

## CHAPTER 5

# Preschool for All

**“ [PFA] has helped my children develop tremendously both socially and developmentally.”**

—PFA Parent



### Key Results

- + **Year 2 of the Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration Project provided 142 preschool sessions throughout the six target communities.** Across the County, 2153 children were given a quality preschool experience through PFA.
- + **Children improved in each of the four domains measured by the DRDP-R.** Like last year, the most improvement was in the area of “effective learning” (i.e., cognition, math ability, and literacy), but all improvements were statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ).
- + **Parents participated in numerous parent engagement opportunities.** Parents were offered a variety of opportunities to attend parent education classes, volunteer in class and at preschool events, and become involved in organizational activities, such as provide advisory committees. All parents reported an improvement in parenting skills, with those attending parent education classes reporting more improvement than other parents. Like last year, parents were highly satisfied with the PFA Demonstration Project.
- + **Improvement in workforce quality.** This year more teachers were educated at or above the Bachelor’s level, which is consistent with the increase in Tier 3 level sessions. Administration of the CLASS tool, which measures teacher/child interaction in Tier 3 sessions and the support of the SDCOE professional development coaching team, ensures that PFA quality will continue to improve even once sessions are designated “PFA Quality.”

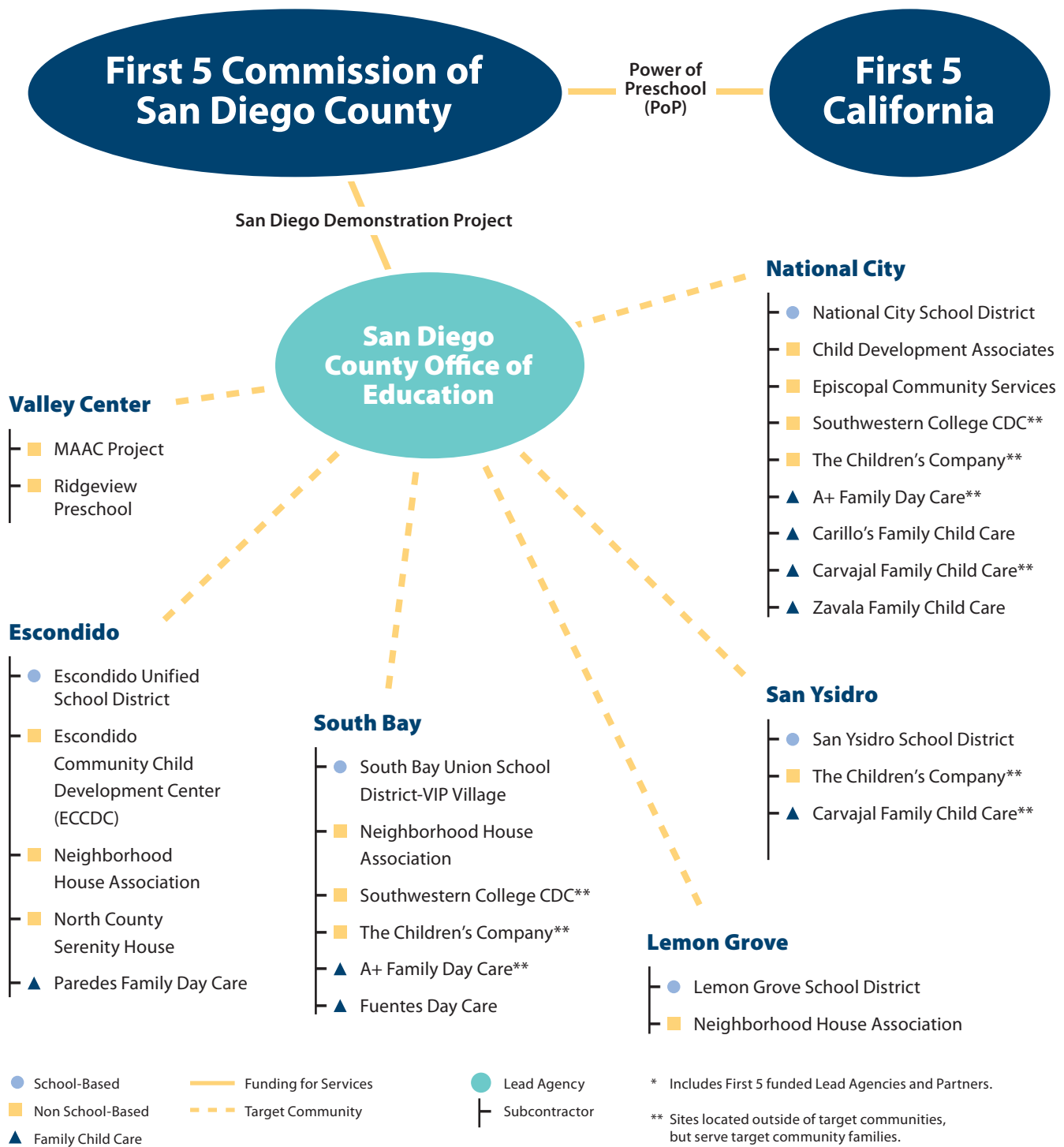
### + Children were screened for developmental delays.

This year approximately three-quarters of children enrolled in PFA were screened for developmental delays, and approximately 11% received services for having a developmental delay.

### Summing It Up

- + 2,113 slots were funded by First 5 San Diego’s PFA Demonstration Project (516 new preschool slots were fully-funded by PFA funds and 1,404 existing preschool slots received PFA funds to enhance existing services). Actual enrollment was 89.0% of the target enrollment (of 2,420 children) for Year 2.
- + An estimated 75.4% of children were screened for developmental delays using the PEDS, a large increase from last year, when only 15.9% of children served by PFA were screened.
- + A total of 632 parent engagement opportunities were offered this year, compared with 279 opportunities last year.
- + The quality of preschool teaching increased; 40.3% of lead teachers were educated at or above the Bachelor’s level this year compared to 32.9% last year, while 84.3% of lead teachers were educated at or above the Associate’s level compared to 83.6% last year. developmental delays.
- + 279 parent involvement activities were offered.

# Preschool for All Demonstration Project Structure\*



# Introduction

Participating in a high-quality pre-kindergarten program can increase a child's chances of academic, social, and professional success, regardless of socioeconomic background. Research has found that children who participate in pre-kindergarten programs are less likely to repeat a grade, require fewer special education services, and are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college.<sup>184</sup>

To address the need for improved access to quality early education opportunities for San Diego's young children, the First 5 Commission of San Diego County (First 5 San Diego) approved the Preschool for All Master Plan in December 2005 and allocated \$30 million over five years to implement a PFA Demonstration Project in six priority communities throughout San Diego County.<sup>185</sup> These communities, which serve approximately 4,400 preschool-age children, were targeted based on their 2004 elementary schools' low Academic Performance Index (API) scores and population demographics, such as number of English language learners and average family income. To coordinate the PFA project, First 5 San Diego contracted with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) to support program implementation in each target community. SDCOE in turn contracts with school-based, non-school-based (includes for-profit, private non-profit, faith-based, and Head Start), and family child care providers to provide quality preschool in each community.

PFA has succeeded in enhancing overall classroom quality, involving parents, increasing workforce quality, and ensuring that children are screened for developmental delays. Because this is a Demonstration Project, the Commission placed a strong emphasis on developing a strong evaluation plan to assess the effects of the project on children and families as well as documenting best practices and lessons learned. By doing so, the project will have the necessary data to support their project as they look for other funds and resources. The First 5 San Diego PFA evaluation plan weaves together three, interconnected components: First 5 California Statewide Power of Preschool (PoP) Evaluation, First 5 San Diego Evaluation Efforts, and the PFA Master Plan Evaluation. The results presented in this report include process data collected by SDCOE, as well as data collected through a variety of assessment tools (see Making a Difference section for a listing of tools).

## Key Elements

The mission of the First 5 San Diego's Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration Project is to design, develop, and subsequently establish a multi-tiered service delivery model for preschool that will support the implementation of quality PFA programs at the local, regional, and countywide levels. PFA was designed to:

- Increase access to high-quality preschool in San Diego County so that children can acquire the skills they need to be successful when they enter kindergarten.
- Encourage the active involvement of family/parents through classes, parent/teacher meetings and opportunities to volunteer in the classroom.

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<sup>184</sup> Lynch, Robert. Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation: Public Investment in High-Quality Prekindergarten. U.Economic Policy Institute, 2007. Accessed 31 August 2007 <[http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/book\\_enriching](http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/book_enriching)>

<sup>185</sup> The San Diego County Preschool for All Master Plan was the result of a community processes funded by First 5 to develop a vision and roadmap for implementing universal, voluntary preschool for all children in San Diego County. The countywide vision of the Master Plan necessitates that funding sources, in addition to First 5 San Diego, be identified to support the project to scale. San Diego County Office of Education. San Diego County Preschool for All Master Plan. U.December 5, 2005. Accessed 4 September, 2007 <[http://www.sdcoe.net/student/eeps/pfa/pdf/mplan\\_12-05.pdf](http://www.sdcoe.net/student/eeps/pfa/pdf/mplan_12-05.pdf)>

- Encourage workforce/professional development of PFA provider staff with higher education, training, and workshops.

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is the lead contractor for providing PFA services and has subcontracted with preschool providers in six communities throughout San Diego County including Escondido, Valley Center, Lemon Grove, National City, South Bay, and San Ysidro. There are also three providers located in Chula Vista, which is not one of the six designated PFA regions, but serves children who live in two of the identified communities (National City and South Bay). Within these communities, there were a total of 20 PFA sites participating in the Demonstration Project in Year 2, including school-based, non-school-based, and family child care as listed in Exhibit 5.1.

<b>Exhibit 5.1 Preschool For All Demonstration Project Sites by Region FY 2007-08</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Setting</b>
Escondido	Escondido Community Child Development Center (ECCDC)	Non-School-Based
	Escondido Unified School District	School-Based
	Neighborhood House Association	Non-School-Based
	North County Serenity House	Non-School-Based
	Paredes Family Day Care	Family Child Care
Lemon Grove	Lemon Grove School District	School-Based
National City	Carrillo's Family Child Care	Family Child Care
	Child Development Associates (CDA)	Non-School-Based
	Episcopal Community Services	Non-School-Based
	National School District	School-Based
	Zavala's Family Child Care	Family Child Care
San Ysidro	San Ysidro School District	School-Based
South Bay	Fuentes Day Care	Family Child Care
	South Bay Union School District - VIP Village	School-Based
Valley Center	MAAC Project	Non-School-Based
	Ridgeview Preschool	Non-School-Based
Other*	A+ Family Day Care	Family Child Care
	Carvajal Family Child Care	Family Child Care
	The Children's Company	Non-School-Based
	Southwestern College CDC	Non-School-Based

*\*These sites are located outside PFA target communities but serve families who live in target communities.*

The overall goal of the PFA is to successfully enroll and serve 70% of 4-year-olds located in all target communities by FY 2010-11. Each provider is classified as either: PFA Entry (Tier 1), PFA Advancing (Tier 2), PFA Quality (Tier 3), or determined to be not yet eligible to be a PFA site (PFA Pre-Entry). All sessions are designated a “Tier level” based on quality criteria which includes the session’s ECERS/FDCRS score and teacher qualifications. SDCOE provides support and training to enhance the quality of sites and their Tier rating, over time. Tiers are used to determine reimbursement rates for the providers— the higher the Tier, the higher the PFA slot reimbursement.

