



City of Seattle Family Child Care Study

Landscape Analysis

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Landscape Analysis

I. Introduction

The mission of the Department of Education and Early Learning is “*To transform the lives of Seattle’s children, youth, and families through strategic investments in education*”. DEEL invests in high-quality early learning services; supports programs that help children succeed in school; and, provides supports to increase the capacity of early learning programs in underserved communities. To realize this mission, DEEL values working with community-based early learning partners to ensure City investments and programs reach traditionally underserved populations.

With 369 licensed family child care homes and licensed capacity to serve 3,285 Seattle children, family child care is key to advancing early education in Seattle. Family child care also plays a unique and important role since families say that the flexibility, longer hours, and lower costs of family child care providers are important. Parent participants in this study named those elements as important, and also valued the close relationship they and their children could develop with the provider and other parents as important motivations for choosing FCC care.

A. Recent DEEL Supports of FCCs.

In recent years, DEEL has partnered with FCCs to increase their participation in City programs and has provided customized training series², such as those focused on the implementation of the *High Scope Curriculum* and support for business operations through consultation with Optimum Consulting. In fall of 2017, DEEL began two important pilot programs with FCCs: the Seattle Preschool Program pilot (SPP-FCC) and the Parent Child Home Program (PCHP-FCC) pilot. The SPP pilot uses a “hub approach” with a well-prepared agency serving as the hub for individual family child care providers. The SPP-FCC pilot is operating two hubs (Child Care Resources and Tiny Tots/Voices of Tomorrow) with their participating FCCs. The PCHP-FCC pilot is coordinated by (United Way of King County) with its participating FCCs. These pilots are useful not only because they facilitate more comprehensive services for some children, but because they also allow the City to test ways to engage small FCC providers in larger efforts (such as City and State preschool programs) that require substantial specialized expertise and infrastructure. The success of this hub approach in helping participating FCCs to reach nearly the same classroom quality as other preschool programs² provides important validation of the potential that working in supported peer groups has for tackling complex new responsibilities.

B. Seattle Family Child Care Advisory Council.

To guide the evolution of its strategy to support early education in FCCs settings, DEEL convened the Seattle Family Child Care Advisory Council, which consists of active family child care providers (FCCs) and other partners, such as Public Health – Seattle/King County.

² Nores, M., Barnett, W.S., Jung, K., Joseph, G., Bachman, L., & Soderberg, J.S. (2018). [Year 3 report: Seattle Pre-k program evaluation](#). New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research & Seattle, WA: Cultivate Learning.

C. Family Child Care Study.

To advance its FCC strategy, DEEL selected the Seattle-based Dovetailing Consulting (with Kaizen Clara serving as subcontractor) to serve as the study team to gather quantitative and qualitative data to respond to a set of research questions (See *Appendix B – Initial Evaluation Questions and Observations*) such as:

1. *What are the characteristics of the family child care community in Seattle as they relate to race, ethnicity, geographic distribution and licensed capacity?*
2. *What challenges are family child care providers currently facing in sustaining their business and enhancing quality of their program and teaching?*
3. *What challenges are family child care providers experiencing in how the City, County, and State interact with their business?*

To respond to the research questions, the study team, with guidance from DEEL and the FCCAC:

- Analyzed demographic data about family child care in Seattle.
- Developed an overview of the City's past and current family child care initiatives.
- Gathered the insights of family child care providers and community partners regarding issues, barriers, trends and beneficial strategies.

These data and insights, continued partnership with DEEL and the FCCAC, and the consultant team's perspectives (DEEL requested the consultant team to identify strategic opportunities to partner with other City departments and with State and County programs) guided the development of the options in the study's strategy brief.

II. Study Methodology

A. Overview

The Seattle family child care study was conducted from April through October 2018. First, the study team and DEEL confirmed research questions to be explored. Then the consultant team asked the FCCAC reflect on the current business context, barriers, and opportunities for family child care providers in Seattle. These insights (described in the methods section below), formed a foundation for data collection, inquiry, and continued consultation with the FCCAC through November 2018. Early in 2018, the FCCAC identified six areas where more support could make a difference to the quality of their programs and the sustainability of their businesses.

1. Small business supports.
2. More program support (culturally responsive materials, parenting classes).
3. More/more coordinated same language professional development.
4. More access to government programs and subsidies (Working Connections, CCAP).
5. Training and support to reach state quality standards (Licensing, Early Achievers and MERIT).
6. Better, culturally responsive experiences with state-child care licensors and Early Achievers raters.

After hearing the FCCAC's initial thoughts, the study team prepared a research protocol to gather and analyze data, confirming the research protocol with DEEL and guidance from the FCCAC. The protocol named potential data collection methods for each research question and the individuals who might participate in interviews and focus groups.

Dovetailing worked to promote broad and balanced participation in the study with a focus on engaging providers of color and those who speak a primary language other than English. Outreach materials were provided in the six most common home languages. Interpretation was provided for focus groups in which providers of a non-English home language were invited, or when additionally requested.

1. **Overview of Data Sources.** Data were collected from five sources, (described in the following sections).
 - Input and advice from five meeting with the Family Child Care Advisory Council (FCCAC).
 - Demographic data for licensed family child care providers in Seattle obtained from the State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), [which licenses providers] and Child Care Resources (CCR) [which provides coaching and supports for providers who participate in the state quality rating and improvement system, Early Achievers.
 - Interviews with FCCs, City staff and partners.
 - Focus groups with FCCs participating in different programs.
 - Review of prior City research, City programs, and related State and County efforts.
2. **Deliverables.** The study team collected and analyzed data and explored findings in ongoing discussions with DEEL and guidance from the FCCAC. The two resulting deliverables are:
 - This *Family Child Care Landscape Analysis* describing study purposes, methods and data sources, past and current City initiatives (for FCCs), a review of secondary data sources, and study findings.
 - A *Strategy Options Brief*.

B. Methods

1. **FCCAC Deliberations.** The Family Child Care Advisory Council (FCCAC) met regularly in 2018, including 5 meetings in which the study team sought advice regarding plans for data collection, initial findings, and draft strategy options. The FCCAC shared their initial thoughts about the biggest barriers and potential strategies during the April meeting (as noted above in *Section II.A*). Data were collected and documented in meeting summaries and revisions of strategy review and strategy options documents as they were developed.

The study team drew on insights of FCCAC members through three means:

- a. Participation in scheduled FCCAC meetings in May, June, September, October, and November.
- b. Convening of a weekend meeting with FCCAC volunteers to discuss and plan additional outreach.
- c. Engagement of individual FCCAC members to plan and carry out additional focus groups and/or review data collection tools.

In some instances, the FCCAC suggested concrete strategies to address barriers to success (such as suggesting the overall and specific ideas noted in strategy option *D1 – Negotiate Housing Affordability Supports* in the *Strategy Options Brief*). In yet others, the need for new strategies to tap into what really works emerged as a result of how FCCs interacted in FCCAC meetings. Two examples of this are the strengthening of strategy option *B1 – Support Peer-Lead Groups Using Mentors*, and the addition of strategy option *C5 - Help FCCs Access Other Community Services That Enhance Quality*, each of which built over the course of conversations in several meetings and spurred FCCAC members to immediate action. In others, they provided interpretation of findings (such as the reasons that providers often do not access the

City CCAP subsidy program for families with income between 200-300% of the federal poverty level – resulting in strategy option *D7 - Make CCAP More Appealing/Beneficial* in the *Strategy Options Brief*).

2. **Secondary Data Review.** The study team collated and connected three sets of data provided at slightly different times. Two were provided by Child Care Resources and one from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Due to differences in the data collection processes, the data set ultimately included in analyses only included those providers reflected in all three data sets. These data sets included information such as: location, ages served, licensed capacity, Early Achievers status, provider race/ethnicity, languages spoken by provider, and financial supports provided to families.

Data were entered into Tableau, creating a dashboard for City staff who have appropriate access to confidential information. This allowed data to be mapped to show location and intensity of various elements of the 369 current family child care providers in Seattle (and 39 just outside the city limits in unincorporated King County). Data were also graphed to describe the current supply and identify some findings (See *Section V*, and *Seattle Family Child Care Study Presentation* slides).

Outreach Strategy – Data were collected through direct requests under data sharing agreements between the City and the consultant. Data were requested from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Child Care Resources. Data sets were connected to each other based on the child care license number. A new file including just the child care license number and the current Early Achievers ratings was obtained from Child Care Resources on August 28, 2018 in response to an FCCAC request to have the data reflect recently-released ratings.

3. **Key Informant Interviews.** 17 interviews were held with three types of partners considered to have important insights about the impacts of City and State requirements, policy, and supports (See *Appendix A – Study Participants*). Interviews allowed the use of probing questions to delve further into particular issues raised.

An interview protocol was customized for each interview, prioritizing interview questions designed to provide qualitative data tied to evaluation questions (See *Appendix B Initial Evaluation Questions and Observations*). Interview questionnaires included “probes” to ensure that prioritized data needs were addressed. Interviews were conducted by phone and in-person as requested by the interviewee. Interview summaries were maintained and viewed only by the consultant team, maintaining interviewee confidentiality to ensure frank responses. Qualitative data were categorized according to themes. Interviews were conducted with individuals who have different roles in the family child care system:

- a. Family Child Care Providers – Family child care providers who participated in City pilots shared their business plans, and their experience with City pilots, training, and supports.
- b. City Staff – City staff members play different roles in administering the programs and policies that support family child care providers. As administrators of these efforts, engaging these staff provided insights about program design, policy development, and family child care pilots. [Note: some data in *Section IV* are still being researched by City staff.]
- c. System and Funding Partners – Partners shared their experience with past and current City policies, programs, and pilots. In addition to the City staff, partners such as United Way of King County (responsible for funding and expansion of PCHP), state child care licensors (who establish licensing

policies and procedures and can foster alignment), and SEIU (which can articulate some provider needs), had their own insights about current challenges and opportunities for family child care providers as a result of their involvement with those piloting City efforts.

Outreach Strategy. DEEL staff identified the individuals to interview and the study team scheduled in-person or telephone interviews.

4. **Focus Groups.** 6 focus groups were held with family child care providers and one focus group with parents. Focus group questions explored deeper and more open-ended topics such as: *“What are your hopes for your business?” “Have the City pilots or programs that you participate in helped you realize your hopes? If so, how?” “How can the City make it easier for family child care providers of all the ethnicities, backgrounds and languages to participate in supports?” “Think about everything that it takes for you to run your business and provide good care for children. Are there other important things that the city could do to help family child care providers sustain their businesses and enhance the quality of their programs?”*

FCC focus groups were planned in ways that would include providers representing varied demographics and participation in City programs, including:

- a. DEEL Pilot Participants - Participants of each of the DEEL initiatives: Seattle Preschool Program FCC networks; the PCHP pilot; the Child Care Assistance Program; and the Early Learning Academy (High Scope training series) were interviewed.
- b. Providers of Specific Home Languages - Focus groups were provided with interpretation in Somali and Oromo. Three interviews that replaced the Spanish-language focus group were conducted in Spanish to gather insights from a group of providers that were reluctant to appear in public.
- c. Parents - Parents whose children are cared for by family child care providers were invited to focus groups. 11 parents participated.

Outreach Strategy. Focus groups were planned in ways that the FCCAC, DEEL staff, and the study team felt would maximize participation. The outreach plan included the following considerations to promote participation:

- Schedule during regularly-scheduled events to ease the burden on FCC’s time.
- Schedule events in different parts of the City at familiar and trusted locations.
- Hold events on weekends and/or evenings.
- Build on introductions of trusted community organizations and individuals.
- Provide interpretation when needed.
- Provide meals.
- Provide gift cards as honoraria in consideration of FCCs time.

Because of DCYF-required training, and other unanticipated research being conducted by others at the same time as the City’s, engagement of providers to participate was more challenging than expected. The study team, FCCAC, and DEEL team tried multiple strategies to boost participation.

