



AUGENBLICK,  
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ASSOCIATES

# An Evaluation of the Denver Preschool Program 2014-2015

Prepared for

The Denver Preschool Program

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## Executive Summary

In 2006, voters approved the Denver Preschool Program (DPP). DPP encourages families to enroll their four-year-old children in quality preschool programs so that the children are better prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn and to increase the likelihood of their success in kindergarten and beyond. Since its first year of operation during the 2007-2008 school year, DPP has made significant progress toward these goals. In the 2014-2015 school year, DPP achieved the following milestones:

- A total of 175 providers, operating at 255 sites, served as approved DPP providers.
- A total of 4,875 children in the 2014-2015 school year received approval for DPP tuition credits.
- Of 255 sites, 211 have a Qualistar Rating™ of 3 or 4 stars, the two highest ratings.
- The vast majority of DPP students attended top-rated classrooms. In 2014-2015, over 86 percent of DPP students attended a 3- or 4-star classroom.
- In 2014-15, a total of 87 classrooms at 34 preschools completed the re-rating process, bringing the total number of classrooms re-rated since 2010 to 788.
- In November of 2014, citizens in the city and county of Denver voted to extend the sales tax supporting DPP through 2026, thus continuing the authorization of the program.

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

- **DPP continues to provide high-quality preschool to a majority of four-year-olds in Denver**, serving nearly 4,900 children in the 2014-2015 school year.
- DPP continues to have a **positive impact on preschool quality** in Denver. Over 82 percent of DPP sites are rated as 3- or 4-star programs, and providers continue to give high ratings to the quality improvement supports that DPP offers, especially the coaching support and the financial assistance with materials and equipment.
- Parents are most focused on **teacher qualifications, positive teacher-child interactions, and safety** when selecting a preschool for their child. In determining a preschool's reputation of quality, parents are more likely to **rely on recommendations from people they know**, and on broader community perceptions, than on the Qualistar Rating™ or national accreditation status.
- The **DPP tuition credit allows parents to work or attend school**, with 74 percent of all parents reporting that DPP allows them to work, and 88 percent of low-income parents reporting the same. Over 40 percent of parents report that DPP allows them to attend school. Again, this impact was greatest for lower-income families, and for children from black or Hispanic families.
- Parents continue to report that by enrolling their child in preschool they hope that they will **experience challenge or a broader range of activities, learn academic fundamentals**, and develop the ability to **interact with other children**.
- **DPP operations continue to run smoothly**, with providers indicating very few operational or policy concerns. Providers also report that tuition payments are received in a timely manner. A majority of parents report that the length of time they are waiting for notification of DPP approval remains under three weeks.



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## I. Description of the Denver Preschool Program

In 2006, Denver voters approved a dedicated sales tax to fund the creation of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP). Since then, DPP has made high-quality preschool possible for 36,174 young children. Tuition support, available to all Denver families with a four-year-old regardless of income or neighborhood, is scaled to family income, the quality of the school selected, and participation level. Families with lower incomes who choose higher quality programs receive more tuition support. In November 2014, Denver voters approved DPP through 2026 and increased the sales tax from 0.10 percent to 0.15 percent.

Since its beginning, DPP has invested in measuring and improving the quality of Denver's preschool programs, recognizing the importance of high-quality programs in giving children a solid start. DPP rates all classrooms for quality and funds quality improvement activities that include coaching for teachers, professional development opportunities including college coursework, and classroom learning materials. Families can choose from more than 250 licensed, high-quality preschool options across the city. These include community-based centers, family child care homes, and Denver Public Schools classrooms.

### *Theory of Action*

A robust body of evidence shows high-quality preschool helps all children, but particularly those at risk for school failure, enter kindergarten with the skills needed to be successful learners.<sup>1</sup> When children are ready to learn in kindergarten, they are more likely to read on grade level by third grade, be reading to learn in fourth grade, and graduate high school on time. DPP ensures every Denver four-year-old has access to high-quality preschool. DPP also works to continuously improve the quality of preschool programs in Denver. The underlying theory of action behind the program is summarized as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- Tuition credits offset preschool costs for families, making it more likely that children will participate in preschool and attend regularly.
- Students who attend high-quality preschools are more likely to develop the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in kindergarten and beyond.
- Financial investments in provider quality coupled with financial incentives for families to enroll in higher quality schools will improve the overall quality of Denver's preschool system.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example Yoshikawa, H. et al. (2013) *Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education*. Ann Arbor, MI: Society for Research in Child Development; New York: Foundation for Child Development. Available at: <http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/Evidence Base on Preschool Education FINAL.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> In the Evaluation Reports prior to 2012, a fourth point was included in the Theory of Action, related to the goal of decreasing the complexity of preschool financing for parents and service providers. In the 2011-12 school year DPP implemented a "no-deductions" tuition credit model to address this goal. Prior to this, in an attempt to make DPP funding the "last dollar in," a family was not necessarily guaranteed the dollar amount published on the DPP tuition credit scale; rather, if that family received other public funding dollars, a deduction for those dollars was taken out of the base tuition credit amount. In an effort to decrease the complexity of preschool financing, however, since the 2011-12 school year, DPP eliminated this deductions process and instead implemented the "no-deductions" scale, where, short of absences, each family is assured of receiving the monthly amount published on the scale for their income tier. As a result of this change, parents and providers can better anticipate the dollar figure they will receive from DPP.



## ***Program Design***

DPP provides several different types of support to encourage families to enroll their children in preschool and to encourage preschool providers to improve the quality of their services.

### ***Tuition Credits***

The DPP tuition credit is available to all Denver residents who enroll their child in a qualified preschool program the year before kindergarten. The credit value is based on a sliding scale and is determined by the following factors:

1. The **quality level of the school**;
2. A family's **income level and size**; and
3. The child's participation level – **extended-time, full-time, or part-time**.

The largest credit will go to the lowest-income child attending the highest-quality school on an extended-time schedule.

To obtain the credit, a Denver family chooses a participating DPP preschool and submits an application to verify the residency and age per DPP requirements. Once the child is approved, DPP determines income and the participation level to calculate the full value of the credit. The preschool submits monthly attendance reports for the DPP children and the credit is paid directly to the provider to offset the family's tuition bill. DPP dollars are the "last dollars in" which means that DPP dollars can be combined with other funding but that a provider cannot receive more tuition than their listed rate.

### ***Quality Rating and Improvement***

To be designated a DPP preschool, a provider must be licensed and quality-rated 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.

All DPP preschools are rated for quality via the State of Colorado's Colorado Shines Level 3 through 5 Assessment. DPP provides financial support to offset the cost of program and classroom rating. Additionally, DPP works with the providers to help improve their quality ratings through a quality improvement credit system. DPP provides preschools with an annual credit allowance based on need and those credits can be exchanged for professional development, coaching, or classroom materials. Providers are rerated on a regular basis. See Appendix G for a more detailed analysis of the rating process.

## ***Denver Preschool Program Organization and Staffing***

DPP is a four-person 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Staff consists of a President and CEO; a Director of Operations; a Director of Quality Initiatives; and a Director of Outreach. A Board of Directors oversees DPP. With the exception of one City Council member, all Directors are appointed by the Mayor. DPP is required to provide annual status reports to the Denver Office of Children's Affairs, a Denver city agency, as well as to the City Council.

To achieve a number of operational and policy objectives, DPP subcontracts with the following organizations:



- **MetrixIQ** provides customer service support to parents, processes all tuition credit applications and time/attendance data for students, and calculates the appropriate tuition credit payments to be made directly to approved preschool providers.
- **Qualistar Colorado** and **Clayton Early Learning** conduct quality assessments and assist DPP with implementation of its classroom rating system.
- **The Flahive Group** provides DPP with quality assurance support.
- The **Denver Early Childhood Council** coordinates DPP's quality improvement credits and oversees the annual provider MOU and renewal process.
- **Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)** completes an annual evaluation of DPP, subcontracting with the **Clayton Early Learning Institute** to assess student progress.
- Other public relations consultants assist with advertising, program outreach, and other services.



## II. Status of the Denver Preschool Program in 2014-2015<sup>3</sup>

### *Number of Children*

The process for participating in DPP is as follows:

1. Families with children in the year before kindergarten **apply** to DPP for their child to attend preschool at a DPP approved site.
2. DPP must **approve** the child's participation in the program at an approved DPP preschool site.
3. Children who are approved can then **participate** in the program and the site is authorized to receive payment from DPP once the child starts attending.

These steps create three levels at which a child-count can be taken:

1. the number of children applying;
2. the number of children approved, and
3. the number of children who actually participate in the program and receive tuition credits.<sup>4</sup>

The numbers in Figure 1 relate to how many children DPP approved in 2014 and for historical years, rather than the number that may have actually participated in a DPP-approved preschool program. As shown in Figure 1, the number of children approved to receive the DPP tuition credit continued to decrease, with 4,875 children approved in school year 2014-15. The recent recession and its impact on child care affordability, coupled with a decline in birth dates in Denver, have likely contributed to this decline. In response, DPP is engaging in community outreach efforts, holding events in more locations across the city, and recruiting "Neighborhood Champions" to further inform parents about DPP. The program is also engaging in a capacity study to refine the actual population of four-year-olds in Denver and evaluate what they do in their year before kindergarten, to further understand this population and how DPP can best serve them.

The total number of preschool providers has remained fairly constant over the years, with 175 providers in 2015 providing services at 255 sites. Sixty-four percent of DPP children received services at 81 Denver Public Schools (DPS) sites, while 35 percent received services from 157 center-based sites and less than one percent received services at 17 participating home-based sites. A further one percent were enrolled in both DPS and community sites during different times of the day.<sup>5</sup> Figure 1 shows the number of approved DPP students by school year over the duration of the program.

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<sup>3</sup> APA surveyed providers and parents in early 2015. Therefore information on approved children and their families and DPP providers that is used throughout this report is taken in December of the report school year. However, additional children are approved throughout the year and therefore the total approved figures used in Figure 1 reflect that final number for the year, rather than the December figure on which the sample for the survey analysis included in this report is based.

<sup>4</sup> In certain evaluation studies it is necessary to ensure that the students included in the study received a minimal dosage of a DPP approved preschool. In these cases a minimum number of months that the child attended the preschool will be set. This would likely further reduce the number of DPP preschoolers participating and reported in the study.

<sup>5</sup> For 2014-2015 63 children were enrolled in 2 different providers each with different ratings and these children are not included in this analysis. Another 70 students were enrolled in 2 different preschools, each of which had the same rating. These 70 students were included in the analysis.



Figure 1

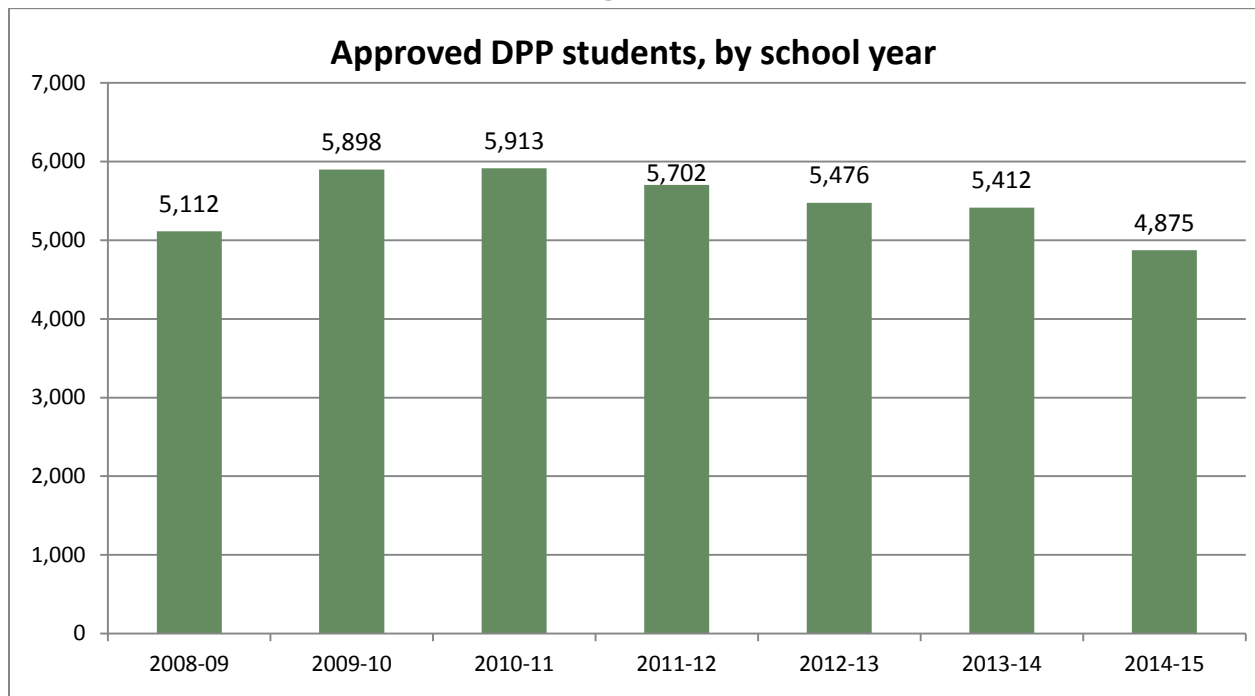


Table 1 below shows the distribution of children enrolled in DPP-approved sites. Approximately 46 percent of DPP preschools enroll fewer than 10 students. Not surprisingly, both center-based and home-based sites were likely to enroll fewer students per site than DPS sites.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1

Distribution of Students Enrolled in DPP Sites, By Provider Type					
# of Children Enrolled	# of Sites				
	DPS	Community Center	Community Home	Total	% of total
1-9	6	93	8	107	46%
10-24	33	32	1	66	29%
25-49	39	12	0	54	22%
50-99	2	2	0	4	2%
100 or more	3	0	0	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>100%</b>

This analysis is based on enrollment records, not provider records. 64 students were enrolled at both DPS and community preschools. They are not included in this analysis. Students who attended multiple schools of the same type were however included in the enrollment totals at multiple schools. This includes 68 students attending 49 different schools.

<sup>6</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.

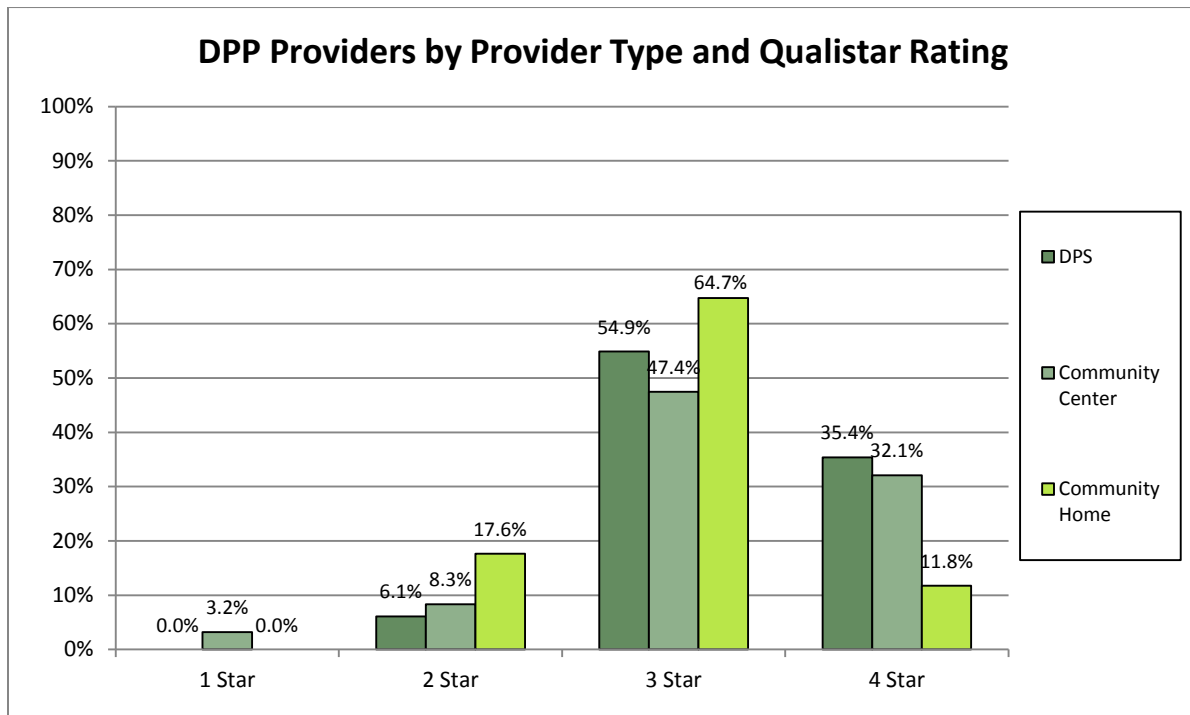




### Number and Quality of Sites

While over 82 percent of DPP preschool sites were 3-or 4-star-rated Qualistar programs in 2015, quality ratings varied by the type of preschool. The vast majority of DPS preschools, 90 percent, were rated 3 or 4 stars, while just under 80 percent of community center-based preschools and just under 77 percent of home-based preschools were rated three or 4 stars. The distribution of preschools by quality rating and provider type is shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2



*This analysis is based on provider records from December 1, 2014. It is possible to be a DPP provider, but not have any children enrolled during the time of data extraction.*

In 2015, the vast majority of students in both community and DPS preschools were enrolled in 3-or 4-star-rated programs, as shown in Table 2. Eighty-nine percent of students who attended DPS preschools and just under 81 percent of students who attended community center-based preschools were enrolled at 3-or 4-star-rated preschools in 2015. Only 32 percent of the students enrolled in home-based preschools were enrolled in 3-or 4-star-rated preschools, compared to nearly 70 percent in 2014. Note that the “In Process/Missing” category includes sites that are not yet rated, or where records were incomplete and therefore a rating was not given.



Table 2

Percent of DPP Students by Provider Type and Qualistar Rating™					
Star Rating	DPS	Community Center	Community Home	Both	Total
1 Star	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
2 Star	7.4%	5.2%	68.0%	0.0%	7.0%
3 Star	52.2%	50.2%	16.0%	93.1%	51.6%
4 Star	37.2%	30.7%	16.0%	6.9%	34.6%
Intro to Quality	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
In Process/ Missing	3.1%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%

For 2014-2015 63 children were enrolled in 2 different providers each with different ratings and these children are not included in this analysis. Another 70 students were enrolled in two different preschools, which each had the same rating. These 70 students were included in the analysis. The number of in-process or missing is higher this year as DPP begins transitioning away from Qualistar to Colorado Shines ratings.

An important indicator of DPP's success is the growing number of students enrolled in high-quality preschool programs. As illustrated in Table 3 below, in 2008, 575 DPP students were enrolled in a three or 4-star-rated program; by 2011, 5,431 students were enrolled in 3-or 4-star-rated programs. In 2015, 3,284 students were enrolled in 3-or 4-star-rated programs. As the number of students participating in DPP has fluctuated, the percentage of students enrolled in 3-and 4-star programs has remained relatively stable at around 90 percent of total students.

Table 3

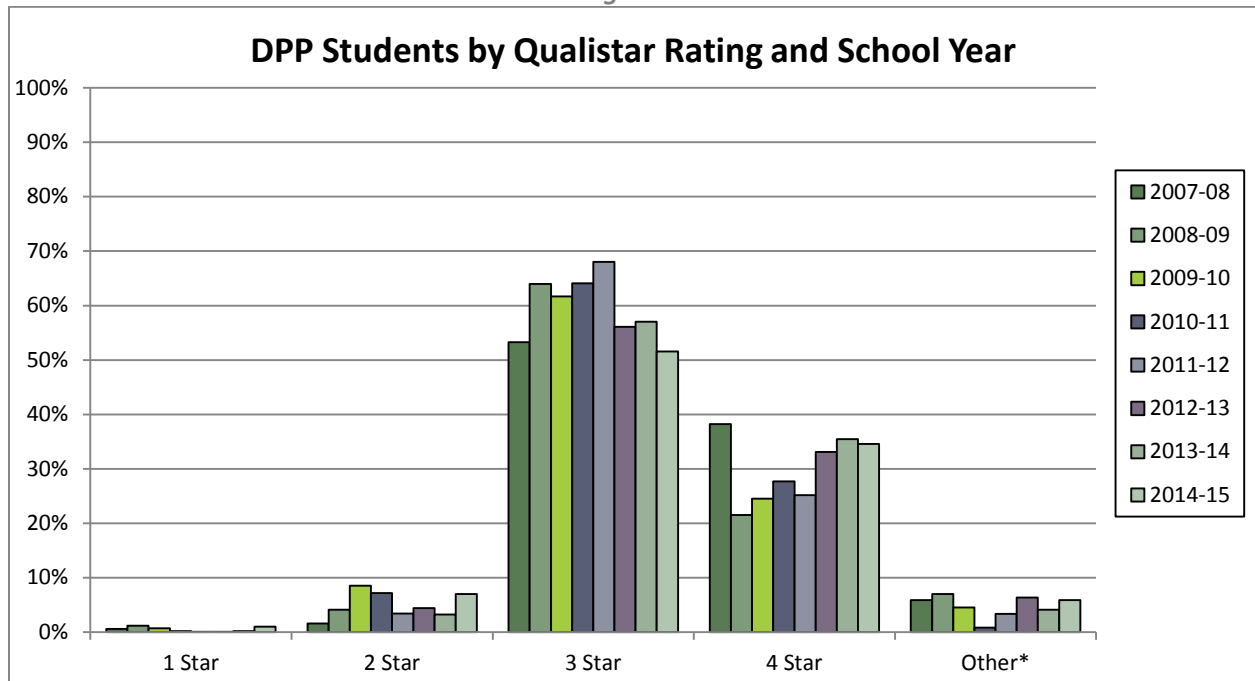
DPP Students by Qualistar™ Rating and School Year								
Star Rating	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1 Star	4	62	43	11	3	4	8	38
2 Star	10	209	504	423	177	238	166	266
3 Star	335	3,253	3,654	3,792	3,481	3,048	2,915	1,966
4 Star	240	1,092	1,451	1,639	1,287	1,797	1,812	1,318
Intro to Quality	0	190	97	14	9	3	37	0
Provisional	1	3	6	8	4	0	0	0
In Process/ Missing	38	274	166	28	158	341	174	224
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>5,083</b>	<b>5,921</b>	<b>5,915</b>	<b>5,119</b>	<b>5,431</b>	<b>5,112</b>	<b>3,812</b>

For 2014-2015 63 children were enrolled in 2 different providers each with different ratings and these children are not included in this analysis. Another 70 students were enrolled in 2 different preschools, which each had the same rating. These 70 students were included in the analysis. The number of in-process or missing is higher this year as DPP begins transitioning away from Qualistar ratings to Colorado Shines ratings.

These data also show the number of 1- and 2-star-rated sites has remained small, with only one percent of preschools rated level one in 2015. The number of in process or missing ratings in 2015 is higher than previous years as DPP begins transitioning away from Qualistar ratings to Colorado Shines ratings. Figure 3 below presents a graph reflecting these data.



Figure 3

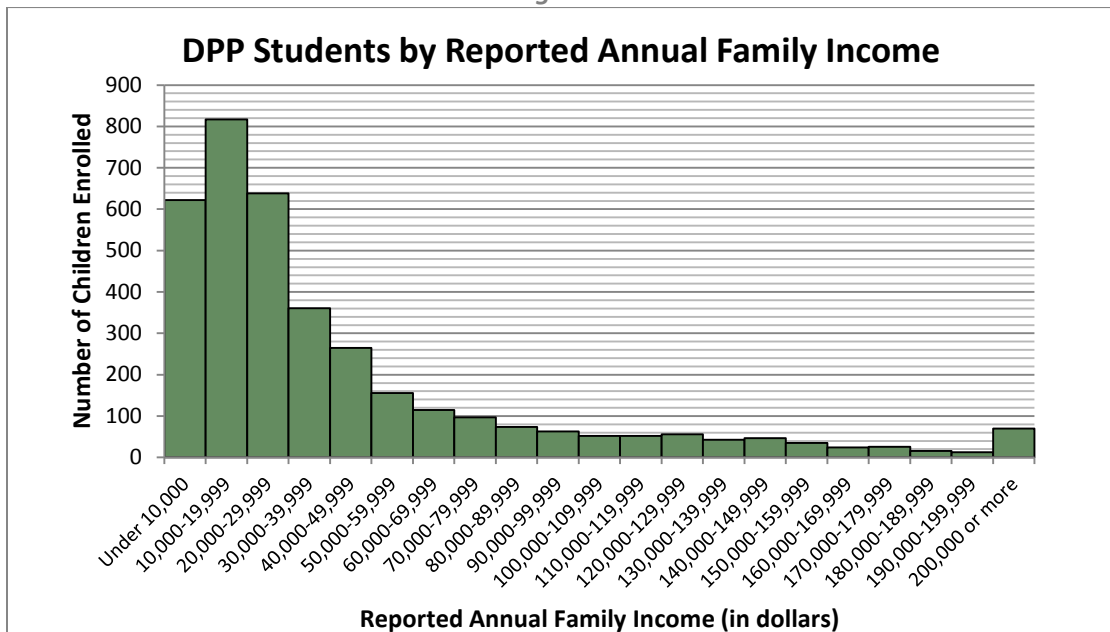


\*The "Other" category includes "In Process/Missing", "Provisional", and "Intro to Quality" programs.

### Family Income

In 2015, DPP continued to serve Denver's lowest-income families. Approximately 57 percent of DPP families reported annual family incomes of less than \$30,000. Only 18 percent of DPP families reported an annual family income of \$70,000 or higher, a slight increase on 2014. Figure 4 presents the distribution of children served by DPP in 2015 by annual family income.

Figure 4





### Primary Home Language

Families reporting that English is their primary home language represented 56.9 percent of all students in 2015, up from 47 percent in 2014. Approximately 23 percent of the families enrolled in DPP during the 2015 school year reported primarily speaking Spanish at home, up from 17 percent in 2014. In 2014, a large number of families, nearly 32 percent, did not report their home language on the application form, compared to 2.5 percent in 2015. This change could account for the higher numbers of English and Spanish speaking families in 2015. Table 4 below details enrollment by language spoken at home.

Table 4

DPP Students by Home Language	
English	56.9%
Spanish	23.1%
Vietnamese	0.5%
Arabic	0.6%
Multi-Lingual	4.5%
Other Language	11.8%
Not Provided	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Race and Ethnicity

The racial and ethnic distribution of children participating in the program this year was largely similar to previous years. However, the percentage of participants reporting “other” for race and ethnicity or not reporting race and ethnicity continued to decrease, after a sharp increase in 2013. In 2015, Hispanic children continued to lead all other racial and ethnic groups in DPP participation, comprising nearly 50 percent of the total DPP enrollment. White children represented 28 percent, and black children represented 12 percent of enrollees. Table 5 below details the racial and ethnic distribution of children enrolled in DPP across all years of the program.

Table 5

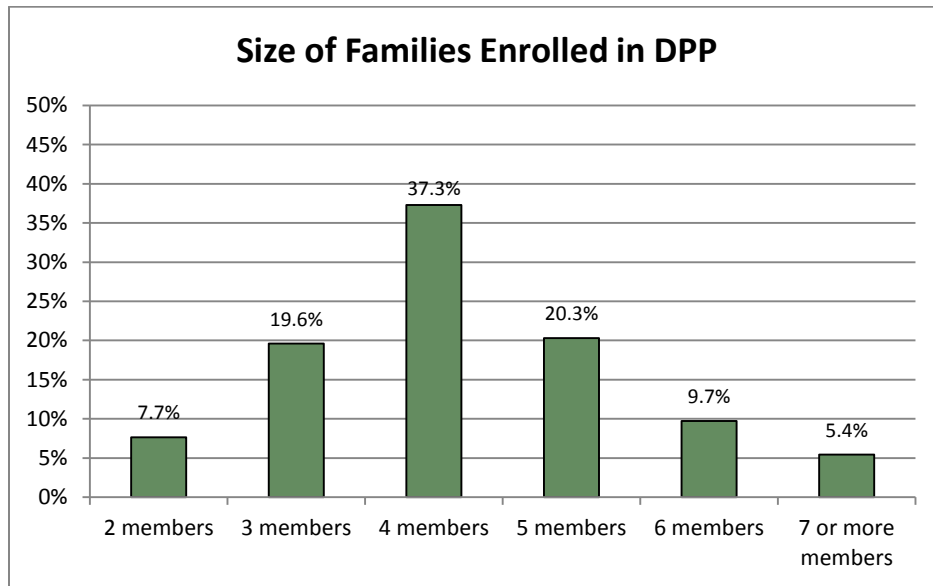
DPP Students by Child's Ethnicity and School Year								
Child's Ethnicity	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Asian	2.4%	2.9%	3.1%	3.2%	3.1%	3.3%	3.1%	3.5%
Black	9.4%	12.9%	12.5%	13.3%	12.6%	13.1%	12.6%	12.2%
Hispanic	54.8%	51.8%	49.3%	51.0%	52.5%	49.9%	47.9%	46.3%
Native American	0.8%	1.1%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%	0.6%	1.0%
Multi-Racial	4.3%	3.5%	5.1%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0%	6.3%	7.9%
White	21.8%	20.5%	27.4%	26.4%	26.0%	25.2%	27.9%	28.3%
Other/Missing/ Not Provided	6.5%	7.3%	1.8%	0.8%	0.4%	7.6%	1.6%	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>



### Family Size

The distribution of students according to family size is presented in Figure 5. Family size distribution in the program for 2015 looks similar to the distributions over the past five years, with a slight increase in four-member families this year.

Figure 5



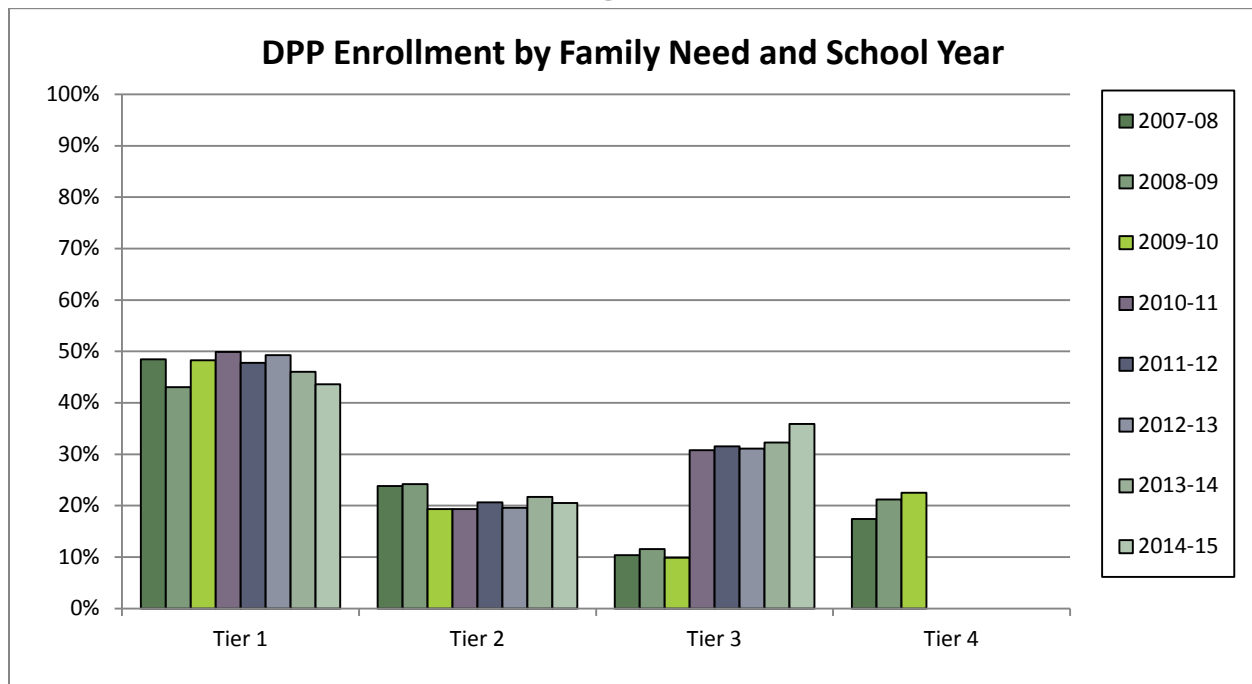
### Level of Family Need (Income Tier Adjusted by Family Size)

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 seven family need categories or tiers. However, due to the comparatively small difference between Tiers 3, 4, 5, and 6, the evaluators consolidated these tiers into a single Tier 3 category for analysis purposes, with the original Tier 7 becoming the new Tier 4. However, the original Tier 7 category was eliminated in 2011 and therefore no students have fallen into the revised Tier 4 category for the past four years.