## Summing it Up: Number of Children and Families Reached

In FY 2007-08, PFA funded a total of 20 sites – five school-based, six family child care (FCC), and nine non-school-based (Exhibit 5.2). Overall, these sites held 142 sessions (a 20.0% increase from last year),<sup>186</sup> filled 2,113 slots (a 23.2% increase from last fiscal year), and served 2,153 children (an increase of 21.3% from last fiscal year).<sup>187</sup> <sup>188</sup>Actual enrollment was 89.0% of the target enrollment for Year 2 of 2,420 children, which is an increase compared to the 71.1% of the target population enrolled last year.<sup>189</sup>

The majority of sessions, 79.8%, were held at school-based sites, where 74.4% of all slots were located. Nearly one quarter, 24.4%, of all PFA student slots were fully-funded, meaning sites used PFA funds to create new slots for children, while 66.4% of student slots were enhanced, meaning that PFA funding was used to increase the quality of services for existing student slots. With the exception of family child care providers, sites had more enhanced slots than fully funded slots.

Exhibit 5.2 Preschool For All Demonstration Project Process Numbers FY 2007-08						
Setting	Number of sites	Number of sessions	Fully-funded slots	Enhanced/subsidized slots	Pre-entry slots	Total Slots
School-based	5	87	442	1130	0	1,572
Family child care	6	8	29	7	3	39
Non school-based	9	47	45	267	190	502
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>2,113</b>
<b>Total FY 2006-07</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>1,279</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>1,662</b>
<b>Percent Change from FY 2006-07</b>	<b>+20.0%</b>	<b>+27.5%</b>	<b>+25.8%</b>	<b>+8.9%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>+21.3%</b>

<sup>186</sup> Each three-hour class is one session. Each classroom may accommodate both a morning and an afternoon session.

<sup>187</sup> The number of children is different than the number of slots because some children leave before the end of the year and new children are enrolled.

<sup>188</sup> In last year’s evaluation report, the percentages of total children receiving tools and services were calculated using the number of total slots as the denominator. This year, percentages were calculated using the number of children served as the denominator. Where applicable, last year’s percentages were updated.

<sup>189</sup> Percentages were calculated by dividing total number of children served by target population.

## Making a Difference: PFA in Action

PFA outcomes were measured for the classroom, children, parents, and teachers. The following section presents findings related to each of these domains.

### Ensuring Quality Classrooms

To measure the quality of PFA classrooms, the Demonstration Project used the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ECERS-R), the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised Edition (FCCERS-R), and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). These tools are among the nationally recognized instruments designed to measure various aspects of classroom and child care site quality.<sup>190 191 192</sup> The overall ECERS-R and FCCERS-R score is one of three components that determine a session's Tier rating.

- PFA Entry (Tier 1), all seven subscale scores must meet or exceed 4.0
- PFA Advancing (Tier 2), all seven subscale scores must be 4.5 or above
- PFA Quality (Tier 3), all seven subscale scores must meet or exceed 5.5.

Last year, the ECERS-R and FCCERS-R were administered to all sites, however, this year they were administered at Tier 1 and 2 sessions only because the CLASS tool was introduced to provide more in-depth assessment of Tier 3 sessions, which have reached PFA Quality standards.<sup>193</sup> The following sections outline the results of the different assessment activities.

### ***Growing classroom quality: Results of the ECERS-R and FCCERS-R.***

This year, the ECERS-R and FCCERS-R were administered to Tier 1 and 2 sessions, while last year the tool was administered to Tier 1, 2, and 3 sessions. Because the tools were not administered at the highest quality sessions this fiscal year, ECERS-R and FCCERS-R were lower this year. Thus, year-to-year comparisons of

### Outcome Measures

- **Classroom Quality:** Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale: Revised (ECERS-R); the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale: Revised (FCCERS-R); the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS); and interviews with PFA teachers and SDCOE's professional development coaching team.
- **Child Development:** Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-R)
- **Parenting Skills and Satisfaction:** PFA Parenting Survey and the DRDP-R Parent Satisfaction Survey
- **Workforce Quality:** PFA Teacher Survey and interviews with PFA directors.

Please see Appendix B for additional information on PFA outcome measures.

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<sup>190</sup> ECERS-R is reliable at the item, indicator, and scale level, 86.1% agreement across all items. There is a high level of inter-rater reliability (.921 Pearson correlation). Harms, Thelma, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer. Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale: Revised Edition. U Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2005.

<sup>191</sup> The FCCERS-R is reliable at the item, indicator, and scale level, with 88.4% agreement across all items. Harms, Thelma, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer. Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale: Revised Edition. Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007.

<sup>192</sup> CLASS scores are stable across time and the tool has a high level of inter-rater reliability, with 78.8 – 96.9% inter-rater agreement. Hamre, Bridget, Karen M. La Paro, Robert C. Pianta. Classroom Assessment Scoring System Manual: Pre-K. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co, Inc. Baltimore, 2008.

<sup>193</sup> It is still to be determined whether or not Tier 3 sessions will receive the ECERS-R/FCCERS-R again throughout the course of PFA

exact scores are not possible. Additionally, the tool administered at FCC providers was changed from the FDCRS tool of the previous fiscal year to this year's FCCERS-R (a revised version of the FDCRS). This further limits year-to-year comparisons.

Overall, the ECERS-R and FCCERS-R have similar subscales with comparable categories - they each include scales from one (inadequate) to seven (excellent), as is noted in Exhibit 5.3. Highlights are as follows:

Exhibit 5.3 ECERS-R and FCCERS-R Subscale Comparison and Brief Overview		
ECERS-R (school and non-school based sites)	FCCERS-R (family child care sites)	Brief Overview (Select Items)
Space and Furnishings for Care and Learning	Space and Furnishings	Furniture, space for learning play and privacy, display for children
Basic Care	Personal Care Routine	Greetings, naps, meals, health and safety practices
Activities	Activities	Fine motor, art, music and movement, blocks, math/science
Language-Reasoning	Listening and Talking	Books, pictures, helping children communicate and understand
Interaction	Interaction	Interaction between children, child/staff interaction, discipline, supervision
Program Structure	Program Structure	Schedule, free play, group time, provisions for special needs children
Parents and Staff	Parents and Provider	Provisions for parents, personal needs of staff, opportunities for professional staff, staff interaction and cooperation

- At **school-based sites**, this fiscal year's scores for all subscales ranged from 4.81 to 6.50. The ECERS-R subscales that scored the highest in both years were *Interaction* and *Parents and Staff*. The lowest score this fiscal year was in *Basic Care*, while the lowest score last fiscal year was for *Program Structure*.

- At **non-school-based sites**, this fiscal year's scores for all subscales ranged from 5.61 to 6.56. Interaction and parents and staff scored the highest last year, while *Program Structure* and *Parents and Staff* scored the highest this year. The lowest score this year was in *Learning Activities*, while the lowest score last year was in *Basic Care*.

- At **family child care sites**, this fiscal year's scores for all subscales ranged from 5.07 to 6.39. This year, FCC providers scored highest in *Program Structure* and *Parents and Staff*, which is consistent with the non-school-based providers' scores. The subscales with the highest mean scores last year were *Adult Needs* and *Social Development* – two subscales not included in the FCCERS-R. The lowest score for both years was for *Space and Furnishings*.

**Enhancing high performing classrooms: Results of the CLASS**

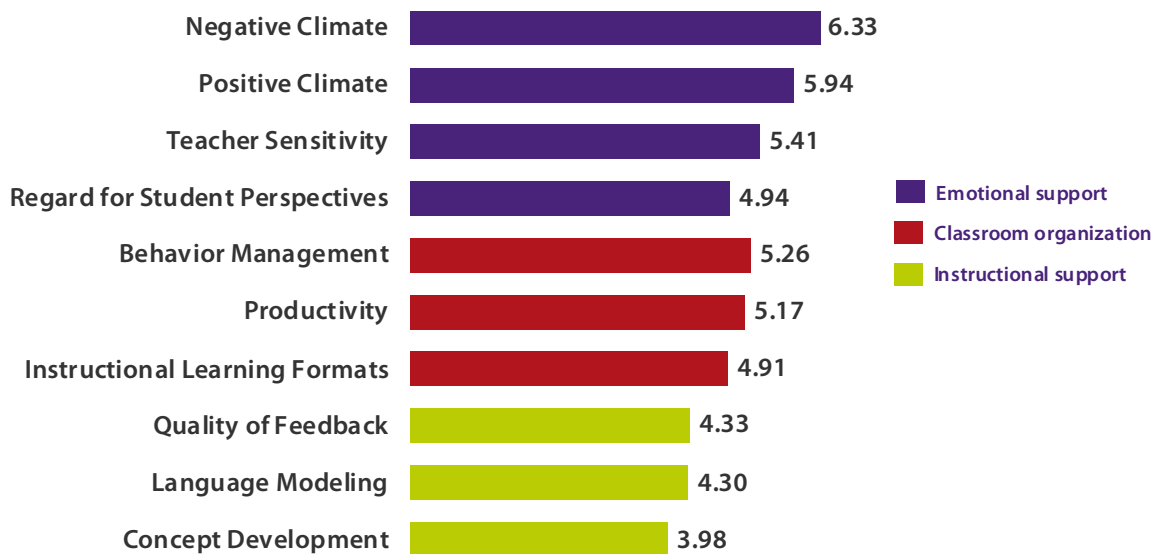
The CLASS is comprised of ten dimensions, and measures the interactions between teachers and students as grouped into three domains, which include emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. Scores range from one (low) to seven (high).<sup>194</sup> *Emotional Support* measures the teacher's ability to support social and emotional functioning in the classroom. It includes the dimensions of positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspectives. *Classroom Organization* measures the

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

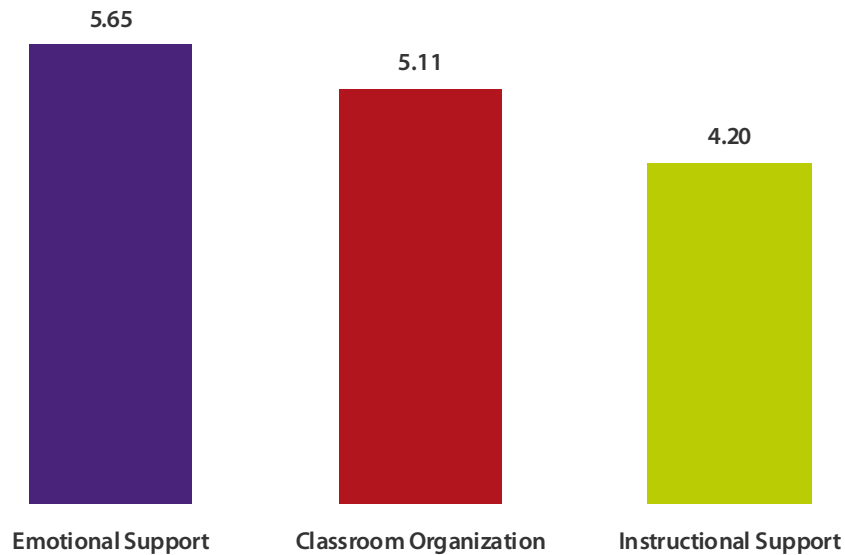
teacher’s ability to monitor behavior, maximize time, and engage students in material. Additionally, the *Classroom Organization* domain includes the dimensions of behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats. Finally, *Instructional Support* focuses on the ways in which teachers implement their curriculum to effectively support cognitive and language development. It includes the dimensions of concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling. Exhibit 5.4 shows the mean scores of each dimension, while Exhibit 5.5 shows the mean score by domain. Highlights are as follows:

- *Emotional Support*: Sessions scored highest, between 4.95 and 5.94, in emotional support dimensions, with a mean of 5.65. Sessions scored particularly high on negative climate and positive climate.
- *Classroom Organization*: Sessions scored between 4.91 and 5.26 in classroom support dimensions, with a mean of 5.11. Within classroom organization, sessions scored the highest on behavior management.
- *Instructional Support*: Sessions scored the lowest, between 3.98 and 4.33, in instructional support dimensions, with a mean of 4.20. Sessions scored particularly low on concept development and language modeling.