C. Study Limitations, Execution Observations, and Recommendations

The DEEL team and Family Child Care Advisory Council were nimble and flexible in pursuing the study's goals. Some challenges interfered with documentation of as much of the field and strategy vetting as desired. The study team offers the following observations and recommendations for future studies.

1. **Many changes are happening simultaneously.** Multiple independent government and non-profit agencies are actively working to support family child care provider success. While FCCs expressed appreciation for the attention, they noted that the number and timing of requests further stretched their schedules. They noted that for that reason and due to the uncertainty of direct benefit, many of their colleagues were disinclined to participate. For this reason, it is important to note that only about 15 percent of FCCs in Seattle participated in the study and not all FCCs were asked about or offered perspectives on each area of the findings. For example, only those participating in the SPP-FCC pilot or the HighScope training provided insights on those programs. **Recommendation:** As noted in strategy area “E - Connect, Streamline, and Align Initiatives/Programs” in the *Strategy Options Brief*, the study team recommends that regular meetings be held with key agency partners whose work regularly affects the City's options (DCYF and CCR) and somewhat less regularly with other agencies who are also working to support providers (e.g., Imagine Institute, Economic Opportunity Institute, etc.)
2. **Data sets do not match and miss important information.** Data sets from Child Care Resources (CCR) which provides coaching to providers through the State's Early Achievers quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) and other venues, and from the State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) [which gathers data for licensing] were analyzed. Each contained some, but not all, necessary elements for this data review. Four issues of data not matching and missing information were identified.
 - a. **Data sets do not match.** The two data sets did not match, reflecting use of different data fields and collection methods, periodicity, and data cleaning processes (for example, each had some records that the other indicated was a family child care business no longer in operation). Since the study team was restricted from contacting the providers who appeared on one list, but not the other, the data presented reflect the 408 FCCs on which the two agencies agreed. Among the 408 agreed providers there are 39 providers (with 386 slots) whose location falls outside the City limits, leaving 369 within City limits and Council Districts.
 - b. **Data are missing.** Another limitation of the data that affects the ability of the City to customize supports and ensure equitable access for providers is the large number of providers for whom demographic or other information is missing. For example, race and ethnicity are unknown for only 219 (53.7%) of FCCs. One reason for this is that many providers choose “other” or do not provide data. In other instances, Latinx FCCs who have concerns about how City and state agencies will use data and safety of gatherings, avoided contact with agencies and their information was therefore less available.
 - c. **More data fields are needed.** Oromo-speaking FCCs participating in the FCCAC and the study commented regularly about how there was no option to state their home language as Oromo, nor were multiple entreaties at the state level for Oromo language materials met.
 - d. **There is little information on FCCs who do not participate in Early Achievers.** Those who do not participate in Early Achievers or accept state Working Connections child care (WCCC) subsidies have

little information in databases at all, providing little insight as to business plans, strengths, or needs. Restrictions on confidentiality of provider addresses and contact information further hamper collection of data.

Recommendation: Negotiate with DCYF and CCR to revise data definitions and collection methods to gather more accurate information (like Oromo and other language) and explore mechanisms to encourage providers not participating in exploration efforts to join the conversation in safe ways. These might include peer-led conversations as noted in the *Strategy Options Brief* and financial or other incentives for participation that counter the cost to providers of participating. The City might highlight how understanding varied needs of different provider communities will drive investment and support strategies— this will make it clearer if there will be benefit from engaging.

3. **Lack of on-hand data at the City hampers action.** The lack of a centralized and regularly-updated source of data about current family child care provider demographics, plans, and interests hampers the City’s ability to forecast and respond to current and changing needs. **Recommendation:** The study team recommends DEEL: secure regular data exchange with DCYF and CCR; pursue strategies to gather more complete data; and, collate data where coaches, planners, and others can access it. The clickable maps in Tableau provided by the study team provide an example of how this data could support regular analysis and deployment of support to those who would most benefit.
4. **City staff are pulled in many directions.** During the study, the City staff were regularly called away from planned activities related to the study for other DEEL priorities. This made gathering and review of data challenging. If continued, this may interfere with execution of future strategies. **Recommendation:** Use the Family Child Care Advisory Council and the planned “report card” showing the success of implementing strategy priorities to drive consistent (and perhaps more) agency resources to focus on the sustainability and quality of family child care.

III. The Context of Initiatives and Programs in Which Seattle FCCs Participate

This section illustrates the broader context of required and voluntary City, County, State, and other initiatives and programs in which Seattle’s licensed family child care home providers participate. This context is key to understanding the pressures on FCCs and strategies to help them sustain their businesses and continue to enhance the quality of their programs.

FCCs in Washington provide early education and care for up to 12 children (ages birth through 12 years) in their homes. Our state requires everyone who provides regular, ongoing care for unrelated children to become a [licensed child care provider](#). To accept low-income families who receive state child care subsidies, child care providers must participate in [Early Achievers](#), Washington’s child care quality rating and improvement system. They must also receive a rating of Level 3 or above (on a scale of 2 to 5).

FCCs can also participate in an array of voluntary State and City programs and initiatives designed to:

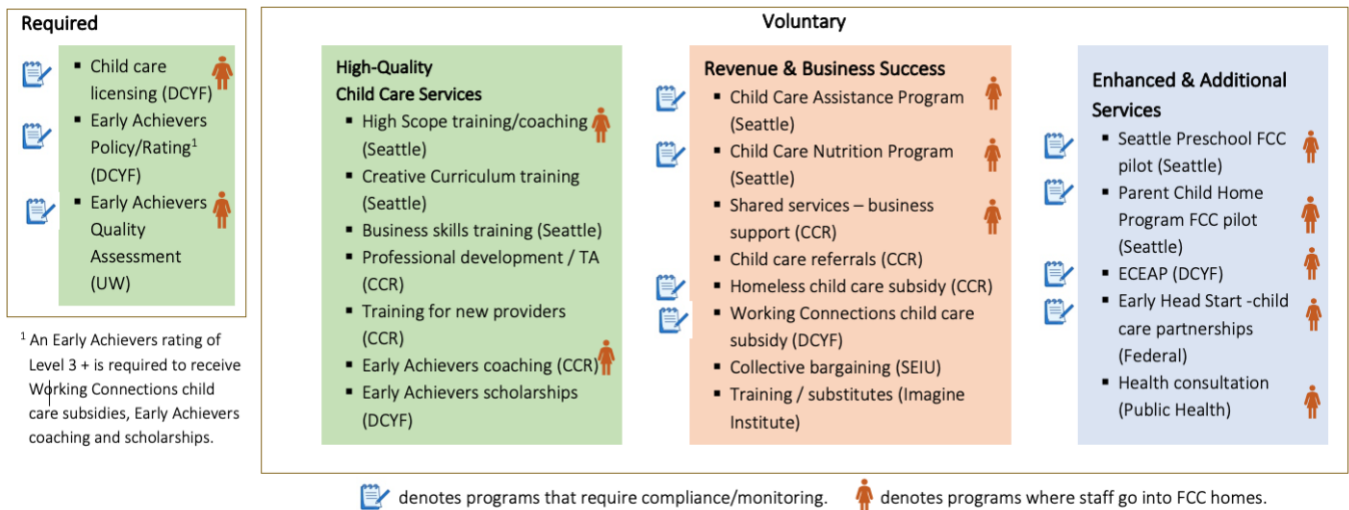
- Continue to increase the quality of their services.
- Increase their revenues and business success.
- Add enhanced and additional services such as the Seattle Preschool Program.

The graphic below shows the multiple City, County, State, and federal programs and initiatives that impact family child care providers. It includes:

1. Supports and initiatives by category (required, supporting business success, providing enhanced and additional services)
2. Name of sponsoring entity and of each support/initiative
3. The seven to ten City, County, and State program supports and initiatives that have professionals entering FCC homes. These include:
 - a. Child care licensors;
 - b. CCR/Child Care Aware Early Achievers coaches (on behalf of DCYF) and professional development/assistance coaching for providers;
 - c. UW quality rating assessors (on behalf of DCYF);
 - d. City of Seattle Preschool Program pilot coaches;
 - e. City of Seattle Comprehensive Child Care Program specialists (to assess and assure ongoing quality);
 - f. City of Seattle Child Care Nutrition Program; and,
 - g. King County Child Care Health Program (on behalf of the Seattle Preschool Program pilot).

One key takeaway is that up to twelve different City and State programs and initiatives send professionals into family child care homes as part of the noted programs and supports, a point often raised by FCCs who participated in the study.

1. Figure 1. Supports to Family Child Care Providers in Seattle by Type and Entity



IV. Current Initiatives

A. Introduction

This section includes current Seattle programs and initiatives in which family child care providers participate. The training and pilot programs are fairly new (with the SPP-FCC pilot beginning in September 2017, the Early Learning Academy (High Scope training) beginning in 2014, and business skills training in late 2018). The subsidy (DEEL) and nutrition programs (HSD) programs are long-standing. (See *Section IV* for a past program that has been discontinued, a Family Child Care Partnerships Program.) For each program or initiative, there is:

1. A brief description.
2. A chart noting: eligibility; benefits to and responsibilities of FCCs; partner organizations; measures and results; City commitments and future plans.
3. Barriers faced by FCCs with each program and initiative. (Please see *2018 City of Seattle Family Child Care Study: Strategy Options* for strategic opportunities.)

The table below provides an overview of City of Seattle initiatives and programs in which family providers participate. Please note that the study team has found that most of the providers spoken with participated in multiple programs. So, the total number of participants is unknown.

Overview of City of Seattle Current Initiatives for Family Child Care Providers			
Program Name	Purpose	Eligibility	FCCs participating (Summer 2018)
Department of Education and Early Learning			
HighScope Curriculum Training	Curriculum training	All licensed FCCs	60-70 providers per training series
Creative Curriculum Training	Curriculum training	SPP pilot participants and instances where the trainings are open	Varies
Business Training	Strengthen business management skills	Participation in the SPP FCC Hubs	16
Seattle Preschool Pilot (SPP)	Provide quality supports, test best ways to engage FCCs in PCHP program	Open to all licensed FCCs	14
Parent Child Home Program Pilot (PCHP)	Provide quality supports, test best ways to engage FCCs in PCHP program	Licensed FCC providers serving low-income children, in business 3 or more years	12
Facilities Fund	Provide pre-development services with architects	SPP pilot participant, currently not eligible for facility funds	2
Child Care Assistance Program	Provide child care subsidies to low-income families	FCCs with licenses in good who serve low-income children and who meet or exceed City of Seattle CCAP quality threshold	Approximately 60
Human Services Department			
Child and Adult Food Program	Provide funds and monitoring to improve child nutrition	Licensed FCCs serving low-income children	128

B. FCC Training Initiatives

1. Early Learning Academy for Family Child Care Providers

The Early Learning Academy provides HighScope training to FCCs. HighScope is an evidence-based curriculum that emphasizes learning guided by children’s interests and choices through hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. Key components of the HighScope approach include participatory learning experiences facilitated by positive adult- child interactions, culturally- and developmentally-relevant practices, and enriched physical environments and daily routines. The HighScope family child care training includes two series of 10 two-hour training modules for a total of 40 hours.