Figure 6 presents the enrollment of DPP families by family need, according to these four tiers. Tier 1 indicates the families with the highest need, 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 were in Tier 1, indicating families with a relatively high need for tuition credits. In Figure 6, please recall that the income tiers are *family need* tiers, and refer to income **and** family size. Later in this report we refer to income tiers when discussing parent survey results. It should be remembered that the income tiers cited later are used for demographic purposes, and are different from the family need tiers that are used in Figure 6, which refer to the tiers that determine tuition credits.



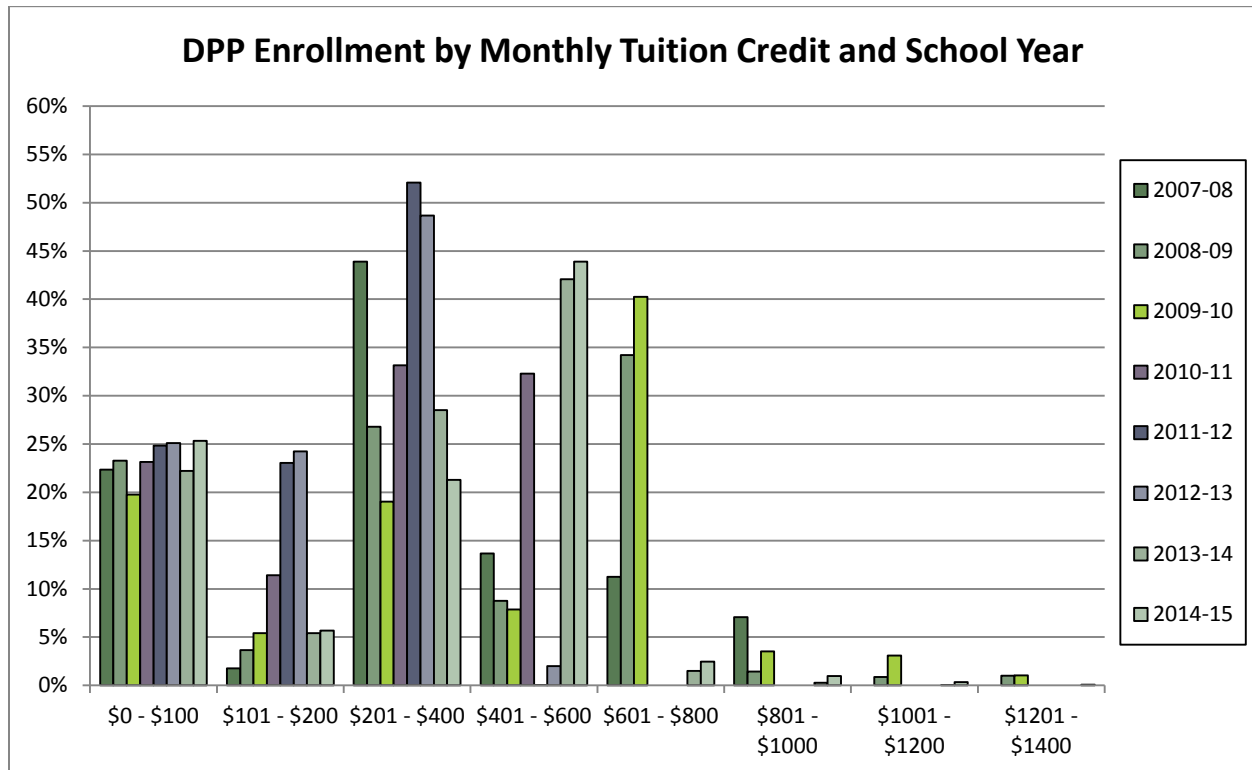
Figure 6



The calculation of a monthly tuition credit takes into account three factors: (1) the quality of the preschool, as defined by the DPP classroom rating or accreditation; (2) the hours that a child attends preschool; and (3) the family need, as determined by the original tier income system discussed above. Figure 7 shows the distribution of approved monthly tuition credit amounts across the past eight academic years. Due to financial constraints of the program, the maximum tuition credit awarded was reduced in 2010, although it has begun to rise again in the past two years, with four percent of families receiving over \$600 per month in 2015, compared to under two percent in 2014, and no families between 2011 and 2013.



Figure 7



As a result of the economic climate and resulting financial constraints experienced by DPP, the average monthly tuition credit decreased sharply after 2010. However, as shown in Figure 8, since 2014 the average credit has increased for all families, and most significantly for families in the lowest two income tiers, as the Denver economy improved. The average monthly tuition credit for families in the lowest income tier was \$441 in 2015, compared to \$253 just two years ago.



Figure 8

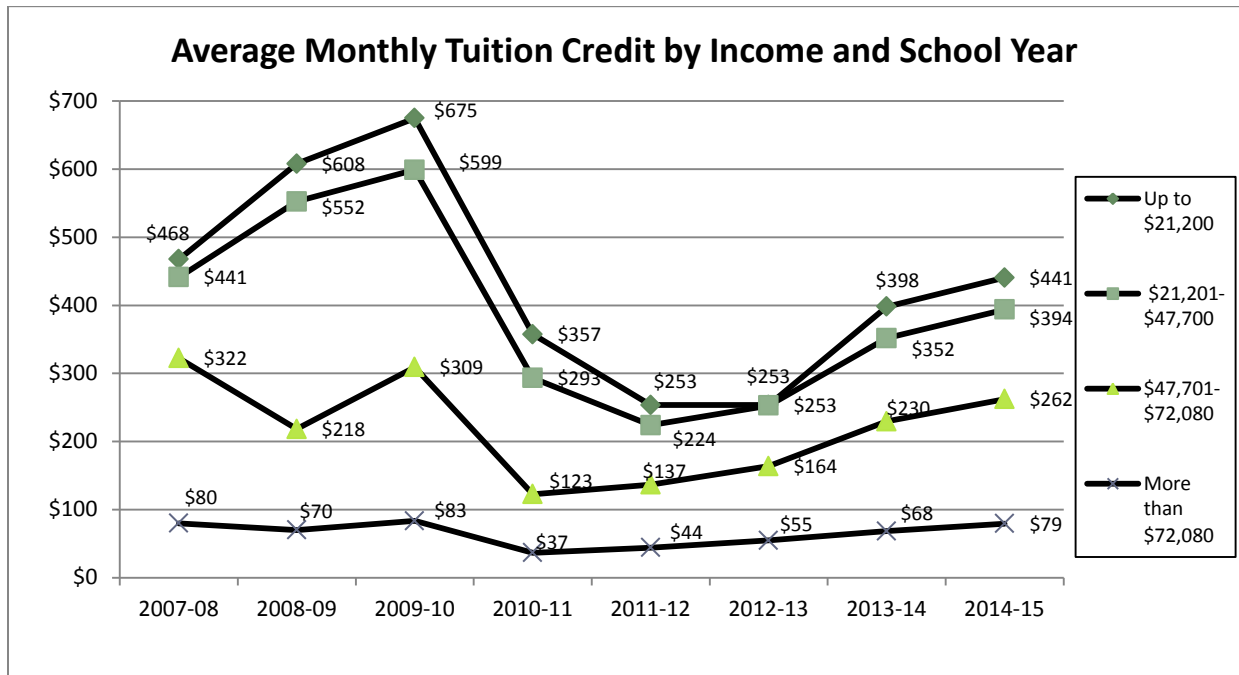
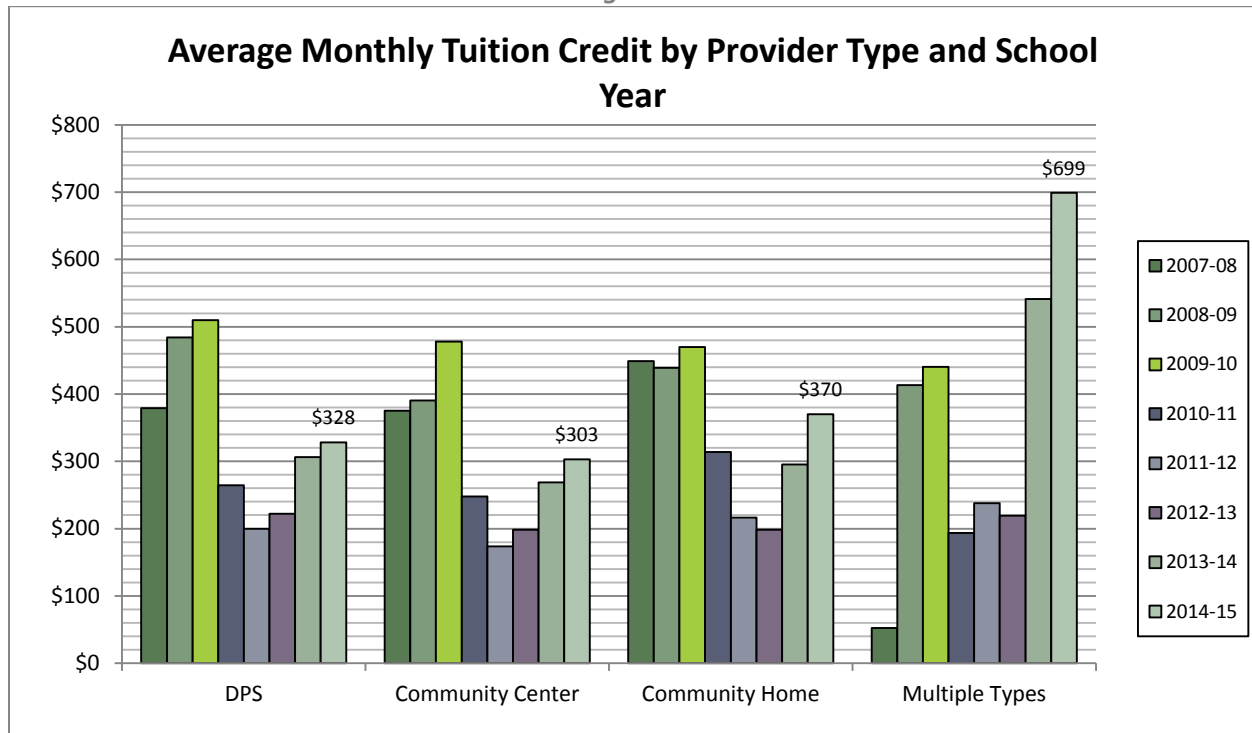


Figure 9 shows the average monthly tuition credits since 2008, by provider type.

Figure 9







### III. Key Findings from the 2014-2015 Evaluation

DPP leadership and the DPP evaluation team developed a number of evaluation questions in fall 2007. These questions were designed to track the effectiveness of the theory of action for the DPP program. These questions have guided the yearly evaluations of the program and will continue to do so over the coming years. The full list of evaluation questions and the related findings for 2014-2015 from the parent and provider surveys can be found in Appendix A.

This section highlights the key findings identified through the 2014-2015 evaluation responses, which are grouped into three areas:

1. The benefit of DPP to families, children, and providers;
2. The impact of DPP on preschool quality; and
3. DPP operations

#### *The Benefit of DPP to Families, Children, and Providers*

The DPP tuition credit has a significant impact on the number of children who are enrolled in preschool. Figure 19 shows that just over 40 percent of families in the three lowest income tiers would not have enrolled their child in preschool without the DPP tuition credit. This compares to income Tier 4, where only 14 percent of families would not have enrolled their child without DPP. In this way, the DPP tuition credit is having a disproportionately positive effect on preschool enrollment for the lowest-income families.

Figure 19

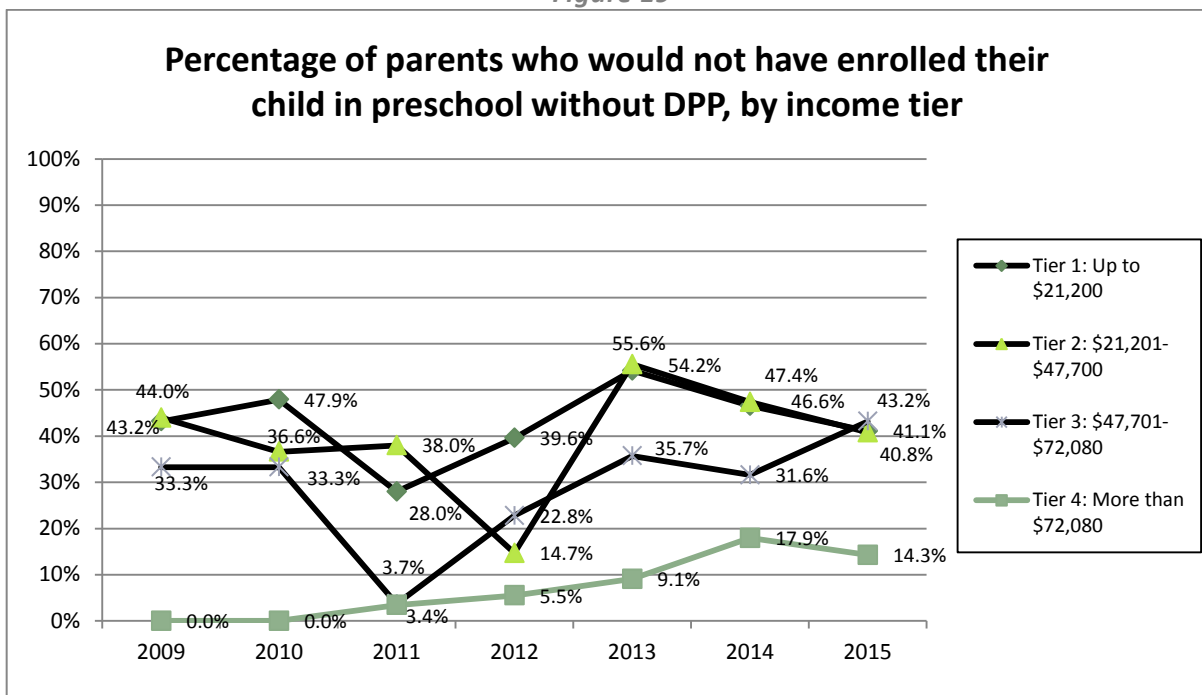




Figure 20 shows that more than 65 percent of parents reported that their child was enrolled in a daycare or preschool prior to the DPP year. Figure 21 displays this data broken down by race and ethnicity, where it can be seen that black and Hispanic families are much less likely to have their child enrolled in daycare or preschool prior to the DPP year, with only 55.6 percent of black children enrolled and less than 48 percent of Hispanic children. The data trend shows that in 2015 more Hispanic families reported their child was previously enrolled in daycare or preschool than at any other time over the course of this evaluation. Overall, this data demonstrates the variation in the pre-DPP experience between black and Hispanic children, and white children.

Figure 20

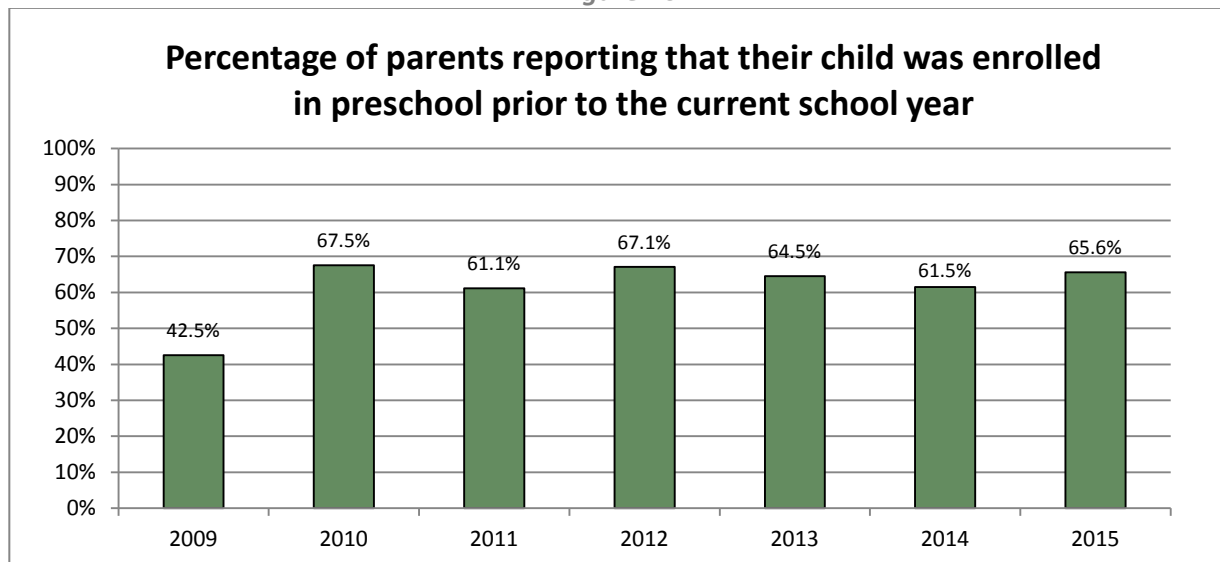
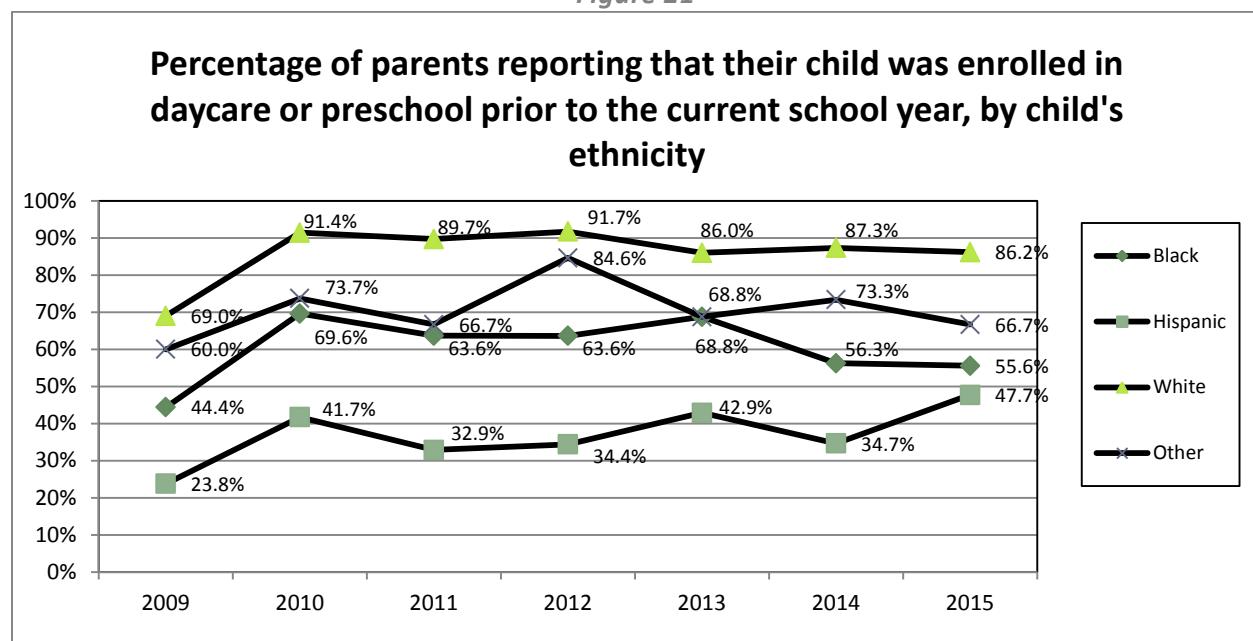


Figure 21





Parents' reasons for enrolling their children in preschool are shown in Figure 22 below. The most common reason in 2015 was to "learn academic fundamentals," which has consistently been a key reason since 2009. In 2015, the number of parents selecting "experience challenge or a broader range of activities" increased to nearly 26 percent, from under 20 percent in 2014. Figures 23 and 24 show the percent of parents selecting "learn academic fundamentals" and "experience challenges" as a benefit, broken down by child's ethnicity. As seen in the charts, Hispanic families were much more likely to select these two benefits of preschool when compared with black and white families.

Figure 22

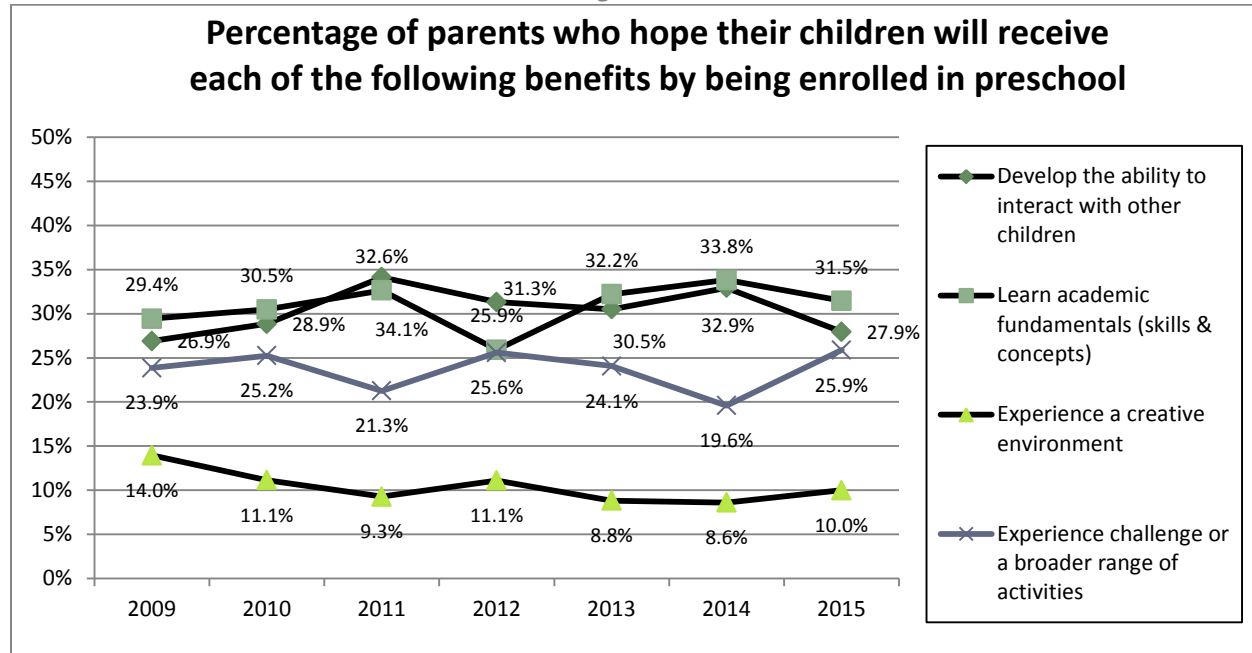


Figure 23

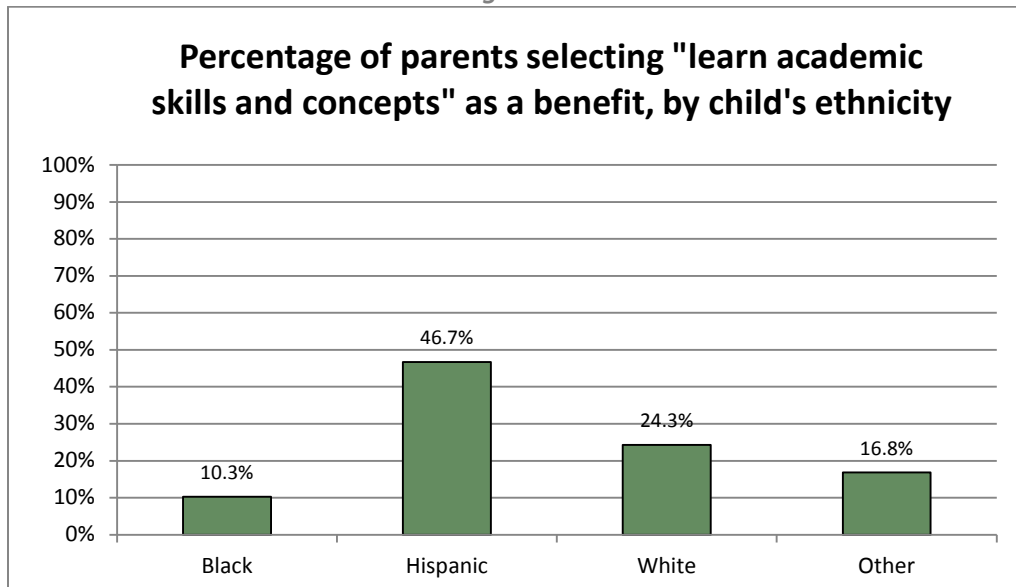
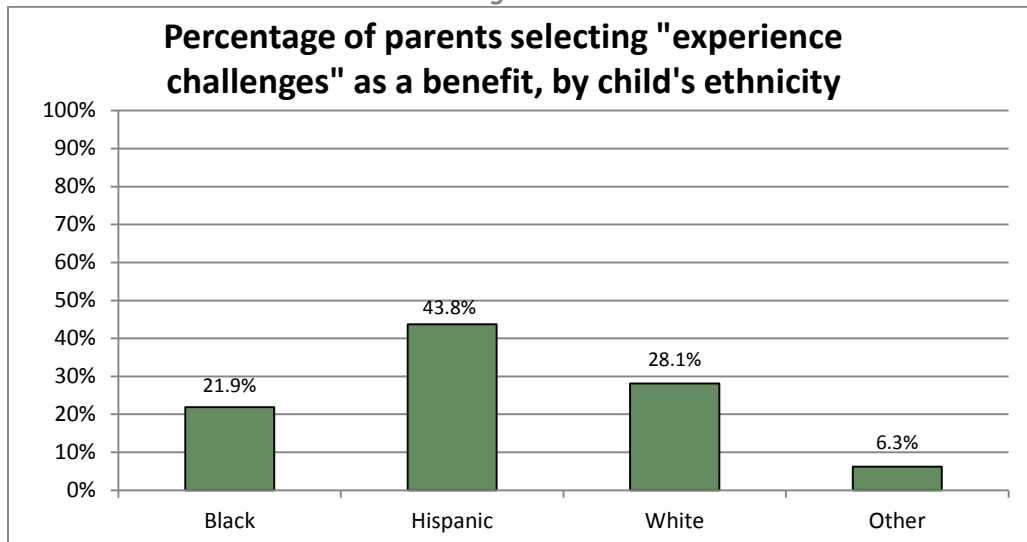


Figure 24



Preschool is known to have benefits for children, and analysis of TCAP results from the first two DPP cohorts has shown that the benefits persist through third and fourth grade (full TCAP results analysis are available in a separate memo from APA). However, DPP also has an immediate impact in the preschool year for families. Figure 25 shows the family benefits of preschool, with about 74 percent of parents reporting that DPP allows parents to work and over 40 percent reporting it allows them to attend school.

Figure 25

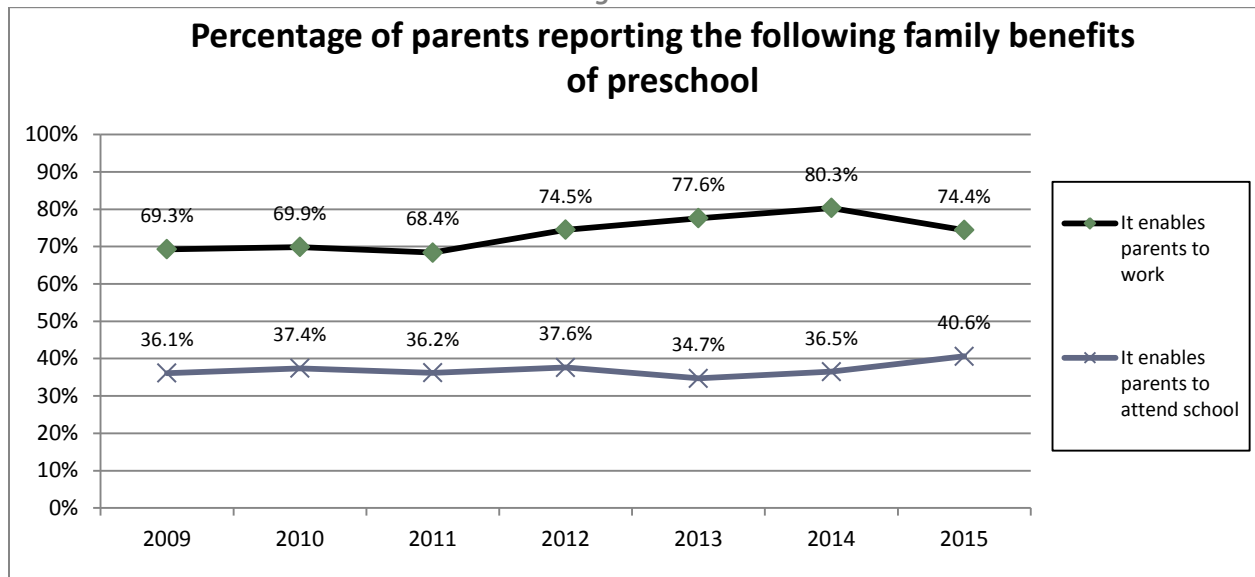
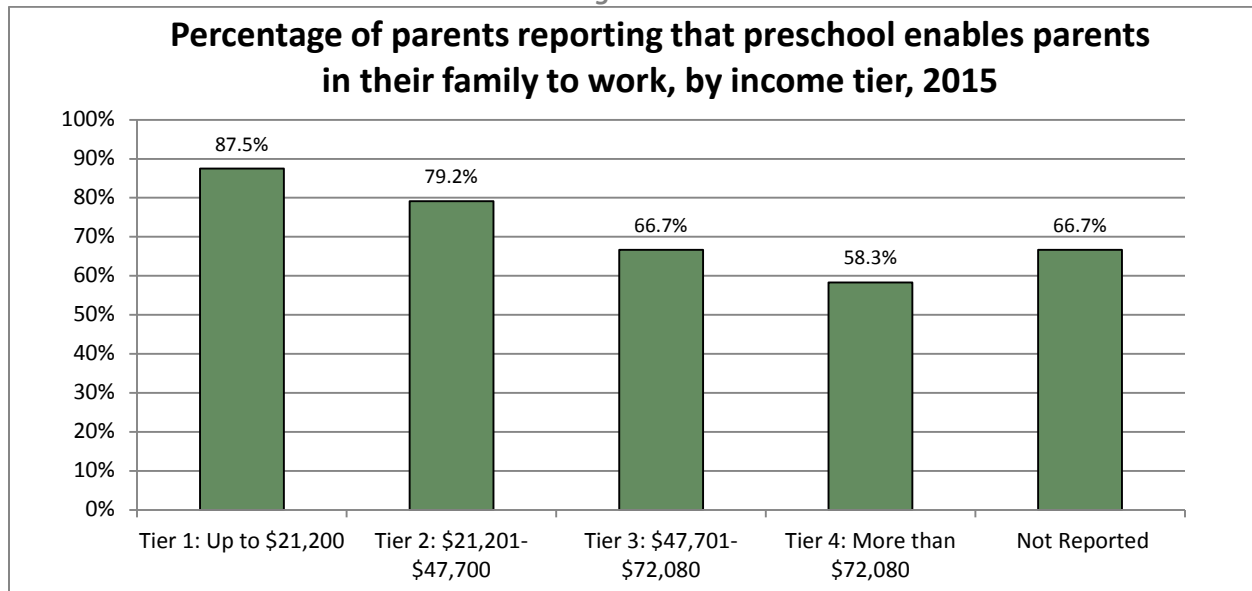


Figure 26 shows that lower-income families are more likely than higher-income families to report that DPP enables parents to work than higher-income families. Figure 27 shows that nearly 90 percent of



parents of Hispanic children report DPP enables them to work, compared to 67 percent of parents of black children and 63 percent of white children.