**Exhibit 5.4** Mean CLASS Scores by Dimension (n=32)



**Exhibit 5.5** Mean CLASS Scores by Domain (n=32)



### Developmental Gains for Children

The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-R) measures a child’s development in four domains including personal and social competence, effective learning, physical and motor competence, as well as safety and health. DRDP-R assessments were completed for children from 121 PFA sessions and represent matched Fall and Spring scores (n=1,083).<sup>195</sup>

### Developmental Scores in Fall and Spring

The DRDP-R consists of 39 questions and asks teachers to rate children’s skills on a scale of zero to four, with zero being the lowest score and four being the highest score. Numerical scores were assigned to each of the four categories, from 0= *not yet* to 4= *integrating*. Thus, the higher the score, the more mastery a child exhibits. Teachers administered the tool twice during the school year, once in the Fall and then again in the Spring, in order to measure a child’s progress.<sup>196</sup> As Exhibit 5.6 illustrates, mean scores in each category increased from the Fall to the Spring, with all of the increases being statistically significant (p<.001).

The mean increases for FY 2007-08 DRDP-R domains are slightly lower than last fiscal year (see Exhibit 5.7). This year, DRDP-R score

**“I have been so surprised in the depth of learning and variety of things [my child] is learning.”**

**– PFA Parent**

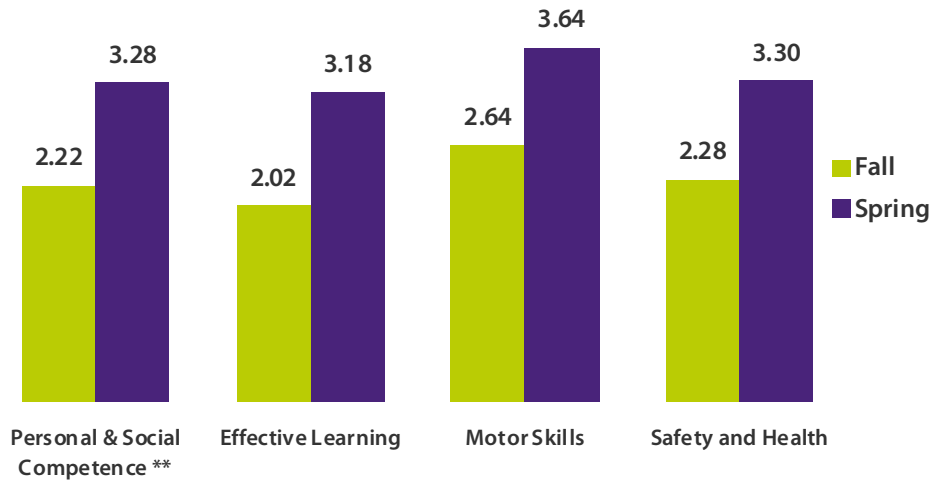
<sup>195</sup> Only scores from Tier 1, 2, and 3 sessions where parents consented to reporting their child’s scores were included in analysis. Additionally, only children with both a pre- and post-score were included. The total number of children with pre- and post-DRDP-R scores (n=1,083) represents 84.1% of the children whose parents consented, 85.2% of all sessions, and 50.3% of all children served by PFA.

<sup>196</sup> Most surveys measuring baseline scores were administered in October and November while most Spring surveys were administered six months later in April and May. Two limitations of this instrument are that increases may be due to normal child development of the course of the school year and that schools/teachers may have collected the data differently.

increases from Fall to Spring were from 0.99 to 1.16 points, while last year Fall to Spring increases were from 1.01 to 1.23 points. The smaller increases in this fiscal year may be due to the fact that mean Fall scores were slightly higher this fiscal year, leaving less room for children to improve. The changes in *Effective Learning* from Fall to Spring were the largest for both years. While the magnitude of this change was the greatest, this domain had the lowest mean Spring and Fall scores compared to other domains. This is true for both fiscal years. By contrast, *Motor Skills*, the area with the least amount of change, had the highest mean score both in Fall and Spring.

As Exhibit 5.8 demonstrates, Spring scores for both years were the same or similar. *Motor Skills* and *Safety and Health* scores are almost the same for both years, while scores for *Effective Learning* and *Personal and Social Competence* are slightly higher this year. As PFA continues, future data may shed light on why these trends occur.

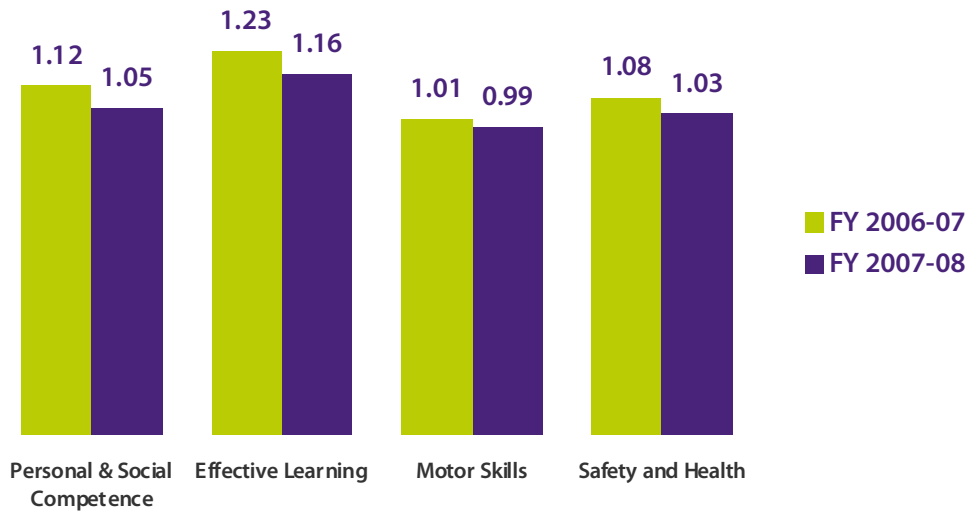
**Exhibit 5.6 Mean DRDP Scores by Domain \***  
FY 2007-08 (n=1,082)



\*Changes in scores were statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) for every domain

\*\*Personal & Social Competence (n=1063). Valid n is different for this category because only matched cases were used.

**Exhibit 5.7 Mean Changes in DRDP Scores by Domain\***  
 FY 2006-07\*\* and FY 2007-08\*\*\*

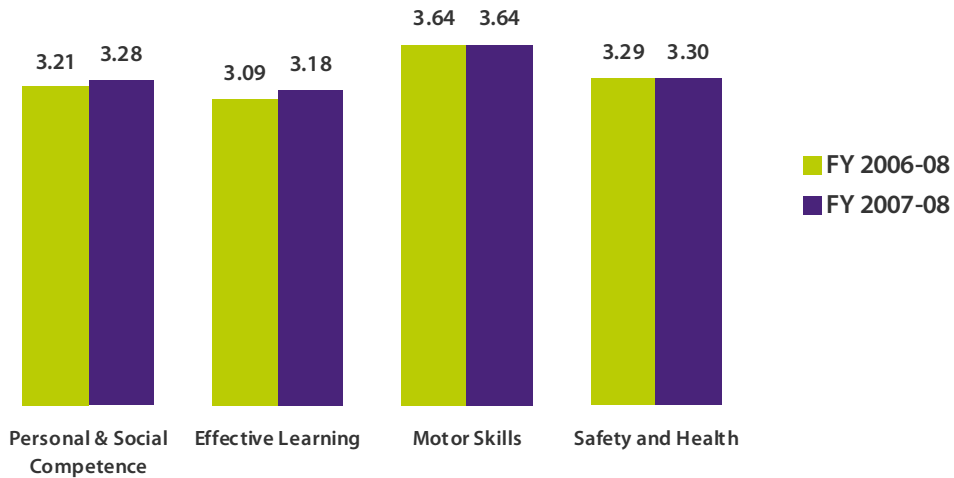


\*Changes in scores were statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) for every domain.

\*\*FY 2006-07: Personal & Social Competence ( $n=1348$ ), Effective Learning and Safety and Health ( $n=1365$ ), Motor Skills ( $n=1364$ ).

\*\*\*FY 2007-08: Personal and Social Competence ( $n=1063$ ), Effective Learning, Safety and Health, and Motor Skills ( $n=1082$ ).

**Exhibit 5.8 Spring DRDP Scores by Domain**  
 FY 2006-07\* and FY 2007-08\*\*



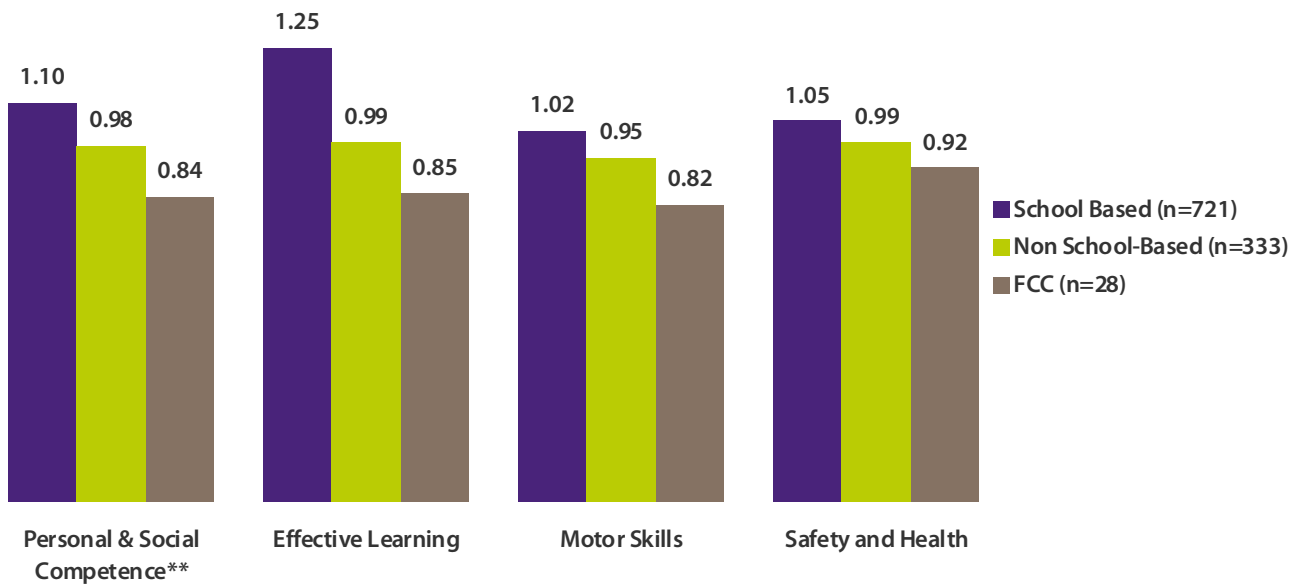
\*FY 2006-07: Personal & Social Competence ( $n=1348$ ), Effective Learning and Safety and Health ( $n=1365$ ), Motor Skills ( $n=1364$ ).