Early Learning Academy	
History and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First adapted and initiated for FCCs in 2014. The Early Learning Academy’s High Scope curriculum training is now in its fifth year. In the early years, the training included 30 modules which has since been reduced to twenty.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to all licensed FCCs
# FCC Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 60 -70 providers per series
Enrollment Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FCCs contact DEEL to apply and register for the training.
Benefits to FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 hours of training MERIT/STARS credit \$150 completion bonus (for attending all 10 sessions) Stipend to attend training (\$30/session, maximum of \$300/series) 4 hours of collaborative coaching Up to 2 hours of on-site coaching Classroom materials Coursework in infant-toddler, preschool, and elementary programs
FCC Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend sessions and participate in coaching.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now provided by DEEL staff. Originally provided by a consultant.
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written materials in English with limited materials in Spanish Simultaneous interpretation available in multiple languages
Outcomes/ Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA) Instrument
City Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time, expertise, funds

Sources:

- HighScope Family Child Care Training Overview
- Interview with Kimberly Early
- Interview and focus group with HighScope curriculum training participants

Overall Feedback

- Value.* The handful of current and past participants interviewed by the study team has found the training extremely helpful.
- Results.* Participating FCCs say that the training has helped them organize their space differently and help the children learn better. Using the curriculum helps them teach what each child needs.

Barriers

- a. *Limited Space.* A few FCCs have noted that there is more demand to participate than available training spaces.
- b. *Time Commitment.* A couple have suggested that it would be easier for them to participate if the time commitment were shorter.

2. FCC Business Skills Training

DEEL program monitoring has found that business issues such as bookkeeping, tax preparation, and human resource management can be a challenge for family child care providers. To address this, the DEEL team has contracted with Optimum Consulting for 8 sequenced two-hour training sessions with one-to-one follow up in business practices for SPP FCC participants.

Business Skills Training	
History and Timeline	▪ New training focused on areas of business management where FCCs have had challenges. The first session was held on June 23, 2018.
Eligibility	▪ Participation in the SPP FCC Hubs
# Participants	▪ 16
Enrollment Process	▪ Through the SPP FCC Hubs
Benefits to FCCs	▪ Business skills training and one-to-one technical assistance
FCC Responsibilities	▪ Attend sessions
Partners	▪ Consultant Nora Duffy
Languages	▪ Written materials in English ▪ Simultaneous interpretation available in multiple languages
Outcomes/ Measures	▪ To be determined at the end of the training series
Results	▪ TBD, training is in progress
City Commitment	▪ Staff time, expertise, funds
Future Plans	▪ To be determined

Source:

- Conversation with Nora Duffy

Overall Feedback:

- a. *Results.* Training still in progress. Feedback and barriers are not yet available.

B. Current City of Seattle – Family Child Care Programs

1. Seattle Family Child Care Preschool (SPP) Pilot

In 2014, voters approved the Seattle Preschool Levy to expand access to affordable, high-quality preschool for Seattle's three- and four-year-olds so that they enter school prepared to succeed and the academic opportunity gap for children is eliminated. Through its two-year SPP Family Child Care Pilot, the City is testing a “hub-network strategy” to provide high-quality preschool in family child care settings.

Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Pilot	
History and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The two-year pilot, initiated in September 2017, implements the <i>Seattle Preschool Action Plan</i> (“After initial program start-up, the City will work to develop a family child care (FCC) pilot to assess whether and how partnerships with FCC providers can be implemented in a way that achieves, in a cost-effective manner, the same quality standards as other types of providers.”) ▪ A family child care advisory council that met in 2015 and 2016 recommended the pilot’s hub-network. Hub organizations provide overall support to FCC participants and remove the individual burden for managing compliance with program requirements.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open to all licensed FCCs that meet minimum quality requirements
# Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 14 (7 with the Child Care Resources Hub and 7 with the Tiny Tots/Voices of Tomorrow Hub)
Enrollment Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The City of Seattle selected two FCC Preschool Hubs: Child Care Resources and Tiny Tots/ Voices of Tomorrow ▪ Each hub selected its FCC participants
Benefits to FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learning environment start up grants (\$1,250-1,800) ▪ Professional development (training, peer learning, coaching and on-site TA) ▪ Up to \$10,000 of tuition support per SPP-eligible child for the SPP school year (public school calendar, 6 hours per day) ▪ Ability to receive additional funds for SPP children for before and after school care from subsidy or private pay sources
FCC Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend sessions and participate in coaching ▪ Commit pre-K slots to the Seattle Preschool Program ▪ Implement one of the SPP curricula and participate in professional development activities ▪ Contract and work closely with the Hub to ensure compliance
Hub Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contract with DEEL ▪ Establish/monitor contracts with FCCs and serve as fiscal agent for SPP child subsidies ▪ Serve specified number of children through SPP slots and participating FCCs ▪ Monitor FCC compliance and make payments to FCCs ▪ Provide technical assistance to FCC participants in areas such as program start-up, communication of SPP program requirements, support to ensure FCCs meet required program elements, provision of fiscal assistance and coordination of access for SPP evaluators

Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Pilot	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Hubs receive up to \$70,000 per year in base pay and may keep up to 10% of SPP child subsidy payments to fund Hub operations
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPP Hubs: Child Care Resources and Tiny Tots/Voices of Tomorrow
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written materials in English with limited materials in Spanish Simultaneous interpretation available in multiple languages
Outcomes/ Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to assess teacher-child interactions Online Teaching Strategies GOLD® to assess child education and learning Ages and Stages Questionnaire®-3 developmental screening tool
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early evaluation shows that the City SPP pilots to help FCCs increase service quality are effective. An evaluation of the Seattle Preschool Program found that “average quality does not differ significantly between classrooms and (Seattle Preschool Program pilot) family child care providers (FCCs)...³”
City Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time, expertise, policy funds

Sources:

- Interview and focus group with pilot participants and Hub Coordinators
- Conversation with Kimberly Early
- 2016 Pilot planning and debrief papers
- 2017 and 2018 learning session notes
- 2018 SPP-FCC Pilot Update for Councilman O’Brien
- [Year 3 Report: Seattle Pre-K Program Evaluation](#)

Overall Feedback:

- Value.* All participating FCCs interviewed said the pilot helped them to improve their teaching, using what they learned to support children’s learning.
- Peer Networks.* Participants rely on the peer networks to help them understand work through challenges.

Barriers:

- Language.* Those who do not yet speak English proficiently reported not being able to understand the classes and materials well.
- Speed of change and learning.* Learning about the new curriculum and TSG at the same time was difficult. The flexibility in timing was appreciated. Participants are now comfortable with using it.

2. Seattle Family Child Care Parent Child Home Program (PCHP)

PCHP is a national evidence-based early literacy, parenting, and school readiness model that works to close the achievement gap by providing low-income families the skills and materials they need to

³ Nores, M., Barnett, W.S., Jung, K., Joseph, G., Bachman, L., & Soderberg, J.S. (2018). [Year 3 Report: Seattle Pre-K Program Evaluation](#). New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research & Seattle, WA: Cultivate Learning.

prepare their children for school and life success. Seattle is part of a multi-site two-year pilot to implement PCHP with family child care providers initiated by the national organization. Implementing PCHP with family child care providers (whereas the program traditionally focuses on the parent-child interaction predominantly) holds the promise of extending PCHP benefits to both providers and the families that they serve.

Family Child Care Parent Child Home Program	
History and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The two-year Seattle PCHP pilot was initiated in September 2017. Through United Way of King County, three PCHP providers (Chinese Information Service Center, the YWCA, and Atlantic Street Center) each provider selected 2 FCC participants for a total of six FCC participants in year one.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be in business for at least 3 years ▪ Must serve low-income children
# FCC Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year One - 6 FCCs. (3 African Americans born in the US, 2 Somali born in Somalia, 1 Chinese, born in China). Year Two – 12 FCCs, 6 original and 6 new.
Benefits to FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early literacy specialists (home visitor) visits each site with a <i>Verbal Interaction Stimulus Material (VISM)</i> (such as a book) and provides coaching using early literacy and math activities twice weekly during the program year (12 total). Guide sheets (developed by PCHP) with ideas to encourage interactions using the VISM are given to the provider and to each child’s parents. The focus of the first-year pilot was on providers and children. Year two may add a focus on families.
Responsibilities of FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in 2 PCHP visiting sessions per week during the program year
Partner Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Way of King County, Thrive Washington (which houses the PCHP state lead representing the national PCHP organization) and Zeno Math.
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early literacy specialists speak FCC primary languages. VISM’s are in primary languages Guide sheets are in English.
Outcomes /Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased parent engagement with provider and child care setting. ▪ Increased quality of child care environment and adult child interactions (tools: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS). Pilot leads are looking at child outcome and FCC satisfaction with PCHP for the future.
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most FCCs showed a gain in each of the 4 FCCERS domains. The most significant gains occurred in the “Listening & Talking” and “Interactions” domains, with an overall average increase of 1.38 and 1.4 respectively (on a 7-point scale). ▪ Note: Pilot participants in other states who experienced the 4-visit sequence had significantly larger gains for the “Listening and Talking”, “Interactions”, and “Activities” subscales, than providers who experienced the 2-visit sequence used in Seattle. (<i>Evaluation Overview Appendix D.</i>)
City Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funds
Future Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For 2018, the year one FCCs will continue for their second year. Each year-one provider will also recruit two new FCC participants for a total of 12 participants. ▪ Year two may add more of a focus on families.

Sources:

- Telephone calls with United Way of King County staff
- Seattle Parent Child Home Program Family Child Care (PCHP) *End of Pilot Report*
- *FCC Evaluation Overview*
- [PCHP Family Child Care Pilot PowerPoint](#)
- Interview and focus group with PCHP participants

Overall Feedback:

- a. *Value.* All participating FCCs expressed appreciation of the pilot and have found it to be an enriching addition to their services and practice. They said they had learned a lot about ways to help children with literacy (and math for those who are also working with ZENO Math as part of the PCHP Pilot). They also noted learning about how to engage parents in children’s learning. One of the things that they said they appreciated most was that PCHP brings materials and books to use in the FCC and for parents to take home. The FCCs also reported talking more with parents about what they are teaching and increasingly suggest things that parents can do at home to support what is happening in care.

Barriers:

- a. No barriers identified

3. Seattle Child Care Subsidies: The Child Care Assistance Program

To address the higher cost of living in Seattle and augment the state Working Connections child care subsidy program available to families, the City of Seattle supports families furthest from opportunity by helping low- and moderate-income working families with children aged one month to 13-years-old pay for child care. Families can choose from about 180 licensed family child care homes and centers, which contract with the City to provide high-quality and affordable child care. CCAP subsidies support child care for 575 children (Program staff, June 2018).

Participating families receive a voucher authorizing monthly child care payments to the child care provider that they choose from the City’s list. The amount of the payment depends on family income, the age of the child, and hours of care needed. The City typically pays between 25% and 70% of a standardized rate, and the family is responsible for paying the difference between the voucher amount and the provider’s regular monthly rate.

Child Care Assistance Program	
History and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CCAP was initiated in the early 70’s. In the early years there was a greater emphasis on technical assistance and quality supports for child care providers and marketing to families.▪ Today the City provides child care subsidies to Seattle families with incomes of between 200-300% of the <i>Federal Poverty Guidelines</i> (from \$50,200 - \$75,300 for a family of four in 2018)
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Must be licensed and in good standing▪ Must meet or exceed City of Seattle CCAP quality threshold (as assessed by program early learning specialists).▪ Must serve low-income children
# FCC Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Approximately 60

Child Care Assistance Program	
Benefits to FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support for children in families with higher incomes than allowed by the state Working Connections Child Care Subsidies (up to 200% of FPL).
Responsibilities of FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a child care license in good standing Pass an observational assessment of quality by CCAP Early Education Specialists Complete an annual vendor services agreement with the City of Seattle Purchase and maintain \$2M of general liability insurance (Compared to \$1M required for state child care subsidies) Provide care to participating families, document services, and forward documentation to the City of Seattle.
Partner Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City CCAP web page is in English.
Outcomes /Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 346 families with children birth to 4 years of age received child care subsidies in 2017 from both child care centers and FCCs. (BERK 2018)
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 346 working families with very young children are able to afford and access high-quality child care that enables them to maintain education and employment (BERK 2018) Child care providers have a more stable payment source
City Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time, funds, expertise and policy
Future Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New vendor agreements with FCCs will require Early Achievers participation or sign-up within 30 days.

