figure 1**



### **Family Income**

In 2011, DPP continued to serve Denver's lowest income families. Nearly two thirds, 66%, of DPP families reported annual family incomes of less than \$30,000. Only 12% of families reported annual family incomes of \$70,000 or higher. Figure 2 presents the distribution of children served by DPP in 2011 by annual family income.

**Figure 2**



### **Primary Home Language**

Families that speak English as their primary home language represented the majority of the DPP population in 2011, at 58% of all students. Approximately 31% of the families enrolled in DPP during the 2011 school year reported speaking Spanish at home. The remaining 11% of families did not report their primary home language, speak more than one language at home, or speak a language other than English or Spanish. These percentages were similar to the percentages reported in the 2009 and 2010 school years. Table 5 below details DPP 2011 enrollment by the language spoken at home.

**Table 5**

<b>DPP Students by Home Language in 2011</b>		
<b>Home Language</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>English</b>	3,456	58.4%
<b>Spanish</b>	1,816	30.7%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	43	0.7%
<b>Arabic</b>	65	1.1%
<b>Multi-Lingual</b>	383	6.5%
<b>Other Language</b>	50	0.8%
<b>Not Provided</b>	102	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,915</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Race/Ethnicity

The racial/ethnic distribution of children participating in the program this year closely mirrored the distribution of the previous three years. The percentage of participants reporting “other” race/ethnicity or not reporting race/ethnicity continued to decrease from 2009 to 2011. In 2011, Hispanic children continued to lead all other race/ethnicity groups in DPP participation with 51% of the total DPP enrollment. White children represented 26% of participants, and black children represented 13% of enrollees. Table 6 below details the race/ethnicity of children enrolled in DPP across all four years of the program.

**Table 6**

<b>DPP Students by Child’s Ethnicity and School Year</b>								
<b>Child’s Ethnicity</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>		<b>2008-2009</b>		<b>2009-2010</b>		<b>2010-2011</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	15	2.4%	149	2.9%	186	3.1%	190	3.2%
<b>Black</b>	59	9.4%	658	12.9%	741	12.5%	788	13.3%
<b>Hispanic</b>	344	54.8%	2,634	51.8%	2,918	49.3%	3,017	51.0%
<b>Native American</b>	5	0.8%	56	1.1%	49	0.8%	50	0.8%
<b>Multi-Racial</b>	27	4.3%	177	3.5%	301	5.1%	257	4.3%
<b>White</b>	134	21.8%	1,040	20.5%	1,621	27.4%	1,563	26.4%
<b>Other/Missing/ Not Provided</b>	41	6.5%	369	7.3%	105	1.8%	50	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,083</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,921</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,915</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

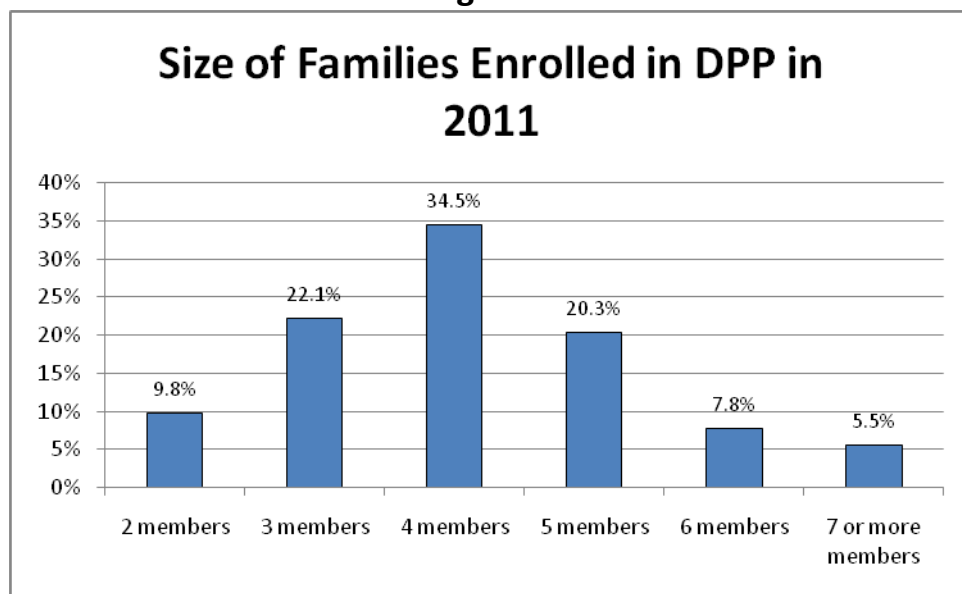
## Family Size

The distribution of families according to family size is presented in Table 7. Family size distribution in the program for 2011 looks similar to the distributions over the past three years.

**Table 7**

Size of Families Enrolled in DPP in 2011		
Family Size	#	%
2 members	579	9.8%
3 members	1,309	22.1%
4 members	2,039	34.5%
5 members	1,200	20.3%
6 members	461	7.8%
7 or more members	327	5.5%
Total	5,915	100.0%

**Figure 3**

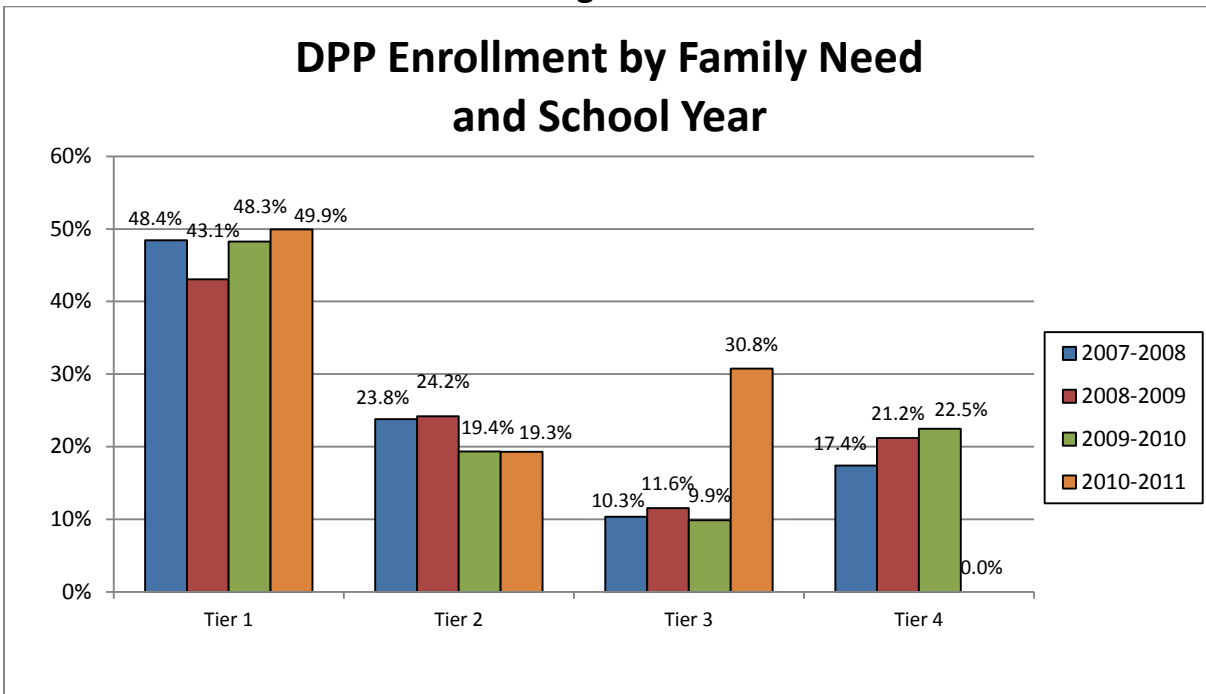


## Level of Family Need (Income Tier Adjusted by Family Size)

In order to estimate each family's *need* for tuition credits, DPP looks at two factors: annual family income and family size. DPP organizes the resulting income index into six categories or tiers. Figure 4 below presents the enrollment of DPP families by family need. Tier 1 indicates the families with the highest need for tuition credits, and Tier 4 indicates the families with the lowest need for tuition credits. In all years of DPP operation, the greatest percentage of families enrolled in DPP fell into Tier 1, indicating families with a relatively high need for tuition credits.

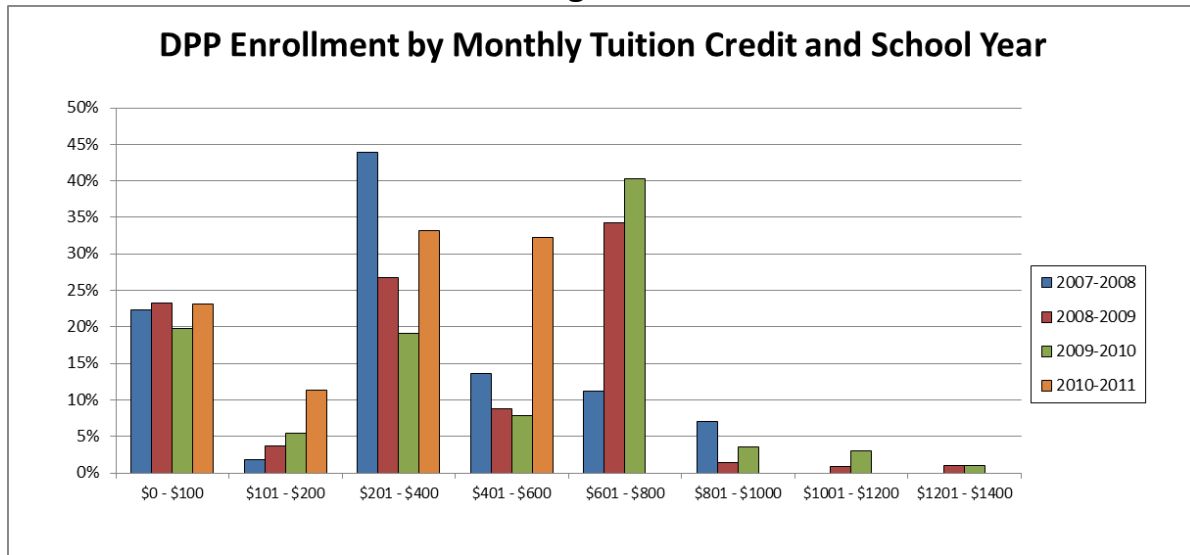
Because of the comparatively small difference between Tiers 3, 4, 5 and 6, the evaluators believe that it is appropriate to consolidate these tiers into a single Tier 3 category for analysis purposes. The result of consolidating Tiers 3, 4, 5, and 6 is presented in Figure 4 below, with original Tiers 3, 4, 5 and 6 becoming the new Tier 3 and the original Tier 7 becoming Tier 4. In 2011, no students fell into the revised Tier 4 because the original Tier 7 category was eliminated. In Figure 4, please recall that *family need* refers to income **and** family size and thus is not strictly comparable to income tiers alone.

**Figure 4**



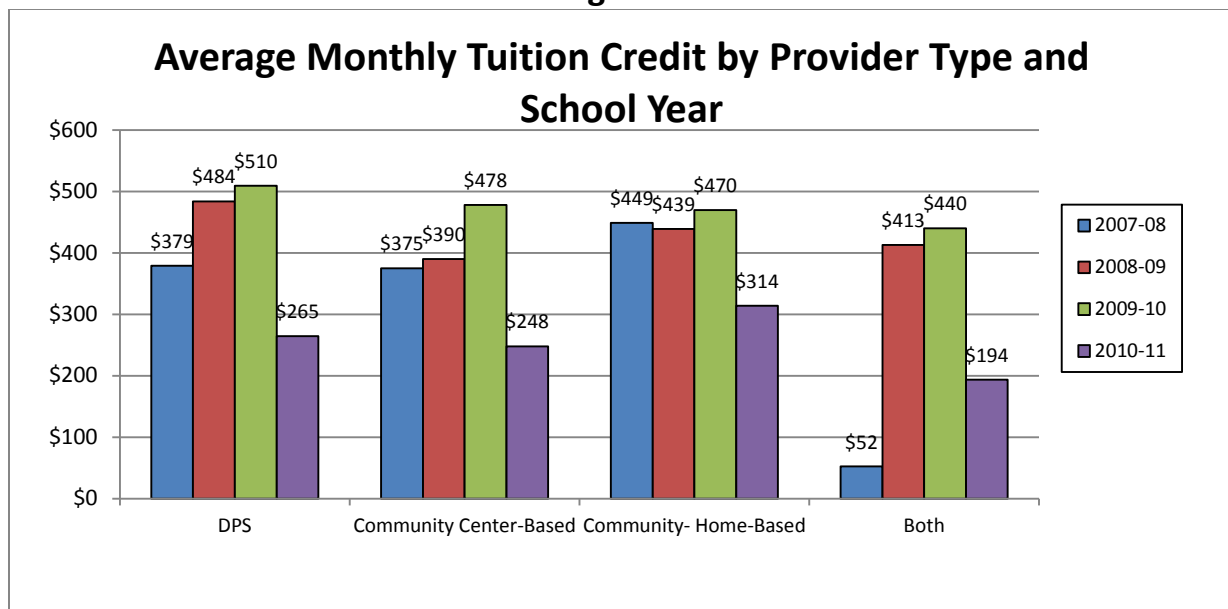
The calculation of a monthly tuition credit takes into account the quality of the preschool as defined by the Qualistar rating, the hours that a child attends preschool, and the family need as determined by the original tier income system discussed above. Figure 5 shows the distribution of approved monthly tuition credit amounts across the past four academic years. It is important to note that due to financial constraints of the program, the maximum tuition credit awarded for 2011 was \$539 versus \$1,400 in past years of the program.

**Figure 5**



As a result of the financial constraints experienced by DPP the average monthly tuition credit decreased significantly in 2011. Figure 6 below shows the average monthly tuition credits for years 2007 through 2011. This decrease did not affect enrollment in DPP; enrollment remained constant for the 2011 school year. The total number of children approved by DPP and receiving tuition credits in 2010 was 5,921 and during 2011 the enrollment totaled 5,915.

**Figure 6**





## Theory of Action

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DPP's primary goal is to help children make an easier transition to kindergarten and, ultimately, to perform better academically in school. A second goal is to raise the quality of preschool programs in Denver. The underlying theory of action behind the program is summarized as follows:

- When DPP uses an effective and efficient application process to provide tuition credits to offset preschool costs for families, more families will have access to preschool and enroll their children in preschool; and enrolled students will attend preschool more regularly.
- When students attend high-quality preschools, they are more likely to develop the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in kindergarten and beyond.
- When DPP provides both higher levels of tuition credits to families of students that attend quality preschool programs and incentives to preschool programs to improve their quality, the quality of participating programs will increase.
- The multiple funding sources for preschool are difficult for many parents to understand and challenging for service providers to manage. The DPP tuition credits should decrease the complexity of preschool financing for parents and service providers.

## Evaluation Questions

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The evaluation questions set forth in Table 8 below were developed by DPP and the evaluation team in the fall of 2007 and refined for this report. The questions are designed to track the effectiveness of the theory of action for the DPP program. These questions have guided the yearly evaluation of the program and provide the structure for this evaluation report. They will continue to guide the evaluation effort over the next five years.

This year's evaluation of the annual parent survey includes an analysis of responses broken down by the following factors: child ethnicity, home language, income level, provider type (DPS, center-based or home-based sites), and preschool attendance status (half-, full- or extended-day attendance). All of the provider annual survey responses were also cross-tabulated by the following factors: Qualistar-rating, total number of classrooms, number of DPP classrooms, city sector, and provider type. Only significant results are discussed in this report. Child outcomes are covered in a separate report prepared by the Clayton Early Learning Institute.

**Table 8**

DPP Evaluation Questions	
<b>A. Outreach: How do parents of preschool children in Denver get information about DPP, about tuition credits and the focus on quality preschool programs? What do they think about the information they receive?</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are parents informed about the existence of DPP and about how to apply for the tuition credits?</li> <li>2. Do they get the information they need and want?</li> <li>3. From which sources do parents get their information about DPP - the internet, community meetings, public service announcements, advertising or other forums?</li> <li>4. Does this information vary by income level or language spoken at home?</li> </ol>	
<b>B. Ease of interaction with DPP: How do parents and providers describe their interactions with DPP, its partners, and providers? Concerning tuition credits? Concerning quality improvement?</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the DPP application system make it easy for families and providers to participate?</li> <li>2. Does the system deliver information and payments in a timely manner?</li> <li>3. Does the system have an acceptable error rate in terms of family applications, student attendance and aid distribution?</li> <li>4. Does the system work effectively across family income levels and/or the language spoken by the parent?</li> </ol>	
<b>C. Tuition credits: Do tuition credits encourage parents from all income levels to send their four-year-old children to high quality preschools? Does the tuition credit structure encourage preschool providers in Denver to increase the number and quality of preschool slots available?</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the availability and size of the preschool tuition credits encourage families of four-year-olds to enroll in the program?</li> <li>2. Do families opt for higher quality programs because of the tuition credits? If not, why not?</li> <li>3. Is family behavior in these areas influenced by income level or the language spoken by the parent?</li> <li>4. Did the number of rated and/or accredited programs change as a result of the DPP QI program?</li> <li>5. Did the quality of participating programs increase as a result of DPP?</li> </ol>	
<b>D. Child Development: What is the impact of the DPP on student development?</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did children make progress in their development while in participating DPP preschool environments (i.e., language, literacy, mathematics, social-emotional development, etc.)?</li> <li>2. To what extent and in what areas are DPP students ready for Kindergarten?</li> <li>3. Do children from different income levels and with different primary languages make similar progress in their development while in DPP early childhood environments?</li> <li>4. Do children participating in DPP compare favorably to their demographic counterparts who did not participate in DPP on subsequent assessments administered by Denver Public Schools (DPS)?</li> <li>5. Is attendance at higher quality preschool programs associated with greater kindergarten readiness?</li> </ol>	

## Key Evaluation Findings

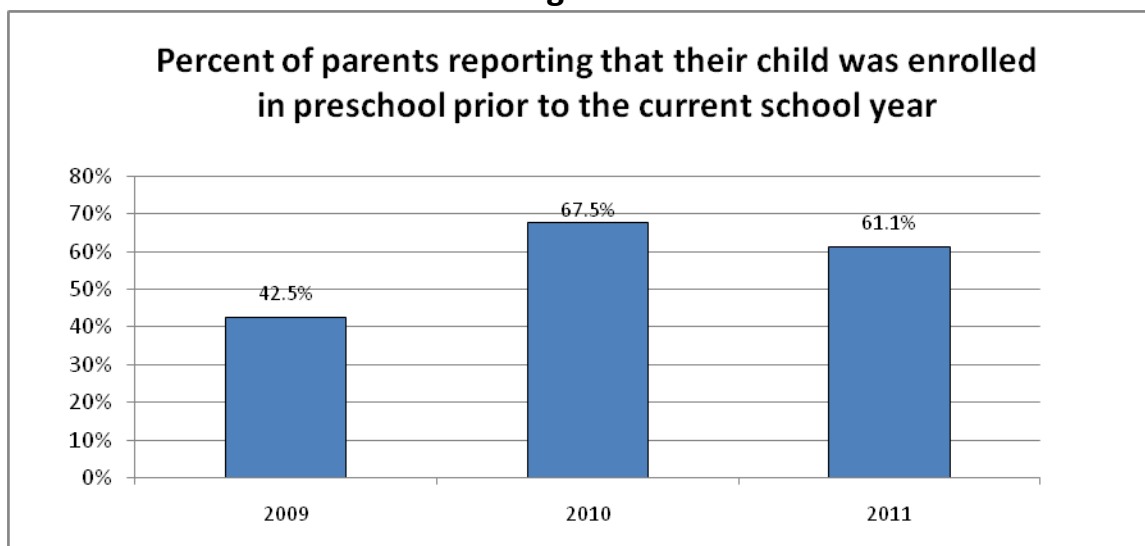
This section addresses all of the evaluation questions set forth in Table 8 above in the order that they appear in the Table with one exception. The Child Outcomes questions, D1 through 5, are addressed in a separate report prepared by the Clayton Early Learning Institute. Although the evaluators collected data on all of the other questions, the amount of evidence available to address all questions varies considerably. Results on a given evaluation question came from both parents and providers, and were further analyzed by demographic sub-categories (e.g., income tier, primary language spoken at home, type of preschool, preschool attendance status, and Qualistar Rating). Results of these additional analyses are presented only if they are noteworthy and/or useful in answering the question being addressed. When additional information could be gained from our interviews and the Spanish language parent focus group, those insights are also reported.

### Outreach

#### **How do parents of preschool children in Denver get information about DPP, about tuition credits and the focus on quality preschool programs? What do they think about the information they receive?**

Many parents receive information about DPP from preschools. More than 60% of 2011 parents report that their children were enrolled in preschool prior to the current school year. Figures 7 and 8 together indicate that many parents probably heard about DPP when their children were 3 years old.