\*\*FY 2007-08: Personal and Social Competence ( $n=1063$ ), Effective Learning, Safety and Health, and Motor Skills ( $n=1082$ ).

### Differences in Scores by Site Type

Exhibit 5.9 illustrates mean changes across domains by the type of setting: FCC, school-based, or non-school-based.<sup>197</sup> For all three site types, children had the smallest increase in scores for *Motor Skills*. Children in school-based programs had the largest increase in scores for *Effective Learning*, and children in non-school-based programs had similar results, with *Effective Learning* and *Safety and Health* increasing by the most. Meanwhile, children in FCC programs had the largest increase in scores in *Safety and Health*. Some of these differences may be due to variations in the way the tool is interpreted and administered by teachers.

**Exhibit 5.9** Mean Changes in DRDP Scores by Domain and Setting \*  
FY 2007-08



\*Changes in scores were statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) for every domain.

\*School-Based (n=711), Non-School-Based (n=325), FCC (n=28). The valid n for this category is different because only matched cases were used.

<sup>197</sup> The majority of children (91.7%) with submitted matched DRDP-R scores were enrolled in school-based programs. Therefore, the mean changes by domain for this setting are similar to the overall mean changes shown in Exhibit 5.6. Differences in mean changes by site type were not tested for statistical significance.

## Professional Development Coaching

The professional development coaching team at SDCOE worked directly with teachers, observing and directing them, in order to improve and maintain quality their classrooms. This opportunity was made available to PFA teachers this year for the first time, and in order to document successes and challenges, the evaluation team interviewed two coaches, six teachers, and conducted a focus group with a group of teachers.

### Establishing a Connection

Professional development was available to all PFA providers, but sites were not required to utilize the service. Both teachers and coaches reported that, generally, the coaches facilitated on-site group training, and then interested teachers would volunteer to receive individual coaching. Though teachers were sometimes hesitant to work with the coaches, they reported that this hesitation quickly dissipated due to their close professional relationship with the coach. In fact, most teachers cited their relationship with the coach as the most beneficial aspect of the professional development. One teacher noted that the coach built a relationship with her before coming into the classroom, and another teacher said, “[I] felt completely supported, like someone was really behind me.” Teachers also appreciated the fact that coaches were willing to work with them during the children’s’ nap time, before school, or after school.

The coaches agreed that the personal relationship between teacher and coach enhanced the experience for the teacher: “The relationship stays even if they’ve only visited three or four times. Their [coach is] now like their [teacher’s] special contact with PFA.”

### Improving Classrooms

Teachers generally received coaching in order to achieve the highest possible score on ECERS-R, FCCERS-R, or CLASS. The professional development team provided coaching on various topics including hand-washing, rearranging classrooms, transition activities, and challenging behaviors. Teachers appreciated the coach’s feedback, acknowledging that there was always room for improvement. One teacher noted that her coach “was very positive about everything we were doing right.” Coaches, similarly, reported that their goal was to make the experience a positive one for the teacher. In one coach’s words, “One teacher told me that she was feeling very overwhelmed...I start thinking, ‘How can I help her?’ I came up with bringing in a visual activity for her to understand. It took one minute and she was able to see, ‘Oh, ok that’s what you mean by that.’

### Remaining Challenges

Teachers reported that they wanted more individual and group sessions with coaches, but didn’t know if that was possible. Coaches similarly reported the desire to have more workshops and group sessions. Additionally, coaches reported that it was challenging to find time to meet with teachers since most of them do not have that much free time. In one coach’s words, “The only time is the playground time so they’re talking during that time. We feel like we are giving them the wrong message because we want them to be with the children on the playground, not talking to us.”

### ***Screening for Developmental Delays and other Special Needs***

Early identification and intervention for developmental delays is a key goal of all First 5 projects.<sup>198</sup> Early identification and intervention can dramatically improve a child's health and learning, as well as social and emotional development; intervention just a few years later becomes more challenging and less effective. In order to facilitate early identification of delays, First 5 San Diego requires that all children attending a PFA program receive a developmental screening with a normed and validated instrument. The PFA evaluation tracked the number of developmental screenings as well as the number of children who are referred for an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or further assessment. The hope is that universal screenings will identify children with "mild" to "moderate" delays that often go undetected and/or unaddressed by existing identification protocols and programs.<sup>199</sup> Indeed, the American Academy of Pediatrics cites studies that indicate that intervention prior to kindergarten has enormous academic, social, and economic benefits, including savings to society of \$30,000 to \$100,000 per child.<sup>200</sup>

PFA uses three screening tools for identification of developmental delays: the PEDS (Parents Evaluation of Developmental Status), the ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire), and the Acuscreen. The PEDS and the ASQ are recognized by the American Academy of Pediatrics as reliable and valid tools for children ages 0-5.<sup>201</sup> The Acuscreen has been validated on over 3,000 children and fulfills the requirements of early childhood screening.<sup>202</sup> The PEDS was used as a preliminary screening tool for all children, and the ASQ or Acuscreen was a secondary screening tool if the PEDS results indicate a concern. By using these tools, children enrolled in PFA with mild to moderate delays may be identified and provided with additional support, either from the school or outside services, such as those provided by the First 5 funded the Healthy Development Services Project (see Chapter 3).

Exhibit 5.10 shows the number of children who were given the PEDS and ASQ or Acuscreen as well as those who were referred for services onsite and/or offsite and who received services for developmental delays either onsite and offsite.<sup>203</sup> Of the 2,153 children served by PFA this year, an estimated 75.4% of children were screened using the PEDS.<sup>204</sup> This is a large increase from last fiscal year, when only 15.9% of children served by PFA were screened.<sup>205</sup> An estimated 10.9% of children (234 children) served by PFA were referred for services and the same percentage received services. This percent receiving services for developmental delays is on par

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<sup>198</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends developmental screenings for children at 9, 18, 24 or 30 months; prior to entry in preschool or kindergarten; and whenever a parent or provider concern is expressed. See *Identifying Infants and Young Children With Developmental Disorders in the Medical Home: An Algorithm for Developmental Surveillance and Screening* PEDIATRICS Vol. 118 No. 1 July 2006, pp. 405-420.

<sup>199</sup> School based providers are mandated to serve children identified as having special needs through Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). The IDEA does not generally required services for children with "mild" to "moderate" delays.

<sup>200</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics: Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics Online. High Quality Developmental Screening. Accessed 12 September, 2007. < <http://www.dbpeds.org/articles/detail.cfm?TextID=373>>.

<sup>201</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics: Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics Online. High Quality Developmental Screening. Accessed 12 September, 2007. <<http://www.dbpeds.org/articles/detail.cfm?TextID=373>>.

<sup>202</sup> Bergan, John, Kristie Cunningham, Jason Feld, Kristin Linne, and Michael Rattee. [The Galileo System for the Electronic Management of Learning](#). Assessment Technology Inc, 2003. Accessed 1 October, 2008. < [http://www.ati-online.com/galileoPreschool/resources/articles/galileotechmanual\\_files/welcome.html](http://www.ati-online.com/galileoPreschool/resources/articles/galileotechmanual_files/welcome.html)>.

<sup>203</sup> Some sites offer services on site and may or may not have tracked referrals for these services.

<sup>204</sup> Some of the children screened by agencies this year were not enrolled in PFA, thus this percentage is an estimate.

<sup>205</sup> This percentage was calculated by dividing the number of children returning the PEDS last year by the number of children served by PFA last year.

with national statistics assume between 8%-17% of children have special needs<sup>206</sup> though are low compared to the results found by the Commission's Healthy Development Services (HDS) project. According to the HDS Countywide Coordinator, HDS providers are finding in low-income areas that 20-27% of children screened demonstrate some form of developmental delay. Part of the picture may be the limitations to the screening methodology used in PFA. The PEDS is a parent self-report tool and therefore relies on parental concern to identify children. There are cultural barriers as well as reliance on parents' knowledge and perception of child development that place limitations to the effectiveness of PEDS as a universal screening tool.

It is important to note that the percentage of children referred for services and receiving services for a delay may not be the same children. For example, some providers offer onsite services and may or may not count referrals made to these services. Thus, some children are counted as receiving services even though they are not counted as being referred for services.

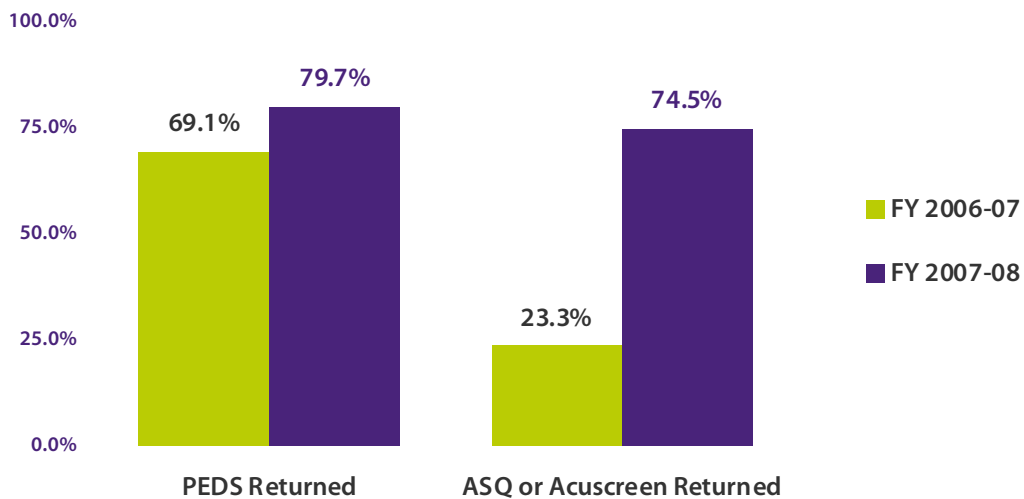
<b>Exhibit 5.10 Developmental Screening Results</b>						
<b>FY 2007-08</b>						
<b>Provider Type</b>	<b>PEDS distributed</b>	<b>PEDS returned</b>	<b>ASQ/Acuscreen* distributed</b>	<b>ASQ/Acuscreen* returned</b>	<b># children referred</b>	<b># children received services</b>
School-Based	1,636	1241	154	77	168	185
Family Child Care	44	33	3	2	2	2
Non-School-Based	357	350	211	194	64	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,037</b>	<b>1,624</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>234</b>

*\*Acuscreen is an alternate screening tool that was reviewed and approved by the AAP. Acuscreen is used nationally by Headstart programs.*

Response rates for the PEDS and ASQ or Acuscreen increased compared to last year (see Exhibit 5.11). Of the 2,037 parents who were invited to complete the PEDS, 1,624 were returned (79.7% response rate). Of these, 368 parents (22.6%) were invited to complete the ASQ or Acuscreen, and 274 were returned (74.5% response rate).