Sources:

- Interview with Suzette Espinoza Cruz and Debra Kinsey
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) *Analysis and Recommendation* (BERK, April 2018)
- Interview with CCAP participant and perspectives from FCCs who receive CCAP that participated in other focus groups
- Program descriptions on City of Seattle website

Overall Feedback:

- Value.* Participating FCCs interviewed appreciate the CCAP tuition support to help families and to help children stay in their program. Despite the cost for higher levels of general liability insurance (\$2 million for city subsidies compared to \$1 Million for state subsidies), FCCs stay with the program so that they do not miss or lose a child that could be supported by the CCAP program.

Barriers:

- Lack of knowledge leads to lack of participation.* So far, most FCCs interviewed do not know about the program. The number of subsidy recipients has declined over the past four years. In addition, there are gaps in providers outside of Southeast Seattle. (BERK 2018).
- Cost without benefit.* Four participating FCCs noted that they pay increased insurance costs at the time of signing the vendor agreements, but that they may not be sent a child all year.

4. Seattle Child and Adult Care Food Program (Managed by the Human Services Department)

The City of Seattle Child Care Nutrition Program uses federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) funds to provide nutrition guidance and reimburses child care providers for the purchase of nutritional foods for meals and snacks. The program goal is to improve and maintain the health and nutritional status of children in care while promoting the development of good eating habits.

Child and Adult Care Food Program	
History and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the 1970's Seattle has sponsored the Child Care Nutrition program (CCNP) providing nutritional training, guidance, site visits, and funds for healthy meals and snacks to family child care homes. However, USDA only pays for meals on properly documented meal patterns. (The State of Washington works directly with child care centers though they do have the option of working with sponsors.) FCC participation is going down. Staff are told that FCCs prefer to forego benefits because they are already burdened with Early Achievers requirements.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-residential, licensed, public, private, or nonprofit FCCs and child care centers Proprietary child care and adult care centers may participate if at least 25 percent of the participants in care are eligible for free or reduced-price meals FFN's who are caring for relatives are eligible.
# FCC Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 128 in June 2018. In June 2017, there were ~140. At the program peak, about 200 FCCs were participating (about 8 years ago).
Enrollment Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call the program and provide initial information Set an appointment for an in-home training (~ 2 hours). During the orientation FCCs learn the basics of the meal patterns and the record-keeping. If an FCC wants to proceed, they sign the paperwork at the orientation Once they are formally enrollment, they can enroll their children (submitting documents online or via hard copy) Serve and document meals and snacks that meet the meal patterns Invoice the City Intensive technical assistance is available from City staff to help providers for the first few months
Benefits to FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and nutritional guidance that supports ethnic and cultural food traditions Support for business practices (recordkeeping) Tracking food is helpful to not lose small business tax deduction Reimbursement for tier 1 could cover 70-80% of food costs. Tier 2 could cover 40-50%. (percentages may be less for more expensive foods such as organic foods.) Tier 1 providers receive between \$9 and \$1,100 per month depending on hours. A tier 2 provider with 12 children receives a check for \$500 every month. <u>Note</u>: Reimbursement is tiered according to census blocks and schools. (Tier 1 is for areas where 50% or more children in the reference school or census block qualify for free and reduced lunch subsidy. Tier two is for all other reference schools or census blocks. Reassessment of tiers is done every five years (The last one was done recently). No raises in reimbursement were given last year
Responsibilities of FCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend trainings. Agree to CCNP rules and regulations and USDA meal patterns (e.g., one whole grain per meal). Document meal planning, meals and snacks.

Child and Adult Care Food Program	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invoice City for food. ▪ Allow 3 in-home reviews each year. (If asked or if there is a problem, they will return more often.) ▪ <i>Note:</i> Child care providers are required by WAC (not apparently enforced by licensing) to follow USDA meal patterns.
Partner Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAAFP is a federal program managed by OSPI at the state level, which contracts with the City of Seattle to serve as a program sponsor.
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written materials are in English and Spanish. Some of the introductory materials are available in other languages, but not contracts, meal patterns, etc. ▪ City staff all speak English. One accounts person speaks Amharic.
Outcomes and Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Healthy food for children (changes in meals over time) ▪ Revenues for FCCs
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Healthy, culturally-appropriate, nutritious meals and snacks for children in FCC care ▪ Funding to help FCCs defray food costs
City Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff time, expertise, some matching funds
Future Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publicize the program and build cooperation among other organizations (CCR, EA, King County, etc.) ▪ CCNP is considering opening its program to child care centers.

Sources:

- Web research
- Meeting with Carol Cartmell and Tina Skilton
- Perspectives from FCCs shared in focus groups

Barriers:

1. *Lack of awareness.* Many FCCs do not know about the Food Program.
2. *Language.* Most materials are in English and Spanish. It has been hard to enroll and keep East African FCCs in the program because of the regulation and the requirement for documentation.
3. *Drop off.* Providers enroll and then drop off. In 2018, about 25-30% of FCCs dropped off after a few months. Reasons include frustration with meal patterns, record keeping, language issues, uncertainty about benefits. Note: Enrollment is more time-consuming at the beginning.
4. *Recordkeeping and requirements.* CCNP requires different attendance records than DCYF online record keeping. OSPI (state program administrator) requires tracking of daily attendance per child which duplicates the DCYF attendance system.
5. *Too many people coming into the home.* CCNP is required to do in-home monitoring.

Strategy Options⁴

1. *Outreach.* Partner with same language community organizations to get the word out regarding training and outreach. Partner with other training organizations to help FCCs.

⁴ Noted here rather than in the *Strategy Options Brief* as this program is managed by HSD.

2. *Streamlining.* Facilitate roundtables among system partners and FCCs to build sensible systems, align calendars, and streamline requirements.
3. *Increase program value to FCCs.* Match funds to give tier 2 providers the same amount per month as Tier 1 providers. Highlight access to sophisticated recordkeeping, accounting software advanced accounting, and provide other incentives such as Zoo and Aquarium tickets, etc.
4. *Pathway to increase participation.* Open trainings to other providers in addition to CCNP participants (STARS training)
5. *Messaging.* Make messaging more relevant by framing nutrition and the CCNP as food equity.

C. Past Seattle Programs for Family Child Care Providers

1. Seattle Family Child Care Partnerships

About 20 years ago, Seattle initiated a Family Child Care Partnerships Program to support a cohort of 12 FCCs in strengthening the quality of their child care. Human Service Department staff, then Seattle’s early learning leads, visited each FCCs home about twice monthly to provide mentoring and technical assistance as needed by each FCC. There were regular gatherings of the cohort for training on topics of mutual interest and peer networking and assistance.

One City staff person felt that the program was instrumental in helping providers see themselves as educators rather than babysitters and helped other providers see possibilities for themselves and children in their care. However, due to the high cost, the program was concluded ten years ago.⁵

V. What the Data Tell Us about Family Child Care in Seattle

A. Overview

1. **Data Sets.** Three data sets were analyzed: two from Child Care Resources (CCR) [which provides coaching to providers through the State’s Early Achievers quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)], and one from the State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) [which gathers data for licensing]. One set contained more demographic data and one set contained addresses allowing geocoding. The data sets were not a complete match, so 408 FCCs that are in both data sets are included in the data analysis. (see *Section IIC* for more on limitations). In addition, a substantial amount of data is not available. For example, race and ethnicity are unknown for 219 (53.7%) FCCs. (See *Section II B Study Limitations, Execution Observations and Recommendations.*)

B. Location of Child Care Slots and Sites in Seattle

1. **Distribution of Slots Across Council Districts is Uneven.** Licensed child care slots are clustered in some areas of the City and almost absent in others as shown in the figure on the following page. There are few providers in districts 3, 4, and 7. In fact, districts 3, 4 and 7 had only 9.4%, 2.0%, and 3.0% of City family child care slots respectively. This has impacts for accessibility for families (one FCCAC member noted that she would prefer to have child care close to home, but there are only a handful for her to choose from in her district 4 area). In contrast the two most southern Council districts (1 and 2)

⁵ Interview with Debbie Lee, DEEL.

combined have 59.8% of the slots (62.2% of infant slots, 60.5% toddler, 61.0% preschool-aged, and 65.3% school-aged).

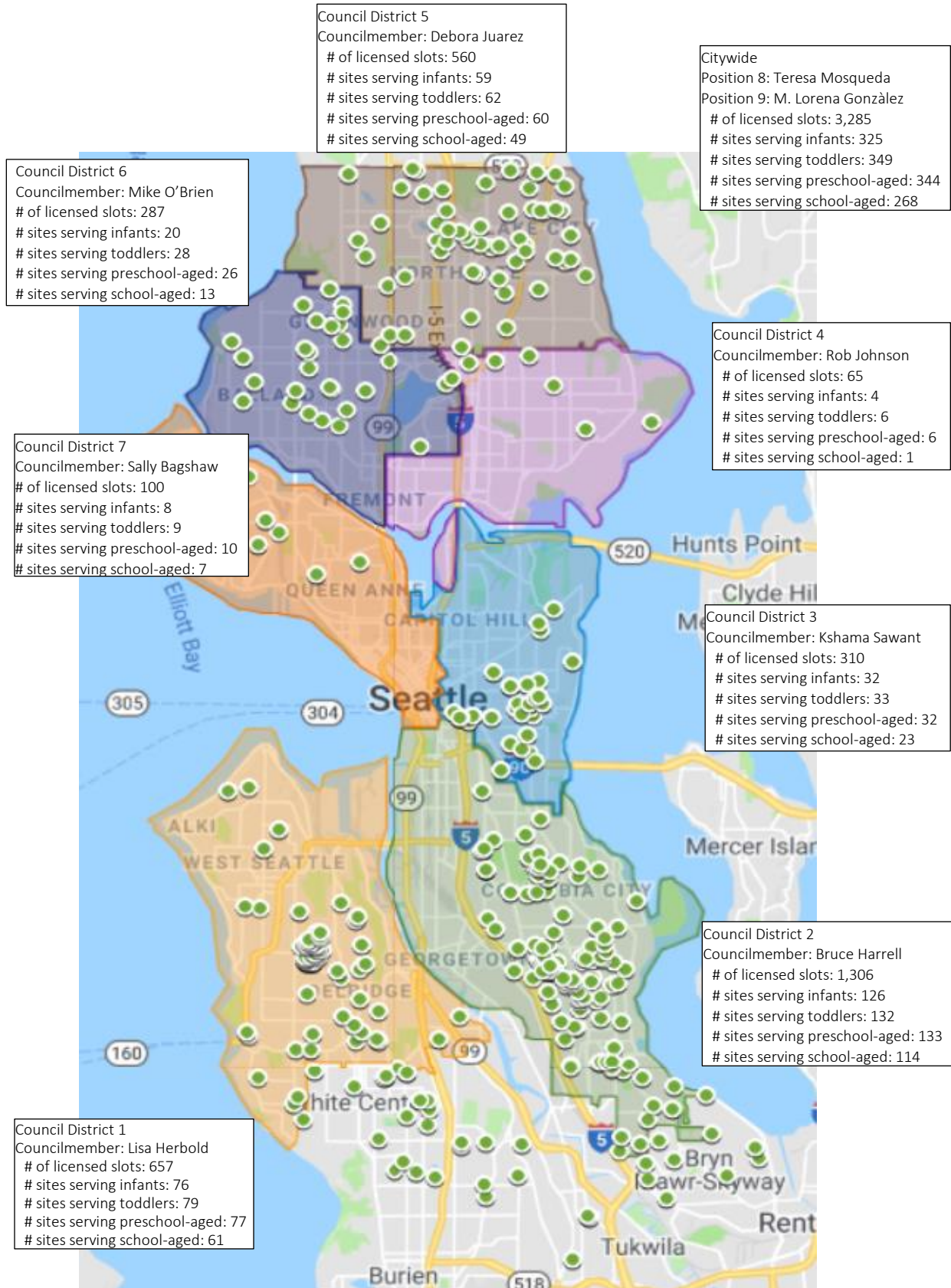
Another effect of this concentration is that there are many providers in locations that feature low-income housing. This can create competition for the available families in the neighborhood. The FCCAC and those interviewed note that this situation is worsening as housing costs rise. Strikingly, a 2018 analysis by Berk Consulting⁶ showed that 57.8% of households in which families were eligible for CCAP subsidy were in southern Council Districts. Moreover, almost all the Census tracts with more households where more than 50% are people of color are in these two districts.⁷

⁶ Berk Consulting. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Analysis and Recommendations (page 9). April 23, 2018.

