



**Minnesota Department of Human Services
Parent Aware Equity Engagement Report –
Final Analysis and Compilations**

9 March 2022

Prepared by:
Carroll, Franck & Associates
Anne Carroll and Jonathan Brown
www.carrollfranck.com

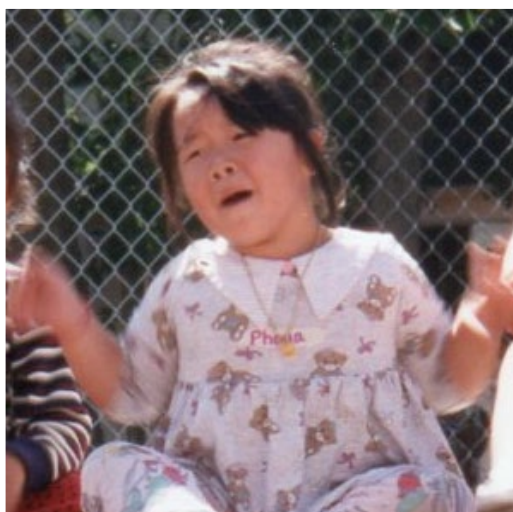
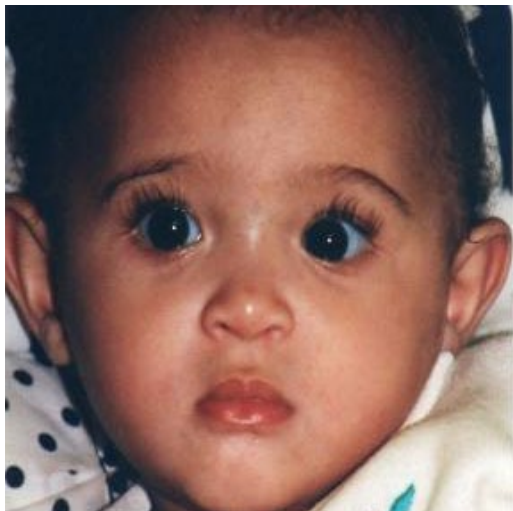
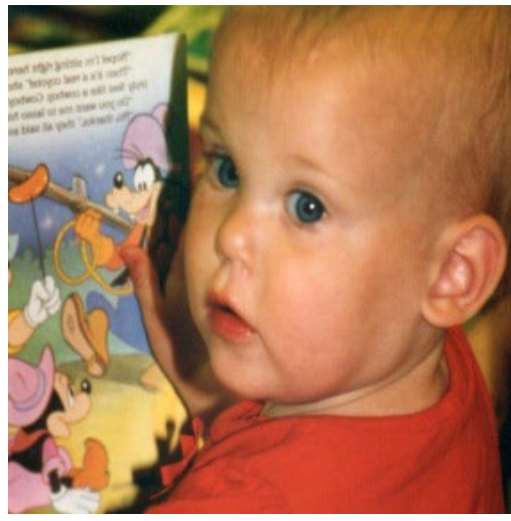


Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Equity Engagement Project Purpose, Navigation, Background	1
1.1.1	Purpose	1
1.1.2	Navigation	1
1.1.3	Parent Aware Background	1
1.2	Engagement Overview	2
1.2.1	Engagement Design	2
1.2.2	Engagement Phases, Tools, and Timeline	3
1.2.3	Methodology	3
1.3	Engagement Content and Participation	4
1.3.1	Summary	4
1.3.2	Unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Family and Center Providers	4
1.3.3	Recently Rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Family and Center Providers	5
1.3.4	Implementation Partners and Early Childhood Education Advocates	5
1.4	Glossary	6
2	Analysis: Challenges, Ideas, and Outcomes	11
2.1	Introduction	11
2.1.1	Engagement Participants and Special Results	11
2.1.2	Baseline Demographics	12
2.1.3	How the Round 1 Analysis is Organized	15
2.2	Issue: Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions	16
2.2.1	Topic: Time, Scheduling, Paperwork	16
2.2.2	Topic: Requirements, Supports, Navigation	18
2.2.3	Topic: Training, Coaching, and Other Resources	19
2.2.4	Topic: Information, Misinformation, and Choices	22
2.2.5	Topic: Bureaucracy, Terms, and Timing/Cohorts	23
2.2.6	Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented	25
2.3	Issue: Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy	27
2.3.1	Topic: Geography	27
2.3.2	Topic: Technology	27
2.3.3	Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented	29
2.4	Issue: Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust	30
2.4.1	Topic: Content	30
2.4.2	Topic: Support, Guidance	31
2.4.3	Topic: System, Accountability	32
2.4.4	Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented	33
2.5	Issue: Language Access, Jargon	34

2.5.1	Topic: English Primacy	34
2.5.2	Topic: Jargon.....	35
2.5.3	Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented	36
2.6	Issue: Expertise Definitions, Recognition	37
2.6.1	Topic: Education and Related Documentation Requirements	37
2.6.2	Topic: Credentialing.....	38
2.6.3	Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented	39
2.7	Other Comments for DHS and the Legislature.....	40
3	Round 1 Input, Compilation of Results	41
3.1	Introduction	41
3.1.1	Methodology, Presentation	41
3.1.2	Glossary	41
3.2	BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Unrated Providers.....	46
3.2.1	Unrated providers who <i>have</i> thought about or started the Parent Aware Process.....	47
3.2.2	Unrated providers who have <i>not</i> thought about/started the Parent Aware process	55
3.2.3	Unrated providers: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?	63
3.3	BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Recently Rated Providers (family and centers)	69
3.3.1	Recently rated providers: Thinking back to your own experience going through the Parent Aware process -- from learning about it, to applying, to spending grant money -- what challenges or barriers did you face that had an impact on your process?	70
3.3.2	Recently rated providers: For those that were really challenging, what changes would you recommend to make the process easier for people like you?	73
3.3.3	Recently rated providers: What or who was actually <i>helpful</i> in overcoming those challenges, and in what way?	76
3.3.4	Recently rated providers: What <i>wasn't</i> helpful, and why not?.....	78
3.3.5	Recently rated providers: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?	80
3.3.6	Recently rated providers: Advice to <i>unrated</i> BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers	82
3.4	Implementation Partners and Advocates	83
3.4.1	Partners, advocates: What are some system-level or process issues for participating in Parent Aware that may be especially challenging for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and geographically diverse providers?	84
3.4.2	Partners, advocates: What resources -- organizations, individuals, websites, training, materials -- have you seen BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers use that substantively <i>helped</i> them successfully participate in Parent Aware?	89
3.4.3	Partners, advocates: What resources have you seen these providers access that do <i>not</i> seem to be as helpful for the Parent Aware process?	92
3.4.4	Partners, advocates: What new or different resources, support, or assistance would be better or more helpful for BIPOC or Greater Minnesota providers going through the PA process?.....	94
3.4.5	Partners, advocates: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about system-level or statewide issues or solutions to improve the PA process for BIPOC and Greater MN providers?	97

4	Round 2 Feedback, Compilation of Results.....	99
4.1	Introduction.....	99
4.1.1	Process, Timeline.....	99
4.1.2	Engagement Content.....	99
4.1.3	Participants.....	100
4.2	Issue: Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions	102
4.2.1	Round 1 Summary	102
4.2.2	Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?	103
4.2.3	Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?	104
4.3	Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy.....	106
4.3.1	Round 1 Summary	106
4.3.2	Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?	107
4.3.3	Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?	108
4.4	Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust.....	110
4.4.1	Round 1 Summary	110
4.4.2	Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?	111
4.4.3	Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?	112
4.5	Language Access, Jargon	113
4.5.1	Round 1 Summary	113
4.5.2	Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?	114
4.5.3	Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?	114
4.6	Expertise Definitions, Recognition.....	115
4.6.1	Round 1 Summary	115
4.6.2	Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?	116
4.6.3	Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?	117

1 Introduction

1.1 Equity Engagement Project Purpose, Navigation, Background

1.1.1 Purpose

The 2021 Minnesota Legislature directed the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify barriers that prevent racially, ethnically, culturally (BIPOC), and geographically diverse child care programs/providers from pursuing a Parent Aware Rating -- and solutions to overcome them (124D.142. Subd. 4). To accomplish that, this equity engagement project reached out to and respectfully engaged child care providers and other identified key stakeholders, and reported outcomes and recommendations that DHS used for the Legislative Report it delivered in early March 2022.

[Table of Contents](#)
[Introduction](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Analysis \(Round 1\)](#)
[Compilation, Round 1](#)
[Compilation, Round 2](#)

1.1.2 Navigation

The table of contents entries are hyperlinks; click on any of them to jump directly to a specific section

- At the top of each major section is a yellow navigation box with hyperlinks (see top of this page); click on your choice to jump within the document
- The section name (or question text) is included in the footer on each page, so readers know where they are in the document

1.1.3 Parent Aware Background

Overview: Parent Aware is Minnesota’s statewide voluntary quality rating and improvement system, providing quality ratings to child care and early education programs on a scale of one to four stars. Programs eligible for Parent Aware Star Ratings are licensed child care centers and family child care programs, public school prekindergarten sites meeting School Readiness Standards, voluntary prekindergarten, and Head Start/Early Head Start sites. Parent Aware Ratings are shared publicly on www.ParentAware.org and encourage parents to select programs that have shown they are using kindergarten-readiness best practices.

For child care programs, Parent Aware offers 1:1 and/or group coaching, training, and support to use more of the practices that research shows best support children to be ready for kindergarten. Programs volunteer for extra training and professional development to go beyond basic health and safety licensing requirements. They share evidence of their program’s routines, learning activities, and practices; make targeted improvements to better support children’s learning; and earn a Parent Aware Star Rating, which measures their use of research-based practices that prepare children for school and life.

History, expansion, and changes: Parent Aware began in 2007 as a privately funded pilot project to address the concern that nearly half of Minnesota children were arriving at kindergarten underprepared, and is now a public program available statewide. Evaluation has informed Parent Aware’s expansion and refinement, with guidance from researchers and experts; providers, teachers, and families; advocacy and support groups; and national and state organizations and programs. Today, there are nearly 2,900 Parent Aware rated programs -- about 30% of those that are eligible.

1.2 Engagement Overview

1.2.1 Engagement Design

Key stakeholders were identified as those in the following major groups:

- **Unrated providers:** Child care providers who are DHS- or Tribal-licensed, who self-identified as BIPOC or are in Greater Minnesota, and are *not* Parent Aware-rated
- **Recently rated providers:** Child care providers who are DHS- or Tribal-licensed, who self-identified as BIPOC or are in Greater Minnesota, and who earned a Parent Aware Rating for the first time through the Full-Rating Pathway in cohorts that finished on 12/31/2020 or 6/30/21.
- **Implementation partners:**
 - Staff across Minnesota working in Child Care Aware agencies that comprise the state’s child care resource and referral system. These agencies are DHS grantees.
 - Staff from Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC), which provides technical assistance and support to Tribal child care programs in Minnesota and facilitates collaboration between Tribal child care programs and the Child Care Aware of Minnesota system.
- **Early care and education advocates**

Core Values: For this equity engagement project, DHS is committed to honoring the engagement Core Values below, adapted from the International Association for Public Participation.

Stakeholder engagement...

- Is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Includes the promise that the stakeholder contributions will influence the decision.
- Promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- Seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Source: Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation, <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>

Engagement objectives, which directly guided the engagement.

1. Reach out to and engage stakeholders in ways that are culturally and linguistically appropriate
2. Respectfully gather in-depth input from stakeholders about barriers and solutions to participating in Parent Aware
3. Provide sufficient program and process information for stakeholders to contribute in meaningful ways
4. Keep stakeholders and the public updated about the project purpose, process, results, recommendations, and next steps
5. Strengthen relationships and understandings between DHS and providers throughout the state
6. Use the results of stakeholder contributions to shape the final report and recommendations

7. Assess and refine the process as it progresses to best meet the needs of the Legislature, stakeholders, and DHS

Stakeholder engagement goal and promise, drawn from the International Association for Public Participation Public Participation Spectrum:

- **Goal:** To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered
- **Promise to our stakeholders:** We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the decision.

1.2.2 Engagement Phases, Tools, and Timeline

1. **Round 1 engagement**, early November to mid-December 2021: Reached out to and gathered input from key stakeholders on barriers and solutions to seeking a Parent Aware Rating. Results used to develop this Engagement Report and the Legislative Report. Tools/techniques included:
 - a. Outreach and project information from DHS, regional partners, and the engagement team; shared via email, text, and phone, and posted on the project [website](#)
 - b. Engagement with unrated and recently rated providers via phone/Zoom interviews and an online survey with the same questions
 - c. Engagement with Parent Aware implementation partners and early childhood education advocates via virtual sessions and an online survey with the same questions
2. **Draft Engagement Report** and draft Legislative Report, mid-December 2021-early January 2022.
3. **Round 2 engagement**, January 24 through February 14, 2022: Reached out to and gathered feedback from stakeholders on key findings from the draft Engagement Report via virtual sessions and an online survey. Results were used to refine this Engagement Report and will help shape future changes.
4. **Legislative Report**, submitted by DHS to the Legislature in early March 2022.

1.2.3 Methodology

To meet the Legislative requirements to reach out to a racially, ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse group of early learning and care providers, DHS compiled a data file of all department or tribally licensed providers. This included past and current Parent Aware Ratings, and if available, provider-identified information on race, ethnicity, and home language from the most recent Market Rate Survey or Provider Business Update.

To get more in-depth responses, the project offered interviews to all identified unrated and recently rated providers along with an online survey with the same content. Implementation partners and advocates were invited to participate via online surveys or live virtual sessions. See the next section for content and participation information. To facilitate participation by BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers, the engagement consultant's interview team included 12 people:

- 10 female, 2 male
- 33% were Black/African American or African Immigrants
- 33% were Asian American or Asian Immigrants
- The remaining team members were evenly split between Latinx and European American
- Across the team, they spoke English, Spanish, Urdu, Somali, and Hmong

1.3 Engagement Content and Participation

1.3.1 Summary

To kick off the equity engagement, in early November 2021 DHS hosted a virtual group meeting with statewide Child Care Aware system coordinators to provide an overview of the equity engagement plan, field questions, and discuss ways to successfully implement the plan; these ideas helped further refined the implementation.

Round 1 participation included approximately 337 participants. Participants who had additional ideas following their initial interview or virtual session were encouraged to add them to the online survey; 25 people did so. The totals below are approximate because a few of the providers in the online survey mistyped their license number and not all virtual participants provided identifying information.

- 205 unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota child care providers participated via interviews or online surveys
- 70 recently rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota child care providers participated via online surveys, virtual sessions, or interviews
- 62 implementation partners and early care and education advocates participated via online surveys or virtual sessions

See below for detailed Round 1 information on outreach, participation, and engagement content, and results.

Round 2 participants included 72 people who provided feedback via one of three virtual sessions or an online survey. Invitees / participants were BIPOC and other Child Care Aware system and MNTRECC staff, recently rated BIPOC and other family child care providers, BIPOC and other child care center directors/owners, and providers from Greater Minnesota. See the [Round 2 compilation](#) for more information.

1.3.2 Unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Family and Center Providers

Unrated providers running family or center-based programs either never started or did not finish the rating process. Unrated providers who self-identified as BIPOC in the Provider Business Update survey were invited to participate in interviews or to complete the online survey.

- **Outreach:** To 277 unrated BIPOC providers via emails sent in batches from DHS from 11/16/21 through 12/3/21, from the interview team, and via multiple text messages and/or phone calls from the interview team. Further, on 12/30/21 several Minnesota Initiative Foundations promoted the online survey on behalf of DHS to hundreds (exact number unknown) of Greater Minnesota unrated and recently rated providers.
- **Interviews:** 115
- **Online survey:** 120
- *Total approximately 235*

Questions for unrated providers:

1. In the last 2-3 years, have you thought about or started the Parent Aware process?
If no:
 - Please explain why (be as specific as possible).
 - What options, changes, or help might make you interested in Parent Aware in the future?

If yes:

- What stopped you from going through with it?
 - If you were to start the process in the future, what would help you get through it?
2. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?

1.3.3 Recently Rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Family and Center Providers

For this equity engagement, recently rated was defined as DHS- or Tribal-licensed programs that earned a Parent Aware Star Rating through the Full-Rating Pathway for the first time in cohorts that finished on 12/31/2020 or 6/30/21. The 32 recently rated providers who self-identified as BIPOC in the Provider Business Update survey were invited to participate in interviews, complete the survey, or participate in a virtual session.

- **Outreach:** To 32 recently rated BIPOC providers via emails from DHS on 11/5/21, emails from the interview team, and multiple text messages from the interview team. Further, on 12/30/21 several Minnesota Initiative Foundations promoted the online survey on behalf of DHS to hundreds (exact number unknown) of Greater Minnesota unrated and recently rated providers.
- **Interviews:** 1
- **Online survey:** 55
- **Virtual sessions:** 9
 - 12/16/21: 5 recently rated family child care providers who self-identified as BIPOC and/or from Greater Minnesota
 - 12/28/21: 4 recently rated center providers who self-identified as BIPOC and/or from Greater Minnesota
- *Total approximately 65*

Questions for recently rated providers:

1. Thinking back to your own experience going through the Parent Aware process -- from learning about it, to applying, to spending grant money -- what challenges or barriers did you face?
2. How did those challenges impact you?
3. What or who was actually helpful in overcoming those challenges, and in what way?
4. What wasn't helpful, and why not?
5. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?
6. We are also going to be interviewing non-rated BIPOC providers about challenges and barriers. What are important questions we should ask them? Any other advice for those interviews? (These questions were asked beginning early in the process to help guide later work. Responses to the first question were used to shape the interviews; advice from the second is included in the compilation.)

1.3.4 Implementation Partners and Early Childhood Education Advocates

These invitees / participants included:

- Implementation partners: Staff across Minnesota working in Child Care Aware agencies that comprise the

state's child care resource and referral system. These agencies are DHS grantees.

- Staff from Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC), which provides technical assistance and support to Tribal child care programs in Minnesota and facilitates collaboration between Tribal child care programs and the Child Care Aware of Minnesota system.
- Early care and education advocates
- **Outreach:** To 150 via several emails from DHS
- **Online survey:** 11
- **Virtual sessions:** 51
 - 11/22/21: 15 Child Care Aware staff and MNTRECC staff
 - 11/30/21: 4 Tribal community partners, hosted by MNTRECC
 - 12/14/21: 15 Child Care Aware and MNTRECC team members who self-identified as BIPOC, co-hosted by Think Small
 - 12/30/21: 17 Early education advocates and partners
- *Total approximately 62*

Questions for implementation partners and early childhood advocates:

1. What are some system-level or process issues for participating in Parent Aware that may be especially challenging for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and geographically diverse providers?
2. What resources -- organizations, individuals, websites, training, materials -- have you seen BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers use that substantively helped them successfully participate in Parent Aware?
3. What resources have you seen these providers access that do not seem to be as helpful for the Parent Aware process?
4. What new or different resources, support, or assistance would be better or more helpful for BIPOC or Greater Minnesota providers going through the Parent Aware process?
5. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about system-level or statewide issues or solutions to improve the Parent Aware process for BIPOC and Greater MN providers?

1.4 Glossary

To support understanding, DHS has provided the following definitions of terms that may be used in this report, especially in the compilations for [Round 1](#) and [Round 2](#).

- **Accreditation:** A way for institutions to evaluate and improve their programs to meet industry standards. Child care and early education programs use accreditation processes to conduct a thorough analysis of their operations and assess if they are meeting nationally recognized standards for quality care and education programs.
- **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, or People of Color
- **Building Quality program:** A six-month period of coaching to help programs use kindergarten readiness best practices. Programs may start receiving coaching during Building Quality in January or July. It supports programs to use kindergarten readiness best practices in the 6-12 months before they join a Parent Aware full-rating cohort and seek a rating.
- **CACFP or Food Program:** The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides aid to child and adult care

- organizations for nutritious foods that contribute to wellness, healthy growth, and development of children and older adults.
- **CDA:** Child Development Associate (degree)
- **CCA or Child Care Aware:** Child Care Aware of Minnesota has five district offices and 16 regional offices, including MNTRECC. The supervisory staff at these offices play an active role in the successful implementation of Parent Aware by:
 - Attending regular meetings with the Associate Directors of the Coordinating office
 - Participating in statewide meetings, such as listening sessions, professional development meetings, QDP Refreshers, and professional development opportunities
 - Reviewing the RBPB event entry of their teams (Professional Development Advisors and Coaches) to ensure consistent practices are in place for all programs participating in Parent Aware
 - Supporting the efforts of the Parent Aware recruiters and understanding the needs of the community
 - Providing caseload data for Quality Coaches to inform staffing level needs and monitoring the workloads of Professional Development Advisors to ensure manageable distribution
 - Providing accurate Coach and Professional Development Associate assignments prior to the beginning of each cohort
- **CCAP:** Child Care Assistance Program, which provides financial assistance to help families with low incomes pay for child care so that parents may pursue employment or education leading to employment, and that children are well cared for and prepared to enter school. Partners and providers in this program provide child care for more than 30,000 children every month. See information [here](#).
 - Maximum rates for providers with certain accreditations or credentials or a three-star Parent Aware ratings are published in [CCAP 15 Percent Quality Differential Maximum Rates DHS-6442C \(PDF\)](#).
 - Maximum rates for providers with a four-star Parent Aware ratings are published in [CCAP 20 Percent Quality Differential Rates DHS-6824A \(PDF\)](#).
- **CICC:** The Center for Inclusive Child Care provides free relationship-based professional development (RBPB) including support, training, modeling, and resources to child care programs throughout Minnesota. See more [here](#). These include the following:
 - **Health and Safety Specialist:** These coaches have current RBPB Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Health & Safety Specialist Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on supporting health and safety best practice
 - **Inclusion Coach:** These coaches have current RBPB Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Inclusion Coach/Consultant Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on successful inclusion of children with special needs/challenging behaviors through environmental, programming and relational strategies
 - **Infant/Toddler Specialist:** These coaches have current RBPB Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Infant/Toddler Specialist Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on infant/toddler development and providing quality care in group settings

- **Career lattice, lattice:** A tool for child care and early education professionals to document professional achievements. The Minnesota Center for Professional Development awards Career Lattice Steps based on a combination of approved training hours, credentials, college credits and degrees earned. Learn more [here](#).
- **Coach / Quality Coach:** These coaches have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Parent Aware Quality Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Support all Parent Aware participants in the Full-Rating Pathway
 - Implement the Parent Aware quality coaching model with fidelity
 - Provide technical assistance to programs in Parent Aware
 - Work in collaboration with Recruiters, Professional Development Advisors, Grant Administrators, and CLASS Coaches
 - Recruit child care centers and family child care programs to join or Re-Rate in a Building Quality Cohort or Full-Rating Cohort of Parent Aware
 - Facilitate partnerships through community outreach
 - Enter RBPD Events and attendance in Develop
 - Refer programs and individuals to their assigned Professional Development Advisors (PDAs) for all inquiries related to professional development training and career goals.
- **Develop:** Offers online professional development and quality improvement tools to support early learning and school-age care programs in Minnesota. Individual Develop membership: A membership to the website, Develop, which offers professional development and quality improvement tools to support early learning and school-age care programs in Minnesota. When child care and early education professionals become an individual member of Develop they document their professional achievements in Develop and track their progress on the Minnesota Career Lattice.
- **Eager to Learn (ETL):** Eager to Learn is an online training platform with instructor-led, online courses for in-depth learning on a variety of topics. All Eager-to-Learn courses utilize message board discussions and weekly live text or video chat sessions. See [Eager to Learn](#) (eagertolearn.com)
- **ECE:** Early Care and Education
- **ELL:** English Language Learners
- **ELS, ELSA:** Early Learning Scholarships / Early Learning Scholarship Administration System. The Early Learning Scholarships program was established to close the opportunity gap by increasing access to high-quality early childhood programs (Minn. Stat. § 124D.165). For more information on Early Learning Scholarships, visit the [Minnesota Department of Education website](#).
- **FaCET:** The [Family and Community Engagement Tool](#) for parents assesses healthy early childhood development from the perspective of family and community knowledge systems. The Family and Community Engagement Tool for providers and program staff assesses program quality from a family and community knowledge systems perspective. Together, the tools measure family and community engagement based upon valuing and respecting family and community connections and wisdom and including families as an integral part of program design and decisions. See [Family and Community Engagement Tools](#)
- **IEIC:** Interagency Early Intervention Committee. Required by law; learn more [here](#).
- **ITIN:** Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, a tax processing number only available for certain nonresident and resident aliens, their spouses, and dependents who cannot get a Social Security Number
- **KCF:** Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency Framework for Early Childhood Educators provides what people who are educating and caring for young children need to know and be able to do. Versions are available for those working with infants and toddlers, family child care providers, and preschool-age children in center and school programs. All versions include the skills needed to work with young children, with more specific skills

added for the area of specialization. Learn more [here](#).

- **Lattice:** See career lattice
- **LNL:** Legally operating non-licensed child care provider. Legal non-licensed providers are typically family, friends or neighbors. The requirements for legal non-licensed providers vary depending on whether they are caring for any children who are not related to them.
- **MIFs:** Minnesota Initiative Foundations. Six regional foundations working to strengthen the communities and economies of Greater Minnesota. Established by The McKnight Foundation in 1986, each foundation is independent and serves its geographic region with grants, business loans, programs and priorities, and donor services, as well as collaborates on several statewide initiatives. The Minnesota Initiative Foundations are nationally recognized as unique resources to the people, businesses and communities of rural Minnesota. See [Home - Minnesota Initiative Foundations \(greaterminnesota.net\)](#)
- **MNTRECC:** Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC) delivers services and support to Minnesota's 11 federally recognized tribes and tribally licensed child care programs throughout the state. These include:
 - Coordination and collaboration among tribal child care and education programs, Child Care Aware, other CDS grantees and organizations serving tribal families.
 - Training on language revitalization and Positive Indian Parenting curriculum
 - Recruitment, approval and support of tribal cultural trainers
 - Coordination with Child Care Aware District sites to assess the training needs and challenges of tribally licensed providers, and to assist with the coordination of training delivery that is culturally relevant and responsive to Tribal needs
 - Professional development advising for programs participating in Parent Aware
- **NAEYC:** National Association for the Education of Young Children is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. Learn more [here](#).
- **PA / Parent Aware:** Minnesota's quality rating and improvement system, which provides quality ratings to child care and early education programs based on a one- to four-star scale. These ratings, shared on ParentAware.org, provide information to families, encouraging them to consider higher rated programs when searching for a child care and early education program for their children. Parent Aware also provides a common set of best practices for child care and early education, and offers supports to help programs work toward best practices. This allows them to evaluate the quality of their programs, and make targeted improvements to better support child development and learning.
- **PDA:** Professional Development Advisors have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Professional Development Advisor Endorsements and offer career advising services to child care programs and providers. The PDA role for all Parent Aware pathways includes all of the same touchpoint areas and contact expectations. They include:
 - Assist in Individual Membership process in Develop
 - Assist in Organization Profile registration and Classroom tab setup in Develop
 - Review individual Learning Records in Develop to determine training needs for Rating
 - Assist in creation of individual professional development plan
 - Assist in creation of a program professional development plan
 - Advise individuals in pursuing their professional development career path
 - Enter RBPD Events in Develop
- **QDP(s) / Quality Documentation Portfolio(s)** is the Rating Guide with the process and requirements for

licensed, unaccredited child care. See: [Parent Aware Manual and Quality Documentation Portfolios](#)

- **Raters / Parent Aware Raters:** The Parent Aware Rating team reviews applicant documentation of Parent Aware Indicators, awards Parent Aware Star Ratings to early care and education programs, and ensures Ratings are fair and reliable by establishing rigorous training, reliability, and data management procedures for the Rating team. The Rating team also responds to questions about specific Ratings from the Child Care Aware system and programs and determines eligibility for participation in all Pathways.
- **Recruiter / Parent Aware Recruiter:** Parent Aware Recruiters are District staff, employed by a local Child Care Aware agency. Recruiters specialize in marketing, outreach, and community organizing. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Create and implement District recruitment plans to increase participation in Parent Aware
 - Recruit child care centers and family child care programs to join or Re-rate in a Building Quality Cohort or Full-Rating Cohort of Parent Aware
 - Work in collaboration with Coaches, PDAs, and statewide recruitment efforts
 - Identify and build relationships with child care programs, related organizations, and community leaders
 - Document work and collect required data
- **RBPD:** Relationship-Based Professional Development
- **ZenDesk:** a customer relationship management system (CRM) used in Parent Aware communications related to rating.

2 Analysis: Challenges, Ideas, and Outcomes

2.1 Introduction

This section briefly highlights the engagement participants and some special results, presents baseline demographics, then moves into the analysis.

[Table of Contents](#)
[Introduction](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Analysis \(Round 1\)](#)
[Compilation, Round 1](#)
[Compilation, Round 2](#)

2.1.1 Engagement Participants and Special Results

Unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers: Unrated providers either never started or did not finish the rating process. Approximately 235 participated through interviews or the online survey. Of note in these results are the perspectives of unrated providers who chose not to pursue Parent Aware rating or started but did not complete the process. Some of the barriers that prevent unrated providers from pursuing Parent Aware overlap with the challenges identified by recently rated providers and implementation partners.

Special results note: There is an important distinction between *barriers* that providers face and the generally informed *decisions* that other providers made. For unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers who don't plan to pursue a Parent Aware rating so, common reasons for their decisions were as follows:

- Extremely busy, and pursuing a rating takes a huge amount of time, additional training, and paperwork
- Full and may have a waiting list
- Already have what they need to deliver a quality program, such as decades of successful experience, a strong curriculum, lots of training, significant education, or other credentials
- Nearing retirement
- Parents aren't asking about or haven't expressed interest in ratings
- Concerned about government interference, privacy, COVID, and strangers in their homes assessing them

I do not see a benefit to me – it would not increase my income. It would not increase my enrollments. It would not give me more paid vacation days or paid sick days. It would not help decrease my 50+ hour work load.

⌘

I am familiar with the program but just never really got to finishing the enrollment program. I have been fortunate enough to have and will have a full center so didn't really see the need for the program.

Recently rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers: This equity engagement project was especially interested in hearing from recently rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers because they have experienced the entire process through to rating. Having found ways to overcome various barriers to getting rated, they have a clearer perspective on those and on challenges around rerating or going up a star level. They also have well-informed thoughts on solutions. While recently rated providers were invited to be interviewed, all but one contributed through the online survey or virtual sessions, totaling approximately 65.

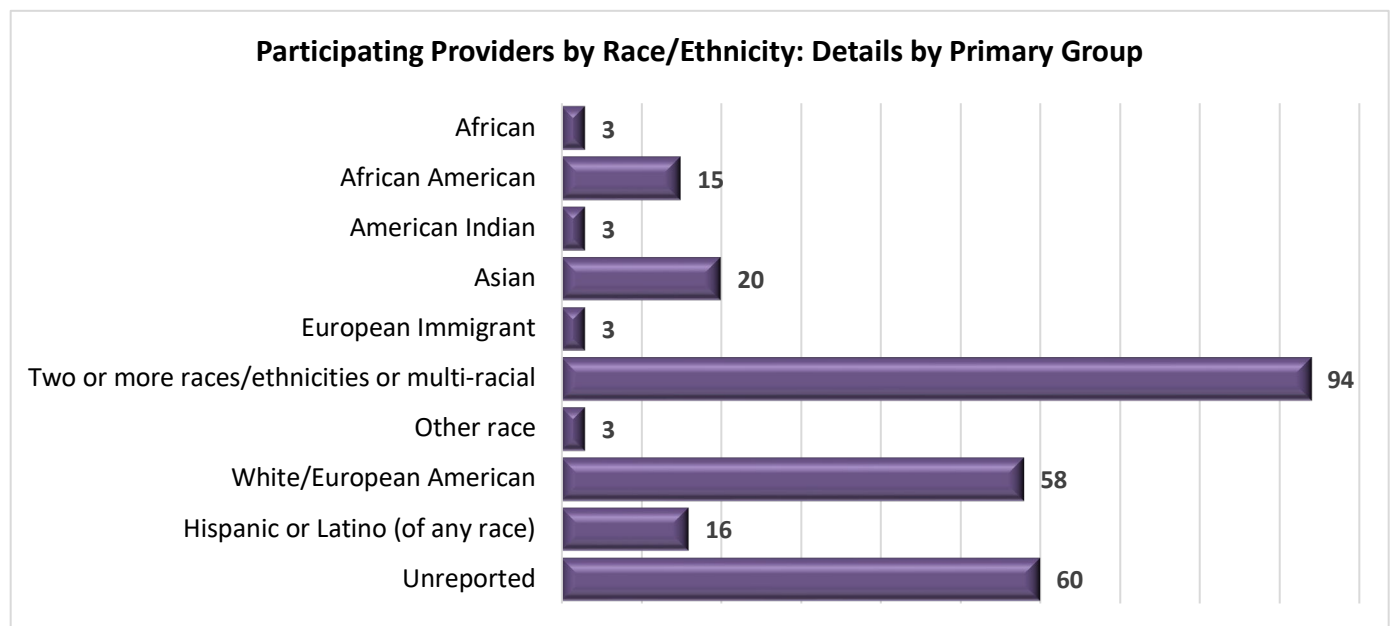
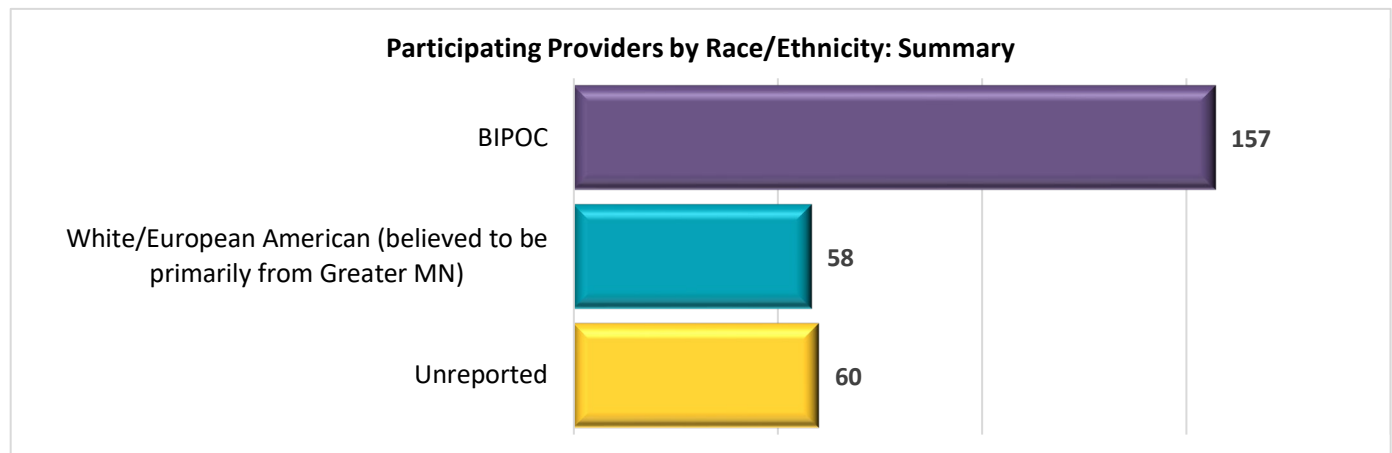
Implementation partners and early childhood education advocates: These approximately 62 participants included implementation partners from Child Care Aware agencies and Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care, and early care and education advocates.