**Figure 26**



**Figure 27**

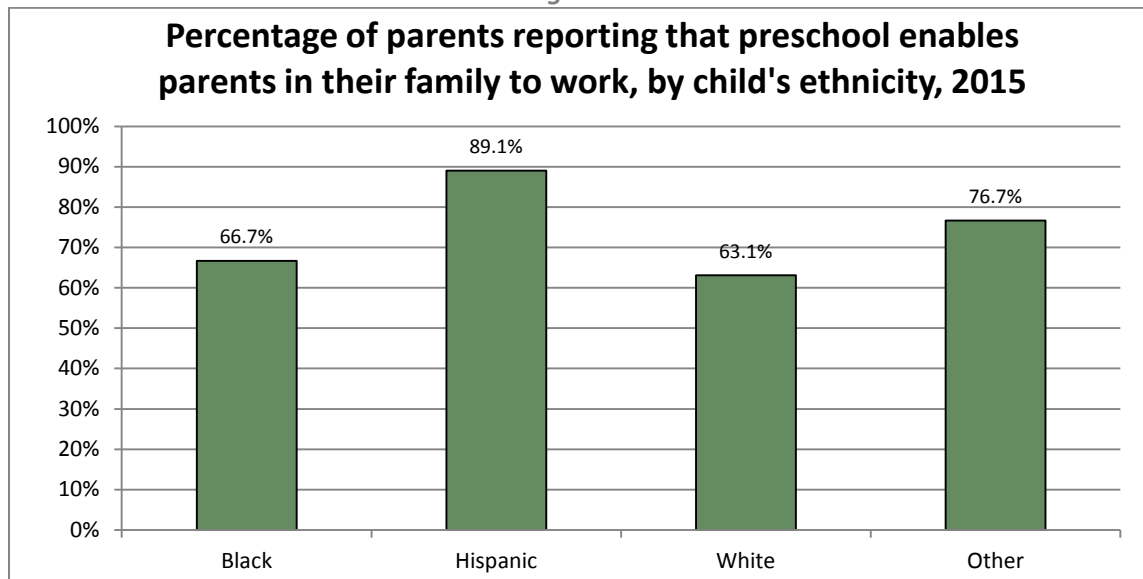
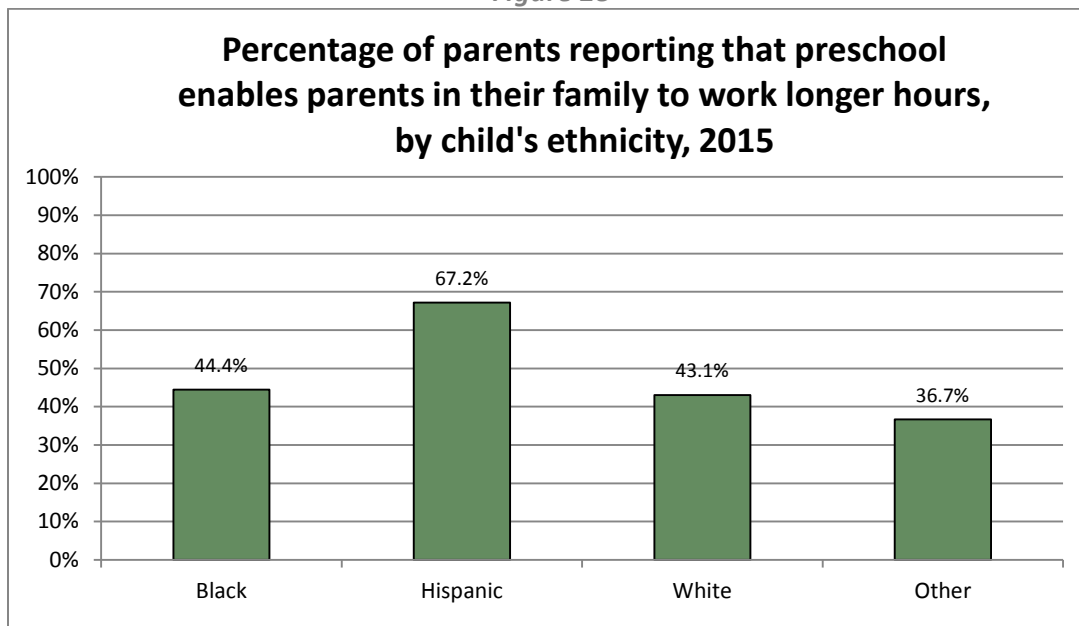


Figure 28 shows that parents of Hispanic children are also most likely to report that preschool enables them to work longer hours. Combined, these data indicate that DPP is having a positive impact on Hispanic and low-income families, not only helping them to work, but also helping them to work longer hours and therefore increase their earning potential.



Figure 28



Figures 29 and 30 show the impact of DPP on enabling families to attend school, broken down by the child's race and ethnicity and by family income tier. This benefit is disproportionately higher for black and Hispanic families, and for lower-income families. In this way, the DPP tuition credit is enabling low-income and minority families to attend school, and most likely improve their employability.

Figure 29

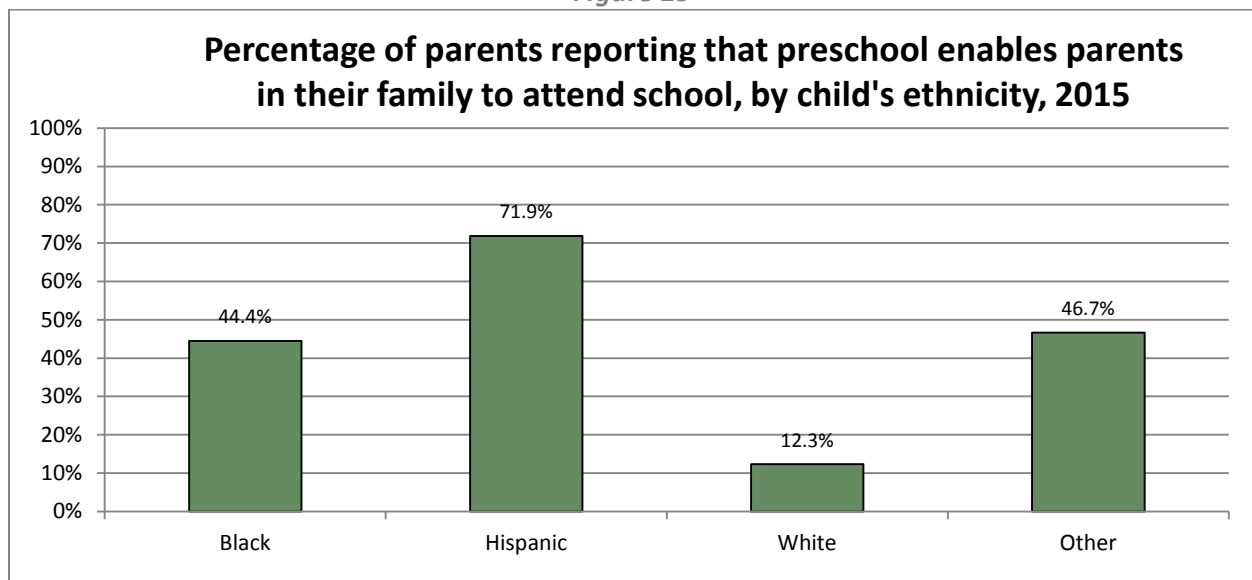
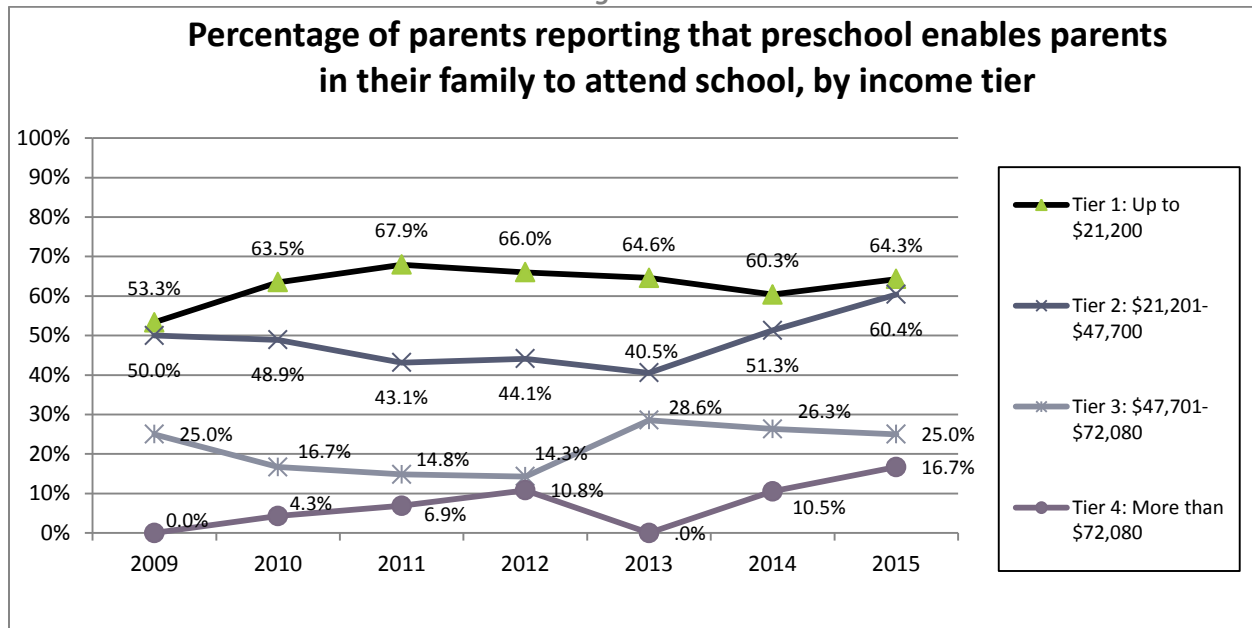




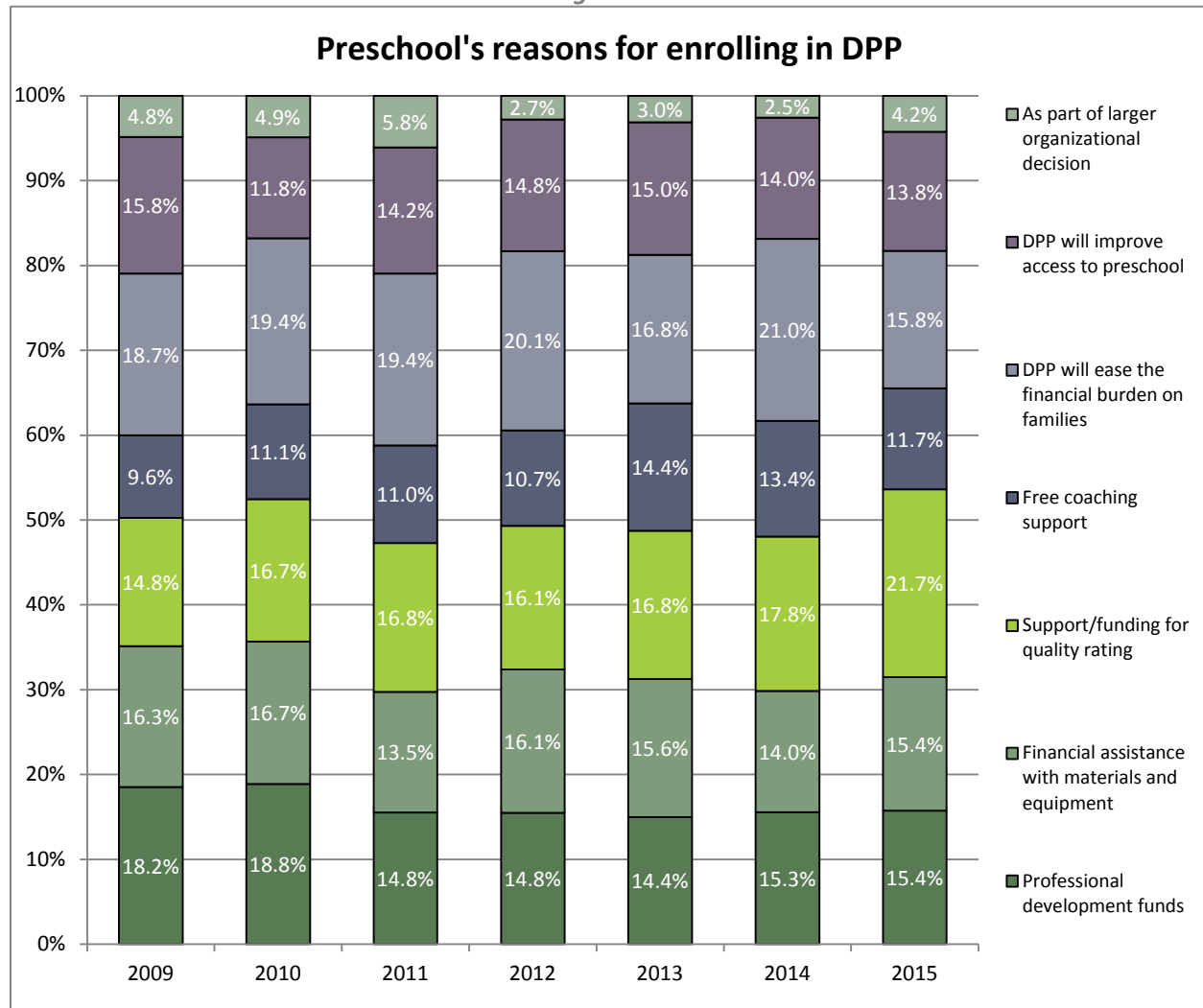
Figure 30



Finally, preschools also reap a large benefit from participating in DPP. Figure 31 shows the reasons why providers enroll in the program. The results have been fairly consistent over the course of the program, with providers' main driver historically being the financial assistance DPP provides to families. However, it is also clear that the quality improvement supports provided by DPP, such as funding for the quality rating, coaching support, and professional development funds, are also key reasons providers enroll in DPP, with the most common reason in 2015 being the support/funding for the quality rating.



Figure 31







### Denver Preschool Program's Impact on Preschool Quality

One of DPP's key goals is to raise the level of preschool quality in Denver. Quality has been defined by DPP through the DPP Classroom rating, which incorporates the Qualistar Rating™, or National Accreditation, and the CLASS® Observation. A number of questions in the annual parent and provider surveys address quality, and parents' perception of quality.

Figure 32 below shows the top factors that parents consider when enrolling their child in preschool. As can be seen, consistently since 2009, parents have identified "convenient location" and "reputation of quality" as the two top factors they consider when selecting a preschool. Cost of tuition declined as a key factor in 2015 to its lowest popularity since the program began.

Figure 32

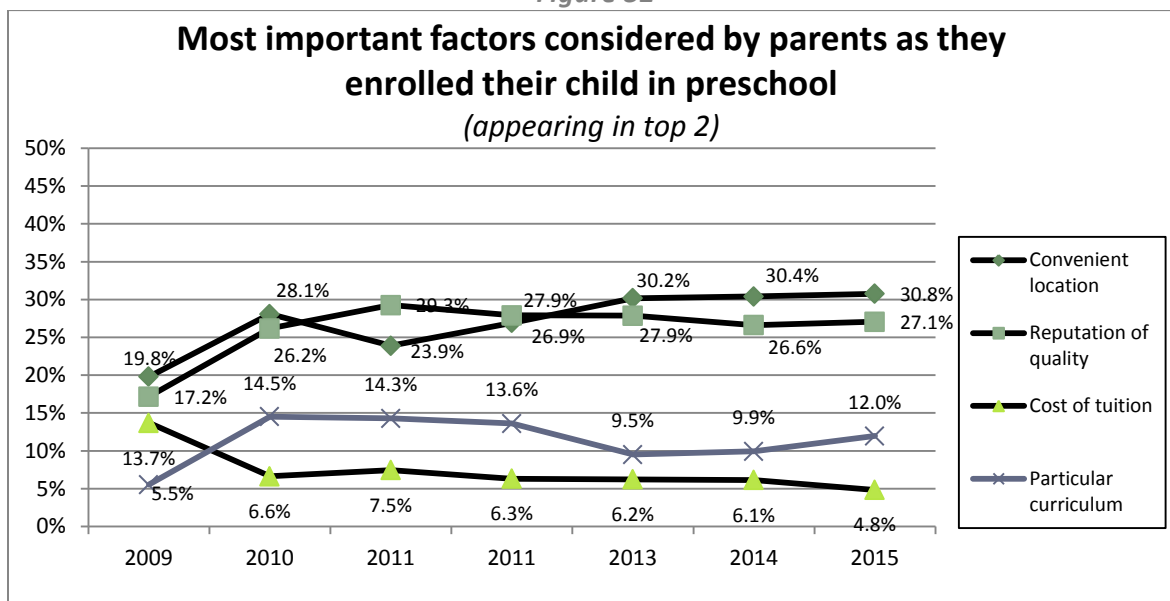
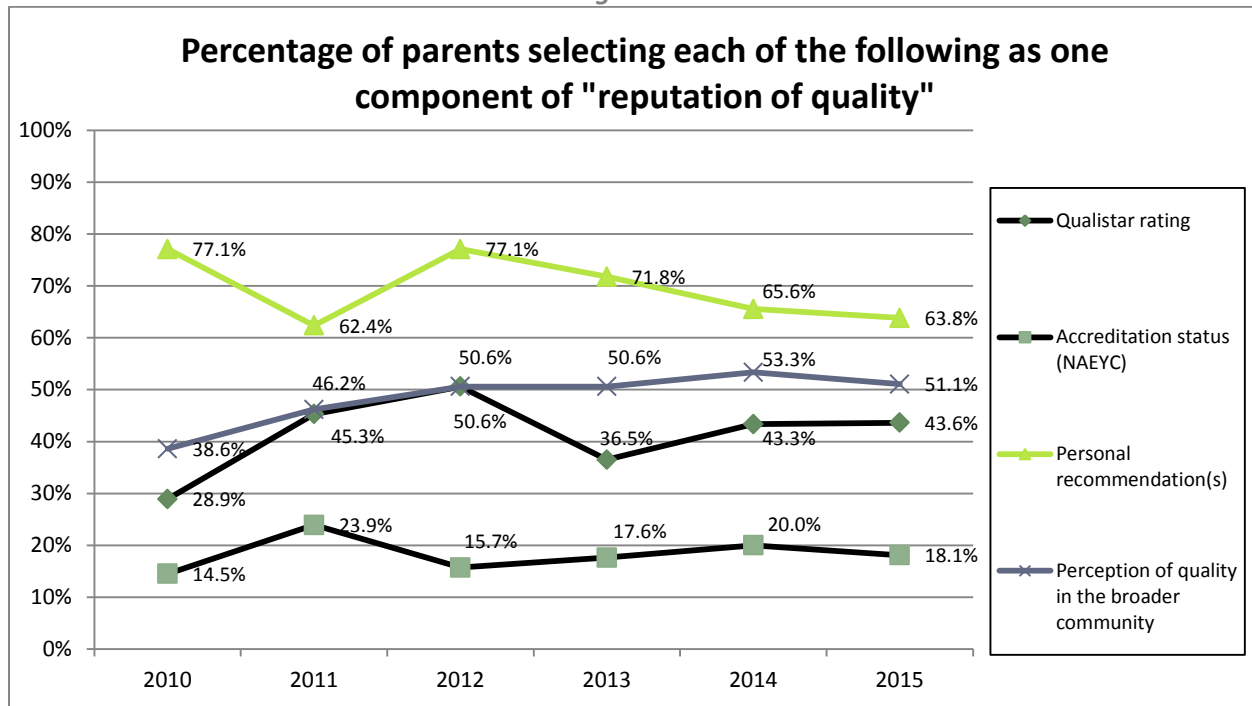


Figure 33 goes some distance toward explaining what parents mean by "reputation of quality," with "personal recommendation" being the most highly rated component, followed by "perception of quality in the broader community." A majority of parents did not consider the Qualistar Rating™ a key component of quality over the past six years.

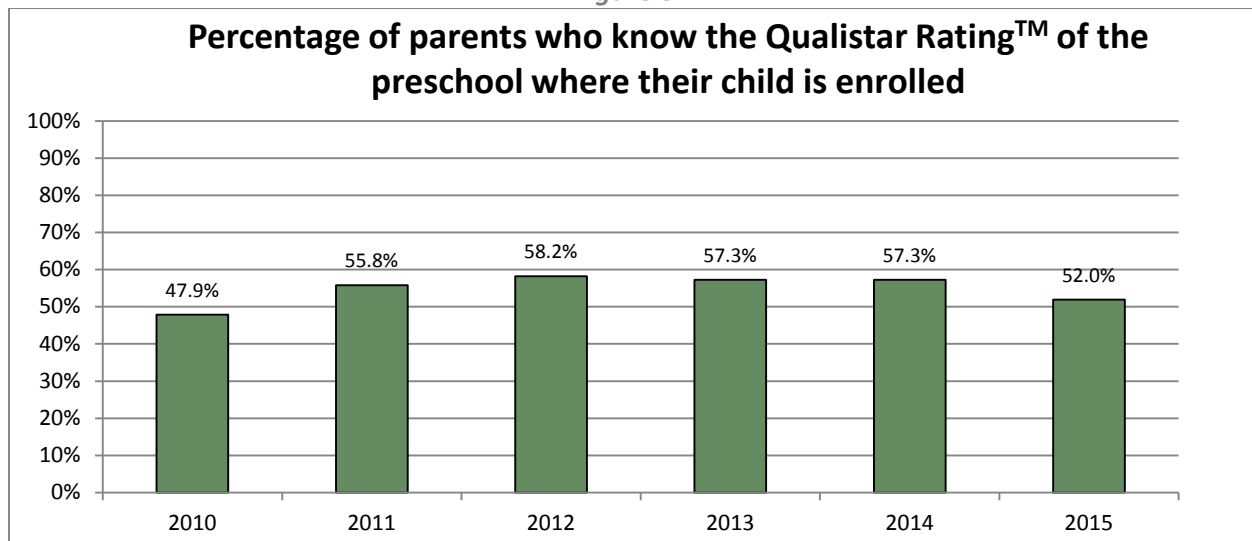


Figure 33



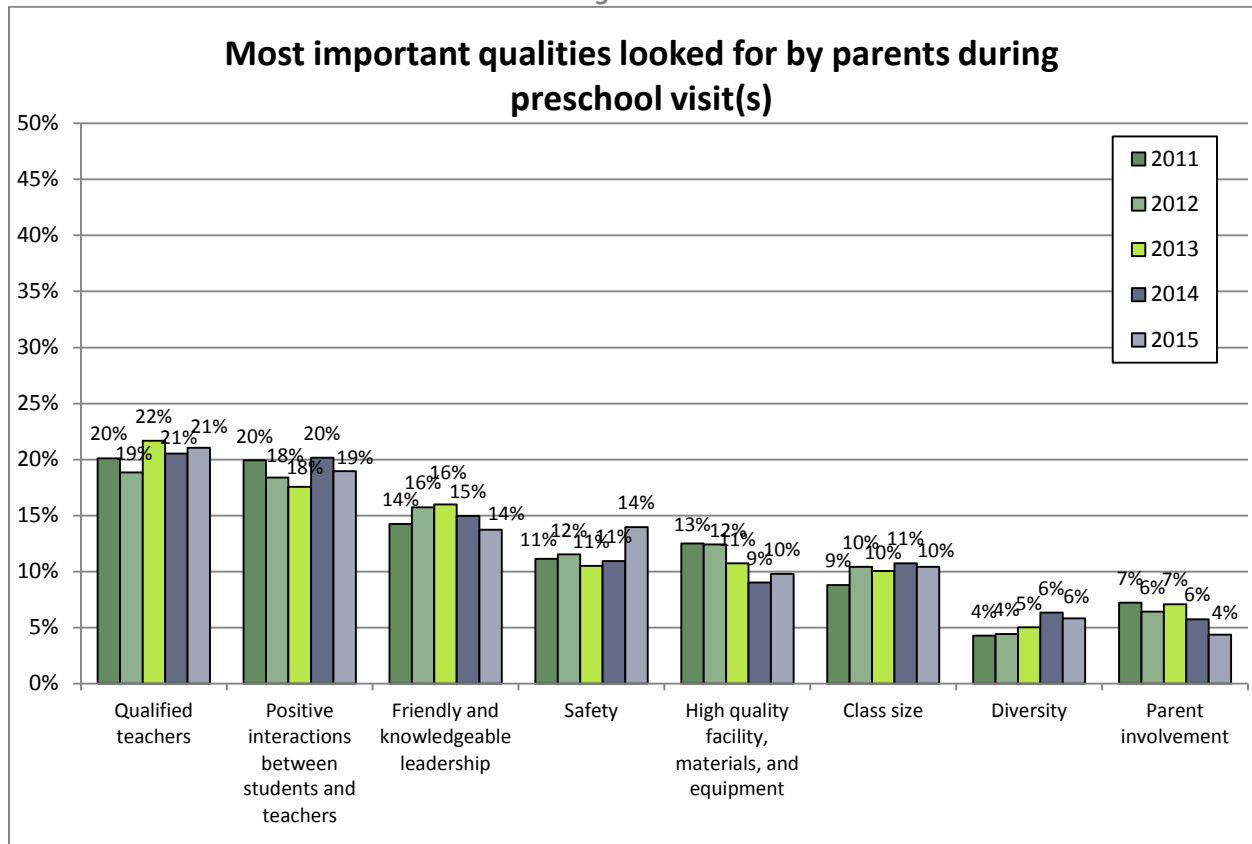
As shown in Figure 34, the number of parents who know the Qualistar Rating™ of the preschool where their child is enrolled decreased by more than 5 percent since 2014.

Figure 34



Given that these data suggest parents are not focused on the Qualistar Rating™ as their determinant of quality, it is useful to look at what attributes they look for when conducting a pre-enrollment site visit, to ascertain how parents define quality. Figure 35 below shows the top qualities parents reported looking for during preschool visits.

Figure 35



The results show that parents have consistently selected teacher qualifications and child-teacher interactions as most important. These data support DPP’s decision to add the CLASS® observation to its overall rating system, as the CLASS® measures teacher interactions, something parents are clearly interested in when selecting a preschool. In 2015, an increased number of parents also reported “safety” as being something they looked for during site visits.

Providers were also asked for their perception of how parents determine quality and what parents look for in a site visit. Figure 36 shows that providers generally understand that parents determine a preschool’s reputation based on “personal recommendations” and the “perception of quality in the community.” Figure 37 shows that providers recognize the importance parents place on “qualified teachers” and “personal interactions” when making a site visit, however there are gaps in what parents report and what preschools perceive. For example, providers are likely to think “qualified teachers” are less important than parents do, and to think that “positive interactions” and “safety” are more important than parents do. These results indicate that there are a number of areas of concern to parents that providers could focus on during site visits.



Figure 36

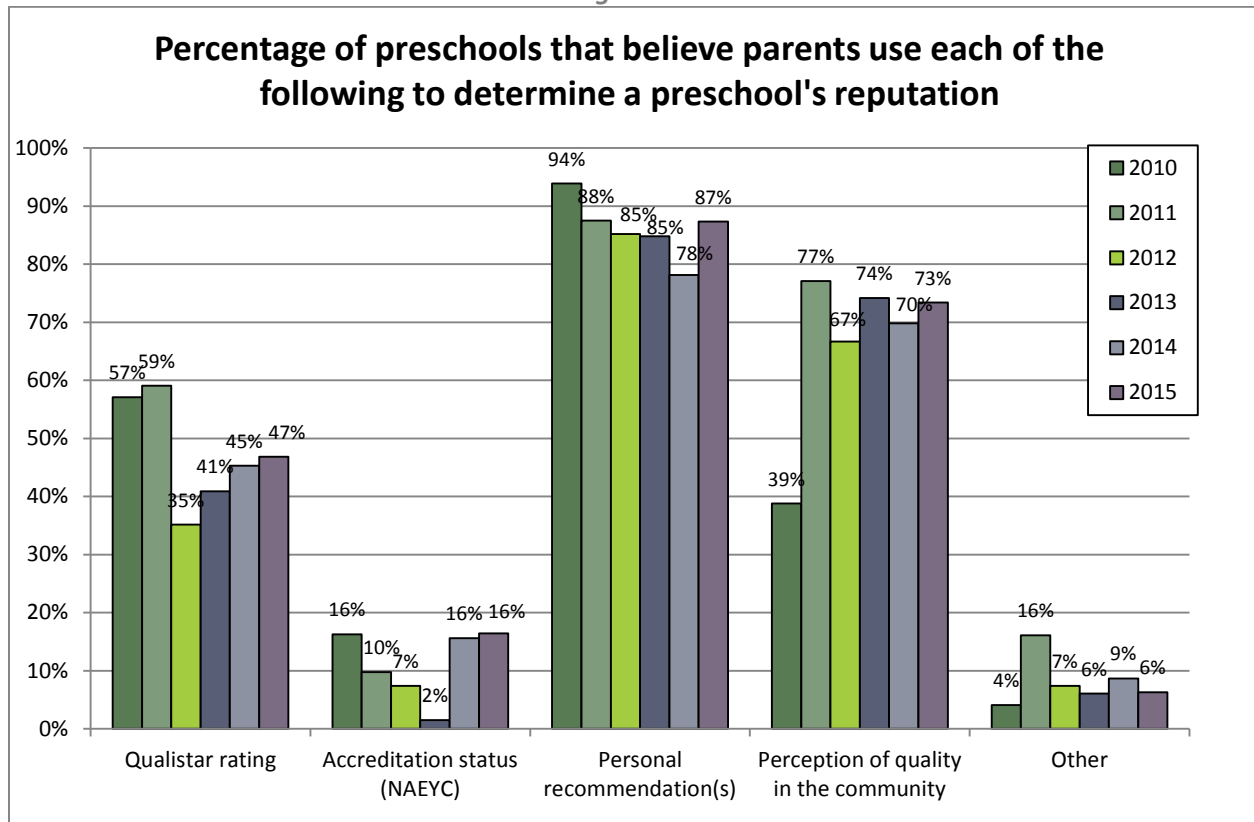
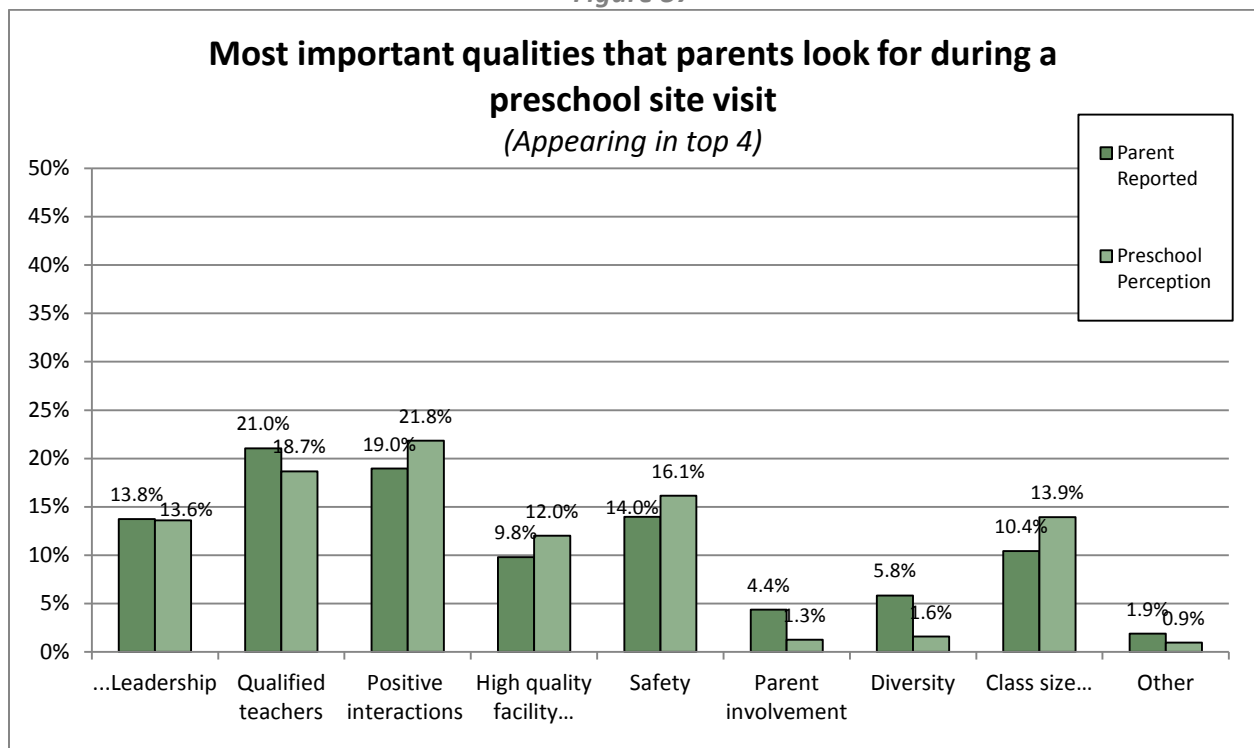


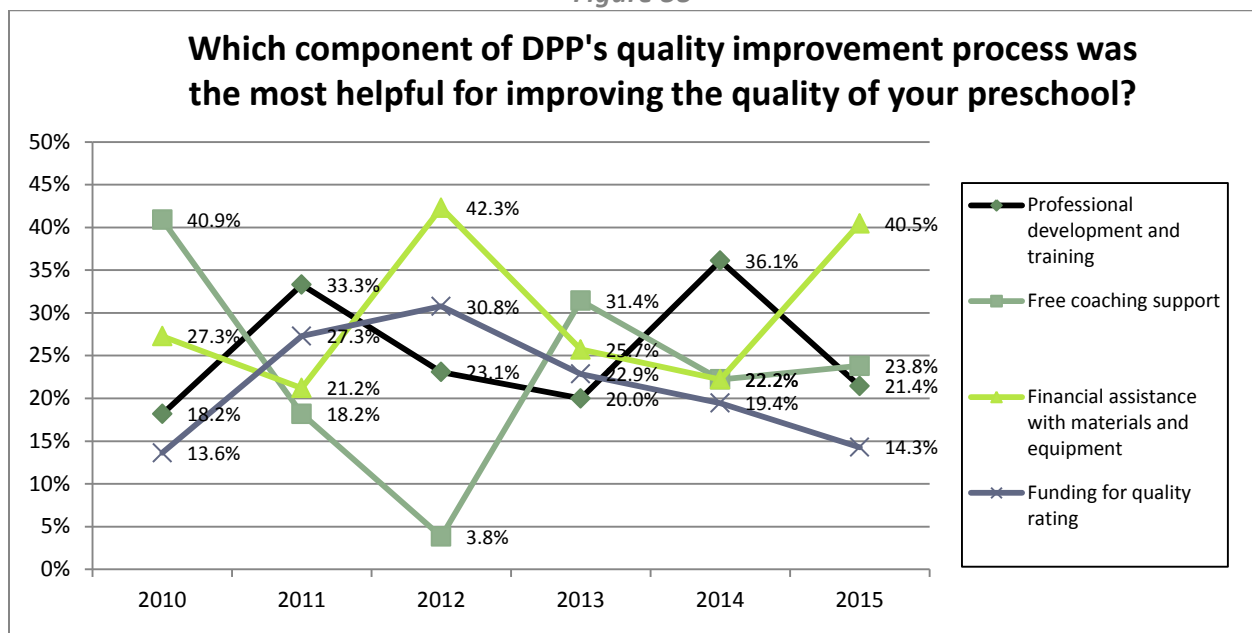
Figure 37





To help drive improvements in quality, DPP provides quality improvement resources to eligible providers. Over 85 percent of providers took advantage of DPP quality improvement resources in 2015 and Figure 38 shows which of the supports providers selected as most helpful for improving quality. As seen in the chart, the responses have varied over time with “financial assistance with materials and equipment” rated as the most helpful component in 2015. In 2014, “professional development and training” was rated as the most helpful, up from the least helpful in 2013, while “financial assistance with materials and equipment” was only selected as most helpful by just over 20 percent of providers in 2014. A number of drivers likely affect these responses, including the different professional development courses offered through DPP and the broader Denver and/or Colorado economy and the impact on providers’ ability to fund updates to their equipment and materials.