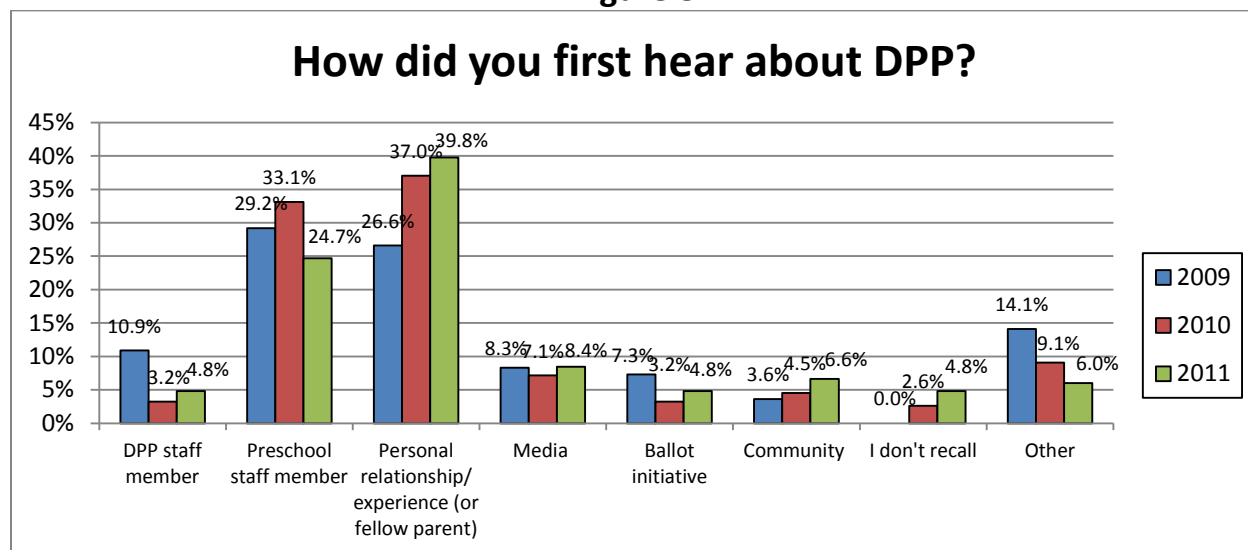
**Figure 7**



In 2009, this question refers only to those parents who reported that their child was enrolled in a DIFFERENT preschool, while in 2010 and 2011, this question refers to prior enrollment at any preschool, including the current one.

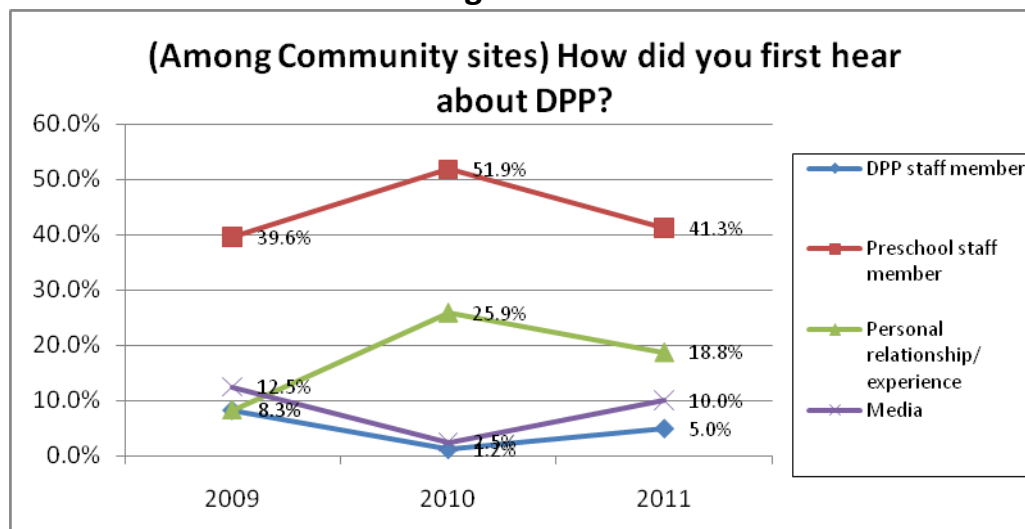
Over the past three years, between 55% and 70% of families learned about DPP from preschool staff members and through personal relationships. These top two avenues, and the other ways of learning about DPP, are displayed in the graph below.

Figure 8

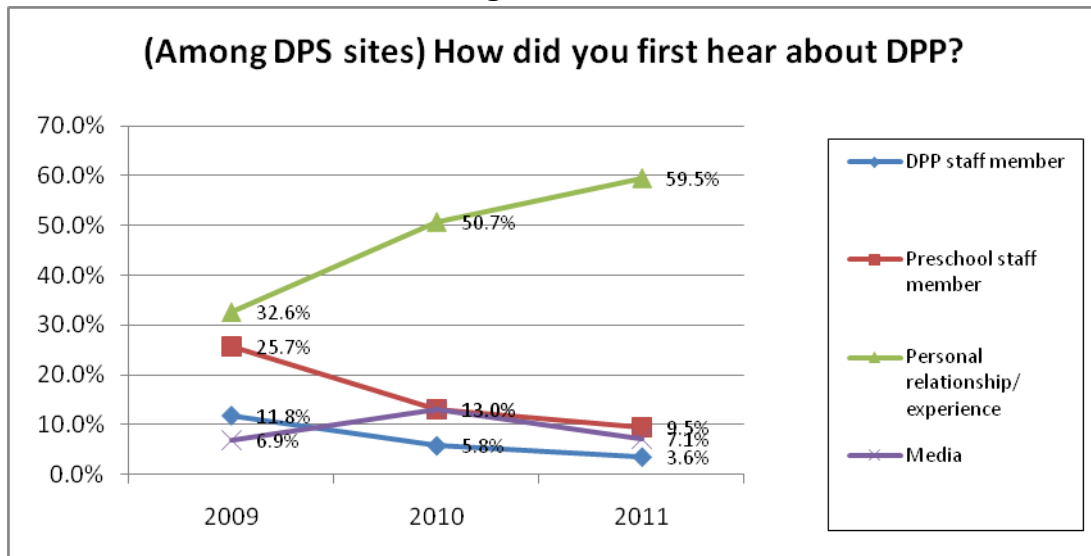


Based on which type of preschool the child attends, families learn about DPP in different ways. For families using community providers, the most common way in which they learned about DPP was through a preschool staff member (41 percent). Among families enrolled in DPS, the most common way they learned about DPP was through a personal relationship (almost 60 percent). These differences in how families learn about DPP may be important to the DPP staff and board as they think about what communication strategies are most effective in reaching families. Areas of focus include improving the preschool staff's knowledge about DPP and helping to improve how they communicate this information to families; developing effective ambassadors; and improving the timeliness of response to families once families have applied and are a part of DPP. This data is illustrated in Figures 9 and 10 below.

Figure 9

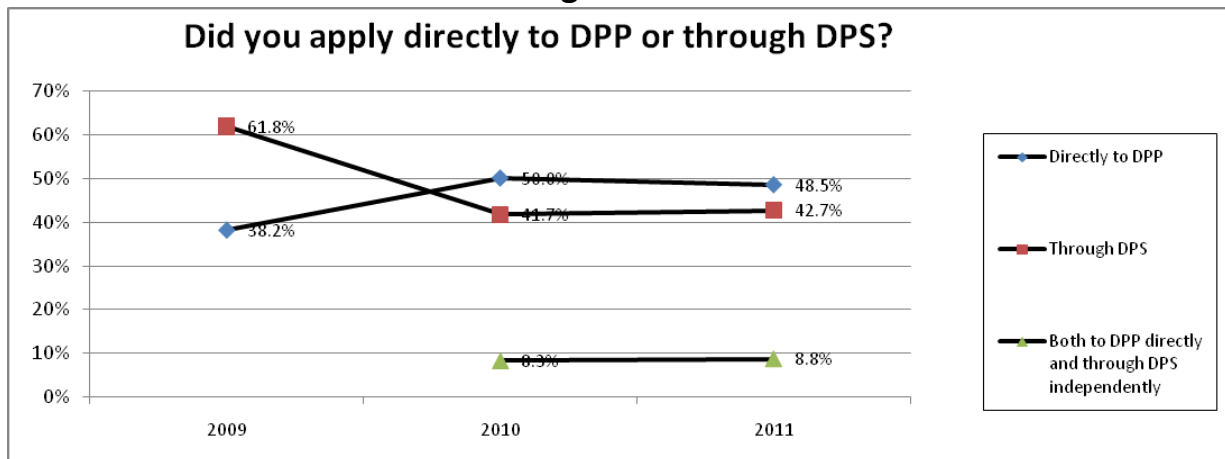


**Figure 10**



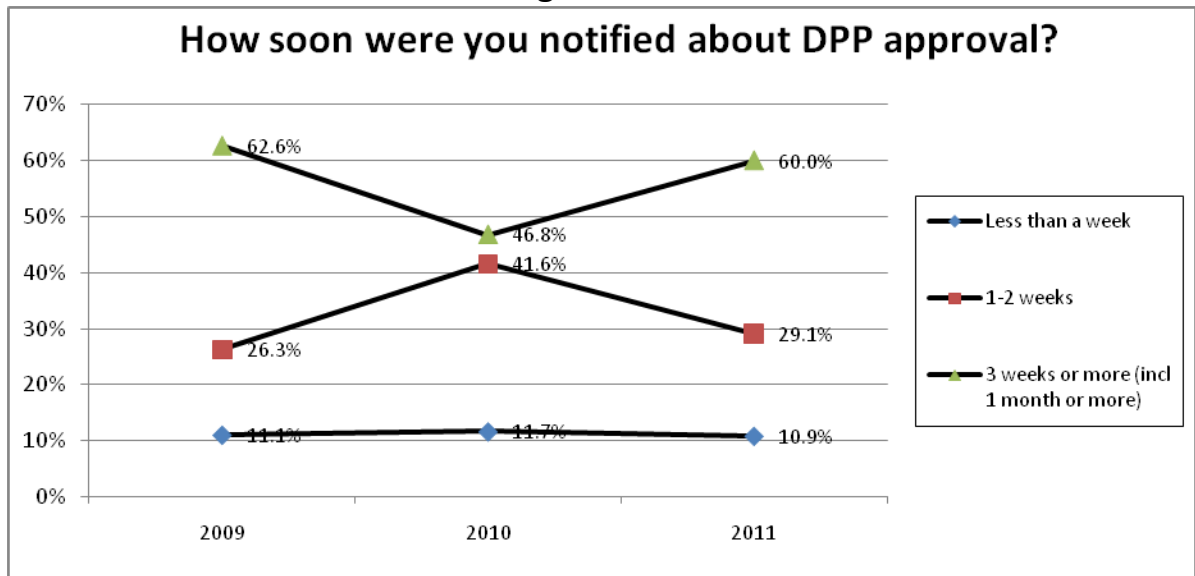
At some point during the enrollment or re-enrollment process in preschool, families apply to DPP. Since a significant portion of families in DPP are in a DPS preschool, the evaluators asked whether or not families applied to DPP through DPS' system or through DPP's system. Figure 11 illustrates how families apply to DPP, either through DPP or through DPS. Using DPP records, the evaluators estimate that there is a +/- 10% error rate on this recollection by families reported in Figure 11.

**Figure 11**



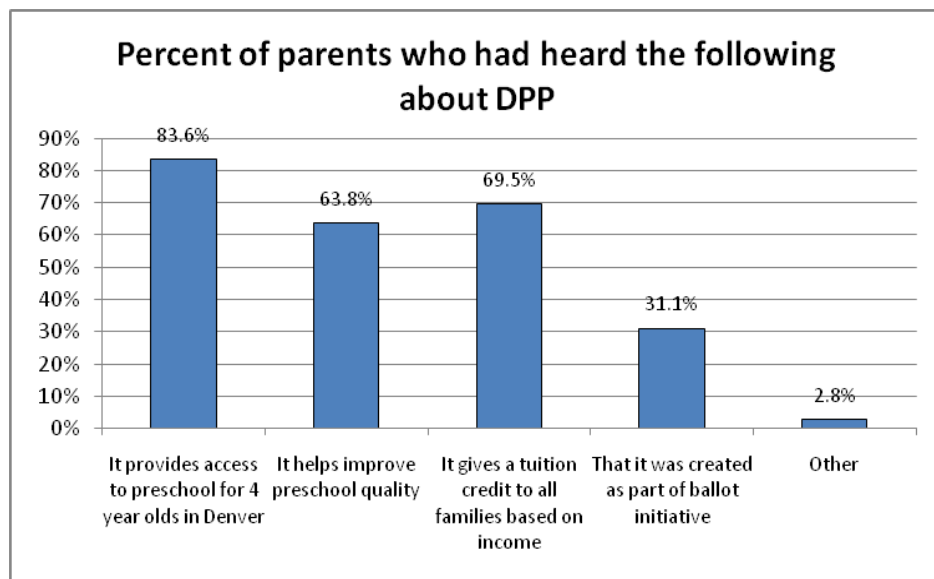
It should be noted that the speed at which the information loop is closed with families in terms of when they apply and when they hear about their acceptance into DPP is three weeks or more for 60% of them, as shown in Figure 12.

**Figure 12**



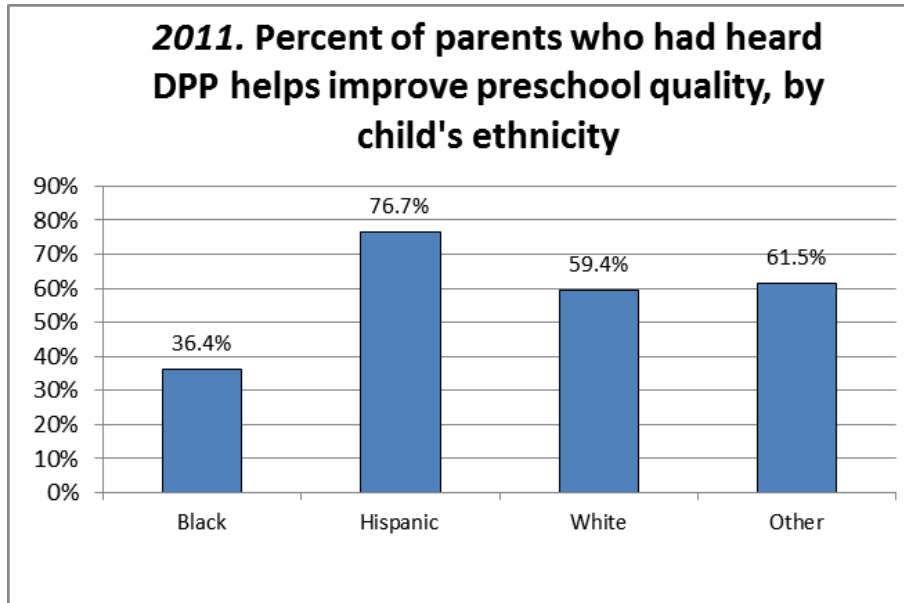
Although the timeliness of DPP approval is of some concern in terms of operational reputation, over 80% of parents can speak to the intent of DPP to provide access to preschool. As reflected in Figure 13, over 60% of parents can identify that part of DPP's mission is to improve the quality of preschools and that DPP allocates tuition credits based on income.

**Figure 13**



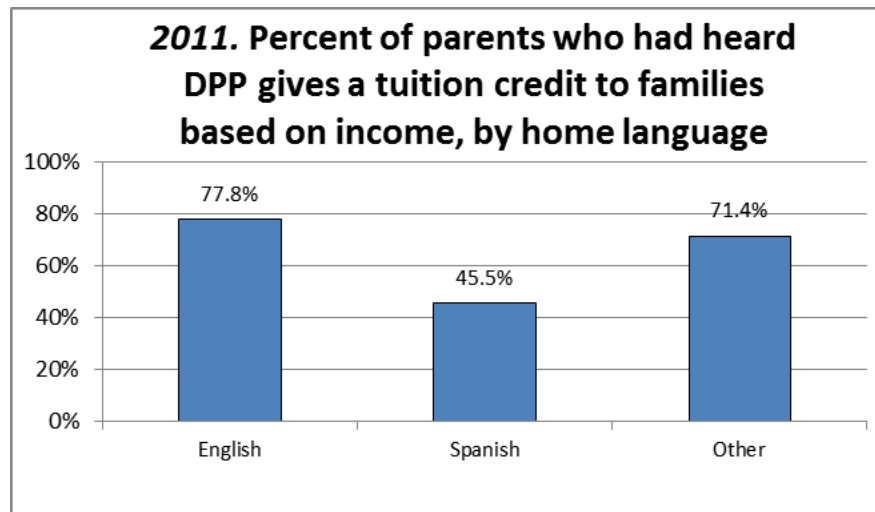
While this overall data appears to be quite positive, the next set of graphs illustrates stark differences when the overall picture is disaggregated by race/ethnicity or income. Substantially less than half of parents with black children had heard that DPP improves preschool quality.

**Figure 14**



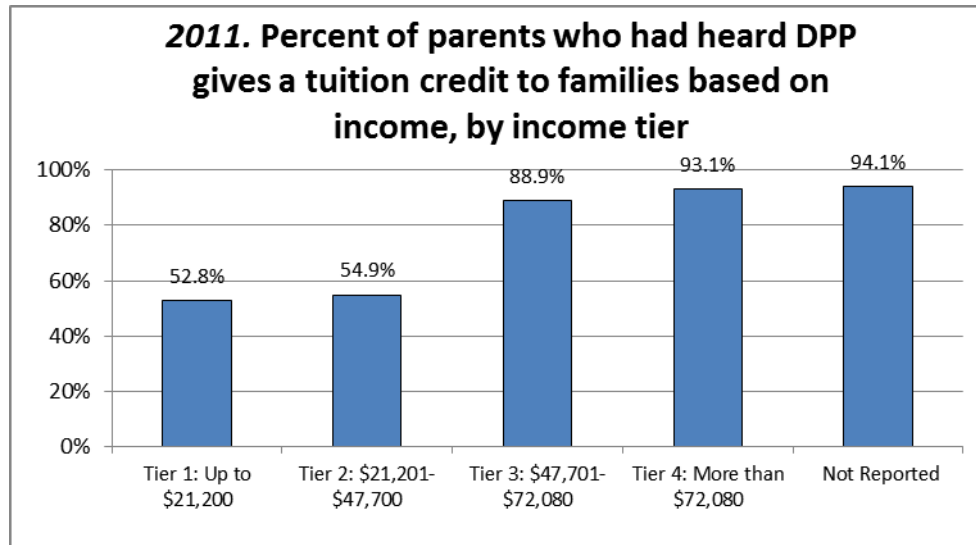
Families that speak Spanish at home were much less likely to hear that DPP gives a tuition credit based on income.

**Figure 15**



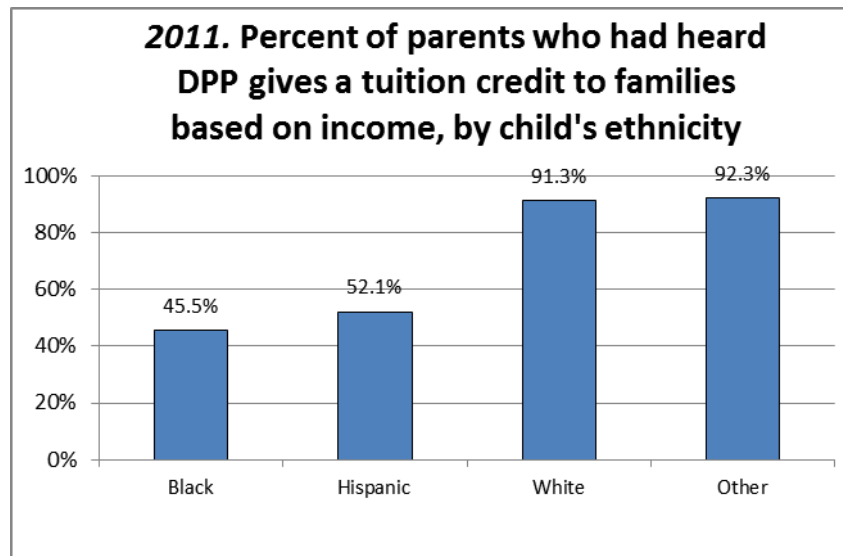
Lower-income families were much less likely to hear that DPP gives a tuition credit. This is especially problematic because they are the families likely to benefit the most from such credits.

**Figure 16**



Parents with black or Hispanic children were also less likely to hear about the DPP tuition credit.

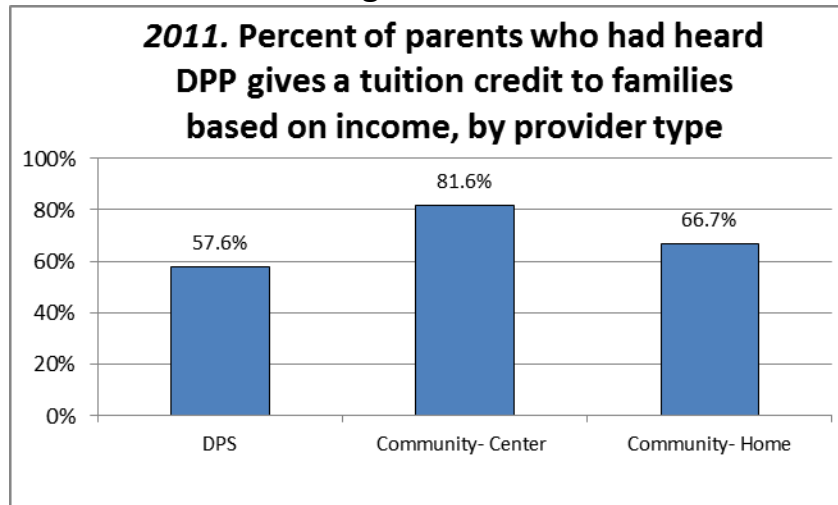
**Figure 17**



Finally, there was substantial variation by provider type in who had heard about the tuition credit. Community center-based sites were more likely to hear about the tuition credits than DPS sites or community home-based sites.

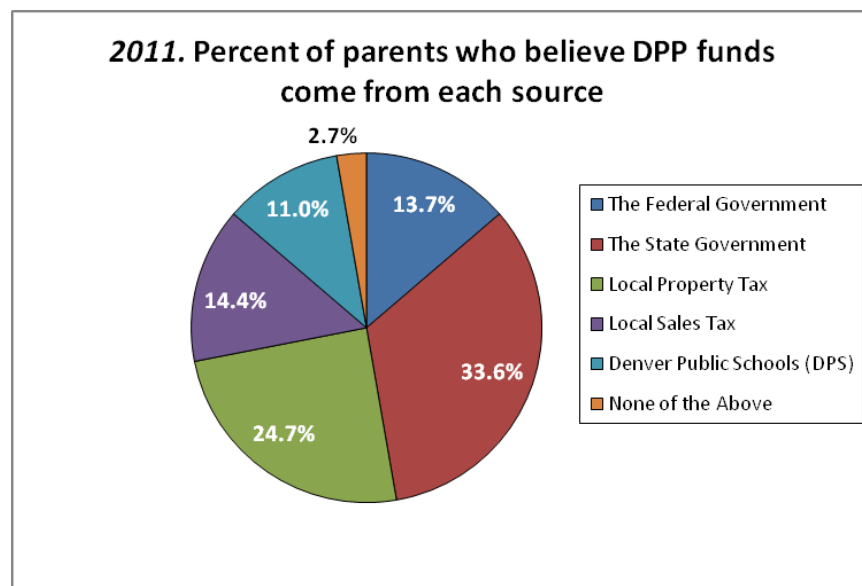


**Figure 18**



In addition to being uncertain of DPP's mission, many parents also did not know how DPP is funded. Only 14% of parents surveyed understood that the funds were the result of a local sales tax and more than a third did not think that DPP was funded by any of the listed tax sources.