2.1.2 Baseline Demographics

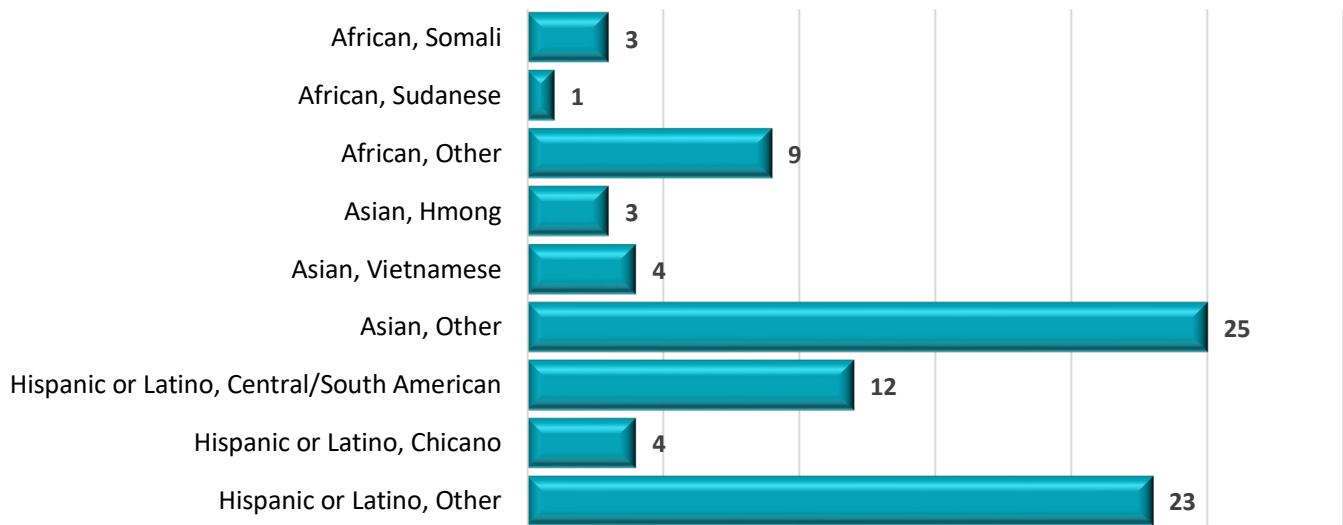
2.1.2.1 Race, ethnicity of participating providers

Below are definitions followed by three graphs.

- For the equity engagement, the term BIPOC is used to describe providers and other stakeholders who reported their race and ethnicity as one or more of the following: African, African American, American Indian, Asian, two or more races or multi-racial, other race, and Hispanic or Latino. Data collected on race and ethnicity by the Child Care Aware system includes the option to provide additional detail within the categories of African, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino. These options include Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, Sudanese, Other African; Cambodian, Hmong, Karen, Lao, Vietnamese, Other Asian; Central/South American, Chicano, and Other Hispanic/Latino.
- White is used to describe providers and other stakeholders who reported their race and ethnicity as white or European American.
- European immigrants are individuals who self-identified as such within either of the above categories. For this project, they were engaged the same way as BIPOC providers because they are culturally, and may be linguistically, diverse providers.



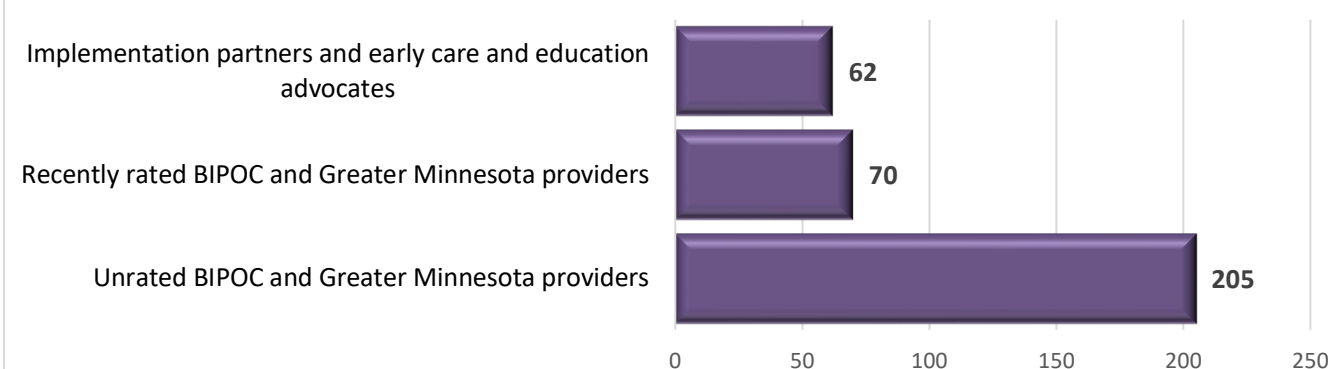
Participating Providers by Race/Ethnicity: Additional Details



2.1.2.2 Stakeholder Group

- 205 unrated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota child care providers participated via interviews or online surveys
- 70 recently rated BIPOC and Greater Minnesota child care providers participated via online surveys, virtual sessions, or interviews
- 62 implementation partners and early care and education advocates participated via online surveys or virtual sessions

Round 1 Participants by Stakeholder Group

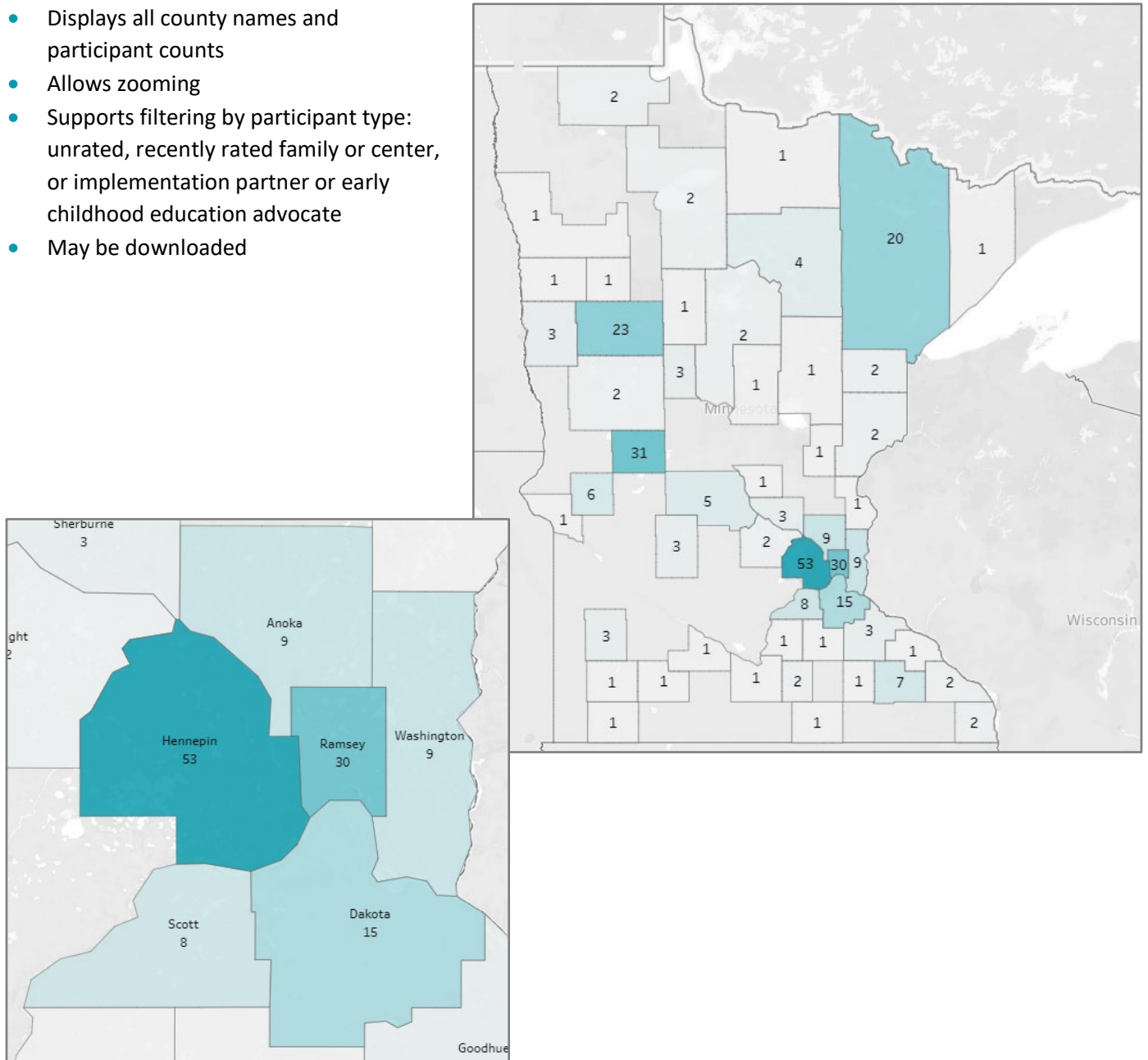


2.1.2.3 Home ZIP Code

Of the approximately 362 participants, ZIP Codes were provided or could be determined for 281. See summary results below and view the interactive online map link [here](#).

The online map:

- Displays all county names and participant counts
- Allows zooming
- Supports filtering by participant type: unrated, recently rated family or center, or implementation partner or early childhood education advocate
- May be downloaded



2.1.3 How the Round 1 Analysis is Organized

The analysis of Round 1 input on the following pages considers results from all participants except the few unrated providers who have decided not to pursue a rating; see 2.1.1 for their perspectives.

It is organized by the following **key issue** sets that emerged from this equity engagement, each with relevant subtopics:

- Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions
- Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy
- Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust
- Language Access, Jargon
- Expertise Definitions, Recognition

Each topic includes an analysis of the challenges, issues, and needs, and then ideas and solutions gleaned from participants. At the end of each key issue set are the outcomes that would be expected if changes were implemented. Quotes from participants in this equity engagement are interspersed throughout the report.

Following this analysis are complete compilations of [Round 1 input](#) (November-December 2021) and [Round 2 feedback](#) (January-February 2022) on the key issues from the draft version of this analysis.

2.2 Issue: Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions

Perspectives on these issues varied somewhat by participant group. Issues from unrated providers were slightly different, largely because they were based on general information or the perceptions of others, rather than direct experience; see box at right for more information.

I learned a lot and it helped my program, but so much work...



If you're doing PA, the food program, CCAP, all together it's an enormous amount of work.



It's like taking college courses; you have to do stuff like homework and PA is a LOT of work -- it's way more than I thought

Unrated Provider Issues

Unrated providers generally based their concerns on what they heard from other rated or unrated providers, Parent Aware information sessions, any initial supports and grants they may have received before starting the full process, or the Parent Aware website.

The most common barriers for unrated providers were the enormous amount of time and paperwork required to get rated -- on top of their already long work hours. They balked at the additional training requirements and doing all this either during their long days or after work hours. Some weren't sure they would know how to complete the documentation required or were not confident they know how to access help or would get the help they needed.

A few unrated providers were quite interested in becoming rated but are simply too busy to do so at this time; others saw the process as forcing them to choose between being rated and spending time providing a good program to the kids they love – and for them, the choice was clear.

2.2.1 Topic: Time, Scheduling, Paperwork

2.2.1.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Rated providers struggle with finding the time to maintain the requirements *and* run their program well, as well as the astounding amount of paperwork required.

- The time needed for the extra training required by Parent Aware is significant and some providers struggled with the homework on top of the training; for many, the training time required was much more than they understood or anticipated; some have found other excellent sources training and resources that allow them to maintain or deepen their professional knowledge and skills with considerably less time and hassle
- Both family programs and centers sometimes had trouble finding coverage for staff to attend daytime trainings or meetings with coaches and others, or balked at those extra costs; others preferred doing these during the workday as opposed to extending their already too-long workdays into the evenings or weekends, encroaching on family commitments and their own physical and mental health
- Providers noted that their first obligation was to their children, and some were frustrated with coaches and others who sometimes seemed to expect them to drop everything and respond to each email or text

Parent Aware comes across as a paper pushing, policing division of childcare. You don't seem concerned with how much time it takes away from dealing with children.... Continue to connect all agencies under the same umbrella so paperwork can be streamlined, and we can spend time with children, not chasing paper in a windstorm.

- Providers were overwhelmed and frustrated with the huge number of forms, documentation, submittals, and other paperwork required, and consistently concerned about requirements for content and timing
- Those doing a rerating or going for a higher rating were consistently annoyed at having to submit the same information repeatedly – rather than only updated or new information

If providers were participating in several related programs to support the families they serve, such as the food program and Child Care Assistance Program, the layered, unconnected requirements can become overwhelming.

- Many noted the massive amount of paperwork that needed to be completed or gathered, and that the information and instructions were often confusing, unclear, duplicative, or otherwise problematic
- A few were confused about who could help with what, and some didn't get the help they needed
- Most appreciated the help they received from coaches and other support staff, while also noting that the process shouldn't be so messy, complicated, and time-consuming in the first place

2.2.1.2 Ideas, solutions

Underneath these ideas is the collective commitment to make Parent Aware more accessible to providers, and to do so in a way that respects providers' time and primary commitments to their children.

Trust us to do a good job; we are in this field because we love it and want to succeed and feel appreciated.

Suggestions revolved around the following:

- Simplify and streamline every part of the rating process to reduce the non-content time needed to complete the requirements
 - Make it cleaner, easier, and simpler, with fewer steps
 - Reduce the number of documents, forms, and other paperwork required
 - Remove redundancies and duplication of effort for providers, such as having to submit all new paperwork for each rating level rather than only new or updated content
- Providers and coaches/others should schedule, plan, and organize provider meetings and supports to meet the needs of both parties
 - Understand and respect providers' busy daytime schedules *and* other obligations evenings and weekends; at the same time, recognize that coaches and other support team members don't work 24/7, either
 - Be flexible, communicate early and often, and jointly make adjustments as needed
 - Choose communications methods and timing based on needs and available technologies. Simple information exchanges can be done electronically and at any time as long as both have the technology (email, text, or web-based). Other purposes that require a conversation may be done in-person, by phone, or via videoconference, with choices based on available technologies, personal preferences, schedules, duration, and other variables such as weather, proximity, health, and general convenience; consider all possibilities and aim for the best option each time.

If you could somehow add more hours to the day!

2.2.2 Topic: Requirements, Supports, Navigation

2.2.2.1 Challenges, issues, needs

The Parent Aware process has an enormous number of requirements and expectations, some that apply to most providers and others that are unique to certain groups or at some point in the rating process. To help providers through the process, DHS and implementation partners provide coaches and many other staff who support providers in multiple ways. They also created online resources including Develop, Eager to Learn, and the Parent Aware website, and a variety of generic or partner-specific guidance documents, tools, and websites to help providers across the state access and benefit from these resources.

In spite of all these supports, a huge amount of the time for both staff and providers is spent navigating processes and systems that are clearly not user-friendly; if those tens of thousands of hours each year were instead spent working directly to improve what children experience every day, the Parent Aware goals would be within reach for every provider in Minnesota.

Access to good information: Unrated providers struggle mightily trying to find information about Parent Aware that is clear, correct, easy to understand, and relevant. Nowhere can they find a simple explanation of where to even begin, much less clear infographics that lay out the key concepts, process, training, and other expectations. As a result, providers may abandon the effort, start and quit because they feel misled, or start and fail because they didn't understand and weren't ready or able to proceed.

Does parent Aware have too many pieces? Are they all necessary for quality? Has it become more about paperwork and less about relationships?

Responsive, human support: Unrated and recently rated providers want to proceed efficiently and correctly through the process, but have a hard time finding people who: Answer their calls or emails at all or in a timely manner; have the answers to their questions, find out for them, or refer them to someone who does; or provide accurate and complete answers. Providers become frustrated and angry about taking even more time making mistakes or having to repeatedly submit documents or information with a system that is very unforgiving. Some felt disrespected or discriminated against, as if their questions or needs aren't as important as those of others. These challenges prevented some providers from getting into Parent Aware, becoming rated, or achieving higher ratings if they wanted to do so.

Navigating online tools, resources: It appears that nearly all providers who started or finished the process struggled to navigate and benefit from these web-based tools and resources, especially Develop. While some appreciated the benefits in the end, getting through it required from a few to dozens of hours of help from coaches and other staff, website tech support, peers, family members, and others.

Getting your first star should be being able to navigate Develop!

These challenges further compounded providers' ability to understand rating requirements and then to maintain or increase their rating. This was a generalized concern *and* it limited their ability to work independently – proceeding through the process when, where, and in ways that were easy and convenient for them. Without lots of help, they struggled with the following:

- What training was required, by when, and availability (timing, location, platform)
- How to get specific training such as for cultural proficiency, that was language-specific, in their geographic area, available within the required timeframe, delivered in their preferred format (in-person or online), etc.
- Training registration and required documentation
- Finding or understanding components and timing of requirements such as goals, portfolio, and similar
- Submitting information, getting more details, or finding and correcting their own mistakes
- Grant and spending/purchasing requirements, documentation, and options

Some providers also noted program-specific issues for which they couldn't easily find answers. Examples included:

- Requirements, expectations, and coaching advice that is relevant to centers but not family providers
- Requirements and expectations that work for large but not small centers
- Program and structure differences in the Parent Aware requirements for Tribal- vs. DHS-licensed programs
- How requirements, training, coaching and financial supports, and other Parent Aware elements change as the star ratings increase

2.2.2.2 Ideas, solutions

- Provide correct, complete, and easy-to-understand process information in multiple formats and languages, designed for and with providers and including correct and relevant links -- and ensure providers understand what it is, why it matters, and how it applies to them
- For each star level, clearly explain and illustrate the steps, training, and other responsibilities and obligations, timing and duration, costs and financial supports, other incentives, options, and opportunities
- Work with providers and system administrators to rethink how Develop, Eager to Learn, and the Parent Aware website are organized, accessed, and function; ensure that *user* needs are the highest priority, while maintaining the backend integrations and links necessary for DHS, implementation partners, and related agencies and organizations
- Allow providers to customize their progression through the rating process to meet their own needs
- As the process changes and improves, ensure coaches and other support staff are fully informed on the process and requirements so they can provide accurate, consistent, and relevant guidance and assistance to providers
- Create a "no wrong door" system that allows interested unrated providers to immediately reach a person via phone, text, or email who can answer their questions, offer further resources, and ensure appropriate follow up

2.2.3 Topic: Training, Coaching, and Other Resources

2.2.3.1 Challenges, Issues, Needs

Training: As a central element of the Parent Aware process, training received a lot of attention from all equity engagement project participants. While some appreciated the number and variety of training courses, opportunities to learn new and valuable information and skills, and the flexibility of in-person and online options, most were frustrated or confused about training requirements, relevance, access, and similar. While closely connected with other issues in this and other sections, these issues included:

- Difficulty and frustration understanding and navigating Develop and other online resources related to training without extensive help from coaches, tech support, and others

- Absence of easy-to-understand information on training requirements, progress, and options
- Trouble finding the training they need, when and how they need it; these included training that is required or sequential, culturally relevant, in languages other than English, nearby in-person or online (depending on personal needs or preferences), etc.
- Training created and delivered absent any cultural context or nuance
- Training that is almost exclusively in English
- Training content that isn't relevant to family providers or doesn't meet their practical needs

Coaches: Providers and implementation partners overwhelmingly appreciate coaches, professional development advisors, and others.

What or who was helpful in overcoming challenges, and in what way

Recently rated providers and partners/advocates were asked what was and wasn't helpful in the Parent Aware process. Below is summary information related to the topics in this section.

Coaches, professional development advisors, recruiters, coordinators, Tribal licensors, and other staff from Parent Aware implementation partners around the state helped providers...

- Understand the process steps, timing, documentation, training requirements and how to find courses
- Complete and submit the required information and keep everything organized
- Navigate Develop
- Find and secure funds, grants
- Prepare draft submissions that they then reviewed and provided feedback on prior to final submission
- Develop strong goals and plans
- Understand the process by preparing materials using language that providers understand, and with step-by-step pictures and/or videos
- Find/access language-specific training or coaching, find interpreters, or brought language-specific training to their center
- Deepen their skills by offering some group coaching sessions

Coaches who are BIPOC, bi/multilingual, from the same cultural background, or from their own or nearby communities are especially helpful and valuable to providers.

Coach showed me the end -- like a lighthouse -- that was really helpful

Some of these support staff developed a collaborative, integrated approach that organizes the various team members to deliver seamless support to providers. They were flexible, accommodating, and sensitive to provider schedules, preferred communications formats, and content needs. Some would even pick up paper documents from the providers who couldn't leave during the day. They responded quickly to questions and concerns, and if they didn't know the answers, they found out and got back to providers.

Many providers also noted a variety of issues and challenges, such as the following:

- Significant variations in the quality, consistency, and relevance of the information they receive from coaches and others; examples included incorrect information about various processes or topics; different directions about requirements such as writing goals, getting materials for assessment tools, getting or spending grant

funds, or what documents/information are needed to ensure certain approvals

- Coaches who weren't from a similar racial, ethnic, or cultural background; who were not culturally competent or hadn't learned anything about the provider's background; those not experienced with low-income providers, and similar; some providers also noted unhelpful or biased decisions or actions, or coaches who seemed to give up on or abandon providers
- Coaches who weren't experienced providers themselves, so their advice or direction wasn't appropriate or workable in the provider's actual child care setting, for a family child care vs. a center, or for an experienced vs. new provider
- Support provided in English only
- Coaches who didn't respond in a timely fashion, who provided incorrect or incomplete information, or didn't respond at all
- People who didn't follow up on their commitments or agreements
- Coaches who didn't explain the process well, rushed them, or weren't clear about deadlines, which put providers' progress at risk

Peers, mentors, and other forms of support: All providers depend on some support, assistance, expertise, or skills from family members and friends. They may help providers understand and navigate the process requirements, serve as translators or interpreters, help work through online resources, or resolve technology problems. Some also were able to cover for providers or staff while they were in training, doing paperwork, or completing other Parent Aware requirements.

Some providers have connections with other providers or former co-workers who answered questions and sometimes served as informal mentors. Many providers want the chance to talk with knowledgeable peers who have had more or different experiences as providers and with Parent Aware; this is especially valuable for family child care providers because coaches and other support team members typically don't have that background. While a few said they were part of intentional or *ad hoc* peer support or learning communities/networks, many providers were too busy to create or find these themselves.

2.2.3.2 Ideas, solutions

There wasn't consensus on specific solutions but there was consistent support for making the timing, location, supports, platforms, and content work for everyone. That meant offering more options that work for providers regardless of their location, availability, preferences, experience, and needs. For example:

- Offer comparable, equivalent training and coaching access, options, and excellence regardless of who providers are, what they need, or where they live
- Meet provider needs for culturally relevant and home-language training and coaching
- Ensure required training courses are available when, where, and how providers need them to meet Parent Aware requirements – and if

The whole process of being rated is to have quality care for the children; process has to help us achieve that, including organizing groups of providers around the state so we can learn from each other rather than being solo and doing our own thing by ourselves all the time -- being supported by our small groups of other providers. We could learn from other providers how to do new things like those required for the next level.



Mentoring from someone who's at the next level -- they know what I don't know because they've done it and I haven't. A coach can't do that, but another provider can. Learning from someone who has done it before would be a big help.

there are problems, ensure the process flexes to meet provider needs and support their success, rather than punishing them

- For online courses, work with trainers, course developers, coaches, and providers to substantially improve the *participant* experience; ensure that such courses are properly designed for online delivery, and that trainers have received the training and support they need to deliver those courses well
- Offer training options that meet individual learning and training needs, understanding that these vary and change: Some providers want most or all in-person training, while others prefer most or all online – and for online training, some want live and others on-demand. Variety, flexibility, and options are essential.
- Provide training at different times and days: Some providers need evening or weekend trainings, others are able to arrange coverage and take training during the day, and some are interested in intense, full-day trainings so they can get done more efficiently; again, options and flexibility will solve most problems.
- Offer a variety of settings for coaching and training: Some want group coaching and training with their peers; everyone wants some 1:1 coaching and some are interested in 1:1 training tailored to their program; other ideas include having trainers or coaches observe their program onsite and to include those hours in meeting Parent Aware requirements; or offering collaborative training or blended training and coaching, either in-person or virtual with breakout sessions, where providers, coaches, and trainers can learn together
- Find ways to support new or expanded peer-to-peer networks and mentoring opportunities that exchange accurate information and meet provider needs and priorities

2.2.4 Topic: Information, Misinformation, and Choices

2.2.4.1 Challenges, issues, needs

There is widespread agreement that **unrated** providers find it nearly impossible to get good information about Parent Aware. Dozens said the information they have is incomplete, incorrect, or outdated. They don't understand how the program works or the benefits. They want to access and understand more on their own *and* from both Parent Aware representatives and their peers. Absent quality, timely, and relevant information, unrated providers seek information from a variety of other sources, many of which are incomplete or incorrect.

Some providers who have gathered basic information and either started or considered the Parent Aware process, at this time see little or no value to being rated. There is a distinction between those who are fully informed and decide not to participate (see 2.1.1) and those who are unable to access correct information or necessary supports. Examples of the latter may include those who said they are too small for this to be valuable, who serve only infants and don't see the relevance of Parent Aware, or who object to elements of the Parent Aware process, requirements, or supports.

Unrated and recently rated providers as well as partners/advocates noted that many parents don't know or ask about Parent Aware. They aren't aware of the requirements that improve child care programs, grants to providers, or financial supports available to parents – all of which benefit their children.

As a provider, we have to maintain 16+ hours [of training, for licensing]. To do additional hours on top of what's required and balancing 4 kids, it gets hard.

⌘

Been doing this for 21 years, discussed with other providers in the area about Parent Aware, low benefits but ton of work to get ratings.

2.2.4.2 Ideas, solutions

These are closely connected to other topics in this and other sections, and include:

- Provide correct, complete, and easy-to-understand information about Parent Aware to unrated providers and parents in multiple formats and languages; actively market the program by working with current and new community, government, Tribal, health and wellness, social media, and other partners and platforms
- Deliver culturally relevant information and communications to providers and families
- Use communications that recognize and accommodate BIPOC, Greater Minnesota, and other providers who don't have computers at home, aren't regular email users, aren't tech-savvy, speak languages other than English, or face other barriers that limit their timely receipt and understanding of e-communications
- Clearly explain to providers the learning and child development benefits of Parent Aware, and the supports and incentives available to *rated* providers
- Communicate directly with parents about the benefits of rated programs to them and their children
- Begin providing information about Parent Aware resources and supports early in a provider's career, such as when they become licensed; make sure they have access to good online resources and contacts to learn more when they are ready
- Add more personal, individualized, and tailored outreach, information sharing, and recruitment, and collaborate with additional community partners in this effort

2.2.5 Topic: Bureaucracy, Terms, and Timing/Cohorts

2.2.5.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Some of these are broad and others specific to individual providers, but together they reflect a system that appears to some providers and implementation partners as unnecessarily rigid, bureaucratic, and sometimes disrespectful. And with pandemic health risks, lockdowns, cleaning requirements, and evolving protocols, providers who needed even more flexibility didn't get what they needed. Together, these cost providers time and may erode trust and interrupt or prevent some providers from succeeding in Parent Aware. Below are examples of some of the issues raised.

Rigid timelines, deadlines: These made an already difficult process especially challenging for BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers, which reduced success, satisfaction, and benefits to providers and the children and families they serve.

- Many providers said there weren't sufficient options for them to take more time to complete certain requirements – time they needed to meet the normal demands of their programs, themselves, and their own families, or to deal with the massive challenges of running a family or center-based program during a pandemic
- A number of BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers struggled with the cohort model: Not being able to start when they wanted, being forced to complete everything by strict deadlines regardless of what was happening in their program or personal lives; not being able to accelerate their efforts if they were able to do so; and having to wait so long for rating decisions
- Some cohort participants were disappointed that the model seemed designed for the convenience of support staff rather than the providers; for example, it wasn't set up for providers to work with/learn from each other
- Some providers dug into in the wrong pathway or process because of misinformation or misunderstanding; or had to pause in their initial rating, renewal, or effort to get a higher rating in order to respond to a crisis or

urgent need – and in many cases found there weren't options or accommodations to meet their needs and continue in the program

- Others said they were rushed by their coaches, received incorrect information or insufficient notice about when things were due (for initial ratings, renewals, or moving to the next level), or weren't able to find or take required training within the time limits
- Some providers struggled tremendously with overlapping or competing deadlines and requirements within Parent Aware (renewals, training, purchasing, new requirements for moving to the next level), which were sometimes almost impossibly compounded for providers also participating in food and financial subsidy programs

Grant-funded purchasing restrictions, inequities: The Parent Aware system is notably set up to provide substantial financial supports to providers to help them achieve their initial rating and then move up, but implementation varies by region.

- Many providers find the process cumbersome, overly complicated, and too time-consuming
- For approvals, providers struggled with conflicting information and guidance from coaches and others in the approval process
- With regional implementation partners taking different approaches, Greater Minnesota providers are significantly disadvantaged because they must pay up front for grant-funded purchases and training, then seek reimbursement; that is an enormous financial burden for many providers and reimbursements can take a long time. In addition, in-person purchasing locations are more limited and typically farther away for Greater Minnesota providers, which leaves them with fewer and a narrower range of options.
- BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers face additional challenges in these heavily bureaucratic processes if they don't have computers, printers, or scanning abilities at home; work without broadband or reliable internet; or if English is not their home language (see more on these topics elsewhere in this report)
- All providers are restricted to certain vendors, which limits opportunities to meet the increasingly broad range of contemporary and culturally relevant program needs, as well as access more affordable products and get timely delivery statewide

Other issues and examples included:

- Providers who changed ownership, formats, age groups, or similar, may get tangled up, stuck, or lost in approval loops and paperwork
- Although a Social Security Number is not required for Parent Aware, it is for licensing, and providers must be licensed in order to participate in Parent Aware; this appears to affect some immigrant providers who may only have an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (a tax processing number for certain resident aliens who cannot get a Social Security Number)

2.2.5.2 Ideas, solutions

Timelines, terms, deadlines

- Just as the rating system allows providers to choose their star level, respect provider realities by offering similar flexibility to control their rating process start time, pacing, and completion date – while recognizing that processes must also work for coaches and other support team members
- Look at making the cohort model a *collaborative* option for those who want an interactive experience with other providers

- Adjust timing requirements for training to accommodate the real challenges that family and center providers face accessing specific training content, throughout the state, using platforms and methods that meet both content and participant needs (in person, online live, online on-demand, etc.), in specific languages, at certain times or in sequence, etc.; this flexibility will be necessary even when more courses and more culturally and otherwise relevant courses are developed or allowed / counted
- To address overlapping obligations, deadlines, and requirements, coordinate between Parent Aware and other systems to make them more coherent and doable for providers and parents

Grant-funded purchasing

- Ensure that no providers are required to spend the money first and be reimbursed later
- Macro- vs. micromanage the process; assume trustworthy and honest behavior and allow providers and coaches more agency while maintaining the integrity of these financial supports
- Significantly simplify and streamline the process including selections, choices, approvals, and documentation
- Expand the list of vendors and list of approved items to ensure that BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers can get what they need to improve program quality
- Streamline, facilitate, and support ordering, such as by tracking frequently purchased items, allowing multiple orders to different vendors, creating lists of approved items, ideas, and suggestions that reflect the needs of BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers, and similar
- Make the deadlines more flexible and provide more information on deadlines and help available

2.2.6 Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented

As a result of the suggested improvements in this section, below are some potential outcomes that would ultimately benefit Minnesota children and families.