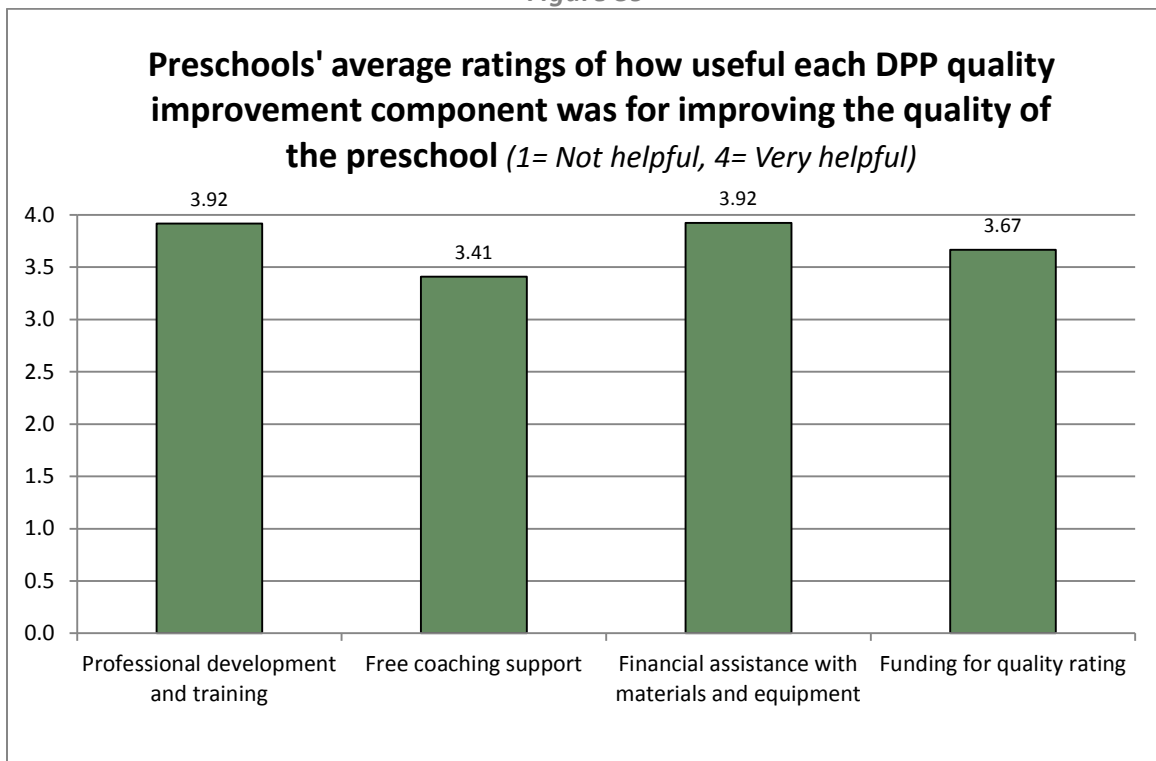
Figure 38



Despite the variation in Figure 38 regarding which component was the *most* useful, Figure 39 shows that providers did in fact rate all quality improvement components highly, with all four components receiving a rating of 3.4 or above on a four point scale.



Figure 39





### Denver Preschool Program Operations

The final key area that will be highlighted in this evaluation concerns DPP operations. Figure 40 shows how long parents reported waiting to receive notification of DPP approval. The number of parents waiting more than three weeks increased slightly in 2015 compared to 2014 (55.6 percent in 2015 compared to 51.5 percent in 2014). Figure 41 shows that parents applying to DPP at a community site continue to receive notification sooner than parents enrolling at a DPS site. Given that the DPP application for DPS parents is part of the larger DPS preschool application, DPP has very little control over this aspect of its operations.

Figure 40

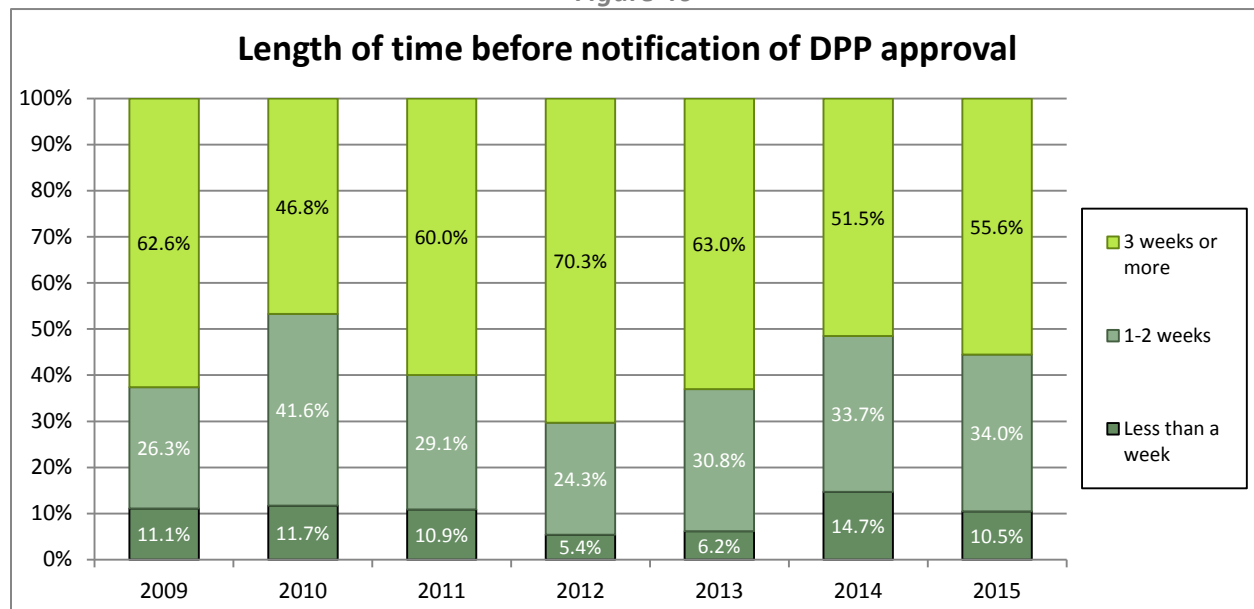
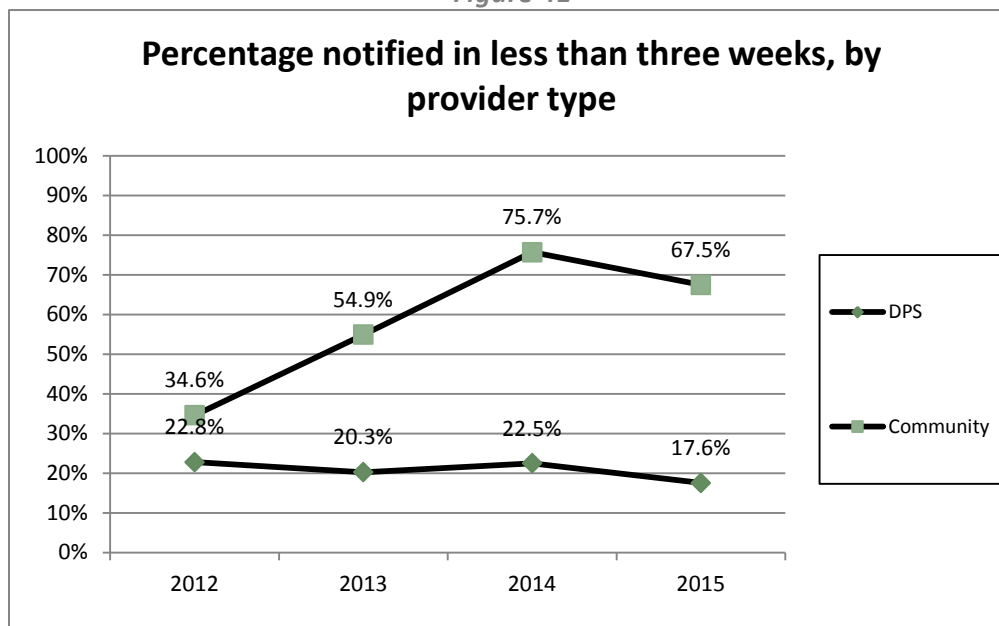


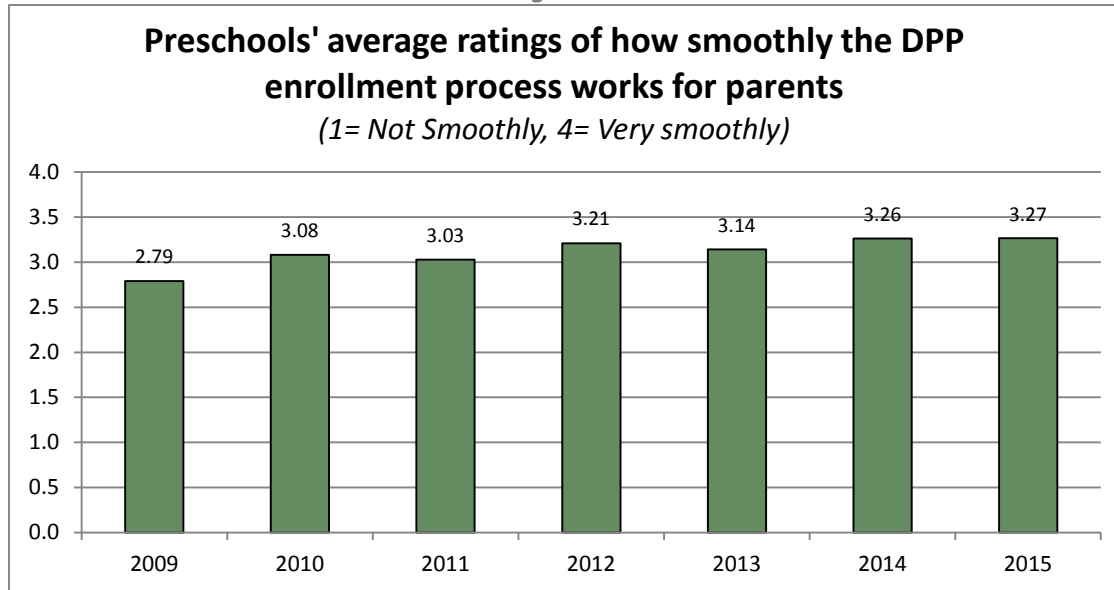
Figure 41





Preschools were also asked for their opinions of the enrollment process for parents. Figure 42 shows that providers believe the enrollment process works fairly smoothly for parents, with the average provider rating of the DPP parent enrollment process rated 3.27 on a four-point scale.

*Figure 42*



Providers are also happy with the tuition credit payment process, giving the process an average rating of 3.41, on a four-point scale, consistent with the last four years (Figure 43). Additionally, providers are continuing to report that the tuition credits are almost always received in a timely manner (Figure 44).

*Figure 43*

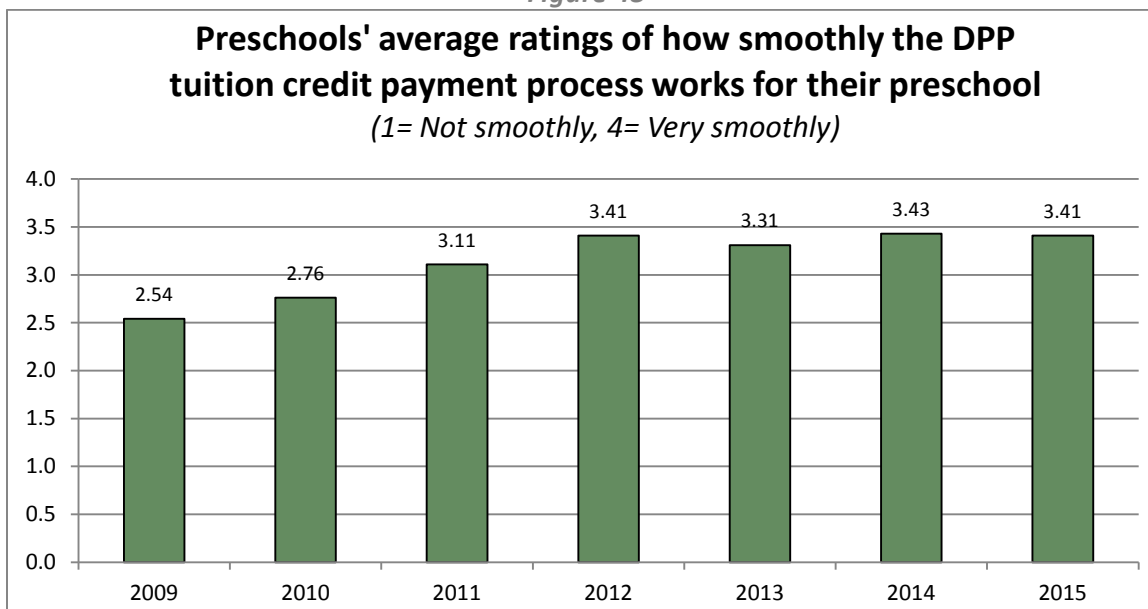
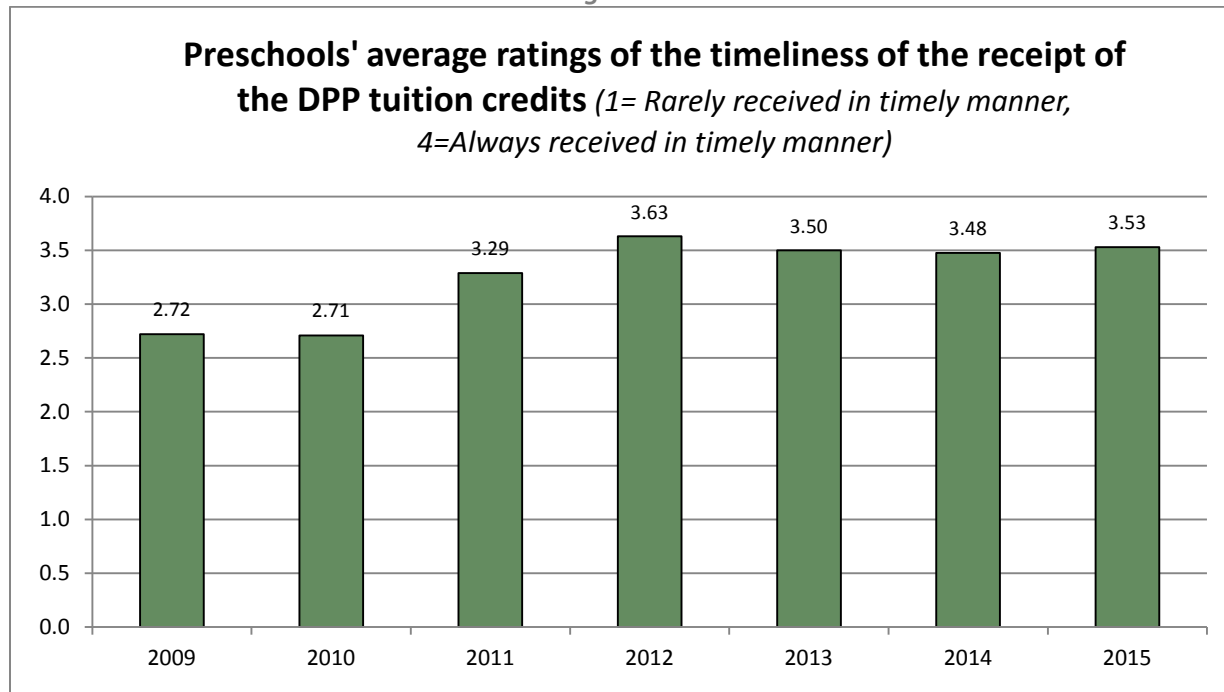




Figure 44



Finally, Figures 45 and 46 present providers' operational and policy concerns about DPP. Figure 45 shows that providers have very few operational concerns about DPP, with over 41 percent of providers reporting no concerns, the highest percentage in the programs history. Amongst those providers indicating an operational concern, most cited concerns with the fairness and/or accuracy of the rating process and the time/effort to prepare for the rating process.

Figure 45

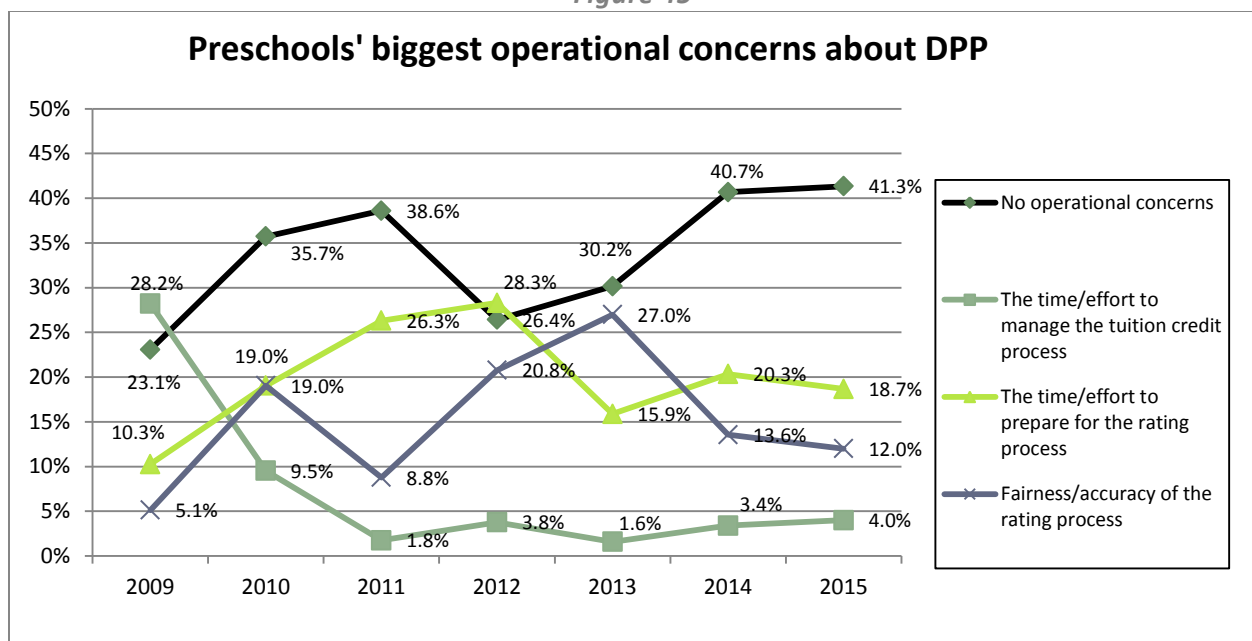
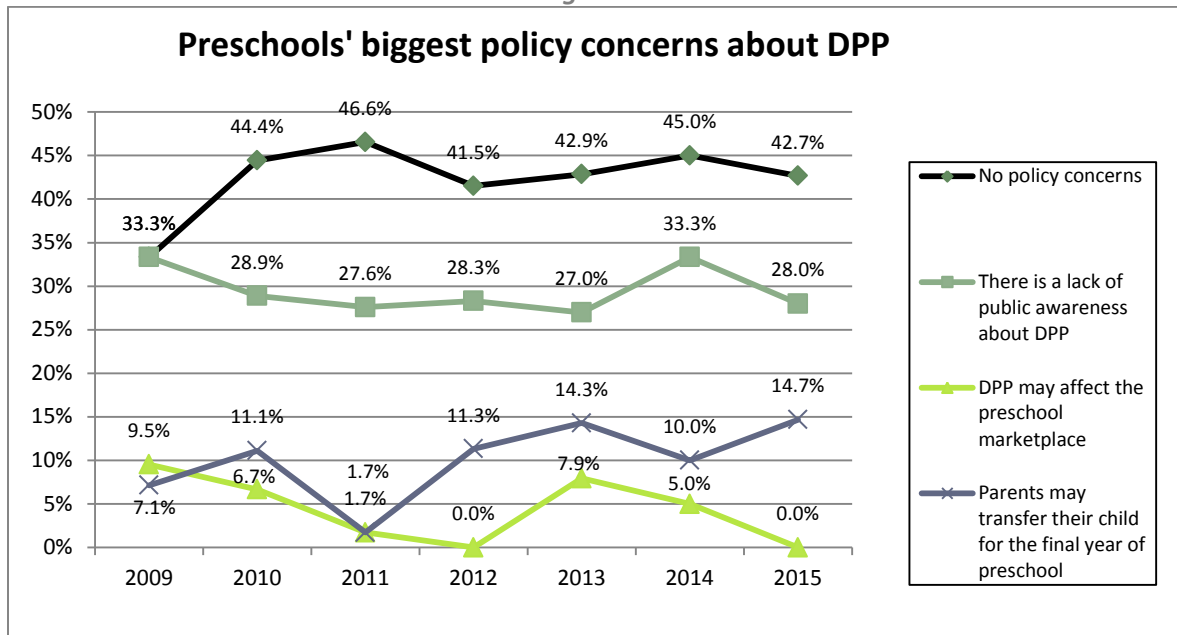




Figure 46 shows providers' policy concerns about DPP. Over 40 percent of providers have no policy concerns, but 28 percent of providers indicated a concern about the lack of public awareness about DPP.

Figure 46





## IV. Conclusion

In 2006, voters approved the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) to encourage families to enroll their four-year-old children in quality preschool programs so that the children would be prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn and to increase the likelihood of their success in kindergarten and beyond. Since its first year of operation during the 2007-2008 school year, DPP has made significant progress toward these goals. In the 2014-2015 school year, DPP achieved the following milestones:

- A total of 175 providers, operating at 255 sites, served as approved DPP providers.
- A total of 4,875 children in the 2014-2015 school year received approval for DPP tuition credits.
- Of 255 sites, 211 have a Qualistar Rating™ of 3 or 4 stars, the two highest ratings.
- The vast majority of DPP students attended top rated classrooms. In 2014-2015, over 86 percent of DPP students attended a 3- or 4-star classroom.
- In 2014-15, a total of 87 classrooms at 34 sites completed the rerating process, bringing the total number of classrooms re-rated since 2010 to 788.
- In November of 2014, citizens in the city and county of Denver voted to extend the sales tax supporting DPP through 2026, thus continuing the authorization of the program.

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

- **DPP continues to provide high-quality preschool to a majority of four-year-olds in Denver**, serving nearly 4,900 children this year.
- DPP continues to have a **positive impact on preschool quality** in Denver. Over 82 percent of DPP sites are rated as 3- or 4-star programs, and providers continue to rate highly the quality improvement supports offered by the program, especially coaching support and financial assistance with materials and equipment.
- Parents are focused on **teacher qualifications, positive teacher-child interactions, and safety** when considering a preschool for their child. In determining a preschool's reputation of quality, parents are more likely to **rely on recommendations from people they know**, and on broader community perceptions, than on the Qualistar Rating™ or national accreditation status.
- The **DPP tuition credit allows parents to work or attend school**, with 74 percent of all parents reporting that DPP allows them to work, and 88 percent of low-income parents reporting the same. Over 40 percent of parents report that DPP allows them to attend school. Again, this impact was greatest for lower-income families, and for children from black or Hispanic families.
- Parents continue to report that by enrolling their child in preschool they hope that they will **experience challenge or a broader range of activities, learn academic fundamentals, and develop the ability to interact with other children**.
- **DPP operations continue to run smoothly**, with providers indicating very few operational or policy concerns. Providers also report that tuition payments are received in a timely manner. A majority of parents report that the length of time they are waiting for notification of DPP approval remains less than three weeks.



## Appendix A: Denver Preschool Program Evaluation Questions and Detailed Findings

In fall 2007, DPP leadership and the evaluation team developed a set of evaluation questions. These questions were refined in 2013 to take into account changes in DPP operations and procedures. The current evaluation questions are listed below. The questions are designed to track the effectiveness of the theory of action for the DPP program and they guide the yearly evaluation of the program.

*Table A1*

DPP Evaluation Questions	
<b>A. Information and Knowledge about DPP: What do families know about DPP and how accurate is that knowledge?</b>	
1.	Are parents informed about the existence of DPP and about how to apply for the tuition credits?
2.	Are parents aware of the goals of DPP? Are parents aware that DPP is distinct from DPS?
3.	Are parents aware of how DPP is funded?
4.	Does this knowledge vary by income level or language spoken at home?
<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>	
1.	Does the DPP application system make it easy for families and providers to participate?
2.	Does the system work effectively across family income levels and/or the language spoken by the parent?
<b>C. Tuition credits: Do tuition credits encourage parents from all income levels to send their four-year-old children to high-quality preschools?</b>	
1.	Does the availability of the preschool tuition credits encourage families to enroll in the program?
2.	Do families opt for higher quality programs because of the tuition credits?
3.	Is family behavior in these areas influenced by income level or the language spoken by the parent?
<b>D. Quality Improvement: Do quality improvement resources change the quality of participating preschool programs?</b>	
1.	Did the number of rated and/or accredited programs change as a result of the DPP QI program?
2.	Did the quality of participating programs increase as a result of DPP?
3.	Did changes in quality vary by provider type or star rating?
<b>E. Child Development: What is the impact of DPP on student development?</b>	
1.	Did children make progress in their development while in participating DPP preschool environments (i.e., language, literacy, mathematics, social-emotional development, etc.)?
2.	To what extent and in what areas are DPP students ready for Kindergarten?
3.	Do children from different income levels and with different primary languages make similar progress in their development while in DPP early childhood environments?
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)? Is attendance at higher-quality preschool programs associated with greater kindergarten readiness?



The following section addresses all of the evaluation questions set forth in Table A1 above in the order that they appear in the table with one exception. The Child Outcomes questions, E1 through 4, are addressed in a separate report prepared by the Clayton Early Learning Institute, and in a memo produced by APA addressing TCAP results for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 cohorts. Answers to a given evaluation question come from both parents and providers, and were 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.

## A. Information and Knowledge about DPP Outreach

### *What do families know about DPP and how accurate is that knowledge?*

In 2012, over 70 percent of parents reporting waiting 3 weeks or more before notification of DPP approval. In 2013 notification times reduced, and this trend continued in 2014 and 2015, with slightly more than 55 percent of parents waiting 3 weeks or more in 2015, as can be seen in Figure A1. Figure A2 shows that in 2014, the extended length of time for notification is driven primarily by DPS providers, with 50 percent of families in DPS waiting a month or more, compared to just under 16 percent in community sites.

Figure A1

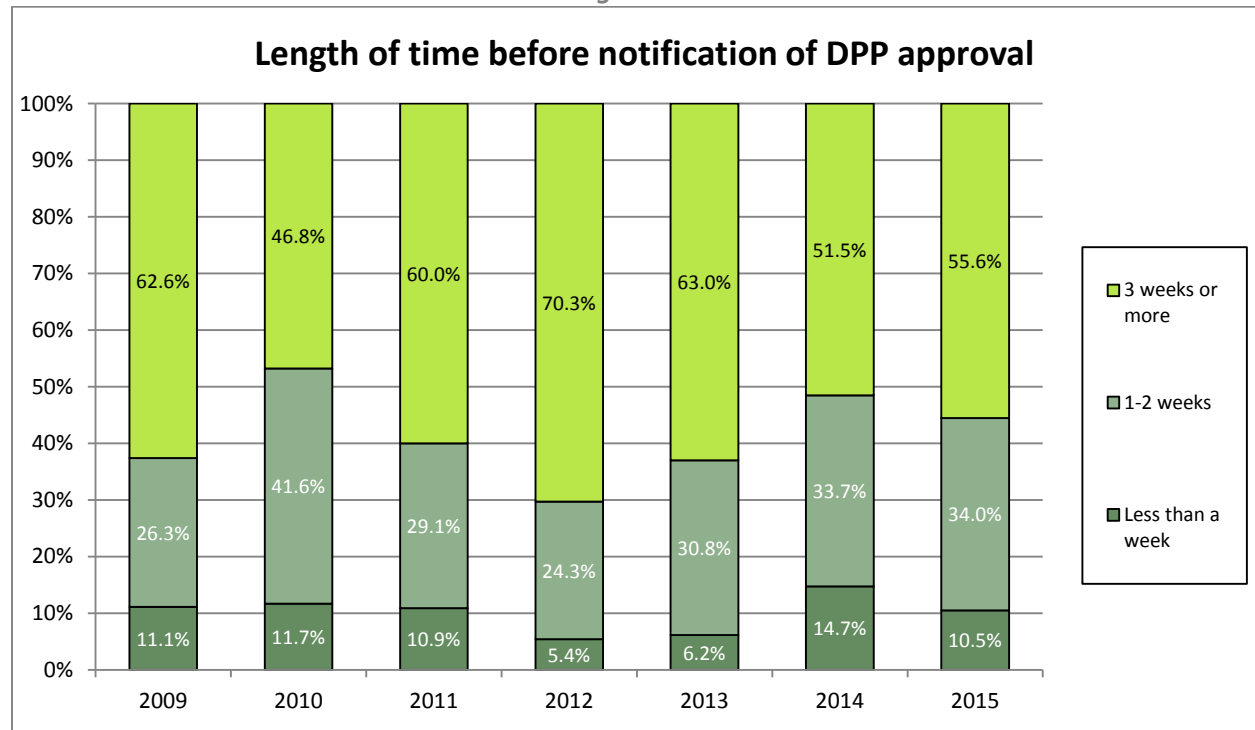
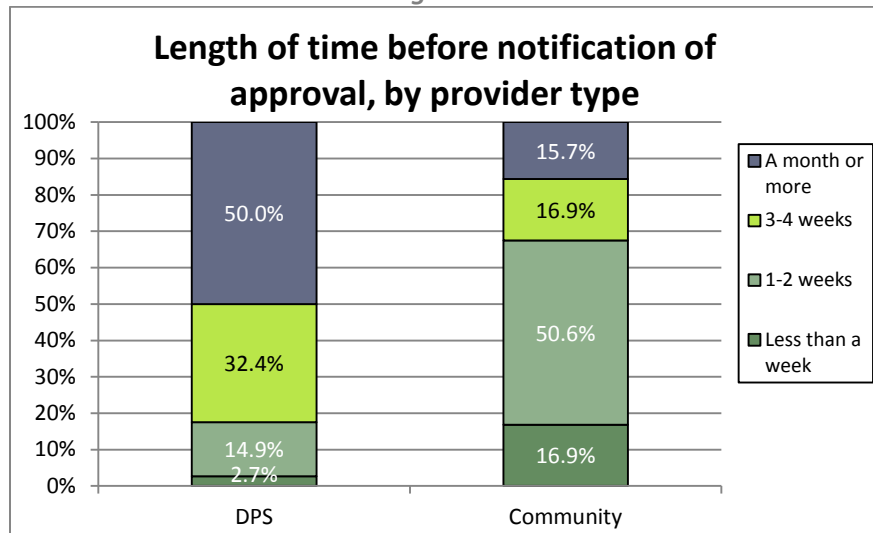


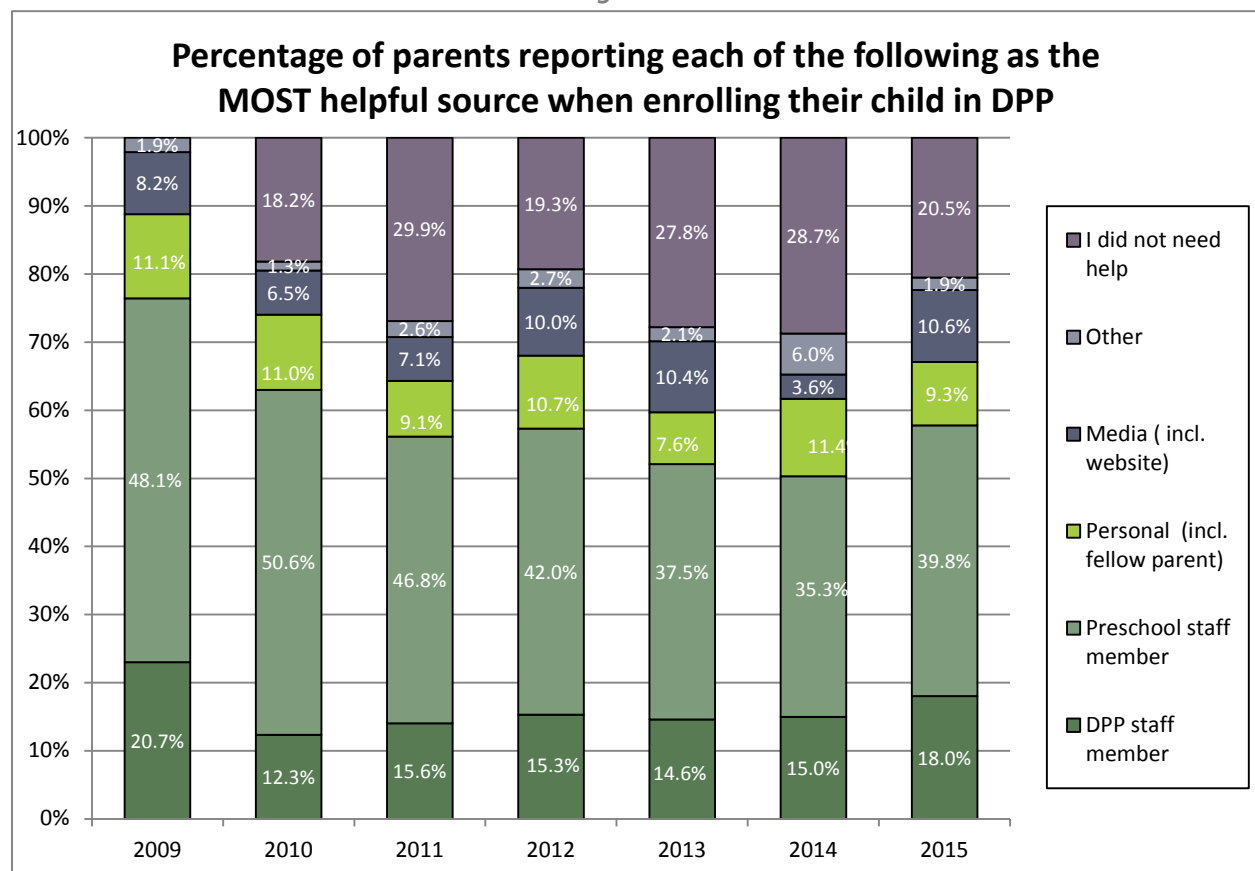


Figure A2



The number of parents reporting not needing any help when enrolling their child in DPP decreased in 2015, after increasing in the prior two years. Of the parents seeking help, nearly 40 percent found preschool staff members to be the most helpful source of assistance, with 18 percent citing DPP staff members as the most helpful source, as seen in Figure A3.