**Figure 19**

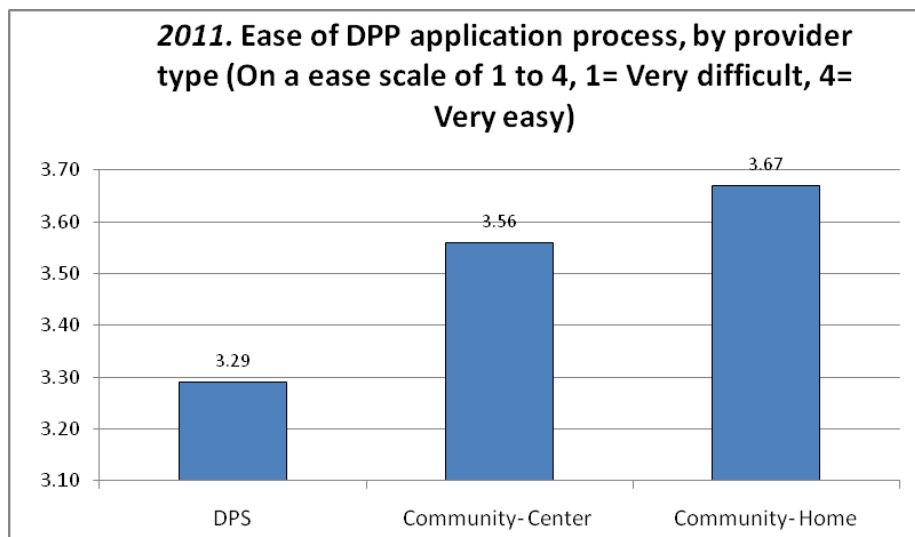


### **Ease of Interaction with DPP**

**How do parents and providers describe their interactions with DPP, its partners, and providers? Concerning tuition credits? Concerning quality improvement?**

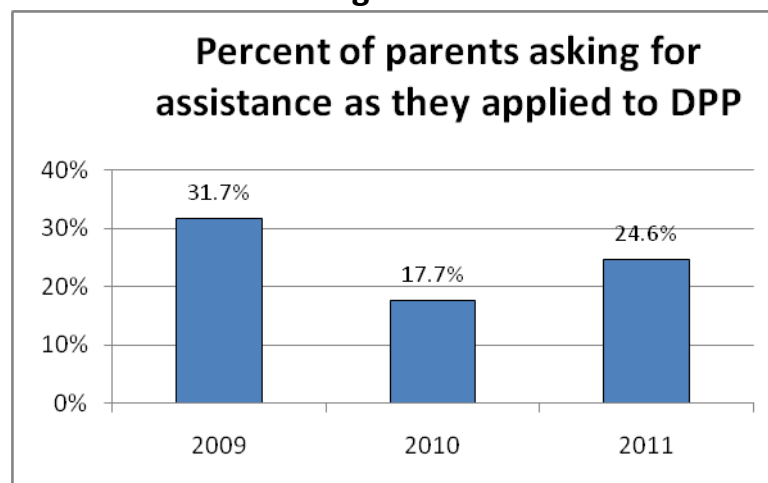
Parents continue to report that the application to DPP is easy, although there is some difference between provider types as shown in Figure 20.

**Figure 20**



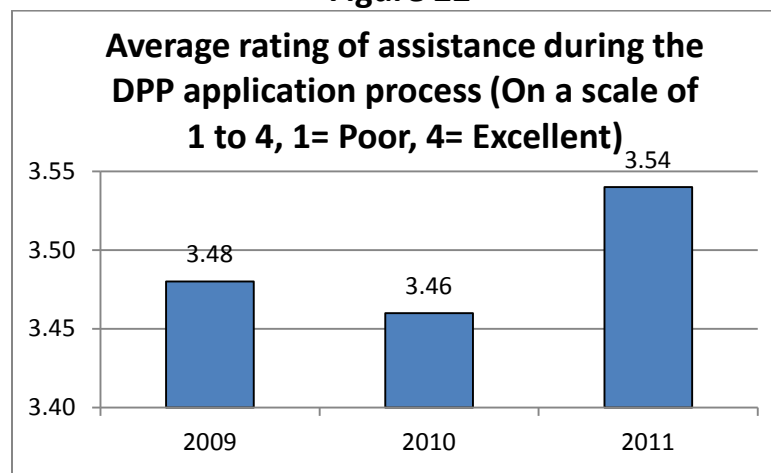
Assistance with completing the DPP application is an important component of the application process. Figure 21 presents the percentage of parents who asked for assistance in this process. Though up from 2010, the percentage of parents seeking assistance in 2011 was still lower than in 2009.

**Figure 21**



Those who did ask for assistance rated the assistance they received very positively, an average of 3.5 on a 4-point scale. Even though Figure 22 shows improvement in 2011, the important story is that the assistance over the three year period has been consistently high for one of DPP's partners, ACS, which manages the application process and staffs the DPP hotline.

**Figure 22**



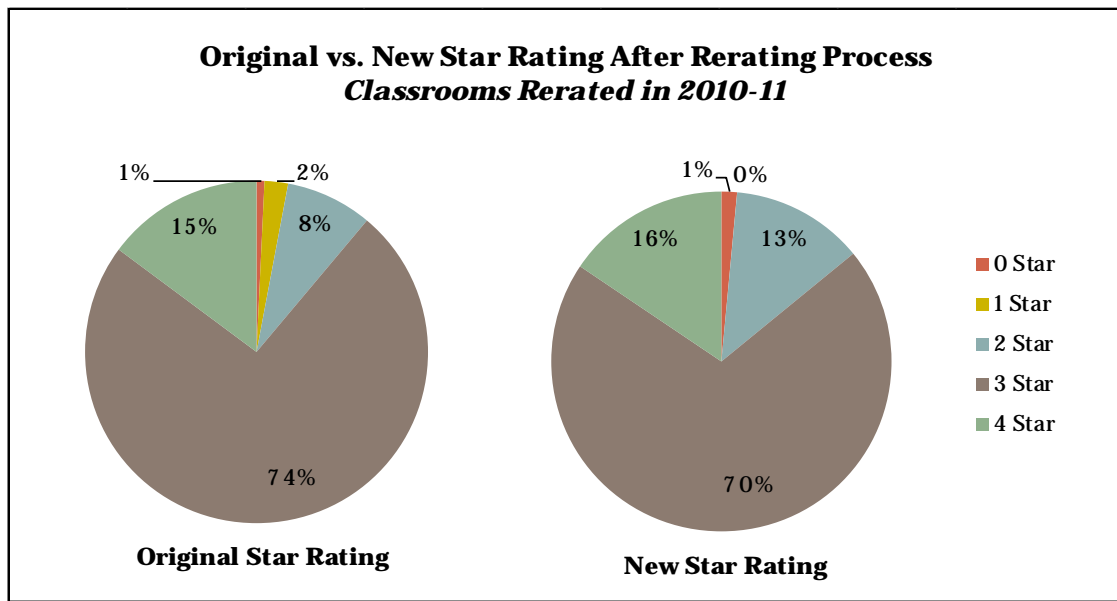
Participation by preschools in quality improvement opportunities provided by DPP was also analyzed. Opportunities include the rating process from Qualistar and coaching provided by Clayton. Several different statistics show that preschools have embraced the notion of quality improvement. The first important indicator is the number of preschools that have engaged in the re-rating process. In 2011, 135 classrooms in 77 sites were re-rated by Qualistar. Table 9 below shows the data by DPS and community providers.

**Table 9**

DPP Providers Engaged in Re-Rating, by Type				
	Re-rating in 2011		All Re-rated in 2010 and 2011	
Site Type	# of Newly Re-rated Classrooms	# of Newly Re-rated Sites	Total # of Classrooms	Total # of Sites
Denver Public Schools	79	44	127	76
Community	56	33	136	70
Total	135	77	263	146

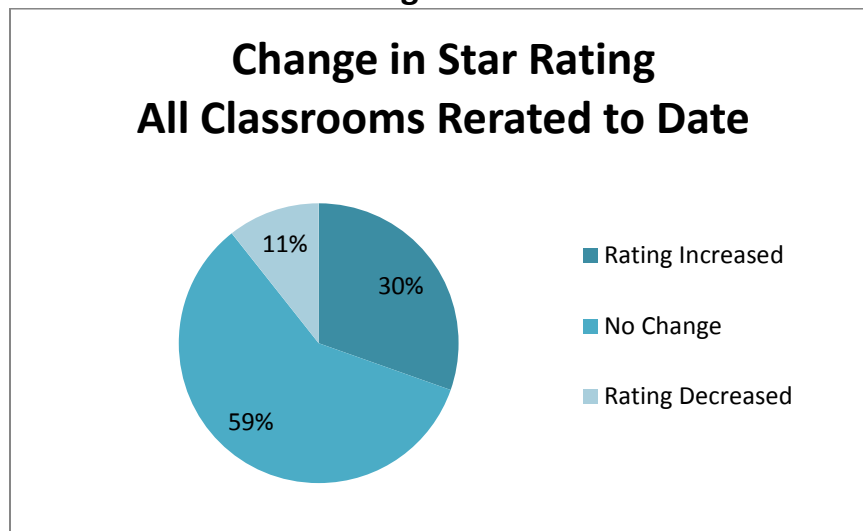
Of the total number of DPP rerated classrooms (263), 90 percent of them now hold a star rating of 3 or above, with 24 percent of classrooms earning the highest rating of 4 stars. Figure 23 shows the same comparison for only the 135 classrooms that were rerated in 2010-11. As the pie chart on the left indicates, initially 89 percent of newly rerated classrooms received a rating of 3 stars or above, with this percentage slightly decreasing after rerating. Of the 135 newly rerated classrooms, 86 percent of them have a star rating of 3 or above, with 16 percent now having a 4 star rating. The percentage of classrooms with two stars or less grew slightly from 11 percent (8% 2 star plus 2% 1 star plus 1 % 0 star) to 14 percent (13% plus 0% plus 1 %) with only one percent (two classrooms) having a rating less than two stars.

**Figure 23**



When looking at rerating results for all classrooms rerated to date there was a positive shift in the ratings, while rerated classrooms in 2010-11 (shown in Figure 23) had slightly less positive results. It is therefore important to take a closer look at star rating movement for all rerated classrooms illustrated in Figure 24. A detailed analysis of provider rerating results is presented in Appendix F.

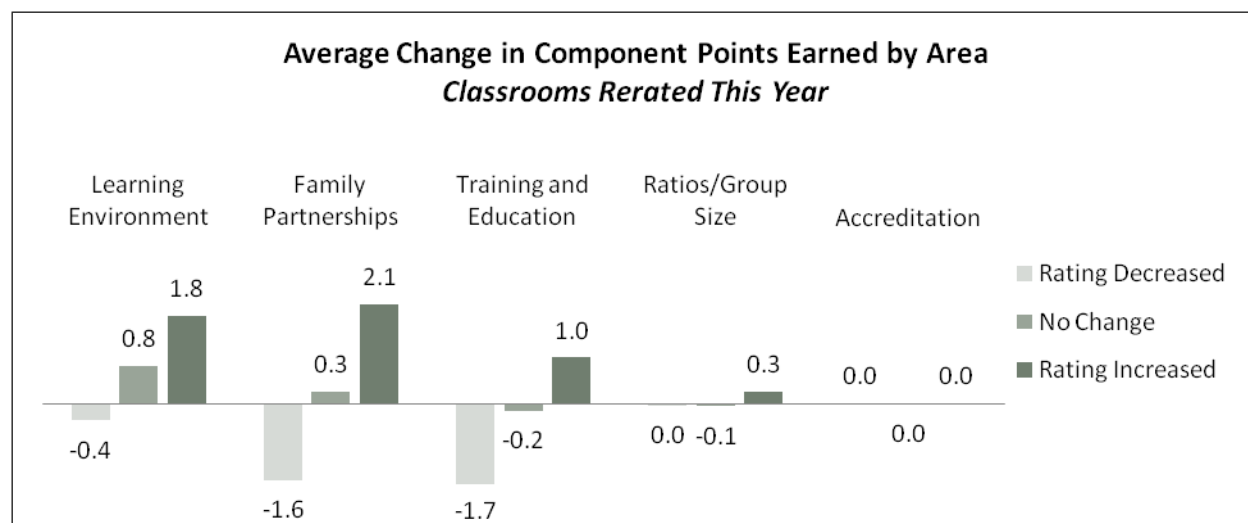
**Figure 24**



In the Qualistar rating process, sites can earn a total of 42 points. The intervals between star rating levels are roughly seven points, so there can be some point movement in the score a site receives without a change in rating. The differences in points earned can also be separately analyzed according to the five Qualistar rating components: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Family Partnerships, (3) Training and Education, (4) Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size, and (5) Program Accreditation.

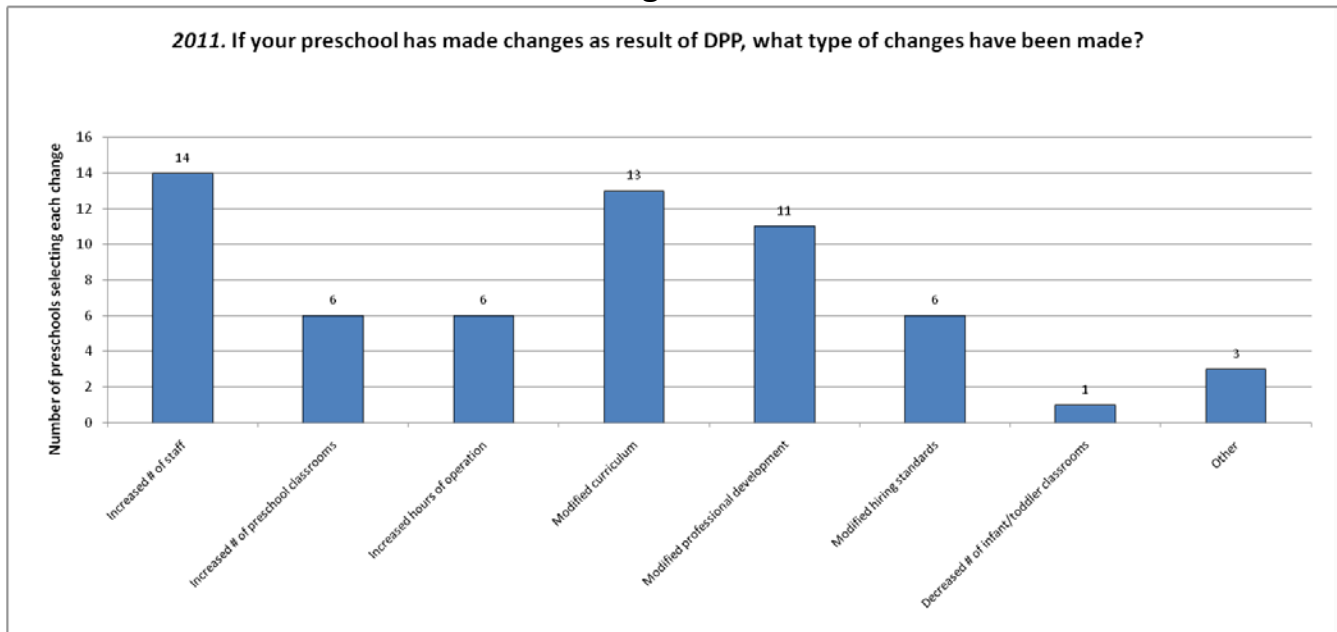
For classrooms with a rating decrease, the primary areas where points decreased were Family Partnerships and Training and Education, with an average loss of 1.6 and 1.7 points respectively. On average, classrooms that maintained their rating had very little change in their score in each area. For classrooms that had a star rating increase, additional points earned occurred mainly in Learning Environment (1.8 point gain on average) and Family Partnerships (2.1 point gain on average), although on average, classrooms also experienced gains in Training and Education and Ratio/Group Size.

**Figure 25**



To identify the specific actions undertaken by preschools while in DPP, the evaluators asked directly what changes have been made from the preschool's perspective. Over 50% of preschools, 31 out of the 59 surveyed, responded that they have made changes. Figure 26 represents the types of changes that have been made, most often by increasing staff and modifying curriculum.

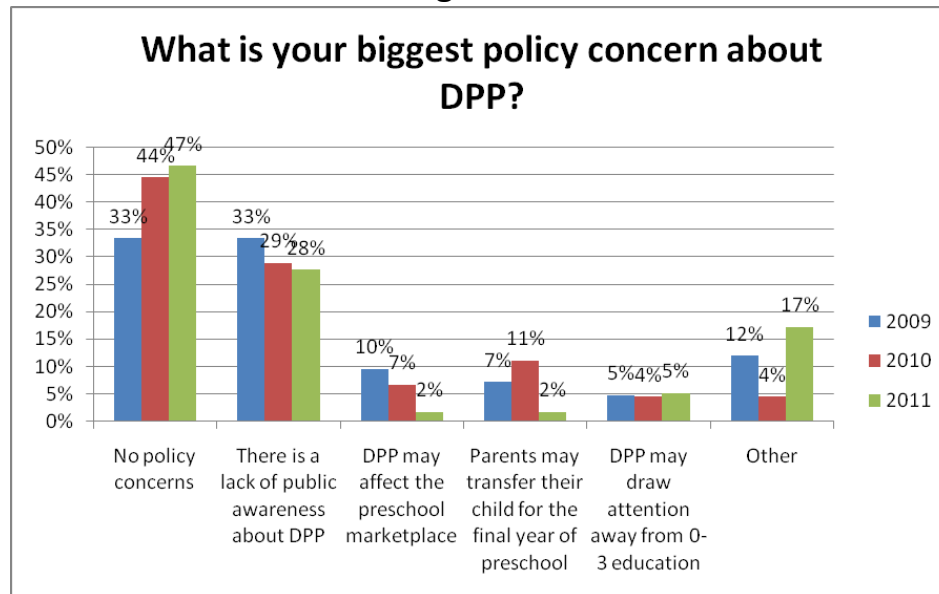
**Figure 26**



Overall, after participating in DPP for at least two years, classroom quality continues to improve in the second year of available re-rating data. While this report considers only the first two waves of providers experiencing the re-rating process, their increased scores and ratings indicate that DPP's emphasis on and support of quality improvement is having a positive impact on the quality of preschool classrooms available to Denver families. Subsequent years will allow for more in depth analysis of these positive improvements and the identification of possible trends.

The last indicator of how DPP interacts with the providers can be illustrated through a general question posed by the evaluation team: "What is your biggest policy concern about DPP?" In 2011, 45% of the providers indicated that they had no concern, a response which continues to trend upward (see Figure 27 below). However, in response to another open-ended question, 17% of respondents (10 respondents) did indicate concerns about such matters as dwindling resources, some specifically about the decrease in the tuition credits. This concern will be addressed in the next section.

**Figure 27**

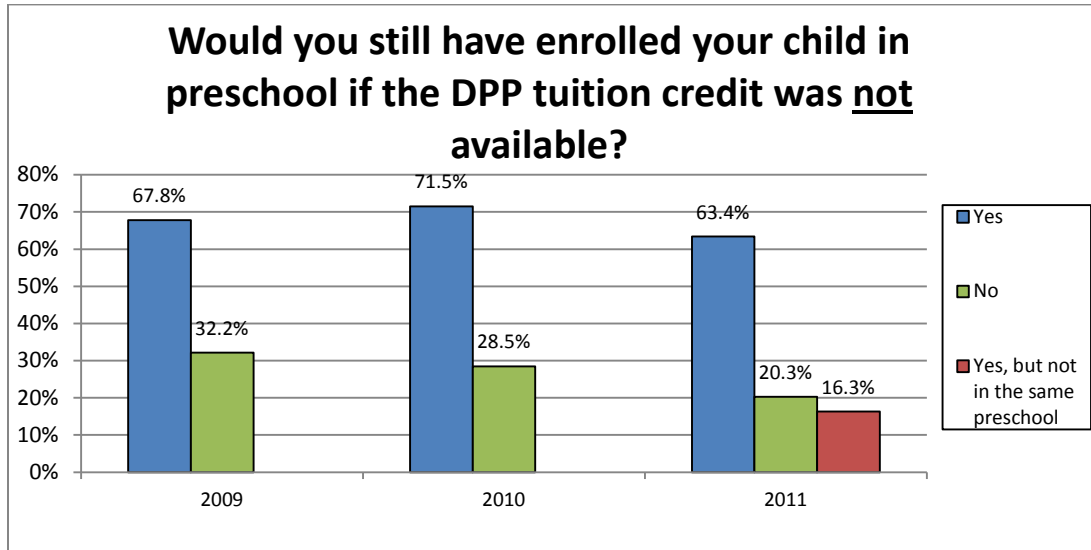


## **Tuition Credits**

**Do tuition credits encourage parents from all income levels to send their four-year-old children to high-quality preschools? Does the tuition credit structure encourage preschool providers in Denver to increase the number and quality of preschool slots available?**

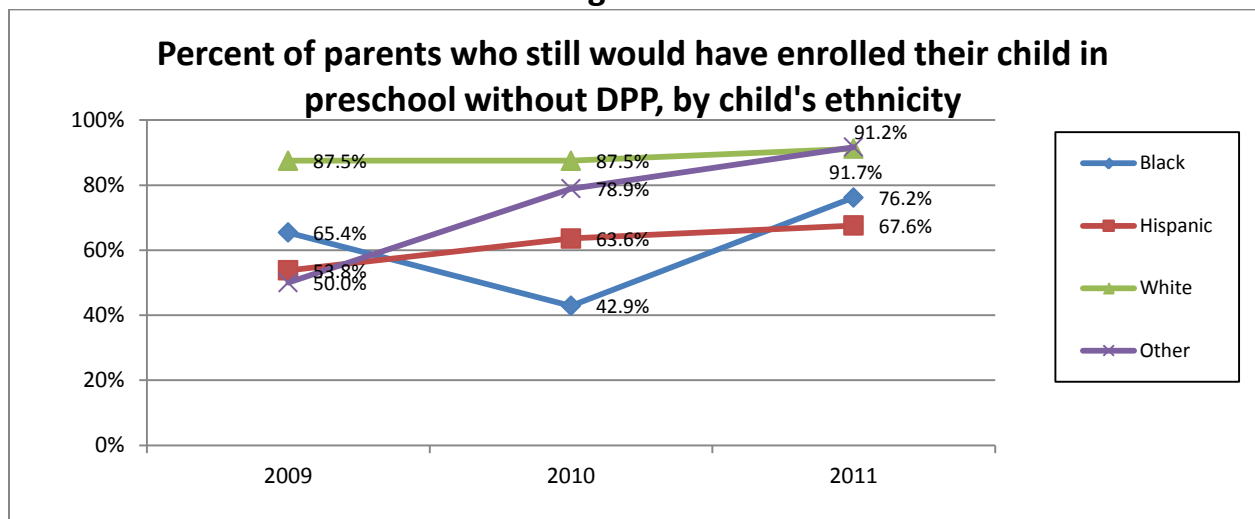
The survey results support the conclusion that the majority of parents would have enrolled their children in preschool without the existence of the DPP tuition credits. However, in 2011, 16% of parents indicated that without the credits, they would have chosen a different school. Also, a fifth of 2011 DPP parents indicated that they were only able to enroll their child in preschool due to the existence of the DPP tuition credit. Each of these last two findings are very positive indicators of DPP's impact on parent choice.