- Providers understand the benefits and requirements of Parent Aware and are prepared to make fully informed decisions about joining or not
- They understand the steps, responsibilities, timeline, options, and opportunities associated with each level, and make decisions that balance their priorities, obligations, and availability
- Providers understand where and from whom to get information before and during the Parent Aware process, and they have more than one way to access clear, accurate, and timely instructions specific to their individual needs
- Providers move through the processes of rating, renewal, and moving up a level at a pace that works for them, and that can be reasonably and fairly managed by support team members and DHS system administrators
- Coaches and other team members are knowledgeable, responsive, and accessible to providers, and times and methods for communications, meetings, and other supports are jointly arranged and respectfully completed
- High-quality, relevant, and culturally competent training and other learning opportunities are readily available to every provider in the state, via platforms and mechanisms that suit the content and provider needs, and available when and where providers need it
- Examples, models, and other supplemental materials (written, audio, and video) offer helpful, relevant, contemporary guidance and information for providers to complete requirements, and support coaches and

other team members in their work

- A blend of formal and informal peer-to-peer and networking opportunities exist statewide, BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers know about and are welcomed into them, and participants share accurate and supportive information and experiences that benefit all
- The vast majority of time spent by providers, coaches, and other support team members is on rich content and practice -- rather than on navigating overly complicated, inefficient, bureaucratic systems and processes
- Providers advance through processes that they understand, take less time, are simpler and easier, and with fewer mistakes; flexibility is built into the process to best meet everyone's needs
- Providers have the time and support to focus on the trainings and guided practice, and they feel respected, valued, and motivated to continue growing and learning

2.3 Issue: Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy

2.3.1 Topic: Geography

2.3.1.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Providers in lower-density regions of the state face unique barriers to accessing participation and supports. Key issues and examples include the following:

- **In-person training, purchasing:** With the number of training hours required, especially at the higher rating levels, many providers in these regions struggled to meet the requirements on time or at all.
 - In-person training may be an hour or more away and specialty training even farther; providers may not have the time in their 50-60-hour work weeks or flexibility with their personal lives and responsibilities
 - There are fewer courses, less variety, and courses are offered less often, limiting opportunities in general and particularly for specialty content, language-specific courses, and topics such as cultural proficiency
 - For training during the work day, they may not have someone to cover in their absence or are afraid they would lose money
 - Access to transportation (at all times/days, reliable, etc.) can be a problem, winter road conditions may make travel impossible, and some providers may not be comfortable driving in unfamiliar areas or after dark
 - Purchasing supplies for their program may require long trips
- **In-person coaching:** Distances reduce opportunities for some coaches and providers to meet face-to-face, which can mean guidance is less informed and there are fewer opportunities for modeling and tailored supports.

Rural providers... have less resources available in their communities. They have to travel to reach some of those experiences required by Parent Aware. How do we balance that with requirements for quality?

2.3.1.2 Ideas, solutions

While there were clear and strong concerns, solutions are more challenging. Some of these are discussed in other sections including Technology, but there is consensus that no matter where providers and coaches are, they must have reasonable, consistent access to whatever they need to be successful. Examples included:

- Equivalent training opportunities for BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers, with the full range of content, quality, and depth; in formats and using methods that suit the content and work for them; and that is accessible in all meanings of the word
- Comparable opportunities for providers to be supported in person and virtually by coaches and other team members so they can successfully learn, practice, and meet the requirements – and serve children and families at the same levels and standards as anyone else in the state
- Expanded and more flexible purchasing options

2.3.2 Topic: Technology

2.3.2.1 Challenges, issues, needs

DHS put in place electronic communications and online options long before the pandemic to increase efficiency and timeliness for the agency and providers, and increase access to the program, training, coaching, and other supports. During the worst of the pandemic, these became the sole means of communication and support.

While Parent Aware doesn't specifically require providers to have computers in their homes, their own email addresses, stable internet access, a printer, and basic tech savviness, the process and requirements are built on those assumptions. Basic hardware/software, affordable, stable, broadband (non-mobile), and internet access have become critical for providers to:

- Get accurate and timely information about Parent Aware
- Complete the comprehensive and time-consuming process to apply, receive coaching, take training, and be rated
- Receive and use the funding provided
- Maintain or increase their rating with the associated documentation, training, and other requirements
- (See map showing significant disparities in broadband access)

Changes are going to happen, they are expected, but a lot of the information goes out electronically -- not the best way to reach ELL or BIPOC providers



I am older and not tech savvy. All these different technologies cause too much stress and [take too much] time.

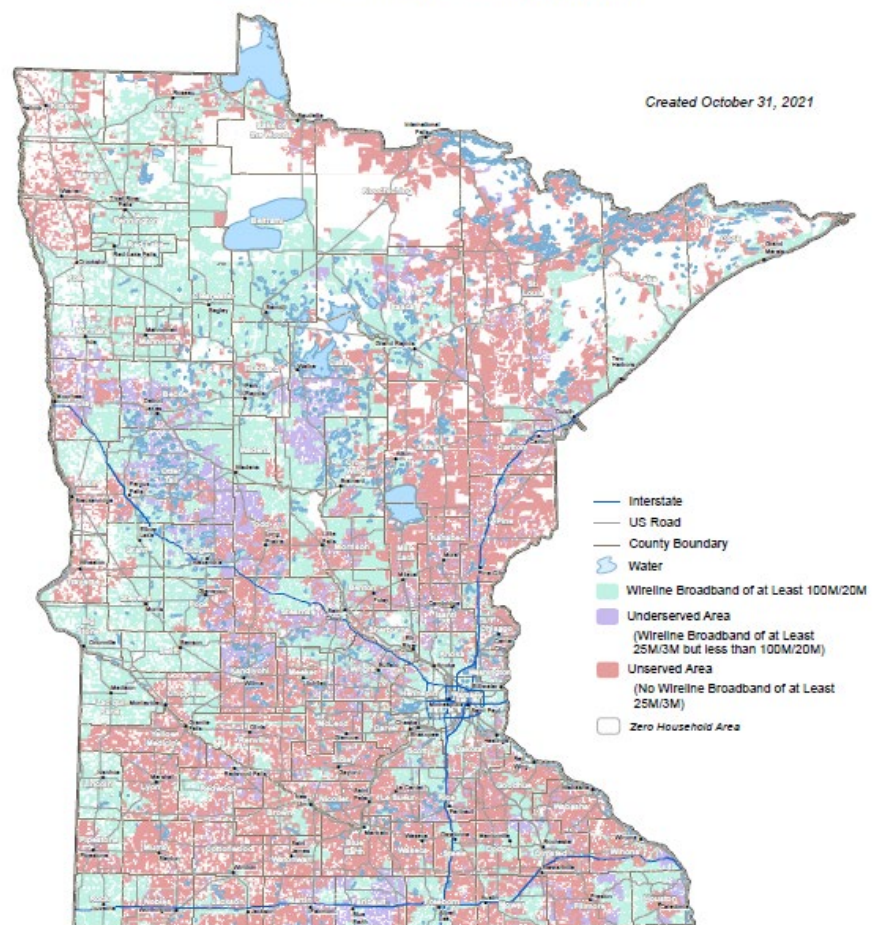
Problems with technology experience and literacy are related critical issues that increase barriers and challenges:

- Providers may have little or no experience with computers or are fearful/resistant to technology
- Until very recently, most Minnesotans hadn't ever used videoconferencing software, much less taken online training or attempted a nuanced coaching session that way

Delivering high-quality training *online* is a major challenge in itself, requiring significantly more than simply shifting to an online platform; materials, processes, activities, and overall instructional practices must be redesigned. Coupling that with providers who have little or no experience with contemporary training courses (and certainly not online) creates a distinct disadvantage for providers trying to understand and access training opportunities and meet Parent Aware requirements.

2021 Internet Service Provider Broadband Service Inventory [\(DEED, link\)](#)

Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program
Unserviced, Underserved and Served Broadband Areas



Together, these may become nearly insurmountable barriers and problems. They:

- Pose special challenges to providers who are lower income, non-native English speakers, older or not tech-

- savvy, and in broadband deserts (where dial-up or mobile may be the only option; see map)
- Prevent providers from getting accurate, complete, and timely information about Parent Aware
- Prevent some providers from pursuing a rating at all
- Prevent providers who want to pursue a rating from assembling and transmitting the massive amount of information required, taking certain training, or having an optimal experience with coaches and other supports
- Take far too much time and cause enormous frustration for those who are rated, which restricts participation, limits growth opportunities, and may result in their leaving the program
- Cause providers to miss important or timely communications with DHS and other agencies and resources, trainers, coaches, peers, and others

2.3.2.2 Ideas, opportunities

These focus more on technology, with ideas on related topics covered in other sections.

- Actively and publicly support the agencies and organizations that are facilitating and funding rapid expansion of high-speed, affordable broadband to serve every household in the state
- As Parent Aware processes and systems are streamlined and simplified, do so in ways that also support access and functionality by phone and tablet
- Determine and communicate the minimum and optimal hardware, software, and internet access required for communications and successful participation in Parent Aware
- Recognize that technology issues are on top of other challenges such as language, culture, and location, and that the cumulative impacts may be overwhelming
- Learn what technology the providers do and don't have; explore how DHS and implementation partners can work with other organizations to help providers get what they need to be successful
- Find ways to directly support providers, coaches, and other support team members to become more knowledgeable, comfortable, and savvy about technology so they can more fully benefit from the entire Parent Aware process and experience
- Acknowledge that online learning is a unique experience that needs different supports, timelines, and processes for effective learning to occur

2.3.3 Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented

As a result of the suggested improvements in this section, below are some potential outcomes that would ultimately benefit Minnesota children and families.

- BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers are able to experience and benefit from the full range of learning opportunities, supports, and communications available through Parent Aware
- They are able to acquire and effectively use the technology they need to fully participate, and do so over affordable, high-speed broadband

2.4 Issue: Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust

Issues around cultural proficiency, relationships, and trust span the Parent Aware system, processes, and participants. They include providers, coaches, and other support team members and system administrators; definitions, expectations, and content requirements; information, help, and advice from all sources; and feedback loops and accountability. Other sections cover these issues as they connect to those topics; this section focuses on content, support and guidance, and systems and accountability.

2.4.1 Topic: Content

2.4.1.1 Challenges, issues, needs

These are about curriculum, training, practices, and information, among others. Examples include:

- Approved curricula may not include or recognize cultural differences and norms and how those affect child care and teaching styles
- The needs, preferences, and expectations of various Tribal communities is not embedded, nor is there consideration of where these are different from or the same as other groups
- Definitions and understandings of what constitutes quality don't recognize the varying forms this takes across cultures and over time; there are many ways to bring quality programming to children
- Inadequate attention to culturally appropriate items or practices; perception that this is important only in urban communities rather than for everyone, everywhere
- Information, materials, and other tangible supports that aren't culturally relevant and nuanced

What is not helpful:

[Training that is] hostile to the lived experiences of BIPOC communities, and that can actually compete with and endanger family and community bonds

2.4.1.2 Ideas, solutions

- Update and expand coaching and training content, materials, examples, exercises, and guides to reflect the rich diversity of people and ideas that these children are growing up into
- Ensure that coaches and others better understand where the standards and indicators *do* value cultural responsiveness and proficiency; improve the standards and indicators to make these topics more central to Parent Aware's measures of quality
- Make it easier for providers to find and recognize content that supports cultural proficiency and content that is particularly useful for BIPOC providers
- Better align lesson plans for portfolios with the realities of different program types, cultural contexts, and languages; add options and adaptations for better customization
- Increase flexibility and support for providers to meet a curriculum or assessment indicator; this supports cultural responsiveness, builds capacity, and strengthens relationships
- Develop, fund, or otherwise support locally designed courses that meet community and cultural needs, such as restoring culture, outdoor learnings, and home languages
- Support more courses and culturally reflective training in Tribal communities to meet needs and build trust
- Infuse trainings and coaching with culturally and community relevant content and methods, such as stories,

[Recognize] that the barriers faced by Greater MN providers are NOT the same as BIPOC providers. Equity means treating those groups differently – the barriers for BIPOC providers are much different, more entrenched and harder to address.

examples, and experiences to which providers can relate

- Embed informational and outreach materials with images, examples, and other content that reflects the full spectrum of Minnesota’s diversity and geography

2.4.2 Topic: Support, Guidance

2.4.2.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Coaches, professional development advisors, and others are recognized as well intentioned and doing their best with a wide range of providers, large caseloads, and large geographic areas. That said, BIPOC and some Greater Minnesota providers aren’t getting the culturally appropriate supports they need to be successful, and all providers are missing opportunities to become culturally proficient – a necessity to support children’s futures everywhere in Minnesota. Examples include:

- So many coaches are white, English-speaking, have minimal experience in family/multi-age settings, have more formal education than most providers, and have limited understanding of cultural proficiency or trauma-informed care that may be central to the lives and work of BIPOC and non-English-speaking providers; as a result, coaches are not best prepared to advise, support, or advocate for these providers
- There is significant variation in the amount and value of support from coaches; this is especially problematic for BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers who face multiple barriers and challenges that limit their opportunities, progress, and growth
- Coaching and other supports don’t center equity, cultural proficiency, and diversity in their work with all providers

2.4.2.2 Ideas, solutions

- Hire / develop more coaches who are culturally congruent with providers, so they can better understand and support providers to be successful
- Work with coaches and providers to explore alternative ways to connect or match coaches and providers, including supplemental cohort-based or group sessions, access to more than one coach, ways to change coaches if the relationship isn’t working, etc.
- Hire and support more BIPOC and bi/multilingual coaches, trainers, and other support team members; create community-based pipelines to ensure sustainability and deepen capacity and value
- Ensure BIPOC and bi/multilingual coaches are available everywhere in the state; specifically ensure more Indigenous coaches, mentors, and others in Tribal communities
- Train all coaches and support team members in cultural proficiency and culturally responsive instruction
- Train and support team members to be more welcoming, respectful, and supportive of the diverse range of providers they serve
- Create connections with BIPOC organizations throughout the state to jointly support providers, coaches, trainers, and other support team members to be successful

2.4.3 Topic: System, Accountability

2.4.3.1 Challenges, issues, needs

The overall Parent Aware system was built to satisfy many important needs and priorities around kindergarten readiness for children throughout Minnesota. It does not, however *center* equity, nor are there formal feedback and accountability systems in place for the system and participants to quickly become more culturally proficient. Examples include:

- Parent Aware doesn't measure, fully support, or require providers and their staff to be culturally proficient, nor does it recognize or reward providers who are demonstrably so
- Certain indicators may not be culturally appropriate or relevant for some groups, and rigidity in parts of the rating process may prevent BIPOC providers from being fairly assessed
- The focus on ages 3 and up (limited indicators for younger children) has significant negative implications for the cultural and linguistic needs of infants and toddlers and their families
- There are no mechanisms in place to routinely seek out and listen to the voices of BIPOC and other providers with unique needs, then use those perspectives to improve the system in ways that benefit those providers and likely all providers in various ways
- There are no mechanisms for providers to easily and safely report or resolve problems with coaches or trainers who aren't meeting their needs, or to switch to someone who is better aligned or supportive
- The current system is designed for those who manage Parent Aware, not providers, parents, or support team members; it does not reflect the diversity of providers and programs throughout the state
- There are no routine methods for providers, parents, or support team members to offer input or feedback on Parent Aware to help improve it

There is no "one size fits all" that will ever work. DHS has prioritized streamlining systems, but this will always hurt BIPOC programs, since they are disadvantaged to begin with. Flexibility is a must.

2.4.3.2 Ideas, solutions

- Create a structural process to routinely gather, review, and act on input and feedback about Parent Aware from all key stakeholders (including parents), with special emphasis on hearing directly from underrepresented stakeholders
- Develop a performance assessment and improvement process for coaches, trainers, and other support team members that includes feedback from providers
- Offer repercussion-free ways for providers to report problems or concerns about their coach, with supports to resolve the issues or make a new match
- Ensure coaches are more consistently supportive of providers, so they get the individualized help they need to be successful and continue learning and growing
- Gather and share better demographic and performance/success data on providers and support team members to understand strengths and opportunities for improvement
- Routinely assess the impact of programs at different rating levels on child outcomes across demographics, and use the results to continually improve the program to best serve Minnesota's children

2.4.4 Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented

As a result of the suggested improvements in this section, below are some potential outcomes that would ultimately benefit Minnesota children and families.

- Parent Aware content, materials, training, and supplemental supports reflect contemporary standards and expectations around cultural proficiency and responsive instruction, and embed approaches, methods, and examples across the full spectrum of diversity
- Coaches, trainers, and other support team members are substantially more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, and hail from throughout the state including the many and varied Tribal communities
- Providers everywhere in the state receive training, guidance, and support in cultural proficiency and culturally responsive teaching, and their development and application of new learnings is expected, recognized, and rewarded
- Parents, providers, and support team members are routinely invited to provide input or feedback, their ideas are used to make improvements, and DHS makes clear how stakeholder contributions shaped the changes
- Evaluations and conflict-resolution practices ensure that coaches and providers are better matched and have more successful and mutually beneficial experiences
- BIPOC providers choose to become rated and are welcomed, respected, and successful at every star level
- Demographic, performance, and impact data are routinely gathered, shared, and used for improvement

2.5 Issue: Language Access, Jargon

Language barriers take two forms: Those that arise because the entire Parent Aware system is almost exclusively in English, and those around the academic and technical jargon that permeates the process.

2.5.1 Topic: English Primacy

2.5.1.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Project engagement included bi/multi-lingual interviewers, but few non-English-speaking providers participated. As DHS does not have data on the home language of all licensed providers (or for staff or parents), it's not known how much licensed providers know about Parent Aware or see it as a realistic option for them either as providers or parents.

Some recently rated providers and implementation partners appreciated that there is some training available in languages other than English, a few bilingual coaches, and the Language Access Line. At the same time, it was clear that these are inadequate and insufficient to meet the wide variety of language needs of providers and the children and families they serve. While there are fewer non-English-speakers in Greater Minnesota (and presumably fewer such providers), they are widely and increasingly distributed statewide, and have access to fewer language resources and supports from Parent Aware and other systems / structures.

Some unrated providers who started the Parent Aware process weren't able to finish because of the language barriers. Some unrated or recently rated non-native English providers noted they could navigate written English with extra help, but their oral skills weren't strong enough to work with coaches and support team members who spoke only English. Others had the opposite problem – they had reasonable oral English, but their skills weren't sufficient to manage the complex reading or writing required for the Parent Aware process.

For providers and parents not fully fluent in oral and/or written English:

- Those who made it through the rating process appear to have had some combination of stronger English skills, access to content in their home language (most notably Spanish), help from bilingual Parent Aware staff, or lots of support from others, typically family members; at the same time, they noted these supports were simply not enough – they aren't getting the kind of help they need, when or where required
- Recently rated providers continued to struggle to maintain their rating; some noted they wanted to go for a higher rating, but it was impossible without training and supports in their home language
- Providers were challenged with all routine communications being in English and little or no training or supplemental materials available in their home language; when it was available, it was only online, making it difficult or impossible for providers without computers/tablets and reliable, stable, internet access
- Some providers received help from peers who speak their language, but some of those helpful peers noted they can only do so much – they have their own programs and aren't trained as coaches or professional development advisors
- Parents can't learn about Parent Aware in their home languages or find providers with staff and content in those languages

2.5.1.2 Ideas, solutions

- Hire or train and support more bi/multilingual coaches and other support team members
- Provide more training in languages other than English; look beyond current sources to trainers from elsewhere in the country or people who may teach/train related content that could be refined or customized
- Recruit, train, and support more interpreters around the state who can support the Parent Aware process; train some of them to as coaches, professional development advisors, and other support team members
- Expand and improve capacity and capabilities of Language Access Line staff and market it in home languages rather than in English
- Provide full suites of written materials in other languages; explore community-based options and partners to help get that work done quickly and well, and keep it updated
- Jointly develop ways for providers to complete much of their rating process in their home language, from initial information to application and through coaching and training to rating
- Help providers create language-specific peer-to-peer networks and mentoring opportunities that exchange accurate information and meet provider needs and priorities
- Market Parent Aware in multiple languages and help parents find and access rated providers with programs in those languages

2.5.2 Topic: Jargon

2.5.2.1 Challenges, issues, needs

While technically different from home language, the Parent Aware process is steeped in jargon that providers experienced as a significant barrier to access and advancement. At all points in the initial rating and ongoing process, unrated and recently rated providers struggled with highly academic language, unusual phrasing, complex wording, or language that makes sense for centers but not family providers. They found the preponderance of acronyms created unnecessary hurdles (even with glossaries), and all of these, combined with the general absence of examples and models, left many befuddled and frustrated.

[My coach] helped me, but there were so many boxes to check, was this the right information, etc., So, I only started with 2 stars at first. Didn't feel confident going to 4. I'm tech savvy but this was really challenging for me. Not ready to go to 4 until I understand the language or process.

While many providers eventually got the help they needed, these plus other issues prevented some providers from starting the process, caused others to quit before they were rated, and disrupted, delayed, and discouraged progress for some rated providers.

2.5.2.2 Ideas, solutions

As the entire Parent Aware process is simplified, streamlined, and made more flexible and individualized to meet the needs of diverse and dispersed providers, take that opportunity to edit all communication and content to eliminate as much jargon as possible. Bring the program language up to state plain language standards with help from excellent editors; include translators and interpreters from multiple languages to provide their perspectives; and routinely pay providers to test and offer feedback. Make this an ongoing process, extend it to training and other content, and ensure that new content and communications align with the new standards.

2.5.3 Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented

As a result of the suggested improvements in this section, below are some potential outcomes that would ultimately benefit Minnesota children and families.

- Unrated providers learn about Parent Aware in their home language and those who choose to become rated receive language-specific coaching, training, materials, and other supports from start to finish
- Language-specific peer-to-peer and mentoring networks throughout the state advance provider success through relationships, information, and support
- Parents learn about Parent Aware from information in their home language and are able to find and access providers who reflect and respect their language and cultural background
- Parent Aware content and implementation is in plain language, making it more accessible and beneficial to providers, parents, and children regardless of their home language

2.6 Issue: Expertise Definitions, Recognition

2.6.1 Topic: Education and Related Documentation Requirements

2.6.1.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Throughout this equity engagement effort, no one advocated for lowering standards or reducing expectations. What many flagged, however, was that narrowly defining the acceptable indicators of quality and qualifications seriously limited the ability of some providers to become rated or to increase their ratings. Specific concerns about educational requirements included:

- Immigrants may not have or be able to obtain transcripts or other proof of education attainment, or have documentation that is acceptable to DHS; documentation may not be available at all from regions in turmoil, or what is available may be in another language, from a school or country that isn't recognized, or include terms or use systems/structures quite different from American institutions
- Reaching education levels needed for higher ratings may be impossible for some providers due to barriers such as language or access (location, cost, time, previous education)
- Some immigrant providers come from places and environments that cause them to fear or distrust government; without tailored outreach and collaboration with trusted individuals and organizations, these providers may not learn about or feel safe enough to join Parent Aware

2.6.1.2 Ideas, solutions

This is not about a few specific solution, but rather about an approach based on trust and best intentions. There are also many other agencies and organizations that deal with educational documentation from other countries every day, and have processes and resources in place that could be shared with DHS. In addition, it is fully within DHS's abilities to quickly develop or replicate other organizations' equitable processes to assess provider knowledge and skills absent a particular diploma. This is done all the time in various fields, and certainly can work here.

The process is still broken as a provider without a college education and a lower lattice level... One of my Somali provider friends has her CDA and cannot get a 4-star rating. We need an equitable opportunity to improve and provide quality care.

⌘

The lower you are on the lattice scale the harder it is to complete an upper-level rating. This process needs to be equitable in achievement since our profession does not even require a high school diploma. This impacts people in low socioeconomic status and opportunities. If someone does not have an upper-level education, the Parent Aware program needs to create a process for them to achieve a high-quality program.

... there should be a pathway for EVERY provider to achieve a 4-star rating. Experience should count for something too. It feels like it is set up for providers with a college education. Our profession does not require a college education. This needs to be an equitable opportunity for every provider who is licensed.

2.6.2 Topic: Credentialing

2.6.2.1 Challenges, issues, needs

Parent Aware doesn't consistently recognize the wide range of credentials that providers bring to their work, nor the deep and long experience of providers statewide. Many providers facing these barriers choose not to begin or don't finish the rating process. Those who get rated are frustrated about duplicate work (training, documentation, time, costs) and the realization that their learnings and experience are not recognized or respected. For example:

- **Higher education:** Providers with two-year, four-year, or graduate degrees related to early childhood education expect that those will count toward their rating and, for example, allow them to start at a higher star rating. They are dismayed, disillusioned, or angry when they find that's not the case, and may decide not to get rated, stop before becoming rated, not renew, or languish at a certain star level to avoid further frustration.
- **Other training, credentials:** Providers who have obtained training or certifications from other sources aren't willing to redo that work because it isn't recognized by Parent Aware or doesn't allow them to move to the next level with the associated recognition and funding. As a result, they may choose not to become rated or not to advance.
- **Extensive and/or lengthy experience:** Providers from all backgrounds who have worked in the field for many years want that to count up front. They may have worked in centers, schools, be licensed teachers, or trained as Montessori (or other program) educators. Many have worked for decades as successful providers, and some said they are regularly recommended by kindergarten teachers because their children were so well prepared. Some have written robust curricula, and many use a curriculum and materials from recognized national organizations.

Quality has many faces that don't all look alike



... it's unfair that I'm stuck on level 5 of the career Lattice because I wasn't able to get a college education, yet I have 13 years of experience and I take so many more hours of training than required by licensing

I have over 30 years of experience working with kids professionally and do 16 continuing education training [credits, annually]... I was a preschool director for a private preschool. I've worked in [---] schools. I have experience writing curriculum, so I draw upon that experience to create my own. I have earned my gold stars and don't feel the need to do more, nor do I have the time since I work 65 hours per week.

2.6.2.2 Ideas, solutions

Excellence, experience, talent, and preparedness come from many sources and take countless forms, large numbers of which support providers to deliver high-quality programs that prepare children well for kindergarten. Other fields – including PreK-12 and higher ed – have been recognizing alternative credentials for years, whether through formal crosswalks, efficient and expert content reviews, or observation-based assessments. That said, DHS is in a position to move forward using contemporary and equity-centered best practices. That work begins by believing that a more diverse set of providers with an equally broad range of credentials, experiences, and backgrounds can successfully progress through the process, provide better programs and services to Minnesota's children, and improve Parent Aware along the way. Then, it is long past time for DHS to quickly create or learn from others how to recognize or assess, appreciate, and give "credit" for other credentials and from the deep experience and practice of long-term providers.

2.6.3 Potential Outcomes if Changes are Implemented

As a result of the suggested improvements in this section, below are some potential outcomes that would ultimately benefit Minnesota children and families.

- A diverse range of providers who bring a range of professional, educational, and experience-based backgrounds are welcomed into Parent Aware. Their expertise is recognized and valued, they are supported to be successful, and they provide high-quality programs that prepare children well for kindergarten.
- A “culture of support” permeates Parent Aware – in the people, processes, materials, and information. It centers on equity, providers feel it from their first encounter, and support team members eagerly bring it alive every day. Everyone’s job is to support success for every provider who wants to participate.

*Bois Forte and the families of Bois Forte
are thankful for the Parent Aware
Program*

*Thank you for asking... It has been a joy
serving children and their families all
these years. It is what I was put on earth
to do.*

2.7 Other Comments for DHS and the Legislature

Responses that fell under barriers and issues or ideas and suggestions were included in other sections of this report. Below is summary information on other topics from all participants – unrated providers, recently rated providers, and implementation partners and advocates; see the compilation for complete results.

- Although this project focused on challenges and how to overcome them, many of the recently rated providers and some who were unrated and have started the process had great things to say about the help they received. Being closest to providers, coaches received the most attention and thanks.
- BIPOC and Greater Minnesota participants deeply appreciated the opportunities and support Parent Aware offers for learning, developing, and becoming better providers. The grants help them accomplish their goals and continue their learning journeys. Many share information and updates with parents and actively promote Parent Aware and the financial supports available for parents who choose rated providers. They also want to remind everyone that family child care programs are just as important as centers even though they may receive less attention. Related to that, providers note they need additional support and equitable resources to deliver programs that are culturally responsive, language-specific, and available to every family in Minnesota. They urged getting more and better information to families as much as unrated providers, so both know their options and can make informed, educated choices.
- Broadly, some providers argued that providers need better pay, subsidized health care plans, and retirement programs. Additional funds would help them expand professional development for themselves and their staff or pay for the extra work required to get and maintain a rating.

3 Round 1 Input, Compilation of Results

3.1 Introduction

[Table of Contents](#)
[Introduction](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Analysis \(Round 1\)](#)
[Compilation, Round 1](#)
[Compilation, Round 2](#)

3.1.1 Methodology, Presentation

Round 1 reached out to and sought input on barriers and challenges, and solutions to overcome them from the following key stakeholders:

- BIPOC and Greater Minnesota DHS-licensed and Tribal-licensed child care providers from throughout the state who are
 - *Not* Parent Aware-rated (unrated)
 - Who recently earned a Parent Aware Rating for the first time (recently rated)
- Implementation partners and early childhood advocates

The responses are organized by stakeholder group and then by question. Responses to each question are presented alphabetically and generally remain as written by the contributor or documented by a facilitator. Minor edits were made to correct obvious spelling or punctuation errors that affect clarity, remove vulgar words and NA / none / nothing responses where appropriate, protect privacy, and change repeated use of all capitalized responses to upper and lower case; if a survey participant copied the same response for multiple questions, in general only the first was retained.

3.1.2 Glossary

Many of the responses include terms or acronyms that may not be familiar to all readers, so DHS has provided the definitions below.

- **Accreditation:** A way for institutions to evaluate and improve their programs to meet industry standards. Child care and early education programs use accreditation processes to conduct a thorough analysis of their operations and assess if they are meeting nationally recognized standards for quality care and education programs.
- **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, or People of Color
- **Building Quality program:** A six-month period of coaching to help programs use kindergarten readiness best practices. Programs may start receiving coaching during Building Quality in January or July. It supports programs to use kindergarten readiness best practices in the 6-12 months before they join a Parent Aware full-rating cohort and seek a rating.
- **CACFP or Food Program:** The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides aid to child and adult care organizations for nutritious foods that contribute to wellness, healthy growth, and development of children and older adults.
- **CDA:** Child Development Associate (degree)
- **CCA or Child Care Aware:** Child Care Aware of Minnesota has five district offices and 16 regional offices, including MNTRECC. The supervisory staff at these offices play an active role in the successful implementation of Parent Aware by:
 - Attending regular meetings with the Associate Directors of the Coordinating office
 - Participating in statewide meetings, such as listening sessions, PD meetings, QDP Refreshers, and professional development opportunities

- Reviewing the RBPD event entry of their teams (PDA'S and Coaches) to ensure consistent practices are in place for all programs participating in Parent Aware
- Supporting the efforts of the Parent Aware Recruiters and understanding the needs of the community
- Providing caseload data for Quality Coaches to inform staffing level needs and monitoring the workloads of PDAs to ensure manageable distribution
- Providing accurate Coach and PDA assignments prior to the beginning of each Cohort
- **CCAP:** Child Care Assistance Program. The Child Care Assistance Program provides financial assistance to help families with low incomes pay for child care so that parents may pursue employment or education leading to employment, and that children are well cared for and prepared to enter school. Our partners and providers in this program provide child care for more than 30,000 children every month. See information [here](#).
 - Maximum rates for providers with certain accreditations or credentials or a three-star Parent Aware ratings are published in [CCAP 15 Percent Quality Differential Maximum Rates DHS-6442C \(PDF\)](#).
 - Maximum rates for providers with a four-star Parent Aware ratings are published in [CCAP 20 Percent Quality Differential Rates DHS-6824A \(PDF\)](#).
- **CICC:** The Center for Inclusive Child Care provides free relationship-based professional development (RBPD) including support, training, modeling, and resources to child care programs throughout Minnesota. See more [here](#). These include the following:
 - **Health and Safety Specialist:** These coaches have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Health & Safety Specialist Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on supporting health and safety best practice
 - **Inclusion Coach:** These coaches have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Inclusion Coach/Consultant Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on successful inclusion of children with special needs/challenging behaviors through environmental, programming and relational strategies
 - **Infant/Toddler Specialist:** These coaches have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Infant/Toddler Specialist Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Coach in family and center-based care settings
 - Offer services at no cost to participating programs
 - Focus on infant/toddler development and providing quality care in group settings
- **Career lattice, lattice:** A tool for child care and early education professionals to document professional achievements. The Minnesota Center for Professional Development awards Career Lattice Steps based on a combination of approved training hours, credentials, college credits and degrees earned. Learn more [here](#).
- **Coach / Quality Coach:** These coaches have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Parent Aware Quality Coach Endorsements. They are responsible for performing the following activities:
 - Support all Parent Aware participants in the Full-Rating Pathway
 - Implement the Parent Aware quality coaching model with fidelity
 - Provide technical assistance to programs in Parent Aware
 - Work in collaboration with Recruiters, Professional Development Advisors, Grant Administrators, and CLASS Coaches

- Recruit child care centers and family child care programs to join or Re-Rate in a Building Quality Cohort or Full-Rating Cohort of Parent Aware
- Facilitate partnerships through community outreach
- Enter RBPD Events and attendance in Develop
- Refer programs and individuals to their assigned Professional Development Advisors (PDAs) for all inquiries related to professional development training and career goals.
- **Develop:** Offers online professional development and quality improvement tools to support early learning and school-age care programs in Minnesota. Individual Develop membership: A membership to the website, Develop, which offers professional development and quality improvement tools to support early learning and school-age care programs in Minnesota. When child care and early education professionals become an individual member of Develop they document their professional achievements in Develop and track their progress on the Minnesota Career Lattice.
- **Eager to Learn (ETL):** Eager to Learn is an online training platform with instructor-led, online courses for in-depth learning on a variety of topics. All Eager-to-Learn courses utilize message board discussions and weekly live text or video chat sessions. See [Eager to Learn](http://eagertolearn.com) (eagertolearn.com)
- **ECE:** Early Care and Education
- **ELL:** English Language Learners
- **ELS, ELSA:** Early Learning Scholarships / Early Learning Scholarship Administration System. The Early Learning Scholarships program was established in order to close the opportunity gap by increasing access to high-quality early childhood programs(Minn. Stat. § 124D.165). For more information on Early Learning Scholarships, visit the [Minnesota Department of Education website](http://www.mn.gov).
- **FaCET:** The [Family and Community Engagement Tool](#) for parents assesses healthy early childhood development from the perspective of family and community knowledge systems. The Family and Community Engagement Tool for providers and program staff assesses program quality from a family and community knowledge systems perspective. Together, the tools measure family and community engagement based upon valuing and respecting family and community connections and wisdom and including families as an integral part of program design and decisions. See [Family and Community Engagement Tools](#)
- **IEIC:** Interagency Early Intervention Committee. Required by law; see <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/125A.30>
- **ITIN:** Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, a tax processing number only available for certain nonresident and resident aliens, their spouses, and dependents who cannot get a Social Security Number
- **KCF:** Minnesota’s Knowledge and Competency Framework for Early Childhood Educators provides what people working educating and caring for young children need to know and be able to do. Versions are available for those working with infants and toddlers, family child care providers, and preschool-age children in center and school programs. All versions include the skills needed to work with young children, with more specific skills added for the area of specialization. See: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/highqualel/know/>
- **Lattice:** See career lattice
- **LNL:** Legally operating non-licensed child care provider. Legal non-licensed providers are typically family, friends or neighbors. The requirements for legal non-licensed providers vary depending on whether they are caring for any children who are not related to them.
- **MIFs:** Six regional foundations working to strengthen the communities and economies of Greater Minnesota. Established by The McKnight Foundation in 1986, each foundation is independent and serves its geographic region with grants, business loans, programs and priorities, and donor services, as well as collaborates on several statewide initiatives. The Minnesota Initiative Foundations are nationally recognized as unique

resources to the people, businesses and communities of rural Minnesota. See [Home - Minnesota Initiative Foundations \(greaterminnesota.net\)](#)

- **MNTRECC** – Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC) delivers services and support to Minnesota’s 11 federally recognized tribes and tribally licensed child care programs throughout the state. These include:
 - Coordination and collaboration among tribal child care and education programs, Child Care Aware, other CDS grantees and organizations serving tribal families.
 - Training on language revitalization and Positive Indian Parenting curriculum
 - Recruitment, approval and support of tribal cultural trainers
 - Coordination with Child Care Aware District sites to assess the training needs and challenges of tribally licensed providers, and to assist with the coordination of training delivery that is culturally relevant and responsive to Tribal needs
 - Professional development advising for programs participating in Parent Aware
- **NAEYC**: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. See <https://www.naeyc.org/>.
- **PA**: Parent Aware- Parent Aware is Minnesota’s quality rating and improvement system, which provides quality ratings to child care and early education programs based on a one- to four-star scale. These ratings, shared on ParentAware.org, provide information to families, encouraging them to consider higher rated programs when searching for a child care and early education program for their children. Parent Aware also provides a common set of best practices for child care and early education, and offers supports to help programs work toward best practices. This allows them to evaluate the quality of their programs, and make targeted improvements to better support child development and learning.
- **PDA**: Professional Development Advisors have current RBPD Specialist Memberships in Develop and current Professional Development Advisor Endorsements and offer career advising services to child care programs and providers. The PDA role for all Parent Aware pathways includes all of the same touchpoint areas and contact expectations. They include:
 - Assist in Individual Membership process in Develop
 - Assist in Organization Profile registration and Classroom tab setup in Develop
 - Review individual Learning Records in Develop to determine training needs for Rating
 - Assist in creation of individual professional development plan
 - Assist in creation of a program professional development plan
 - Advise individuals in pursuing their professional development career path
 - Enter RBPD Events in Develop
- **QDP(s) / Quality Documentation Portfolio(s)** is the Rating Guide with the process and requirements for licensed, unaccredited child care. See: [Parent Aware Manual and Quality Documentation Portfolios](#)
- **Raters / Parent Aware Raters**: The Parent Aware Rating team reviews applicant documentation of Parent Aware Indicators, awards Parent Aware Star Ratings to early care and education programs, and ensures Ratings are fair and reliable by establishing rigorous training, reliability, and data management procedures for the Rating team. The Rating team also responds to questions about specific Ratings from the Child Care Aware system and programs and determines eligibility for participation in all Pathways.
- **Recruiter / Parent Aware Recruiter**: Parent Aware Recruiters are District staff, employed by a local Child Care Aware agency. Recruiters specialize in marketing, outreach, and community organizing. They are responsible for performing the following activities:

- Create and implement District recruitment plans to increase participation in Parent Aware
- Recruit child care centers and family child care programs to join or Re-rate in a Building Quality Cohort or Full-Rating Cohort of Parent Aware
- Work in collaboration with Coaches, PDAs, and statewide recruitment efforts
- Identify and build relationships with child care programs, related organizations, and community leaders
- Document work and collect required data
- **RBP**D: Relationship-Based Professional Development
- **ZenDesk**: a customer relationship management system (CRM) used in Parent Aware communications related to rating.