⁷ Berk Consulting. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Analysis and Recommendations (page 14). April 23, 2018.

2. Seattle Family Child Care Supply by City Council District

Figure 2 – Seattle Family Child Care by Council District



3. Connection to Qualitative Findings

The lack of providers in many areas of the City is also seen in the qualitative findings.

- a. Rising housing costs. The impact of rising housing costs (see *Section VI Findings, C1*) affects FCCs across the city, but to different degrees depending on home and rental costs by neighborhood. FCCS said that they are having trouble making ends meet. (See *Section VI, Findings A.2.a*)
- b. Population shifts. Study participants noted that population shifts, gentrification, and rising housing costs are leading to turnover in the families using FCC care. (See *Section VI, Findings C.5.*)
- c. Clustering of FCCs in Southeast and Southwest Seattle. FCC’s noted this causes competitive pressures in their communities and vacancies for some. At the same time, in higher-income areas there are often few family child care options. (See *Section VI, Findings C.6.*)

C. Characteristics of Family Child Care Providers

1. Most Providers Serve Children Birth to 12 Years of Age

While DEEL is focused on children birth to age 5, most (74% of those inside and outside City limits) also serve school-aged children. This has implications for the impact that “early learning only” policies, programs and supports, and single-age-group approach of standardized assessments (such as CLASS) have on the majority of FCCs that are also serving school-aged children.

2. Connection to Qualitative Findings.

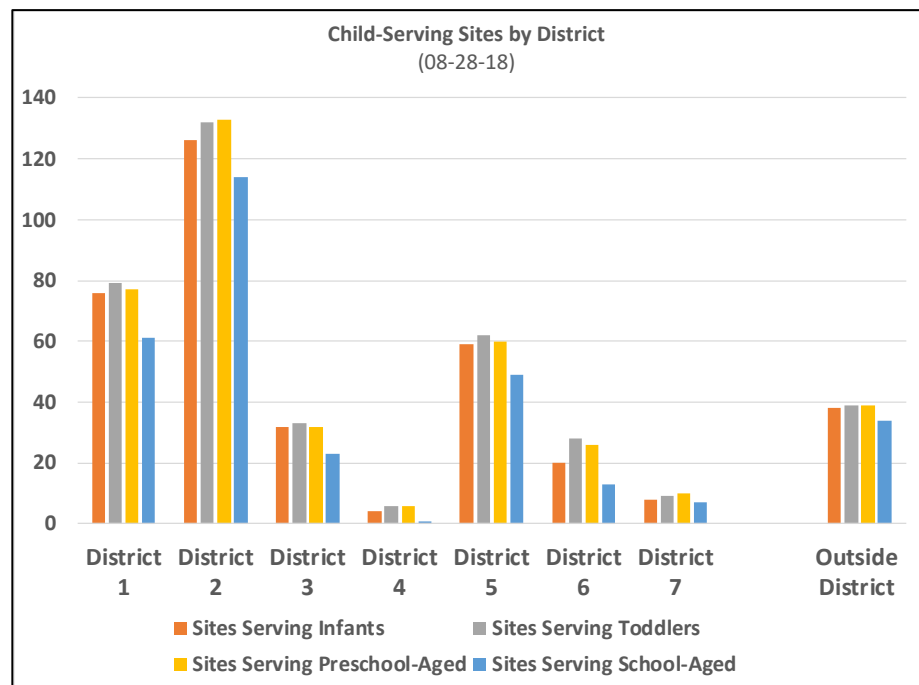
The impact of serving a wide range of ages is also seen in the qualitative findings.

- a. Policies / supports not focused on multi-age groupings.

Training and

requirements are not always tailored for FCCs who care for multi-age group children. Providers who serve school-aged children find it particularly challenging that early learning training, policies, and supports often conflict or do not address the needs of multiple age groups served in the home environment. (See *Section VI, Findings A.3.i*)

Figure 3 – Child Serving Sites by District



D. Many FCCs Work Extremely Long Hours.

1. Working Hours.

It is well known that family child care providers work many hours, which divides their revenue by a large number of hours (making their hourly wages lower than most in early childhood). However, the number of Seattle FCCs that offer before and after hours care and weekend care to support family needs is striking. 39.0% of providers are open on weekends, with 40.9% providing services between 6pm and 9pm, and 14.0% providing late evening (9pm-5am) care, 8.6% providing early morning (5am-8am) care, and 5.9% being available 24 hours - some 7 days a week. A full 34.3% (140) provide services 7 days per week.

Figure 4 – Days of Operation

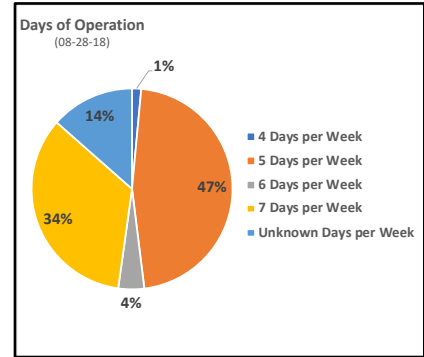
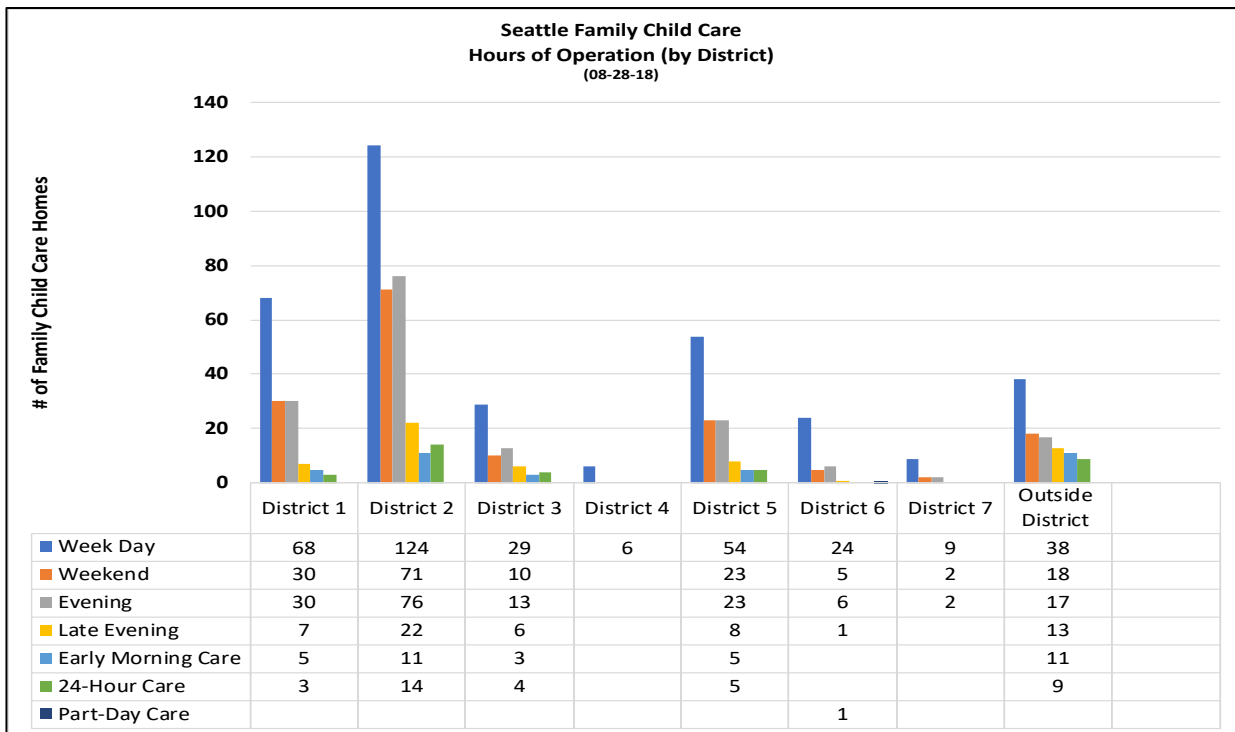


Figure 5 – Hours of Operation



Weekend = Saturday and/or Sunday

Evening = 6 - 9pm

Late Evening = 9pm - 5am

Early Morning = 5am - 8am

2. Connection to Qualitative Findings

The impact of long working hours of FCCs across Council Districts is also seen in the qualitative findings.

- a. Desire for peer connections. The study team suggests that the fact that FCCs work long hours leads to strongly stated desire for peer connections raised by about two-thirds of FCCs, as well as by the FCCAC. (See Section VI, Findings A.2.a)
- b. Meeting and training times. This is also seen in the FCCAC search for the best meeting times (Saturdays) and times for DEEL training and SPP-FCC Pilot hub meeting times (evenings and weekends).

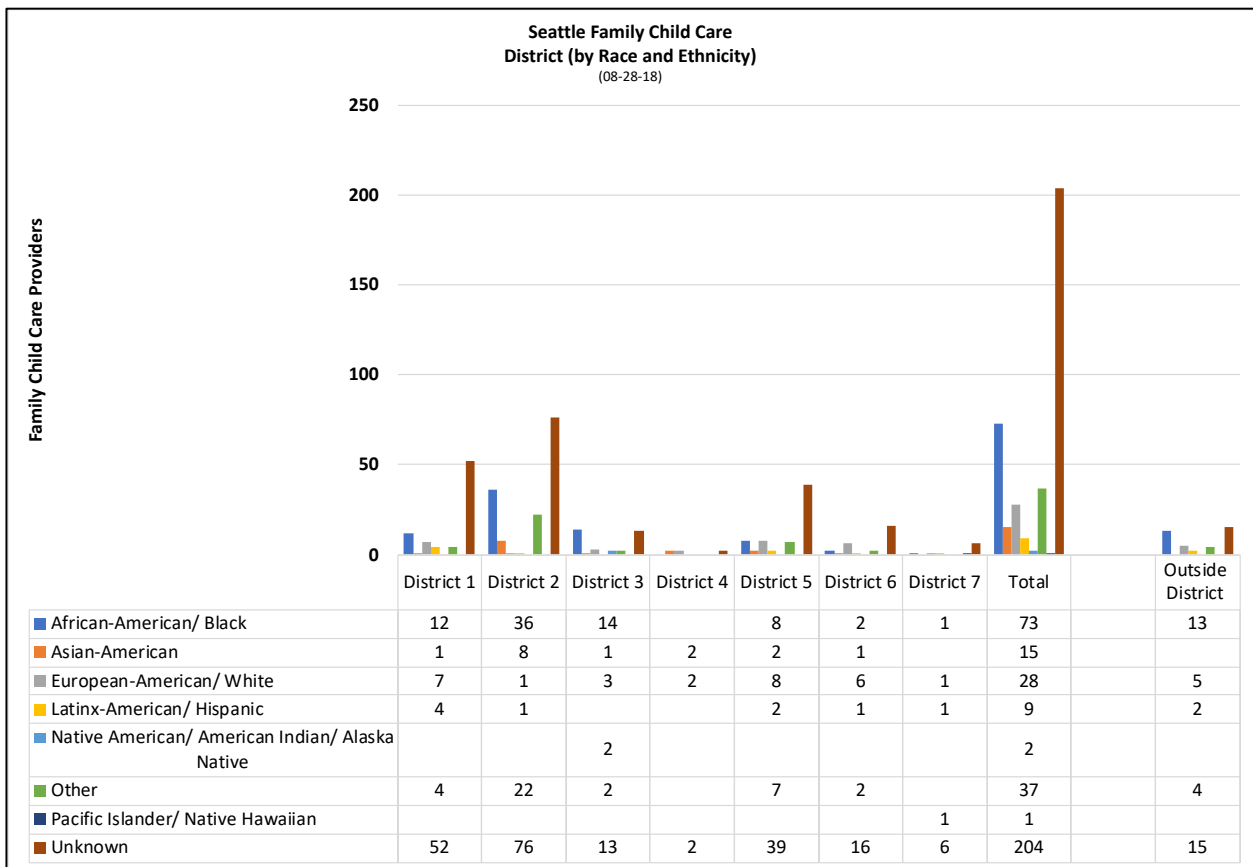
E. Most Family Child Care Providers Are People of Color. Many Are Immigrants.