Figure A3





As in prior years, in 2015 parents reported that they first heard about DPP primarily through a personal relationship/experience. Figure A4 shows that in 2015, nearly eight percent of parents first heard about DPP from a DPP staff member, up from only 1.4 percent in 2013.

Figure A4

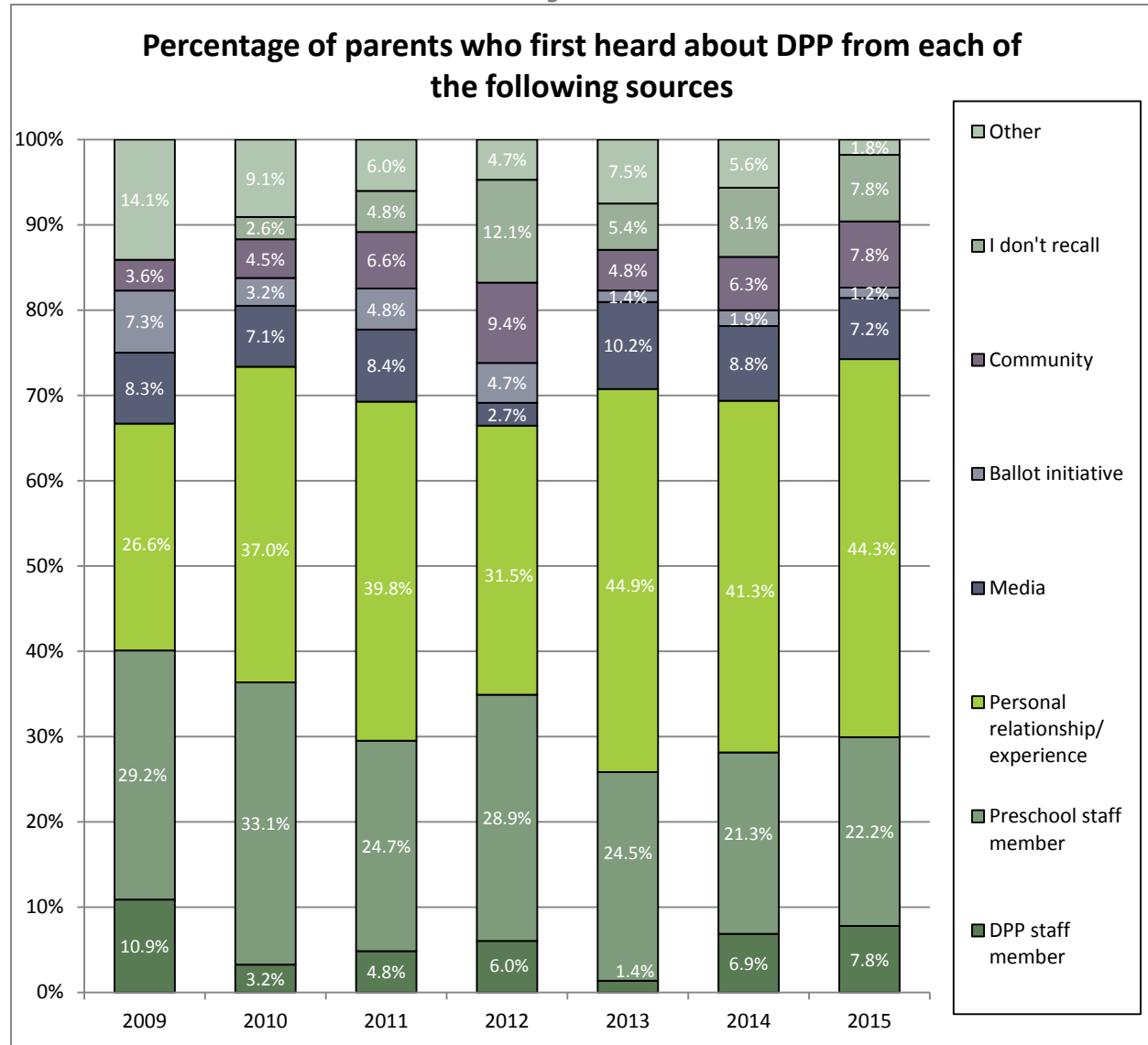
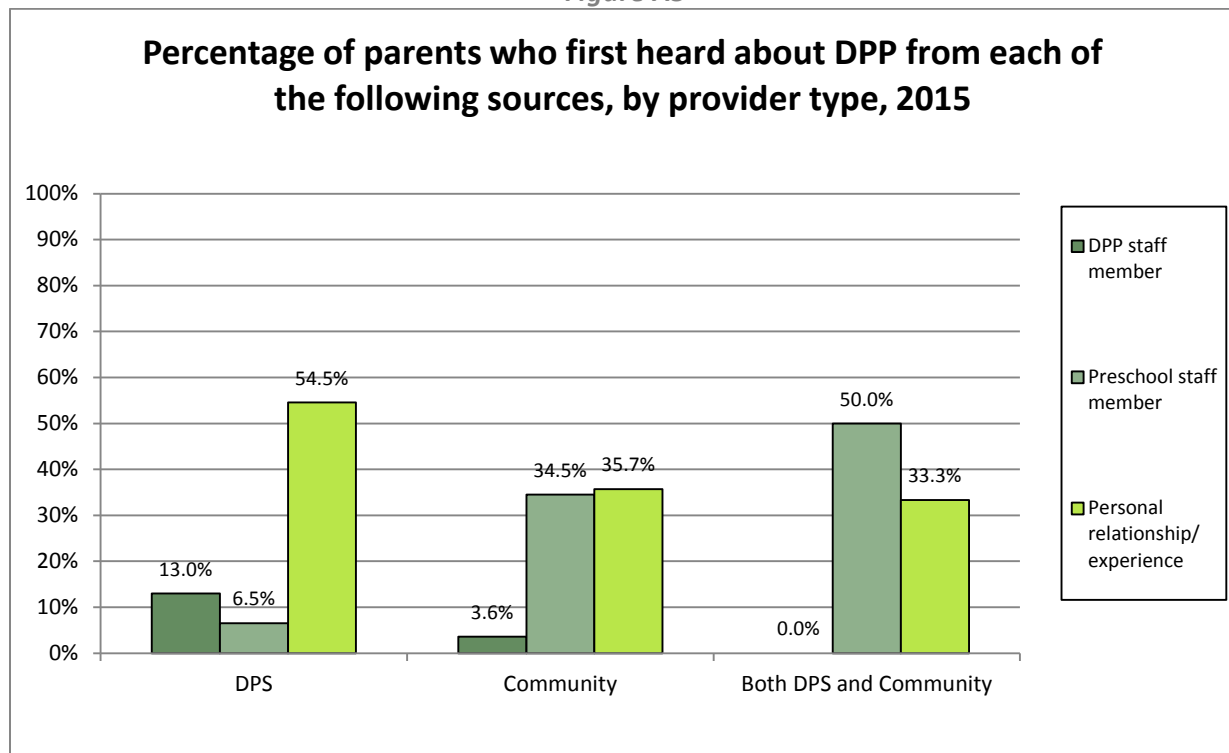


Figure A5 breaks down these data by program type, and shows that parents enrolling their children in DPS sites were much more likely to have first heard about DPP from a personal relationship or experience, rather than from a preschool or DPP staff member. In community sites, parents were about as equally likely to have first heard about DPP from preschool staff members as they were from a personal relationship or experience.



Figure A5







## 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?*

The percentage of parents seeking assistance as they applied to DPP rose in 2015, after being consistently around 20 percent for the past three years. In 2015, over 30 percent of parents asked for assistance, as displayed in Figure A6. Figure A7 shows that, among those who did seek and receive assistance, they rated the assistance very good, with a slight increase over last year. This represents the highest rating since the program began.

Figure A6

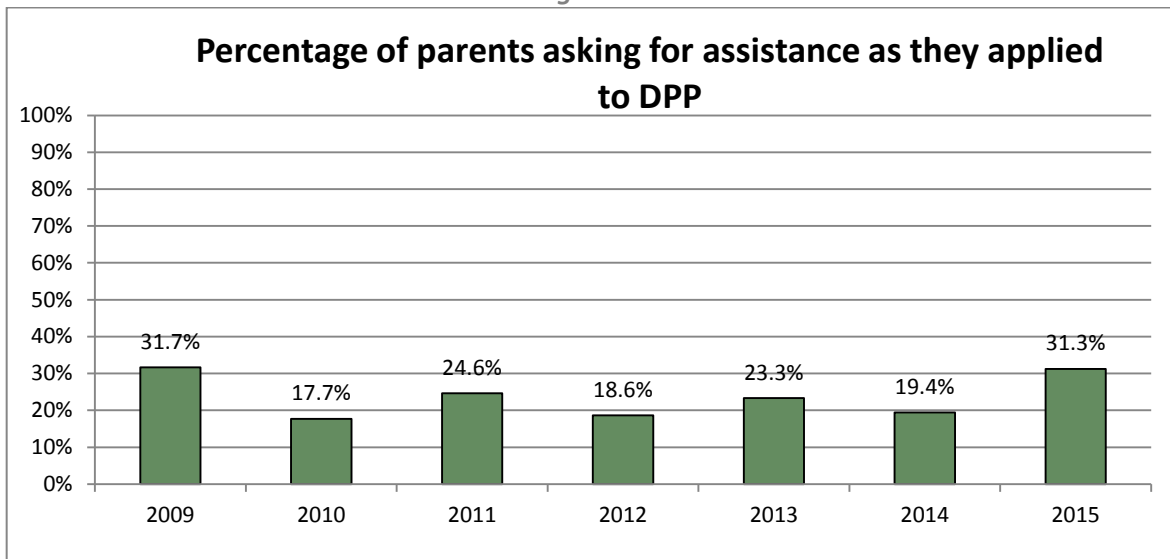
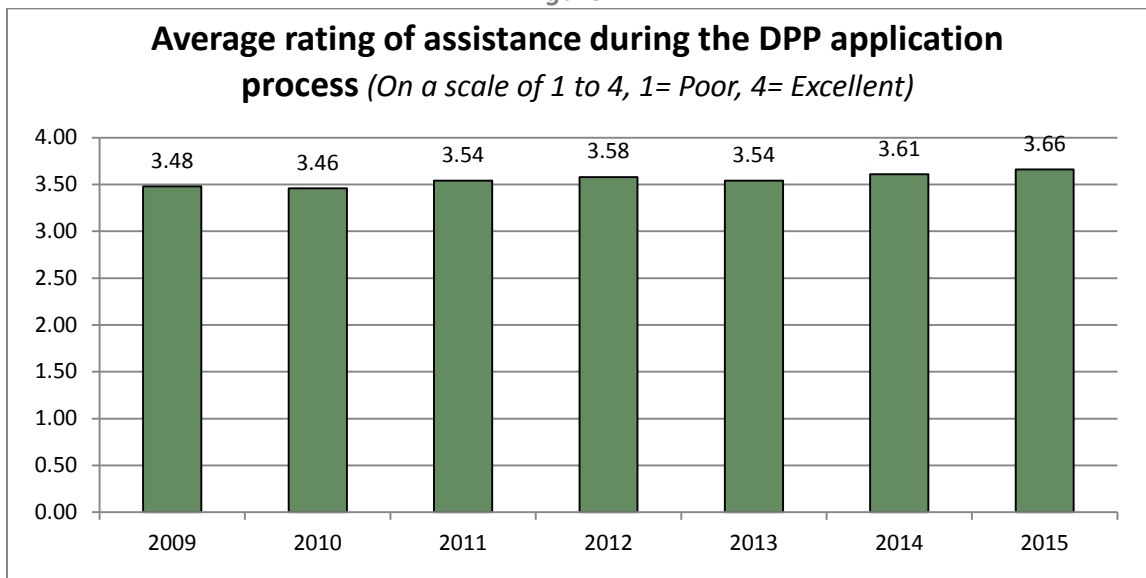


Figure A7





Among providers, just over 35 percent asked for administrative assistance from DPP during the 2014-15 school year, a slight increase from 2014, but a number that has been fairly consistent over the past six years, as seen in Figure A8. Figure A9 shows that those seeking assistance rated that assistance as useful, but less useful than the past three years.

Figure A8

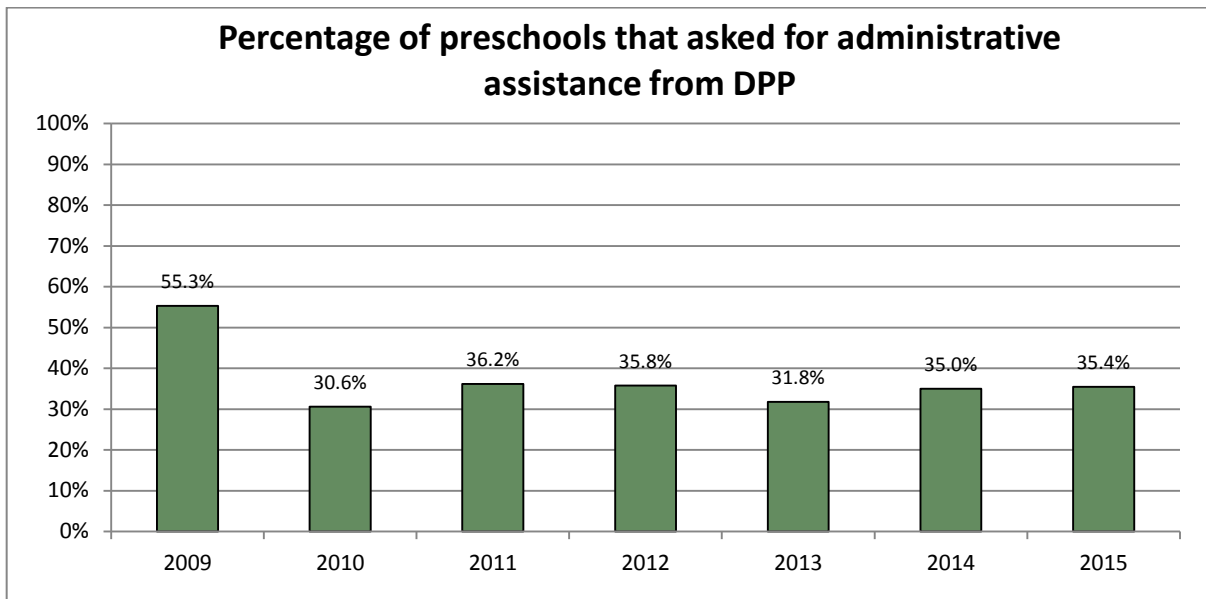
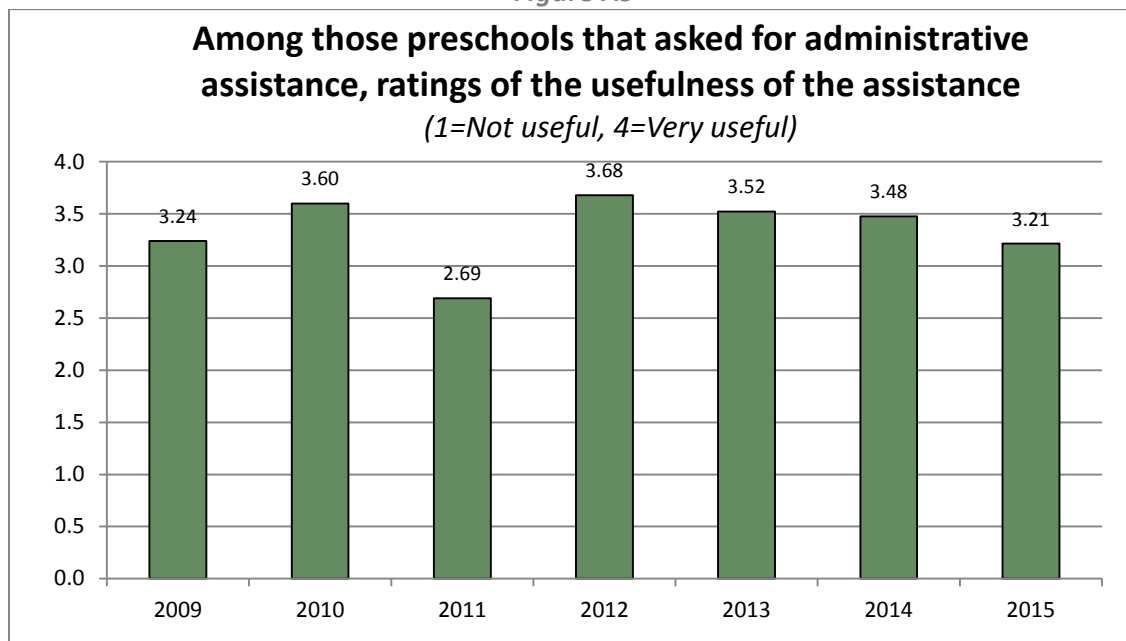


Figure A9

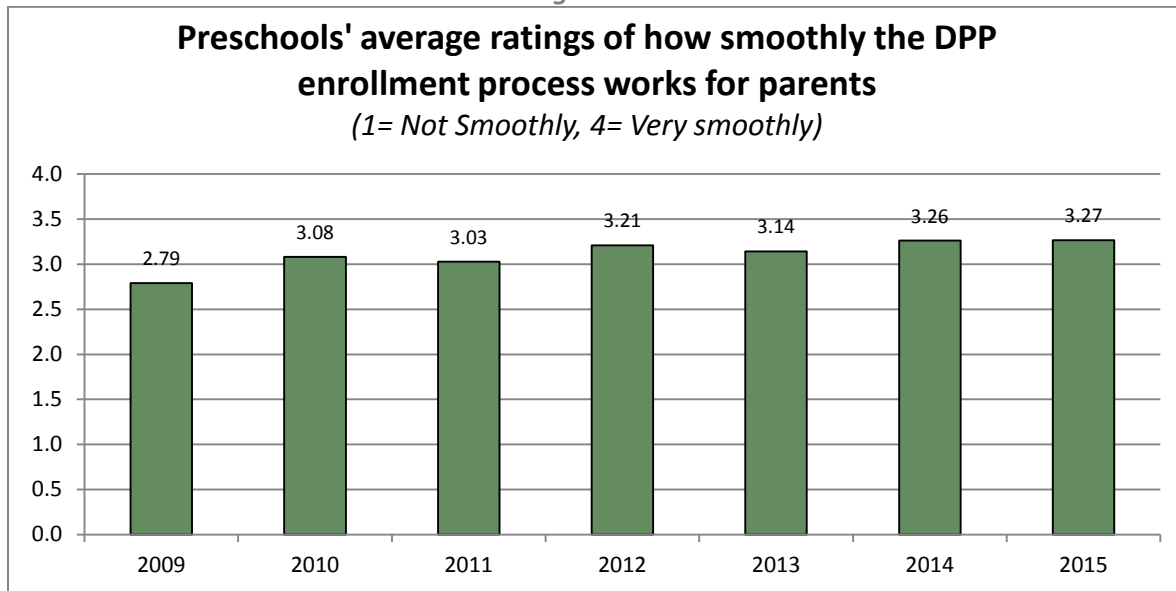


Overall, providers are positive about DPP operations. Provider ratings related to the enrollment process continued to be high, as seen in Figure A10. Provider ratings of how smoothly the tuition credit process



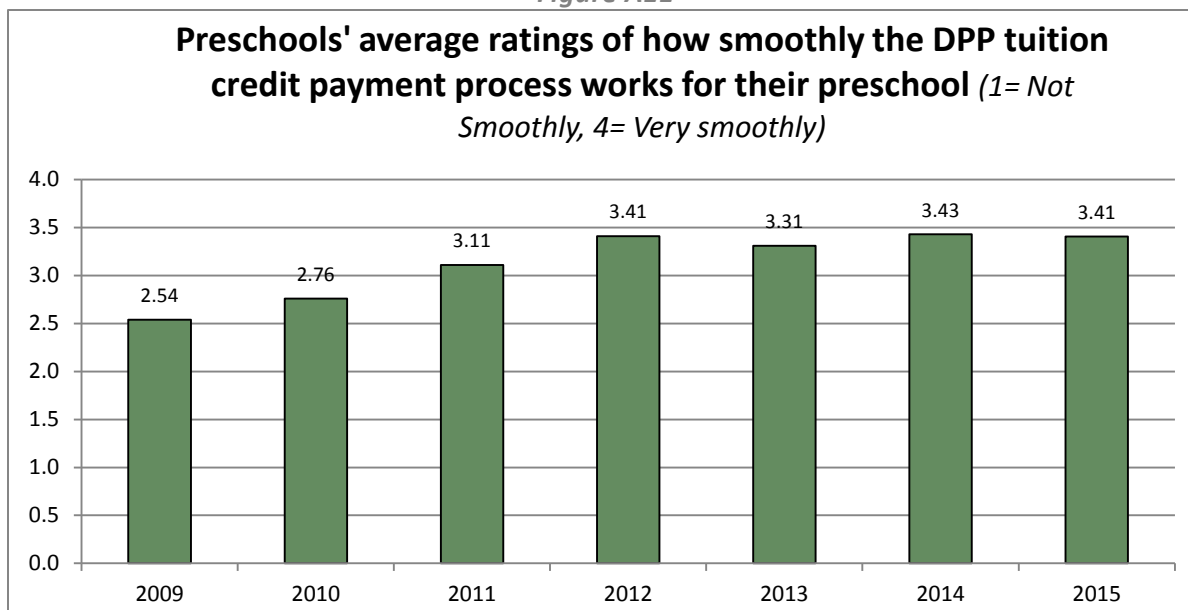
works for them saw a small decrease in 2015, as seen in Figure A11, however the rating has been fairly consistent since 2012.

Figure A10



We did not ask this question to DPS sites after 2010.

Figure A11

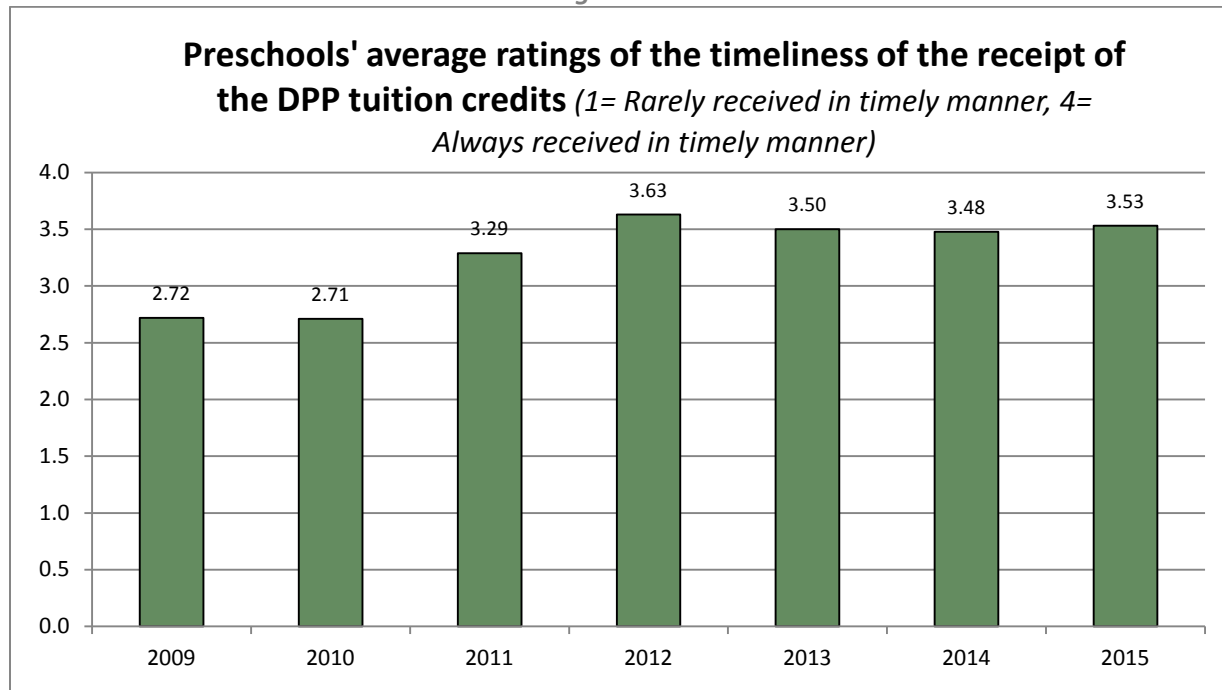


This question was not asked of DPS sites after 2010.

Providers reported that payments are received in a timely manner (Figure A12), but they also reported that they were still not completely comfortable explaining how the tuition credits are determined, as seen in Figure A13.

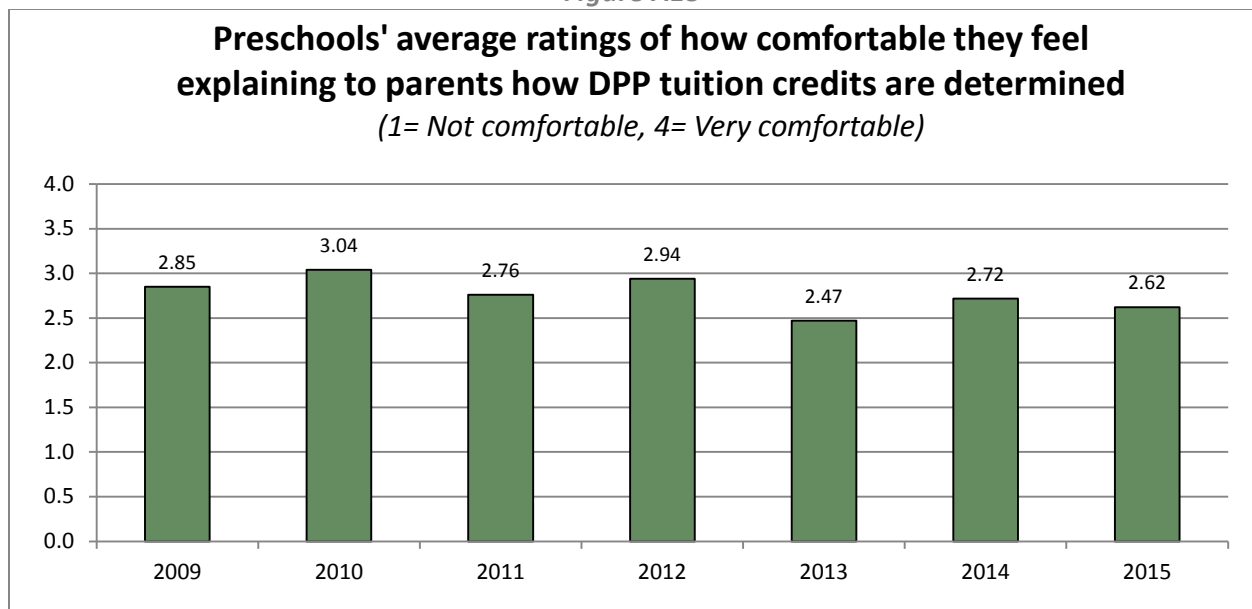


Figure A12



*This question was not asked of DPS sites after 2010.*

Figure A13





### C. Tuition Credits

*Do tuition credits encourage parents from all income levels to send their four-year-old children to high-quality preschools?*

The DPP tuition credit was shown to have influenced both the decision to enroll children in preschool, and the number of hours of preschool attendance. Figure A14 shows that just under one-third of parents report that they would not have enrolled their child in preschool without the credit.

Figure A14

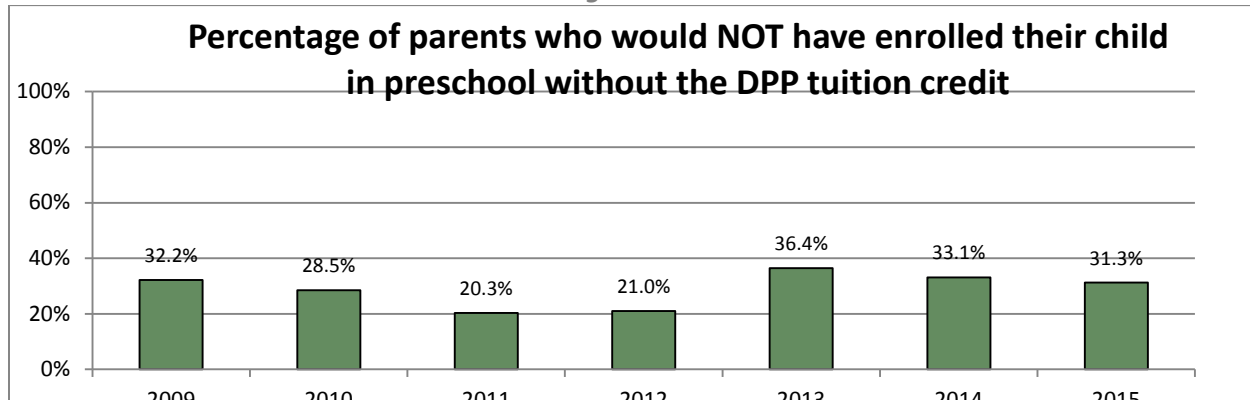


Figure A15 breaks down these data by income tier and illustrates that the lowest-income tier families are more likely to rely on the tuition credit to enroll their child in preschool, compared to the higher-income families. Figure A16 illustrates these data by race and ethnicity, with black and Hispanic families much more likely to have not enrolled their child in preschool if they did not have access to the tuition credit. Taken together, these two charts illustrate the larger impact that the DPP tuition credit has on low income and minority families.