3.2 BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Unrated Providers

Questions for unrated providers:

1. In the last 2-3 years, have you thought about or started the Parent Aware process?

If no:

- a. Please explain why (be as specific as possible).
- b. What options, changes, or help might make you interested in Parent Aware in the future?

If yes:

- c. What stopped you from going through with it?
 - d. If you were to start the process in the future, what would help you get through it?
2. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?

Note that the page footers include section information to help users navigate.

3.2.1 Unrated providers who *have* thought about or started the Parent Aware Process

3.2.1.1 What stopped you from going through with it?

- A lot of training.
- All of my reasons for not going through with it lead back to me wanting to, just not taking the time to do it.
- All of the extra trainings
- Also, the length of time of the program can be a bit longer.
- Although it was interesting, I don't recall joining and I got busy.
- Are there still renewals yearly or not? Unsure about yearly renewals because there are more hoops to jump through.
- As a provider, we are already so busy, so this makes it harder and takes up a lot of our time.
- As a provider, we have to maintain 16+ hours. To do additional hours on top of what's required and balancing 4 kids, it gets hard.
- Been doing this for 21 years, discussed with other providers in the area about Parent Aware, low benefits but ton of work to get ratings.
- Busy schedule.
- But I haven't previously because I have been licensed 23 years and don't care for the paper process of teaching. I prefer play based. But I am open for some change so we will see what happens.
- COVID
- Covid has made an impact as well. I feel that as of now, I won't continue my interest if I am unable to find kids.
- Covid stopping in person training/ coaching
- Current Covid situation made it difficult to start the process.
- Current Covid situation made it more difficult to start the program and commit to it.
- Difficult to commit outside of work, especially when working multiple jobs.
- Difficult to find time to do more as things are.
- Does not feel it's necessary to have the rating at this time.
- Don't have that much of a time.
- Due to my education background, I am well-prepared and Parent Aware is just extra work added to my busy schedule.
- During pre-covid, I thought about it. During covid, I put it off. I'd be open to it as I haven't taken the time for it.
- Extra time for training that I don't currently have.
- Extra visits to my home.
- Finding time to explore what it is all about. How the benefits will really impact my daycare and are parents really looking for that kind of care.
- Flexibility and time is the biggest barrier.
- For the last 15 years, I have had my CDA and thought that since I already had this, some of my experience and credentials would transfer over. I thought that I would be at about 4 stars with all my training and credentials, however this wasn't the case.
- Hearing so many challenging stories from other providers.
- I feel like it will be another thing that will take up time.
- I was starting to get set up for the program, but through my association, CHCCP, (I pay a \$45 membership) it offers qualified classes and training that I need and I attend once a month to meet my requirements.
- I also am full so I am not worried about the stars.
- I am also 62 years old and I am closer to retirement now.
- I am currently on maternity leave so I don't have time.
- I am familiar with Parent Aware however I do not know the details because I don't have the time.
- I am familiar with the Parent Aware program but just need to find time to navigate and figure out the requirements.
- I am familiar with the program but just never really got to finishing the enrollment program. I have been fortunate enough to have and will have a full center so didn't really see the need for the program.
- I am in the process of signing up for the Parent Aware program. I heard about the program from pamphlets that I received and my cohort class will be starting at the end of this month.
- I am not a fan of Parent Aware rating because a lot of what they push aren't development appropriate.
- I am not interested in the program.
- I am now questioning if I should join because of my retirement.
- I am older and not tech savvy. All these different technologies causes too much stress and time.
- I am somewhat familiar with the program but due to scheduling, I am not able to look into it and do not know what the steps are to complete it.
- I am starting it in January~ :)
- I attended a few classes in Shakopee in 2016 which I paid for. I did not get a grant like some of the other people who attended.

- I attended an information session and when I went, I found out that it required a lot of paperwork and time.
- I attended the first orientation 6-7 years ago. I got busy with my children.
- I believe that we shouldn't be pushing alphabets on kids and should have more different learning styles offered.
- I can get all my training and everything I need to be successful without needing to be a part of it.
- I considered enrolling into the program about 2 years ago but got sick so I wasn't able to do so.
- I did the process online but stopped because I got busy. I had a hard time with the process because of the language barrier.
- I didn't look into it much and I wasn't sure about what to do or how to start the process.
- I do have a parent aware.
- I do not see a benefit to me- it would not increase my income. It would not increase my enrollments. It would not give me more paid vacation days or paid sick days. It would not help decrease my 50+ hour work load.
- I do not want my information put out on a website or social media.
- I don't feel after being In daycare 31 years I need someone watching over me
- I don't know if this is still the case, but other providers in the past told me that 3-star programs received more funding than 4-star programs.
- I don't need a "mentor" after being in daycare 31 years
- I don't want anyone coming over to my house unannounced, especially due to COVID.
- I don't want to do any more trainings than I already have to.
- I don't know a lot about it. Used to work for a childcare center and they signed up us (employee providers) for the Parent Aware program classes.
- I feel that it doesn't change anything with my business and the price I charge.
- I felt like the website is not user-friendly at all. It is too complicated to do anything. Registering for classes is so hard.
- I got a grant and after learning everything I have to do for it, I don't know if I want it anymore.
- I had to re-do a lot of training which I already had and I didn't want to do it again.
- I have a full daycare of 12 kids so it can be a bit hectic with scheduling.
- I have a license, food program, trainings, etc., I don't want another program to keep paperwork, requirements, and visits for a little extra money.
- I have had full enrollment.
- I have some friends who have ratings, so I'm interested, but I don't have the time at the moment.
- I have started the process to be a part of Parent Aware in January 2022 and just need to finish my registration. I recently just opened my center about 1.5 years ago so I wasn't sure if I wanted to do this long term or not; that's why I didn't initially enroll. However, I have heard that it is a lot of time and paperwork commitment. I understand that having the star rating is good but it just wasn't a good time for me.
- I haven't been made aware of the process and how to get started.
- I haven't opened my center yet and have been having health issues but do plan on being a part of Parent Aware next year.
- I haven't stopped going through with it. I just started and am working on a 2-star rating
- I heard from other providers that there was a lot of extra training to meet requirements to be in Parent Aware.
- I heard that there is also a lot of paperwork that is required which I wouldn't necessarily know how to fill out correctly.
- I just don't know much about it.
- I just hadn't gotten around to do it. I plan to do it in the summer. The summer would be better for me as I would have more time.
- I just haven't had any time honestly and don't necessarily like having people come to the house because it causes a lot of interruptions with my childcare schedule.
- I know about the program and have done some research about it, however I am just super busy and don't have the time. I would love to become certified and get the training as well as the grant, however I just don't have the time.
- I know I have been doing most of the things expected and going above and beyond, but with the hurdles I felt that I do not need a star to prove to my parents what my program can offer.
- I know of the program but am not currently enrolled because it requires too much time.
- I know of the program but I am no longer interested because I have a very small center of only 3 kids and do not feel the need to get certified. I am close to retiring as well.
- I know the program however due to traveling to classes, it is very time consuming.
- I know there are incentives to get paid more from childcare but I don't know what to really say because I haven't done any research.

- I live in a small community. I have been full from day 1 from word of mouth.
- I live in an old house/shared space with a horrible layout that does not work well for a daycare.
- I looked into it and wasn't interested. I haven't done a lot of research and I don't know if it will be beneficial for me.
- I looked into it but didn't pursue it further. I just don't think it's for me as I am working on my graduate degree so I don't need it.
- I looked into the program about 1 ½ years ago but didn't follow through because I just got too busy. I have been providing care for 20 years and don't have time for much because my family has suffered a lot because I have committed so much to my business. I currently only have one child so I didn't feel that I would need the program.
- I looked into the program, however I have heard from other providers that it is very time consuming, especially with the paperwork. I was told that if you do not submit accurate information or paperwork then you would have to redo it over again. I am at full capacity and do not have time for this.
- I may be interested in the future but not right now.
- I only heard good things about Parent Aware. It is fabulous- the support and funding. They just need to do better with following up.
- I recently just opened up this center and was just really busy so couldn't meet the deadline to enroll into the program, however we are currently enrolled now and starting next month.
- I spoke with Amber ___ on the phone when it first started. I've been thinking about it, but it was overwhelming.
- I started it many years ago. I sent in all my information to see where I was sitting with my credits, but I just never did anything with it because there were lots of hoops to go through.
- I started the application more than 3 years ago. I'm not good with English so I had a hard time finishing the application.
- I started the process but had some things and medical issues come up and hadn't gotten back to it.
- I think all of the training that we have to do already is silly. We have 16 hours of training to do, and I think Parent Aware requires more and I just don't have the time.
- I think I started and joined it because I get emails from Parent Aware but I'm not sure about what the program is all about.
- I think that it is a good program, however I live in a small town and didn't feel that I needed to be a part of the program because I get a lot of referrals already. I have 1 ½ years left until I retire, but if I wasn't retiring, I would totally be a part of the program.
- I thought about it, but it hasn't crossed my mind since I am busy and have no time with 10 kids. I've had 7 foster kids in the last 2-3 years and I have dedicated a lot of my time to them after work.
- I thought about it, but time prevented me because I balance my kids, daycare and trainings, bible study, and volunteer work.
- I thought about it. I am 68 years old, and I have been debating on whether or not to retire. But I have decided to retire in 2 years once my license expires.
- I thought about the program, however, I have been very fortunate that I have been full all the time so didn't feel the need to move further with Parent Aware.
- I thought that I was already enrolled into the Parent Aware program but apparently I am not due to the busy schedule.
- I tried applying for the program but since taking over the center from my Mom's name, I am unable to transfer information over now and DHS said I can't transfer it over. I am interested but unsure how to go about it. My name is on the current license, and I have been the owner for 3 years now, but I just can't figure it out.
- I tried getting more information about it with no luck
- I want to complete it and start in January.
- I was about to start it but so many things happened. I've been busy and have no time due to managing the kids and their activities.
- I was contacted with Head Start and they held the star rating. Now I resigned from Head start I am signed up to do the cohort this January
- I went through a divorce 2 years ago. I would love to get more information about the program but just didn't have time.
- I would like to do things on my own terms to reduce my stress level.
- I'm a single mom with three kids, so I just don't have the time to do the training.
- I'm licensed but have not been able to find kids for my daycare. I don't know people and my family is not near, so it's been hard for me to find kids.
- I'm wondering what is the process and if there is an in-home aspect and privacy concerns.
- I've thought about it, but haven't followed through.
- If I need to travel and close, it's something that I can't afford to do because I don't want to lose money. I don't want to be taken away from daycare hours and parents and their kids.

- If the people of Parent Aware will be POC and look like me.
- I'm able to fill my childcare spots without being rated.
- Interest
- It costs too much. Why would I spend money to get a rating if my daycare income will not be increased to cover the investment? The rates I charge the families are based on market values; it's not based on my level of star rating.
- It does not support emotional strength in a multi age group.
- It focuses on strict lesson plans.
- It ignores the needs of the family we serve which is so different from the norm.
- It seems like a lot of time (added assessment/documentation). I'm already very short on time!
- It takes too much time- I work over 50 hours a week running daycare. I have a busy family life. I do not want to take time away from my family in the evenings or weekends. I do not have time to attend classes and study.
- It's hard to figure out who to contact for information
- I've been busy.
- I've heard that it is difficult to become rated.
- Joining the Parent Aware program is not groundbreaking for myself as a provider.
- Just busy.
- Just so busy at the time.
- Lack of interest
- Lack of motivation to do so. I also have pretty bad anxiety, so I don't reach out to ask questions.
- Language Barrier.
- Language barrier. I can manage to read and write English but can't speak English well and properly.
- Large number of employees
- Licensing requirements are enough to keep up with.
- Life changes
- Looking at retirement in 6 years, but if I was in my twenties, I'd look at it differently.
- Looks more geared towards center like places rather than family home daycares
- Lots of paperwork
- More training
- More trainings than I already do.
- Mostly time commitment issues. Extra training was a time commitment I couldn't do especially since I don't drive after dark.
- My center is currently full so I don't feel that this program would benefit me. I currently have a long waiting list for my center now.
- My transcript had to be sealed and coming from the college that is overseas. I couldn't use my transcript that I already have with me.
- No need for more enrollment, at full capacity.
- not enough information.
- Not enough time right now.
- Not enough time to complete hours needed
- Not enough time/energy left to proceed with it as I already work 60+ hours on an average week between my hours if business, charting, sanitizing, meal prep- the list goes on!
- Paperwork
- Parents don't ask or care if I'm a part of Parent Aware.
- Process seems time consuming and lengthy.
- Retirement in 6 years, then the business is closed, so if I was in my 20s or passed the business to someone else, I would consider it, but don't know if it's (the time commitment) worth it at this point in my career.
- Single mom, difficult to do more work outside of work hours.
- Sounded like a lot of extra work- not sure what is all involved.
- Starting in January Cohort
- Starting now.
- Still considering
- The amount of time it would take
- The barrier right now is time and flexibility; the process takes time and I am unable to do that now.
- The idea of someone coming into your home for x amount of hours wasn't okay with me. I felt like "somebody watching you."
- The time of day classes is an inconvenience because that's when I'm working.
- The time.
- There has been countless studies about free play and in this program there is no free play or no self-direction for the kids.
- Time
- Time commitment.
- Too long of a process.
- Too many extra trainings
- Too much going on
- Too much paper for licensing.
- Trainings too far away or at inconvenient times
- Turnover
- Uncertainty of telling me how to run my business.
- Using Waldorf Learning Method and teaching curriculum is working for my business.

- Usually my families come 12 weeks old to kindergarten and I have never really needed the program because I have a curriculum that I currently use.
- Wasn't sure if I really wanted to do it.
- We already have a very long waitlist, so being parent aware doesn't really draw in new families.
- We are an in-home child care center and didn't really see the need for the value of being in the Parent Aware program because at the time we had kids in the daycare.
- We are familiar with the program and currently enrolled to be a part of the cohort starting in January. We have recently just opened up 5-6 months ago and are grateful for the information that we have been receiving from Parent Aware. We think that they do offer a lot of great information and training and want providers to be successful.
- We do a lot of work already as providers; 16 hours of training yearly plus other training courses and certifications that should count as part of the Parent Aware program but it does not.
- We just completed the July 2021 Cohort and are waiting for our rating.
- Will consider Parent Aware in the future.
- Yes! I just signed up for the program this month and should be starting in January. I am not fully aware of the program but do have a counselor/coach that will help me navigate through this program.
- Yes, I attended a Parent Aware info session and found out that there was too much requirement that is needed and I don't have the time.
- Yes, I have heard of the program but am too familiar with it, but I would be interested in getting more information.
- Yes, I have thought about the program, however during that time, I have already been a provider and set in my ways, so I didn't feel that there was a need for me to become a part of the program.

3.2.1.2 If you were to start the process in the future, what would help you get through it?

- 1:1 virtual training
- 1-1 help
- A coach would be really great! I need that type of support.
- A list of all the paperwork and deadlines for it
- A program that has considerations for the needs of the families we serve.
- A program that helps me meet my needs.
- A program that's more inclusive.
- A translator would be helpful. Someone to call and help me through the process and answer questions that I may have.
- Accepting a copy of my college transcript that I have at hand and be given the trust it is authentic
- Also find a way to make it easier for providers such as myself since we are already committed to 15–16-hour days already, not to mention not really having time to be with family or socially.
- Also, find a better timing for the annual training because it is typically in the evenings during our personal family time.
- Also, I would need someone to help me 1-1 instead of phone call or paperwork only.
- As a provider I don't have a lot of spare time to do a lot of research and I don't like wasting my time with reading a lot of crap to try to figure out how things will impact my business. Simple and to the point.
- Being able to have a 1:1 sit down appointment with a rep that would walk me through each step of the process and be available for questions
- Being able to have things online rather than in person
- being guaranteed a 5 star, wouldn't want to be rated anything less
- Classes to be offered in conference style where we can knock out 6-10 hours a day during the weekends.
- Coaching would be helpful; having someone there to help get through the process.
- Communication
- Communication is imperative. To those of us that are new, we are new to it all. The process and even the verbiage used is foreign.
- Constant communication
- Create a childcare support group.
- Creating Incentives is a great way to get people motivated.
- Creating mentorships and incentives.
- Develop is a great website for training information.
- Direct contact to guide through each step
- Do classes on weekends.
- Ease of the program
- Easy access and flexibility for online training for providers.
- Easygoing people to work with
- Ensuring the process is personable and welcoming
- Explain the procedure better.
- Flexibility in trainings, locations, times
- Follow up calls, I think would also help.
- Get help or a map from start to finish so we know our progress and all the necessary information to be successful.
- Have 1-1 help coach to become successful to complete the process.
- Have 1-1 help.
- Have 1-1 help.
- Have a user-friendly website.
- Have more 1-1 help available.
- Having 1-1 help would be great to keep us on track from start to finish.
- Having a mentor through the process
- Having online classes would help out a lot.
- Having the process laid out for me with a checklist.
- Help with financial funding/grant.
- help with paperwork
- Hoping the schedule can work for me.
- I am busy and just have too much on my plate. It would be helpful to meet someone online versus someone coming to my house due to covid.
- I am near the end of my business/license, so I feel that it's just not worth the investment for me. Therefore, I have no comment.
- I am unsure because I haven't been through the process yet but would hope that there is a lot of 1-1 help if needed.
- I do the training I already have to do on my own and there is a cost. If Parent Aware was cheaper or lower cost, I would be more interested.
- I don't know what the process entails to be in Parent Aware.
- I don't know what to say without knowing your program. More information would be helpful so I can learn what the benefits are to joining the program, how much time it will take, and what I will need to go through to be a part of Parent Aware.
- I don't know where to start and what the process is. Someone to help walk through the process with me would be helpful.

- I don't think group meetings are helpful. I would prefer one on one or mentorship so they can get to know me better and understand what it is that I need for my daycare.
- I don't know but there would have to be an incentive as to why I would go through with it.
- I have heard from my daycare support groups that the program can be a bit discouraging too. It does require a lot to just get one star and there is a lot of paperwork involved. Providers have shared that people will come to the center and watch you so that could be a bit intimidating, but I am not sure. But I have also heard of very good things too.
- I just need to get started. I think it is a procrastinator thing.
- I like classes, so if they provide classes other than the required licensing, that would be good.
- I think I would need help with start to finish and understanding the process of what it actually takes to complete the program successfully.
- I think that offering more information from start to finish would be helpful and how much time is needed to commit would be helpful.
- I would like more information because it has been a while since I last participated.
- I would need more information about the program.
- I would think that offering evening or Saturday classes in the morning would be good to help with schedules.
- I wouldn't start it. I think it's just another way to make your personal information vulnerable.
- I'm not sure what the process is. I've been in childcare for 20 years and back when I was looking, I was interested in grants, etc.
- I'm part of a daycare association in my county and they get together to do the training together which is really helpful.
- If I remember correctly, there was a cost to joining the program. I'm going towards my retirement so a program having a cost to join would be a deal breaker for me.
- If my children were older in school.
- If our waitlist disappeared
- If there are training sessions that are not during business hours and the weekend, it would probably be easier for me to commit to. After business hours and night time works best for me.
- If you could somehow add more hours to the day!
- I'll let you know
- I'm not sure because I don't know all that it entails yet
- In person coaching to work through process
- It would be helpful to have someone to help and follow up with me on the process.
- It would be very helpful if Parent Aware could make appointments instead of just popping up to the house to avoid interruptions with my schedule.
- It would have to be free. It would have to get paid time off to take the classes.
- It would have to benefit me financially. I would need to see how it would increase my income substantially. I would also like to see credit be given for my experience, for being a daycare provider for over 20 years!
- It would have to work around my family's schedule. No nights or weekends. I already work 50+ hours. This program is just one more thing that takes me away from my family. The whole reason I became a daycare provider was to have time with my own children.
- I've seen 4-star parent aware been written up and revoked
- Keep classes to 1 hr or less.
- Knowing more about it. I don't know enough. The email stated that there have been changes and I'm curious what those changes are.
- Knowledge of what exactly parent aware is and how it will benefit my care in a simple nutshell.
- Language barrier help
- Language barrier is an obstacle. I would need help with understanding the program, as well as need help navigating with the data system.
- less paperwork
- Less paperwork, requirements, and visits.
- Less paperwork.
- Less required training
- Less steps, to get where you need to earn a star.
- Less structure to my program
- Less things going on
- Leverage, making sure the process is worth the benefit of being rated
- Make classes less time consuming. We are busy providers.
- Make it easier with time saving systems.
- Make it easier, less paperwork to fill out.
- Make sure I have a list of specific trainings I need to do
- Making it individualized to know providers better, so they understand what it is that we need.
- Maybe also offer online classes.
- Maybe have Zoom training.
- Maybe someone to help me find kids so I can be in business and use my license.
- More free time to dedicate

- More information about Parent Aware requirements, what it provides, and how it will benefit my daycare program.
- More Knowledge about Process
- More knowledge or educational literature about Parent Aware. I'm a visual learner, so more flyers in the mail would be helpful.
- More paper information would be helpful to start out with so I can read and learn about the program.
- More time and help with translation (language barrier).
- Need details of step by step and what time commitment is needed.
- No group meeting
- No plans to do so
- Not sure at this time
- Not sure I would
- Nothing really, I just need to do it.
- Offer forms and applications in other languages.
- online application
- Online classes would be helpful.
- Online courses that are self-paced.
- Parent aware reached out to me so I signed up
- Parent Aware training courses cost too much money.
- Patient people to work with
- Prefer 1:1 training, can be done virtually.
- Prefer in-person assistant when starting the program and training.
- Prefer One-On-One coaching.
- Prefer to speak with a "live" person.
- Programs should be easily accessible to providers and not time-consuming.
- Providers should be compensated for joining Parent Aware.
- Qualified applicants
- Quick interview (15-30 minutes) and application process.
- Simplified or automated steps to becoming rated
- Some of the trainings were harder to find and you had to travel. Back then when I started daycare, I had my little guy and that wasn't feasible.
- Someone to explain that it's really easy
- Someone to help explain what Parent Aware is, the benefits, and how it works.
- Someone to help with the process would be very helpful.
- Someone to reach out and explain about the program.
- Someone to walk me through it and less requirements
- Step by step broken down requirements
- Step by step help from a person to educate and understand it really first and assistance with help on the computer.
- Taking the time to do it
- Time
- Time and flexibility not available.
- To be honest, I don't know if I will ever be interested. I've been in daycare for too long and I don't know if it will have any effect on my daycare.
- To know more about parent aware
- Training
- Unknown
- Unknown
- Utilize my higher education, experiences, and credentials to help with the current Parent Aware rating.
- Will need help with the application process, not familiar with all the new technologies.
- Yes, having someone like a coach to support would help me complete the process.

3.2.2 Unrated providers who have not thought about/started the Parent Aware process

3.2.2.1 Please explain why you have *not* thought about or started the Parent Aware process

- A lot of paperwork
- Also, the rating system wouldn't benefit us being that we would only want a 5-star rating, but it takes a lot of time and paperwork to get a 5-star rating, so we don't have the time for that.
- Although I understand English, it is hard for me to read and write. My husband helps look through, translate, and do paperwork for me. He is a chiropractor so he is busy and sometimes does not have time.
- Another person coming into my home
- Another person overseeing things
- Because I got licensed in 2010 and did a lot of work with child care until 2019. From 2020, I have been working very less. The reason is I have grown up kids and my husband is diabetic and has high blood pressure. I love to be in this profession so I can still do child care. I do not want to involve myself into this program and get stuck with all the trainings etc., I am happy where I am and do not want to go ahead. In the future, I might consider it.
- Because I know I do an excellent job in caring for children. I provide them with preschool/ school readiness and life skills.
- Because I'm small and simple. I'm a granny. I keep grandkids and 1-2 families.
- Being star rated in my opinion are misleading to parents when looking for childcare. I feel word of mouth is the best source to find reliable trustworthy care!
- Busy family schedule to find time to do the extra trainings
- Busy. Not even sure what is needed. I feel like I do more than enough for my business
- CCAP increased rates are not a big benefit
- Disruption to our schedule to have people show up unannounced
- Do not feel the benefit to join Parent Aware will increase income, it is just more time and work.
- Don't have a contact for parent aware
- Don't have time for more paperwork
- Don't have time to complete all the requirements
- Don't find it beneficial enough
- Don't have time
- Don't need any extra papers to push around
- Everyone that I talked to said that it was not beneficial to them.
- Extra requirements and time
- Extra steps with licensing
- Extra trainings and cost
- Family providers already have a lot on our plates. Our families, low enrollment numbers. So many of us have second jobs. And we still have to keep up with paperwork and training.
- Feel too busy
- Home daycare is small -5 children currently.
- I am 61 years old and just not interested.
- I am a full childcare center and get referrals from teachers, so I don't need the program.
- I am brand new to being licensed. So this is something I haven't been informed about or that I was looking into.
- I am concerned about the application process and requirements to join the program.
- I am familiar with Parent Aware however I do not know the details because I don't have the time.
- I am familiar with the Parent Aware Program however, I don't need it. I have a BA in Psychology and have been a provider for 27 years. I have a very long waitlist and all my parents appreciate the curriculum I teach.
- I am getting up there in age, I'm 62 and have been doing this for 30 years, and close to retirement. I am not sure just how much longer I will be providing care.
- I am going on year 20 licensed and was unlicensed before that. I am fine with how I've done my business and want all my spare time to go to my family. No need for anymore classes or trainings.
- I am hoping to retire in a few years
- I am more interested in loving the kids than the paperwork.
- I am no longer in daycare. I have gone into a different field and have taken a different path.
- I am not familiar with it or the process.
- I am not good at reading English.
- I am not interested in the program as there is no benefit for my center.
- I am very busy and I understand that to be a part of this program, I will need to commit time to do trainings.
- I am with Think Small and I receive all my trainings through them.
- I believe it is another way for the government to poke their nose into what I'm doing.
- I believe kids don't need to sit at a table in order to learn.
- I can join in in future

- I care mostly for infants. Only have a few preschool aged kids, so pursuing the program isn't worth it.
- I did not know much about it.
- I didn't think much about it because at the time, I was not licensed.
- I didn't see a need to as I've had very little turnover.
- I do everything needed to be rated (and more). I don't want to take time away from my family to complete all of the paperwork.
- I do not have the time to take the classes that are required
- I do not like the idea of having people watch me in my own home doing my job. I have children coming all day/evening, so I am very busy with special needs children, pre-k and school agers getting on and off buses, naps, different meal times, etc. Also, my hubby works from home and our adult children come and go with work and college that there is a lot going on and I just do not have the time to have another person in my home.
- I do not want someone coming into my home to observe me for the length of time required.
- I don't have time to sit on the computer and complete training, nor do I have time to continue training in the future.
- I don't know about it
- I don't know anything about Parent Aware, first time I heard about this.
- I don't know much about Parent Aware and didn't look into it much. I just started to hear more about it through classes that I'm taking in order to become licensed.
- I don't like taking classes online. I don't do computers, my husband does all of that.
- I don't like the grading 1-5. I am probably a 2 because I'm not willing to join. I don't think that is right – it's discriminating. No, it just isn't right!
- I don't think that putting or having a Parent Aware rating/label does much for daycares.
- I don't understand what Parent Aware is. I have no information on what it's all about.
- I don't want to sit at the computer and spend my time doing paperwork.
- I don't feel having the rating would change what I charge for my services.
- I don't know much about Parent Aware; I'd like more information.
- I don't like having strange people into my home.
- I don't plan on being a provider much longer.
- I don't really understand how/in what ways it benefits me
- I don't want too
- I feel I have just as much educational material within my program and wouldn't benefit from being rated.
- I feel like I already have a lot on my plate.
- I feel like there's already enough annual training and paperwork to do as is.
- I feel that the courses that Parent Aware offers are very repetition based and it is not helpful for me.
- I feel there is a lot of extra trainings
- I find trainings that are helpful in running the kind of positive program I run.
- I have a bachelor's degree in early education.
- I have a really good size of families and I am doing well. I don't really need any more.
- I have always had a waitlist, so I'm busy.
- I have been doing daycare for the last 28 years and am getting ready to retire.
- I have been doing home child care since 1996, I feel I am quite good at what I do, and I don't need anyone trying to improve my program
- I have been licensed for 37 years, and am about to retire.
- I have heard about the program, however I have been a provider for 37 years and never really needed outside resources. My center is always full and just didn't really see the benefit.
- I have not started the process for Parent Aware because I have a hard time with the paperwork. Child care involves so much time already. I work close to 16 hours a day and with more paperwork, it's hard for 1 person to manage and handle.
- I have not thought about it due to time and I'm no longer in daycare.
- I have over 30 years experience working with kids professionally. I have 16 continuing education training I already have to do. I was a preschool director for a private preschool. I've worked in Roseville schools. I create my own curriculum. I have experience writing curriculum so I draw upon that experience. I have earned my gold stars and don't feel the need to do more, nor do I have the time since I work 65 hours per week.
- I have reduced my kids to only 5.
- I have to do 16 hours of trainings already, so I don't want any more trainings.
- I just don't have the time for all of the paperwork and what is needed.
- I just haven't gotten to it. It's extra work for me and I'm already Montessori trained.
- I just haven't really thought about it.
- I just never really got to finishing the enrollment program. I have been fortunate enough to have a full daycare so didn't really see the need for the program.