<sup>206</sup> HDS and PFA initiatives both use CDC statistics for benchmarking the number of children with developmental delays. However, the CDC's statistics encompass ages 0-17: "Child Development: Developmental Screenings." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2005. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 12 Sept. 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/child/devtool.htm>, A sample based national study, conducted in 2001, estimated that approximately 8% of children aged 0-5 had special needs: "The National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs Chartbook 2001." The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. 2004. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 10 Sept 2007. <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/chscn/index.htm>.

**Exhibit 5.11** Response Rates for Developmental Screening Tools  
FY 2006-07 and FY 2007-08



This fiscal year exhibited a decrease in the percentage of children who had Individual Education Plans (IEPs), meaning that these children were identified under State guidelines to have special needs warranting additional assistance. At the beginning of this school year, 94 children already had IEPs, and at the end of this school year, a total of 107 children. Last fiscal year, 68 children had IEPs upon entering the PFA program, while 145 children had IEPs at the end of the program. The reason for this decrease is unknown, but comparison of these data to future years' data may shed more light on possible explanations.

### Assessing Parent Engagement and Satisfaction

Parental involvement and satisfaction with their child's classrooms is a key goal of PFA and a priority for the First 5 Commission.<sup>207</sup> The First 5 San Diego Strategic Plan seeks to provide families with the skills, comprehensive support, and resources they need to promote their children's optimal development and school readiness.<sup>208</sup> Parent involvement in a child's preschool builds trusting relationships with families and allows parents and teachers to exchange information about the child's progress. It also supports the First 5 principle of a parent as a child's first and best teacher. Preschool California views family involvement as one of the components of an effective pre-kindergarten program.<sup>209</sup>

### Parent Engagement

Parent engagement is comprised of three core activities: parent involvement (such as volunteering in the classroom, field trips, special events), parent education (such as parenting classes, nutrition classes), and

<sup>207</sup> State Evaluation Question 6.

<sup>208</sup> Issue Area 3.1: Parent and Family Development and Resources.

<sup>209</sup> Preschool California. "What is Effective Pre-Kindergarten." Accessed 10 September 2007.

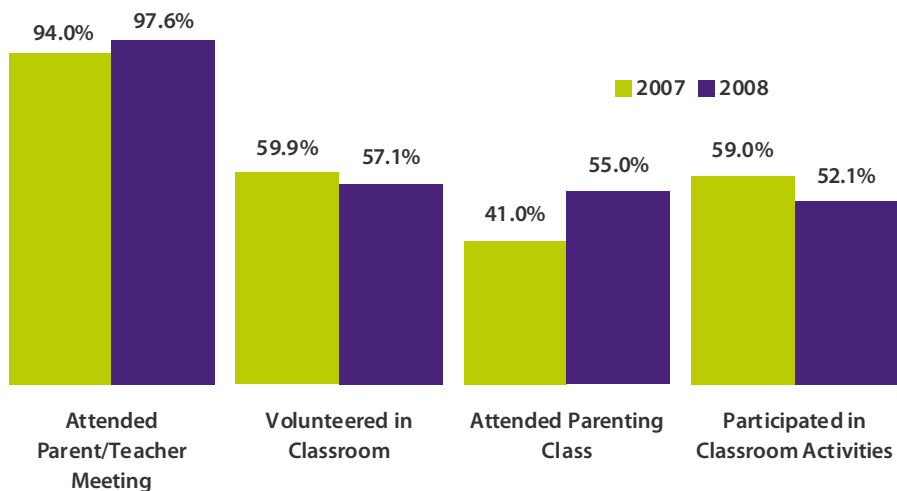
<<http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/for-policy-makers/fact-sheets.htm>>

organizational involvement (such as serving on advisory committees). Providers reported offering a total of 632 parent engagement opportunities, an overall average of 37 per site.<sup>210</sup> Results from the parent survey (62.5% of parents responded to this survey) suggested the level of involvement of parents in their preschools according to these three core parent engagement activities.

- **Parent education** was the most commonly offered activity reported by providers (311 activities). Of those responding to the parent survey, over half (55.0%) noted that they attended parenting classes.
- **Parent involvement** was the second most commonly offered activity reported by providers (249 activities). Of those who responded to the parent survey, nearly all (97.6%) reported participating in parent/teacher meetings, and more than half of these parents reported volunteering in the classroom (57.1%) or participating in classroom activities (52.1%).
- Parent involvement in **organizational** activities was the least common activity reported by providers (72 activities).

Somewhat more respondents reported participating in parent engagement activities in FY 2007-08 than in FY 2006-07 (62.5% and 54.8%, respectively). However, the overall breakdown of participation in different types of activities was fairly similar between the two years. The most notable differences from last year were an increase in parents attending a parenting class and a decrease of parents participating in classroom activities.

**Exhibit 5.12** Percent of Parents Attending Parenting Activities\*  
FY 2006-07 (n=461) and FY 2007-08 (n=585)



\* Counts within each fiscal year are not mutually exclusive.

<sup>210</sup> The average number of opportunities by site type is not provided for several reasons: not all opportunities were funded by PFA and sites varied in the number of PFA sessions they offer, in the type of slots (enhanced versus fully-funded) they had, and in the number of children they served.

## **Parent Development**

To assess parental development, each site utilized a Parenting Survey, an instrument modified from the “Survey of Parenting Practice” developed by the University of Idaho. This tool measures parents’ knowledge, confidence, ability, and behaviors around child development before they participated in the PFA Demonstration Project (“then”) and after participating (“now”). Ratings range from zero to six—the higher the rating, the more knowledge, confidence, ability or frequent the behavior. This method of “retrospective” comparison allows for respondents to more accurately provide baseline data, compared to traditional pre/post methods, when participants tend to rate themselves higher on the pre-test.<sup>211</sup> About 43% of PFA parents (926 parents) completed this survey.<sup>212</sup>

After being involved in the PFA, parents rated themselves higher on all 12 items on the Parenting Survey, with the increases being statistically significant for all items ( $p < .001$ ). Findings within each category for the current year include:

- **Knowledge:** Items in this category asked parents to rate their own knowledge of their child’s physical growth, cognitive development, and behavior. Knowledge items had the lowest mean “then” scores, but showed the greatest overall improvement.
- **Confidence:** This referred to a parent’s confidence in their own parenting skills, ability to set appropriate limits, and ability to help their child learn. The confidence statement that showed the most improvement was “my confidence that I can help my child learn at this age” and the one that showed the least was “my confidence in myself as a parent.”
- **Ability:** Within this category, the most improvement was seen in parents’ ability to identify and respond to their children’s needs. The least improvement was seen in parents’ ability to attend to their children’s health and safety. Overall, ability statements had the highest ratings – both “then” and “now.”
- **Behavior:** This section measured changes in parent behaviors including engaging in activities with their child, reading with their child, and connecting with other families that have children. This category had the lowest “now” scores, and showed the least improvement. Within the behavior category, parents showed the most improvement on the statement “the amount I read to my child.”

**“This program has met my child’s needs in all ways possible – physical, emotional, intellectual – and [it] has also met our family’s needs.”**

**– PFA Parent**

While respondents as a whole showed significant improvement on all items, parents who did not participate in any parenting activities only showed significant improvement on five of the twelve items. These parents did not improve significantly on any of the behavior or ability items, suggesting that parental engagement in preschool activities may help parents become more effective in their role as parents. Additionally, among parents who participated in at least one parent involvement activity, those attending parenting classes reported the largest increases overall, while those attending parent teacher meetings reported the smallest increases. These findings are consistent with last year’s findings and while a causal relationship between parent engagement and

<sup>211</sup> “Pre-test overestimation is likely if participants lack a clean understanding of the attitude, behavior, or skill the program is attempting to affect.” Pratt, C., McGuigan, W. and Katzev, A. (2000) Measuring Program Outcomes: Using Retrospective Pre-test Methodology. American Journal of Evaluation. (21) 341-349.

<sup>212</sup> The percent of parents completing surveys was calculated by dividing the total number of surveys received by the number of children served by PFA. An exact response rate could not be calculated because the total number of surveys distributed is unknown.

increased parenting skills cannot be established, these findings suggest involvement in preschool activities was linked to an increase in parenting skills. It may be that parents benefit from more intensive involvement in preschool activities, and it may also be that parents who choose to become involved in preschool activities were also pursuing additional activities to improve their parenting skills.

**“This is an amazing program that has brought more confidence and joy to my child’s life!”**

**– PFA Parent**

Mean differences in “then” and “now” statements were relatively unchanged between this year and last year. For both years, the greatest increases were seen in knowledge, followed by confidence, ability, and behavior. Likewise, as Exhibit 5.13 illustrates, the six items that showed the greatest and least improvement were consistent from this fiscal year to last. Even the items with the highest overall “then” and “now” scores (“my ability to keep my child safe and healthy”) remained the same for both years, as did the items with the lowest overall “then” and “now” scores (“the amount I read to my child” and “my connection with other families that have children”). One

difference between the two years is that mean “then” scores for every item were higher in this year compared to last year. These findings suggest that parents in FY 2007-08 began the PFA Demonstration Project with higher levels of knowledge, confidence, ability and positive parenting behaviors and, as such, showed somewhat more modest improvement in these areas.

<b>Exhibit 5.13 Outcomes for Parenting Survey FY 2007-08</b>				
<b>Survey Item</b>	<b>Mean “Then” (Before PFA)</b>	<b>Mean “Now” (After PFA)</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Mean Difference FY 2006-07</b>
My knowledge of how my child is growing and developing. (n=778)	4.25	5.20	0.96*	0.89*
My knowledge of what behavior is typical at this age. (n=770)	4.15	5.02	0.87*	0.80*
My knowledge of how my child’s brain is growing and developing. (n=767)	4.15	5.06	0.91*	0.85*
My confidence in myself as a parent. (n=769)	4.54	5.26	0.72*	0.68*
My confidence in setting limits for my child. (n=761)	4.37	5.15	0.78*	0.70*
My confidence that I can help my child learn at this age. (n=772)	4.51	5.36	0.85*	0.75*
My ability to identify what my child needs. (n=772)	4.46	5.30	0.84*	0.70*
My ability to respond effectively when my child is upset. (n=769)	4.40	5.12	0.72*	0.66*
My ability to keep my child safe and healthy. (n=773)	5.04	5.63	0.59*	0.54*
The amount of activities my child and I do together. (n=767)	4.39	5.05	0.66*	0.61*
The amount I read to my child. (n=770)	3.94	4.74	0.80*	0.66*
My connection with other families with children. (n=771)	4.07	4.75	0.68*	0.61*

*\*Statistically significant at  $p < .001$  with alpha set at .05 and .004 (Bonferroni’s Correction).*

## **Parent Satisfaction**

Parent satisfaction was another critical element identified by First 5, and also in the PFA Master Plan. To measure this, the PFA providers used the “DRDP Parent Satisfaction Survey,” a survey developed by the California Department of Education that many school based sites already utilize. This survey was completed by about 72% of PFA parents (n=1,558).<sup>213</sup> <sup>214</sup> The survey is a series of satisfaction questions about components typically included in early care and education programs. Key findings are shown on Exhibit 5.14 and include the following:

- The majority of parents were very satisfied with each program component. Across all components, an average of 75.9% of parents were “very satisfied.”
- The highest percentage of parents felt very satisfied with the *Overall Quality of the Program* (82.4%). Several parents made positive comments about the quality of the program such as, “I think the program is excellent and nothing needs to be changed” and “It couldn’t improve—their program is amazing!”
- For each component of the parent survey, less than 2% of parents said they were “not satisfied.”
- The only components in which less than 70% of parents were “very satisfied” were *Interaction with Other Parents* (61.2%) and *Parent Involvement* (62.6%). Parent suggestions for increasing parent interaction and involvement included providing more opportunities to help out in the classroom, more parent-teacher conferences, and more parent-child activities.
- *Hours of Operation* received one of the lower satisfaction ratings. Several parents commented that they would like the hours of the program to be extended (PFA is a half-day program).