Figure 28



The data suggests that the availability of the DPP tuition credit was more likely to influence the enrollment decisions of black and Hispanic parents than of white parents (Figure 29). The percentage of families who would have enrolled without a credit increased for all ethnic groups in the city in 2011.

Figure 29



Enrollment decisions also were related to income level. The higher the level of parental income, the more likely parents were to have enrolled their children in preschool with or without the DPP tuition credit. In Tiers 1-3 of Figure 30, the data indicates that many lower income parents would not have enrolled their children in preschool without the DPP tuition credit, while nearly all of those in the highest tier would have enrolled their children regardless of the credit.



**Figure 30**

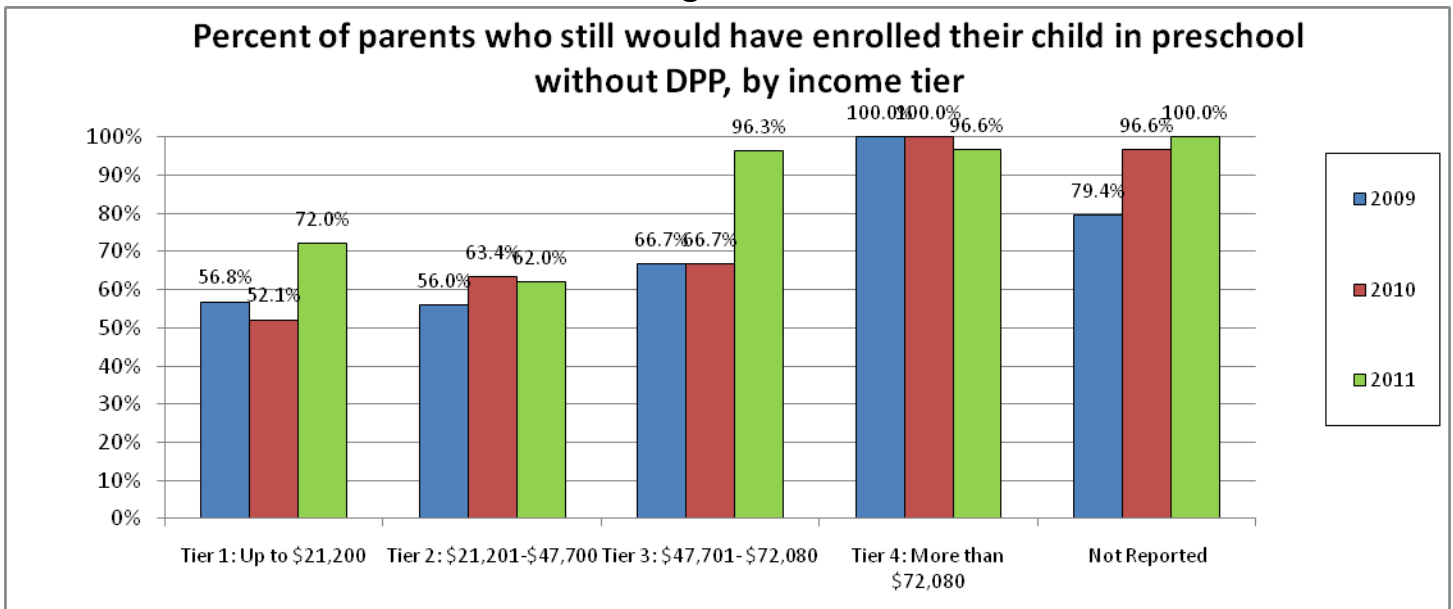
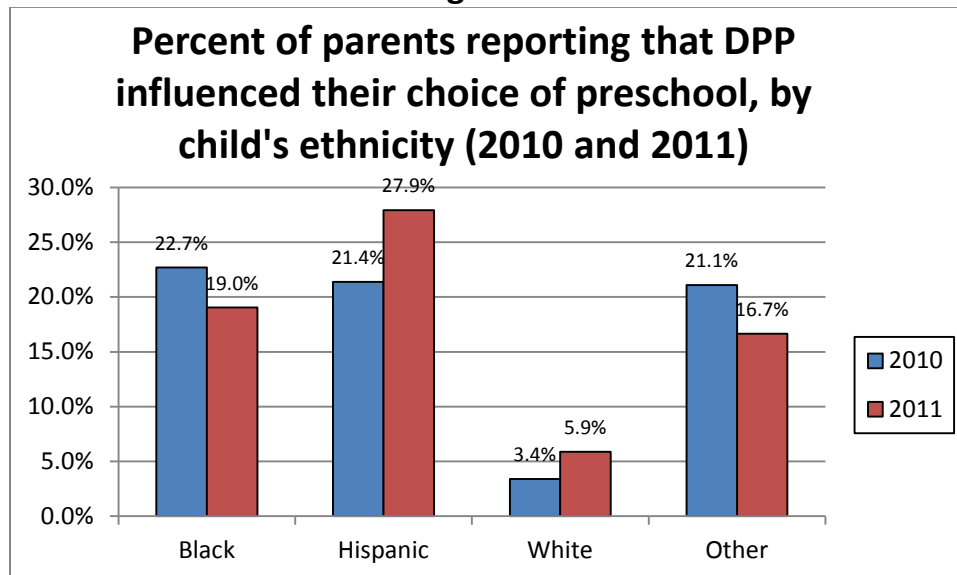


Figure 31 shows the race/ethnicity of families that indicated that the tuition credit **did** influence which preschool they selected. Parents of white children were much less likely than parents of children of other ethnicities to report that the DPP tuition credits influenced which preschool they selected. While 19% of black parents and 27.9% of Hispanic parents reported that DPP influenced their choice of preschool, only 5.9% of white parents reported that it was a factor. This figure provides additional detail on the 16% reported in Figure 28.

**Figure 31**



In order to evaluate how parents select a preschool, the survey asked parents a series of questions about how they made preschool enrollment decisions, and also asked preschools to give their

impression of how parents made these decisions. Parents were asked to identify the reasons for enrolling their child in a particular preschool. On the provider survey, preschools were asked for their perceptions of the most important factors that parents consider during the preschool selection process.

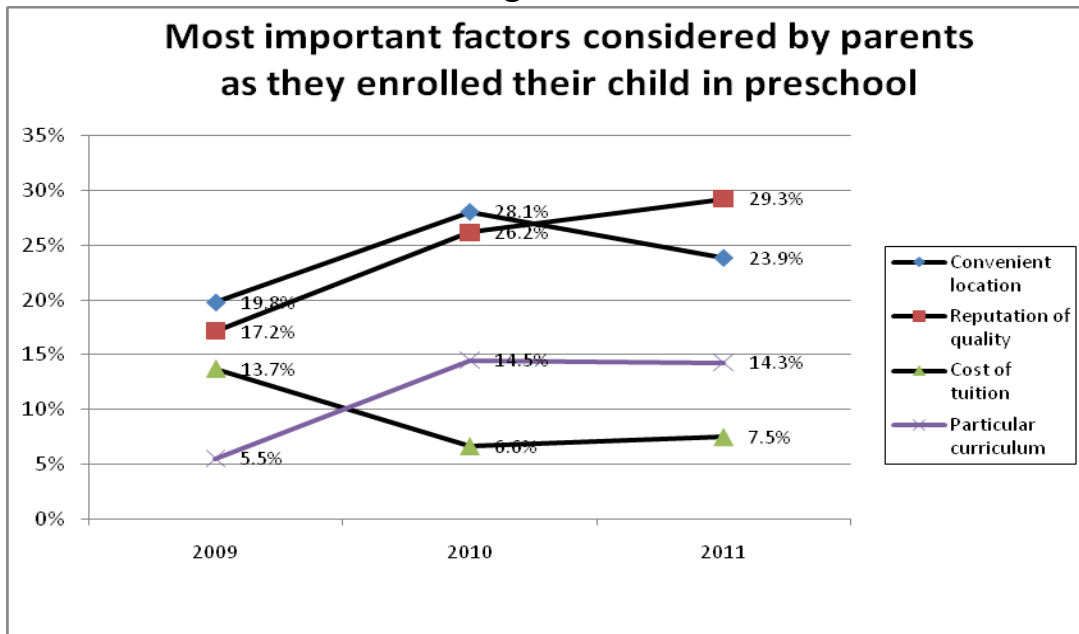
The 2009 version of this question included nine factors and asked respondents in both surveys to select their top four factors. The 2010 and 2011 versions included seven factors and asked respondents to select their top two. There were two reasons for this change. First, the evaluation team believed that the two options removed, Qualistar rating and personal recommendations, might be synonymous with another factor, reputation of quality. In addition, the team thought that it would be more instructive to ask a specific and distinct question about how parents determine a preschool's reputation for quality. In the 2010 and 2011 survey, an additional question asked this precise question. Table 10 shows a comparison of the response options provided in the annual survey.

**Table 10**

<b>Comparison of Reasons for Enrolling in a Particular School, by Year</b>			
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Included in 2009</b>	<b>Included in 2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Convenient location</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Cost of tuition</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Reputation of quality</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Hours of operation/schedule</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Qualistar rating</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Personal recommendation(s)</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Particular curriculum</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Impression during site visit</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Other</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

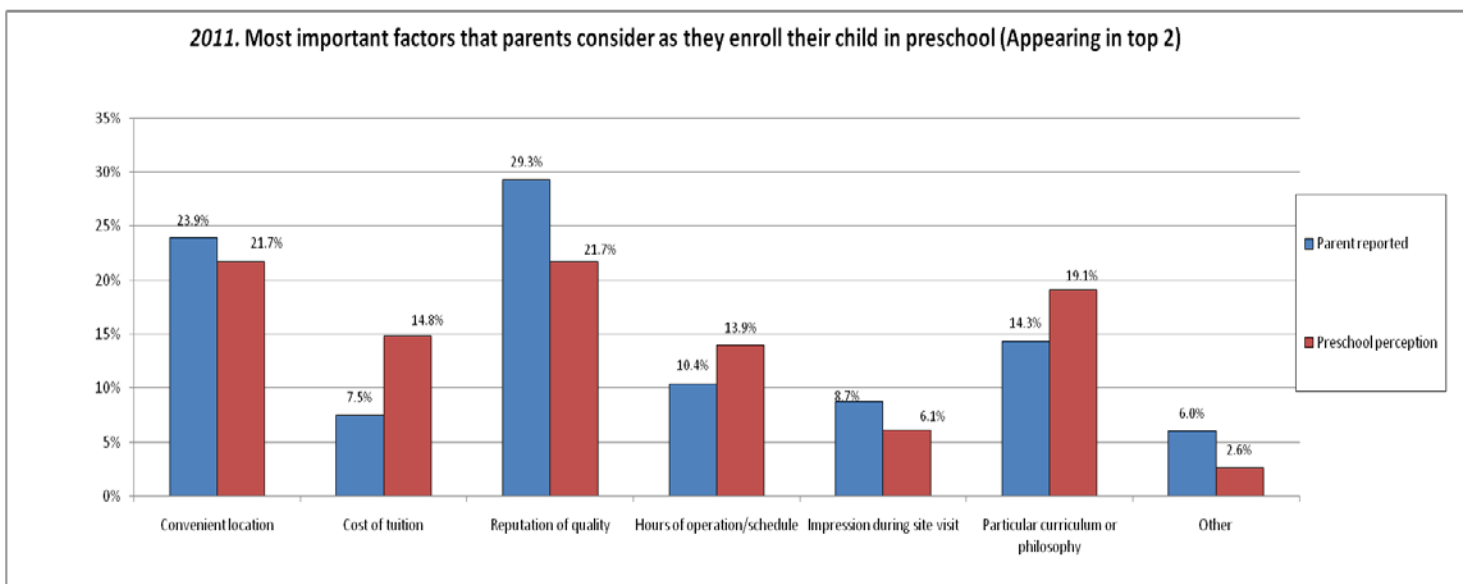
Both Figures 32 and 33 show the relative importance to parents of the cost of tuition of a preschool and the reputation of quality of a preschool. Nearly four times as many parents selected the reputation of quality factor as selected the cost of tuition factor. Even in the current economic times, preschool quality appears to be important to more parents than the cost of attending preschool.

**Figure 32**



Preschools were relatively accurate in their perceptions of what factors parents consider. For the second year in a row, preschool respondents were most likely to believe that parents consider reputation of quality, convenient location, curriculum/philosophy and cost of tuition in that order. While overall rankings were similar, preschools were more likely than parents to select cost of tuition as a factor and less likely to select convenient location or reputation of quality as an important factor. These results for parent and preschool respondents are presented in Figure 33.

**Figure 33**



## Conclusion

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The Denver Preschool Program (DPP) was created to encourage families to enroll their four-year-old children in quality preschool programs so that the children enter kindergarten ready to learn and thus increase the likelihood that these children are successful in kindergarten and beyond.

Over the course of the last five years, DPP has become an important component of preschool education in the City and County of Denver. Through June 2011, the following milestones had been achieved:

- A total of 173 providers, operating at 256 sites, were serving as approved DPP providers.
- A total of 5,915 children in 2010-11 received approval for DPP tuition credits.
- Of the 256 sites, 60 had received a Qualistar rating of 4 stars and 150 had received a Qualistar rating of 3 stars, the two highest ratings.
- The vast majority of DPP enrolled students were enrolled in top rated classrooms. A total of 1,640 children were enrolled in 4-star classrooms, while 3,792 children attended 3-star classrooms.
- In 2011, a total of 135 classrooms at 77 sites completed the re-rating process, bringing the total number of classrooms re-rated in 2010 and 2011 to 263.

In its fourth year of operation, staff, board members and operating partners continued the program in an effective manner even with significant changes in personnel. Further, DPP has been in the forefront of the local and statewide conversations about the quality of preschool. All of this occurred in an economic environment that continues to be extraordinarily challenging.

Based on data collected from numerous points of contact between the program and the Denver community, the evaluator concludes that DPP has a solid base of public support among the program's core constituents; however, two issues raise concerns. For the first time in the provider survey, the percentage of respondents who felt comfortable describing the DPP program declined rather than continued to grow. This decrease seems to be related to changes in structure of the quality improvement support and the elimination of tuition credit support for summer school. A number of providers expressed unhappiness with the fact that they promised parents that DPP tuition credits would be continued through the summer and then had to go back on this promise when DPP was unable to fund summer tuition credits. So far, provider discomfort does not seem to be adversely affecting either channels of communication or the participation rates of families from all income tiers in the program. We will examine these issues closely in the coming year. The second concern focuses on how much families in the poorer, language minority segments of the Denver community know about the program. Focus group results indicate that information on DPP is not "common knowledge" in this segment of the community.

Significant findings of this year's evaluation include the following:

- ***Enrollment in DPP appears to have leveled off.*** The DPP program seems to have reached a leveling-off point in terms of the number of children participating. For two years in a row, DPP has enrolled about 5,900 children, 5,921 in 2010 and 5,915 in 2011. When the ballot initiative was proposed in 2006, it was estimated that the program would serve a maximum of approximately 6,500 of the 10,000 four-year olds who reside in the City and County of Denver.
- ***A decline in the amount of individual tuition credits did not adversely affect participation in the DPP program.*** Due to the difficult financial times, the amount of individual tuition credits adjusted for income was reduced by 25-35% for the 2010-2011 school year. This reduction did not appear to adversely affect the number of parents and children participating in the DPP tuition reimbursement program this past year. As lower tuition reimbursement rates continue, changes in participation rates and or patterns by various groups may emerge. Participation in DPP by families with the highest incomes may decline as the amount of tuition reimbursement available to them becomes so small that the families decide that it no longer is worth their while to go through the DPP application process. Also, as the amount of tuition reimbursement for families at the lowest income levels declines, the families may increasingly choose DPS classrooms since DPS classrooms have lower tuition than most community center-based preschools. Future evaluations will monitor for such trends.
- ***Although parents associate DPP with quality preschool, they do not have a good understanding of how DPP works and how it is funded.*** Most parents surveyed knew that DPP was involved in quality improvement in preschools in the Denver area. Fewer understood that DPP provides tuition credits and very few could identify how DPP is funded. These results indicate that work needs to be done in explaining the DPP program to parents of preschoolers.
- ***Parents are confused about the respective roles of DPP and DPS.*** The relationship between DPP and DPS continues to strengthen operationally. Coordination between DPP and DPS in the enrollment of preschool children has been streamlined to the point that parents who use DPP tuition credits to enroll their children in DPS classrooms often do not understand that DPP is helping to pay for their child's education. While maintaining the ease and efficiency of the DPP-DPS enrollment process, both DPP and DPS need to help make parents more aware of DPP's role.
- ***Families are beginning to perceive preschool differently.*** As compared to prior years, there is a perceptible shift in how families perceive preschool. Parents increasingly see preschool as important to a child's development and understand that it is related to a child's cognitive, social and emotional growth and long-term success in school. In short, parents are viewing preschool as more than simply childcare. Whether this shift develops into a trend will be examined in subsequent years.
- ***Quality may be playing a bigger role as families select a preschool for their child.*** The data is beginning to indicate that quality is a reported influence parental decisions about which preschool they select for their child. Particularly among Hispanic parents, the Qualistar rating

played a significant role in the selection of a preschool. As seen in previous surveys, most families still get their ideas about what is a good preschool from family, friends and neighbors; however, quality is now a part of that discussion. The emergence of quality playing a larger role in parental decision making will continue to be tracked in coming years.

In short, DPP continues to realize its goals and manage its financial resources in tough economic times. The organization has also assumed a leadership role in the local and statewide discussions of child care and preschool quality.

## Appendix A: 2010-11 Parent Survey

### Denver Preschool Program (DPP) Parent Survey

Thank you for volunteering to complete this survey on the Denver Preschool Program (DPP). All survey responses will be kept completely confidential.