Figure A15

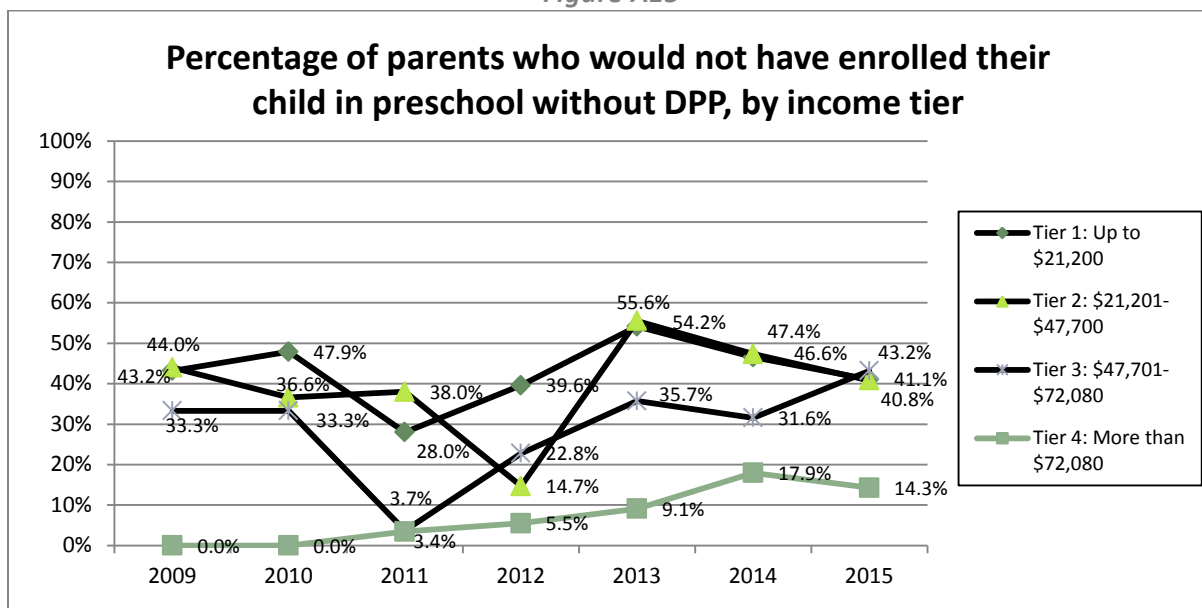
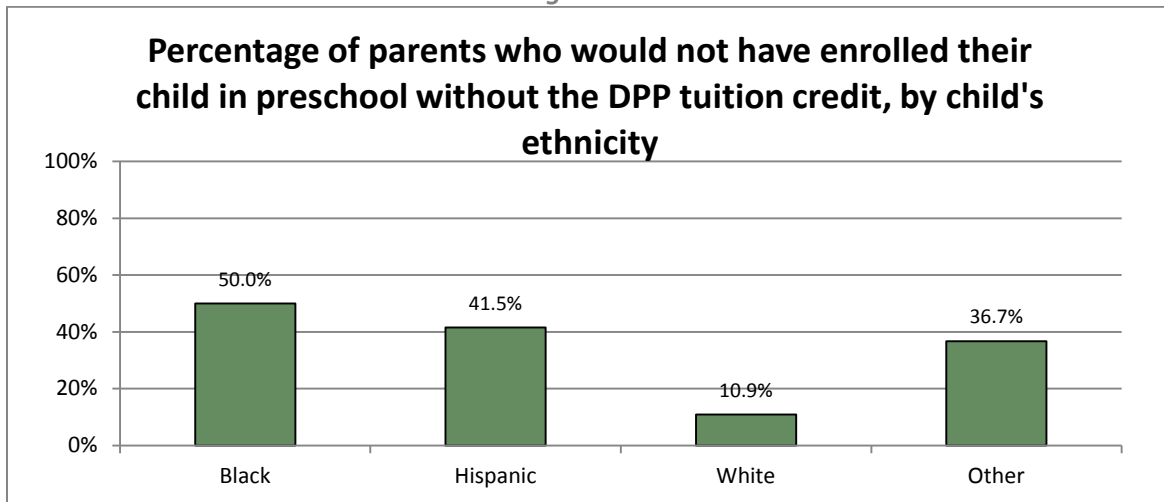




Figure A16



The tuition credit also influences the number of hours children are enrolled in preschool, especially for low-income and black or Hispanic families. Figure A17 shows that over 57 percent of the lowest-income families, and over 65 percent of the second income tier families, increased their child's hours in preschool as a result of DPP. Figure A18 shows that 60 percent of Hispanic families increased their child's preschool hours, compared with only 23 percent of white families.

Figure A17

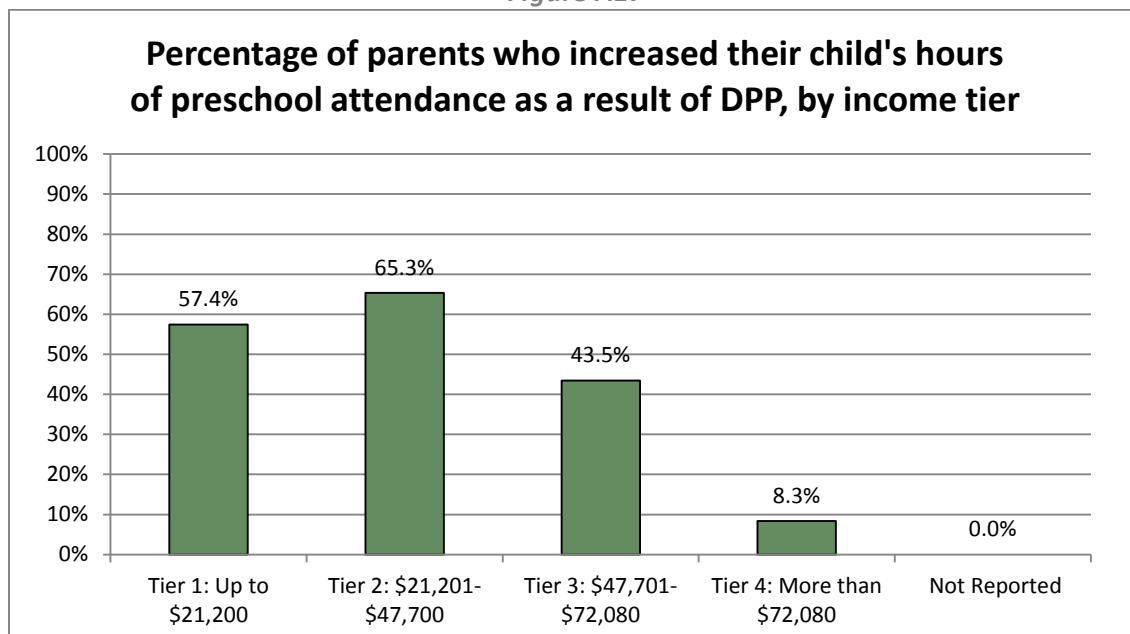
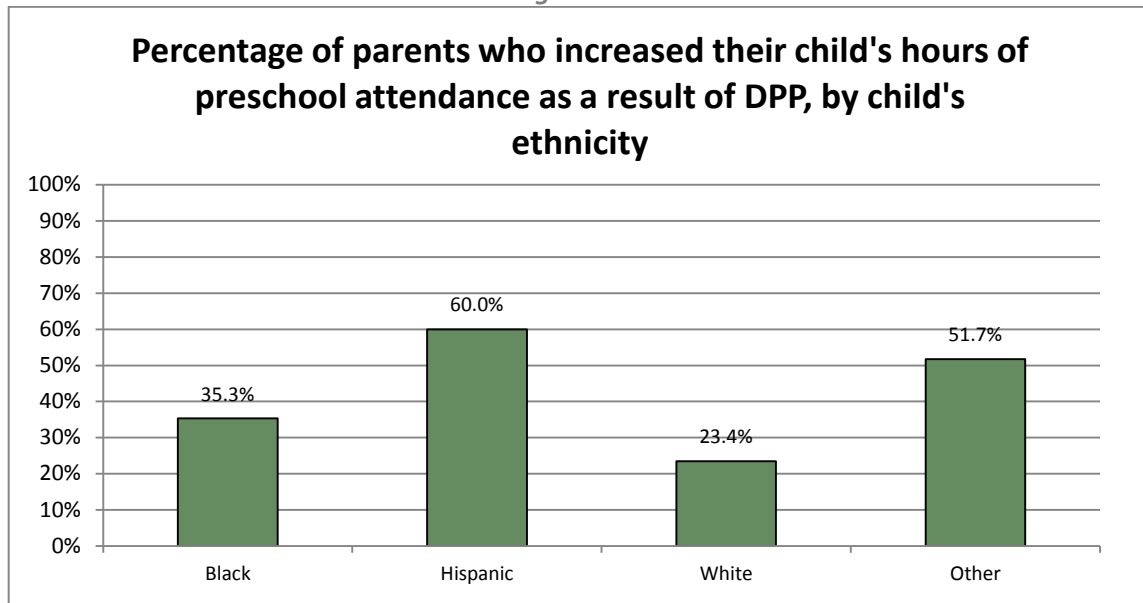




Figure A18



In addition to helping parents enroll their child in preschool for longer hours, the tuition credit also helps parents keep children continuously enrolled in preschool throughout the year. As shown in Figure A19, over 92 percent of parents reported this, with over 98 percent of parents in the lowest income tier, and 100 percent of parents in income Tier 2 reporting the tuition credit helps them keep their child continuously enrolled (see Figure A20).

Figure A19

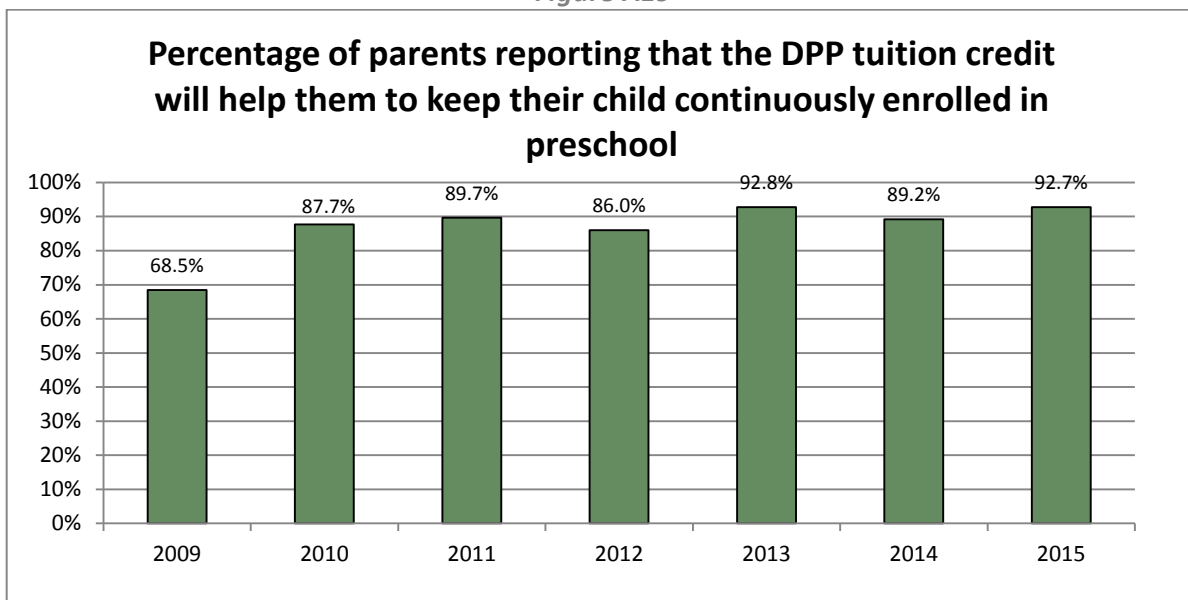
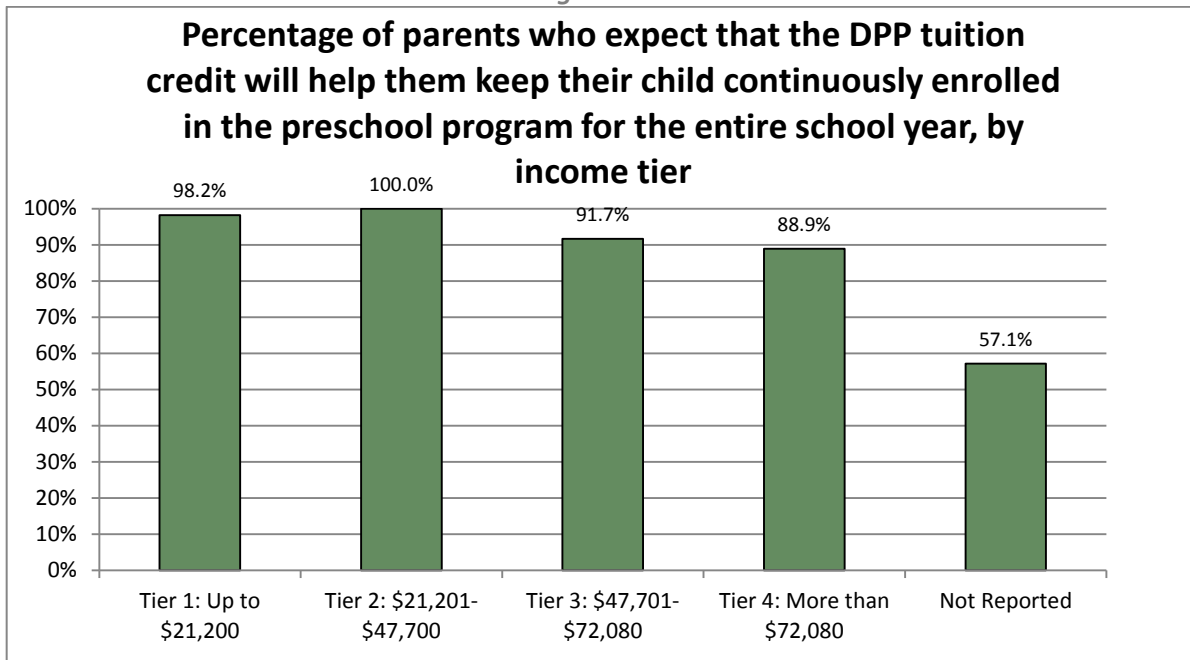




Figure A20



The tuition credit also has an impact on choice of preschool. Forty percent of parents reported that the tuition credit influenced their choice of preschool, a 10 percent increase over 2014, as seen in Figure A21. Figure A22 shows that this number is even higher among parents who would not have enrolled their child without the DPP tuition credit, at 64 percent.

Figure A21

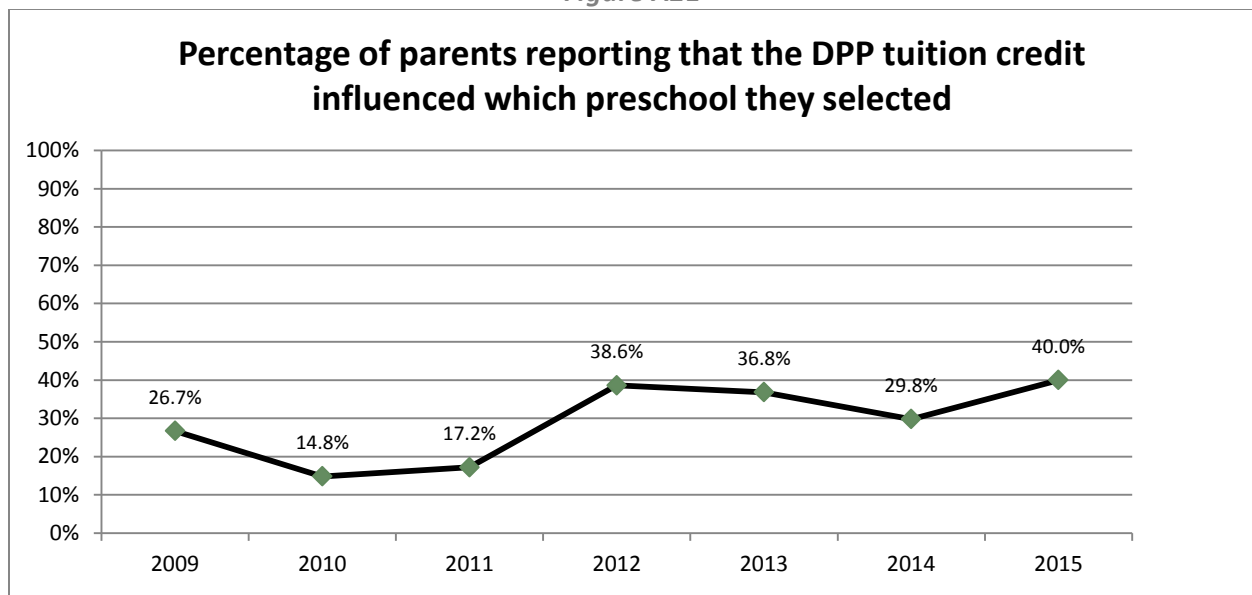
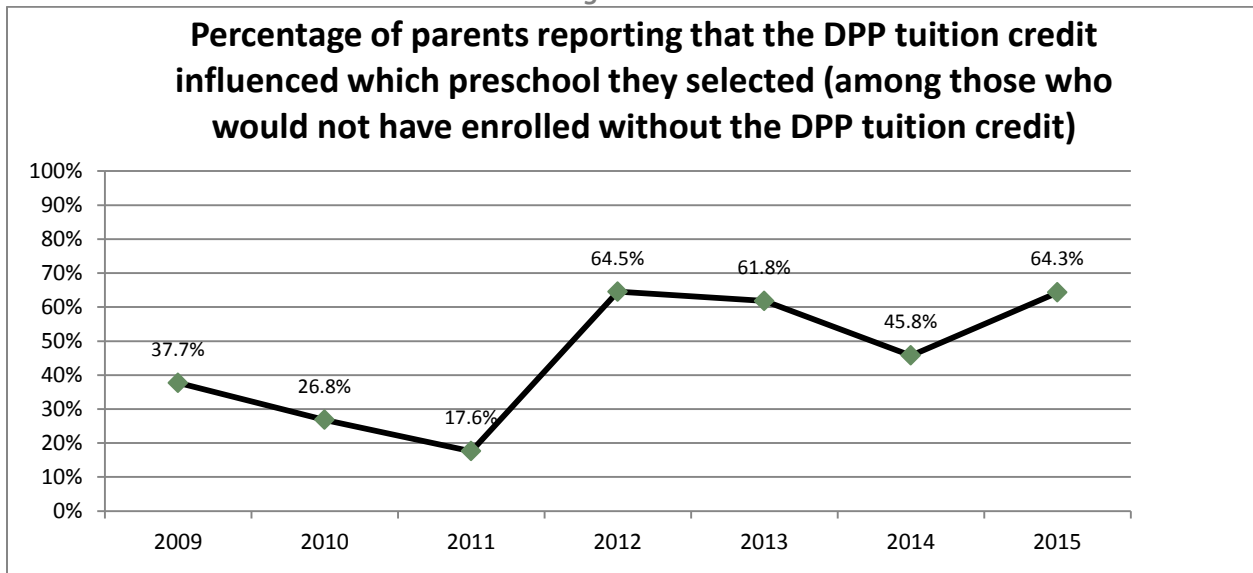






Figure A22



The impact of the tuition credit on school choice is seen to vary widely by income level and race and ethnicity. As shown in Figure A23, nearly 60 percent of Hispanic families reported that DPP influenced their choice of preschool, as did over 55 percent of black families, compared to 18.5 percent of white families.

Figure A23

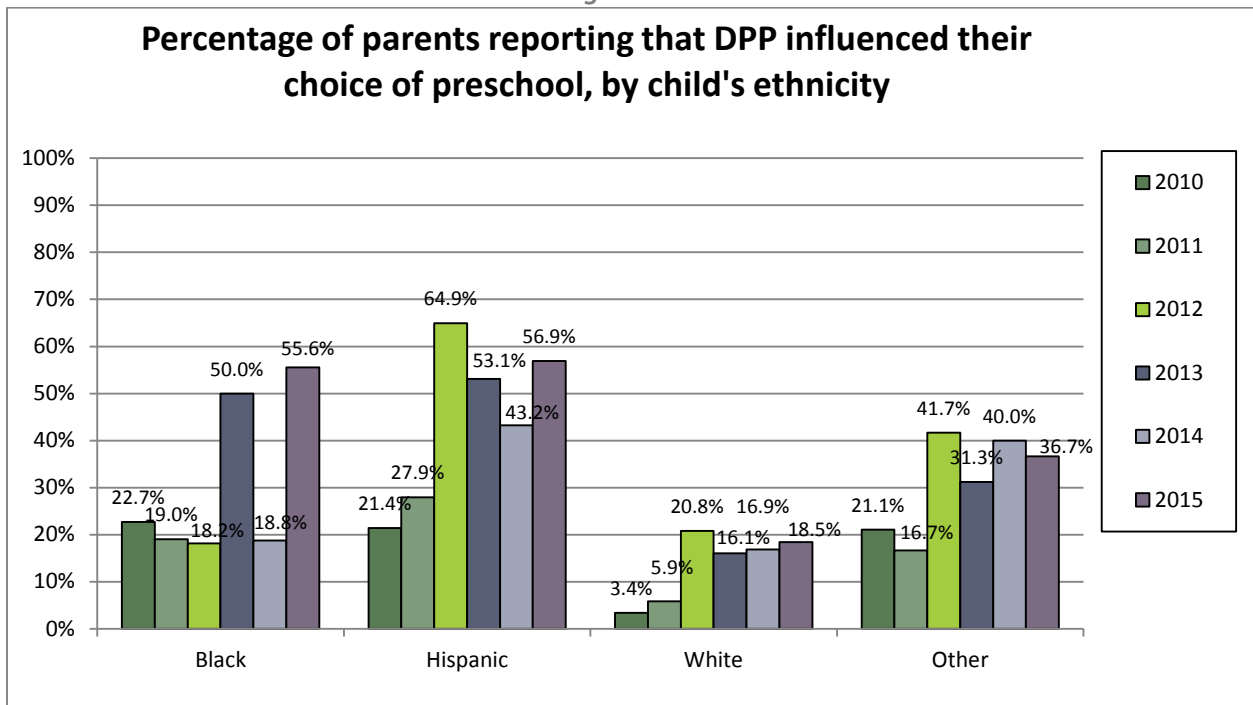
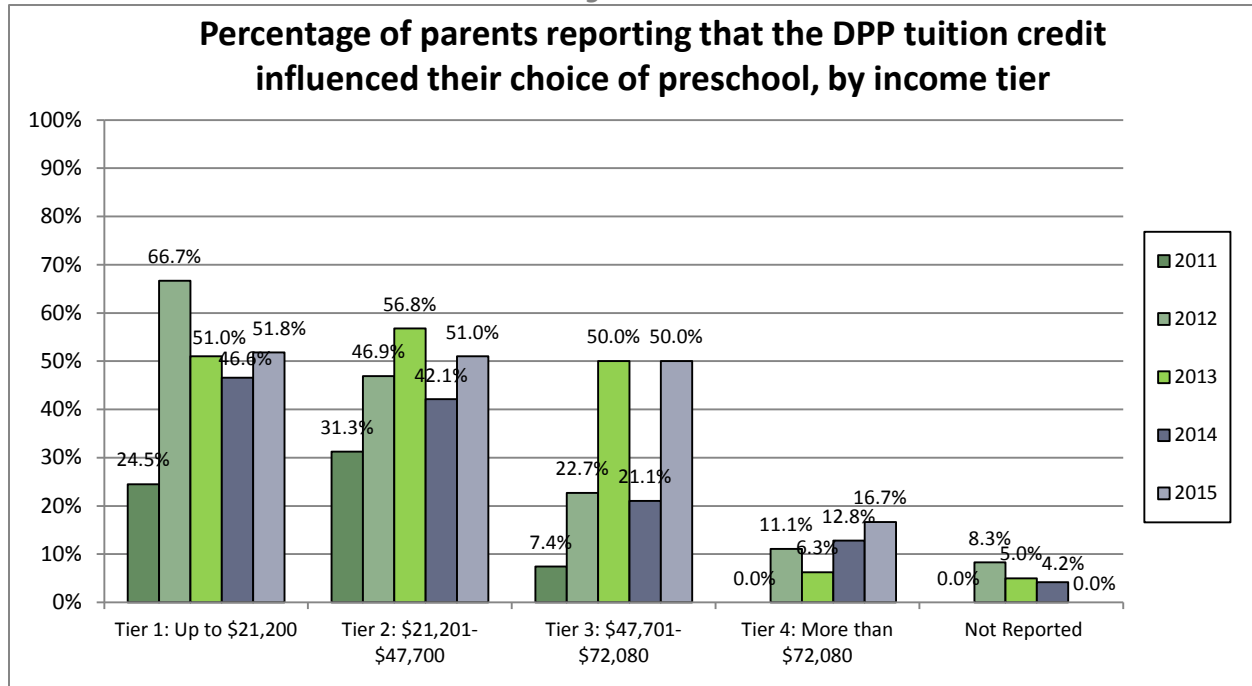




Figure A24 shows that around 50 percent of parents in the Tier 1 and 2 income categories reported that the tuition credit influenced their preschool choice, compared to under 17 percent of parents in the highest income category.

Figure A24



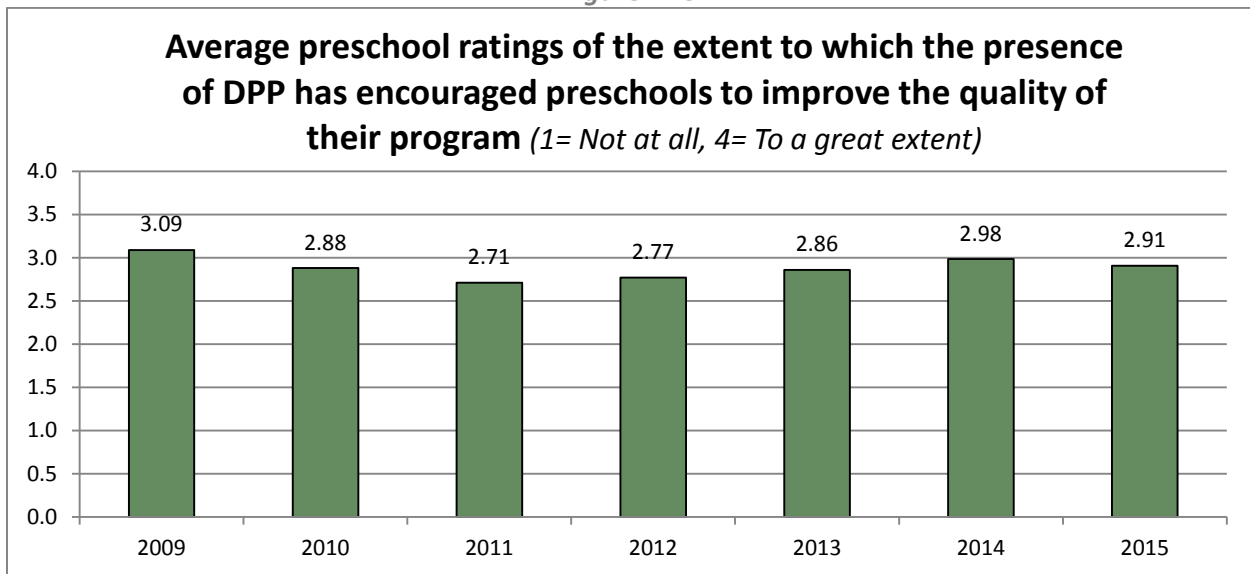


## D. Quality Improvement

### *Do quality improvement resources change the quality of participating preschool programs?*

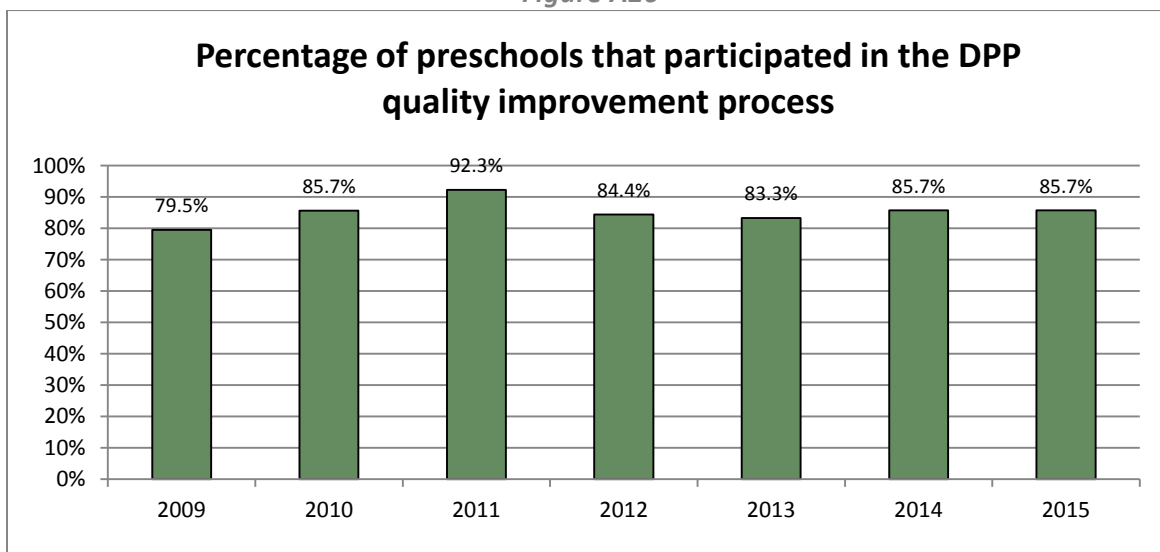
In 2015, providers largely continued to report that the presence of DPP has encouraged them to improve the quality of their program, as shown in Figure A25.

Figure A25



One of the key mechanisms DPP uses to help improve preschool quality in Denver is through its quality improvement (QI) process, which provides resources to providers to increase quality. As shown in Figure A26, nearly 86 percent of providers took advantage of DPP QI resources in 2015.

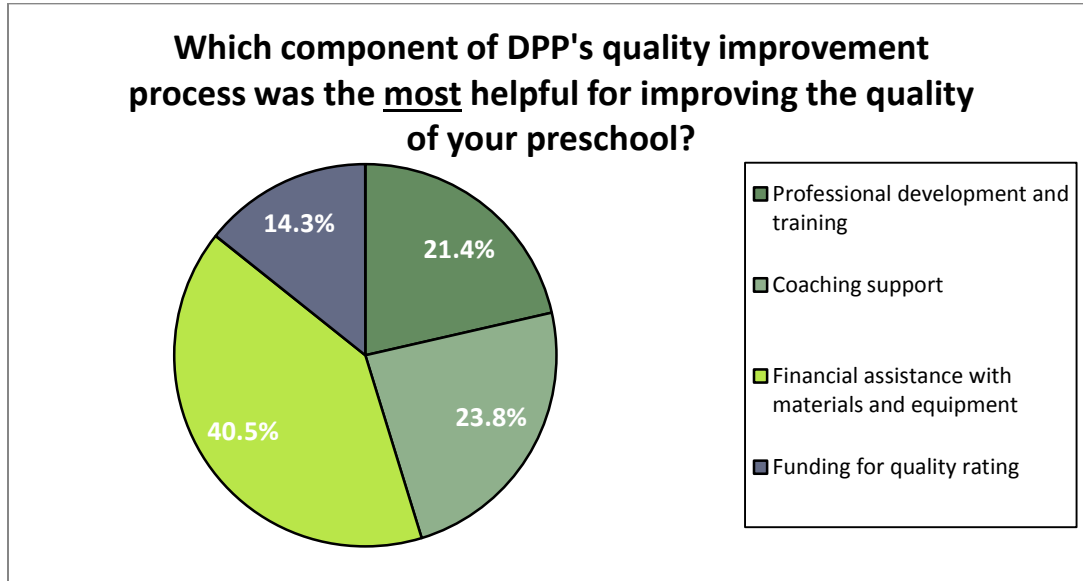
Figure A26



*This question was not asked of DPS sites after 2010.*

Figure A27 shows that providers find “financial assistance for materials and equipment” the most helpful component for improving the quality of preschool, with “coaching support” and “professional development and training” also rated as very helpful.