- I just opened last December.
- I just truly had no interest in proceeding with that, when I open my daycare, it was purely out of love for children, and I feel that they are getting for me what they need.
- I keep prices low, so I don't do curriculum.
- I like to run my business my way. Free to do what I want when I want.
- I never looked into it because I have no information about it.
- I never thought about it. It wasn't something that came up.
- I provide Spanish immersion which parents seek out.
- I really don't have any use for it at this point.
- I respect what they are doing, especially for those who are just starting out or only have a few years, but for me to join with all my experience doesn't seem fair to me. I don't want to do additional training if I already know how to provide valuable education and experience.
- I run a very successful business without being rated.
- I should be able to provide examples of my curriculum to get a rating.
- I think it would be fair if they could qualify me with my credentials.
- I think the rating should be changed.
- I think this is for the younger group, or white collared people.
- I want the least government involvement as possible in my business and life.
- I was busy with work and taking care of the kids.
- I was in the pilot program. did the work and received funds. No rating. I was told to get a rating, I would need to do it all over again, but I would not get any funds, since I received them in the pilot program.
- I was not interested. We have development programs and a good network system where we take credits online.
- I was not licensed
- I was not the owner of a childcare
- I was not utilizing early learning scholarships for any participants
- I was previously rated (4 stars) and felt it would not be in the best interest of my program or my mental health to keep up with the paperwork. My time could be better spent with the children I serve
- I will be retiring in 2-3 years.
- I will be retiring in the next couple years
- I work 50-60 hours weekly and as a single mother myself, I don't have the time to commit to extra accreditation. I don't want the pressure of the extra work when my center is full currently.
- I work only with babies n toddlers under 4 years
- I'm almost retired now, so I don't see the need for it.
- I'm always busy and have never had to advertise. Parents like the way I run my childcare center.
- I'm Montessori trained, so classic education isn't something I offer. I'm more hands on.
- I'm not all that familiar with it. But what I do know from my friend is that it is a long process.
- I'm not interested in becoming rated.
- I'm not interested in becoming rated.
- I'm not interested in computer work. Maybe in my younger years but I'm old school. I've been doing this for 25 years and at my age, I'm just not interested.
- I'm not interested in more paperwork. Some people in the program told me that once you submit the paperwork, it gets sent back and you have to reword it.
- I'm not interested in signing up because I want to retire soon.
- I'm not too familiar with parent aware. I need to do more research.
- I'm on my way out of daycare. I'll probably only be around for the next year and a half for the most part. All my kids are grown and gone, and we are planning to downsize our home and follow our dream of buying a home in the country for retirement.
- I'm part of a state-wide forum for licensed providers and many people say that they don't have the tools to equip the older kids with kindergarten preparation.
- I'm retiring in a year so I have no interest
- I've been busy with kids and haven't had the time to look into it further.
- I've been licensed for 28 years and I'm old school in a lot of things.
- I've just been busy with everyday life.
- If I have all these years of experience with a good record and good feedback from parents. That is enough for me and that should be enough for parents to want me which it has.
- I'm too close to retirement to take all the time involved to complete the process
- In the last 2 years, I didn't think about Parent Aware because I didn't open up my own business yet.
- It costs money and I don't want to spend extra money.
- It has been 3 years since I stopped my license due to health issues.
- It just requires too much, and my hands are already full. After 10-12 hours of working with kids, I just want to breathe and not get on the computer. To do all of this on the computer is just too much. I can multitask all day but getting on the computer is just not for me. It's too overwhelming.

- It sounds like a wonderful program, but I have my own family to take care of in addition to work.
- It takes time away from family and daycare
- It was never really explained to me or the benefits of being star rated.
- It's a lot of extra work. Being in daycare for over 20 years it doesn't seem to be worth it
- I've heard it's a lot of paperwork to keep up with.
- I've heard it's not worth it to be rated
- Just don't feel I need it
- Just don't want to do it. I think it is too personal. I don't like the idea that anyone can just come to my house and stop by. No, thank you!
- Just more training hours and rather have family time
- Just not interested
- Just not interested.
- Like to do my own curriculum with no one telling me I need to complete something by certain times
- Maybe because I only have 3 kids
- More paperwork
- Mostly I don't think I would have the time
- My assumption is that you need a lot of training. There are a lot of hours of training you have to complete.
- My childcare has stayed very successful (plenty of kids and a waitlist)
- My curriculum is from Carol Curriculum. I like it and I will continue using it. There is no reason to do something different if Carol Curriculum works for me. The kids enjoy the curriculum and the online educational games. Parents are really happy with how I do things.
- My daycare families wouldn't care or appreciate it
- My husband and I are both licensed providers and we are both familiar with the program however have been very busy. Our programs are currently full and we do have a waitlist as well.
- Nearing retirement age.
- Never really thought about it
- No longer a child care provider therefore no need for this program.
- No specific reason.
- Not enough time for extra classes/trainings needed
- Not having parent aware hasn't impacted my daycare at all. I always have a waitlist and happy parents and kids.
- Not interested
- Not interested. Retiring soon.
- Not sure what it entails
- Only provide organic food for my children currently and it is expensive but it's the best option and healthiest.
- Own my own daycare center and plan on shutting down soon.
- Paperwork
- Parent Aware wouldn't change the way I do things.
- Parents Aware does not apply in my systems
- People should want to do parent aware because it's beneficial to the kids, not for the funding or the stars.
- Planning on quitting daycare for the last 5 years.
- Process long the time that the workers have to spend in the house with me and the children and personally nor even knowing them. And now with the covid 19. And raising prices on parents that cannot afford to pay, the county keeps denying parents any help.
- Reading, writing, and language barrier-Spanish speaking.
- Takes too long
- The parents I have seem to always need extra attention and updates which takes up extra time.
- The process is also too long. There's too many hurdles and no one useful to help you.
- The struggle I have with Parent Aware is the distrust. When awards and grants were being sent out, I made a copy of it and did some research on the top providers that were on the list. I noticed that some providers had violations and there was one provider who had recently enrolled for about 1 month that received a lot of grant money. Later on, this list disappeared so a lot of us were wondering what was going on and how these providers were rated top facilities when they did not meet standard/requirements.
- The thought of jumping through extra hoops to validate my experience and knowledge serving kids and families seems out of the question for me.
- The training requirements seem excessive to me.
- There is already so much paperwork to do
- There was no grant money for 4-star rated programs as incentive
- There's so much paperwork.
- Thinking about retirement, have been serving families and children for over 28+ years. This may be my last year.
- Time and flexibility is a barrier at this time.
- Time commitment is too much.
- Time of completion
- Too much paperwork
- Too time-consuming filling out paperwork
- Unknown
- Unsure about how to do it
- We are a part of KinderCare and have received all our accreditation through them.
- We are a private child care center and provide care for our employees only. We do not find that there is a need for Parent Aware simply because we are not a public child care center.

- We have a small child care center with only 3 kids. I don't know if we'd get any advantage from being a part of the program.
- What are the benefits? Why would I want to sign up?
- What I gain as being rated isn't worth the time it takes.
- When Parent Aware first started, it was built on center style learning which knocked home daycare out of the day.
- When parent aware first started, there was a lot of paperwork, training, etc., and I had young kids of my own. I just didn't have the time to start it. I felt negative about it. I felt that it pitted providers against each other. Some of my friends went through with parent aware and I didn't and there became a wall between us.
- When parents call me, they are often calling me from a parent aware program.
- When the babies are sleeping, I will read to the older kids, but I don't have a curriculum in place.
- When the PA program was initially started, PA used underhanded radio ads and misrepresented family child care. I'm not interested in working with a rating system that uses those types of marketing tactics
- When you shop for a hotel you look for a 5 star. When most providers are at a 2 or 3 I don't look it looks good to someone not familiar with the rating system.
- With all of the trainings that are required yearly why can't that in itself account to be qualified

3.2.2.2 What options, changes, or help might make you interested in Parent Aware in the future?

- A quick paperwork process with not having to resubmit because of the need to reword.
- Adding more hours to the day haha
- An online version to submit everything I do over the course of time of time that would
- At this point nothing. I do not charge as much as the county will pay so do not see a benefit
- Be rated
- Be updated with quality care for children.
- Benefits that would specifically help me.
- Clearer information on what all is needed to become Parent Aware
- Currently have 5 kids and I don't want to take on anymore with my age.
- Depends on what help they may be willing to help with
- Different rating system
- Don't think it would benefit me. I have lots of happy parents who appreciate the one-on-one time, learning opportunities, and no TV time.
- Done the same thing for the last 28 years and it's worked for me.
- Ease of process
- Easy application process
- English is my second language, so some of the terms I don't understand. Having easy instructions would make it easier for me, or if I could reach out to a representative so they could answer my questions.
- Get prepared to face child care challenges
- Grants for higher rated programs
- Have quality assurance to provide to share with parents. It would be good promotional method
- Having a contact
- Having had a different perspective about parent aware from the beginning, for people who don't have the experience like I have, I think it would be beneficial to them to have a rating to share with families.
- Having more information on what it is
- Help to walk through steps
- I also have seen centers with 4-star ratings which have been written up and revoked so I am not sure how that would help us.
- I am familiar with the rating system of Parent Aware. The training isn't the hard part for me; it's the time and visitation that is challenging.
- I am getting close to the end of my run as a licensed provider, so I really don't feel anything would persuade me to jump on the PA wagon.
- I am not a public speaker and I don't like long meetings with people, kids are my forte.
- I am not aware of what the different options currently are. As a parent looking for care I would see a rated parent aware provider as a more desired option vs an unrated provider.
- I am not interested because Think Small provides everything I need for my requirements.
- I am NOT interested. Talking with providers who are rated most wish they wouldn't have wasted the time.
- I am not that familiar to suggest any changes.
- I do like trainings in person. I enjoy getting out and meeting new people but that stopped because of COVID.
- I do my classes and paperwork to stay licensed but there is always an issue online and that's exhausting. My husband (who is my backup) had an issue with completing a first aid class and he knows the computers.
- I don't have plans to be in daycare in the future.
- I don't know all that much about it [Parent Aware] but there is a lot of unnecessary paperwork for other stuff the county requires. There is just so much paperwork.
- I don't know enough about it to say what I would need. It's been too many years since taking the original class.
- I don't know if it is a trust thing, but we should be made better aware about this.
- I don't know much about it so educational materials to learn more about the program would be helpful to start off with. Also, information about trainings I would need and if there are grants available.
- I don't know much about the program. I don't think about it.
- I don't know. I don't like that everything is now electronic. That takes too long, too much to answer. It's too much to deal with. I have my husband take care of things online otherwise I would not do it. I don't have the time.
- I don't feel there is anything at this time in my life
- I don't know.
- I don't want to waste time doing more paperwork than I already do.
- I have a wonderful daycare. I love what I do and I can't get mixed in until standards change. It has to be something that's specifically unique and different that I currently am not teaching already.
- I have not yet decided right now, but I will explore when I decide. My kids are all grown up and I am not interested in joining any of the activities.

- I have nothing to comment. I'm not interested at the moment.
- I haven't understood what I need to go through to start the program so more information would be helpful.
- I haven't done enough research so I have no opinion at this time.
- I just need to find the time to coordinate it into my schedule.
- I like the idea of parent aware, but I need more information about it in order to make a decision.
- I was part of the very first group. I felt that my coach was inexperienced. I got my paperwork back where my 2 stars needed correction and I didn't know what I needed to correct. I reached out to my coach and she wasn't helpful. I didn't need her to do it for me, I just needed her to clarify what kind of corrections I needed to make before submitting.
- I will never be interested unless it became required.
- I work 55+ hours a week and I don't want to go to school on weekends and nights. I'm not willing to put time into it.
- I would need someone to help. I like
- 1:1 and not on the computer.
- I'm interested in learning more, but I need easy step-by-step instructions to join and get rated.
- I'm not sure
- I've been in daycare for a very long time and I like it but I'm old now. If I was to be interested in Parent Aware in the future, I don't think it will be beneficial for me because I'm aging.
- If I didn't have to complete so many hours of training.
- If I had to do it to get funding from the government then I would. Otherwise, I'm not interested because my kids and parents are happy.
- If I increase in number of children in the future then I will consider joining.
- If it could be like self-paced web classes and zoom meetings, then I would be interested.
- If the program was designed more realistically for home daycare, I'd be interested.
- If the training was the same as daycare trainings and not more
- If there was no cost, I might consider
- If will take up a lot of daytime during work doing paperwork etc.
- Incentives or reimbursement program for food assistance for providers.
- It can't just be babysitting; it also has to be educational and structural for the kids.
- It's only myself at my daycare, so I don't have the time to pursue training or keep up with it.
- Knowing more about the benefits
- Learning about it
- Less computer work.
- less paperwork and the observations
- Less requirements
- Less unannounced visits if any
- Likely nothing
- Make it easier with time saving systems.
- Make me 30 years younger. It may have been helpful when I was first starting out 37 years ago. Now I have a lot of experience and have been highly rated by clients for decades.
- Make the system more usable.
- Materials mailed to you to know more about Parent Aware and how to get started/do it.
- More education about what parent aware actually is and how it benefits the kids and parents.
- More educational materials.
- More information
- More information
- More information
- More information
- More information about the program and what it is about.
- More information about the program because I want to be rated and more prepared with services I'm offering.
- More information on what the Parent Aware program is all about.
- Must have Spanish speaking staffs available.
- No added paperwork.
- No In person
- No outsiders coming into my home.
- No reps coming into my home watching me and the children.
- None at this time of my life
- None at this time, I have 2 small children of my own, along with I work 50 hours a week at minimum.
- None. I have no interest. I don't need a star by my name to get people in here. I don't need more training too be a great provider. I just do not have an interest.
- Nothing at this point because our plans have changed.
- Nothing. I plan to only do child care for less than a year more.
- Once again there's nothing that would make me want to do that, I intend to retire in approximately a year or just a little more.
- Online courses offered regularly are working great please keep this option!!

- Online training is fine, well the self-pace is pretty good, but not the same as in person. I only did one so far and had some tech issues with that but was able to jump on the phone to finish up.
- Possibly a zoom visit during child care hours instead
- Prefer to have one-on-one training and coaching throughout the process, Zoom meetings are okay.
- Probably nothing at this point.
- provider support/mentoring
- Rated doesn't mean quality!
- Reading material/papers printed in other languages.
- Really more clarification.
- Self-paced, online trainings.
- Spanish version of the Parent Aware application.
- The extra paperwork takes away from time with the kids and it's hard to keep up with it, so make it so that we [providers] don't have to deal with all the paperwork.
- There is a lot of extra trainings that after 30 years, what can you tell me. I really hate the extra trainings. I know I have to stay on top of the safety but some of these other trainings like creating a parent newsletter is not helpful. I speak to my parents at drop-off and pick-up each day.
- There needs to be a way for DHS to evaluate us based on our experience, curriculum, feedback from families and kids, etc., for us to get a rating or some sort of incentive or funding.
- There should be a more intentional way to get providers involved to enroll in the program.
- Translator would be helpful too when it comes to certain things that I do not understand.
- Unsure
- Unsure
- Use current required trainings and apply accordingly.
- Video chats
- We are not interested at this time due to us being a small child care center.
- We attend most of our training sessions with Americans. Sometimes there are some Hmong trainers/translators and those are very helpful since we fully understand the language. Reading material and trainers/translators in different languages would be helpful.
- Went through CDA program in Bemidji. I didn't renew my license.
- When I have more kids
- Why is it so hard for providers to know about these things?
- With more of preschoolers and schoolers

3.2.3 Unrated providers: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?

- 401k and subsidized health care plan for providers.
- A fellow provider was told that she could get a 4-star rating for her program and receive "x" amount of money OR she could be given a 3-star rating and she would get \$1500 more to "improve" her program. She chose the availability to get more money. I don't see how that should be an option. That doesn't seem "right" This is another thing that has turned me off of the program
- A multi age group has so much to offer in terms of emotional intelligence.
- Advertise it more. Send information through the mail.
- All information about it in print, I have no time during the day or evening or weekends to talk to anyone for an extended conversation
- All my focus goes to the children I care for and these unannounced visits or visits at all, it takes away from the kids.
- Also, have people follow up if we don't go through the process.
- Are the grants part of Parent Aware? Where you get it monthly?
- Are there specific topics or areas of study that parent aware can provide me regarding parent aware?
- As someone with a one-year-old and three-year-old, I feel that the rating process is very time consuming and would involve more than I can commit to.
- Be intentional about reaching out, like you did tonight.
- Beneficial to have trainers come out and observe providers on site during working hours and use these hours as part of the requirements for Parent Aware.
- Beneficial to receive additional educational learning tools from Parent Aware; laminated learning materials such as cut-out of numbers, letters, animals, etc.
- Benefits/incentives to join Parent Aware are not extraordinary.
- Can't ever talk to a real person for questions. When they do call back, they don't know the answer. Say they will find out and call back but don't. The classes they offer for regular trainings are not quality ones. Some of the instructors are bad. Don't want to spend time on being rated by a program that doesn't value us or our time
- Children are being pulled out of quality care and put out of their environment that doesn't fit their needs due to subsidy.
- Children are losing their childhood and are put into school at 2 years old. There's a lot more to having to learn skills and having to learn skills at a young age.
- Communication is one of my barriers. English is not my first language. I have a friend who is in Parent Aware and she told me how the program helped her speak and communicate better with parents. She was excited for what she learned and that really made me interested in learning more about Parent Aware and the cohort.
- Communication overall needs to improve.
- Daycare is important to parents and children, sometimes it is essential first step to school stage in children for socialization and structure
- DHS allows new daycares fresh out of licensing to go too big too fast. When you get 12+ kids in daycare, it's very stressful. DHS doesn't keep a close eye out on providers.
- DHS needs to do more training regarding patience.
- Do the stars pertain to my program or a general learning program in Parent Aware?
- Does the program have people come check on me regularly and/or annually with trainings that I need to be up to date with license and program?
- Don't like the star ratings. 1 out of 4 stars makes you sound like a bad provider. Classify as a level would be better.
- Don't want to do all the additional training hours to be rated.
- Even if I do not have a parent aware rating, I am still providing quality care and supervision to these children.
- Fair playing field for all childcare providers. Some providers don't do their jobs which then makes a bad name for the providers who put in the hard work.
- Financial reimbursement not available for providers who do not have children within the subsidy program or state aid program.
- Fingerprinting is confusing to me - who does it, why, when?
- Full attention should on the child
- Grant money should be given to all providers.
- Have heard about the benefits of PA and how it has helped the new educators.
- How is the program beneficial for me? Does it help me to get more kids for my business?
- How much paperwork is there to join parent aware?

- I also feel there is a push to have daycares be connected with school programs and that will push home daycares out of business.
- I always thought it was too hard to obtain.
- I am a firm believer that kids should have free play.
- I am no longer interested since I'm not in daycare now.
- I am not Tribal and have had no problems with DHS or Parent Aware
- I am sure it is an amazing program, for the younger providers I'm sure it is absolutely worth it! Once again, I am retiring soon in approximately a year or maybe just if she wants more. So, at this time I truly have no interest. Thank you
- I am unsure what this is. I am new
- I appreciate any information and grants given to my Childcare.
- I appreciate the concept of standards of excellent care and best practices. I think it's a great idea, we just haven't had the need to document our practices for parent aware.
- I can handle babies n toddlers n not preschoolers.
- I do have a curriculum, but I am a firm believer in dramatic play, outdoor play, learning manners, and getting along with others. I will not carve out this time to make more time for academics. They are infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It's right there in the name: PRE schoolers. Let them be kids! Kindergarten is already more like first grade now.
- I do not have anything against it, it just isn't for me
- I don't have a lot of information about Parent Aware. All I know is that if you become a part of it, you have to follow an educational curriculum.
- I don't have any
- I don't have any
- I don't have any concerns
- I don't have any questions or concerns.
- I don't have any questions.
- I don't have any to offer.
- I don't have information about the program, so I don't know what it is all about.
- I don't have much knowledge of the program so I'm not sure if it's for me.
- I don't know because I don't have enough information.
- I don't know very much about Parent Aware to even have questions. I am aware that it is a great program, but the time commitment is too much for me.
- I don't want to deal with any more people than I already have to because it is hard enough already having to deal with kids, parents, trainings/requirements, cleaning, and paperwork.
- I don't have any concerns that I can think of right now. I just don't know much about the program.
- I don't have any questions or concerns
- I don't have any questions.
- I don't know anything about Parent Aware so I can't give my opinion.
- I don't know much about the program, so I don't have any questions.
- I don't know what it is and don't have enough information about it.
- I don't know why there would be a reason to push Parent Aware. If I'm taking care of children, raising them and getting them ready for K5, I don't think being Parent Aware or not, does that.
- I feel that my feedback doesn't matter much because there hasn't been any changes and it seems like we just go in circles, however I am hopeful that DHS and legislation listens to all of us now.
- I get off work at 5 pm and the trainings to qualify with classes were more than a 1-hour drive and that was a major setback for me. I felt that trainings were not as accessible as it could be.
- I had completed the prior program and would have liked that to account towards the Parent Aware.
- I have always done a preschool curriculum as long as I have been doing child care. For myself I felt like just because I choose not to be rated then I'm seen as a less qualified provider.
- I have never been asked for my "parent aware status" nor has it ever come into play for anything, other than I am not able to get a grant for Parent Aware providers.
- I have no comment because like I said, I haven't done enough research about Parent Aware to offer an opinion at this time.
- I have no concerns, but I am confused about the star rating system. (It's confusing why you would choose stars and dollar amounts.)
- I have no concerns, but I would be interested in getting more information now that I am licensed.
- I have no questions as I am not familiar with the program to make a comment.
- I have no questions at this time. More information would be helpful because I'm not sure what it's all about.
- I have nothing to comment. I'm not interested at the moment.
- I have to spend so much time on cleaning protocols, accounting, business upkeep, etc., It's hard to fathom adding the rating process into my "free time"
- I haven't had a CCAP family in many years so the program would not benefit me much

- I just feel like it is hard enough to get the 16 hours in for childcare let alone have to try and get more in with little kids at home
- I just haven't done enough research to know about the program.
- I just think the government is telling us providers to do things they have no clue can't be done. This new build back better act is a joke. Many providers don't have the time or money to get a 4 degree. A degree doesn't mean you are a better provider than a provider that doesn't have it.
- I know getting support with COVID needs to improve. There's no real information on protocols when dealing with COVID. I called the county and got little support on what to do when a child tested positive.
- I know you're doing your job, but the follow through with the curriculum isn't working out. The system is broken.
- I like the idea of Parent Aware and am open to criticism about my business as I know I could use more organizational skills, activity ideas, and many other areas because after 20 years I will admit I fall into a slump on things at times but I just do not like the idea of strangers coming in and some of my parents feel the same way especially with all that is happening in the world right now.
- I liked the classes in-person, there is always something to learn. Now with COVID, those are online. I'm just too old-school for all of that and it's exhausting. There needs to be an easier way for people my age.
- I love the 1:1 and small classes but with COVID, that stopped. Now everything is online, and I don't like that. It took the fun out of education and learning. Virtual trainings takes the joy out of being a provider.
- I may be moving out of state. Is the rating system transferrable where I can use the training there in a school or office setting?
- I met a friend through a CPR first training class and she told me about the Parent Aware program, resources, grants it offers, and ways to help people. I don't know much about Parent Aware but that created an interest.
- I never had any experience before.
- I really don't have anything, but DHS should know that I just spoke to another provider, (Sally ___), and she told me that she completed all of her Parent Aware paperwork and when she called about it, they didn't have anything on her. She told me she is not going to start the process all over again. So, they should improve on that part of the process because that would put me off too.
- I think being in daycare 31 years is a huge experience.
- I think it's a great program and I've thought about starting the process many times since opening a year and a half ago it's just hard to add extra onto providers plates at the present time
- I think last year I left some messages, but no one reached out to me. I am interested in learning more and would like someone to get back to me and share more information about the program.
- I think my voice is being heard in the senate and all. I have never been in this program. In the past, so many ladies called me, and they told me about everything. Once I also went to attend a meeting with one of the friends, the lady told me about the program, but I do not have time for it.
- I think that it is a good resource and would help keep my parents in the know. I like to share information and let my parents know what is going on, including changes. I think it would be good.
- I work long days and with the training I already have to do for licensing, I just don't have time to add on more.
- I would definitely focus on new providers, because it could determine whether they stay in the business. I have a business which I've built from the ground up, and have been successful and happy for decades.
- I would like DHS & Legislature to know that in-home daycare are as valuable as centers too.
- I would like for more information to be sent out to me.
- I would like some help with getting more children
- I would like to further know how parent aware works with the legislature.
- I would like to see Parent Aware be open to diverse learning styles and not put everything in a box. We should be able to offer different teaching, and this doesn't give us a choice.
- I would love to be a part of Parent Aware because of the star rating, but I have no knowledge of the program and I don't know what the steps are to get started.
- I'm not okay with doing things just to get a rating. There were a lot of barriers, "if you don't do this our way, then you don't get the rating."
- If I had known about the program earlier on during my business, I probably would have been more interested at that time.
- If the program could be restructured to eliminate reps coming into homes and self-paced online trainings offered, it would be much better especially during the pandemic.
- I'm sure that there are providers out there that #1 think they need this program, #2 like the "free money" which you must claim at the end of the year #3 enjoy staff

coming into their homes etc., but I am not interested.
Thank you.

- I'm sure there are way more rules for being rated and as providers we have way too many rules as there is. Some of which are absolutely ridiculous. We have to still love in the homes we provide care in, and I think they forget that when they make some of the rules up.
- In future might think differently
- In what ways does it change my program, if any?
- Incentives and reimbursement to help alleviate the cost of living.
- Incentives for providers who use only organic food for their daycare centers.
- Is Parent Aware training low cost or free? I don't have the extra money to spend on it if I already have to spend money on being a licensed childcare provider in my home and to pay for all the training I already have to do.
- Is this process available in Spanish and/or other languages to make it easier for providers to apply for Parent Aware?
- It is a great program for areas with a lot of competition between programs. We have a serious lack of child care in my area, so star rating doesn't seem to help with decision making for parents.
- It is nice to have this program to keep providers honest and children growing.
- It is of the most benefit to new providers, or for those in business for less than 10 years. Those who are in it longer have a program that works for them and their families. Less experienced providers need the most resources, advice and feedback from observation.
- It seems like a daunting process when trying to keep up with all the other licensing requirements.
- It was really hard for me to obtain any sort of financial help for my in-home center because I was smaller.
- It would be nice to have ALL providers on the search for openings instead of rated providers first
- It's just more things to do other than the 16 hours of credits we already have to do.
- It's just not making sense to all of us when we are already busy to ask for us to do more.
- It's one more thing to add to an already full plate
- Keep in mind that some providers who are rated only get rated for the cash incentive that's offered.
- Lessen some of the paperwork
- Lots of paperwork.
- Make it more accessible. Encourage providers and assist them in signing up and working towards full rating
- Make it simple and easy for providers to understand. No long ongoing explanations, that we have to rely on others to translate what exactly is being said.
- More oversight from DHS.
- My C/C parents know that I offer quality childcare and have no problem with the reason I am not star rated
- No concerns. We appreciate the help
- No questions or concerns
- No, but for me...nope. Really, it's the technology – it gets in the way.
- No, I don't have any questions.
- No, I really don't. I don't really know that much about it.
- Nothing, I am not interested because I already have Think Small to help me.
- Nothing, just not interested due to the ages of kids I serve.
- Offer an introduction class on Parent Aware online around 7 pm -8 pm to educate providers about the benefits of joining the program and allow the class to go towards the 16 hours we have to maintain yearly. Having a presenter share the information and also allowing an open discussion for questions afterwards.
- Oh, they don't care. After 45 years, I don't think that there will be any real changes.
- Only that the push to do this isn't what we need. No one should be rated better than another. We are licensed and it's our business.
- Other incentives available for providers to help alleviate the cost of living.
- Parents struggling to pay daycare cost that don't get help
- Parents struggling to pay their bills.
- People that I know that have done it said they are getting better clients, but I don't know if that makes a difference. It's your personality and your program that makes you who you are.
- Providers who have been doing this job for a long time have the expertise to be successful on their own without PA.
- Rated doesn't mean quality or reliable!
- Reduce number of hours required for each level
- Right now, I don't have any questions or concerns
- risking our health and possibly our lives in time of Covid - 19.
- Rules are sufficient enough. I don't think we need more rules. We need more mentorship and coaching (one on one), so feedback is provided and less paperwork.
- See value in support to keep high standards, so profession is thought of positively, trust is built. This should be part of the training.
- Should not be taxed on "grant money."
- Should offer subsidized health care benefits for providers that are contracted through the county and offer 401K.

- Smaller daycare providers/centers received less assistance compared to bigger daycare centers.
- So, I think support, free trainings, grants for parents to get child care to any licensed childcare is better all the way around. Thank you.
- Subsidized health care plan and 401K matching for providers.
- Subsidized health care plans for smaller providers to help with living costs.
- Teaching love and care is more important than strict lesson plans about numbers and shapes.
- Thank you for asking, though. It has been a joy serving children and their families all these years. It is what I was put on earth to do.
- The experiences that I have had with parent aware have all been good! I receive an oral health training that was very helpful!
- The incentives are great (grant money), but they need to make it easier and give people more time, and make it less demanding.
- The people assigned to help really don't.
- The program is valuable and good, but it's not for me at this time.
- The struggle sometimes to get families in daycare.
- The struggle to find kids to be in your program with them having 3 yr olds in preschool
- There are plenty of non-rated providers who provide excellent care and learning environments to make sure children get school readiness skills.
- There is already so much that we have to do to keep our license and it seems like it's getting to be more and more requirements.
- There is nothing that I can think of to change my mind.
- There probably needs to be a better process for us so that it doesn't seem so overwhelming.
- There seems to be a lot of rules to become parent aware that have nothing to do with the wellbeing of the children
- There's a lot of lying and distrust. For example, when providers need to get their homes ready for assessment, it's deceiving because once the assessment is done, the homes do not look and stay like that. It's just staged in order to pass the assessment.
- They are doing great but coming to daycare disturb my babies
- Tons of regulation won't keep daycares around like in the current few years many surrounding daycares have closed because of this.
- too much paperwork and too much time observing the kids when we have too many age groups and to many different things going on
- Trust us to do a good job, we are in this field because we love it and want to succeed and feel appreciated.
- Unknown
- Unknown
- Unsure
- Very satisfied with Child Care Aware and the services they have available for the providers in our state.
- We all need to be on the same page with Covid (schools and daycare).
- We all work 65 hours a week and we don't have the time to do the rigorous training.
- We already have to deal with so much paperwork between licensing, food program and then adding parent aware is just too much and it takes away from my family time, my down time and my time with the kids.
- We are all hard-working childcare provider, that's
- We are already short on providers for families in our area and if they take away the preschool age ...we can't survive on the limited spots for 1 infant and 1 toddler
- We as childcare providers love our children.
- We as providers have too many classes already. Being an experienced childcare provider for 26 years, I understand that all classes are required in order to maintain a license, but it gets repetitive after so many years having to take the same classes over and over again. For example, the Safety Supervision class- I've taken it so many times that I could probably teach it! I feel that after so many years, if we are in good standings without any violations, we should be able to take a 10-question test and if we pass, that should count towards credits we need. I'd rather take something different where I'm able to learn something new. That would help with the burnout because I hear it from providers all the time.
- We have to go through so much when there are already so many classes for licensing. I do like the trainings but just don't understand why there are so many that are being asked of us. I have been doing this for a very long time and even before becoming a provider, I was always learning. I enjoy the education but some of this is just too much.
- We work very hard taking care of kids and time is a rare commodity
- We're saying kids are behind but we're demanding and expecting higher standards from them.
- Weekend classes should be made more available.
- When it first started, we thought the rating would separate us from others. I feel that parents don't look at the rating system; they don't care about it.
- When parent aware was first introduced, it was exclusionary. I felt bad about that because I know the

- valuable curriculum and experience I provide. There should be more opportunities to get evaluated and rated.
- When you get grant money, how does it work? For example, I need to update and replace some items in my playground. If I got a grant, does it apply to replacing playground material?
 - Whenever I heard of Parent Aware, I've never heard of negative feedback. People usually express interest, excitement, and appreciation about the program.
 - Why do people even need parent aware? Is it something that you need because it is brand name and I'll get a gold star? How does it benefit the children? Do parents seek it out? I want it to be an educational and emotional benefit to the children, not just a material benefit.
 - Why does someone have to be parent aware rated to receive a higher CCAP rate
 - Why is a parent aware rating important to parents?
 - Why is so much annual paperwork involved?
 - Would getting Parent Aware qualify me for additional funding?
 - You can help providers with free trainings and support if needed but this rating system to me is not needed. I'm not less of a provider or deserve less pay because I didn't get rated. Use extra money for trainings and support and instead of this put money towards parents who need childcare and can't afford it. Not give them a grant to use only for a parent aware tested program. This divided us. We shouldn't be divided by a star.
 - You guys do a great job

3.3 BIPOC and Greater Minnesota Recently Rated Providers (family and centers)

Questions for recently rated providers:

1. Thinking back to your own experience going through the Parent Aware process -- from learning about it, to applying, to spending grant money -- what challenges or barriers did you face?
2. How did those challenges impact you?
3. What or who was actually helpful in overcoming those challenges, and in what way?
4. What wasn't helpful, and why not?
5. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?
6. We are also going to be interviewing non-rated BIPOC providers about challenges and barriers. What are important questions we should ask them? Any other advice for those interviews? (These were asked beginning early in the process to help guide later work. Responses to the first question were used to shape the interviews; advice from the second is included in the compilation.)

3.3.1 Recently rated providers: Thinking back to your own experience going through the Parent Aware process -- from learning about it, to applying, to spending grant money -- what challenges or barriers did you face that had an impact on your process?