1. Race and Ethnicity.

It is important to note that race and ethnicity is not known for a full 219 (53.7%) of the 408 providers in (and just outside) city limits. Of the 190 for whom race, and ethnicity is available, 157 describe their race and ethnicity as other than White. For a full 219 (53.7%), race and ethnicity are unknown. This is due to providers declining to respond, or not participating in data collection where this data would be requested. (See *Section II B Study Limitations, Execution Observations and Recommendations* for more detail.)

It is also important to note that that grouping long-time African Americans and more recent African immigrants in a single category makes it difficult to explore differences in culture, strengths, and needs. This was brought to the attention of the study team several times throughout the study and warrants ongoing consideration and attention.

Figure 6 –District by Race & Ethnicity



2. Connection to Qualitative Findings

The racial and ethnic composition of FCCs is also seen in the qualitative findings. (This is also reflected in the section concerning languages spoken below.)

- a. *Responsiveness to provider needs.* Many of the participating FCCs and the FCCAC noted the need for programs and supports to be more responsive to provider needs including home languages, multi-age groups and culture. (See *Section VI, Finding A.3.i*)

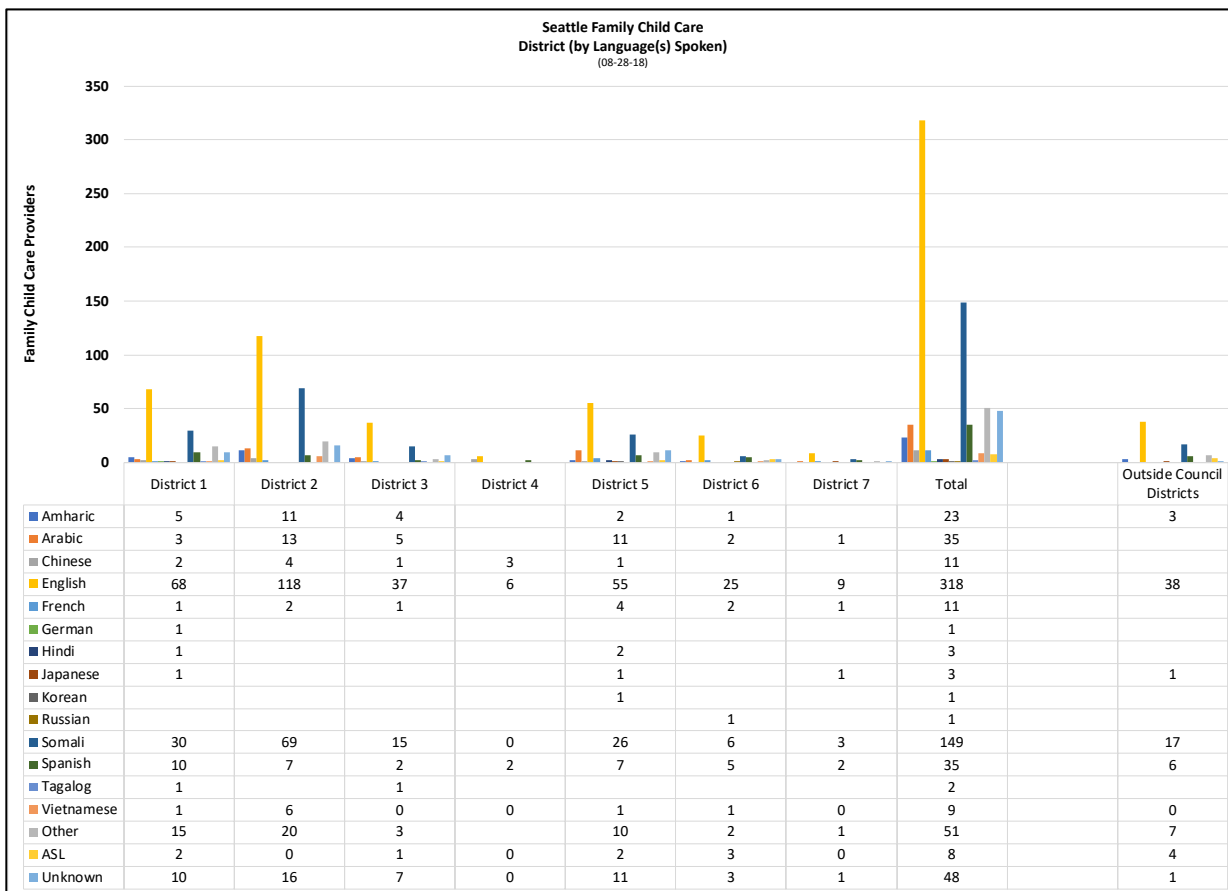
- b. Computer skills. It was also noted that the lack of computer skills is a substantial barrier and stressor for Somali providers and perhaps others in preparing to complete online assessments and DCYF’s online attendance system. (See Section VI, Finding A.3.h)

F. Many Providers Speak Some English and Another Home Language

1. Languages Spoken

While 87.7% of providers reflected in the CCR data indicated English as a language spoken, only 22.1% of providers list English as their only language (an additional 1.2% also know American sign language (ASL)).

Figure 7 –District by Language(s) Spoken



Language data show that 206 providers speak Amharic, Arabic, or Somali (and FCCAC members noted they know of 15 Oromo-speaking providers in Seattle). This is more than half of all providers before considering American-born African Americans. Similarly, many French-speaking providers might be from other parts of Africa or the Caribbean, and many Spanish-speaking providers might be of Latinx ethnicity. This suggests that the vast majority of the family child care provider community is represented by people of color, many immigrants, and many multilingual individuals who bring great richness to the field. It also suggests that the City can advance racial equity goals, by prioritizing family child care providers (for whom a higher percentage of providers are people of color than early learning programs overall) in its overall early learning strategy.

2. Connection to Qualitative Findings

Issues relating to language and English proficiency are also seen in the qualitative findings.

- a. Responsiveness to provider needs. Many of the participating FCCs and the FCCAC noted the need for programs and supports to be more responsive to provider needs including home languages, multi-age groups, and culture. Training opportunities, assessments, and professional development are largely provided in English. All FCCs who have primary languages other than English noted this as a major barrier since it adds to the challenge of learning or understanding new things.

Study participants said that those providers who speak a home language (and often several other languages as well as English) find it difficult to understand the opportunities the City provides as well as the logistics involved in “signing up” when presented in English. They also wonder about the benefit. As one provider noted: “We don’t always have a good experience when we sign up for things, so we have to hold back if we are not sure.” (See Section VI, Finding A.3.i)

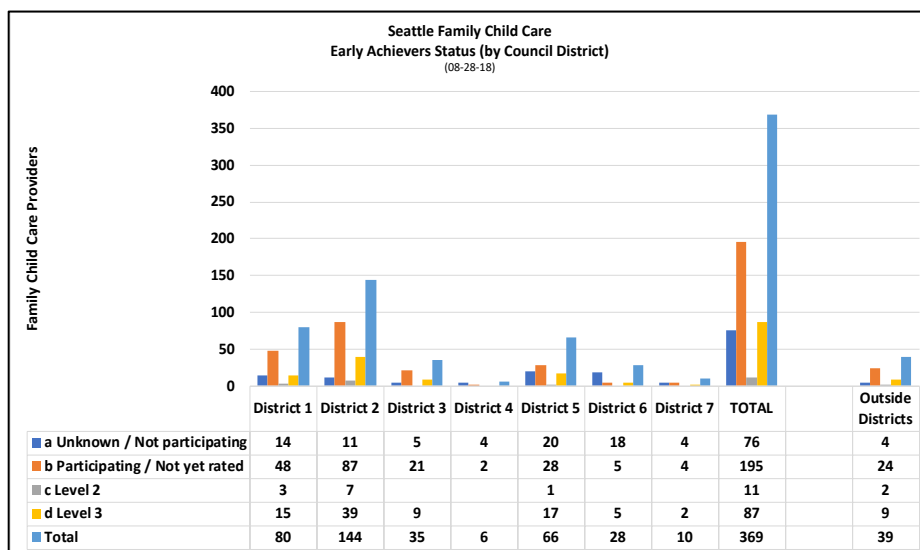
- b. Children served. Most providers engaged in the study also indicated that they care for children of many backgrounds in their home, and few served predominantly children of their own race/ethnicity and home language. (See Section VI, Finding C.7.)

G. Many Providers Are in the Early Achievers Queue

1. Early Achievers Queue

80.4% of the 408 FCCs inside and just outside the Seattle city limits participate in Early Achievers, our state’s quality rating and improvement system. One of the biggest issues expressed by providers was the long delay in being able to be rated by Early Achievers (EA) [Note: EA rates child

Figure 8 – Early Achievers Status by Council District



care programs on levels from 2 to 5]. This creates frustration for the 328 participating providers and also affects their revenue potential (since more highly rated providers who accept state child care subsidies receive higher subsidy payments).

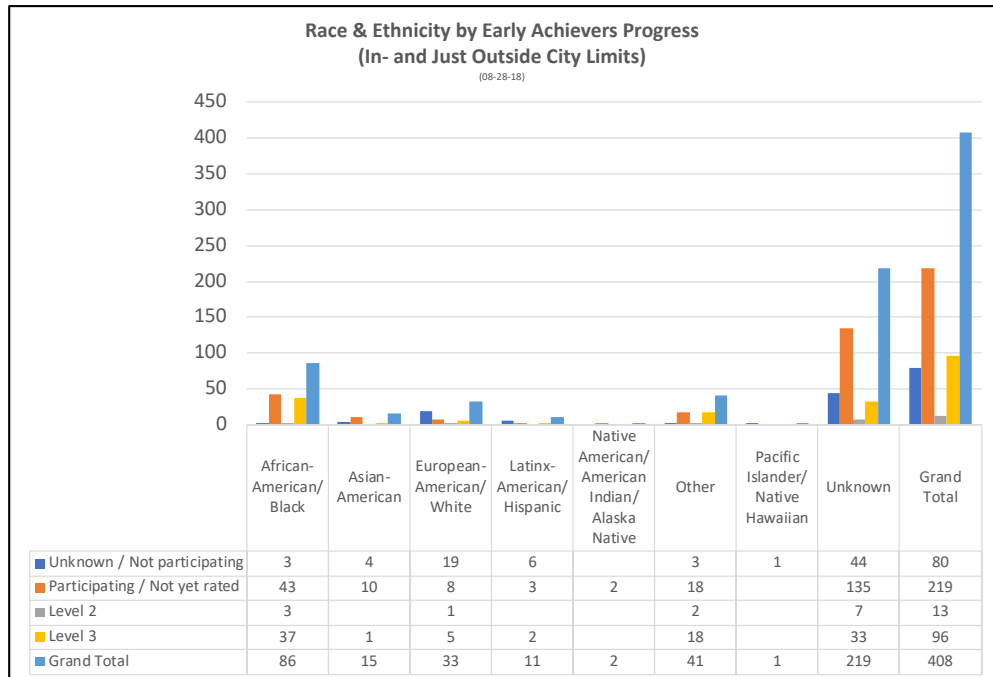
Except in Council Districts 4 and 7 (which have only 6 and 10 FCCs respectively), the percentage of providers who are progressing and attaining higher Early Achievers quality levels is generally comparable to the percentage of providers in that district. For example:

- District 1, which has 19.6% of the providers inside/just outside the City limits has 18.8% of the three-star ratings.
- District 2 has slightly fewer with 35.3% of providers, but 27.1% of the current three-star ratings.
- District 5 has 16.2% of the providers, but 25.8% of three-star ratings.