We estimate that the survey will take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

**1. What benefits do you hope your child will receive by being enrolled in preschool?**

Please select the **2 MOST IMPORTANT** benefits

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop the ability to interact with other children | <input type="checkbox"/> Be in a creative environment                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop the ability to interact with adults         | <input type="checkbox"/> Experience challenge or a broader range of activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learn academic fundamentals                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Identify developmental issues                         |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

**2. Parents may have many reasons for enrolling their child in a particular preschool.**

Please select the **2 MOST IMPORTANT** factors that you considered as you selected a preschool for your child.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convenient location         | <input type="checkbox"/> Impression during site visit               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of tuition             | <input type="checkbox"/> Particular curriculum or philosophy: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation of quality       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hours of operation/schedule |   |

**a. If you selected 'Reputation of quality' in question #2, which of the following did you use to determine preschool reputation? (select all that apply)**

- ☐ Qualistar rating
- ☐ Accreditation status (National Association for the Education of Young Children- NAEYC)
- ☐ Personal recommendation(s)
- ☐ Perception of quality in the broader community
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do you know the Qualistar rating of the preschool where your child is enrolled? (circle one)**

Yes, I know it

No, I don't know it

**4. Does the preschool where your child is enrolled have NAEYC accreditation? (circle one)**

Yes

No

I don't know

**5. Did you visit this particular preschool before making an enrollment decision? (circle one)**

Yes

No

**a. If yes to question #5, please select the 4 MOST IMPORTANT qualities that you looked for when you visited the preschool and rank them from 1 to 4 (1= Most Important)**

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1) Friendly and knowledgeable leadership                 | _____ |
| 2) Qualified teachers (e.g., experienced, well-educated) | _____ |
| 3) Positive Interactions between students and teachers   | _____ |
| 4) High quality facility, materials, and/or equipment    | _____ |
| 5) Safety  | _____ |
| 6) Substantial parent involvement                        | _____ |
| 7) Diversity   | _____ |
| 8) Class size or student-to-staff ratio                  | _____ |
| 9) Other: _____  | _____ |

**6. Please indicate whether the following statements are true for your family: (circle yes or no for each statement)**

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| • Preschool enables parents (one or both) in this family to work              | Yes | No |
| • Preschool enables parents (one or both) in this family to work longer hours | Yes | No |
| • Preschool enables parents (one or both) to attend school                    | Yes | No |
| • Preschool provides parents (one or both) with some free time                | Yes | No |

**7. How did you first hear about the Denver Preschool Program (DPP)? (select one)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DPP staff member  | <input type="checkbox"/> Print media (newspaper, mail)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool staff member  | <input type="checkbox"/> Broadcast media (radio, TV)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/acquaintance   | <input type="checkbox"/> Website: _____                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member   | <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool Matters Ballot Initiative          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer: _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> One of my other children participated in DPP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community presentations or literature<br>(at school/college, church, local event,<br>recreation center) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor's office/health clinic   | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not recall                              |

**8. What have you heard about the Denver Preschool Program (DPP)? (select all that apply)**

- ☐ That it provides access to preschool for 4 year olds in Denver
- ☐ That it helps improve preschool quality
- ☐ That it gives a tuition credit to all families based on income
- ☐ That it was created as part of a ballot initiative
- ☐ None of the above

**9. There has been some confusion about where the money for the program comes from, how do you think the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) is funded? (select one)**

- ☐ From the state government
- ☐ From the federal government
- ☐ From a local sales tax
- ☐ From local property tax
- ☐ From Denver Public Schools (DPS)
- ☐ None of the above

**10. What one source was the most useful for helping you enroll in the Denver Preschool Program (DPP)? (select one)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DPP staff member       | <input type="checkbox"/> Website: _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool staff member | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/acquaintance    | <input type="checkbox"/> I did not need any help |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member          |  |



11. Did you apply to the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) directly or through Denver Public Schools (DPS)? (select one)

- ☐ Directly to the Denver Preschool Program (DPP)  
☐ Through the Denver Public Schools (DPS)  
☐ Both to DPP directly and through DPS independently

a. How easy was the application process to complete? (circle one)

Very difficult                      Very easy  
1                      2                      3                      4

b. Did you ask DPP for assistance as you completed the application process? (circle one)

Yes                      No

i. If yes to question #11b, how would you rate the assistance? (circle one)

Poor                                      Excellent  
1                      2                      3                      4

c. After applying to DPP, how soon did you receive notification that your child was approved? (select one)

- ☐ Less than a week  
☐ 1-2 weeks  
☐ 3 weeks or more

12. If the DPP tuition credit was NOT available, would you still have enrolled your child in preschool? (circle one)

Yes                      No

13. Did the availability of the DPP tuition credit change the number of hours that your child attends preschool? (circle one)

Yes                      No

a. If yes to question #13, in what way did the DPP tuition credit change the number of hours? (select one)

- ☐ My child is now enrolled for more hours  
☐ My child is now enrolled for fewer hours

b. If yes to question #13, please explain why the tuition credit changed the number of hours your child attends preschool.

---

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14. Did the availability of the DPP tuition credit influence which preschool you selected? (circle one)

Yes                      No

a. If yes to question #14, how did the DPP tuition credit influence which preschool you selected?

---

---

---

15. Was your child enrolled in preschool or daycare prior to this school year? (circle one)

Yes                      No

a. If yes to question #15, please specify the name of the prior preschool/daycare and the city where it is located (include your current preschool/daycare if your child was enrolled there in a previous school year).

Preschool/daycare name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

16. As long as your family's situation stays the same, do you expect that the DPP tuition credit will help you to keep your child continuously enrolled for the entire school year? (circle one)

Yes                      No

17. Does your child currently receive tuition assistance for preschool or daycare from any public source other than DPP (such as CCCAP or Head Start)? (circle one)

Yes      No      I don't know

a. If yes to question #17, which of the following would make it easier to apply to these assistance programs? (select all that apply)

- ☐ A single application for all programs  
☐ Shared income documentation for all programs  
☐ On-line application  
☐ More transparency about how funding amounts are determined

18. To help leaders of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) think about the future, given the current economic situation, which of the following would you prefer?

a. ☐ To receive a reduced tuition credit for an extended 12 months

or ☐ To receive your current tuition credit for the current 9 months

b. ☐ Reduce tuition credit amount for higher income families to increase amount for lower income families

or ☐ Keep current amount for all income categories

19. How many people (including you) reside in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

20. How many children (under 18) reside in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What language is primarily spoken in your home? (select one)

- ☐ English  
☐ Spanish  
☐ Arabic

- ☐ Vietnamese  
☐ Korean  
☐ Somali

- ☐ Mandarin  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Do you have access to a computer with Internet? (circle one)

Yes      No

23. Do you regularly check an email account? (circle one)

Yes      No

24. If this survey was conducted online, would it be easier for you to complete? (circle one)

Yes      No

25. If you would be willing to participate in a follow-up survey in the future, please provide your email address and phone number.

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for completing the Denver Preschool Program Survey!**

**Please use the pre-addressed stamped envelope to return the survey  
or mail the survey to:**

Augenblick, Palaich and Associates  
Attn: Kathryn Rooney  
1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 1101  
Denver, CO 80203

**Your \$25 gift card will be sent to you when we receive your completed survey.**

**Please select which gift card you would prefer:**

- ☐ King Soopers      ☐ Walmart

## Appendix B: 2010-11 Provider Survey

### Denver Preschool Program (DPP) Provider Survey

Thank you for volunteering to complete this survey on the Denver Preschool Program (DPP). All survey responses will be kept completely confidential.

We estimate that the survey will take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

1. Provider/agency name (e.g., DPS, Catholic Charities, Family Star): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Preschool site name and street address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Your work phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Your work email address: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your current job title at the preschool site? \_\_\_\_\_

a. How long have you been employed in this position? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How would you characterize the preschool's curriculum? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Creative Curriculum
- ☐ High Scope
- ☐ Montessori
- ☐ Reggio Emilia

- ☐ DPS Curriculum
- ☐ Project Approach
- ☐ No specific curriculum, play-based
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Does your preschool maintain a waiting list? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #8, how many children are on the waiting list?

- Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months) \_\_\_\_\_
- Preschool (3-5 years) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Was your preschool first approved by DPP within the previous 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #9, why did your preschool opt to enroll in DPP? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Support for quality rating
- ☐ Free coaching support
- ☐ Professional development funds
- ☐ Financial assistance with materials & equipment
- ☐ DPP will improve access to preschool
- ☐ DPP will ease the financial burden on families
- ☐ As part of larger organizational decision
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

b. If you personally completed the application for DPP, how easy was the application process? (circle one)

Very difficult                      Very easy                      N/A  
1                      2                      3                      4                      ☐

10. Has DPP affected your preschool's enrollment numbers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #10, please indicate the number of new children who enrolled or left as a result of DPP.

- |                                      | <u># of new children</u> | <u># of children leaving</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months) | _____                    | _____                        |
| • Preschool (3-5 years)              | _____                    | _____                        |

11. Has DPP affected your program's enrollment patterns (hours that children enroll)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

a. If yes to question #11, please indicate the number of children who have increased or decreased their hours of enrollment.

# of children increasing hours

# of children decreasing hours

• Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Preschool (3-5 years)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. How would you rate DPP's efforts to inform parents about the availability of tuition credits? (circle one)

Poor

1

2

3

Excellent

4

13. How would you rate DPP's efforts to inform parents about its quality improvement process? (circle one)

Poor

1

2

3

Excellent

4

14. Parents may have many reasons for enrolling their child in a particular preschool.

Please select the 2 MOST IMPORTANT factors that you believe parents consider as they select a preschool for their child.

☐ Convenient location

☐ Impression during site visit

☐ Cost of tuition

☐ Particular curriculum or philosophy

☐ Reputation of quality

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Hours of operation/schedule

15. Which of the following do you believe parents use to determine a preschool's reputation? (select all that apply)

☐ Qualistar rating

☐ Accreditation status (National Association for the Education of Young Children- NAEYC)

☐ Personal recommendation(s)

☐ Perception of quality in the broader community

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

16. How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "In general, parents can accurately determine preschool quality." (circle one)

Strongly disagree

1

2

3

Strongly agree

4

17. Please select the 4 MOST IMPORTANT qualities that you believe parents look for during a preschool site visit and rank them from 1 to 4 (1= Most Important)

1) Friendly and knowledgeable leadership

\_\_\_\_\_

2) Qualified teachers (e.g., experienced, well-educated)

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Positive interactions between students and teachers

\_\_\_\_\_

4) High quality facility, materials, and/or equipment

\_\_\_\_\_

5) Safety

\_\_\_\_\_

6) Substantial parent involvement

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Diversity

\_\_\_\_\_

8) Class size or student-to-staff ratio

\_\_\_\_\_

9) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Has your preschool recruited parents to apply for the DPP tuition credits?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #18, in what parent recruitment activities has the preschool engaged? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Discussion at parent meetings  
☐ Distribution of printed information on-site  
☐ Individual encouragement for parents to apply

- ☐ Individual assistance for parents with applications  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

b. If yes to question #18, since the beginning of this school year, how much time has your preschool staff spent per month recruiting parents to apply to DPP? (select one)

- ☐ 0-5 hours  
☐ 6 -10 hours  
☐ 11-15 hours  
☐ More than 15 hours

19. How much time does your preschool staff spend per month completing DPP attendance paperwork? (select one)

- ☐ 0-5 hours  
☐ 6 -10 hours  
☐ 11-15 hours  
☐ More than 15 hours

20. From your perspective, how smoothly do you think the DPP enrollment process works for parents? (circle one)

Not smoothly Very smoothly  
1 2 3 4

21. How smoothly is the DPP tuition credit payment process working for your preschool? (circle one)

Not smoothly Very smoothly  
1 2 3 4

22. Does the preschool receive the DPP tuition credits in a timely manner? (circle one)

Rarely Always  
1 2 3 4

23. How comfortable do you feel explaining to parents how DPP tuition credit amounts are determined? (circle one)

Not comfortable Very comfortable  
1 2 3 4

24. Have you asked for any administrative assistance from DPP?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #24, what type of assistance did you request?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. If yes to question #24, how useful was the assistance? (circle one)

Not useful Very useful  
1 2 3 4

25. Did your preschool participate in the DPP quality improvement process?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #25, which component of DPP's quality improvement process was the most helpful for improving the quality of your preschool? (select one)

- ☐ Professional development funds  
☐ Free coaching support  
☐ Financial assistance with materials & equipment  
☐ Support for quality rating

26. Has your preschool participated previously in a quality improvement process (outside of DPP)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #26, how long did the preschool participate? (select one)

☐ Less than a year  
☐ 1-2 years  
☐ 3-5 years  
☐ More than 5 years

b. If yes to question #26, who sponsored the quality improvement process? (select all that apply)

☐ Denver Early Childhood Council ☐ Mayor's Office for Education and Children  
☐ Mile High United Way ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Buell Foundation ☐ I don't know  
☐ School Readiness (House Bill 1238)

27. Has your preschool staff received any coaching from DPP?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #27, how beneficial was the coaching? (circle one)

Not beneficial Very beneficial  
1 2 3 4

28. Do you believe the most recent quality ratings that your preschool received to be accurate assessments of the preschool's quality?

- Qualistar
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

a. If your preschool has a Qualistar rating, please explain why you believe the rating was or was not an accurate assessment of the preschool's quality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

29. To what extent has the presence of DPP encouraged you to improve the quality of your preschool program? (circle one)

Not at all To a great extent  
1 2 3 4

30. Has your preschool made any significant changes as a result of participating in DPP?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes to question #30, what types of changes have been made? (select all that apply)

☐ Increased number of staff ☐ Modified curriculum  
☐ Increased number of infant/toddler classrooms ☐ Modified professional development  
☐ Increased number of preschool classrooms ☐ Modified hiring standards  
☐ Increased hours of operation ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Decreased number of staff  
☐ Decreased number of infant/toddler classrooms  
☐ Decreased number of preschool classrooms  
☐ Decreased hours of operation

**31. What is your biggest operational concern about DPP? (select one)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No operational concerns                              | <input type="checkbox"/> The time/effort to prepare for the rating process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The time/effort to recruit parents                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairness/accuracy of the rating process           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The time/effort to manage the tuition credit process | <input type="checkbox"/> The time/effort for parents to enroll in DPP      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The time/effort to track attendance                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                      |

**32. What is your biggest policy concern about DPP? (select one)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No policy concerns   | <input type="checkbox"/> DPP may affect the preschool marketplace      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DPP may draw attention away from 0-3 education                   | <input type="checkbox"/> There is a lack of public awareness about DPP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents may transfer their child for the final year of preschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                  |

**33. How effectively does DPP work for the families it serves?  
(circle one)**

<u>Not effectively</u>				<u>Very effectively</u>
1	2	3	4	

**34. How effectively does DPP work for families whose primary language is not English? (circle one)**

<u>Not effectively</u>				<u>Very effectively</u>
1	2	3	4	

**35. Do you have any suggestions for improving DPP in the future?**

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**Thank you for completing the Denver Preschool Program Survey!**

**Please use the pre-addressed stamped envelope to return the survey  
or mail the survey to:**

Augenblick, Palaich and Associates  
Attn: Kathryn Rooney  
1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 1101  
Denver, CO 80203

**Your \$25 gift card from The Bookies (Denver Bookstore) will be sent to you  
when we receive your completed survey.**

## Appendix C: Data Collection Methods

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During the first 14 months of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) operations (beginning in November 2006), the program's emphasis was on building the administrative and operational capacity. Staff and contractors were hired and worked together to develop procedures for processing parent and preschool applications.

In the 2007-2008 school year, the first-year for the program, the number of providers that enrolled was limited and the first sites were not approved until early in 2008. As a consequence, families receiving tuition credits were concentrated in a small number of DPP-approved sites. For these reasons, in the 2007-08 year, APA modified its procedures for collecting information and relied on face-to-face meetings, telephone interviews, and small focus groups of parents and providers.

DPP's "second school year," from August 1, 2008, through July 31, 2009, the evaluation team was able to gather data about the program from the full range of parent and provider sources, relying more heavily on surveys and less on face-to-face focus group meetings and telephone interviews with parents and providers.

The data collection strategies used in 2008-09 were continued into the 2009-10 and the 2010-11 school years. For the 2010-11 school year, three full years of collected parent and provider survey data allows APA to present trends in the survey results. For the purpose of presenting the data, the 2007-08 school year is referred to as 2008; the 2008-09 school year is referred to as 2009; the 2009-10 school year is referred to as 2010, and the 2010-11 school year is referred to as 2011.

Tables C1 and C2 document the approaches and sources of information used to collect data in the 2011 year. Information was obtained from focus groups, surveys, in-person and telephone interviews, and analysis of DPP enrollment and provider data. A focus group was conducted for Spanish-language parents who had a 4-year old child who was not enrolled in DPP. The purpose of this focus group was to ascertain the parents' knowledge of and feelings towards DPP. The evaluation team also analyzed 180 completed surveys from a sample of parents and 65 completed surveys from a sample of DPS, community-based, and home-based preschools. A description of these samples is provided below. In-person interviews were conducted with three DPP board members, three DPP staff, and the lead staff of all DPP partners.

A review of the last two columns of Table C2 indicates that the number of children in the program who were assessed by Clayton Early Learning Institute was 200 students, and that the number of children records processed by ACS remained at just under 6,000 in 2010-11.

The evaluation data collected and analyzed in 2010-11 can be characterized as follows:

- The parent survey results are representative of the opinions of families that participated in DPP.



- The provider survey results are representative of the opinions of providers that participated in DPP.
- The student assessment sample is now drawn in a scientific manner from the families that were participating in DPP as of mid-August 2010.

**Table C1**

<b>Approaches Used to Answer DPP Evaluation Questions in 2011</b>								
			<b>Focus Groups</b>				<b>Surveys</b>	
			<b>Parents</b>			<b>Coaches</b>	<b>DPP Participants</b>	
			<b>Child in DPP, Receiving TC</b>	<b>Child in DPP, Not Receiving TC</b>	<b>Child Not in DPP (Latina/o)</b>	<b>Coaches and Supervisors</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Preschools</b>
	<b># Participated</b>		0	0	19	0	180	65
<b>Operational Issues</b>	<b>Outreach</b>	<b>A.1.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>A.2.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>A.3.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>A.4.</b>			X		X	X
	<b>Ease of Interaction with DPP</b>	<b>B.1.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>B.2.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>B.3.</b>			X		X	X
		<b>B.4.</b>			X		X	X
	<b>Tuition Credits</b>	<b>C.1.</b>					X	X
		<b>C.2.</b>					X	X
		<b>C.3.</b>					X	X
		<b>C.4.</b>					X	X
		<b>C.5.</b>					X	X

Table C2

Additional Approaches Used to Answer DPP Evaluation Questions in 2011								
			Interviews				Data Analysis	
			In-Person		Phone		Assessments	DPP Data
			Staff / Board	DPS Leaders and DPP Partners	Parents with Child in DPP, Receiving TC	Parents with Child at a DPP site, not receiving TC	Child Outcomes in DPP	Families, Providers
	# Participating		6	7	0	0	200	5882
Operational Issues	Outreach	A.1.	X	X			N/A	X
		A.2.	X	X			N/A	X
		A.3.	X	X			N/A	X
		A.4.	X	X			N/A	X
	Ease of Interaction with DPP	B.1.	X	X			N/A	X
		B.2.	X	X			N/A	X
		B.3.	X	X			N/A	X
		B.4.	X	X			N/A	X
	Tuition Credits	C.1.	X	X			N/A	X
		C.2.	X	X			N/A	X
		C.3.	X	X			N/A	X
		C.4.	X	X			N/A	X
		C.5.	X	X			N/A	X

## Appendix D: Description of the Sample of Families and Providers

### Description of Family Sample

DPP enrolls children on a year-round cycle, and thus the number and demographics of DPP children are constantly changing. The data presented in this section represents children enrolled in DPP as of October 25<sup>th</sup> 2010, which is when the sample of families to be surveyed was drawn. For an explanation of how particular descriptions were coded into categories such as ethnicity, see Appendix G.

Table D1 portrays the breakdown of children by ethnic and family income tier. As in 2008-09 and 2009-10, approximately half of the children enrolled in DPP were Hispanic. In contrast to 2009-10 when slightly more than half of DPP families reported incomes of \$47,000 or less, in 2010-2011, nearly three-quarters (72%) of DPP families reported incomes of \$47,000 or less. Only about 10% of families did not report income.

**Table D1**

<b>All 2011 DPP Families by Income Tier and Child's Ethnicity</b>						
<b>Income Tier</b>						
<b>Child's ethnicity</b>	<b>Up to \$21,200</b>	<b>\$21,201-\$47,700</b>	<b>\$47,701-\$72,080</b>	<b>More than \$72,080</b>	<b>Not Reported</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Black</b>	440	183	40	22	36	<b>721</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	1596	868	113	47	152	<b>2,776</b>
<b>White</b>	212	252	206	429	313	<b>1,412</b>
<b>Other</b>	199	111	40	64	48	<b>462</b>
<b>Not Reported</b>	21	6	2	0	1	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,468</b>	<b>1,420</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>5,401</b>

The 2011 survey sample was drawn from the population described in Table D1. APA sent surveys to all of the parents of the children who were assessed by Clayton Early Learning as part of the child outcomes study. In addition, APA sent surveys to a supplemental sample of 32 additional parents. This supplemental parent sample was selected to be representative of parents with children in preschools with Qualistar ratings of 1 or 2 stars. By adding these 32 parents to the surveyed total, the sample was representative of the population by income, child's ethnicity, home language, and the Qualistar ratings of preschools where the children were enrolled.

In 2011, APA sent surveys to a total of 232 parents, and received 180 completed surveys from these parents. This was a comparable response rate to the 2010 response rate (both rates were 78%). The

sample of 180 responding parents presented in Table D2 is representative of the ethnic and income demographics found in the entire DPP parent population.

**Table D2**

<b>2011 Returned DPP Surveys by Income Tier and Child's Ethnicity</b>						
<b>Income Tier</b>						
<b>Child's ethnicity</b>	<b>Up to \$21,200</b>	<b>\$21,201-\$47,700</b>	<b>\$47,701-\$72,080</b>	<b>More than \$72,080</b>	<b>Not Reported</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Black</b>	12	6	2	2	0	<b>22</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	34	30	3	3	6	<b>76</b>
<b>White</b>	5	11	20	22	11	<b>69</b>
<b>Other</b>	5	4	2	2	0	<b>13</b>
<b>Not Reported</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>180</b>

## Description of Provider Sample

DPP continues to recruit and enroll preschool providers on an ongoing basis. The data presented in this section represents preschools that were enrolled in DPP as of October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at which time the sample of providers to be surveyed was drawn.

Table D3 categorizes these preschool sites by type of provider, total number of classrooms, and Qualistar rating. DPS preschools represent 31% of all DPP preschool sites. Of the non-DPS (community) sites, 14% were home-based and the rest were center-based sites. These proportions are similar to those in 2010. About 60% of the home-based sites actually had at least one DPP child enrolled in 2011. As in 2009 and 2010, approximately 80% of the preschool sites in 2011 (77%) had between one and five classrooms. Approximately 11% of DPP sites in 2011 did not have a Qualistar rating. This percent is down about 16% from the previous year. Among the sites that were rated, 60% had earned a 3-star rating and 16% earned a rating of 1-star or 2-star.

**Table D3**

<b>2011 All DPP Preschool Sites</b>	
<b>Provider Type</b>	
<b>DPS</b>	84
<b>Community Center-Based Sites</b>	159
<b>Community Home-Based Sites</b>	26 (16 with 1 or more child enrolled)
<b>Number of Total Classrooms</b>	
<b>1 or 2 classrooms</b>	119
<b>3-5 classrooms</b>	90
<b>6-9 classrooms</b>	44
<b>10 or more classrooms</b>	16
<b>Star Rating</b>	
<b>1 or 2 stars</b>	38
<b>3 stars</b>	144
<b>4 stars</b>	57
<b>Scheduled or In-Process</b>	9
<b>Provisional</b>	5
<b>Intro to Quality</b>	16
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>269</b>

\* Numbers exclude those preschool sites that enrolled or dropped out of DPP after October 18, 2010.