- Adding up everything bought
- Amount of paperwork is frustrating at times
- As a family child care provider, I have a lot of kids and some challenging days -- sometimes the kids can be a lot - - can't always find the time to do all this. Depending on what's going on with the kids, I may not have any time during the day to get to these things.
- being a new director and not being told or shown anything from the previous director
- Being in a rural area the greatest challenge for me was not being able to meet with my coach face to face.
- Coach was very helpful. Did 2 stars first, then registered to go to 3 stars. Much more difficult than 2 stars. Some questions they were asking that I didn't understand. Struggled with questions...academic. Talked with my coach but still needed more help. Had so many things going on that I stopped for now.
- Coaches need to be trained across the board to follow the same goal writing and spending expectations.
- Coaches need to understand you have another job than Parent Aware and you can drop everything to respond each email, text you get.
- Communication can be lacking
- Couldn't get variance for qualified teachers (but did so for licensing)
- Covid
- Covid preventing coaches from being on site
- Creating a body system with Day Care's or already read it they can help other daycare's that are unrated
- Dealing with Coach
- Deciding on items that would fit with the grant
- Develop was confusing at first
- Did not get an email or contact when I needed to renew. I would have missed the building quality deadline if I wouldn't have contacted them
- Didn't feel like I had enough time and I thought it was due by the end of the year, but it was due 2 months sooner
- Didn't have enough time to get all the things done that are necessary to go from one level to another.
- During a pandemic. Wasn't always able to meet in person
- Each coach seems to have different rules on goal writing and spending. It should be the same across the board.
- Ensure the purchase item align with goal & map against child category
- Finding important documents
- Finding the approved trainings were hard
- Finding the time to invest while working full time as a provider
- Finding time in my day for hours with my coach
- get too many wrong answers to my many questions. Lots of paperwork
- Going through the process, I had to arrange for extra help in my program each time I had to do something during regular hours
- Happy to be part of Parent Aware team.
- Having a coach who couldn't fully help, assist, or direct us in the direction to get materials for assessment tools.
- Having things put on hold because of new rules etc.
- Having to re-rate too often
- How to make sure all areas are covered
- I am new to this role; I took over in June and we did not apply for the classroom supplies grants. In the past however I was a director for KinderCare for 7 years and thought the process was fairly easy.
- I am tribally licensed and the number of children per group (infant, toddler, preschool) age is different. Meaning age ranges. So, it was a little confusing but Parent Aware team is very helpful and was able to work me through it
- I did not have any challenges or barriers in the process of my cohort.
- I do CCAP but I can't get the extra funds because I don't have the higher rating; not fair
- I finally started and became star rated after many years of wanting to; before, I just didn't have enough information about it to actually move forward with it. I wish I had done it sooner
- I had no problems thanks to my coach.
- I have had the best coach Jen ___ walk me through steps, encourage me and meet me outside during covid.
- I learned a lot and it helped my program, but so much work
- I live with my parents and my program is in their house, but they aren't allowed to watch the kids because they haven't taken the CPR/First Aid class because it's not offered in Mandarin; even though classes were offered online during the pandemic, they weren't in Mandarin

- anywhere we could find (would have had to go to NY or LA in person for a whole week)
- I think the scholarships should be for ages two and up not three and older.
 - If you're doing PA, the food program, CCAP, all together it's an enormous amount of work.
 - In the beginning I was really struggling to learn everything to be a better provider
 - Incorrect info from coach
 - Investing the money up front and waiting for it.
 - It was added work but overall went well because I felt like my coach did a great job!
 - It's been a great experience.
 - It's like taking college courses; you have to do stuff like homework and PA is a LOT of work -- it's way more than I thought.
 - Knowing how to word goals
 - Knowing what documents to submit
 - knowledge about what parent aware offers, what the process is and how it actually help you as a provider and the parents
 - lack of classes offered to get CE classes done
 - lack of support
 - Learn new things, get helpful resources.
 - Learning about parent aware I was excited to be able to apply, many things I had been doing just need to show evidence.
 - learning how to use DEVELOP
 - Lots of paperwork and very long process
 - Navigating and understand ELSA
 - navigating the information on the website - I still don't know if it is something I should be interacting with
 - No challenges
 - None
 - None
 - None, it was a pretty smooth process. The waiting game to find out our rating was the hardest part
 - Not being able to use funding on decking
 - Not enough details given
 - Not very good internet
 - Now that I'm going for 3 or 4 star, it's really a problem to have to resubmit everything I already sent for 2 starts in addition to the new requirements for 3 and 4 stars. Should only have to submit new information.
 - One of the things I really appreciate about the process is the coaching component. As a rural childcare provider, it took some digging to be informed about parent aware. I don't know if this happens now, but one idea would be to offer some material to all new licensed providers.
 - Our remote location
 - Our teachers are Spanish speakers and paperwork is only available in English
 - Qualified staff members to fill the classrooms
 - Resources for completing all the indicators
 - Retaining teachers we started the process with
 - Rushed by coach
 - Scheduling 1-1 with coach (finding times that works for both)
 - So many goals; we'd submit, and they'd come back to us, and at some point, it was that either we weren't understanding or the evaluator was too picky. Each one took so much time. Coach was as helpful as possible, but goal setting was our job -- but the back-and-forth took a lot of time and tight deadlines...with short staff and having to do lots of work at home, this was a real problem
 - Some meetings held during the day
 - Sometimes challenging to find a time that works for everyone to meet or FaceTime to decide new materials.
 - Sometimes I was confused on trainings I needed to take.
 - Spending the money is a challenge because there needs to be special requests for items and services, they either do not understand or is impacted by their personal beliefs. It is micromanaging. If the coach says it is an approved item or service, then the program should go by that. The coaches visit the program and interact personally and directly with the provider. Family Childcare is a diverse childcare option that provides care for a mixed age group. Also, why do they ask which age group do we mainly work with? It needs to include B- age 8 as an option. I work with all of my children not just a specific age group.
 - Staff participation-many of them didn't understand the point of the extra work when they didn't get any "benefits" out of it.
 - Staff training was really hard during COVID. Online training helped, but there aren't enough to meet the requirements.
 - Supply issues
 - The amount of time that it takes to load staff training hours, transcripts, etc., to get them qualified takes so long
 - The grant money spending process, uploading receipt needs many values to fill-in. It could be simplified.
 - The Lead teachers had a difficult time understanding some of their expectations.
 - The lingo, the process and additional language, ways of documenting, and such were a little complicated.
 - The only barrier I faced was having to pay for the items in advance and then get reimbursed in order to receive the grant money.

- The paperwork to get a four-star rating the 1st year was confusing.
- The Parent Aware Process needs longer learning curve. Need coach help every time to key in the data.
- The process is hard to understand and follow on your own. The lower you are on the lattice scale the harder it is to complete an upper-level rating. This process needs to be equitable in achievement since our profession does not even require a high school diploma. This impact people in low socioeconomic status and opportunities. If someone does not have an upper-level education, the Parent Aware program needs to create a process for them to achieve a high-quality program.
- The rest of the process has been easy and educational.
- The timeline to spend the money is not clear to me
- the vast amount of things that needed to be done or gathered
- The website itself is incredibly slow and that makes things frustrating sometimes
- There is very limited amount of coaches that speak Spanish
- There was a lot of steps to go through and hoops to jump through for Parent Aware to pay for items instead of paying me back for the items.
- Time
- Time frame can be tough
- Time to complete the areas
- Time to get everything done
- Time to take all of the required training courses.
- Time, knowledge of system, lack of resources (printer)
- To be responsible for buying the best possible product.
- Too much paperwork
- training requirements/getting staff to complete trainings on time
- Turn around on order from placement by the program to actual placement
- Unclear direction from quality document portfolio
- Using grants money at a special Location
- Waited about a 1.5 years. A lot of lingo / jargon to learn. My coach was really helpful, but it was hard to understand the process. She helped me understand the pieces of the puzzle. She helped me, but there were so many boxes to check, was this the right information, etc. So, I only started with 2 stars at first. Didn't feel confident going to 4. I'm tech savvy but this was really challenging for me. Not ready to go to 4 until I understand the language or process.
- We did not experience a lot of problems
- We did not receive enough training on the CLASS observation tool because the CLASS Spanish speaking coach had limited time to meet with us
- When I first wanted to Learn about the process of parent Aware ratings, there was not much information regarding how to be culturally diverse. With the help of my coach at the time, I was able to find trainings and received the rating I wanted.
- Where I was able to spend the money through the program, with no upfront costs.
- With staff turnover, getting new staff trained in time for rating
- working with Tiffany on training hour information wasn't very helpful. We found working with Jess our main contact was more helpful.

3.3.2 Recently rated providers: For those that were really challenging, what changes would you recommend to make the process easier for people like you?

- A list of recommended trainings
- Ability to work with Parent Aware people outside of program hours
- Again, for my 2-star rating, I didn't find anything overly challenging due to a great coach!
- Align with Track 1 and Track 2 variances for teachers -- would be helpful
- Allowing coaches to come on site
- Allowing providers to spend their grant money at any store without having to pay out of pocket upfront.
- Another area in which I would've liked to have more support is preparing our teachers for the CLASS observation
- Ask your coach more questions on explaining the paperwork.
- Better directions on what can be ordered
- Career lattice: hard to get people qualified, hard to get transcripts, etc. If it wasn't for our coach, we would have really struggled
- check ins from our coach
- Clearer training process
- Coaches should be from a culturally similar community. They understand providers cultural background and communication needs. PA needs to take more time in matching coaches to providers. My coach is awesome and we work well together. Not every provider is as lucky as I am. When the coach approves the purchases, it builds quality in the program.
- Consider the expectations for quality through the eyes of a center provider with a team of people versus a family child care provider with a person, sometimes maybe two people. Is it a reasonable expectation?
- Contacting providers renewing should be automatic through the mail or email. I do not understand why it needs to be done by someone in the office. The information should be sent out ahead of time to provide enough time to get signed up.
- Could have a frequently purchased items and category
- Ensuring clear directions and guidance
- For checklist of requirements, would help to have links to examples of what PA is looking for. Would make it a lot easier and less stressful.
- For the checklist of requirements, links with examples is a great idea.
- Have some flexibility in getting training hours done when you have new staff
- Have someone visit childcare provider
- Having a package of all information sent to those enrolling
- Help us find CPR/First Aid classes in other (less common) languages
- Helpful to extend the time; gives us flexibility to get through what we have to do, organize the documentation. etc. Three months to start, do, and document something new like parent-teacher conferences, is too short.
- I appreciated being able to do some of my coaching via Zoom. I appreciated being able to email/call Tiffany ___ to get info about my training.
- I feel it is a lot to get done as a family childcare provider working alone.
- I love the coaching i recommend it be mandatory for everyone
- I think the process has really evolved into an easier to work with process and although it is still lengthy, I believe it is very achievable.
- I would recommend that the coaches be able to meet face to face with applicants.
- instructions written out
- Intro to near and far organizations to further their knowledge of children.
- It was more my fault on it. I needed to be more organized
- It's good for family child care providers to meet the same high standards, but people who choose FCC may be looking for a different atmosphere, so it will look different -- so the process should make it more reasonable for one person to do all this paperwork, and not having to resubmit the same information over and over.
- Jargon/lingo can be really hard to understand; make it easier for people to understand.
- Limit the paperwork
- Load up on free trainings! Be proactive with your curriculum and your goals.
- Longer period to complete the process
- Make a list of things that you want.
- Make it possible to place real time orders for pre-approved items.
- Make multiple orders possible so different vendors would be accessible
- Make the rating period longer- 5 years

- make the things that parent aware can do for you more known and available, not just follow these steps to get enrolled
- Make TIME for coaches to explain things
- Meeting after daycare hours if able to. Understanding that is hard for others as well.
- Mentoring from someone who's at the next level -- they know what I don't know because they've done it and I haven't. A coach can't do that, but another provider can. Learning from someone who has done it before would be a bit help.
- More collaborative-style training, in-person or virtual with breakout sessions where we can dialogue with others who have the same background
- more examples or templates
- More guidance on how to efficiently move through the process; what to start early because it takes longer, what I can get done quickly, etc.
- More help from coaches to understand and be supported through the process.
- More in-person training where we also have the chance to learn from each other in addition to the trainer (after COVID)
- More online availability
- More time
- More variety of places to purchase things eligible for reimbursement
- N/a
- No changes needed
- none
- none - the Parent Aware staff provided so much help & support through the process
- None come to mind
- None come to mind at this time
- Not be going through a pandemic but hard to change that.
- Not having to pay first and then get reimbursed
- Not having to renew as often
- Now that I'm going for 3 or 4 star, it's really a problem to have to resubmit everything I already sent for 2 starts in addition to the new requirements for 3 and 4 stars. Should only have to submit new information.
- Offer more times during the daycare day.
- Offer more training or communication training for [coach]
- One challenge for us has been Language. Most of our teachers are Spanish speakers and I would love that resources as the PDP, environmental assessment, etc., were available in Spanish
- Our coaches were always helpful, some issues arose for scheduling needed classes
- Participate in all trainings. Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Perhaps doing one and two stars on a point system rather than having them completely miss stars due to an error
- Providing a base of materials for centers to use across the board (assessment tools, and observation forms etc.)
- Put list of items or approved toys on their Website
- Requirements for degrees for directors
- Resume in person visits.
- Some portion of money could be given in prepaid card
- Someone who has done it before.
- Staff training was really hard during COVID. Online training helped, but there aren't enough to meet the requirements. Provide more online training, and more in Somali so they're easier for my staff to access/understand.
- streamline getting things input into the system faster.
- Struggle to understand grant qualification requirements; want to be sure I qualify before going through the process; would help if those were more clear
- Take advantage of the help a cohort provides!
- Talk about it with administration on things that need to be improved on.
- Talking with your parent aware coach
- That resource/documents are available in other languages like Spanish
- The amount of coaching for the staff. While it is good in the long run, many centers aren't equipped with extra staffing to be able to pull staff out for individual coaching meetings.
- The booklet we use to complete the forms and information needs to be less confusing. It is hard to follow. It is done online and not everyone has Wi-Fi or a computer. While the lattice number can be considered, there should be a pathway for EVERY provider to achieve a 4-star rating. Experience should count for something too. It feels like it is set up for providers with a college education. Our profession does not require a college education. This needs to be an equitable opportunity for every provider who is licensed.
- The timeline to spend the money should be communicated.
- The whole process of being rated is to have quality care for the children; process has to help us achieve that, including organizing groups of providers around the state so we can learn from each other rather than being solo and doing our own thing by ourselves all the time -- being supported by our small groups of other providers. We could learn from other providers how to do new things like those required for the next level.

- To have the opportunity to choose the language in which to conduct the rating process
- Too many goals you have to set. It takes a lot of time. Unfortunately, we are strapped for time and help
- When I was doing therapeutic foster care, even though I did a lot of training beforehand about what to expect, there's an element of not knowing what you don't know - so you have to do it and learn on your own before you know what questions to ask. So sometimes people can't really tell you in advance what it's like -- so that's the benefit of small-group dialogues with other providers to at least learn some things in advance...even if there's more learning to do once I experience it myself.
- When spending grant money and having Parent Aware pay for it make the steps simpler for submitting items providers would like. It got to be very hard to spend grant money.
- With changes in standards and rules over time, parents aren't as aware of how important it is to be in a rated program. Suggest getting information out to parents in hospitals when their children are just born, so they know about PA-rated programs with higher standards.
- Wondering how many people actually know about Parent Aware. On my Facebook groups with other centers, it seems many don't know about it; not sure why they wouldn't know, but they don't. Getting the word out would help.

3.3.3 Recently rated providers: What or who was actually *helpful* in overcoming those challenges, and in what way?

- A friend helped purchase items for my program.
- Again, the PA staff helped so much. They were available, they helped break it down to be manageable & less overwhelming, they checked in frequently
- All of the resources for trainings are a big help for us to get our teachers trained; director also does some and pins them for teachers
- An old co-worker
- Building quality was helpful to talk to and meet other providers.
- Coach helped me to upload the receipt and get the money quickly
- Coach no longer with PA, but was great
- Coach provided details and information.
- Coach showed me how to do it
- Coach showed me the end -- like a lighthouse -- that was really helpful
- Coach support was fabulous and made the process easy to accomplish.
- Coaches were flexible about time; my coach tried hard to make it convenient for me
- Coaches were vital to our process; without them we would have been lost
- Co-hart [coach] Wayne ____
- Dawn and Marianne were always willing to answer questions and help in any way they could. Couldn't have done it without them
- Dawn was awesome and always is! Always fast to reply and helps on whatever is needed
- Definitely my coach!
- Encouragement that there is funds/grant money out there to be used.
- Flexible coach, willing to reschedule.
- Get everything done on time.
- Get over through the process easily.
- Google
- Got pre-approval from them on my list
- Guide the process all the way.
- Having a coach was vital! Going through it on your own would be overwhelming!
- Having others in the Parent Aware with you and local star rated providers willing to help and answer questions was helpful.
- Help me on how to use website to place order for items
- Help me with spending grants money on items
- I also appreciated the help of our coach and all the resources she shared with us
- I had a coworker that went through the parent aware rating process for her home daycare, and she helped me as well.
- I have a great coach.
- I personally like the setup of develop, it helps me keep track of what I am accomplishing and what trainings I have taken. I like that those things can all be in one place and shared across multiple organizations.
- I reached out to my coach for renewal information, and she gave the name of the person to contact so I could get the information.
- I think parent aware is an amazing program to help us use new materials in our program. Allowing us to help increase children's development.
- I went to supervisor and then after a VERY uncomfortable confrontation my coach started to slow down and explain
- I worked with a really helpful recruiter and got help from First Children's Finance (small business cohort), which were really helpful.
- It was helpful to have the "dry run" with my coach -- submitted a draft for review and advice, so it was in better shape before I put it into Develop
- Jennifer ____ is the BEST coach! She had an answer/solution to every question.
- Jess was amazing, she was always very responsive. If she didn't know the answer to a question, she would figure it out. She was willing to help in any way and was incredibly supportive
- Keeping everything organized
- Licensor help us answer questions as well and encouraged us if needed.
- My co - workers, my understanding of my family
- My coach
- My coach
- My coach gave me a lot of ideas; having a daycare is a really long learning curve; always trying to learn a better, more efficient way - what's better for the kids
- My coach guided me through the process but there are times I have time to do the work. Childcare can be stressful and very busy as we work with children. The paperwork gets done when we have rare breaks or time in our off time. We are not able to work on paperwork when we are supervising and caring for children.

Someone needs to rewrite the process so it can be completed without someone directing us through it.

- My coach helped but she even struggled to explain some things
- My coach helped me tremendously
- My coach helped me write the request for the items I needed for my program. I ended up getting a percentage of what I needed. Other providers may not have been able to come up with the percentage they would not allow.
- My coach Karen ___ helped me
- My coach Mary ___ was wonderful.
- My Coach that was provided to me
- My coach was amazing and made the process so much easier than I thought it would be. I was honestly scared at first, but it was not that bad, and the grant money was great to add quality items to my program.
- My coach was really helpful
- My coach. She walked me through it page by page.
- My coached helped in all areas and questions I had
- my co-provider
- My coworker at LCA school.
- My co-workers/team
- My determination
- My direct coach Dawn. She did an amazing job advocating for our program and figuring out what was causing delays.
- My director
- My mom (designated emergency person) watched the kids sometimes so I could work on all this
- My PA coach was very accommodating in when/how we did meetings.
- My parent aware coach has been an important piece to the process. She wholeheartedly wants to see us achieve the rating we strive for.
- my Parent Aware coordinator
- My recruiter was very helpful and supportive; very encouraging; would pick up documents from me, etc., which made a big difference because I couldn't leave during the day because I have to be here for the kids
- No one. We didn't feel like we had proper guidance.
- Online classes, mentorship
- Our coach See ___ is amazing. She is resourceful and patient and that helped so much!
- Our coach was fabulous!!
- Our first year and coach made it very easy for us (director for two centers). Coached and guided throughout the whole process.
- Our liaison - by scheduling times to meet and due dates for the process
- Our owners stepped up a lot and helped out in classrooms as teachers because our staffing was so bad.
- Parent aware coach helped a lot when needing questions answered. Or needing some advice to help my program
- Parent aware coach helped to purchase items
- Parent aware coaches
- Parent aware leader walked me though the steps, but there were many phone calls, emails, messages and visits to complete process.
- Process to apply for supplies grant was pretty streamlined and good communications from Think Small
- Process to apply for supplies grant was pretty streamlined and good communications from Think Small
- Received a welcoming email from our PDA with all kinds of useful information about how to proceed; that was really helpful
- Should keep having the option to choose which star to go for, and give us enough time to get it done. It's a lot especially for one person.
- Sometimes my coach helped by answering questions by email
- Stacy ___ walked me through everything so far with great explanation
- The grant funds definitely helped
- The staff were helpful and thoughtful.
- The staff were very helpful
- Trainings and calls to MDE
- usually, my field rep.
- We had opportunity for some in-person trainings, which I thought were really helpful. With others, learning about PA and had the chance to meet lovely women who shared a lot from their personal experiences. Great opportunities to collaborate with other women who had a lot more experience than I did. Different from how the coach presented the information -- these were people doing what I was, so it was really helpful.
- When I was first beginning, I didn't have a helper, but now I do, which helps a lot
- Yes, all the details were helpful and done.

3.3.4 Recently rated providers: What *wasn't* helpful, and why not?

- Almost missing star 4 rating due to typing error and the way we felt when they said we would get bumped to a rating of one
- Need coaches who understand what it's like working with multiple age groups. For example: because kids like to eat everything, I always have to think first about what would happen if they did! They normally won't do that, but sometimes one just has the idea to do something, and all the rest go along. Have had some real challenges with some of the sensory materials [recommended by coach]... Need ways to control materials such that even in your wildest imagination they can't do something and get hurt as a result.
- Being rushed
- Being told I had to put all items I wanted to purchase into one goal under the category they fit. Meaning even if I were ordering 100 items, I could only have three goals (one for Health and Safety, one for professional development, etc.)
- Coaches necessary for most of us!!
- Covid protocols
- Didn't get information on the overall national concept of quality ratings...
- Early in the process, there wasn't a lot of information (except for grant program incentive) about why PA would be meaningfully for me personally and professionally -- about the big picture "why" I was being offered this incentive to pursue
- Every part of the rating process went smoothly.
- Everything was helpful as it allowed more education plus in the end provided children with more educational toys and improved my program.
- Everything was helpful in some way
- Getting two different answers from my coach.
- Having my coach walk through how to get my first star
- How to promote parents aware
- I don't think my coach was ever a provider, so sometimes what she recommends just doesn't work in my real setting
- I felt that the book that you supply explaining the domains were very helpful.
- I hate to say it, but Tiffany was hard to work with at first. The communication and information given was lacking.
- I really have not had difficulty, there has always been a solution we were able to work out or solve.
- I think all info is helpful in some way
- If I could have done a few meetings outside of daycare hours, that would have given some time to keep focus just on my rating work
- It concerns me that the staff approving and distributing funds do not understand the uniqueness of family childcare and the cultural diversity within it. Implicit bias creeps in and it shows up when the needs of providers are not being met. Providers do not have extra money, especially with covid right now, to pay a percentage of their Parent Aware award. People from low socioeconomic status, the ones we should be reaching out to, are not being lifted up and supported.
- It felt like you were thrown into a lot, especially when it came to Develop. More training with the parent aware piece of develop would be helpful.
- it has all been helpful so far
- Many fields required to submit the receipt. it could be simplified.
- My coach
- My coach is always helpful. I have friends where their coach will give up on them and not help. There needs to be an assessment process with provider input so the system can improve and the coaches doing a great job are recognized. There is no way Parent Aware knows how the provider experience worked for them. No one ever asks.
- N/a
- No in person visits. It was harder to do some things over the computer.
- Not a fan of Develop
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing come to mind
- Nothing, you do awesome
- Parent aware website is hard to find resources on
- Receiving a lot of emails. Sometimes gets overwhelming. Almost rather meet in person or get in mail. Understanding that this year was difficult with pandemic.
- Some of the things we had to do for the rating were useless for my program only because I've been doing it for a long time and my parents never paid much attention to them. For example, a suggestion box. It would probably work better in a center.
- Sometimes navigating Develop could be an arduous process; trying to find the correct trainings was not always easy/convenient. Also, getting things updated in Develop can be time-consuming, for example, I need to

- get some college credits accounted for but the process to update that is not very straight-forward.
- Sometimes the trainings got to be difficult fitting in schedule. But also did what we could do to fit them in to meet requirements.
 - Thank goodness we had wonderful people to back us up and give support on our behalf
 - The amount of time for coaching, but the coaching itself was helpful.
 - The communication from the person doing the purchasing was confusing and not timely. Some items go out of stock or have limited availability or special pricing. Slow turn around means missing out on sales during which programs can get more bang for their buck or even not getting items entirely.
 - the new process of entering everything into the computer system was overwhelming
 - the payment process
 - The process can be frustrating
 - The program coach was extremely helpful, however the steps you have to take after completing the program to receive your grant is baffling.
 - The reimbursement process could be more user friendly
 - The time frame required
 - the totals for 4-star providers (changed now)
 - Too much repetitive reporting. Done for licensing should NOT have to do again for Parent aware.
 - Waiting for others to order items for me instead of getting the funds then just bring able to turn in receipts like other grants
 - We are structured a little differently so the fact that my Site Coordinator couldn't be counted for one of the bonus areas, when she is direct staff supervisor & also helps in classrooms, just because our title for her isn't the same as the PA title
 - We need help manual every time to search and find the section in the portal
 - Well, Covid was not great for so many of us and the challenges that the pandemic brought was something that none of us could have predicted
 - When it comes to training, it feels sometimes like they really haven't provided care themselves; such as providing an example with older and younger kids that really won't work or be safe with the littler ones
 - While I was able to get through to a 4-star rating. I had to do every point possible with no wiggle room, and I only have 8 classes until I graduate with my degree. The process is still broken as a provider without a college education and a lower lattice level will not be able to. One of my Somali provider friends has her CDA and cannot get a 4-star rating. We need an equitable opportunity to improve and provide quality care. Rural providers do not have the resources available to them like metro providers do. We barely have stores available to us outside of an hour's drive to buy our basic business supplies. A variety of training is not available to rural providers, and many do not have Wi-Fi or a computer to do online training.

3.3.5 Recently rated providers: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about your experiences, questions, or concerns about Parent Aware?

- Bois Forte and the families of Bois Forte are thankful for the Parent Aware Program.
- Childcare is disappearing by the day. Rural providers struggle to provide the required experiences for the children as they are not available in their community. We need to make Parent Aware achievable by all
- easier access
- Ensure process for spending parent aware grant money becomes easier.
- Even though a 4-star rating would increase payments received we don't see the value in the time it would take
- Have an option of more than 1 coach as not everyone clicks
- Having a good coach really helps for this process
- Having people who used to be providers stop by periodically or offer training or guidance directly in my home program -- so they can see my layout and my kids and offer specific suggestions for improvement
- I feel like Parent Aware needs to do a better job of showing families the benefits of attending a provider with a parent aware rating. They have no idea.
- I feel that most people are just going for the scholarship; I don't have anyone on the scholarship
- I give all my families information about Parent Aware, and most didn't know anything about it beforehand; they found me other ways
- I like the idea of Parent Aware and hope providers participate
- I love parent Aware, it helped me to learn what makes a high-quality program.
- I love the program; I love that it give the money to help with your program to make it how you want
- I personally thought it was a good experience. If you're willing to put in a little extra time and work, it has many benefits. I enjoyed my experience.
- I really liked the process and feel like I'm learning
- I think a QRIS is important. I am grateful for the opportunity to comb through my program.
- I think it is a lot of hard work! I have great respect to be state licensed and feel parent aware is a step up to prove our education ability.
- I think it it's a good program. Instead of renewing the process the same way over and over every two years they should just have the coaches visit the home and see that the program is doing what is needed.
- I wish that there wasn't a 2-year commitment for the grant money.
- I'm not the cheapest provider in my area; I want to provide kids with learning and growing opportunities as best I can, and I want to run my own business; trying to treat them nicely, calmly, show them new things, provide behavior guidance, support them to be themselves.
- It is a great program and I'm grateful that we have access to it. I have a small program, so it is easier for me to get everything done.
- It is a rigorous process. I am signed up to start the cohort for my 3rd star.
- It was a fairly easy process but finding the time to complete the trainings etc., was hard
- It's a great program.
- I've always had great reps. To help me through this process. I can't think of anything now
- I've been very appreciative for the program & has it has helped me better my childcare program
- Lay out the program in the simplest terms possible for ALL providers
- Let the rating last 5 years
- Licensed family childcare programs.
- Love it, I am so glad I made the decision to participate.
- Make access to funds easier
- more grant money along the process would help pay for expenses for either classes, or paying staff for the extra work they are putting in
- More publicity needs to be done about the star rating system. A lay person sees one star (out of four) as a pretty low score. I requested my rating not be put in the county website due to the misperception. However, with 3–4-star programs eligible for more/different funding the perception that 1–2-star ratings are seriously inferior (and not serving different populations in some ways) may be closer to the legislature's opinion than stated.
- My coach was a huge help
- No other concerns
- Nothing that I can think of - maybe less time between finishing & then receiving the rating so we aren't waiting in suspense!
- Nothing, I really like it
- Option to buy products from Amazon for Parent aware.

- Overall, I enjoyed the PA rating process; I feel as though it benefited my FCC in that it gave me new/different perspectives and things to implement.
- Parent Award is good program
- Parent Aware and Think Small are like the same thing but there are too many names -- confusing to parents; most people don't know what this is all about; better to have just one name like Parent Aware that's easy to remember
- Parent aware comes across as a paper pushing, policing division of childcare. You don't seem concerned w how much time it takes away from dealing w children. Develop has helped but has a long way to go. Continue to connect all agencies under the same umbrella so paperwork can be streamlined, and we can spend time with children not chasing paper in a windstorm.
- Parent Aware is a wonderful program that helped me to be confident in providing quality care.
- Parent Aware is great, but what about the high turnover rate at many centers even those who are PA rated? How do you manage to maintain that star rating when staff come and go so frequently?
- Parent aware is to be a step ABOVE building on the foundation of licensing. DO NOT make providers redo basic issues covered by licensing. Your systems should be tied together to have all pertinent information for programs accessible to both organizations.
- Parents need to be more involved with provider
- Proud to be a partner with parent aware
- Providers are intimidated by the amount of work it is said it takes to achieve a rating.
- Reduce paperwork requirements
- Reimbursement process should be simplified
- Sometimes Parent Aware seems more like a measure of how well someone can complete paperwork than of the quality of their child care program.
- That with the right coach it is an enjoyable experience.
- The process is easy. Maybe allow 4-star rated programs to go through virtual licensing visits
- The Professional Development monitoring and opportunities are great to have our staff well trained and on track with the best practices
- The scholarships that are offered by Parent Aware are not following the child. One parent controls the scholarship contract. Why does there need to be a difference between pathway I and Pathway II? The money should follow the child. If the child attends childcare and preschool, both programs should be able to bill the scholarship until the money is gone. One parent should not control the funds. It becomes an item in a divorce. IF it followed the child, the child always benefits, not the preschool program or the childcare program.
- The star rating is misleading. When someone hears your 2-star rated, I personally feel like that sounds like a low rating if I didn't understand the rating process. Scholarship changing with the different stars I don't think should have happened.
- The time should be communicated
- There are a lot of requirements for staffing qualifications, I don't want to say lower the teaching requirements, but that is almost what needs to happen based on the amount of qualified staff we have available.
- There are great day cares out there who do not have ratings and if we had proper help in guidance to be able to work towards the rating it would greatly help minority Day Cares like us.
- This is an amazing way to support early childhood education center to get better
- This process increased the quality of our program. Thank you for the opportunity.
- We do appreciate the resources that come along with Parent Aware and the process.
- When I first started parenting, I didn't know about Parent Aware; it's definitely helpful in finding daycare and preparing parents -- so I wish it were better known to parents, like through advertising in doctors' or midwives' offices. And some of the training that's offered to new parents can be expensive... (good things are hidden!)
- When you lose your rating or drop stars it impacts many families, it would be good to have a process to be able to help families with funding instead of them just losing everything maybe mid year. So they don't have to leave programing because they can no longer afford it
- Why are unrated programs against ratings
- Why do centers get automatically rated

3.3.6 Recently rated providers: Advice to *unrated* BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers

This question was created early in the process and invited recently rated providers to suggest questions for interviewers to ask *unrated* providers, or to offer advice to *unrated* providers. Responses below include only the advice offered.

- Advice would be that the process is worth the money & program improvement gained!
- Have a happy rated provider connect with unrated providers to talk about the program. Most of the time I learn they have been fed inaccurate information about the program.
- Apart from coach, do you need mentor?
- Better explain to parents and providers what stars mean and the commitment that providers make to getting better
- Get rated! You're already doing 90% of the work and it's so easy!
- I think it is a lack of knowledge or information for providers as far as what parent aware is and why it's helpful! The grant money should be a huge incentive, and I think there's misinformation as far as what it entails. Until we started the process, we thought that it cost us money to be a part of, and didn't realize how much more the benefits outweigh the amount of work put into it.
- I wanted to get rated to learn more and get someone to help me; the whole process requires time and energy besides this job which is about 10 hour a day -- but we really don't get paid more (because people come to me directly rather than through the county)...beyond learning and improving ourselves.
- I would recommend the process to other providers.
- If you haven't started the process, what are you waiting for? It is well worth the time and energy to go through it. The financial incentives are also really great and worth shooting for the 4-star rating.
- It seems like a lot, however, it is all things you are already doing
- Knowing why they are choosing to do it. The grant money is nice but so is the knowledge. It's a good program if children are your passion and you want to make sure you are providing quality care and education to your daycare families.
- Let them know about the importance of the Building Quality Pathway. It is not a good idea go for the full-rating path if the Center Administrator does not know the process.
- Make sure that they know why each step is important to them at their daycare.
- Parent Aware is a huge accomplishment
- Parent Aware is a rewarding experience.
- Parent aware is easy, helps you with ideas and helps with your program
- Rating process is a commitment that is very helpful to offer quality care for your families.
- Start taking classes right away since you need so many hours.
- Strongly encourage unrated providers to take the time and join Parent Aware it is so worth it and educational just will help improve your program. No matter how long you have been in childcare there is always something more to learn each day. Parent Aware also helps give you support to resources.
- That it is hard to achieve but we are recognized for our daily hard work with children i achieving Pre-k goals
- The process has helped me grow as a provider and was worth the time.
- What are you waiting for?
- Would you like to be able to purchase developmentally appropriate toys, equipment, and training?
- Would your families benefit from a scholarship?