With an Early Achievers rating serving as a current proxy for quality the State and the City (and with a higher rating tied to receiving higher State Working Connections child care subsidy reimbursements), many providers who participated in the study were motivated to advance as quickly as possible.

FCCAC members wondered whether there was a correlation between Early Achievers rating levels and race/ethnicity, or other issues related to the diverse family child care community. Due to the large number of providers not participating and

Figure 9 – Race & Ethnicity by Early Achievers Progress



not yet rated, it is impossible to make a judgment as to disproportionate ratings. However, results in this sample are generally comparable, with providers who declared their race as other than White making up 82.5% of the 189 providers for whom race/ethnicity is known. These providers of color make up 92.1% of current three-star ratings.

2. Connection to Qualitative Findings

Issues relating to Early Achievers are also seen in the qualitative findings. All FCC’s noted that there are too many changes and demands on their time all at once. (See *Findings Section VI, A3d*). Almost all FCCs noted the increase in regulation and education requirements is too fast and that there is not enough help and support. (See *Findings Section VI, C3*). These concerns noted were not about not wanting to change and improve but rather about the rate of change and need for more supports. The few participating FCCs who are not enrolled in Early Achievers noted that they do not want to provide “cookie cutter) services. (See *Section VI, Findings D.3.b*). Connections to other findings include:

- a. **Quality Improvement.** About 1/3 of participating FCCs said that obtaining help to improve their programs is a primary goal. (See Section VI, Findings A.2.c.)
- b. **Help navigating changing regulations and requirements.** Almost all participating FCCs said that they needed more help navigating regulations and requirements (including Early Achievers). (See Section VI, Findings A.2.g.)
- c. **Support for training and consultation.** In addition, most said that they need additional help be able to afford substitutes to allow them to attend training (See Section VI, Findings A.3.j)
- d. **State program use.** (See Section VI, Findings C.4.)

- e. *Responsiveness to provider needs.* Many of the participating FCCs and the FCCAC noted the need for programs and supports to be more responsive to provider needs including home languages, multi-age groups and culture. Training opportunities, assessments, and professional development are largely provided in English. All FCCs who have primary languages other than English noted this as a major barrier since it adds to the challenge of learning or understanding new things. (See Section VI, Finding A.3.i)

H. Family Child Care Providers Take Great Steps to Serve Many Low-Income Children

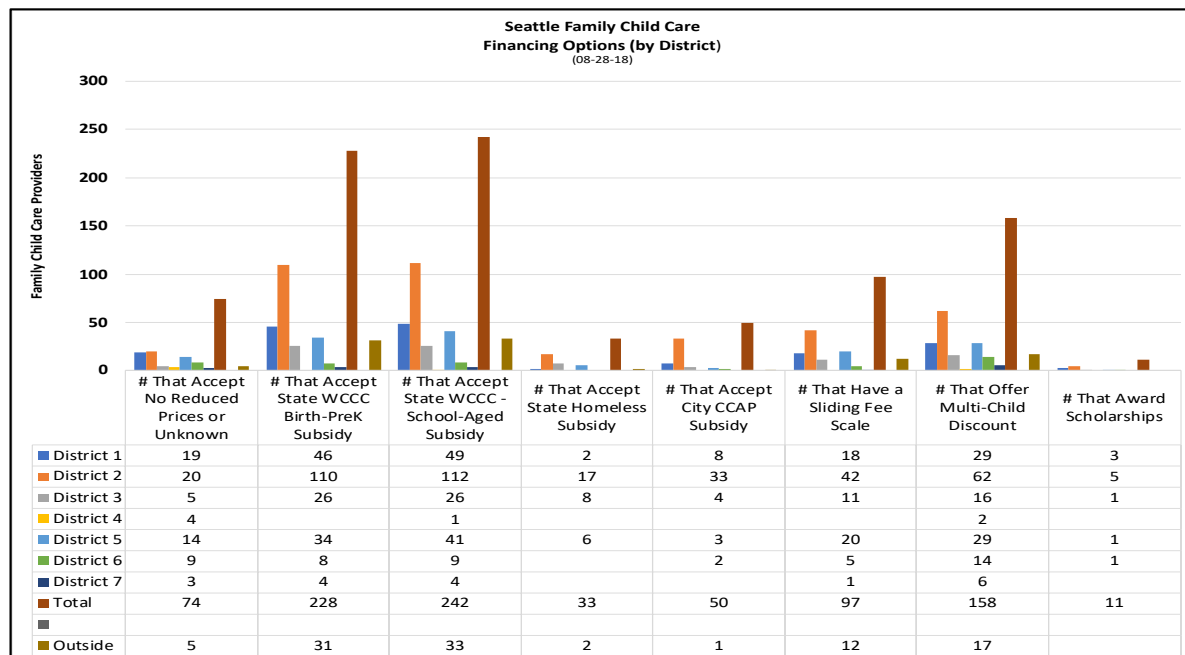
1. FCCs that accept subsidies

More than 60% of FCCs accept state child care subsidies for families with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Of these, 63.5% accept birth-to-five subsidies, and 67.4% accept school-aged subsidies. However, only about 60 accept City of Seattle CCAP subsidies for families with incomes 200%-300% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Two key points were made in the *2018 Berk Analysis and Recommendations* (BERK, 2018) are worth noting here.

- The overall number of CCAP recipients has decreased from 1,143 in 2007 to 581 in 2017.
- Overlap between high concentrations of the income-eligible population and children aged birth through 12 occurs in White Center/Delridge, Southeast Seattle, Sandpoint, Northgate, and Magnolia/Interbay. The areas where all children aged birth through 12 are concentrated do not include high concentrations of the income-eligible population. Generally, there is not a strong correlation between the geographies with a high concentration of income-eligible individuals and those areas with a high concentration of children aged birth to 12.” (BERK, 2018)

Reflecting the “relationship-oriented” approach to child care reflected in the reason families say they choose family child care (See Section VI, Findings, B.), 42.9% of child care providers provide multi-child discounts to allow families to easily enroll multiple children in their program, while 26.7% providing a sliding scale to help families afford care and 2.7% even provide scholarships.

Figure 10 – Pricing and Acceptance of Subsidies by District



2. Connection to Qualitative Findings

All participating FCCs noted that they aspire to provide warm and safe learning environments for children, and they want to support families in pursuing their work and educational goals. Most also noted that they also need to provide an income for their own family and want to be successful business owners (See Section VI, Findings A.1.)

VI. Findings

These FCC study findings describe what FCC’s and others have told the study team. Findings are drawn from five focus groups with family child care providers, seven interviews with family child care providers, one focus group with parents, and ten interviews with DEEL early learning staff and community partners. These insights were considered along with perspectives shared by Family Child Care Advisory Council members.

Findings noted with an “↪” symbol were noted by more than half of participating FCCs. However please keep in mind that the only about 15 percent of FCCs in Seattle participated in the study and not all FCCs were asked about or offered perspectives on each area of the findings. For example, only those participating in the SPP-FCC pilot or the HighScope training provided insights on those programs.

A. Family Child Care Provider (FCC) Hopes and Barriers to Success

1. **Goals.** ↪ All FCCs with whom the study team has spoken, expressed goals of providing loving, and home-like learning and care environments for the young children in their care. They aspire to provide warm and safe learning environments for children, and they want to support families in pursuing their work and educational goals. Most also noted the need to provide an income for their own family and want to be successful business owners. Some also placed high value on pursuing their own independent vision for their business.

Almost half expressed an aim of providing high-quality care and helping prepare children for school. A few also noted that they provide dual language learning as well as care for children with special needs.

“While working in a school, I noticed the children in my community were learning in different ways, but the teacher did not always want to or know how to support them. I wanted to create a place that supports them, especially children with special needs.”

FCC provider
“I love the children and families that I provide care for like my own.”

2. **FCC Interests.** FCCs expressed a variety of interests that were common across those with different characteristics such as race and language. Interests include:
 - a. **Peer connections.** ↪ FCCs expressed a strong desire for peer connection with other family child care providers. This has been raised by about two-thirds of FCCs, as well as by the FCCAC. Many noted that being an FCC is a solitary endeavor with very long days and change in regulation and requirements coming at a rapid rate. FCCs regularly said that they want to learn together about what is working and solve problems together.

- b. Business supports. ↪ Many FCCs said that it is a lot to run both the business side and child care aspects of family child care and that they could use help. Examples of the needs expressed ranged from tax preparation and bookkeeping to human resources and marketing.
- c. Quality improvement. Obtaining more training, mentoring, and coaching to improve the quality of their services is a primary goal for about a third of participating providers.
- d. Staff and human resources. ↪ FCCs who have assistants and staff note that it is extremely difficult to hire and keep qualified staff because of the high cost of living and the low pay of assistants.
- e. Ways to learn about supports that can help them and the families they serve. Most FCCs have expressed a desire to learn about other programs and supports and community partners that can be of help to them and to the families they serve.
- f. Ways to control expenses. ↪ FCCs said that they need help to reduce expenses. Desired assistance ranged from reductions in utility bills and taxes, to assistance with the purchase of major appliances and home repairs. FCC's also spoke of wanting help to defray rental costs, pathways to home ownership and ways to reduce the cost of consumable items.
- g. More help navigating regulations and new requirements. ↪ Almost all FCC's expressed frustration with the changing state regulations and new requirements and the desire for more help navigating and preparing for these changes. Types of help suggested range from computer training (for online attendance) to training and coaching, to an ombudsperson to help troubleshoot problems.
- h. Access to benefits. ↪ Most FCCs expressed the desire for access to benefits such as health care and retirement plans.

“You have to go out and learn about new requirements like safe sleep or going outside when the air is bad on your own. If you don't, you get violations, even if you didn't even know about it. It's almost like anxiety that builds up not knowing whether or not you are in line with a policy or a WAC...it's like this fear that permeates you. Can somebody help us with this?”

3. Barriers to Achieving Goals. FCC's shared the following barriers to realizing their hopes.

- a. Child care licensing. Several FCCs and others interviewed noted that some licensing staff have a rigid enforcement approach and licensors, Early Achievers coaches, and other support staff provide differing interpretations of the WACs.
- b. Rising costs and finances. ↪ Almost all FCCs said that they need help controlling costs. About half said they are worried about making ends meet. They said that rapidly rising housing and rental costs in Seattle, increased regulation, and increases in wages for support staff due to the minimum wage law, make it hard for FCCs to meet their expenses. Very few noted that they are aware of home-buying assistance programs. Many live in Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) communities. FCC's say that SHA policies (counting gross revenue as income and not accounting for fluctuations in the numbers of children) are noted as particularly challenging in sustaining their businesses. Some Muslim FCCs

“To really address this [rising housing costs] we need to buy our homes, but as Muslims, we need an interest-free loan option.”
 ~ FCC provider

who want to purchase a home said that they need interest-free loan options that do not required them to compromise their faith. (*Sharia prohibits riba, or usury, defined as interest paid on all loans of money.*⁸)

- c. Positive respectful relationships. ↪ Most FCCs noted not feeling respected by some of the monitoring or support professionals who enter their homes. One successful FCC noted that her biggest challenge was to establish respectful positive relationships with those who come into her home. (She noted appreciation for City CCAP and nutrition staff.) Few providers knew whether those coming into their homes were from Seattle or from the State.
- d. Too many changes and demands on their time all at once. ↪ All FCCs noted challenges caused by too many changes and new demands on their time coming all at once. Changes over the Summer and Fall of 2018 included negotiation of new state WACs, and preparation for the new state online attendance system (soon to be required of all FCCs). Requests for their time when the study was being conducted include: the FCC study, training for the new required child care online attendance program, the Imagine Institute’s needs assessment, and King County community cafés.
- e. Too many professionals coming into FCC homes. ↪ Almost all FCCs noted that too many people are coming into their homes. Seven to ten City, County, and State initiatives and programs send professionals into FCC homes for monitoring and supportive functions (licensors, Early Achievers coaches, City program staff, etc.). This takes away from time with children. Sometimes guidance provided by these “visitors” conflicts and it is hard to know whose guidance to follow. Most FCC’s engaged in the study said that this was frustrating and took away from their time with children.