The preschool survey sample was drawn from the distribution of preschools described in Table D3. This sample was stratified according to provider type, number of total classrooms, star ratings, and location (zip code). APA intentionally oversampled home-based community preschools and preschools with a rating of 1 or 2 stars. In October 2011, there were 11 providers enrolled in DPP that managed more than one preschool site. These included DPS, Mile High Montessori, Catholic Charities and Family Star among others. APA surveyed at least one preschool site within each of these 11 providers.

Of the 99 preschools surveyed, 65 returned surveys, for a response rate of 66%. Both the surveyed preschools and the preschools that returned surveys were representative of the overall population of DPP preschools. Table D4 presents the distribution of preschools that returned surveys.

**Table D4**

<b>2011 All Returned Surveys – Numbers</b>	
<b>Provider Type</b>	
<b>DPS</b>	20
<b>Community Center-Based Sites</b>	36
<b>Community Home-Based Sites</b>	9
<b>Total Number of Classrooms</b>	
<b>1 or 2 classrooms</b>	25
<b>3-5 classrooms</b>	19
<b>6-9 classrooms</b>	13
<b>10 or more classrooms</b>	8
<b>Star Rating</b>	
<b>1 or 2 stars</b>	12
<b>3 stars</b>	27
<b>4 stars</b>	19
<b>Scheduled or In-Process</b>	2
<b>Provisional</b>	0
<b>Intro to Quality</b>	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>

## **Appendix E: Summary of Spanish-Speaking Parent Interviews and Focus Group**

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During the summer of 2011, Sixth Sun Consulting conducted individual interviews and facilitated a focus group to enable APA to assess the effectiveness of DPP's outreach to Spanish-speaking parents. Participants for both the focus group and the interviews volunteered to take part in the assessment process after being recruited by pastors in the northwest part of the city. The focus group was conducted at one of the churches on July 12, 2011 and included 14 individuals almost all of whom were monolingual Spanish-speaking parents with two to three children. All except one had a household income of below \$38,000.

In addition to the focus group, Sixth Sun conducted five individual interviews. Three of the interview participants were monolingual Spanish-speaking parents and two were bilingual-bicultural Spanish-speaking parents. In prior years, surveys have relied exclusively on monolingual Spanish-speaking parents for feedback. In an effort to be more inclusive, reach more members of the Hispanic community and better distinguish between barriers to DPP accessibility that are largely due to a family's home language and those that may be due to more complex cultural factors, the evaluators opted for the first time to include both monolingual and bilingual-bicultural parents.

The summaries below include the feedback from both the focus group and the interviews.

### **Highlights**

- Only four participants had heard of DPP. Two of them were bilingual interview participants and two were participants in the focus group. One of the two focus group participants who had heard of DPP was proficient in English. Those familiar with DPP included one parent whose child was enrolled in preschool on a DPP tuition credit and another who had worked on the campaign to establish DPP.
- Participants overwhelmingly agreed that an effective preschool program should support their development and learning as parents as well as promote their children's education. All parents who participated in the discussion agreed that it is important for preschools to foster an experience that is based on intentional relationships with parents and students and a deep commitment to the health and vibrancy of the communities they serve.
- Parents want English-language related support and learning opportunities for their children in preschool but also value the preservation of Spanish-language capacity at home and within the family. Suggested support strategies included offering specialized language development classes, after school programs, and individualized instruction as necessary.
- Many participants suggested a greater focus on educating parents about what preschool is and about the potential of their children benefiting from it both socially and academically. One

parent pointed out that especially for un-acculturated or minimally acculturated, monolingual Spanish-speaking parents, preschool is unfamiliar and can feel daunting to access.

- Several parents gave feedback about important things to consider when exploring specific communication strategies. Class was identified as a major barrier to accessing certain types of promotional media, especially Internet based-media. Participants also identified an all too common lack of cultural competency among providers, often resulting in a simple substitution of Spanish materials translated directly from English for truly relevant and culturally competent Spanish-language communications. Parents agreed that cultivating relationships within their communities coupled with strategic outreach campaigns would be the best way to communicate information regarding DPP to the community.

Specific questions discussed included the following:

### **Why did you decide to enroll your child in preschool? What did you hope your child would learn?**

Parents expressed a wide range of experiences with preschool enrollment; including some whose age-eligible children were not enrolled, some whose children were enrolled in a non-DPP approved preschool, and others whose children were enrolled in DPP-participating programs. Among parents with currently enrolled preschoolers, common desired outcomes included:

- Early education with an emphasis on preparing children for active and successful participation in the educational system;
- Opportunities for socialization among peers combined with resources and guidance from teachers to support identity formation, and emotional development; and
- Education-centered childcare to support working parents, especially in multiple income-earning households.

### **Why did you pick this preschool? Did you visit different schools before you chose this one?**

Reasons given for picking a preschool and information about the search process included the following:

- Proximity to the home was a top factor in choosing a program;
- For the majority of respondents, their search for a program included an information-gathering visit and tour of a chosen preschool prior to enrollment;
- In some cases, parents visited multiple programs prior to finalizing a choice;
- A diverse and inclusive learning environment for their children, especially one that effectively helps students begin to develop English-speaking capacity while also respecting and supporting the retention of Spanish-speaking capacity was important for some parents; and



- One participant described her involvement with *Grupo VIDA*, a community-based advocacy and support group that includes a network of Latino families who have children with disabilities or special needs, which helped her feel more prepared to navigate the education system with her child's best interests in mind. With *Grupo VIDA*'s support and guidance, she felt empowered to compare the offerings and benefits of two different programs to decide on the one she concluded was the best fit for her child and family.

### How do you currently receive information about your child's education options?

Many parents described feeling very isolated and overall disconnected from their child's education with inadequate access to information about available options. Acknowledged resources included:

- Radio
- Channel 10
- Family and friends
- Information sent from school and brought home by older children
- Catholic Charities
- *Grupo VIDA*'s annual conference
- The *Statewide Parent Coalition*.

### How would you like to receive information about your child's education?

The majority of parents expressed agreement that access to information in Spanish is very important. Suggested mediums included:

- Mail
- Radio
- Newspapers
- Television
- Daycare centers
- Churches
- Conferences (i.e. *Statewide Parent Coalition*).

Parents also strongly agreed that DPP could improve its outreach to primarily Spanish-speaking families by demonstrating a **more visible community presence** and investing in **building stronger community-based partnerships and coalitions** within the communities it serves. Parents described wanting to be engaged in meaningful and intentional ways in their children's preschool experience.

## **Who do you trust to give you good information when making decisions about your child's education?**

Several parents emphasized an appreciation for programs that intentionally work to cultivate trust while also communicating helpful information. The following were identified as trustworthy sources of information about early childhood education:

- Family members
- Friends
- Teachers
- Experts.

One participant described relying solely on her own research in making decisions about her child's education.

## **Where did you learn about the DPP program?**

Parents who were familiar with DPP listed the following as sources of information about the program:

- Another, older child's school
- English television
- Radio
- *Statewide Parent Coalition*
- Posted flyer.

## **What is the best way to communicate this type of information to you and your friends and family (community)?**

Participants indicated that the best ways to communicate information regarding preschool to them and their friends and family were the following:

- Television and radio, especially programming in Spanish
- Public service announcements
- Door-to-door home visits to families
- Interpersonal relationship building
- Strong community partnerships
- Formal partnerships with K-12 schools to help distribute clearly identifiable DPP materials and information by sending it home with students living in preschool eligible households.

One participant emphasized that simply adding information in Spanish to existing outreach materials falls short of connecting with people in ways that are truly culturally relevant.

## **Appendix F: Analysis of Re-Rated DPP Providers**

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### **Analysis of DPP Provider Re-Rating Process**

**Prepared for the  
Denver Preschool Program: 2010-11**

By  
Augenblick, Palaich and Associates

August 2011

## Introduction

An important aim of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) is to improve the quality of preschool available to families in the Denver area. When preschool sites choose to participate in the Denver Preschool Program, they receive a rating from Qualistar Colorado that evaluates the quality of their program in five areas: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Family Partnerships, (3) Training and Education, (4) Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size, and (5) Program Accreditation. The total number of points a site earns in all of these areas determines their star rating on a scale of 0 to 4 stars.

The Denver Preschool Program allocates varying amounts of funds to support quality improvement efforts for each DPP participating provider. These funds may be used to purchase classroom equipment, materials and other resources that improve the quality of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Quality improvement funds may also be used to increase the level of education and training of the provider's classroom staff and administration through approved seminars, workshops, and conferences as well as to provide scholarships which enable staff to attend college-level early childhood education classes and college-level courses leading to an education related degree. Additionally, coaching services are provided by the Denver Preschool Program to support those classrooms that have completed the Qualistar Rating™ process and have received a Provisional to 2-Star rating as well as to providers who have chosen to access up to a year of coaching services in preparation of their first rating.

Sites that participate in the Denver Preschool Program are required to go through a re-rating process with Qualistar every two years. The re-rating process allows for changes in quality to be monitored and further documents the influence that the program has on improving the quality of the preschool community.

This is the second year in which DPP sites have gone through the re-rating process and this report analyzes changes in quality during the first two years in the Denver Preschool Program for all Denver Public Schools and community sites that have been re-rated as of March 2011. A similar report was released in 2010 that examined sites that had been re-rated as of March 2010. This report examines the 128 classrooms at 69 DPP sites that were re-rated previously, and an additional 135 classrooms at 77 DPP sites that have since been re-rated. Findings for all 263 classrooms are presented in this report, which also includes separate findings for the classrooms which were re-rated in 2011 and were not a part of the 2010 report's analysis.

The table below illustrates the classrooms and sites that are examined in this report.

Site Type	Re-rating in 2011		All Re-rated in 2010 and 2011	
	# of Newly Re-rated Classrooms	# of Newly Re-rated Sites	Total # of Classrooms	Total # of Sites
Denver Public Schools	79	44	127	76
Community	56	33	136	70
<b>Total</b>	135	77	263	146

## Understanding the Qualistar Rating™

According to Qualistar, site ratings are based on the site's scores in the following five quality components:

- 1. Learning Environment:** This component utilizes the Environment Rating Scales to award 0-10 points based on the measured quality of physical classroom space, personal care routines, language and reasoning activities, child interactions and program structure.
- 2. Family Partnerships:** This component measures and awards 0-10 points based on information about communication, collaboration, and family involvement opportunities collected through family questionnaires and program documentation.
- 3. Training and Education:** This component measures and awards 0-10 points based on the formal training staff has received as well as their level of experience. There are separate scales for center administrators and child care providers/home providers.
- 4. Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size:** This component measures and awards 0-10 points based on adult to child ratios and overall classroom group size. For a preschool classroom, a ratio of one adult to eight children (1:8) combined with a group size of fifteen or less children earns full points (up to eight points for Adult-to-Child Ratios and two points for Group Size).
- 5. Program Accreditation:** Sites can also earn an additional two points for receiving and maintaining program accreditation through an approved organization (for example, NAEYC and NAFCC).

The combined point total from each of these areas determines the site's star rating. The following table illustrates the points needed for each star level:

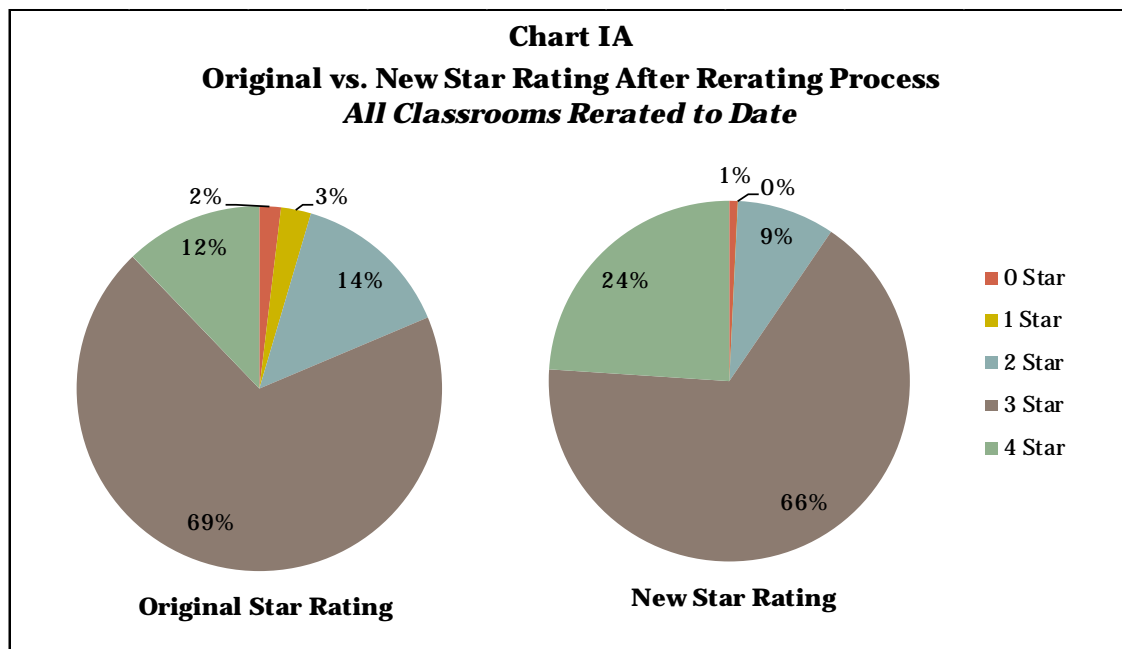
Points Needed for Each Star Rating Level	
Star Rating	Points Needed
Provisional	0-9 points OR Learning Environment Score of 0
1 Star	10 - 17 points
2 Star	18 - 25 points
3 Star	26 - 33 points
4 Star	34 - 42 points

## Re-rating Results

Results of the re-rating process in 2010 and 2011 are analyzed in two ways. The results of the re-rating process for all classrooms re-rated in 2010 and 2011 are shown in charts labeled with an “A.” Results of the re-rating process for classrooms rated in 2011 are shown in charts labeled with a “B.”

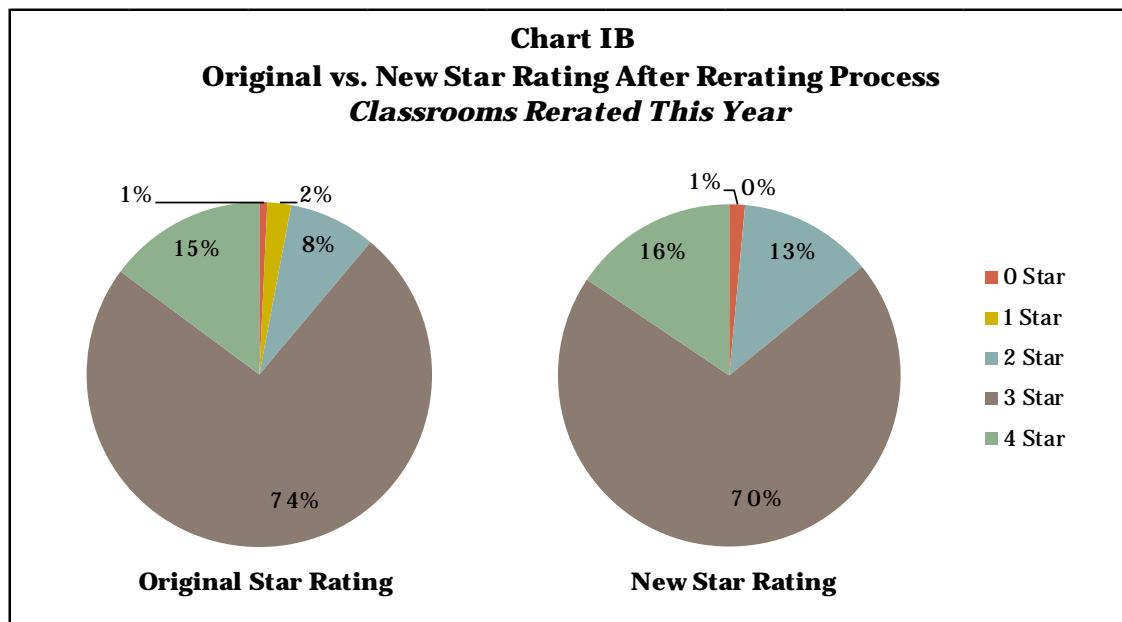
### Changes in Star Ratings – All Classrooms

The two comparisons shown in Chart IA and Chart IB provide a snapshot of the initial star ratings of re-rated classrooms as well as their new ratings. Chart IA shows this comparison for all 263 classrooms.



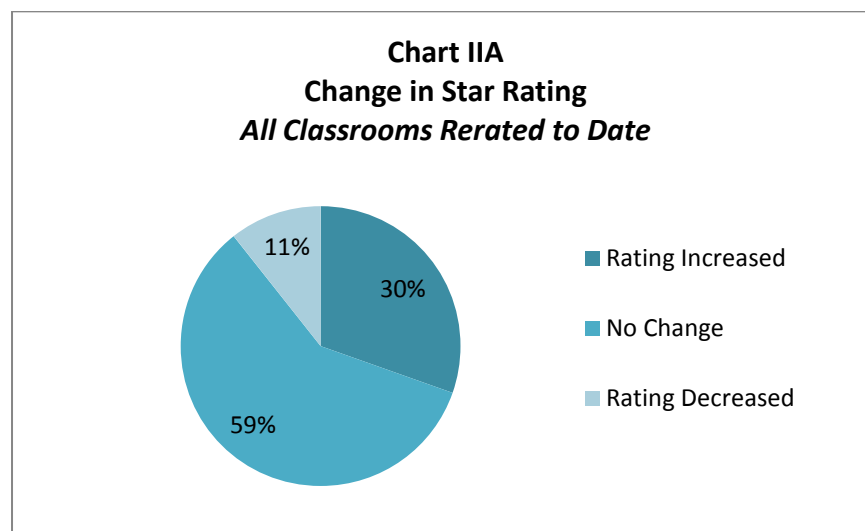
As the pie chart on the left indicates, initially 81% of classrooms received a rating of 3 or 4 stars. The chart on the right shows that this percentage increased when the classrooms were re-rated. Of the 263 re-rated classrooms, 90% percent now hold a star rating of 3 or 4, with 24% earning the highest rating of 4 stars. While 19% percent of the classrooms had an initial rating of 2 stars or less (with 5% earning one star or less), upon re-rating 9% of classrooms earned 2 stars, none had a 1 star, and only 1% had a rating of 0 stars.

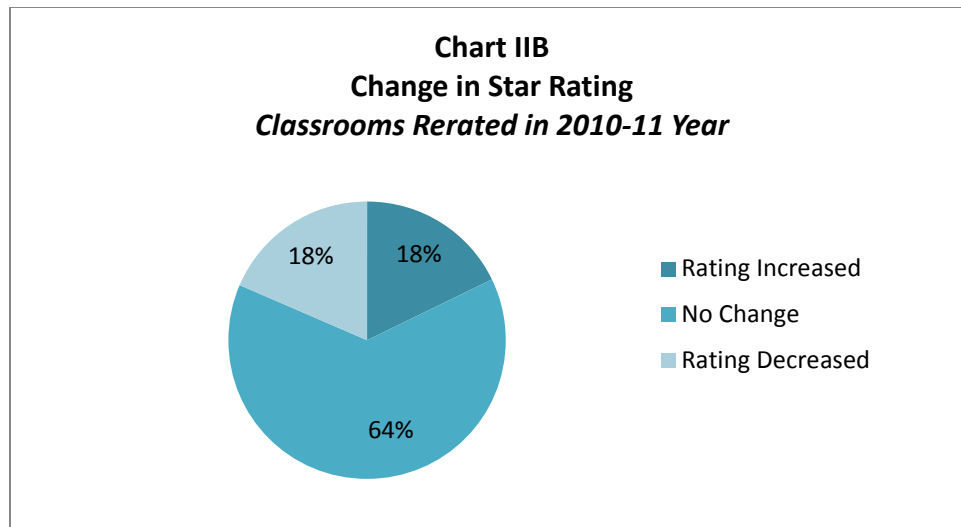
Chart IB shows the same comparison for the 135 classrooms that were newly re-rated in 2011.



As the pie chart on the left indicates, 89% of the classrooms re-rated in 2011 had an existing rating of 3 or 4 stars. After the re-rating, 86% of the classrooms have a star rating of 3 or 4. The percentage of classrooms with 2 stars or less rose from 11% to 14%, while the number with a rating of less than 2 stars fell from 3% to 1%.

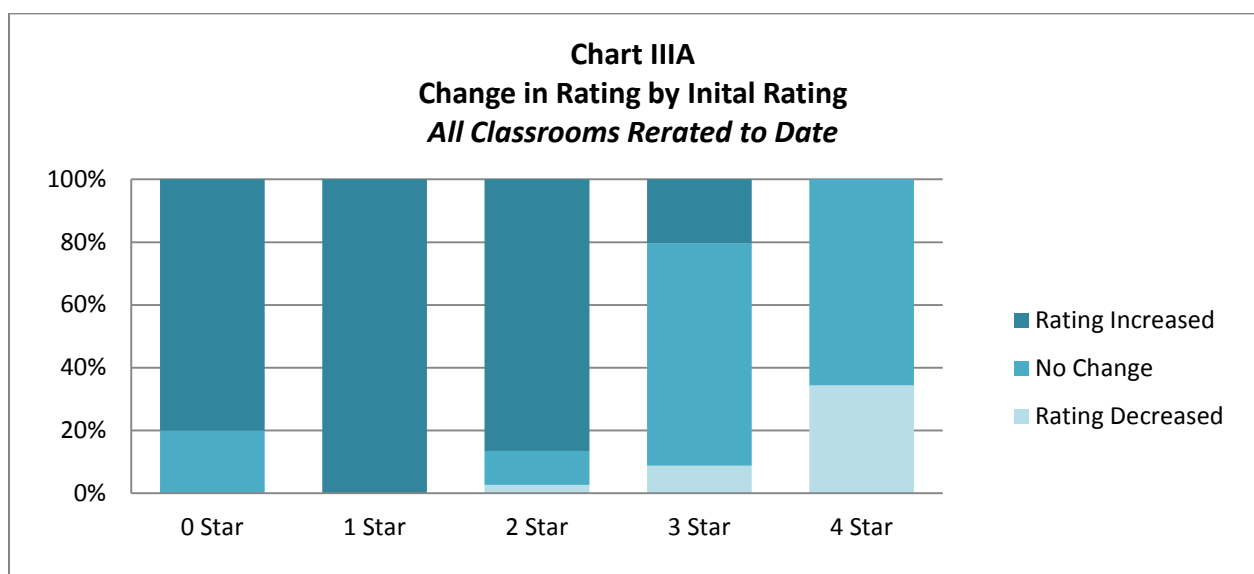
An important part of understanding the trends emerging in the re-rating process includes looking at increases and decreases in ratings for individual classrooms. Chart IIA shows that for all classrooms re-rated to date, 30% increased their star rating and 59% maintained their rating. Eleven percent had their rating decrease.