3.4 Implementation Partners and Advocates

Questions for implementation partners and early childhood advocates:

1. What are some system-level or process issues for participating in Parent Aware that may be especially challenging for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and geographically diverse providers?
2. What resources -- organizations, individuals, websites, training, materials -- have you seen BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers use that substantively helped them successfully participate in Parent Aware?
3. What resources have you seen these providers access that do not seem to be as helpful for the Parent Aware process?
4. What new or different resources, support, or assistance would be better or more helpful for BIPOC or Greater Minnesota providers going through the PA process?
5. What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about system-level or statewide issues or solutions to improve the PA process for BIPOC and Greater MN providers?

In addition, the survey asked participants about their connection with Parent Aware, and virtual session participants were asked to indicate theirs. **Survey options were** Child Care Aware of Minnesota staff, Parent Aware partner organization, advocacy organization, educator/educational institution, and other (please specify).

Virtual session participants and survey respondents *who provided this information* included:

- Child Care Aware of Minnesota staff, Tribal team members, and Minnesota Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC) staff, including: Self-identified BIPOC staff members, Parent Aware coach, quality coach, outreach and engagement program lead, Tribal Head Start program, Parent Aware recruiter, professional development specialist, language access line specialist, quality support manager, professional development support coordinator, program manager, coordinator
- Implementation partners such as Community Action organizations, Milestones
- Minnesota Initiative Foundation staff
- Foundation staff
- Advocates, either individuals or with organizations, such as child care associations and networks, coalitions, partnerships, and similar
- Educators or with an educational institution

3.4.1 Partners, advocates: What are some system-level or process issues for participating in Parent Aware that may be especially challenging for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and geographically diverse providers?

- A lot of travel/unavailable time for coaches to assist these programs.
- A third-hand perspective: There's more "help" for lower rated providers; hence, some providers prefer to stay at a level 2 (for example) and not rise to a 4, even though the reimbursement might be higher. The consultation is what they value most.
- Access to broadband/internet is limited
- Access to culturally rooted strategies
- Access to technology to support online learning - time, equipment, broadband, discomfort with online learning
- Access to the internet
- Accessibility to education
- Accessibility to education
- Afraid of asking for help
- Although a social security number is not required to participate in PA, it is required for licensing and providers must be licensed in order to participate in PA. This affects a number of immigrant communities that may only have an ITIN.
- Any upfront costs for quality.
- approved curriculums do not all include culture or how that impacts care and teaching styles.
- assuming all have access to and skills to navigate things electronically
- Assuming that all providers are alike. Family structures are different and when life issues come up the process takes a back seat, which causes for cancellations of set meetings or sites being non-responsive (In some cases)
- assuming Wi-Fi is standard in all areas
- Availability of in-person training in proximity of programs.
- Can we make the PA grants more flexible? Do we need to prove every dollar spent or can we allow providers to spend as they see fit? (Think Retain grants)
- Coaches are not always responsive
- Coaches have large caseloads and cannot be as responsive as needed.
- Coaches often do not have an understanding of the cultural context in which BIPOC providers are operating and therefore are not equipped to advise or advocate for them. More BIPOC coaches with appropriate training and appropriate materials are needed.
- Coaching in different languages. Language line is cumbersome to use.
- Coaching staff that reflects the providers' backgrounds
- Cohorts are rigid, start and stop, without flexibility for individual needs to find training, etc.
- Communication of changes
- Communications sent out in English, how sent out, come too much and too fast. Just getting used to the way things are being done, and do not learn about it until it is already happening. Example MNStreams to Develop...would have been a transitional period -- getting to go to Develop rather than a hard and fast cut off. Programs lost information that way. Changes are going to happen, they are expected, but a lot of the information goes out electronically -- not the best way to reach ELL or BIPOC providers.
- Communities of color may not access email on a regular basis. Not only ELL, also older generation providers
- Computer capabilities - access to computer/iPad etc.
- Computer literacy & broad band width
- Computer literacy combined with broadband width not accommodating
- Continued support is needed for sustainability after a provider becomes rated.
- Cost of Training, Curriculum, and all of the things that are needed to become rated.
- Cost to benefits is low
- Cultural misunderstandings
- Culturally competent coaches
- Develop could be easier to access and navigate through.
- Develop is hard for programs - need simple instructions.
- Develop is too confusing to navigate
- Disconnect between PA and the local providers; Tribal providers don't trust an outside system
- Distance to closest Parent Aware person
- documentation process is heavy on paperwork
- Does parent Aware have too many pieces? Are they all necessary for quality? Has it become more about paperwork and less about relationship?
- Don't know the person, the "Coach," to share my business with
- Driving distances
- Driving distances--adds in layer of difficulty for coaches to reach a program & spend enough time to meet hours
- Education levels for some, mainly in immigrant community, not easy to reach higher stars, especially if there are language barriers.

- Education requirements
- Educations barriers when dealing with educators from other countries transcripts, no transcripts, no way to gather documentation of past education and the barrier of starting over,
- ELL and literacy in both home language &/or English-- related to paperwork and navigating all the systems
- Equal access to training to meet requirements - transportation, trainings only offered in specific town, lack of reliable internet.
- False Narratives: PA is so difficult
- Feelings that culture is not supported; the idea of what is natural from a Tribal/cultural standpoint is not supported by PA system
- Geographic location
- Grant dollars and spending for sites that cannot spend out and then be reimbursed, due to lack of funds. Having a system that could allow for items for non-vendor sites to be purchased on behalf of the program (so things have changed)
- Grant spending policies - reimbursements vs. direct payments
- Having CDA training available in set languages continually
- Having enough coaches from BIPOC Communities who can connect with the lived experiences of the educators
- Having to print out and scan the application to join can be difficult for childcare providers that don't have technology, or the language is not native
- Higher education requirements
- How much were BIPOC and rural providers involved in the development of Parent Aware?
- Huge barriers for people to become licensed, including language
- I don't know why the providers are not pursuing the Parent Aware rating
- I hear frequently that they do not see the value of doing it.
- I wish there was a way to partner providers with culturally similar backgrounds. It would make the process more understandable.
- Immigrant staff may not have a diploma or access to get it. How can we allow quality staff to still be able to participate in the program.
- Immigrant/migrant distrust of government, or not understanding the cultural construct into which they're entering
- In general, the Parent Aware system is oriented to ratings and not enough to "improvement". (The "I" in QRIS). Scary!
- Indigenize the PA system for urban communities especially
- inflexibility around deadlines for submission...kinda like the idea of floating cohorts
- in-person training not in proximity to programs and often enough, but rural access to internet makes that option hard
- Internet access
- Internet access
- internet access & technology skills
- Internet connection for programs in rural areas
- internet issues for greater MN
- Is the definition of Quality the same across all cultures - or is it Eurocentric?
- Is there a way to check with the diverse groups if we are being culturally sensitive to each group? Is there an indicator that may not be culturally sensitive?
- Knowledge of KCF/training requirements/intimidation with process overall
- lack of access and experience using technology for training and submission
- Lack of access to interesting, relevant and accessible training/PD
- Lack of audio support on Develop
- Lack of diversity across the CCA system as a whole
- lack of equipment to do work more efficiently, for example most programs work on a phone screen vs. a laptop or tablet.
- lack of flexibility in Develop process from initial membership to submission, lacking of skills/ experience working online, or lack of consistent reliable connection.
- lack of materials in multiple languages
- Lack of other multilingual resources - video, audio recordings to supplement guides and other written materials.
- Lack of representation in staff who work within various roles.
- Lack of standards/indicators that give "credit" for being culturally responsive
- Lack of training for staff - staff need to be familiar with the fact that different cultures operate differently.
- Lack of trainings in certain languages
- Lack of translated documents, not just the application and agreement
- Lack of transportation.
- Language Barrier
- Language barrier
- Language barriers
- Language barriers
- Language barriers
- Language is center/schools not FCC

- Language, I have many Latina providers call me with questions all the time but I'm busy doing childcare and can't always help and I'm not a coach
- Lattice Level of education. It's unfair to many . I believe experience and trainings should add up as education.
- Limited coaches from communities similar to all participants
- Male quality coaches
- Many BIPOC and rural providers (that's I've heard about) are not able to participate in trainings for Parent Aware because they don't have resources (staff time or money).
- Marketing and Recruitment not tailored to specific communities
- May need more time for the BQ and PA coaching processes during challenging times like the pandemic
- Maybe there are having trouble maneuvering through develop or having trouble with accessing the training.
- Money/funding
- more engagement and intentional collaboration with tribes, or more funding directly to tribes to support hiring of tribal coaches and/or tribal liaisons
- Most successful initial connection may be through another provider already involved. A letter or email from the state may not be enough to convince someone to get involved.
- Mostly white, English-speaking coaches
- My assumption is the Native American providers don't want to share information about their program with DHS.
- Navigating Develop
- Navigating Develop tool/Learning record
- Need more dedicated coaches and mentors who are BIPOC
- Needing to pay out of pocket for things and then being reimbursed
- No culturally relevant marketing - people do not see themselves in Parent Aware.
- Not all PA requirements transfer well to BIPOC cultures.
- Not all providers are at the same education level. Some coaches are more supportive at that education level than others.
- Not all providers have the same access to Wi-Fi. Some not at all. It is hard to research and gather supports. It limits the type of observation and curriculum tools. It should be equal access and an equitable process.
- Not enough culturally competent coaches
- Not enough ESL coaches to assist programs in their home language
- Not everyone has the technology available
- Not having or being able to afford high speed internet for coaching and training opportunities
- Not having the funds for reimbursement so providers are forced to purchase items from lakeshore or Kaplan
- Not having the right equipment at home, like computers
- Not looking at impacts of trauma that has happened in certain areas N. Minneapolis -George Floyd's murder. Supporting programs beyond PA rating
- Ongoing training on how to use develop tool
- Overall communication, disjointed & confusing, piecemeal
- PA structure - program support should exist at any time, so they are better prepared when entering a cohort (Develop memberships, Lattice steps, required training completed). It does say this in the Participation Agreement, but there is no clear way to ensure it's done across the board. This creates setbacks for programs when they enter a cohort.
- Paperwork heavy process - could be hard for someone with limited written language abilities
- Parent Aware is too "in the box"
- People having education that they can't access proof of (ex. from other countries).
- People who don't have transportation to get to the library for internet access, and \$ for that transportation, etc.
- Perhaps lack of coaches from similar cultures.
- Possible discrepancies in rating QDPs submitted in a language other than English.
- Program getting the coaching they need not all the same.
- Providers do not an equitable opportunity to achieve a 4-star rating. The lattice level inhibits that equitable opportunity for success.
- Qualitative data needs to be collected on a regular and periodic basis so that the PA process can be better formulated.
- Racism and language barriers: Most of the people helping you get rated are white, native English speakers. Licensors are usually white English speakers. The support people are usually white English-speaking people. The system was created and run by mostly white English speakers.
- RBPB requirements for Quality Coaching endorsement.
- Readily available interpreters in greater MN
- Reimbursement vs. up front quality grants
- Reliable internet access
- Remote areas with limited internet access
- Required paperwork only in English
- Requirements that are not culturally responsive
- Requiring FFC to turn homes into centers
- Residence or immigration status
- Respect

- Rural providers do not have access to the same variety of quality training to meet PA requirements. Finding in-person training for those who need training in their home language is challenging in rural areas (nonexistent). Online training is not always a solution with limited Wi-Fi in rural communities.
- Rural providers struggle with technology. They also have less resources available in their communities. They have to travel to reach some of those experiences required by Parent Aware. How do we balance that with requirements for quality?
- Since everything is on computer there has to be a knowledge to know what to look for
- Some coaches do not provide the same supports. I know of providers who have been left to navigate the system on their own while others get walked through it. There needs to be an evaluation tool for providers as they go through the process or at least at the end of the process so there can be growth and a pathway to success.
- Some documents only provided in English.
- Some indicators may not be culturally appropriate for certain cultures. Lack of flexibility in PA rating submission process.
- Some of the terminology we use in our materials may not be appropriate or meaningful
- Step One: Programs need to be licensed, and licensing for non-English speaking programs can be challenging.
- Targeted outreach is essential - it is especially helpful to reach providers when they are just becoming or newly licensed.
- Technology
- Technology
- Technology issues, they feel they just don't have any extra time, they aren't aware of the support system to help them become parent aware rated
- Technology skills
- technology skills vary from person to person
- the application and agreement requiring handwritten signatures, when they can type a signature for a federal grant
- The assumption that all programs, will not have life issues that will affect the follow through process and timing of the Full Rating process.
- The cost structure for BIPOC providers as small businesses is not understood. A better framework and understanding are needed for these small businesses.
- The current Parent Aware system's definition of quality care is incomplete for infants and toddlers. Nearly every indicator is aimed at preschool age (3 and up). This is a problem across the board, but has implications due to cultural and linguistic needs of infants and toddlers and their families.
- The education requirements for the higher stars.
- the participation agreement not being available on Develop
- The process is long, can be confusing, and not all providers have the same education level.
- The research and expertise from people who are experienced, culturally connected, etc., is often missing from courses and other training.
- The system does not prioritize culturally appropriate qualifications.
- The system should allow people to connect with a PERSON they are comfortable with.
- The timing and structure of the cohort model for PA rating does not work for many BIPOC providers.
- The voices of BIPOC providers are not captured in a regular and systematic way. Therefore, processes and information that is relevant to their needs and experiences are generally not easily available. There is a disconnect between the things that matter to them and their communities and the availability to information and reasonable processes by which the information can be accessed. Happy to elaborate more.
- There are barriers to licensing for people, especially if you are low-income.
- There are providers that rely only on their phone as they do not have a computer. It is difficult to get the documents needed to complete the PA process.
- There is not enough support for providers to do everything they have to do already.
- There needs to be more flexibility.
- Time
- Time is always a major barrier for providers
- Time, and tech for very rural providers.
- Too far to travel for the trainings; after providing care all day, in-person training is an hour or more away, and some specialty training is even farther
- Too tired after a long day of working with children
- training availability in rural MN
- Training in the set language available regularly
- Training not relevant to community needs. Trainings could be a challenge - distance, language, required hours.
- Trainings in preferred language.
- Transcripts or educations (from other places) not being fully counted
- translated documents are not readily available
- Translating concepts, not just language
- Translation of materials

- Translation/Interpretation services readily available in only three languages (LAL). The DHS line is more difficult to navigate.
- Travel distance to a training location to complete PA hours
- Tribal licensing off reservation boundaries/service areas to license BIPOC early childhood programs like child care, use the same language as the service agreement as foster care that allows tribes, ICWA, to license foster homes off reservations and go statewide.
- Trust
- Understanding how known ways of doing things may be parallel in concept though not exact in practice
- Universities offering training related to KCF have diversity issues of their own. Orientations related to culture are needed for colleges and universities.
- Value for the amount of work involved.
- Value of investment/return not clear

3.4.2 Partners, advocates: What resources -- organizations, individuals, websites, training, materials -- have you seen BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers use that substantively *helped* them successfully participate in Parent Aware?

- A PDA who is willing to work with them to bring training to their center in a requested language.
- Any agency/person that understands privilege.
- Being specifically and individually invited to join Parent Aware.
- Bilingual-bicultural coaches at Think Small helping BIPOC programs navigate the system
- Build your own program
- Build Your Own Program (Think Small) staff support
- Build Your Own program at Think Small
- CCA
- Center for Inclusive Child Care
- Child Care Aware is a resource that is accessed to obtain information to participate in Parent Aware
- CICC Coaching.
- Coach who helps walk them through the paperwork
- Coaches
- Coaches - Addition of more coaches to reduce caseloads.
- Coaches - sometimes with translation or with language abilities
- Coaches of color and many cultural backgrounds
- coaches that are bi-lingual.
- Coaches that speak their primary language
- Coaches who work with them starting where they are
- Coaches/PDAs from the same cultural background or who speak the same language.
- Coaches/PDA's guiding them through the processes
- coaching in their primary language
- Collaborative partners that share the importance of Parent Aware-Public Health, MIFS, Mental Health Collaboratives, First Children's Finance, IEIC, etc. Some with incentives but most just sharing the messages
- Cultural congruity really helps
- Culturally appropriate training
- Culturally relevant trainings are needed. Trainings should have stories and include experiences that are relevant to providers.
- customized supports through Think Small's culturally specific staff
- Develop - being able to access staff training records and see clearly (in one place) what we need to work on and gaps in our training.
- Develop handouts that help set up Classrooms, apply for memberships, etc.
- Eager to learn: having access to ETL Anytime learning modules was very helpful for our staff. It allowed a great amount of flexibility.
- ECI coalitions
- FaCET (Family and Community Engagement Tools) would be a great way to train coaches AND to collect qualitative data. Needs to be used on a regular and periodic basis
- FaCET (Family and Community Engagement Tools), a survey tool that collects qualitative data , can be EXTREMELY helpful in collecting qualitative data from BIPOC providers. The data base is at Wilder Foundation.
- Family engagement apps
- Family members that are bilingual assisting them with paperwork and interpretation in visits.
- Family members who are bilingual to read and translate documents.
- FCCs have access to a FB page specifically for PA participation, not enough are BIPOC but greater MN yes
- First Children's Finance
- Free trainings and supports
- Free, online trainings are always great for those that don't have time to travel
- Goal setting and planning steps for meeting indicator steps
- Grants to purchase materials needed for a higher rating.
- Greater MN providers can sign up for training lists from develop but they do not have email access or Wi-Fi access in their homes, so they rely on emails delivered to a different household.
- Group coaching sessions
- Group Coaching/ Learning Communities
- Having an interpreter or another staff to assist with translation.
- Having other younger family members assist with tech example: sharing screen, zoom and Microsoft Teams,
- Hmong Early Childhood Coalition has been able to provide in-person training to Hmong providers in the last year. They've mentioned that this has been helpful since they do not know how to access the virtual platform.
- Hmong providers have mentioned the language line staff at Think Small being helpful with answering questions about trainings.
- I think some intermediary organizations, local provider associations, etc., can be helpful if they have the right information

- In White Earth, the tribal child care licensor works side by side with tribal early childhood educator, and together they created a network of PA rated child care system, and they support them with quality dollars and coaching them thru the PA QRIS, in collaboration with C.C.A. PA coach
- Interpersonal connections
- Interpreters
- It's difficult to know having never worked with BIPOC programs
- Lack of access to Resources- technology
- Language Access Line
- Language Access Line
- Language Access Line
- language barriers
- Language line at Think Small- When sites have issues with the paperwork, I know them to contact the language line to have them read materials when the coach is not available
- learning communities
- Learning communities
- Learning communities to support coaching and provide a space for programs to build their network.
- Licensors
- Mahube ____
- Materials made by coaches in languages educators can understand, with step-by-step pictures and/or videos.
- Mental Health Consultation for PA participants.
- Mental health consultation??
- Minimal Diverse Coaches
- Minimal Translated Materials
- MNTRECC
- More courses related to the KCF on culture need to be developed and available through Achieve/Develop.
- NAEYC - referring to the NAEYC website for specific information related to the code of ethics and training opportunities for our staff. I also found valuable help related to curriculum from NAEYC as we reevaluated our curriculum and observation tools and looked to make changes.
- Navigating a complex system
- New financial incentives for providers not tied to CCAP or scholarships.
- Online training opportunities making it easier to access PD
- Other programs that have already earned a Parent Aware rating
- Other programs that have navigated the Parent Aware process
- PA Recruiter -- 1:1 support
- Parent Aware coach
- Parent Aware Coaches, and PDA's who will go to provider and help walk them through the process (pre-COVID) setting up ZOOM Meeting
- Partnerships with MIFs to provide free trainings--with "extras" like dinners and/or additional resource giveaways
- PD Specialists in certain organizations
- PDA
- PDAs
- People coming from war-torn countries may not have had access to even a HS education, or if they did, may not be able to prove that (no documentation available)
- People with advanced degrees in other countries get no credit for that here
- Personal connections and mentoring are best.
- Professional development advisors, Free trainings, anytime Learning, coaches. tribal licensors
- Providers appreciate their Tribal Licensors, as they seem to have a better relationship with them; they are a support within their community. Makes them feel more comfortable
- Providers in Greater Minnesota rely on each other to learn about training available. If they have an association, they sometimes use them as a resource. We can sign up on develop to get the updated training available, but again you need to have access to Wi-Fi to receive it. Many use an email in a different household and hope they get the updates in time because they do not have a computer. This process is not friendly for those who do not have access to technology
- QDP has many unwritten and/or not clear expectations - a rubric with clearly defined expectations would be helpful for everyone, including those working for CCA MN
- Quality coach- connection
- Quality improvement grants
- Re: being individually invited - extra important in a field of mostly women, who are historically less likely to put themselves forward for something without being invited (to run for office, go for an award, etc.) - women in our society often don't think they are qualified to do something that they very much are.
- Reading Corps
- scholarships to pay for CDA costs upfront--moving along the career ladder and the associated costs can be a barrier
- Small business grants and stabilization grants
- Strategic meetings with agencies that support child care providers (e.g., County/Tribal Licensors, Child Care Aware, First Children's Finance, etc.)

- Tailored trainings with trainers who can provide the training in specific languages.
- Talking with others who have already gone through the process.
- Technical assistance
- Technologies for remote coaching
- The coach providing the forms and step by step walking through them.
- The coaches meeting providers where they are and working in a partnership with them to achieve their goals.
- The FCC licenser.
- The MIFs
- The need for culturally and linguistically appropriate materials.
- The parent aware recruiter contacting in person or phone to help them understand what they need to do.
- The people in our region that represent Parent Aware are very friendly and approachable.
- The providers that are in process, new or, already licensed ask trainers for help in understanding develop or finding the training they need. We need a resource that is easily understood
- The recruiter as a resource
- The tribal licenser and other EC tribal staff, for example White Earth has a PA liaison is another partner in the process.
- Their coach and PDA
- Think Small
- Think Small
- think small and its various resources
- Think Small and Teach and Retain
- Think Small coaches
- Think Small Interpretive Language Line
- Think Small was very helpful to me through the language line.
- Training brought to their center and provided in home language and/or with appropriate interpretation
- Training coordinators to evaluate training value for which star level
- Translation issues - need more live individuals to help build relationships
- translators
- Tribal licensers and FCC licensers
- Tribal licensers/PDA
- Veteran educators who have had great experiences
- Websites: Center for Inclusive Childcare, Zero to Three, Childcare Aware
- White Earth has a tribal Parent Aware liaison and a tribal licenser that fully support Parent Aware participation. They provide a trusting relationship foundation for our coaches to work alongside the program with them.
- Wildflower Foundation

3.4.3 Partners, advocates: What resources have you seen these providers access that do not seem to be as helpful for the Parent Aware process?

- Any of the materials that are not translated/interpreted for them including Develop, QDP, etc.
- Being able to afford trainings for staff
- Being able to get foreign degrees and transcript on Develop to receive a higher rating
- Develop guides
- Develop handouts that help set up Classrooms, apply for memberships, etc.
- Develop is confusing, you have to learn how to navigate through. For some providers that don't use this much, you have to learn each time you log in. Always seems to be changing.
- develop trainings that are not relevant with either content or language and then misunderstanding from that
- Develop understanding to ESL educators
- DEVELOP user guides if someone is not very techie
- Develop!
- DHS
- Differing QIS spending practices amongst Districts, some are better able to help purchase items up front, and some operate on reimbursement only.
- Educators in the community who have had negative experiences
- Electronic communication ONLY - this is not usually an effective way to communicate with BIPOC programs.
- ETL tests in English only
- ETL trainings that were in different languages, but the tests were in English (maybe some of that is fixed now)
- For oral cultures expecting all information in a written form is a much longer process for them.
- Formal, impersonal letters and emails are not effective.
- Guides/resources that contain too much info, hard to follow.
- Head Start auto ratings are built on solid child assessment data. Auto ratings for school districts??
- How-to guides on Develop not meeting full needs. Those who already have some understanding can use them. Very difficult for those who are beginners.
- Information on the benefits to make joining worth their while!!
- Informational Sessions
- International jobs being added to Develop system. Foreign country addresses and zip codes and phone numbers.
- Interpreters - lots of interpreter complaints with trainings.
- Just translating materials into a home language is not enough. Having someone to coach/advise in home language is key to helping an ELL educator navigate the process.
- lack of training on how to use Develop/ EQUIP
- Licensors
- Licensors
- Limited translations on Develop - not enough, not very helpful.
- May need to revise written instructions and even how we present indicators by audience so that everyone can "see themselves" in the materials.
- Not sure if this applies but, ZenDesk can be challenging for ELL providers to use
- Not taking into account Provider learning disabilities
- Observers and NAEYC accreditation
- Online storage of credentialing pieces; we've been a part of the "keep your certificate" group for so many years – this new process is daunting
- On-line submission is only in English (that I am aware of), and navigating is difficult
- Only being able to provide a coach who is not bilingual for programs who clearly need support in a language other than English.
- Other programs that have navigated the Parent Aware process
- Partnership with Head Start and Schools does not help the FCC provider in the long range/changes
- Programs going to Facebook instead of their coach with questions and getting misinformation.
- Programs understanding group goals process or fully developing the individual instructions beyond it being on a lesson plan.
- QDP
- QDP-Is not translated having coaching to translate documents has been helpful
- Seems that head start educators don't use Develop as much as child care, would be interesting to see the comparisons, if so, could be due to the automatic rating for Head Start programs, so no need/or incentives to vs cc has to go thru the process for rating
- Some coaches are not responsive

- Some new updates to Develop use terminology that even English speakers struggle with understanding what they mean - i.e., "Qualification Type"
- Some of the Develop guides are confusing for them
- Some of the guides that are only in English. I agree
- Some of the neighborhood groups on Facebook
- Some suburban/rural programs do not understand what a culturally appropriate item/practice is. (Maybe additional resources regarding this?)
- Sometimes there is misinformation or misinterpretation by some provider groups
- T3.3 Programs need to do more than complete a checklist and goals that are not implemented a required diversity training would be a good suggestion
- Teaching strategies gold and the like
- The automatic 4-star ratings for Head Start and school district-based programs are defeating for many child care providers - it feels that they have to do more work with fewer resources.
- The Grants system on Develop!
- The new grants system on Develop
- The PA Readiness Assessment checklist
- The QDP - without help from a coach some programs do not understand it.
- Training interpreters - most are not familiar with the ECE field and are primarily medical translators.
- Unless parents are utilizing Early Learning Scholarships, parents don't know about PA, especially in tribal communities
- Value is placed on certain types of training rather than what providers may feel are actually more helpful and valuable. In essence, it devalues what providers transfer directly into their practice
- We do not have an intake customer (educator line) hotline to support providers who speak a second language.
- We have had providers say that develop is too hard to navigate, they aren't technology savvy, they don't understand how to upload training,
- What is NOT helpful is training that is hostile to the lived experiences of BIPOC communities, and that can actually compete with and endanger family and community bonds.
- Written QDP for communities with limited experience with written communication
- Written QDP is only for the 'mail-in' process and not for the 'upload' process

3.4.4 Partners, advocates: What new or different resources, support, or assistance would be better or more helpful for BIPOC or Greater Minnesota providers going through the PA process?

- A crosswalk of how traditional ways of providing care/education connect with PA requirements
- A lot more diversity among contracted staff that support programs participating in Parent Aware. This may mean alternative routes to qualifying for certain positions, i.e., coaching.
- A system that can support interpreting and translation services that are local to the provider's community.
- Access to join Parent Aware at any time rather than just January and July
- Access to local, trusted interpreter/translator services for programs from initial interest in becoming licensed, to recruitment, PA PDA and Coaching, and beyond.
- Alternate ways to increase Career Lattice steps without verification of foreign transcripts.
- An appropriate adjustment to RBPD requirements for coaches that takes years of experience into consideration with a lower amount of post-secondary education (9A-C)
- At systems level, better data to allow DHS/ advocates/ policy makers to understand who is participating (by race/ethnicity and geography), and what their strengths and opportunities for improvement may be
- Being able to submit in their primary language
- Better understanding of the standards/indicators and how they DO value cultural responsiveness now, and improvements to make that a stronger, better part of PA's measure of quality
- CCA and State work with tribes for urban communities and supports that are more intentional around early childhood
- Coach evaluations
- Coaches from their local communities, to make them feel more comfortable sharing their info with
- Coaches of color around the state
- Content that is particularly useful for BIPOC providers should be more easily identifiable.
- Cooperative approach to application
- County websites should/could offer some information on how to get started or contact Parent aware
- Create supports for those who do not have access to a computer. This needs to be an equitable process for all providers in Minnesota.
- Cross-cultural walk of care with some flexibility
- Culturally congruent coaches/mentors.
- Dedicated support for applying for Develop memberships
- Develop guides that are easier to read.
- Different pathways for bilingual/bicultural individuals in the ECE field to become trainers.
- Direct payments for grants! This past year has shown us it can be done.
- Diversity among coaching staff & trainers.
- Easier access to curriculum/ assessment materials.
- Easy access to assessments that are also bilingual
- Ensuring that everyone has access to quality internet.
- Equitable enrollment of families in center-based programs and/or Family Child Care
- ESL coaches
- financial support to programs so they can purchase needed equipment at the start of the cohort...laptop/tablet
- Focus on building diverse coaching and PDA staff across the state.
- from my recruitment efforts, I honestly don't work with many BIPOC, majority are white/Caucasian so this is a very small window for our region, and could possibly be a shared resource
- Funding support initially to get onboard
- Funding support to join Parent Aware
- Funding up front
- Getting your first star should be being able to navigate Develop!
- Grace for mistakes
- Grant spending on behalf of programs in all Districts or direct payments of grants.
- Greater emphasis and awareness of infant/toddler care.
- Having some kind of degree or credential in early childhood should get them started in the rating system.
- High Speed internet access
- Higher pay and access to teach & retain
- How do we have a both/and attitude rather than an either/or attitude?
- How to apply for membership, set up your organization account etc., videos in multiple languages.
- Increased access to trainings on Parent Aware.
- Interpreters, bilingual coaches
- It is important to build trust, part of building trust is feeling included - marketing materials and staff need to reflect a number of different communities

- KEEP learning!!
- Land and food justice initiatives
- Less "high stakes" for indicator submission
- Less punitive for indicator mistakes
- Less restrictive rule 2&3
- Limited purchase power, out of pocket is not an option for many. Purchase orders should be honored, paid and processed not just Lakeshore, etc.
- Localized trainings chosen by providers in a specific area. A training that may be helpful in the city may not be as relevant in greater Minnesota
- Locally designed courses that meet community needs, such as restoring culture
- Make sure all parts of trainings are translated - assessment in addition to content
- Make sure all sections on Develop can be translated
- Marketing to parents so they understand why it is important to look for a PA rated program.
- More bilingual/bicultural coaches
- More BIPOC coaches are needed as well as training for all coaches on cultural responsiveness. Also, coaches need to be able to promote Develop courses related to culture that are available through Achieve/Develop.
- More cultural representative coaches
- More culturally competent staff
- More Indigenous Coaches, mentors and advertisements in tribal communities
- More Language Access Line staff.
- more one on one support to help through the process. This can be confusing if you don't understand the process.
- More Parent Aware staff who speak languages other than English/are not White
- More resources with Ojibwe language.
- More training in other languages.
- More translated material
- Multi-lingual and culturally supportive curriculum.
- Multiracial- culturally diverse quality coaches and teams.
- Need a system that is culturally responsive to providers.
- Paper communication in addition to computer
- Partner/collaborate with BIPOC organizations working with Providers.
- POC as trainers. Alternate ways to rate so it's not so one size fits all in terms of time and criterion
- Positive marketing in very rural areas
- Possible asking sites to share how they support diverse languages in their programs. How are they supporting the English Language learner?
- Programs shouldn't have to be reimbursed for the cost of purchasing items, but should have the district purchase them on their behalf
- Providers in our communities are being asked to prepare for school readiness, safety, health, as well as provide for greater cultural learning
- QDP focused on how to upload documentation
- Quality Rating Grant funding that does not require proof of receipts
- Reaching direct provider not just the admin of the center or program
- Recognize homes of FCC don't have to look like centers to be high quality
- Recruiting coaches mentors from BIPOC communities for BIPOC communities
- Recs from Parent Aware racial equity action plan
- Referral services for language, professional development, and overall systems management
- Reimbursement model for Quality Improvement Rewards - this is barrier for many providers who do not have the resources to pre-pay for items.
- Representation at higher levels
- Separate QDP for Centers and Family Child Care settings
- Separate system of communication and submission for centers and FCCs
- Some coaches do the work for providers, others are left hanging with no help. There needs to be a consistent check in process for all providers so they can get the help they need.
- Some kind of intentional mentorship by others who have completed the process successfully.
- Some programs do not have the means to pay for trainings/curriculum/assessment tools up front. This forces them to move through the rating process at a slower pace.
- Some suburban/rural programs do not understand what a culturally appropriate item/practice is. (Maybe additional resources regarding this?)
- Staff who not only speaks the language but understand the cultural needs of providers.
- The Parent Aware Website could be created to support providers in finding access to culturally diverse supports like language or technology support in their home language and background
- The pathways for training and culturally appropriate courses should be MUCH easier to navigate. The pathways are confusing, and it is difficult for people to know what courses could be extremely relevant for them.
- There needs to be resources that are culturally similar to the provider's background. The material is confusing and difficult to follow.
- There's a national entity ~ the Prenatal to Three Research to Policy Impact Center (at Vanderbilt) which gathers

research on a range of issues. According to Director Cynthia Osborne, there's not enough research to put QRIS on their list of promising strategies.