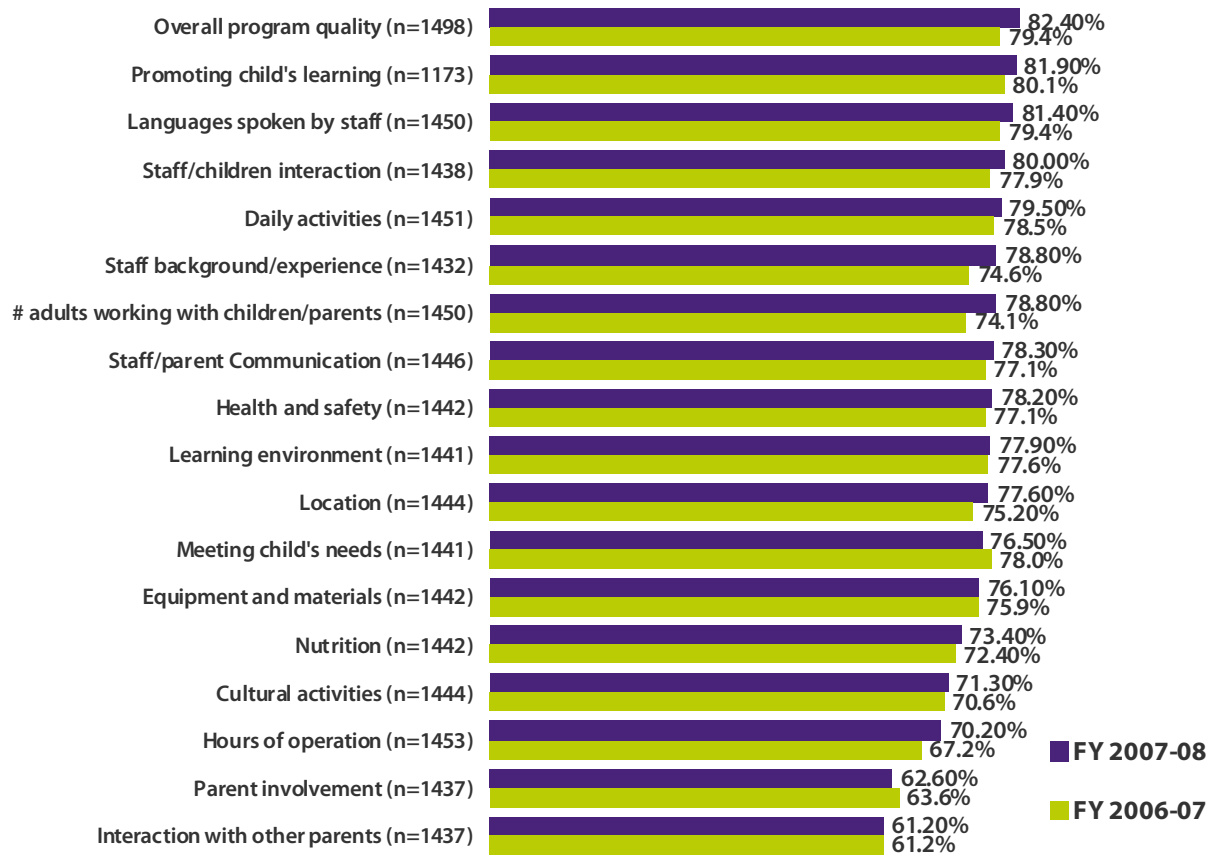
From FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08, slight increases were seen in the percentage of parents who were “very satisfied” for 15 of the 18 components. Across all components, the average increase between the two fiscal years was one and a half percentage points. The two components that showed the greatest improvement (more than four percentage points each) were *Staff Background/Experience* and *Number of Adults Working with Children/Parents*. The only areas in which the percentage of parents who were “very satisfied” remained the same or decreased slightly (less than two percentage points) were *Satisfaction with Meeting Child’s Needs*, *Parental Involvement*, and *Interaction with Other Parents*. Two of these areas, *Parental Involvement* and *Interaction with Other Parents*, also received the lowest satisfaction scores in both fiscal years, and thus may be important areas to target for improvement during the next program year. The area that received the third lowest satisfaction ratings, *Hours of Operation*, also remained consistent between the two years, as did parent comments expressing a desire for extended program hours.

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<sup>213</sup> The percent of parents completing surveys was calculated by dividing the total number of surveys received by the number of children served by PFA. An exact response rate could not be calculated because the total number of surveys distributed is unknown.

<sup>214</sup> At some sites the DRDP-R Satisfaction Survey and the Survey on Parenting Practices were distributed separately, thus, the response rate for the two surveys was different.

**Exhibit 5.14** Percentage of Parents Who Were “Very Satisfied” by Component  
FY 2006-07 and FY 2007-08\*



\*Valid n provided for each category is for FY 2007-08. Valid n's for FY 2006-07 are different.

### Understanding Teacher Perspectives

The final area measured by the evaluation was that of teacher perspectives and professional development. The PFA Preschool Teacher Survey is an instrument that gathers information about lead teacher professional development, interaction with parents, interaction with kindergartens, kindergarten transition, and school readiness awareness. In all, 112 PFA teachers completed the survey, a 84.8% response rate.<sup>215</sup>

According to these teachers' self reports:

- Teachers' strengths are in education and experience.
- Teachers' do not interact with kindergarten teachers as much as they could or should. While most teachers met with parents to discuss their child's transition into kindergarten, there was a decrease in the percentage of teachers creating transition files for children, compared to last fiscal year. Less than half of teachers attended meetings and trainings with kindergarten teachers.

<sup>215</sup> Although there were 132 lead PFA teachers in FY 2007-08, the number of teachers who received the survey is unknown, thus the response rate is an estimate. This year's response rate is higher than last year's response rate of 74.0%.

- Teachers have improved their interactions with parents compared to last year, with almost all teachers participating in parent conferences and in-person and telephone meetings, and inviting parents to volunteer in classrooms and participating in activities.

Each of these three overall findings is further explored below.

### ***Education and Experience***

In comparison to last fiscal year, PFA lead teachers had more experience this fiscal year. This fiscal year, 70.6% had taught preschool for over five years, compared to 63.0% last year, with 52.7% teaching at their current preschool for over five years (compared to 48.6% last fiscal year).<sup>216</sup> Comparison data indicates PFA teachers remain in their positions longer than their peers. Only 39% of center-based providers in California have been employed in their current setting for over five years.<sup>217</sup>

**“I have gotten great ideas and feedback from professionals in this field to improve my skills as a teacher and provide a better learning environment for my children in the classroom.”**  
- PFA Teacher

Although fewer teachers were enrolled in degree programs this year compared to last year, the level of education increased. As Exhibit 5.15 demonstrates, this fiscal year, 40.0% of teachers were enrolled in a degree program at a university or community college – a decrease from last year’s 60.3%. While the percentage of teachers educated at, or above, the Associate’s level was consistent this fiscal year and last year (84.3% this fiscal year compared to last year’s 83.6%), more teachers were educated at or above the Bachelor’s level (40.3% this fiscal year compared to last year’s 32.9%). This suggests that PFA teachers are no longer enrolled in degree programs because they have already reached their desired educational goals and received a Bachelor’s degree. This is consistent with the increase in Tier 3 sessions this fiscal year. Last fiscal year 28 sessions were designated as Tier 3, while this year 38 sessions were designated as Tier 3. Comparison data indicate that more PFA teachers have an Associate’s degree than their peers, while about the same percentage have Bachelor’s degrees or higher: in California, an estimated 67% preschool-age children in non-school-based settings have lead teachers with at least an Associate’s degree, and 42% percent have a teacher with a Bachelor’s degree or higher.<sup>218</sup>

During the school year 90.1% of teachers were offered the opportunity to supplement their experience and/or formal education with professional development activities, such as training on the DRDP-R and CLASS or working with children with special needs. Almost all teachers (93.3%) participated in activities and took advantage of this opportunity, with 71.4% of teachers participating in activities to better meet the needs of children with special needs or English language learners. Survey participants attended an annual average of 7.6 activities in FY 2007-08, an increase from last year’s average of 5.9 activities. Many teachers view PFA as opening up opportunities to participate in training that allow them to offer more tools to the children, as well

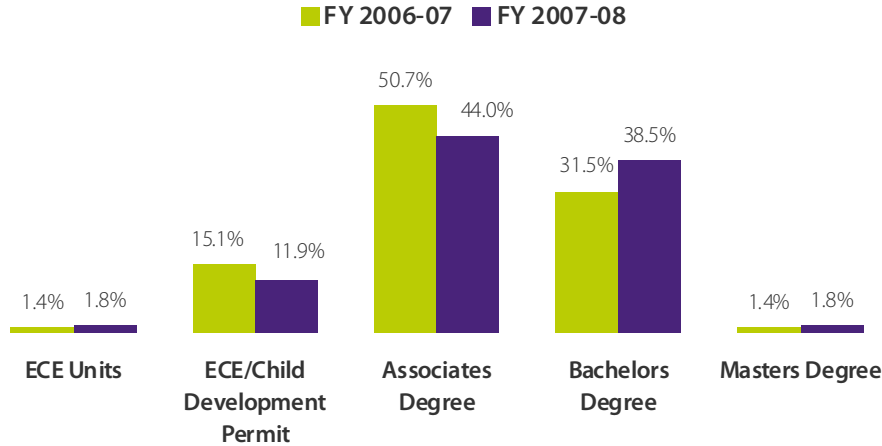
<sup>216</sup> Percentages reported are valid percentages based on the number of valid responses to each survey item.

<sup>217</sup> “California Early Care and Education Workforce Study: Licensed Child Care Center and Family Child Care Providers.” Center for the Study of Child Care Employment. 2006. Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California at Berkeley, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network. July 2006. 18 Sept 2008 <[http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/cscce/workforce\\_study.html](http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/cscce/workforce_study.html)>.

<sup>218</sup> Karoly, Lynn A., et al. “Prepared to Learn: The Nature and Quality of Early Care and Education for Preschool-Age Children in California.” Preschool California. 2008. RAND Corporation. 18 Sept. 2008. <<http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/rand-study/rand-study-3.html>>.

as professional growth for themselves. In one teacher’s words, “By participating in PFA, I’ve been able to grow professionally.”