For classrooms re-rated in 2011, 18% increased their rating while 64% maintained their rating and 18% decreased their rating. While classrooms re-rated in 2011 had higher initial ratings and higher subsequent ratings compared to the total pool of classrooms, there was a decreased rate of improvement in star ratings.

Since a successful program would have lower rated classrooms improving their ratings and classrooms with the highest ratings initially maintaining their ratings, we looked at the rating changes for individual classrooms. Charts IIIA and IIIB show these results.

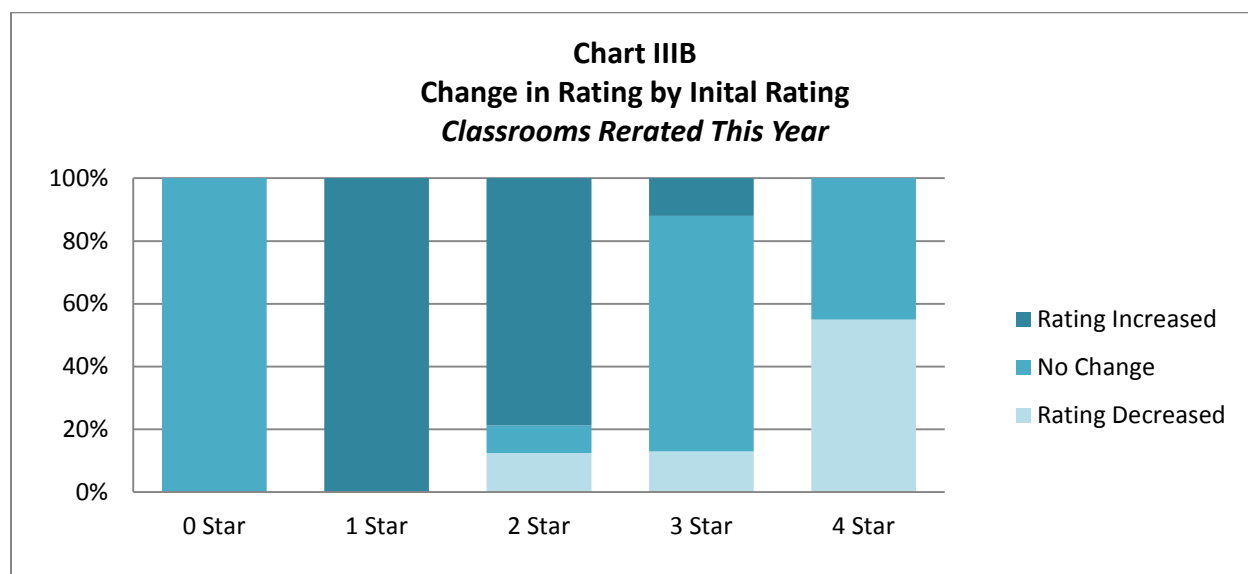




As seen in Chart IIIA, nearly all classrooms initially rated 0 to 2 stars increased their star rating. Classrooms rated at these levels receive both quality improvement dollars and coaching as part of their participation in the Denver Preschool Program. Eighty percent of 0-star-rated classrooms, 100% of 1-star rated classrooms, and 86% of 2-star rated classrooms increased their rating. Only one of the classrooms with an initial rating of 0 to 2 stars decreased its rating.

Seventy-five percent of the classrooms with an initial 3-star rating maintained this rating. Twenty percent of the 3-star-rated classrooms increased their ratings to become 4-star classrooms. Less than 10% of 3-star-rated classrooms had a decrease in rating. Two-thirds of 4-star classrooms maintained their high rating, while 34% of 4-star classrooms had their rating decrease.

Similar results occurred for classrooms that were re-rated in 2011 as can be seen below in Chart IIIB.

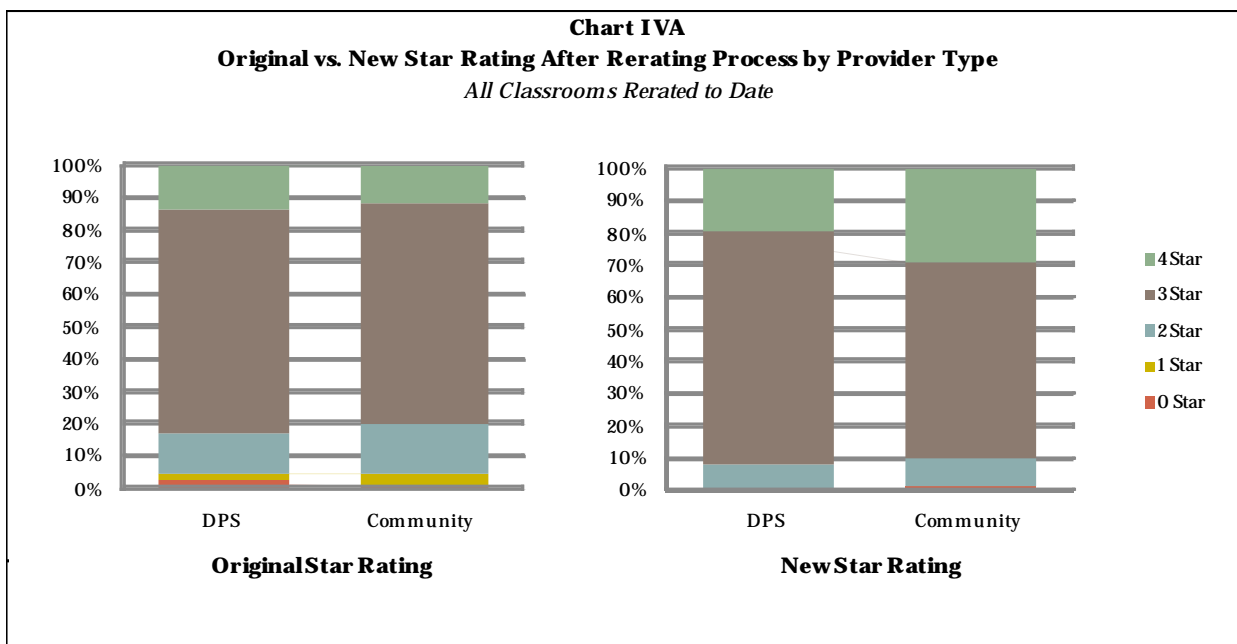


For classrooms with an initial rating of 1 or 2 stars, 86% increased their rating. There was only one 0-star classroom in the pool of classrooms re-rated this year and its rating did not change. Thirteen percent of 3-star classrooms increased their rating and 75% maintained their rating. Results were not as positive for the highest rated classrooms; only 45% of 4-star-rated classrooms maintained their rating, while 55% had their rating decrease.

Charts IIIA and IIIB show that the majority of lower rated classrooms increased their rating, and very few classrooms with an initial rating of 3 stars or less had their rating decrease. A large percentage of all 4-star classrooms overall and the majority of newly re-rated 4-star classrooms had their rating decrease after re-rating. Possible reasons for these increases and decreases are discussed in a later portion of this report.

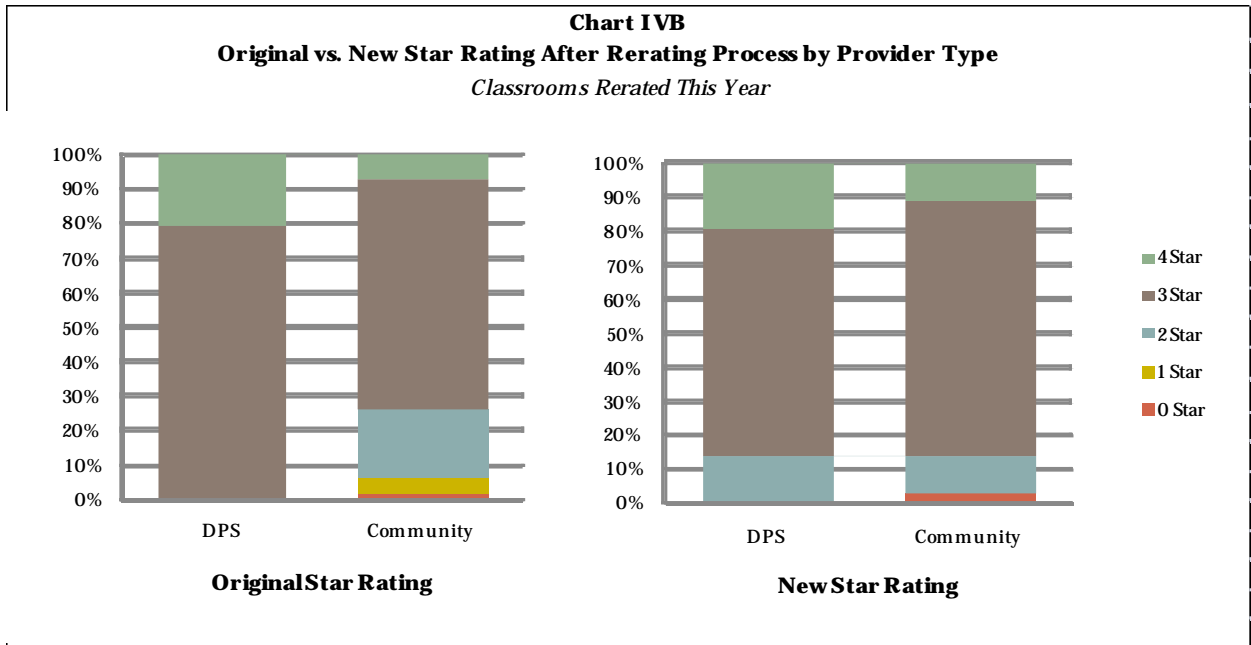
## By Provider Type

Variations in results by program type were also analyzed. Chart IVA below compares the initial ratings of classrooms to their new ratings after the re-rating process for two provider types – DPS and community. Due to the low number of sites going through the re-rating process to date, home providers were not included in this analysis.



For all classrooms re-rated to date, there is a similar distribution of classroom ratings between DPS and community sites, both in their original ratings and in the new star ratings after the re-rating process. As the chart on the left shows, over 80% of both DPS and community classrooms had an initial rating of 3 or 4 stars. The chart on the right shows that after re-rating 90% of classrooms were rated at the 3- or 4-star level. A larger percentage of community classrooms had a 4-star rating after the re-rating process (30% of community classrooms vs. 20% of DPS classrooms). No DPS classrooms had a rating of less than 2 stars after re-rating, while two community classrooms, both at one site, had a 0-star rating.

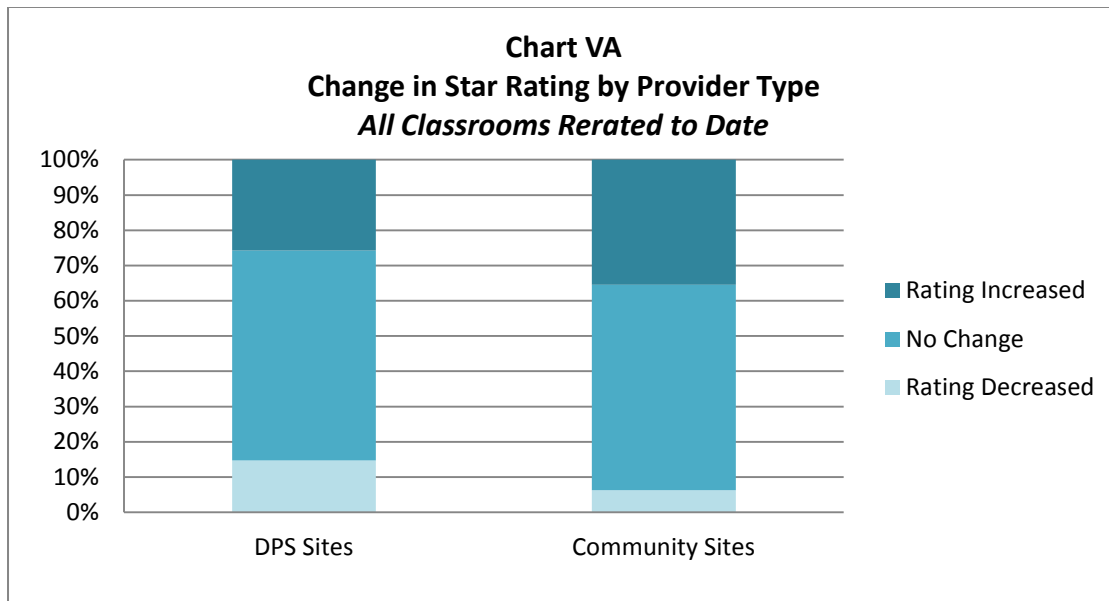
The results varied more widely when looking only at classrooms re-rated in 2011. Chart IVB shows these variations.



All of the DPS classrooms that went through the re-rating process this year had an initial rating of 3 or 4 stars. Twenty percent had a 4-star rating initially. The initial ratings of community classrooms were more varied, with just over 70% having an initial rating of 3 or 4 stars and only 7% having a 4-star rating. Of the remaining community classrooms, 20% had a 2-star rating, 5% had a 1-star rating and 2% had an initial rating of 0 stars.

The chart on the right shows the star ratings of classrooms after the re-rating process. The percentage of DPS classrooms that are now rated above 2 stars decreased to 86%. While no DPS classrooms were previously rated at the 2-star level, now 14% of DPS classrooms have a 2-star rating. About 20% of DPS classrooms are still rated at 4 stars. The percentage of community classrooms rated 3 stars or higher increased to 86%, with a slight increase in the number of 4-star classrooms, up from 7% to 11%. Four percent of community classrooms have a rating of 0 stars after re-rating and the remaining 11% have a rating of 2 stars.

Charts VA and VB take a closer look at the individual movement of classrooms along the rating scale.



Just over 26% of classrooms at DPS sites increased their star rating, while 60% maintained their prior star rating. Community classrooms saw a similar percentage of classrooms maintaining their rating (58%), but with a higher percentage of classrooms increasing their rating (35%). Fifteen percent of DPS classrooms decreased in their rating compared to 6% of community classrooms.

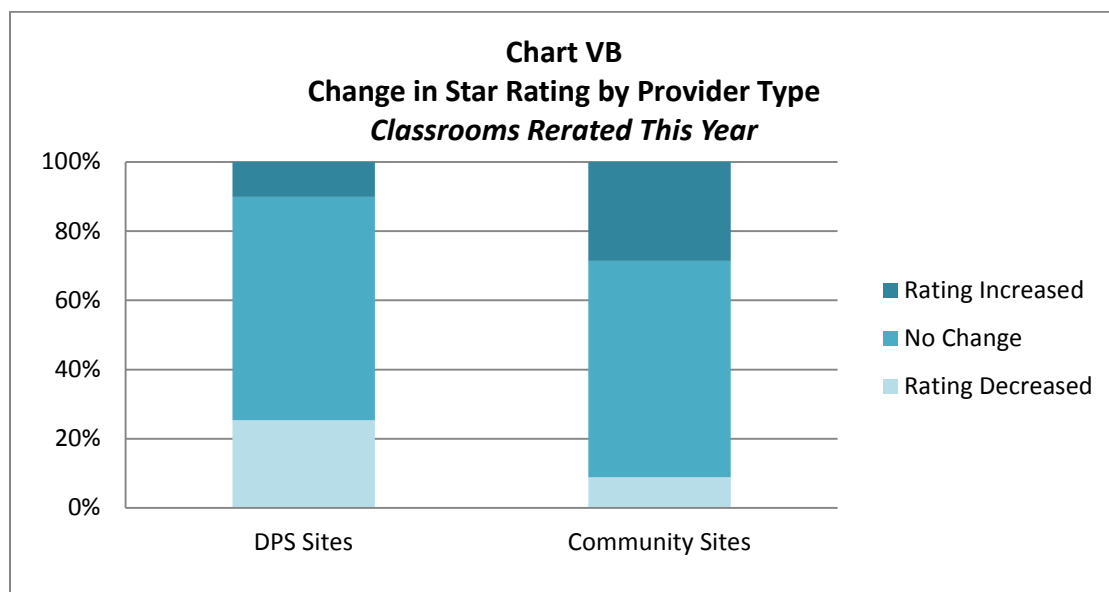
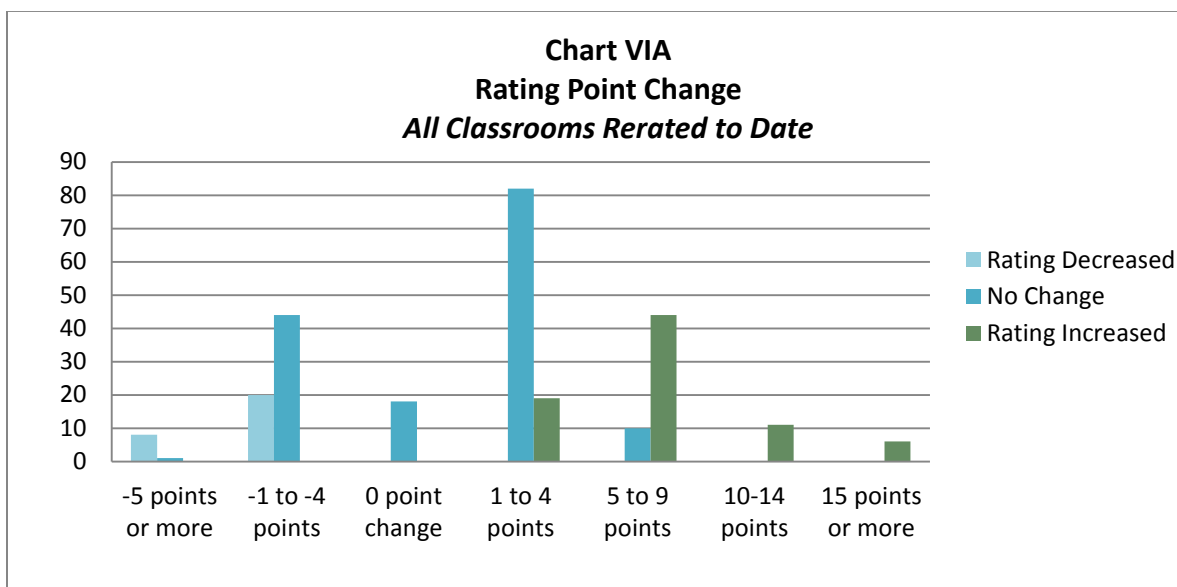


Chart VB provides a similar comparison for classrooms that were re-rated in 2011. As compared with all re-ratings to date, fewer DPS classrooms increased their rating (10%) and more classrooms decreased their rating (25%). Community classrooms saw 29% of classrooms increase their rating and 9% receive a

decrease in their rating. Approximately 60% of both DPS and community classrooms maintained their rating.

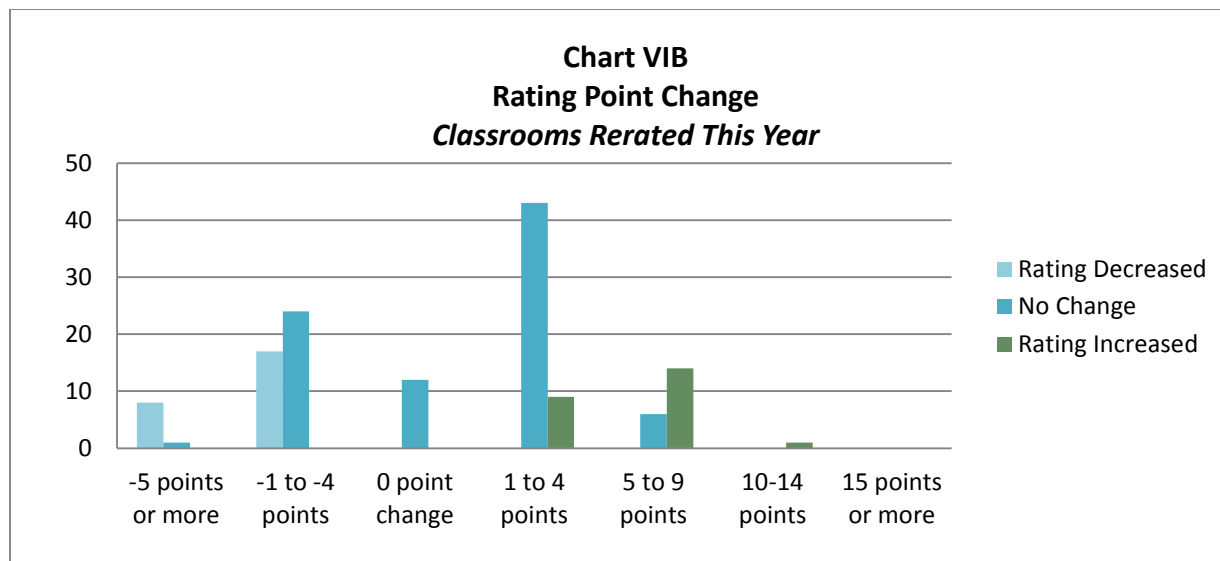
### Changes in Rating Points Earned – All Classrooms

As detailed in the chart at the beginning of this analysis section, classrooms can earn up to a total of 42 points. Since the intervals between star rating levels are roughly seven points, there can be a fair amount of point movement in the score a site receives without a change in rating. Charts VIA and VIB below illustrate the change in rating points earned based upon whether the classroom's rating increased, decreased or remained the same.