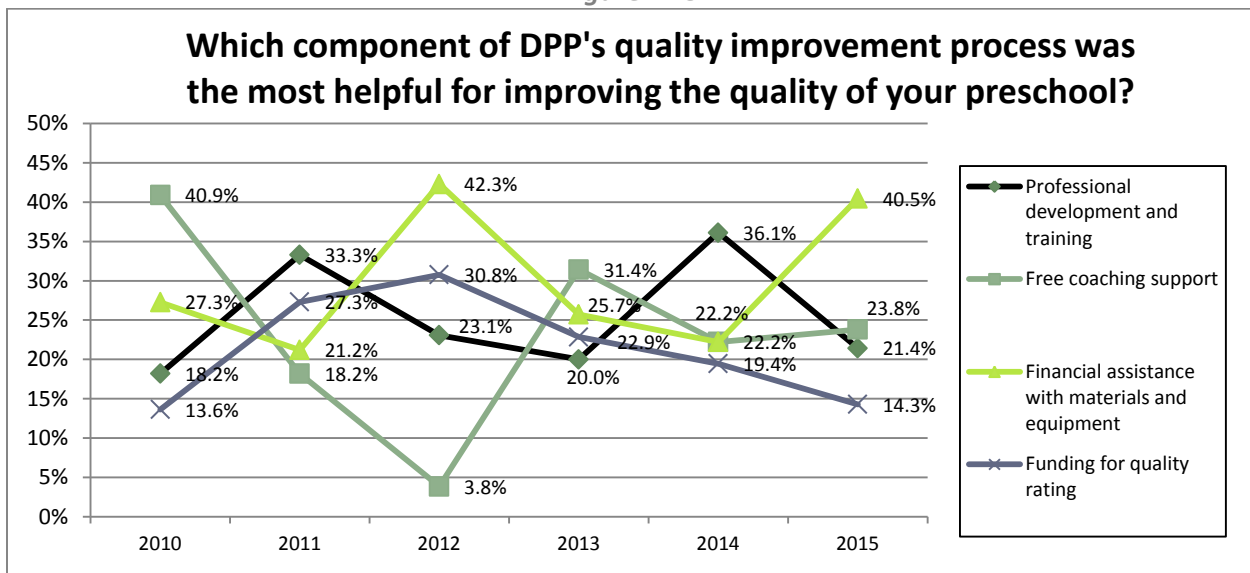
Figure A27



*This question was not asked of DPS sites after 2010.*

As can be seen in Figure A28, providers' rating of which component was most useful has changed often. In 2012 “financial assistance with materials and equipment” was rated as the most useful by providers, in 2013 “coaching support” was the highest rated, and in 2014 it was “funding for quality rating” that was rated highest. In 2015, providers once again rated “financial assistance with materials and equipment” as the most helpful component.

Figure A28

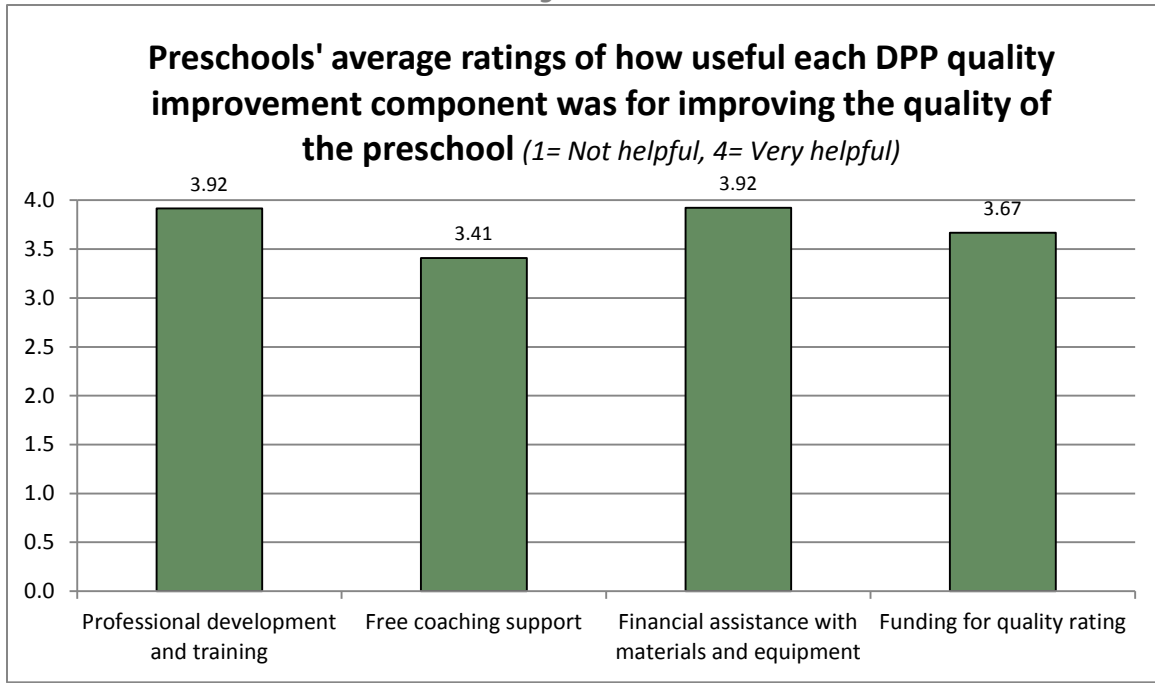


*This question was not asked of DPS sites after 2010.*



Despite the yearly variation in the ratings of which component was most useful, Figure A29 shows that providers do rate all components of the QI process very highly, with all four components receiving a score of 3.4 or higher on a four point scale.

Figure A29



The 2014-2015 school year is the sixth year in which DPP sites have gone through the rerating process and as such, most sites have been through the rerating process at least twice (sites are commonly rerated every 2 years). In 2015, a total of 87 classrooms were rerated, at 34 sites, as can be seen in Table A2 below. Note, fewer programs were rerated in 2015 as this was a shortened time period before the rating system transitioned from the Qualistar Rating™ to the new Colorado Shines QRIS.

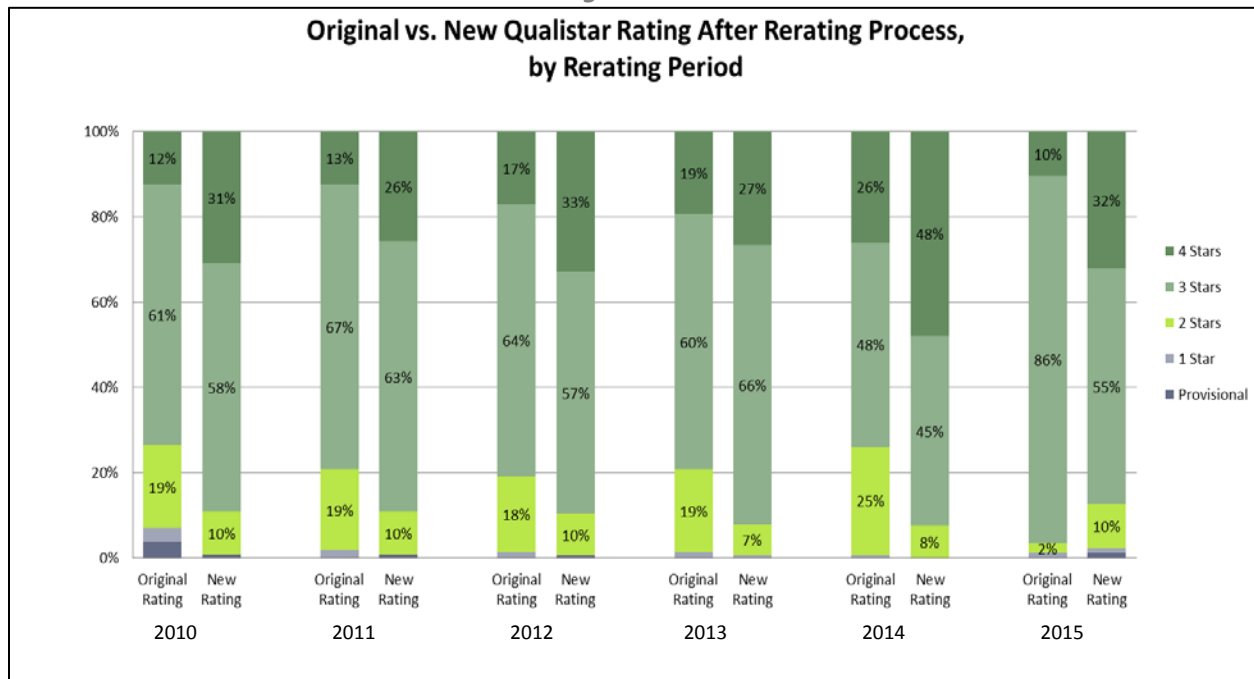
Table A2

Rerating Period	# of Classrooms	# of Programs (Sites)
Rerated by March 2010	129	72
Rerated April 2010-March 2011	120	63
Rerated April 2011-March 2012	146	80
Rerated April 2012-March 2013	160	83
Rerated April 2013-March 2014	146	46
Rerated April 2014-January 2015	87	34

Of the total number of DPP rerated classrooms, 92 percent now hold a star rating of 3 or 4, with 32 percent earning the highest rating of 4 stars. Figure A30 shows the initial star ratings of all rerated classrooms as well as their new ratings, disaggregated by rerating time period.

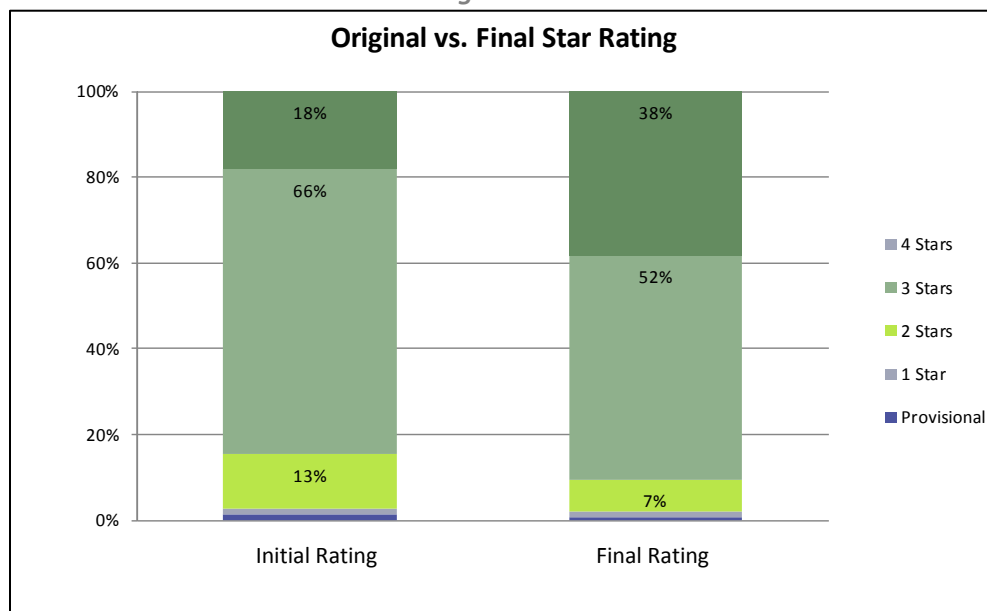


Figure A30



A total of 417 classrooms have been rerated at least once. Overall, for these classrooms, just over 80 percent started out as a 3-star rating or higher (18 percent with a 4-star rating). Thirteen percent had a 2- star rating and the remaining three percent had a 1-star or provisional rating. Star rating results appear to be changing in a positive direction after rerating, with 90 percent of programs having a rating of at least 3, and the number of programs receiving the highest rating of 4 stars increasing more than twofold from 18 percent, to 38 percent. Figure A31 compares each classroom’s original rating to their final rating.

Figure A31

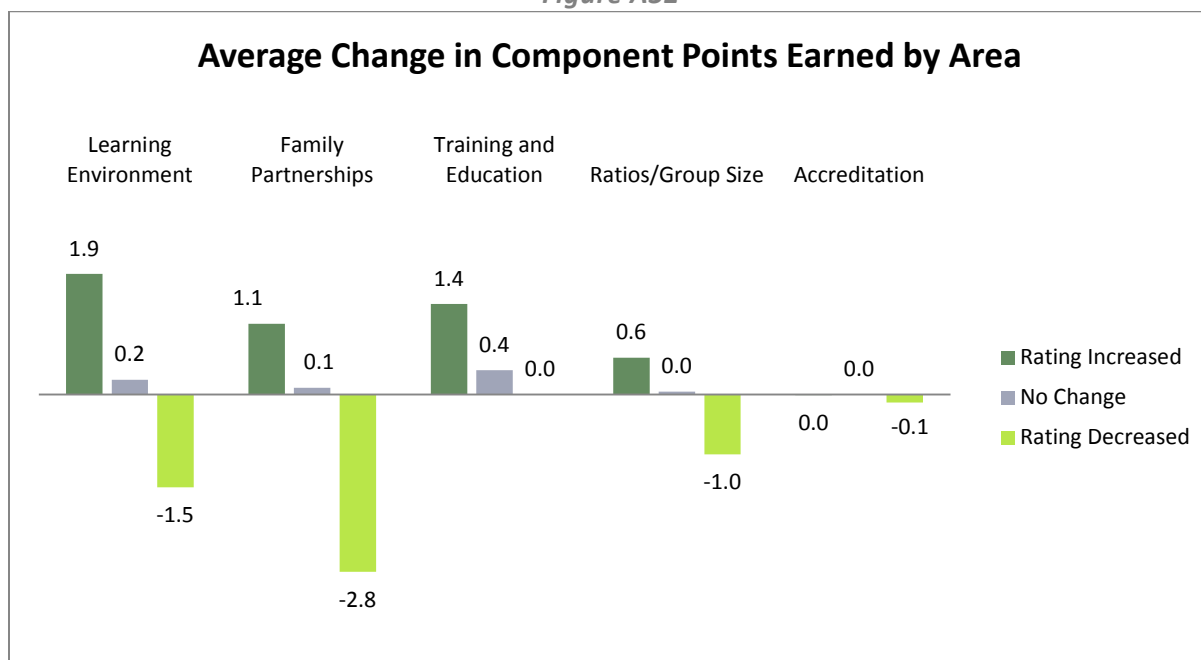




In the Qualistar Rating™ process, sites can earn a total of 42 points. The intervals between star rating levels are roughly seven points, so there can be some point movement in the score a site received without a change in rating. The differences in points earned can also be separately analyzed according 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.

Figure A32 shows the average point change in each of these areas, for all classrooms, grouped by whether their star rating increased, decreased and stayed the same. When comparing points earned for a classroom's original program rating, the classrooms that had their program's rating increase, gained more than one point on average in the areas of Learning Environment (1.9 point gain on average), Family Partnerships (1.1 point gain) and Training and Education (1.4 point gain). Conversely, classrooms that had their rating decrease, lost the majority of points on average in the area of Family Partnerships (2.8 points lost on average), following by a 1.5 point loss on average in Learning Environment scores, and a 1.0 point loss in the area of ratio/group size.

Figure A32



A more detailed analysis of provider rerating results is presented in Appendix G and shows that overall, the improvement in the quality of classrooms who participate in DPP continues to be positive over the past five years, and results are highly consistent when comparing classrooms that have been rerated multiple times. Over 90 percent of classrooms carry at least a 3- star rating after at least one rerating process which indicates a positive impact of the Denver Preschool Program on the quality of preschool classrooms.



## Appendix B: 2014-2015 Parent Survey

### Denver Preschool Program (DPP) Survey

Thank you for completing this survey on the Denver Preschool Program (DPP).

All survey responses will be kept confidential.

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 their ability to interact with other children | <input type="checkbox"/> Experience a creative environment      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop their ability to interact with adults         | <input type="checkbox"/> Experience challenges                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learn academic skills and concepts                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Experience a broad range of activities |
|  | <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 |   |

**2a. 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 community
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- ☐ Yes, I know it      ☐ No, I don't know it

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

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ I don't know

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

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No (skip to question 6)

**5a. 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, certified)   | _____ |
| 3) Positive Interactions between students and teachers | _____ |
| 4) High quality facility, materials, and/or equipment  | _____ |
| 5) Safety  | _____ |
| 6) Substantial parent involvement                      | _____ |
| 7) Diversity (of students and/or staff)                | _____ |
| 8) Class size or student-to-staff ratio                | _____ |
| 9) Other: _____  | _____ |

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





- |   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Preschool makes it possible for parents (one or both) in this family to work              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Preschool makes it possible for parents (one or both) in this family to work longer hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Preschool makes it possible for parents (one or both) to attend school                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Preschool provides parents (one or both) with some free time                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

7. How many days per week do you or another member of your household typically read to your child? (select one)

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None   | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 day  | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 days |

8. 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  | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member   | <input type="checkbox"/> Website: _____                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer: _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool Matters Ballot Initiative          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community presentations or literature<br>(at school/college, church, local event,<br>recreation center) | <input type="checkbox"/> One of my other children participated in DPP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor's office/health clinic   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                 |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not recall                              |

9. 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 approved by voters as part of a ballot initiative
- ☐ That it will need to be approved by voters every 10 years
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What source helped you the MOST when you enrolled your child 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. How did you submit your DPP application? (select one)

- ☐ Through my child's preschool
- ☐ Through the mail
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



12. How difficult or easy was the DPP application process to complete? (circle one)	<u>Very difficult</u> 1                      2                      3 <u>Very easy</u> 4
12a. Did you ask DPP staff for assistance as you completed the application process? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (skip to question 12b)
12ai. If <u>yes</u> to question #12a, how would you rate the quality of assistance you received? (circle one)	<u>Poor</u> <u>Excellent</u> 1                      2                      3                      4
12b. After applying to DPP, how soon did you receive notification that your child was approved? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than a week <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> A month or more
13. If the DPP tuition credit was <u>NOT</u> available, would you have enrolled your child in preschool anyway? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14. Did the availability of the DPP tuition credit influence <u>which preschool</u> you selected? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (skip to question 14b)
14a. If <u>yes</u> to question #14, how important was the tuition credit in your preschool selection decision? (circle one and then skip to question #15)	<u>Not very important</u> <u>Very important</u> 1                      2                      3                      4
14b. If <u>no</u> to question #14, would a larger tuition credit have influenced you to enroll your child in a different preschool? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
15. Did the availability of the DPP tuition credit increase the <u>number of hours</u> that your child attends preschool? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
16. Was your child enrolled in preschool or daycare prior to this school year? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (skip to question 17)
16a. If <u>yes</u> to question #16, please specify the name of the <u>prior</u> preschool/daycare and the city where it is located (include your current preschool/daycare if your child was enrolled there in the previous year).	Preschool/daycare name: _____ City: _____
17. 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? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
18. If money to fund the DPP program was limited, how would you prefer to receive the <u>SAME TOTAL</u> tuition credit amounts? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spread over 9 months <input type="checkbox"/> Spread over 12 months
19. How would you prefer to receive general information about DPP? (select all that apply)	



- |  |                                   |                                       |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email             | <input type="checkbox"/> Mail     | <input type="checkbox"/> DPP website  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text message      | <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Via the preschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook |                                       |

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

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

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

- |                                  |                                     |                                       |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic  | <input type="checkbox"/> Somali     |                                       |

23. If this survey were conducted online, would it be easier for you to complete? (circle one) Yes No

24. If you would be willing to participate in a follow-up survey in the future, please provide your email address and/or 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: Melanie Sloan  
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 C: 2014-2015 Provider Survey (Community Sites)

**Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15**

**Denver Preschool Program Survey**

Thank you for volunteering to complete this survey on the Denver Preschool Program. All survey responses will be kept completely confidential. We estimate that this survey will take no more than 20 minutes to complete

**Preschool Information**

**1. Provider/agency name if applicable (e.g.DPS, Catholic Charities, Family Star)**

**\*2. Preschool (site) name:**

**\*3. Preschool address:**

**4. Your name:**

**\*5. What is your email address?**

**\*6. What is your direct work telephone number?**

**\*7. What is your current job title at this preschool site?**

**\*8. How long have you been employed in your current position at this preschool site?**

**\*9. In the past year, which of the following has your preschool experienced? (select all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Prolonged staffing vacancies	<input type="checkbox"/> High teacher turnover
<input type="checkbox"/> Low student enrollment	<input type="checkbox"/> New leadership (principal, director, or lead ECE teacher)
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher dissatisfaction with compensation or benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Large changes in income or expenses
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher dissatisfaction with schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher dissatisfaction with professional development	

Page 1

**Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15****\*10. Why did your preschool opt to enroll in DPP? (select all that apply)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for quality rating                        | <input type="checkbox"/> DPP will improve access to preschool           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching support                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> DPP will ease the financial burden on families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development funds                    | <input type="checkbox"/> As part of larger organizational decision      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial assistance with materials and equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know or remember                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below)                      |   |

**\*11. If you personally completed the DPP application, how easy was the application to complete? (select one)**

- ☐ 1: Very difficult    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4: Very easy    ☐ Not Applicable

**\*12. Has DPP affected your preschool's enrollment numbers?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I do not know

**DPP Enrollment Numbers****\*13. Please indicate whether one or more children have enrolled in your preschool as a result of DPP.**

	Yes	No	I do not know
Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**\*14. Please indicate whether one or more children have left your preschool as a result of DPP.**

	Yes	No	I do not know
Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**15. How many preschool students (DPP and non-DPP) in their last year before kindergarten are currently enrolled in your preschool?**

**Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15**

**16. How often does your preschool communicate with DPS preschools about open preschool slots that may be available at your preschool?**

- ☐ Not applicable  
☐ Never  
☐ Sometimes  
☐ Frequently

**Interest in Program**

**\*17. Since your preschool first enrolled in DPP, has there been an increase in the number of parents interested in enrolling their children in your preschool?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I do not know

**DPP Enrollment Patterns**

**\*18. Has DPP affected the number of hours that children enroll in your preschool?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I do not know

**DPP Enrollment Patterns**

**\*19. Please indicate whether one or more children have increased their hours as a result of DPP.**

	Yes	No	I do not know
Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**\*20. Please indicate whether one or more children have decreased their hours as a result of DPP.**

	Yes	No	I do not know
Infants and Toddlers (0-36 months)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**DPP Efforts to Inform Parents**



### Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

**\*21. How would you rate DPP's efforts to inform parents about the availability of tuition credits?**

- ☐ 1: Poor      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Excellent

**22. How could DPP better inform parents about the availability of DPP tuition credits?**

**\*23. How would you rate DPP's efforts to inform parents about its quality improvement process?**

- ☐ 1: Poor      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Excellent

**24. How could DPP better inform parents about its DPP quality improvement process?**

### Parent Decisions about Preschool

**\*25. Parents 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.**

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



### Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

**\*26. Which of the following do you believe the majority of parents use to determine a preschool's reputation? (select all that apply)**

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

**\*27. How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "In general, parents can accurately determine preschool quality."**

- ☐ 1: Strongly disagree      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Strongly agree

**\*28. 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).**

Friendly and knowledgeable leadership	<input type="text"/>
Qualified teachers (e.g., experienced, well-educated)	<input type="text"/>
Positive interactions between students and teachers	<input type="text"/>
High quality facility, materials, and/or equipment	<input type="text"/>
Safety	<input type="text"/>
Substantial parent involvement	<input type="text"/>
Diversity (of students and/or staff)	<input type="text"/>
Class size or student-to-staff ratio	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

### Parent Recruitment

**\*29. Has your preschool recruited parents to apply for the DPP tuition credits?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

### Parent Recruitment





### Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

**\*30. What DPP parent recruitment activities has your preschool engaged in? (select all that apply)**

- ☐ Distribution of printed DPP information on-site
- ☐ Individual assistance for parents with DPP applications
- ☐ Individual encouragement for parents to apply to DPP
- ☐ Discussion of DPP at parent meetings
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

**31. What do you see as the existing barriers to parents applying for DPP tuition credits?**

**\*32. Since the beginning of this school year, how much time has your preschool staff spent per month assisting parents with DPP paperwork?**

- ☐ No time
- ☐ 1-5 hours
- ☐ 6-10 hours
- ☐ 11-15 hours
- ☐ More than 15 hours

### Logistics

**33. How much time does your preschool staff spend per month completing attendance paperwork?**

- ☐ No time
- ☐ 1-5 hours
- ☐ 6-10 hours
- ☐ 11-15 hours
- ☐ More than 15 hours

**\*34. From your perspective, how smoothly do you think the DPP enrollment process works for parents?**

- ☐ 1: Not smoothly
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4: Very smoothly



### Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

**\*35. How smoothly is the DPP tuition credit payment process working for your preschool?**

- ☐ 1: Not smoothly      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Very smoothly

**\*36. Does the preschool receive the DPP tuition credits in a timely manner?**

- ☐ 1: Rarely      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Always

**\*37. How comfortable do you feel explaining to parents how DPP tuition credit amounts are determined?**

- ☐ 1: Not comfortable      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Very comfortable

#### DPP Assistance

**\*38. Have you asked for any administrative assistance from DPP within the last 12 months?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### DPP Assistance

**\*39. What type of assistance did you request?**

**\*40. How useful was the assistance?**

- ☐ 1: Not useful      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Very useful

#### Quality Improvement

**\*41. Has your preschool taken advantage of the DPP quality improvement process and resources?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### DPP Quality Improvement Process

**Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15**

**\*42. How helpful were each of the following DPP quality improvement processes for improving the quality of your preschool?**

	1: Not helpful	2	3	4: Very helpful	Not applicable
Financial assistance with materials and equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding for quality rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coaching support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**\*43. Which component of DPP's quality improvement process was the MOST helpful for improving the quality of your preschool?**

- ☐ Coaching support
- ☐ Funding for quality rating
- ☐ Financial assistance with materials and equipment
- ☐ Professional development and training

**44. If your preschool has participated in a CLASS observation, please explain how this observation was or was not useful in informing your preschool's quality improvement decisions.**

**DPP Quality Improvement Process**

**\*45. Please explain the reason(s) your preschool did not participate in the DPP quality improvement process?**

**Quality Ratings**

**Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15**

**\*46. Do you believe the most recent quality ratings that your preschool received to be accurate assessments of the preschool's quality?**

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Qualistar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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

**Improvements**

**\*48. To what extent has the presence of DPP encouraged you to improve the quality of your preschool program?**

- ☐ 1: Not at all      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: To a great extent

**Concerns**

**\*49. What is your biggest operational concern about DPP?**

- ☐ No operational concerns
- ☐ The time/effort to recruit parents
- ☐ The time/effort to manage the tuition credit process
- ☐ The time/effort to track attendance
- ☐ The time/effort to prepare for the rating process
- ☐ Fairness/accuracy of the rating process
- ☐ The time/effort for parents to enroll in DPP
- ☐ Other (please specify below)



## Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

### \*50. What is your biggest policy concern about DPP?

- ☐ No policy concerns
- ☐ DPP may draw attention away from 0-3 education
- ☐ Parents may transfer their children for the final year of preschool
- ☐ DPP may affect the preschool marketplace
- ☐ There is a lack of public awareness about DPP
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

## Effectiveness

### \*51. How effectively does DPP work for the families it serves?

- ☐ 1: Not effectively      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Very effectively

### 52. How effectively does DPP work for families whose primary language is not English?

- ☐ 1: Not effectively      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: Very effectively

### \*53. To what extent do you believe that DPP is accomplishing its goal of providing quality preschool to Denver children?

- ☐ 1: Not at all      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4: To a great extent

### \*54. Please explain why you believe DPP is or is not accomplishing its goal of providing quality preschool to Denver children.

## Suggestions and Comments



## Community Providers- DPP Survey Online 2014-15

**55. How would you prefer to receive general information on DPP? (select all that apply)**

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mail    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook               | <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text message           | <input type="checkbox"/> Email   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |                                  |

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

**\*57. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up phone call regarding your preschool's experience with DPP?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**58. Please use the space below for any other comments, questions, or concerns.**

### Thank You!

Thank you for completing the Denver Preschool Program Survey! Your \$25 gift card for The Bookies (Denver bookstore) will be mailed within a few weeks.



## **Appendix D: Data Collection Methods**

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 2007-08 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.

During 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 every school year up to the present year. For the 2014-15 school year, seven full years of collected parent and provider survey data allows APA to present trends in the survey results. For the purpose of presenting these 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; the 2010-11 school year is referred to as 2011; the 2011-12 school year is referred to as 2012; the 2012-13 school year is referred to as 2013; the 2013-14 school year is referred to as 2014; and the 2014-15 school year is referred to as 2015.

In 2015, information was obtained from surveys, analysis of DPP enrollment data, provider data, and DPS TCAP data. The evaluation team analyzed 181 completed surveys from a sample of parents and 82 completed surveys from a sample of DPS, community-based, and home-based preschools. Providers were able to complete surveys online or on paper. Spanish language versions of the surveys were made available.



## Appendix E: 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 represent children enrolled in DPP as of December 2014, 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 F.

Table E1 portrays the breakdown of children by ethnic and family income tier. As in prior years, approximately half of the children enrolled in DPP were Hispanic. Consistent with prior years, in 2014-15 over two thirds (68.9 percent) of DPP families reported incomes of \$47,000 or less.

*Table E1*

All 2015 DPP Families by Income Tier and Child's Ethnicity												
Child's Ethnicity	Income Tier											
	Up to \$21,200		\$21,201-\$47,700		\$47,701-\$72,080		More Than \$72,080		Not Reported		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Black</b>	283	7.4%	124	3.2%	36	0.9%	17	0.4%	2	0.1%	<b>462</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	897	23.5%	685	17.9%	115	3.0%	73	1.9%	11	0.3%	<b>1781</b>	<b>46.6%</b>
<b>White</b>	139	3.6%	150	3.9%	127	3.3%	455	11.9%	187	4.9%	<b>1058</b>	<b>27.7%</b>
<b>Other</b>	179	4.7%	150	3.9%	67	1.8%	77	2.0%	19	0.5%	<b>492</b>	<b>12.9%</b>
<b>Not Reported</b>	14	0.4%	10	0.3%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	<b>28</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1512</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>1119</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>3821</b>	<b>100%</b>

The 2015 survey sample was drawn from the population described in Table E1. 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 29 additional parents to ensure results were representative of the DPP population. By adding these 29 parents to the surveyed total, the sample was broadly representative of the population by income, child's ethnicity, home language, and the Qualistar Ratings™ of preschools where the children were enrolled.

In 2015, APA sent surveys to a total of 229 parents, and received 181 completed surveys from these parents. This response rate of 79 percent was similar to 2014. Our responses under-represented Hispanic families and families with family income below \$21,000. Responses also over-represented white families. Table E2 shows the returned parent surveys broken down by ethnicity and income level.





Table E2

2015 Returned DPP Parent Surveys by Income Tier and Child's Ethnicity												
Child's Ethnicity	Income Tier											
	Up to \$21,200		\$21,201-\$47,700		\$47,701-\$72,080		More Than \$72,080		Not Reported		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Black</b>	10	5.5%	4	2.2%	3	1.7%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	<b>18</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	36	19.9%	23	12.7%	3	1.7%	4	2.2%	0	0.0%	<b>66</b>	<b>36.5%</b>
<b>White</b>	3	1.7%	11	6.1%	10	5.5%	28	15.5%	13	7.2%	<b>65</b>	<b>35.9%</b>
<b>Other</b>	7	3.9%	10	5.5%	8	4.4%	4	2.2%	1	0.6%	<b>30</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
<b>Not Reported</b>	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	<b>2</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>31.5%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Description of Provider Sample

DPP continues to recruit and enroll preschool providers on an ongoing basis. The data presented in this section represent preschools that were enrolled in DPP as of October 2013, at which time the sample of providers to be surveyed was drawn.

Table E3 categorizes these preschool sites by type of provider, total number of classrooms, total number of DPP classrooms, and Qualistar Rating™. DPS preschools represent just under 32 percent of all DPP preschool sites. Community home-based sites comprise just under 7 percent of all DPP sites and 61.6 percent of DPP sites are community center-based sites. Approximately 96 percent of the preschool sites in 2015 had between one and five classrooms, an increase from 75 percent in prior years. Under 1 percent of DPP sites in 2015 did not have a Qualistar Rating™, a decrease from 4 percent in 2014 and 11 percent in 2011. Among the sites that were rated, 31.7 percent earned a 4-star rating and 51.2 percent earned a 3-star rating.