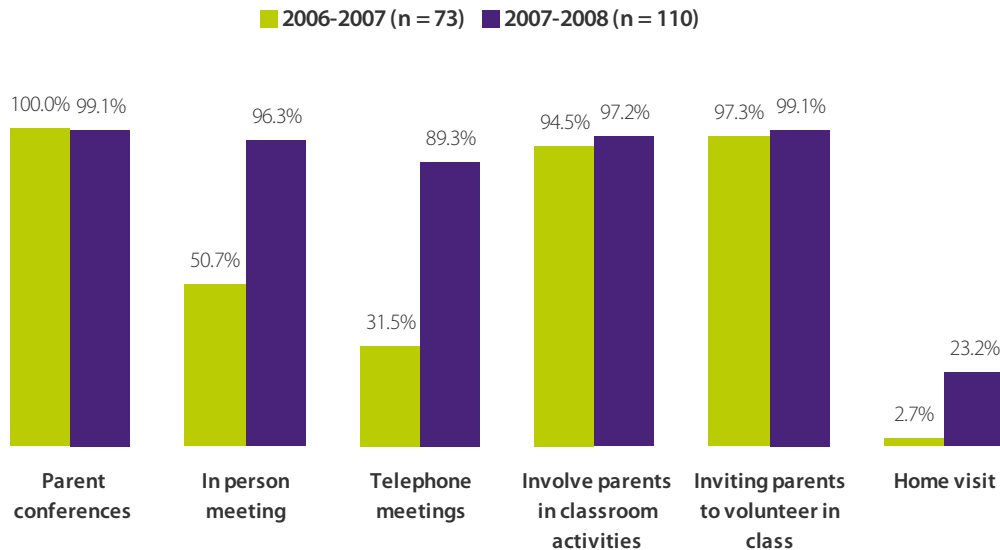
**Exhibit 5.15** Level of Teacher Education  
FY 2006-07 (n = 73) and FY 2007-08 (n=107)



***Interaction with Parents***

As Exhibit 5.16 shows, the most common parent involvement activities remained consistent from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08, with the three most common activities being parent conferences (99.1%), inviting parents to volunteer in the classroom (99.1%), and involving the parents in classroom learning/play activities (97.2%). The percentage of teachers participating in these three activities this year was similar to last year. Though the least common activity in both years was home visits, this year there was a substantial increase in the percentage of teachers participating, from 2.7% last year to 23.2% this year. This increase is largely due to the addition of a new provider who engages in home visits. Similarly, there was an increase in the percentage of teachers meeting parents in person, from 50.7% last year to 96.3% this year, and talking to parents on the telephone, from 31.5% last year to 89.3% this year. Overall, PFA teachers interacted and involved parents in more types of activities this year as compared to last year.

**Exhibit 5.16** Activities Involving Parents\*  
FY 2006-07 (n=73) and FY 2007-08 (n=110)



\*Categories within each fiscal year are not mutually exclusive

**Interaction with Kindergartens**

Like last fiscal year, the majority of PFA teachers do not have extensive interaction with kindergarten teachers, with just over a quarter (28.3%) of PFA teachers having met with kindergarten teachers to discuss their students’ transition. However, compared to last fiscal year, there was an increase in PFA teachers who said they attended meetings with kindergarten teachers (46.7% in FY 2007-08 versus 37.5% in FY 2006-07). There was also an increase in teachers who attended training with kindergarten teachers (26.9% in FY 2007-08 compared to 20.3% in FY 2006-07). Most PFA teachers (88.8%) met with parents to prepare them for their child’s transition (similar to last fiscal year). However, there has been a decrease from last fiscal year in PFA teachers who created transition files for students going to kindergarten (78.6% in FY 2007-08 compared to 90.9% in FY 2006-07). For the most part, while some indicators of kindergarten interaction improved, the majority of preschool teachers were not in direct communication with kindergarten teachers.

**Making the Connection**

One of the intentions of all of First 5 San Diego’s initiatives is to strengthen the systems of care that support young children. System-level evaluation for PFA Year 2 included observational and secondary data gathered from the PFA Leadership Team meetings, interviews with 15 PFA site directors, and data from SDCOE. The purpose of this section is to document the continuing and new successes and challenges of the project.

**Successes**

The second year of PFA has seen the addition of five new sites, for a total of 20 sites in the six designated areas of San Diego County. Directors from 15 of these sites were interviewed and continued to be excited about the successes of the project. Most of the successes that emerged this fiscal year are the same as the successes identified last year. Continuing achievements included improved access to quality preschool, educational

advancement of teachers, and involvement of parents and the community. A new success included the professional coaching services offered by SDCOE.

- **Improved access to quality Preschool.** Last fiscal year, PFA Directors said that the project was an opportunity to raise the quality of education they provided and expand quality services to children in need. This year, Directors continued to praise PFA’s ability to provide quality preschool to a broad cross-section of children. PFA’s enrollment criteria have allowed children who otherwise would have fallen through the cracks to access quality education - specifically, children with family incomes too high for state preschool, but who cannot afford private preschool benefitted the most. Directors said that the support and funding available through PFA have allowed them to raise the quality of services they offer through training opportunities for teachers, classroom activities and curriculum, and upgrades to classrooms and playgrounds. Most sites continued to be pleased with the high quality guidelines set by PFA, and smaller providers and family-based sites have used these quality guidelines to enhance their program offerings. As one director explained, “It provided an additional way for us to move towards the quality standards that we’re interested in.”

**“I can provide service to 60 kids who wouldn’t have otherwise gone to Preschool. It isn’t only improving quality, it is increasing access.”**  
- PFA Director

- **Encouraging educational advancement for teachers.** Last fiscal year, directors noted that participation in PFA encouraged teachers to pursue B.A. degrees and look more objectively at their classrooms. This fiscal year, the same was true. Most Directors believed that advancing teachers’ education had a positive impact on the classroom environment, most often citing the less advanced teacher education level as the reason classrooms did not achieve higher Tier levels. Being involved with PFA gave many teachers the motivation and financial support needed to advance their education and career. Most directors reported actively encouraging their teachers to further their education, and many provided flexible scheduling options to allow teachers to work towards their A.A. or B.A.
- **Involvement of parents, families and the community.** Last fiscal year, PFA providers had numerous partnerships with community agencies and local businesses in order to increase the resources available to families. In Year 2 of PFA, providers continued to engage a variety of community organizations in providing services. Common partnerships included the YMCA, local libraries, as well as vision, hearing and health screening centers (providers were unsure if these services were First 5 funded). Like last year, FCC providers had the fewest and most informal partnerships, and most agencies did not know whether the agencies they collaborate with were First 5 funded. However, many of the directors interviewed noted that their involvement with PFA facilitated the establishment of new partnerships.

**“We have good parents and they want to be around their child and school.”**  
- PFA Director

Additionally providers offer diverse activities in order to involve as many families as possible in the PFA Demonstration Project. All sites offer parent involvement activities (such as volunteering in the classroom, field trips, special events), parent education (such as parenting classes, nutrition classes), and organizational involvement (such as serving on advisory committees). Directors stated that while participating/volunteering in the classroom was

not mandatory, between 10% and 100% of parents volunteered. Parents who could not – or did not – spend time in the classroom often participated in other activities such as parent advisory committees, family nights, and other special events.

- **Support and professional coaching services provided by SDCOE.** This fiscal year, SDCOE offered professional coaching services to PFA teachers (see Professional Development Coaching text box on page 151 for more information). Most of the PFA Directors saw the professional coaching services as a tremendous benefit to their teachers, although some of them wanted the service to focus more on child outcomes and less on ECERS-R and FCCERS-R scores. The directors viewed the services as a valuable tool for improvement, noting that both new and old teachers have room for improvement. According to directors, some teachers were initially hesitant to receive coaching, but the coaches did a good job of breaking down barriers and establishing trust. In fact, many teachers proved more receptive to feedback from an external source. One director explained the coaching program’s success by saying, “Sometimes it’s good to have someone objective – not an evaluator like myself or principal. [The teachers] feel more comfortable asking the coaches for feedback.” Overall, PFA Directors felt strongly supported by the SDCOE staff. Many commented on the quick response time on emailed questions, and the general helpfulness of SDCOE staff.

## Challenges

Many of the challenges identified in the first fiscal year of the PFA Demonstration Project have been overcome. However, there are still programmatic issues posing a challenge for Demonstration sites. This section includes an update on challenges identified last fiscal year as well as challenges that emerged this year. Continuing challenges include administrative requirements, workforce quality and participation, and new challenges include assessments and sustainability.

- **Administrative Requirements/Startup.** Last fiscal year, many providers noted that the administrative requirements associated with PFA were often overwhelming. They also noted that there were delays associated with start up, such as communicating the data collection requirements to PFA Directors, which added to their frustration surrounding the requirements. This year, although PFA Directors said there was a decrease in the time and energy spent on administrative requirements, many said the requirements for PFA were still burdensome. One PFA Director explained the burden was largely due to different reporting formats and categories for PFA and other funders. A number of Directors overcame this issue by tailoring databases to PFA reporting requirements. Despite the perceived burden, Directors reported that SDCOE staff provided valuable technical assistance, assisting some of the providers in developing processes and/or worksheets to fulfill their reporting requirements.
- **Workforce Quality.** Last fiscal year, providers identified two challenges around workforce quality. They noted that it was difficult for lead teachers to find the time and money to reach the qualifications required for PFA Quality (Tier 3), and that it was difficult to find qualified instructional assistants. This year, Directors continued to find that recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce difficult. This was particularly true for Tier 3 level teachers. One Director explained his challenge replacing a Tier 3 teacher mid-year, “Her replacement was Tier 3 education level...as we get more Tier 3 people it is a challenge to maintain.” PFA sites in rural areas of the county particularly noted difficulty recruiting qualified personnel due to long commute times.

- **Participation.** One of the success stories of PFA in San Diego is that it has a diverse system of providers – including school based, Headstart, private, family care and faith based centers. In this area, the SDPFA project is regarded as a model demonstration project around the state. Although PFA recruited diverse providers in Year 1, participation was noted as a challenge due to limited involvement of FCC providers and lack of site type diversity within regions. There has been some improvement in participation; however, challenges remain. In Year 1 and 2, PFA did not meet its target for the number of children served. This fiscal year, the program served 90% of its target population, and last year the program served 69.4% of its target population. In Year 1, only three of the six regions had providers from the three different site types. This year; however, four of the six regions had providers from all three site types. Despite the increased parent choice, a smaller percentage of slots were located at FCC sites than last year. Last year, 2.5% of PFA slots were located in FCC sites, while this year even fewer slots, 1.8%, were located in FCC sites. Currently, 17 providers have pending applications or have submitted letters of intent to participate in PFA in FY 2008-08, and 11 of these are FCC providers. First 5 San Diego and SDCOE continue to work together to include a diverse range of preschool providers in each region.
- **PFA Assessments.** Some PFA Directors felt there was a disconnect between preparing children for kindergarten and performing well on PFA assessments, particularly the ECERS. Some directors desire more emphasis on children’s educational outcomes, as opposed to environmental measures. One director asked, “You can have perfect scores on ECERS, but how do we know that [the children are] ready for kindergarten?” Some directors believe the coaching services should be aimed at increasing student outcomes, not on improving ECERS scores.
- **Sustainability.** Many PFA Directors expressed concern about losing PFA funding. They saw universal preschool as a need for many children in their communities, and were worried about what would happen to those children if PFA was discontinued. The uncertainty about PFA’s future also made at least one director hesitant about making changes in her current program, “If you go through a lot of work and make changes, but [PFA] doesn’t stick around, what’s the point of making a long-term change?”

## Update on Recommendations from FY 2006-07

The following actions were recommended in First 5 San Diego's Annual Evaluation Report. First 5 and SDCOE made the following changes to address these recommendations.