There was positive movement for the majority of classrooms (65%) in the number of points earned; for 27% of classrooms, it was an increase of five points or more. Less than a third of classrooms received fewer points during re-rating, with 28% losing one to four points and only 3% losing more than five points.

There is overlap between the groups gaining and losing points. Some classrooms lost or gained the same amount of points but experienced different impacts on their overall star rating. For example, 10 classrooms saw an increase of five to nine points in their total score, but their star rating remained the same. For over 40 classrooms, that same increase in points (five to nine) was enough to also increase their star rating. At the other end, 44 classrooms lost one to four points but kept their same rating, while 20 classrooms lost the same amount and saw their rating decrease. As these examples indicate, there is movement within rating categories not manifested in the resultant star rating.



When considering only classrooms that were re-rated in 2011, there was less positive movement in scores. Fifty-four percent of classrooms increased their score with 16% doing so by five points or more. Thirty-seven percent of classrooms lost at least one point during re-rating. Again, there was overlap in the score changes of the three rating change categories.

Differences in points earned can also be examined by each of the Qualistar Rating™ components: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Family Partnerships, (3) Training and Education, (4) Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size, and (5) Program Accreditation. Charts VIIA and VIIB show the average point change in each of these areas for all classrooms grouped by whether their star rating increased, decreased, or stayed the same.

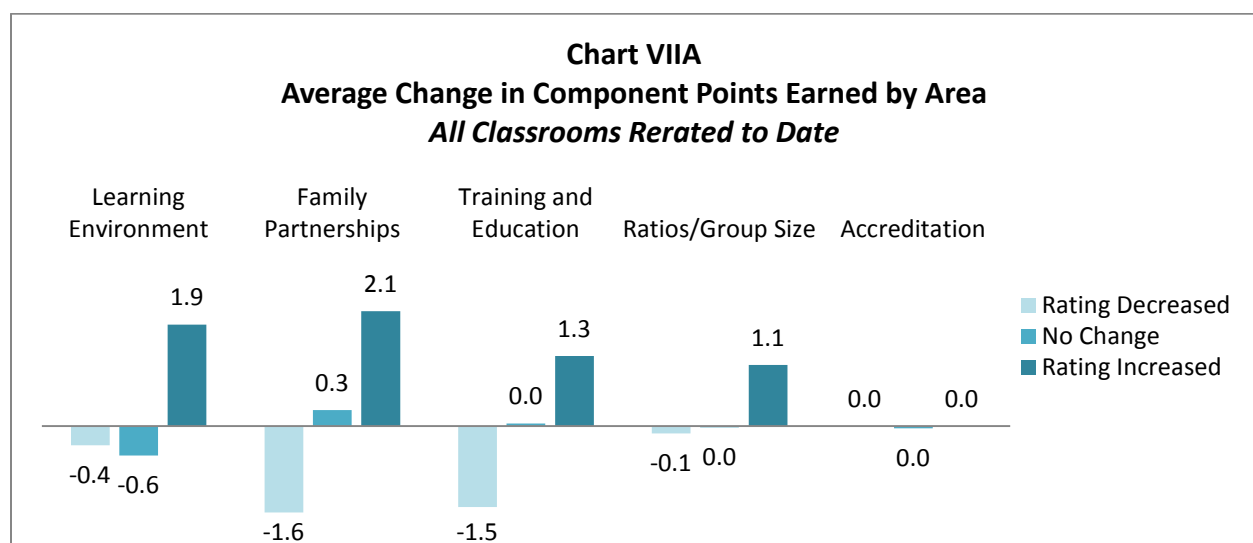
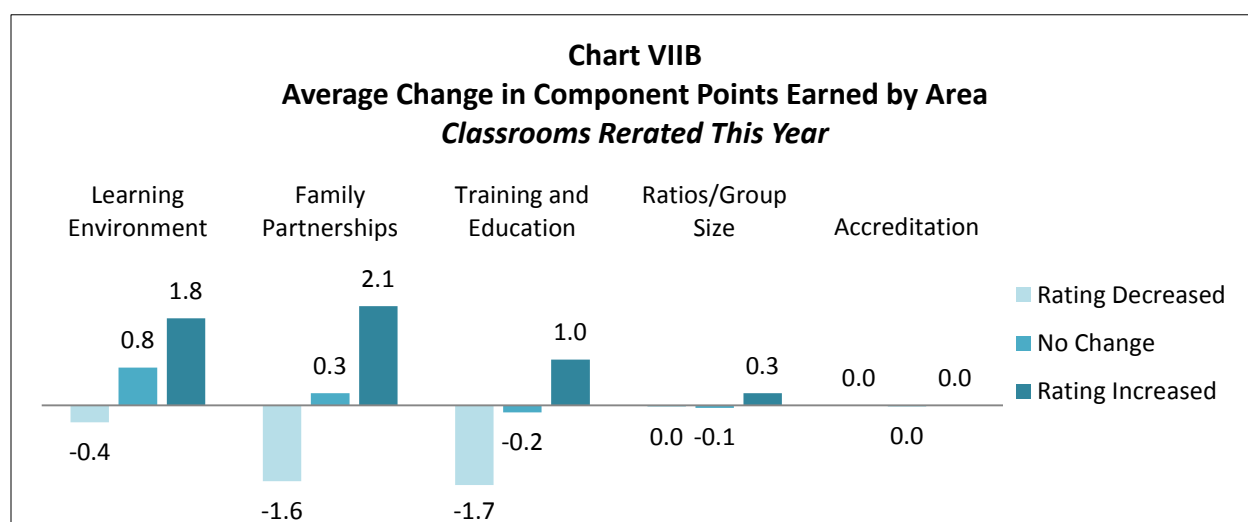


Chart VIIA above shows that for classrooms that had their rating decrease, the primary areas in which they lost points were Family Partnerships and Training and Education, with an average loss of 1.6 and 1.5 points respectively. On average, classrooms that had their rating stay the same had very little change in their score in each area. For classrooms that had a star rating increase, the two main areas in which they earned additional points were Learning Environment (1.9 point gain on average) and Family Partnerships (2.1 point gain on average). On average they also experienced gains in Training and Education and Ratio/Group Size.

Chart VIIB demonstrates similar results for the classrooms re-rated in 2011 with the same areas of highest points lost/gained and nearly identical average point change.



Upon closer inspection of the elements that contributed to the score changes seen in both Charts VIIA and VIIB, there are a number of commonalities in each of the score component areas.

For classrooms that had their rating increase, we looked for commonalties in the component areas where they had average gains of one point or more. For all classrooms re-rated to date, these component areas were (1) Learning Environment, (2) Family Partnerships, (3) Training and Education and (4) Ratio/Group Size. Detailed results for these areas are discussed below.

#### *1. Learning Environment*

There was improvement in almost every Learning Environment subscale area by the majority of classrooms that had their rating increase. The highest average point changes were in the areas of classroom activities and program structure.

Subscale	Percent with Score Improvement	Average Point Change
Physical Space	60%	0.26
Personal Care Routines	61%	0.27
Language and Reasoning	39%	0.00
Classroom Activities	61%	0.56
Classroom Interactions	51%	0.14
Program Structure	63%	0.60

Within the classroom activities subscale, over 40% of classrooms had improved scores in activities and materials related to fine motor skills, music and movement, dramatic play, water and sand, and numbers. Within program structure, nearly half of classrooms received additional points for their schedule, and a quarter of classrooms received additional points in the areas of free play and group time.

## 2. *Family Partnerships*

Over 60% of classrooms that had their rating increased received additional points based upon their family questionnaires. To receive points for an element on the questionnaire, 80% of families had to agree that the classroom was successful in that area. These areas included how well the program: (1) communicated with and provided information to families, (2) provided educational, social and engagement activities for families, (3) offered advice on parenting technique topics, (4) inquired about child's activities interests and behavior at home, (5) updated families on their children's progress, and (6) including families in planning/ decision making and incorporating family goals and preferences. Only 28% of these classrooms received additional points from their documentation checklist.

## 3. *Training and Education*

Fifty-five percent of classrooms had an increase in the education level of the teacher and 40% had an increase in the education level of the director.

## 4. *Ratio/Group Size*

Over 50% of classrooms improved their score in their student-teacher ratio and group size.

For all classrooms re-rated to date that had their rating decrease, we examined in more detail the Family Partnerships and Training and Education components, the areas where the classrooms had, on average, a loss of one point or more.

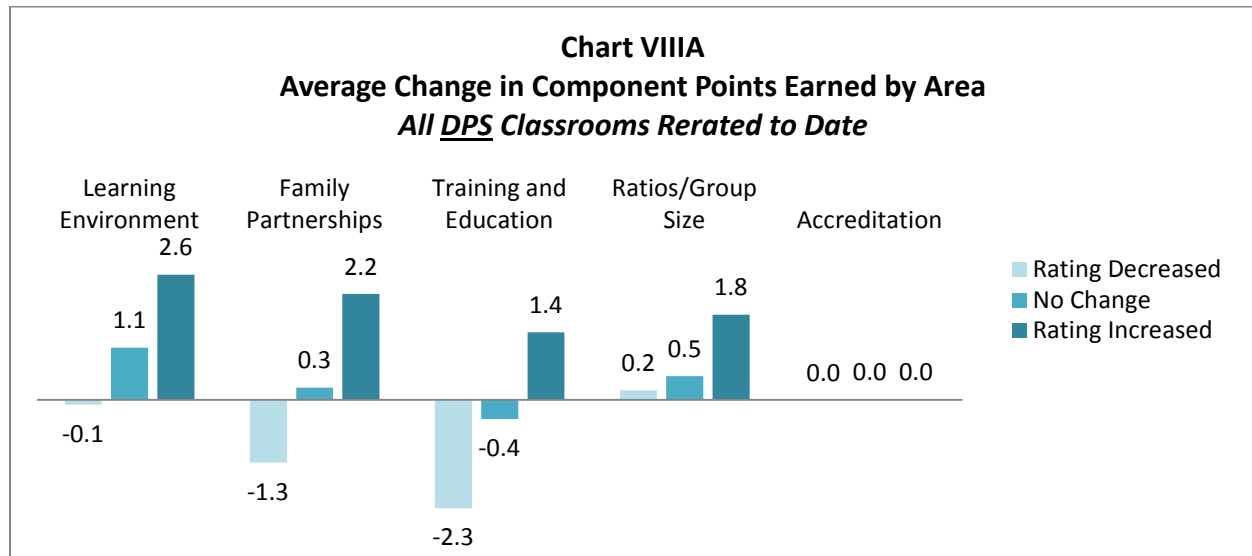
*Family Partnerships:* Nearly 30% of classrooms received fewer points based upon their documentation checklist which gives proof of a program's efforts in the same areas as the family questionnaire described previously, such as having a written plan for supporting family partnerships with goals, set activities and a timeline.



*Training and Education:* Forty-six percent of classrooms had a decrease in the education level of the teacher and 32% had a decrease in the education level of their director.

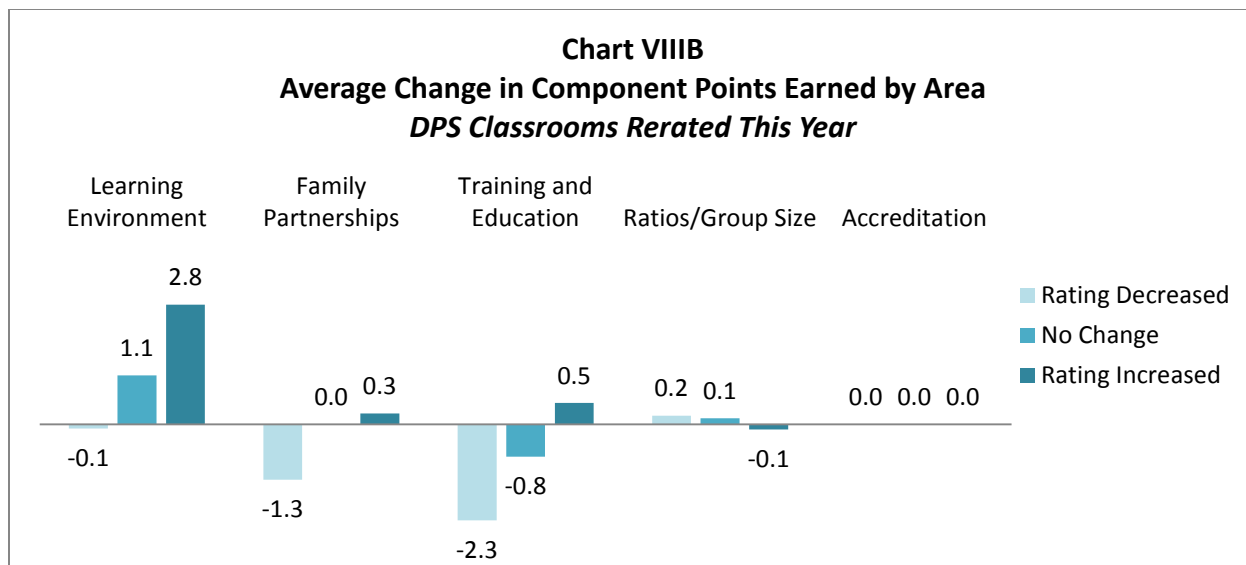
### By Provider Type

Differences in how scores changed were also examined based on whether classrooms were DPS or community sites. Charts VIIIA and VIIIB show the average change in each area for DPS sites.



For DPS classrooms re-rated to date that saw decreases in their rating points, the decreases came in the areas of Family Partnerships and Training and Education by 1.3 points and 2.3 points respectively. The areas of the highest point gain for DPS classrooms that had a rating increase were Learning Environment (2.6 points on average) and Family Partnerships (2.2 points on average). These DPS classrooms that experienced increased ratings also had average gains of over a point in Training and Education (1.4 points) and Ratio/Group Size (1.8 points).

Chart VIIIB, which looks at DPS classrooms re-rated in 2011, illustrates some differences in results.



For DPS classrooms that had an increase in their rating, the only significant area of point gain was Learning Environment (2.8 points on average). This contrasts with the gains in almost every area for classrooms re-rated to date as shown in Chart VIIIA. For classrooms that experienced a decreased rating, areas and average points lost were identical for classrooms re-rated in 2011 and classrooms re-rated to date.

Charts IXA and IXB show the results for community classrooms.

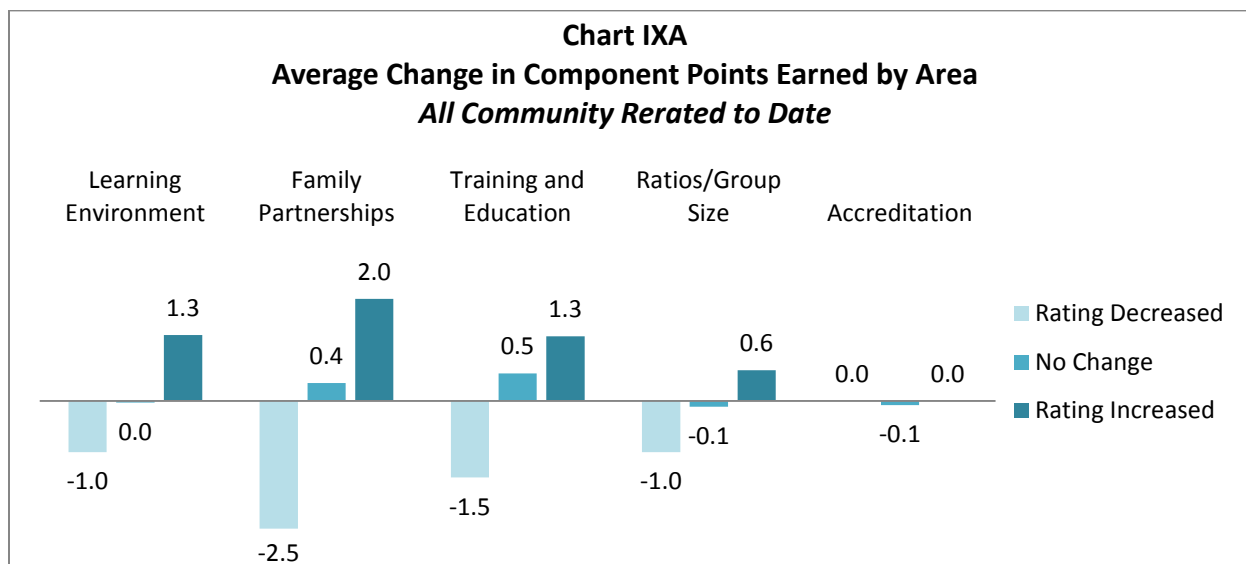


Chart IXA includes all community classrooms re-rated to date. Community classrooms that increased their rating had the highest gains in the area of Family Partnerships (2 points on average), followed by a tie between Learning Environment and Training and Education, where there was a 1.3 point gain on average in each. For community classrooms that had their rating decrease, Family Partnership was the main area where points were lost with a 2.5-point decrease. These classrooms also lost 1.5 points on average in Training Education and 1 point on average in the areas of Learning Environment and Training and Education.

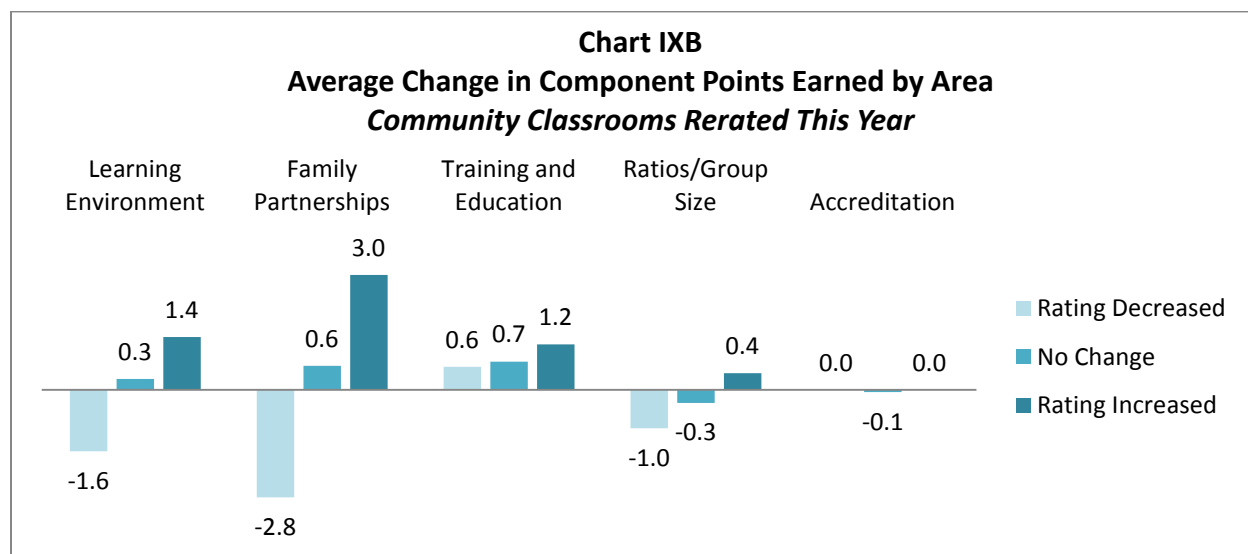


Chart IXB shows the results for community classrooms re-rated in 2011. For classrooms that had an increase in their rating, changes were comparable to those for all community classrooms re-rated to date. Community classrooms that had a decrease in their rating had decreases similar to those for all community classrooms re-rated to date in the areas of Learning Environment, Family Partnerships and Ratio/Group Size. However, these classrooms on average did not have any points lost in Training and Education, but instead gained 0.6 points in this area.

In comparing all DPS classrooms re-rated to date to all community classrooms re-rated to date, both had gains in similar areas; however, DPS classrooms that had a rating increase gained 8 points on average while community classrooms that had a rating increase gained 5.2 points on average. Community classrooms that had a decreased rating also lost 6 points on average as compared to an average loss of 3.4 points for their DPS counterparts.

When considering only classrooms that had been re-rated in 2011, community classrooms that had their rating increase had a higher average point increase (6 points) compared to DPS classrooms (3.5 points). Community classrooms that had a decreased rating still had more points lost (4.8 points) on average than the DPS classrooms (3.5 points).

## **Conclusion**

Overall, although the pace of rating increase has slowed, the re-rating process data shows that the quality of classrooms that participate in the Denver Preschool Program continues to improve. While this report only considers the first two waves of providers experiencing the re-rating process, the overall increased scores and ratings indicate that the Denver Preschool Program's emphasis on and support of quality improvement is having a positive impact on the quality of preschool classrooms available to Denver families. Subsequent years will allow for a deeper trend analysis of these improvements.

## Appendix G: Description of Demographic Recoding

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Coding of Child's Ethnicity	
Coded Ethnicity Category	Included in Category
<b>Black</b>	African American; Black
<b>Hispanic</b>	Hispanic
<b>White</b>	White; white (Not of Hispanic origin); white (not Hispanic)
<b>Other</b>	Other; Asian or Pacific Islander; American Indian or Alaska Native; Multi; Mayan Indian; Bi-Racial; Indian; Pakistan; Mixed Race; "Any combination of more than one ethnicity such as Black/White"
<b>Ethnicity Not Reported</b>	Not provided; "Missing data"

Coding of Home Language	
Coded Home Language Category	Included in Category
<b>English</b>	English; Mostly or only English; "Any combination of 2 or more languages beginning with English, such as English/Arabic"
<b>Spanish</b>	Spanish; "Any combination of 2 or more languages beginning with Spanish, such as Spanish/English"
<b>Other</b>	Not Reported, Not Provided, Not Selected; Arabic; Ana; Dina; Amharic; Oromo; Tigrina; Other; Kirundi, Mandingo; Somali; Oromic; Fulani; Ameharic; Portuguese; Vietnamese; Amahaic; Somali Jez Gora; Another language and English equally; French; Russian; Chinese; Malayalam; Hmong; Mongolian; Koren; Karen; Korean; Irsil; Chindi; Ardu; "Any combination of 2 or more languages that does not begin with English or Spanish"
These codes are based on the assumption that parents are most likely to list their primary home language first in a list of more than one language. This does not mean that it is the only language spoken at home.	