Table E3

All 2015 DPP Providers		
Provider Type	#	%
DPS	81	31.8%
Community Center-Based Sites	157	61.6%
Community Home-Based Sites	17	6.7%
Number of DPP Classrooms		
1 Classroom	102	40.2%
2 Classrooms	68	26.8%
3-5 Classrooms	74	29.1%
6 or More Classrooms	10	3.9%
Star Rating		
Star 1 and 2	24	9.5%
Star 3	129	51.2%
Star 4	80	31.7%
Provisional	1	0.4%
Intro to Quality	18	7.1%
Grand Total	255	100.0%

The preschool survey sample was drawn from the distribution of preschools described in Table E3. This sample was stratified according to provider type, number of total classrooms, star ratings, and location (zip code). In December 2014, there were 10 providers enrolled in DPP that operated more than one preschool site (excluding DPS). These 10 providers operate 33 preschools in total and we sent surveys to 12 of these preschools.

Of the 100 preschools surveyed, 82 returned surveys, for a response rate of 82 percent, up from 64 percent in 2014. Both the surveyed preschools and the preschools that returned surveys were generally representative of the overall population of DPP preschools. Our responses did slightly under-represent community center-based sites and 3-star sites and over-represent 4-star sites and DPS sites. Table E4 presents the distribution of preschools that returned surveys.

*Table E4*

All 2015 Provider Returned Surveys		
Provider Type	#	%
DPS	30	36.6
Community Center-Based Sites	46	56.1%
Community Home-Based Sites	6	7.3%
Number of DPP Classrooms		
1 Classroom	28	34.6%
2 Classrooms	20	24.7%
3-5 Classrooms	29	35.8%
6 or More Classrooms	4	4.9%
Star Rating		
Star 1 or 2	8	9.9%
Star 3	39	48.1%
Star 4	29	35.8%
Provisional	1	1.2%
Intro to Quality	4	4.9%
Grand Total	64	100.0%



## Appendix F: Description of Demographic Recoding

Table F1

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"

Table F2

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.	



## **Appendix G: Analysis of Rerated DPP Providers**



AUGENBLICK,  
PALAICH AND  
ASSOCIATES

# Analysis of Provider Rerating Process

Prepared for the  
Denver Preschool Program

By  
APA Consulting

September 2015



## **I. Introduction**

An important aim of the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) is to improve the quality of preschool available to families in the Denver area. Preschool programs that choose to participate in DPP are rated to assess their quality. From the beginning of the DPP program through January 2015, each site received a Qualistar Rating™ based upon the quality of their program in several 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 which was on a scale of 0 to 4 stars. As of February 2015, DPP has transitioned to a new rating system called Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). As such, this report will focus on all Qualistar Rating™ results through January 2015. Future reports will address rating results under the new Colorado Shines QRIS.

The Denver Preschool Program invests near 10 percent of the annual budget to support three distinct quality improvement strategies; coaching, purchasing materials, and ECE professional Development. Based on quality level incentives as well as number of classrooms, each preschool program has a level of access to the DPP QI Strategies as described above. 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. All participating DPP programs are required to go through a rerating process every two years. The rerating process is identical to the original rating process and captures nuances and/or changes that have occurred since the last rating. As noted earlier, this process further illustrates the influence that the program has on the preschool community through its emphasis on quality improvement.

This is the fifth year in which DPP programs have gone through the rerating process and therefore most programs have been through the rerating process at least twice. As such, in addition looking at Qualistar rerating results by rerating year, this report will also examine rerating results by whether it was the first, second or third rerating.

## **II. Understanding the Qualistar Rating™**

The Qualistar Rating™ was Colorado's Quality Rating System (QRS) until the end of January 2015. The Qualistar Rating™ measured the quality of child care programs in Colorado on a provisional to 4-Star scale. In the Qualistar Rating™ process, programs were evaluated on five different quality components. These components included:

### **Learning Environment**

This component utilized the Environment Rating Scales to award points based on the measured quality of physical classroom space, personal care routines, language and reasoning activities, child interactions and program structure. Points earned in this area could range from 0 to 10.

**Family Partnerships**

This component measured and awarded points based on information about communication, collaboration, and family involvement opportunities collected through family questionnaires and program documentation. Points earned in this area could range from 0 to 10.

**Training and Education**

This component measured and awarded points based on the formal training staff has received as well as their level of experience, with separate requirements for center administrators and child care providers/home providers. Points earned in this area could range from 0 to 10.

**Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size**

This component measured and awarded 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) and a group size of fifteen or less children would earn full points (up to eight points for Adult-to-Child Ratios and two points for Group Size). Points earned in this area could therefore range from 0 to 10.

**Program Accreditation**

Programs could also earn an additional 2 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 determined the site's star rating. The following table illustrates the points needed for each star level:**

*Table G1*

Points Needed for each Star Rating Level	
Star Rating	Points Needed
<b>Provisional</b>	0 -9 points or Learning Environment Score of 0
<b>1 Star</b>	10 - 17 points
<b>2 Star</b>	18 - 25 points
<b>3 Star</b>	26 - 33 points
<b>4 Star</b>	34 - 42 points

### **III. Rerating Results**

As noted above, the rating process occurs at the site level with a site's rating being based upon scores received in the five quality areas, including the average Learning Environment scores for all classrooms within a site. However, while individual classrooms do not have independent scores, APA presents rerating results at the classroom level so that results are "weighted" by the size of program (based upon the number of classrooms that received a program's overall rating). APA feels that this better represents the changing quality of programs as it relates to child experience as programs that have more classrooms are impacting more children.



Results are first shown for each group of rerated classrooms by rating time period, then by whether it was the first or second time a program had been rerated.

### ***Overall Results for all Rerating Time Periods***

The table below shows the number of programs and the number of classrooms within the programs that have been rerated through January 2015, the last month that the Qualistar Rating™ was used.

*Table G2*

<b>Rerating Period</b>	<b># of Classrooms</b>	<b># of Programs (Sites)</b>
<b>Rerated by March 2010</b>	129	72
<b>Rerated April 2010-March 2011</b>	120	63
<b>Rerated April 2011-March 2012</b>	146	80
<b>Rerated April 2012-March 2013</b>	160	83
<b>Rerated April 2013-March 2014</b>	146	46
<b>Rerated April 2014-January 2015</b>	87	34

Note that in the final rerating period, April 2014-January 2015, few programs with fewer classrooms were rerated as this was a shortened time period before the rating system transition.

Figure 1, on the following page, identifies the original star ratings of the classrooms in all rerated programs as well as their program's new ratings, by the rerating time period.

The first column of each pair shows the original program ratings for all classrooms rerated in a given rerating period (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015). To clarify, this means the original program rating is the original rating a classroom received the very first time a program was rated, regardless of how many ratings it has received since. For each rerating period between 2010 and January 2015, original star ratings varied, with somewhere between 75-96 percent of programs starting with a rating of 3 or 4 stars. Looking specifically at the group of programs rerated between April 2014 and January 2015 (first column in last pair of columns), original star ratings were as follows: 10 percent, 4 stars; 86 percent, 3 stars; 2 percent, 2 stars; and the remaining 2 percent, provisional. Compared to the other groups rerated in prior years, it had the highest percentage of programs starting with a three or 4-star rating.

The second column of each pair shows the new rating for the classrooms in each program rerated in that rerating period. In all but the last rerating year, classroom ratings increased after rerating. In all years, roughly 90 percent of classrooms having a rerating of at least 3 stars. For the 2010 through 2013 rerating groups, and the 2015 rerating group, about 30 percent receiving a 4-star rating. The group of programs rerated between April 2013 and March 2014 (shown in the second to last sets of columns) stand out with 48 percent of programs receiving a new star rating of 4 stars.





Figure G1

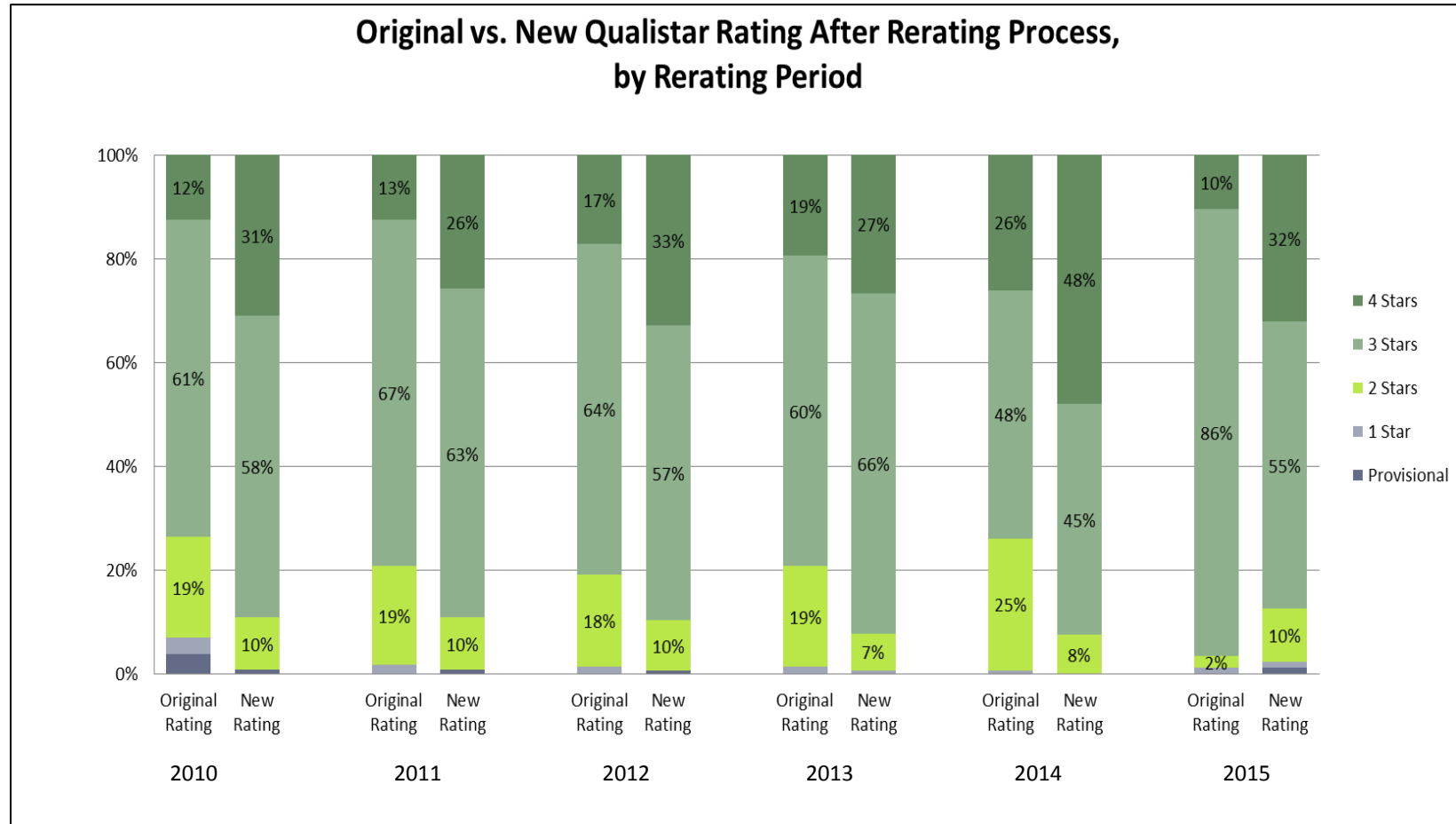
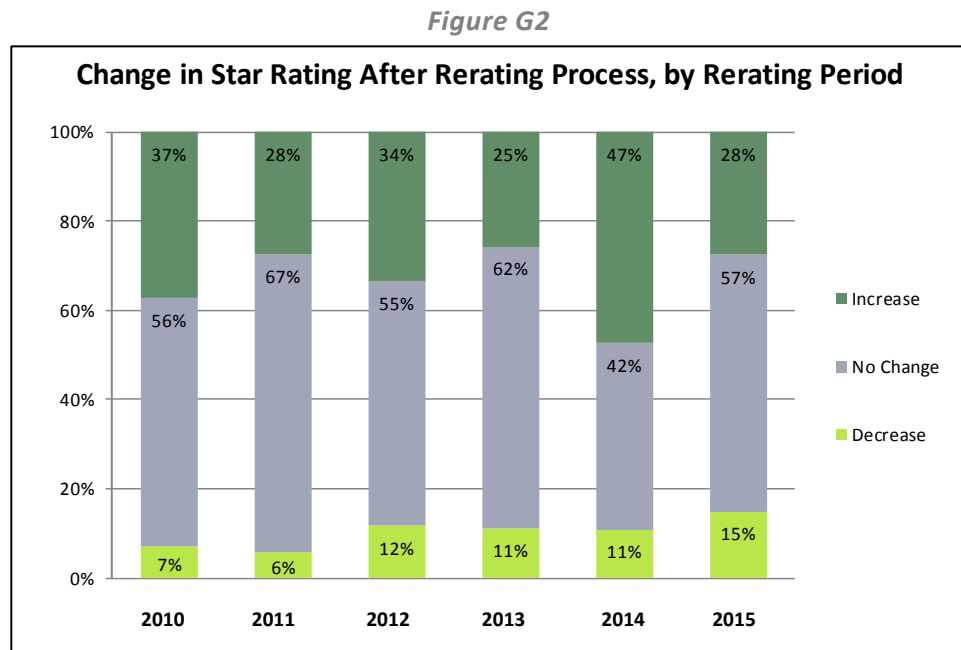


Figure G2 then provides a closer look star rating movement in each rerating time period:



Results have varied slightly over the six years of rerating data, On average, about a third of classrooms had their program's rating increase, about 60 percent stayed the same, and the remaining classrooms had their program's rating decrease.

### ***Changes in Qualistar Rating™ Results, Original Rating Compared to Final Rating***

The following table shows the number of programs and classrooms that have an original rating (261 programs, 670 classrooms), the number that have been rerated once (199 programs, 417 classrooms) and the number that have been rerating twice (106 programs, 188 classrooms), and the number that have been rerated three times (19 programs, 26 classrooms) as of the end of January 2015.

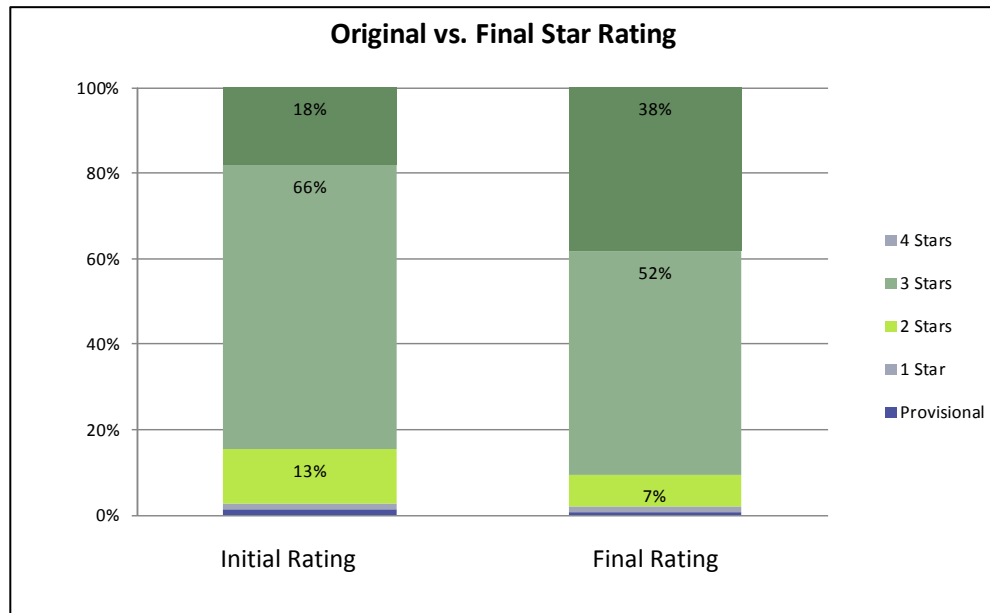
**Table G3**

Rerating Round	# of Classrooms	# of Programs (Sites)
<b>Original Rating</b>	670	261
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Rerating</b>	417	199
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Rerating</b>	188	106
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Rerating</b>	26	19

Figures G3 and G4 look more closely at the 417 classrooms that have been rerated at least once, comparing their original rating with their final Qualistar Rating™ after one, two or three rounds of the rerating process.

First, Figure G3 offers a comparison of each classroom's original rating compared to their final rating.

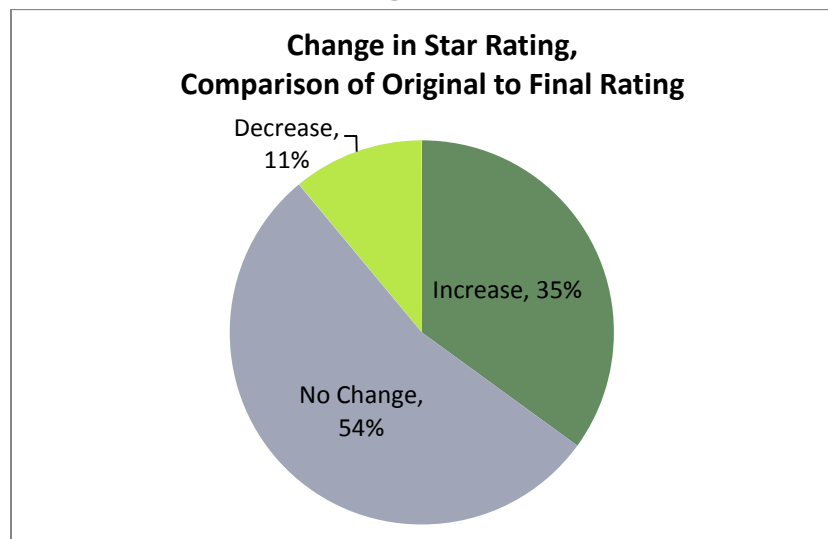
Figure G3



Overall, for the 417 classrooms in programs that have been rerated at least once, just over eighty percent started out as a 3-star rating or higher (18 percent with a 4-star rating). Thirteen percent had a 2-star rating and the remaining three percent had a 1 star or provisional rating. Star rating results appear to be changing in a positive direction after rerating, with 90 percent of programs having a rating of at least 3 stars, and the number of programs receiving the highest rating of 4 stars increasing more than twofold from 18 percent, to 38 percent.

Results are also examined by whether a site's final Qualistar Rating™ increased, decreased or stayed the same compared to their original rating in Figure G4.

Figure G4

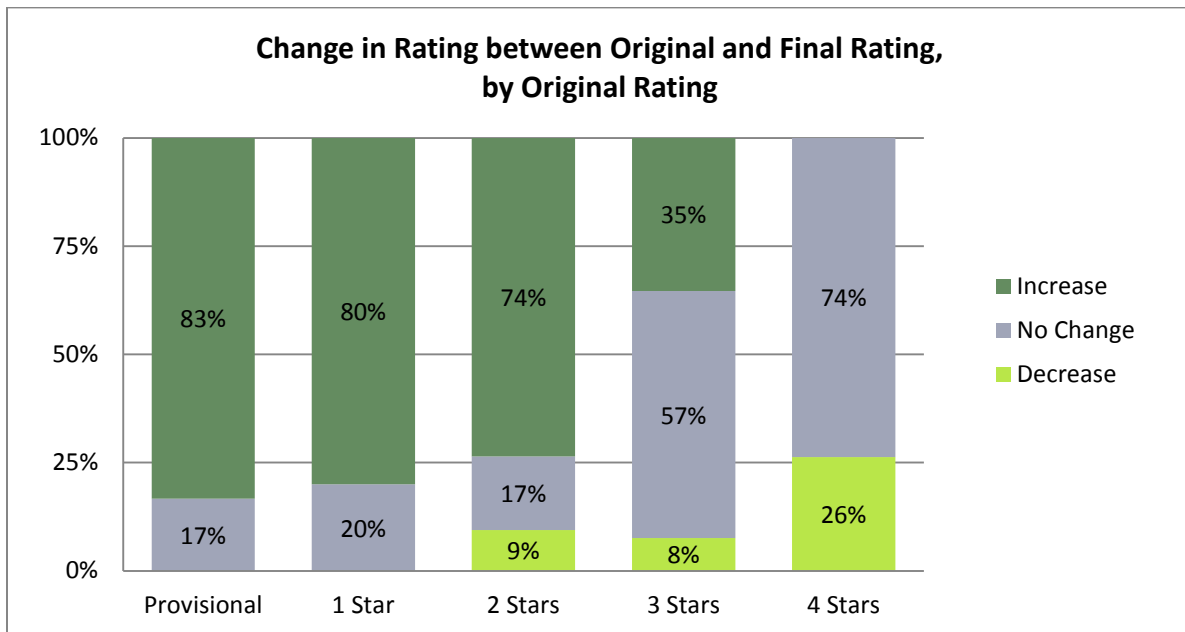




Results were very consistent across rerating rounds, and when the study team compared each classroom's original rating vs. their final Qualistar Rating™, it was found that about 90 percent of classrooms having their program's rating increase or stay the same after rerating.

Figure G5 then explores whether the final rating of each classroom represented an increase, a decrease, or was the same as their original rating, based upon their original star rating.

Figure G5



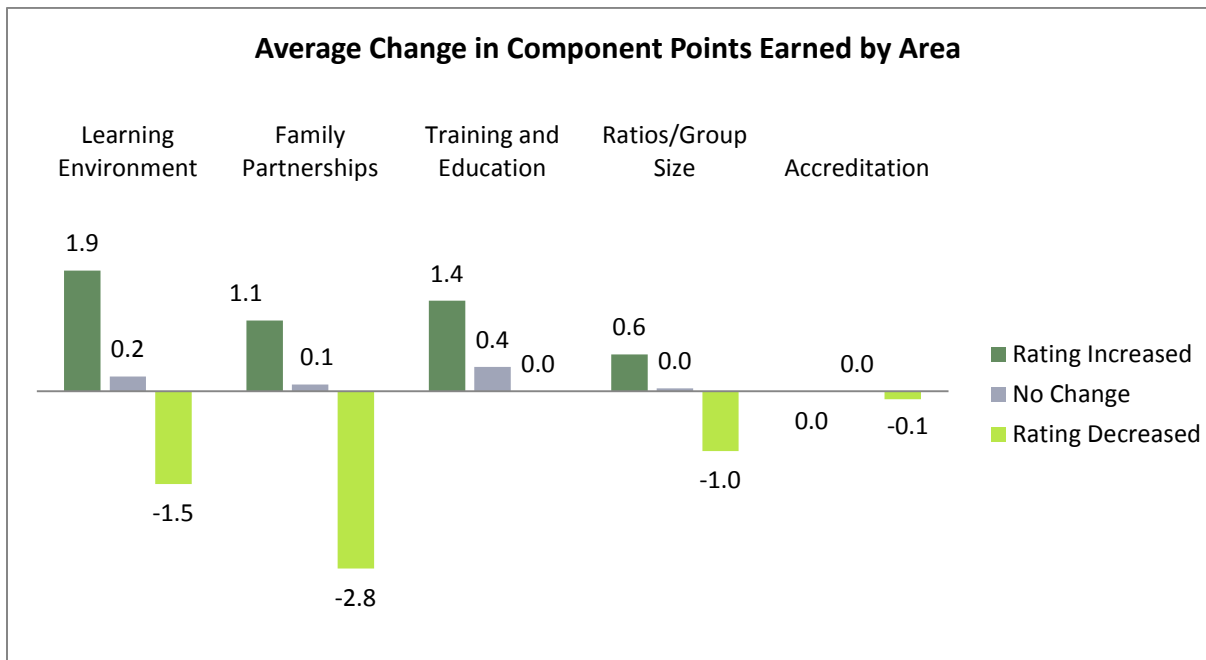
Comparing classrooms' original ratings to their final ratings, 80 percent or more of provisional and 1 star classrooms increased their rating (given the small number of classrooms programs with an original provisional or 1 star rating, this meant that in each case one classroom/program had their rating not improve). Of the 55 classrooms with an original program rating of 2 stars, out 75 percent had their program's rating increase, 15 percent had their program's rating stay the same, with the remaining nine percent having their rating decrease. Thirty-five percent of classroom's with an original 3 star program rating increased their rating, with the majority maintaining their rating (57 percent), and less than 10 percent being rerated as less than 3 stars. Seventy-four percent of 4 star rated classrooms had their program's rating stay the same, while just over a quarter had their rating decrease- the largest percentage decrease experienced by any rating category, but also the most difficult rating to maintain.

As mentioned previously, Qualistar ratings are based upon the following components: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Family Partnerships, (3) Training and Education, (4) Adult-to-Child Ratios and Group Size, and (5) Program Accreditation. Figure 6 shows the average point change in each of these areas, for all classrooms, grouped by whether their star rating increased, decreased and stayed the same.



When comparing points earned for a classroom's original program rating, the classrooms that had their program's rating increase, gained more than one point on average in the areas of Learning Environment (1.9 point gain on average), Family Partnerships (1.1 point gain) and Training and Education (1.4 point gain). Conversely, classrooms that had their rating decrease, lost the majority of points on average in the area of Family Partnerships (2.8 points lost on average), following by a 1.5 point loss on average in Learning Environment scores, and a 1.0 point loss in the area of ratio/group size.

Figure G6



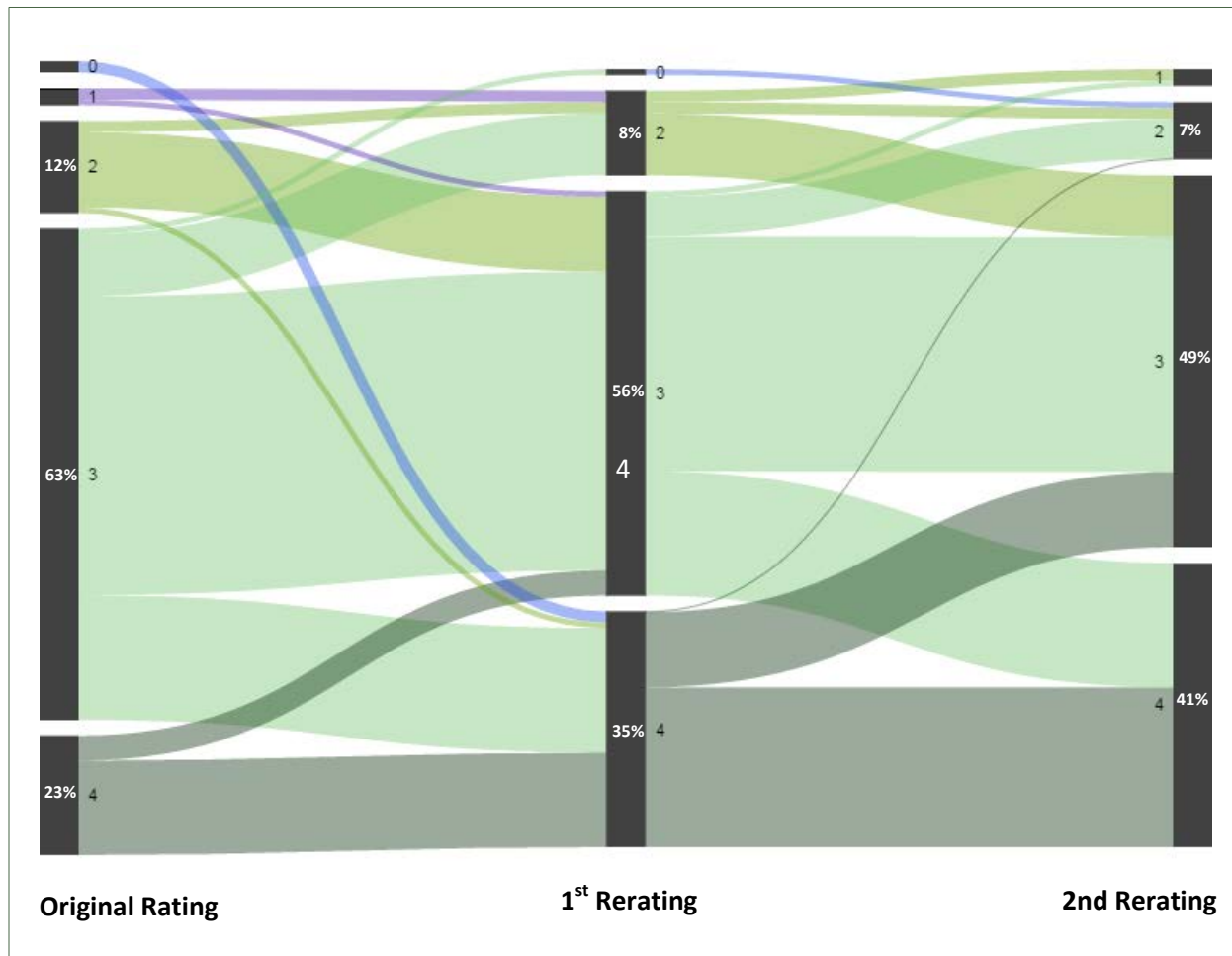
### ***Data Snapshot: Changes in Qualistar Rating™ Results Over Time for Classrooms that have been Rerated Twice***

As this was the final year of Qualistar ratings, APA also more closely examined the rating change over time for the 188 classrooms that have been rerated twice. Note: there were not enough classrooms (only 26 in total) that had been rerated three times to conduct a similar analysis.

Figure G7 tracks the Qualistar Rating™ movement, or flow, of the 188 classrooms from their program's original rating, to 1<sup>st</sup> rerating, to 2<sup>nd</sup> rerating.

Figure G7

Qualistar Rating™ Change Over Time, for Classrooms in Programs that have been Rated Twice



Starting on the far left of Figure G7, the first set of bars labeled with percentages indicate the original rating of the 188 classrooms, ordered from lowest rating (provisional, labeled as 0 in the Figure), to highest (4 stars). The width of the bands coming from the bar indicates the proportion of classrooms with each rating. As shown, about two percent of classrooms had an original program star rating of 1 star or provisional (0), 12 percent had an original program rating of 2 stars, 63 percent had an original program rating of 3 stars, and 23 percent had an original program rating of 4 stars. Each original star rating band then diverges, flowing from the bar indicating the classroom's original rating to the next bar, indicating their rating after the first rerating. Again, the width of the band indicates the number of classrooms taking each path. For example, in the band of programs that had an original rating of 4, most of those classrooms retained their 4 rating at the first rerating, while a small percentage fell to a rating of 3. The direction of the band coming from the bar indicates whether the classroom's rating increased, decreased or stayed the same, and what their new program rating was after their program's first rerating.



Looking first at the classrooms with an original star rating of 4 stars, the flow diagram indicates that the majority of these classrooms maintained their program rating, while about a quarter of classrooms (as indicated by the width of the band) declined to a rating of 3 stars. For classrooms with an original program rating of 3 stars, the majority maintained their rating; just over a third (again indicated by the width of the band) increased their rating to 4 stars; about 15 percent had their program rating decrease to 2 stars; and a very small percentage (likely one program), had their rating drop to the provisional level. For the classrooms with an original rating of 2 stars, nearly all increased their rating to 3 stars and at least one classroom had its program rating increased to 4 stars; the remaining classrooms maintained their rating. All classrooms with an original provisional or 1 star rating also increased their ratings.

The right half of the figure diagrams the flow of rerating results from the first rerating to the second. As shown, 35 percent of these classrooms were rated 4 stars after the 1<sup>st</sup> rerating. Of those classrooms, a third of these classrooms had their program's rating decline to 3 stars after their second rerating demonstrating what appears to a challenge maintaining the highest program rating; one classroom had their program rating change to 2 stars; and the remaining two-thirds maintained their program rating. Then looking at the 56 percent of classrooms that had a program rating of 3 stars after the 1<sup>st</sup> rerating, a third increased their rating to 4 stars; about 50 percent of classrooms having the same rating after their program's second rerating; and about twenty percent having their program rating decline to 2 stars or 1 star. About eighty percent of the classrooms with a 2-star rating after the first rerating had their program rating increase to 3 stars; 10 percent had their rating decline to 1 star, and the remaining classrooms maintaining their rating. The classroom(s) with a provisional rating after the first rerating, had their program rating increase to 2 stars.

The bars on the far right side indicate the end results of the movement in rating after a classroom had spent at least four years in DPP and two rounds of rerating: less than three percent had a rating of 1 star; seven percent had a rating of 2 stars; 49 percent had a rating of 3 stars; and 41 percent had the highest rating of 4 stars.

## Conclusion

Overall, the improvement in the quality of classrooms who participate in the Denver Preschool Program and went through the rerating process was very positive between 2010 and when the Qualistar Rating™ system was discontinued at the end of January 2015. Overall, across years and for the current year, over 90 percent of classrooms carry at least a 3-star rating after at least one rerating process which indicates a positive impact of the Denver Preschool Program on the quality of preschool classrooms.

Future rerating reports will focus on results from the newly implemented Colorado Shines QRIS.