### **Recommendation 1: First 5 San Diego and SDCOE should work together to coordinate administrative requirements.**

Update: First 5 San Diego created a Provider Evaluation Committee, attended by staff from First 5, PFA providers, SDCOE, and Harder+Company. The group meets quarterly to discuss evaluation-related requirements including reporting and data collection requirements and timelines. The Committee is also a forum where directors can share their ideas about how to improve the evaluation. In year 2, SDCOE staff created better reporting templates with clearer instructions. Providers also received requirements before preschool sessions began.

### **Recommendation 2: Continue to improve classroom quality.**

Update: The professional development coaches worked closely with teachers this year to help improve classroom quality. The implementation of the CLASS tool helped to ensure that PFA classrooms continue to excel even once they have reached the level of PFA Quality (Tier 3). This tool is administered only at Tier 3 level classrooms and measures teacher-student interaction.

### **Recommendation 3: Encourage collaboration between PFA providers and First 5 Initiatives.**

Update: Like last fiscal year, most providers did not know if the agencies they worked with were funded by First 5, although it is likely that they are. In order to promote collaboration, the PFA and Healthy Development Services (HDS) Leadership Teams have shared membership; one member of the PFA Leadership Team is also a member of the HDS Leadership Team. Although this helps to raise awareness of collaborative opportunities among leadership, First 5 and SDCOE could continue to raise awareness among providers about collaboration opportunities with other First 5 Initiatives; especially within FCC providers. School and non-school -based providers already have numerous partnerships within the community to meet students' needs.

### **Recommendation 4: Improve screening and referral processes.**

Update: Last fiscal year, approximately 15.9% of children at PFA sites were screened for developmental delays. This fiscal year, approximately 75.4% of children were screened. Additionally, the response rates for both the PEDS and the ASQ were much higher this fiscal year. This fiscal year, 79.7% of distributed PEDS were returned, compared to 69.1% last fiscal year. Similarly, this fiscal year, 74.5% of distributed ASQs were returned, compared to 23.3% last fiscal year. Overall, the screening process has improved, with more children being screened.

### **Recommendation 5: Continue to provide families with choices.**

Update: Last year, the evaluation report recommended that SDCOE assist sites who have submitted letter of intent with meeting PFA quality standards. This year the professional development SDCOE coaching team worked with PFA Tier 1-3 level sites, as well as designated "pre-entry sites," to help ensure these sites meet PFA standards in the coming year. SDCOE should continue this practice in order to increase the choices available to families.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed based on the second full year of PFA implementation.

- + Expanding the Focus on Special Needs.** Early identification of special needs and treatment of mild to moderate delays is a cornerstone of First 5 San Diego. Data from this year show two areas that need to be addressed. Screening for special needs should be universal. In FY 2007-08, screenings improved substantially, but were still only 74.5% (as performed through the PEDS survey). This is an area for further improvement. Additionally, the PEDS instrument, which relies upon self-reporting by parents, may not be the best tool for the PFA population. The overall result is that fewer than 11% of children in PFA programs (those screened and not screened) received services for a developmental delay. Data from HDS and CDC figures suggest that this figure should be closer to 20%, given the population served. Ensuring true universal screening and improving the identification and treatment of children with developmental delays should be a priority for this year. In addition, it is unclear why the number of children qualifying for IEPs dropped by 26% in FY 2007-08, when both the number of children enrolled increased 21% and the number of screenings increased by nearly 60%. This warrants additional investigation.
- + Continue to Offer Professional Development Opportunities.** The professional development coaching team should continue to work with teachers, expanding their focus and providing increased support. Overall, teachers were satisfied with the assistance provided by the professional development coaching team. Teachers appreciated the professional relationship they had with their coach and felt supported in their work as a teacher. Many teachers expressed the desire to receive additional individual and group coaching, but did not know whether or not it was available. Meanwhile, directors noted that they wanted the coaches to focus on child outcomes versus scores on tools. Although the professional development team often provides materials and resources for classrooms, they could focus more on this, and provide ongoing support to teachers even once the review process is complete. In addition, more information could be shared about the overall approach of First 5 programs – focusing on the whole child and family -- and also the connection between some of the assessments and child outcomes.
- + Expand Connections.** First 5 and SDCOE should increase efforts to connect PFA providers, especially FCC providers, to other First 5 Initiatives. A new resource for teachers and providers is the new “warmline” (1-888-5First5), which connects callers to special operators at 211 San Diego who have been trained on First 5 programs and other resources serving young families in this area. In addition, SDCOE is well positioned to take a leadership role in building better connections between preschool and the K-12 system could facilitate connecting preschool teachers to kindergarten teachers. Like last fiscal year, the majority of PFA teachers do not have extensive interaction with kindergarten teachers. First 5 and/or SDCOE could notify PFA providers of opportunities for their teachers to attend trainings with kindergarten teachers. Additionally, they could sponsor a training to provide a space for kindergarten and preschool teachers to interact. Along with facilitating connections between preschool and kindergarten teachers,
- + Identify Ways to Increase Parent Engagement.** SDCOE and PFA providers could identify ways to increase parent engagement given that parents who participated in preschool activities showed a greater increase in parenting skills than those who did not. In particular, those who attended parenting classes reported the largest increase in skills and confidence as a parent. Parent education could be increased through offering more classes at various times throughout the day or through distributing class-related materials to all parents even if they cannot attend classes. In addition, parents noted that the smallest

increase in managing behavior issues with children. Special efforts could be made to increase class offerings to parents in this area.

- + Improving Data Collection.** PFA is a demonstration project, funded for five years by the Commission to create a platform and demonstrate to the public and policymakers the importance of quality early education. As such, the data collection and evaluation are critical to this project. Response rates need to be improved for the DRDP, the PEDS and the parent survey. This was the first year of implementing some data collection protocols, which affected data collection especially the DRDP. This should be resolved this year as the consent process becomes part of initial registration. There needs to be additional improvements in ensuring data is collected in all areas and response rates for the PEDS (74.5%) and the Parenting Survey (43%) are improved. One solution is to have teachers administer a screening for children whose parents do not complete a PEDS.
  
- + Work to Sustain Programs Over Time.** PFA funding is dedicated through 2011. Key to sustainability is advocating for recognition of the importance of preschool, and securing a stable funding stream for the continuation of PFA. Promoting funding for universal preschool in California is highlighted in the PFA Master Plan for San Diego County and is supported by the community base that developed the Plan. In addition, SDCOE and its partners should continue to look for opportunities to develop additional funding opportunities to sustain this project beyond First 5 San Diego. Although there are few funding sources that are available to directly fund preschool sites, there may be opportunities to leverage opportunities with the local school districts, such as using some Title I funds for preschool, or to identify new funding streams through local foundations.

## A Final Word on the Preschool for All Demonstration Project

During the second year of the Preschool for All Demonstration Project, 2,113 slots were provided for children in the six target communities to receive a quality preschool experience. The San Diego County Office of Education worked closely with school-based, non-school-based, and family care providers to integrate the various elements of the Demonstration Project. Classroom quality was enhanced by encouraging teachers to increase their educational level and attend trainings, administering the CLASS, and through support provided by the professional development coaching team. In addition, parents were offered numerous opportunities to participate in their child's education by volunteering in the classroom, participating in after school activities, serving on advisory committees, and attending parent education classes. Some of the challenges from the previous fiscal year continued to be challenges this year, such as limited family care provider participation and maintaining a qualified workforce; however, many of the challenges associated with the start-up phase of the project are no longer as significant an issue. The second year of PFA resulted in many achievements such as a significant increase in mean DRDP-R scores from Fall to Spring, an increase in the percentage of teachers with Bachelor's degrees, a high level of parent satisfaction, and an expansion of quality preschool throughout San Diego County. Preschool for All will be expanding into two new communities in FY 2008-09 – Vista and the Mountain Empire area. This is a testament to the program and its reputation in the San Diego community.

## Case Study 5 Learning for Your Kids\*

### *Dina's Full House*

Dina has lived in San Diego for the last 18 years. She has seven children, with three under the age of 5 years. After the birth of her youngest children, twin boys, Dina attended a class at North County Health Services (NCHS) that educated mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding. After attending this class, Dina was contacted by a NCHS parent educator who was recruiting parents for a new series of First 5 San Diego funded parent education classes. These classes launched a long standing relationship between Dina and NCHS that saw her youngest daughter, Kylee, off to kindergarten and has helped her with her twin boys.

### *Classes for Everyone*

Over the course of the six classes, Dina was offered information about how to address behavioral issues with her children, how to manage stress related to parenting, and how to seek out and attain resources from both NCHS and other community agencies. The sessions offered Dina a space for her to express typical parenting anxieties, while having an informed parent educator available to orient her on how to autonomously tackle those concerns. Upon completing the six class series, Dina, with a new sense of confidence, sought information about other services being offered through NCHS. It was then that Dina became aware of the numerous interactive parent-child classes offered. NCHS offers parents of children ages 0-5 years classes from an array of topics, such as music and movement, arts and crafts, and outdoor play. Dina feels that her participation in these classes prepared her children for kindergarten and contributed to their independence as well as their calm and appropriate behavior at school.

**"...They told me they were giving the classes every given day of the week. And I came and I grabbed a calendar and that was how I started to come to classes."**

**- Dina, First 5 Parent**

Over the last several years, Dina has routinely picked up a monthly NCHS calendar, which forecasts classes for that entire month and she proactively enlists in the parenting classes of interest to her. Dina regularly attends classes four to five times a week and takes classes she can apply to her family. "[I try to] learn about what they teach...and put it into practice," Dina affirmed. One class, in particular, teaches positive discipline and she has been able to apply these lessons to her children. Dina has found the program to be very accommodating with staff asking her for input on class topics. "When we first arrived, they gave little pieces of paper on Fridays and asked for suggestions about what one wanted to see more of at the center," Dina said. Based on Dina's suggestions, the program has held classes on nutrition and emergency preparedness for families with young children.

One of the important outcomes of her participation at NCHS has been that she has learned how to accommodate her children's preferences, which she feels are different from other children who have not participated in educational classes. Dina presents her children with toys and activities that inspire their curiosity and are attuned to their preferences. She recognizes now that 4-year-old Kylee does not have fun with dolls. Instead, she likes to feel the surface of shaving cream on glass windows and "she likes to paint, use clay, [and] crafts," she said. Dina recognized that her children's exposure to these sorts of toys and activities has positive influences on their physical and cognitive development. Dina highlights this fact by stating that Kylee has picked up on skills that will prepare her for school, such as using scissors and feeling comfortable in a classroom setting. She recently began to bring her young niece to the weekly classes, thinking that she too could benefit.

### ***Connecting to Other Programs***

During her interaction with NCHS, Dina has also been connected to another First 5 funded agency, Children's Care Connection (C3), which offers similar classes for parents. Dina now feels that she does not need to attend classes at another center because she is satisfied with the classes offered at NCHS.

### ***Expectations Met***

Dina feels that Kylee's participation in these programs has given her the opportunity to learn things that other girls her age do not know. Dina has seen real outcomes in Kylee. "...What I had achieved with her is that she's real independent," she said. Kylee has shown improved social skills and a sense of independence, such as dressing herself and being able to do many things by herself that her friends are unable to do. Dina also notices these same attributes with her twin boys. Because of NCHS, Dina feels that she is a confident parent who understands that help is available if, and when, she needs it.

*\*All names were changed to protect confidentiality*