“I wish you people who make these decisions would all think about how much time it takes away from our caring for children when all of these things happen at the same time. Can’t you coordinate?”
- f. Lack of coordination among the many agencies involved in regulating and supporting FCCs. ↪ FCC’s in Seattle are regulated by the State, supported by Early Achievers coaches at Child Care Resources, and represented by SEIU. The small business supports that FCCAC has prioritized are provided by different city, state and non-profit agencies. Lack of coordination among these agencies results in multiple efforts competing for FCC time, sometimes conflicting guidance, and not maximizing the benefits of each program or support.
- g. Pathway for struggling providers. Community partners noted that there are increasing resources for FCCs who are already doing well, but there is no pathway to help those who are struggling to advance their business practices and quality to the level that prepares them for participation in programs like the Seattle Preschool Program pilot.

⁸ Ahmad, Ashfaq & ur Rehman, Kashif & Afzal Humayoun, Asad. (2011). Islamic banking and prohibition of Riba/interest. African Journal of Business Management. 5. 1763-1767.

- h. Computer skills. Lack of computer skills is a substantial barrier and stressor for Somali providers and perhaps others in preparing to complete online assessments and DCYF’s online attendance system.
- i. Responsiveness to provider needs. → FCCs want programs and initiatives to be more responsive to their needs. The following barriers were noted.
 1. Language. Training opportunities, assessments, and professional development are largely provided in English. All FCCs who have primary languages other than English noted this as a major barrier since it adds to the challenge of learning or understanding new things.
 2. Multi-age groups. Training and requirements are not always tailored for FCCs who care for multi-age group children. Providers who serve school-aged children find it particularly challenging that early learning training, policies, and supports often conflict or do not address the needs of these children.
 3. Culture. The importance of allowing breaks for prayers in all training and supports was underscored by Muslim FCCs. Others expressed a preference for new information to be presented in several pieces, with adequate time to discuss and learn in their cultural peer community along the way (See point 4 below).
- j. Support for training and consultation. → FCCs said that they cannot attend the training that they want to take as they cannot afford (or find) qualified substitutes to fill in for them. They expressed the strong desire for payment to attend training so that they could bring in a substitute to cover for them during the training. They also want to be able to access more training and in FCC consultation support from behavioral consultants for children with behavioral issues and development delays and disabilities.
- k. Requirement to begin Early Achievers rating over when FCCs move. Under current regulations, FCCs must start the Early Achievers rating process over from the beginning when they move. Providers noted that this is expensive, disruptive and does not respect what they have already achieved.

“When we move, we have to start Early Achievers rating process again. This is time-consuming and doesn’t respects what we have accomplished. The licensor could just validate the safety of the new home. We’re the same professional with the same skills we had before the move.”

- FCC

- 4. Ways of Learning about Programs. → Most of the family child care providers reached for the study have been explicit about trusting the information and experience of their peers the most. This applies to learning about new programs and supports that may be helpful and problem solving with each other. FCCs for whom English is not the home language, in both the SPP and PCHP pilots, talked about working together to help interpret information and materials that they do not understand.

“Things don’t always go well for us when we sign up for programs. We need to learn about it and talk about it among ourselves before we make decisions.”

FCC

B. Parent Perspectives on Family Child Care

1. **Home-like environment where children are happy and learning.** Parents participating in the parent focus group chose family child care for a number of reasons related to quality and nurturing environments. They noted that they wanted a place where children are happy and learning and where teachers are knowledgeable and “on top of things”. Almost all spoke of valuing the environment “that is like what they have at home” and a caregiver that “has the time to pay a lot of attention to me and my child.” Another spoke of appreciating how the FCC “listens to my goals and adjust what happens during the day to my child’s needs”.

“I wanted to see how the children were cared for and if they were happy.”

“The diversity of children and families provide a great place for my kids be together and to learn new things and appreciate differences.”

“I was looking for something convenient and close to our school so that my son could make friends who will go to school with him.”

“I wanted a place that would listen to my goals for my child and adjust what happens during the day to her needs.”

- Parents with children cared for by an

2. **Socialization and diversity.** Parents participating in the parent focus group talked about valuing the diversity of children and languages spoken. Another noted that it is “easier to help my children be interested in our home language as well as English, because they are all learning parts of different languages from other kids.”
3. **Convenience.** Parents also spoke about appreciating that the FCC has “flexible hours to help me manage my work responsibilities,” and is “close to home.” Another noted that she was looking for a place that was “close to school so my son could make friends that also go to school with him”.
4. **Support for Parenting.** Parents appreciated help with parenting skills, and the community of parents and the social opportunities that help provide a peer group going through the same things.

C. Trends and Demographic Changes

1. **Rising costs.** ↗ Large increases in housing costs are squeezing already tight incomes. Some say they have friends who are providers that had to move their businesses out of the City as landlords raise rents and property taxes increase. Others note that they think about this themselves. A few reported not being able to find the larger spaces they want to expand their businesses.

2. **Labor shortage and cost.** ↗ Labor shortages make it extremely difficult to find and hire qualified assistants. This was mentioned by almost all providers. In addition, the minimum wage law has resulted in higher costs for assistant teachers. A few FCCs noted that they pay their assistants more per hour than they are able to pay themselves.

“I want to find a bigger house, so I can care for more children. But I cannot find a place to rent that I can afford near here. I want to stay near here so that I can keep caring for these children.”

“I advertise everywhere, but I cannot find an assistant.”

- FCC providers

3. **Increased regulation and educational requirements.**

↗ Requirements for FCC providers have substantially increased in the past decade. Examples mentioned include the requirement for a high school degree/equivalent (2009) and the requirement to achieve an Early Achievers Level 3 or higher to receive state child care subsidies (2015). Others noted that demands are increasing for assessments, curriculum, quality and K-12 alignment. These

are new to many FCCs and it takes time to learn and implement. FCCs said that the number and speed of changes left them with a sense of “us against them” between FCCs and government.

4. **The union has helped to gain fairer compensation.** In 2006, FCCs gained the right to collective bargaining. Since then they have secured ~\$11M in increased Working Connections child care subsidy rates.
5. **Population shifts.** The populations of Seattle and its neighborhoods are changing, due largely to gentrification and housing costs. Some low-income families are moving out of the City. Over time, this has caused some turnover and change in the make-up of families using an FCC provider’s care.
6. **Family child care providers are clustered.** There are providers in areas with large numbers of low-income families, creating competitive pressures and vacancies for some (this is particularly true in Southeast and Southwest Seattle). In higher income areas there are often few family child care options.
7. **FCCs serve children of different races, ethnicities, and languages.** ↪ Most providers engaged in the study indicated that they care for children of many backgrounds in their home, and few served predominantly children of their own race/ethnicity and home language.

D. FCC Use of City and State Programs

1. **Seattle investments in early learning.** ↪ Seattle investments in early learning (such as the CCAP subsidy program, and the SPP and PCHP pilots, and Child Care Nutrition Program) are benefiting FCCs and helping them to enhance the quality of their services. However, these opportunities are limited. (See *Section III Current Initiatives - Overview of City of Seattle Current Initiatives for Family Child Care Providers* chart for the number served in each of the City Initiatives and program.)
2. **Lack of awareness about City programs.** Several providers told the study team that they did not know about City programs. Useful programs that were unknown to FCCs included CCAP, CCFP, small business supports, and supports for low-income families. In addition, 1/3 of the parents at the parent focus group had never heard of state child care subsidies or City CCAP subsidies.
3. **DEEL early learning program use.** Several FCCs said that City programs are easy-to-access, once they know about the programs, and that City staff members do a good job of outreach and building positive respectful relationships with the FCCs they engage.
 - a. **HighScope Training.** The training was described as very informative. However, one person noted that it was too long (20 sessions). They noted that they worked 12-hour days 5 days a week and needed weekend time with their family to restore themselves for the coming week.
 - b. **Seattle Preschool Program Pilot.** Participants and partners expressed appreciation for the skills and improved environments made possible by the pilot. Many noted that the combination of training, coaching, peer networking, start-up funds, and provision of substitutes helps to realize pilot benefits. Participants noted that “it is a lot” to take all of these requirements on, but worth it. More FCCs want to access, but there are no additional slots.

“A lot of my kids come from the homeless shelter. I participate in all the learning I can so that I can help them.”

- FCC provider

c. Parent Child Home Program Pilot (PCHP). All PCHP pilot participants who participated in the focus group and interview valued the Parent Child Home Program. They appreciated the guide sheets, books, toys and learning activities with children. They also enjoyed the sharing activities, and opportunities to learn with parents. More FCCs want to participate but there are not enough slots.

“The Parent Child Home Program has introduced me to math development. It was very interactive and made it very fun for the kids. They want to do it all the time now. It is good because it comes to me, I learn, and the children learn too.”

- FCC provider

d. Child Care Assistance Program. Having income eligibility levels for City subsidies that are higher than state eligibility is important and valued by FCCs and community partners. All who know about the subsidy program thought that it would be good to expand the subsidy program and to increase subsidy levels. Noting that many families and providers do not know much about this program, many also suggested additional marketing to providers and families. Several FCCs noted that once the contract is executed, they must meet City liability insurance requirements of \$2M (twice the state requirements) even if children are placed with them.

e. Child and Adult Food Program (CCFP). A few of the participating FCCs did not know about the nutrition program. Others appreciated the revenues from the program (about ½ of total food costs), its support for healthy meals, and the informative and lively training sessions. A few others said that the required paper work was not manageable for them.

4. State program use.

a. Licensing. Some participating FCCs noted that they feel “intruded upon” by the State due to increased regulation, rule changes, and challenges with overpayments and undue fines.

b. Early Achievers. FCCs participating in Early Achievers had mixed opinions about it. A few find it very helpful and note that they have learned a lot. Another appreciated the coaching and scholarships but not the rating process. Yet another noted that she had her own vision for her program and didn’t want to provide “cookie cutter services.” All felt that it had major impact on their work. The challenges engaging child care providers in more conversation in this study conveys a sense of how overarching the impact of Early Achievers and DCYF work are for family child care providers. While the City of Seattle has no direct control over DCYF plans and choices, its options are framed and constricted by what the State decisions about Early Achievers, WAC progressions, and other aspects of Washington’s early learning systems development cause to happen in the field. For example, the recent revisions to the licensing WACs/rules, required attendance software implementation and training.

c. Child Care Subsidies. FCCs appreciated the increases in subsidy rates that have been secured by SEIU 925 but noted that they are still too low. (Note: The [2018 Child Care Market Rate Survey Final Report](#) confirms that subsidy rates in King County are less than the 75th percentile of what providers charge, by total active enrollment.)

VII. Appendices

- *Appendix A - Study Participants*
- *Appendix B - Initial Evaluation Questions and Observations*
- *Appendix C - Seattle Family Child Care Study Presentation*