- Training needs to be made available for high school kids, in keeping with BIPOC cultural traditions.
 - Trainings in tribal communities so tribal providers feel comfortable, and having Tribal trainers present trainings.
 - Trainings that are culturally relevant to providers such as having stories, examples, and experiences that providers can relate to.
 - Trainings that support their cultural, language, and outdoor learning.
 - Translated Materials
 - Understanding cultural differences of programs and it may not fit perfectly in QDP documentation
 - Up front availability of quality improvement grants, to allow providers with fewer resources to access those supports
 - Update and more thorough Develop handouts to help set up Organization Profile and Apply for a Develop Membership
 - Updating providers on the reasons for Parent Aware rating...getting rated doesn't change their ability to raise their rates in most of our region.
 - Uploading mishaps, can we have some grace on the little things.
- Using the FaCET process on a regular and periodic basis to train Coaches and to collect qualitative data from BIPOC providers that can help them improve their individual programs AND provide info on their direct needs and experiences to PA.
 - Videos in a variety of languages
 - Videos of how to use Develop in multiple languages.
 - Virtual face to face training.
 - When PA buys the materials requested by the provider- they do not always get the materials you need. If not available, they will get something else for you. No questions. This is not supportive.
 - When re-rating it would help if the programs could just show that they are continuing to do what is required at the 4-star level, should not have to keep sending in a daily schedule, how they share information, etc. - maybe just new observations, assessments, lesson plans
 - Wifi, technology assistance, laptop
 - Working with other cultural programs that can help support programs.
 - Working with sites to go beyond just translation materials to families but also, adding information on lesson plans on how they can be more culturally relevant in the work.
 - Yes! Grace for mistakes - better to work with programs to make sure they get it right instead of discouraging them.

3.4.5 Partners, advocates: What else would you like DHS and the Legislature to know about system-level or statewide issues or solutions to improve the PA process for BIPOC and Greater MN providers?

- A centralized hub (hotline) for multi-language provider intake
- A path to rating for programs that can't be licensed - LNL. It may be somewhat different, but there should be a quality measure for those programs, as well.
- A pathway from licensing right into PA, not sure what that would look like, but licensing would get providers to a base level in partnership with tribal licensors.
- Achieve and the membership process can be long - especially if they need their foreign credentials evaluated.
- Acknowledge cultural differences in education and care
- Be sure MNTRECC (tribal) and African American Babies Coalition are involved in the next phase of Parent Aware.
- Being able to document quality indicators on paper is not the only way to show quality.
- Challenges of balancing the need to have Ratings that can be "apples to apples" across settings, with the need to be flexible enough to acknowledge cultural differences.
- Change the cohort model to allow programs to join PA at multiple times throughout the year
- Consistent, uncomplicated language so everyone understands the desired outcomes.
- Differentiate how Licensing is different from Parent Aware
- distribution of funding is equitable- there is not a concrete framework of how funding is distributed among marginalized communities
- Educating people about PA (not just child care providers, but also the "lay" person. I have been in task force meetings where most of the people have never heard of PA.
- families have to stay poor to receive CCAP
- For non-English programs, the indicators that ask how do you support families who speak a language other than English should be reversed for them.
- gaps in award years
- Greater incentives are needed.
- Have required QDP documents fit how programming actually happens in that particular kind of childcare program - for example, FCC shouldn't need 2 different schedules like child care centers (infant/toddler & preschool) since that's not how they run their program
- having more than one way to reach a curriculum or assessment indicator. More approved curricula or rather simply ways to show you are meeting indicators of progress with what you teach versus an approved curriculum .
- How do we take into account, education and competencies? Is there a way to show competencies without a 4-year degree? Is there a way to encourage education but not mandate a 4-year degree?
- I keep believing that its unfair that I'm stuck on level 5 of the career Lattice because I wasn't able to get a college education, yet I have 13 years of experience and I take so many more hours of training than required by licensing.
- I would like more focus on rural Minnesota providers, not just educators within an hour of the cities. A rural Minnesota childcare educator is dealing with different issues and probably has a different environment that one near the Metro.
- Inclusion of some child outcome measures linked to ratings (or at least part of the evaluation) so we can know how the PA rated programs are serving children
- Increased diversity within the DHS team is needed.
- Is there a form of data that tells why providers are not pursuing Parent Aware?
- It is important to listen to staff working directly with programs. They know the struggles their programs are encountering and are their advocates.
- Keep supporting early childhood initiatives, our future depends on them
- Less steps to complete their Organization Profile Information. Can be long and tedious for those who may not have computer skills.
- Listen to your coaches and PDA's, they are in the field, hands on every day.
- Maybe there could be a state accreditation that counts hours worked (experience) and trainings and gives you college credits
- More grace to early educators with deadlines due to illness or family trauma.
- Much appreciate the outreach to the tribes for input. Glad that we have the opportunity to be at the table and be heard.
- Need better data, including existing PA data broken down with accurate data on race/ethnicity
- Need for it is genuine, but have not invested enough in the providers first and in the system itself.

- Not a one size fits all program. There has to be flexibility within the system to meet programs where they are.
- Not everyone fits in one box.
- PA consistently supports specific websites and businesses when it comes to purchasing their needs and materials. We need to look at expanding those resources so we can include more culturally diverse opportunities.
- Parent Aware information needs to be distributed throughout the state. I have been through the renewal process several times and need to contact them to find out how to get the information.
- Parent Aware is generally an unknown system to those seeking child care. The system feels self-serving vs. serving the population it is intended
- Parent Aware is NOT regulation - it's voluntary quality improvement.
- Parent Aware should measure turnover in child care staff. Relationships are so key, and loss of staff is like a death to little children.
- Please don't de-regulate!
- Quality has many faces that don't all look alike
- Rolling Cohorts would allow for programs to keep their program current on track when issues arise.
- Some providers lack stable internet, makes navigating Develop difficult.
- Supplement wages
- Support better small business model
- systems can be intimidating to the BIPOC communities.
- That the barriers faced by Greater MN providers are NOT the same as BIPOC providers. Equity means treating those groups differently - the barriers for BIPOC providers are much different, more entrenched and harder to address.
- That there is a point to Parent Aware! It is measuring things that go beyond basic licensing health/safety. We're talking about the quality of children's developmental and educational experiences.
- The current model supports convenience in managing the Parent Aware process. It does not support the complexities of running a childcare program year-round and the diversity among programs. This has to change.
- The ensuring of racially, culturally, and diverse inclusion at the decision-making levels, and important boards. The evaluation of Parent Aware and its impact on BIPOC and Greater MN communities must be an ongoing conversation.
- The PA money should follow the child, not the program. Families who need help in childcare cannot get it if they are in preschool who scooped that money up. The child needs access to both programs
- The past push for providers to become PA rated turned many off and they are still "bitter" about the forcefulness of that introduction.
- There is no "one size fits all" that will ever work. DHS has prioritized streamlining systems, but this will always hurt BIPOC programs, since they are disadvantaged to begin with. Flexibility is a must.
- There seems to be a strong push for assimilation when integration should be the goal.
- Track national level trends for QRIS in other states
- Value the time and work, by supporting the increase of pay to early childhood educators
- We need career pathways that honor people's experience in the field.
- We need to get more input from actual providers and not from the staff that are out doing the work. We tend to assume the reasons. Hard to fix what we don't know is broken.
- When programs miss the deadline, allow them to still use the last application and participation agreement sent in for the next cohort. (not request a new form.)
- White Earth has a successful model of engaging their tribally licensed programs into PA....learn more about they make it work.
- With the staffing shortage, many centers cannot keep staff long enough to go through a BQ and/or FR cohort even with the current staff rule - many had to get an extension

4 Round 2 Feedback, Compilation of Results

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Process, Timeline

Round 2 ran from January 24, 2022 through February 14, 2022, and asked for feedback on a summary of the Round 1 Analysis including thoughts on priorities and next steps.

Engagement was via three virtual sessions in late January and early February 2022 and an online survey through mid-February, all with the same information and questions. Invitees for Round 2 engagement were:

- BIPOC Child Care Aware system and MNTRECC staff
- Recently rated BIPOC family and center providers and providers from Greater Minnesota

[Table of Contents](#)
[Introduction](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Analysis \(Round 1\)](#)
[Compilation, Round 1](#)
[Compilation, Round 2](#)

4.1.2 Engagement Content

The Round 1 summary information provided to Round 2 participants is shown at the top of each of the issue sets below:

- Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions
- Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy
- Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust
- Language Access, Jargon
- Expertise Definitions, Recognition

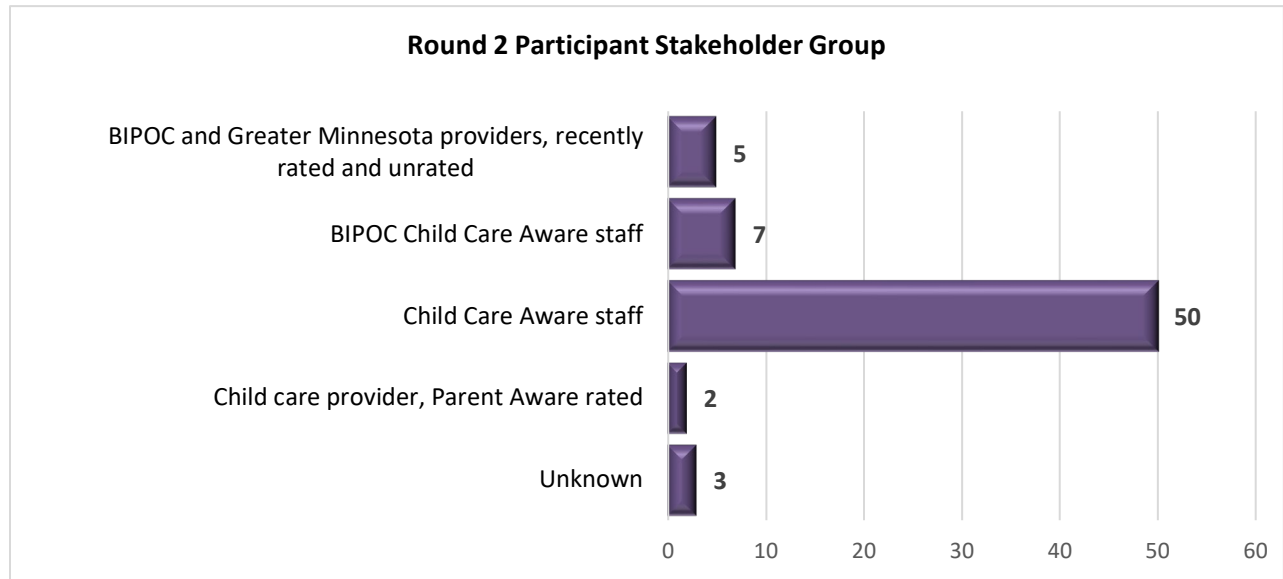
Participants responded to the following questions:

1. Over the next 1-2 years.... Thinking about these improvement ideas and the potential outcomes, what changes are critical?
2. What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?
3. Who besides DHS must participate for these changes to be successful?
4. How do we make that collaboration happen?

4.1.3 Participants

A total of 72 people contributed Round 2 feedback, 67 of whom provided affiliation and/or ZIP Code information as shown on the chart and maps that follow.

4.1.3.1 Stakeholder group

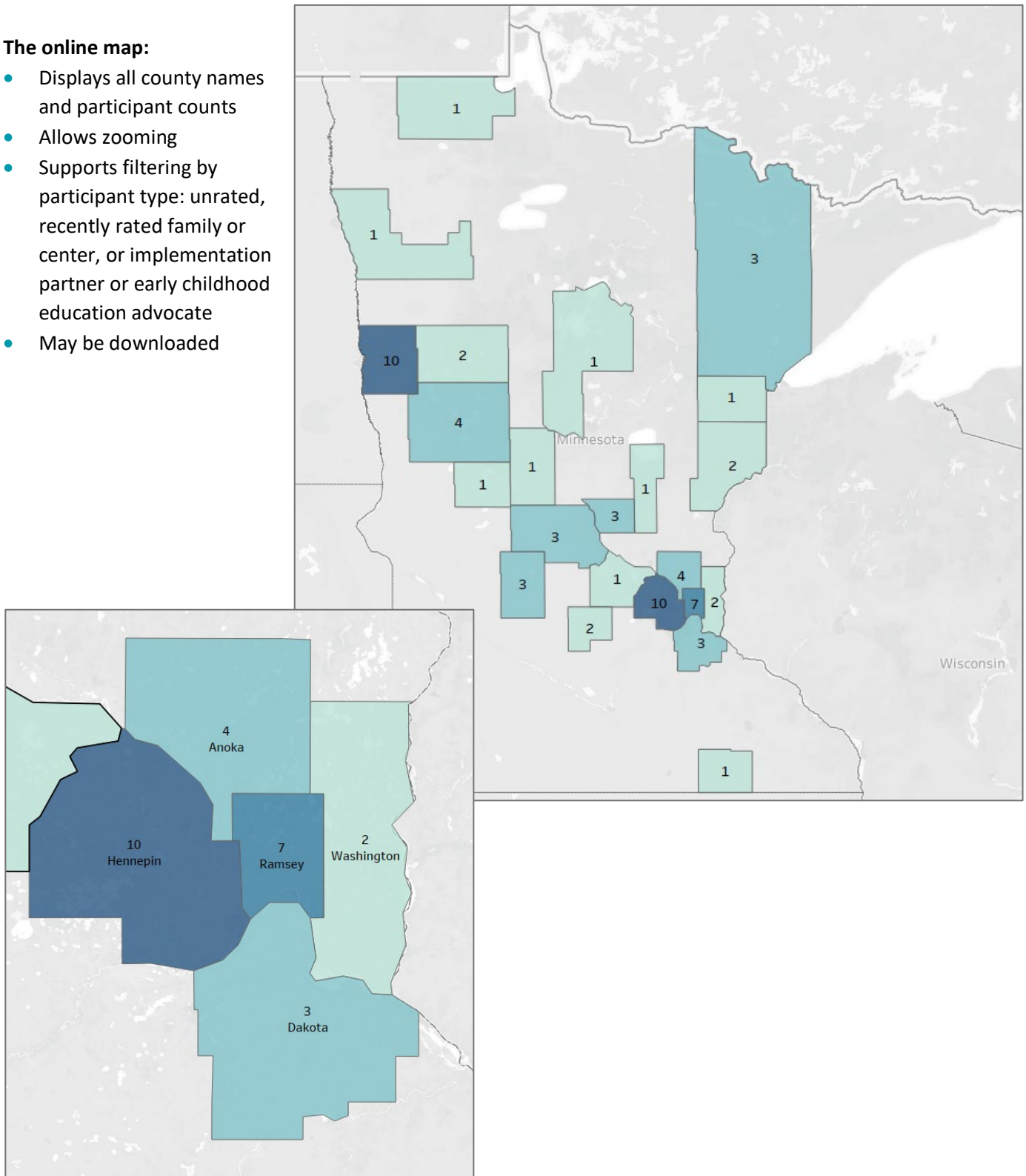


4.1.3.2 ZIP Code

Of the 72 Round 2 participants, 67 provided ZIP Codes. See summary results below and view the interactive online map link [here](#).

The online map:

- Displays all county names and participant counts
- Allows zooming
- Supports filtering by participant type: unrated, recently rated family or center, or implementation partner or early childhood education advocate
- May be downloaded



4.2 Issue: Process Consistency, Information, Perceptions

4.2.1 Round 1 Summary

Challenges, issues, needs	Ideas, options
Time, scheduling, paperwork: Busy providers struggled with requirements, forms, documentation; limited scheduling options; worst for multiple programs	Simplify and streamline rating process to reduce non-content time needed to complete requirements; expand options for connecting, scheduling
Requirements, supports, navigation: Inadequate and inconsistent information, responses + huge navigation problems caused frustration, dismay	Provide correct, complete, clear information; clearly illustrate steps and requirements; revamp online tools; allow individualized processes; no-wrong-door system
Training, coaching, and other resources: Too hard to find required training, when and how it's needed; helpful coaches, but not always aligned	Ensure comparable, equivalent training and coaching access, options, and excellence; meet cultural and language needs; support peer-to-peer networks
Information, misinformation, and choices: Poor info leads to misinformed/ignorant providers and parents; Parent Aware not a good fit for every provider	Provide correct, complete, and clear information to everyone, tailored to culture, language, location; use multiple methods and personalized approaches
Bureaucracy, terms, and timing/cohorts: Rigid PA and funding timelines, cohort model threaten success; reimbursement system inequitable, unworkable	Allow provider-driven timelines; offer a collaborative cohort <i>option</i> ; simplify process to spend grant funds; eliminate reimbursement-based process

Potential Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers understand the benefits and requirements of PA, so they can decide about joining They understand the details of each star level, so they can decide Providers understand where and from whom to get information, and have more than one option Providers move through the PA process at an individualized pace Coaches and others are knowledgeable and helpful, and communications are jointly arranged Quality, relevant, culturally responsive training/PD is available statewide, when/where/how needed Multimedia supplemental materials help providers complete requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal / informal peer networks welcome and support providers statewide The vast majority of time spent by providers, coaches, and other support team members is on rich content and practice -- not on navigating complicated, inefficient, bureaucratic systems and processes Providers advance through processes that they understand, take less time, are simpler and easier, and with fewer mistakes; flexibility is built into the process to best meet everyone's needs Providers have the time and support to focus on the trainings and guided practice, and they feel respected, valued, and motivated to continue growing and learning

4.2.2 Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?

- A variety of DEVELOP approved trainings on a variety of technology information.
- Access to technology
- Access to technology/internet - support when needed
- Acknowledge experience and years of service - not just degrees
- Address the navigation challenges with Develop; provide more support in terms of visuals and tools.
- Adjusting the cohort system as it is
- Amount of paperwork
- Being able to build the PA system around other child care systems, such as licensing will be a benefit to providers because it will require less work and more benefits. (i.e., the systems could be combined so that when a program gets licensed, they are automatically at a 1 star)
- Being able to have rolling cohorts will help all providers, especially BIPOC providers. The current 2 cohort system is set up as a benefit to Districts and the system, not to providers.
- Clear directions and support.
- Clear instructions for the process with a variety of formats for acceptable documents. Educators need assistance in articulating how their program meets PA QDP indicators.
- coaches, PDAs, support staff that speak the language the program has requested
- Complications with Develop - streamline steps?
- consistency with established processes
- Develop a crosswalk that shows how the quality indicators might look in different programs based on culture
- DHS approved Develop trainings on a regular basis
Difficult to manage cash flow with grant funds
- Eliminate reimbursement
- Eliminate reimbursement process; cash-poor especially at the beginning; really hard to make those purchases up front and the reimbursement process is too difficult and time-consuming
- Eliminate reimbursement-based grant spending...this can be very difficult for providers to have to spend \$\$ out of their own pockets initially.
- Eliminating the reimbursement process is essential. This is a clear equity issue that results in barriers for many providers to access regional grants, etc. Also, this is a problem that could be solved with a technical solution.
- Ensure programs can receive information in their preferred language and by preferred method
- Expand options to purchase without cash up front from other sites
- Have a support tree so providers understand who they should be connecting with and when.
- I am still learning the many connections and paperwork instruction being a New Coach with Think Small
- Important to create and support intentional connections among peers within a cohort
- Improving user friendliness of Develop
- Info/Choices
- Intentional, DHS funded peer networks to supporting educators throughout the process
- It is hard to get someone gives you training you need especially your employees
- Keep website up to date.
- Lack of flexibility
- Language barriers
- Make it easier for providers to attain higher career lattice steps (maybe consider experience)
- More clear directions and information.
- More individualized experience
- More transparency and information for those working with the programs such as updates, knowing what's available, etc.
- Multimedia supports that explain some of the processes-- having this as a resource would allow coaching and training time to be spent on content and not on bureaucratic processes.
- Non-cohort seems like a good and flexible option, could be almost self-paced
- Ongoing flexibility with Ratings and participation
- Paperwork does not equal quality!
- Paperwork is not translated including QDP this is a disservice for ESL providers.
- Participants have more time to go through Parent Aware at a pace that better fits their needs
- Peer networks to feel connected and supported
- Provide materials in languages in addition to Spanish in both written and oral for those that may not speak English but also do not read their home language (Somali).
- Provider Driven Timelines
- Providers are busy juggling multiple demands and priorities. I think it is on the PA System to develop a process that is not as time consuming and involves less paperwork.
- Providers moving at an individualized pace

- Reducing the amount of paperwork as it does not necessarily reflect their quality
- Resolve problems with uploading/re-uploading info to the website -- so she only has to do everything once, and can see what's there and what's not
- Rolling cohorts give participants more than two times a year to join Parent Aware
- Rolling cohorts to allow for flexible timetables
- Simplifying and streamlining the rating process/rolling cohorts
- Simplifying language while still keeping quality checks in place
- Spanish speaking PDA needed
- Streamline process for all including thinking about rolling cohorts that will assist with providers joining when they can, complete the evidence when they are able and limit paperwork applications/agreements, missing out on cohorts.
- Technical wording
- Technology is not available for everyone
- The paperwork is user friendly.
- Time/Scheduling
- training for support staff on all new processes, changes
- Training opportunities
- Training/Coaching
- Waitlist? - if caseloads are too big then coach can't spend as much time on the actual coaching, and it is more focused on paperwork. Do not want to limit access to participate though
- Working with new teachers - streamline onboarding/training timeline

4.2.3 Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?

- Additional workload/paperwork when staffing is tight/educators are in crisis mode.
- Amount of paperwork
- Building enough options into our current system, we will need more flexibility on some regulation to make expansion possible - for example ELS timelines, Develop Member timelines
- Clear understanding of expectations and the benefits of going through the process.
- Complex and numerous (sometimes unnecessary) steps
- confusion
- Continued plateau if the number of participating programs if we do not allow for flexibility and revamp/dismantle the current cohort model.
- Cultural competency and equity issues should be built into the PA program / system and not be an afterthought.
- Develop membership/training barriers, Achieve time frame
- Difficult to manage a caseload with less predictable schedules of Rating and participation
- Don't lose option to use agreements with partner websites to purchase without paying up front
- Ensure that Coaches and grant administrators are able to maintain an accurate/manageable caseload
- Ensure that regardless of what quality looks like in practice, it actually is quality
- equitable education about state wide systems to all ECE EDUCATORS not just program level (owner/operator/director)
- Flexible timelines connected with ELS and spending grant funds so programs can get financial benefits WHILE in the process to help raise their quality with less out of pocket
- I think we need to be careful not to down grade the Parent Aware process. We want to maintain Best Practices for children.
- If there's too much flexibility in timelines for PA participation, it could have the potential to have consequences in the workflow for Coaches and PD Advisors
- If we move away from the Cohort model, the ability to do peer-to-peer networks may be limited.
- inconsistent QRIS indicators/experience by Pathway choice
- Issues with billing/invoices
- Lack of flexibility
- Lack of supported peer networks will further exacerbate the spread of misinformation, isolation, and disconnect between other networks and Parent Aware
- Language and cultural barriers to materials, supports, resources
- Not all programs have access to high-speed internet
- Not engaging providers as we make changes.
- Not reflecting on our everyday work to see if we are being inequitable to those especially in the BIPOC community. For example, giving a very short heads up about getting input about this data. It was sent out late Thursday, and for those in the BIPOC community only had Friday to see it- less time than the rest of us. This didn't give much time to reflect prior to the meeting. I don't believe the inequity was conscious, but the perception is what

- matters. This is what our system needs to consider to make the space open for all.
- Not stretching the coaches to thin, burnout from working too many hours or with huge caseloads
 - Programs lack of knowledge with technology and navigating Develop a system that is not user friendly
 - Quality defined without sound cultural competency reinforces a "one size fits all" model
 - Staffing - qualified teachers - high turnover
 - Systems in place to support all educators
 - Taking too much time
 - That a full rating should be achievable for all educators
 - Timing of the PA process/program and technology,
- To be on time when you need renew information.
 - Unaware parents/lack of supporting resources
 - Unqualified staff/unwilling to learn job
 - waitlist - don't want to limit access but be mindful of coach caseload and time, really focus on coaching not paperwork
 - We need more ESL coaches in all counties to make Parent Aware successful
 - With one-time money coming in from Feds, etc. it would be a missed opportunity to not use some of those dollars to help with some of these changes /revisions to the system to make it more equitable.

4.3 Geographic and Technology Access, Experience, Literacy

4.3.1 Round 1 Summary

Challenges, issues, needs	Ideas, options
<p>Geography: Providers in lower-density regions have less access to and fewer choices for in-person training and coaching, and purchasing, plus transportation barriers</p>	<p>Ensure equivalent opportunities for in-person training and coaching; expand purchasing options</p>
<p>Technology: Many BIPOC and Greater MN providers lack computers/tablets and aren't active e-communicators; broadband (non-mobile) access is a huge problem; together these pose enormous barriers for BIPOC and Greater MN providers for training, coaching, information access, and managing the PA process</p>	<p>Support all providers to access high-speed, affordable broadband; work to resolve and support provider technology needs and skills so they can have an optimal PA experience</p>

Potential Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIPOC and Greater Minnesota providers are able to experience and benefit from the full range of learning opportunities, supports, and communications available through Parent Aware 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are able to acquire and effectively use the technology they need to fully participate, and do over affordable, high-speed broadband

4.3.2 Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?

- Access to basic technology training, overview of Develop and its functions specific to provider use
- Actively recruiting bilingual trainers and coaches.
- Address the plain language need for all supporting documents for participation
- Affordability
- Again, DHS funds to support technology use along with accessible training. Allow programs to use PA grants to pay for ongoing cost of technology use (internet).
- Allow coaching to be counted in various KCF, not just professionalism.
- Are things the way they are to make it easier for us (CCA MN staff) or what's best for our programs?
- Basic technology & business training offered as a foundation for PA success. And encouraging grants to be spent on computer equipment if needed.
- Being able to support providers with technology supports is doable and an equity issue. It will cost dollars, but we should be able to find the dollars through unspent COVID relief dollars, budget surplus or incoming Federal dollars.
- Broadband access is a bigger issue than our system - needs infrastructure on a state or federal level
- Broadening available training topics to be delivered in more ways. Currently CCA District offices are not allowed to provide training virtually (except Pine Tech and the CO)
- Continue to be cognizant as a system of how lack of technology and internet access is an equity issue.
- Develop approved training on technology
- Direct assistance (more defined coaching hours) to help educators spend grant fund NON reimbursement since access to different shopping options is limited for some
- Ensuring availability of diverse trainer pool/coalition across the state, especially multilingual trainers
- Equitable internet access
- Expand trainer capacity and spaces for training (when in-person)
- Fast track virtual face-to-face training development and implementation.
- Figuring out how to make this happen. It's very obviously an issue but not sure how to make it different - especially when we are looking at distances people have to travel
- Have a tech 101 added to our training catalog.
- Have language as well as technology interpreters available for those who struggle with those who struggle in these arenas.
- Having the coaches help the providers to navigate the system, starting with develop.
- If a provider is unable to read or write, they will need an interpreter there to go through every step--possibly even be able to do an interview for submission vs turn in paperwork?
- Increase number of trainers in outstate MN so in person training can be offered close to home. Travel to training is a barrier.
- Internet access
- It is a critical equity issue for the system to allow for various forms of training that are not in-person. We have learned during the pandemic that providers like virtual trainings for many reasons, but it helps with transportation issues, balancing many priorities, etc.
- It is difficult to schedule training when providers in rural areas are such a small number, many will have to drive in order to be in person
- Keeping an option for educators to NOT have to use online resources. Not every person has the access and basic knowledge, so it is discriminatory to expect that to earn grant funds.
- Lower grants to allow for technology incentives.
- Make sure technology support is available in all languages
- Making sure that everyone has access
- more coaches to support the providers, ratio....
- Not all areas of the state have good internet access
- Not everyone has computers that is a big problem
- Obtaining credit for trainings completed for the KCF and apply it to coaching skills.
- Offer Develop training to all providers to help them be more successful.
- Offer technology before they join the cohort or during the cohort. A loaner program or purchasing program
- Programs are able to navigate the internet yet Develop is too difficult, redesign program to be user friendly. Possibly an app program since many programs utilize apps on their phone.
- Programs are able to navigate the internet yet Develop is too difficult, redesign program to be user friendly. Possibly an app program since many programs utilize apps on their phone.
- Provide greater access to technology.
- Provide technology devices/hot spots to those who need equipment
- Provide the devices for providers so they have the same access
- Provide training to the system on the use of Develop

- Providers need access to things like printers and scanners -- or to a coach close by who does, or to access an equipment "lending library" to meet their needs
- Providing all educators with the right tools/training ops for success
- Providing computers, hotspots and cell phones to participating programs as an incentive, reducing grant amounts.
- Resources to Wifi services and support. or Offer at low-cost pricing for providers in the underserved communities
- Should have technology support funding for each organization.
- Simplify the amount of online requirements there are for the Parent Aware process. Educators care for children during business hours and should be allowed personal time NOT online work after hours
- Technology support funding for each organization
- To ensure all centers to get required training timely matter.
- To implement technology, technology (computers...) need to be provided.
- Use of technology
- Virtual options

4.3.3 Over the next 1-2 years...What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?

- Access to reliable internet that supports the programs providers are required to use to complete tasks.
- Again, the lack of true cultural competence will maintain the "one size fits all" approach. We will think "if people use technology for other things (social media, games, text), people should be able to use if for PA" and this is not true and dangerous.
- All areas of the state being treated equal, like they have equal access and opportunity
- Allowing geography to impede positive outcomes for children and families
- Assuming every educator has the motivation/time to become well versed in online formats
- Broad guide of approved spending items and HOW to go through the process with instructions so no items are not questioned and can be purchased faster.
- Expand capacity for training and TA for the use of any newly funded technology
- Expecting that providing technology and/or training will fix things. Some individuals just need a paper option.
- Funding issues to get all providers the kind of access they need to fully participate
- Having PA coaches be responsible for training providers to navigate technology is too time consuming and not fair to overall coaching experience.
- Marketing the benefits of pursuing PA. seems the marketing has dropped off from when it first started.
- Not having enough resources available to streamline technology.
- Not having QIS grants available to be purchase on programs behalf for technology
- Not supporting educators of color and ELL educators with technology/training & literacy gaps
- Providing technology and not providing support and training on how to use it.
- Regions declining items based on their opinions not what the program wants to build the quality of their program
- Reliance on technology
- Sketchy internet in many areas is a huge barrier
- Some agencies not allowing coaches to be both a coach and trainer
- Support for ALL devices for working with PA
- Supports for educators to get more assistance with navigating online spending/submitting receipts, the current EQUIP system needs to be paired down
- Technology training, also Develop is not user friendly or language specific
- Technology will only be helpful if providers get basic training on how to utilize for training and PA (but who provides this training?)
- The QDP needs to be translated in all languages served

- There are just simply not enough qualified trainers and trainers who speak other languages, and who have the ability to travel without the trainings being canceled
- When there are only one or two people in a training, you miss much of the benefit of being in-person - to interact with others and hear multiple perspectives.
- When things have large price tags, it is easy to say we cannot do it and throw up our hands, however, this would be a mistake.
- Who provides tech support and education to programs?

4.4 Cultural Proficiency, Relationships, Trust

4.4.1 Round 1 Summary

Challenges, issues, needs	Ideas, options
<p>Content: PA content, materials, supports, practices, supports, and information don't include or recognize cultural and Tribal differences and norms; definitions and understandings of quality aren't culturally respectful and inclusive</p>	<p>Update and expand to reflect rich diversity of people and ideas; update and improve QRIS to make these more central to quality measures; highlight cultural proficiency and responsive instruction in the content and process; lean into culturally reflective and language-specific training and support materials</p>
<p>Support, guidance: Support team members are knowledgeable and well intentioned, but nearly all are white, English-speaking, non-providers, highly educated, and with limited training in cultural proficiency and trauma-informed care; significant variation among coaches; equity not at the center of their work</p>	<p>Hire/develop culturally congruent and bilingual coaches; expand provider access to better-aligned coaches and other supports; ensure statewide access and equity; make and leverage community connections</p>
<p>System, accountability: PA doesn't measure, support, or require cultural proficiency or responsiveness; rigid systems and narrow definitions affect assessments and supports; no systems to routinely listen to BIPOC and other providers and make improvements</p>	<p>Routinely seek feedback from all stakeholders and improve PA; create assessment systems for support team members; ensure consistent, equitable support for providers; assess and improve performance and outcomes</p>

Potential Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Aware content, materials, training, and supplemental supports reflect contemporary standards around cultural proficiency and responsive instruction, and embed approaches, methods, and examples of the full spectrum of diversity • Coaches, trainers, and other support team members are substantially more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, and hail from throughout the state including Tribal communities • Providers everywhere in the state receive training, guidance, and support in cultural proficiency and culturally responsive teaching, and their development and application of new learnings is expected, recognized, and rewarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, providers, and support team members are routinely invited to provide input or feedback, their ideas are used to make improvements, and DHS makes clear how stakeholder contributions shaped the changes • Evaluations and conflict-resolution practices ensure that coaches and providers are better matched and have more successful and mutually beneficial experiences • BIPOC providers choose to become rated, and are welcomed, respected, and successful at every star level • Demographic, performance, and impact data are routinely gathered, shared, and used for improvement

4.4.2 Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?

- Actively recruit BIPOC/bilingual coaches and trainers
- Allow variation to PA indicators/practices to reflect culture of providers and families served.
- Being knowledgeable about other cultures and their practices, values, and beliefs.
- Broaden the knowledge of coaches and PDAs in our system to support educators with a variety of cultural backgrounds
- Coach requirements (pay, training, and skills) may be a barrier for why we do not have more BIPOC coaches.
- Coaches are able to build relationship regardless of cultural background - theirs or educators
- Cultural proficiency of Coaches and others needs to be emphasized and mentored
- Diversity must be maintained.
- Embed equity and diversity into all aspects of how we do PA work.
- Explore recruitment of workforce at younger levels (high school, junior high)
- Feedback loop for educators and parents to regularly offer their insights into how changes are working.
- finding people that can trust us enough to share their cultural beliefs on quality when they may differ from our own definition.
- Form a team/committee made up of the BIPOC community to reassess the current indicators.
- Get rid of the Star representation and adopt something that represents an appreciation for quality at all levels.
- Give credit in the PA process for years of experience separately from education. Experience with children needs to be recognized and rewarded.
- Give diverse programs a voice on what they need to be successful allowing them to be a part of the process of change. Starting a community/board?
- Having a system of valuing 'years of experience' in the field for both coaches and providers.
- Having a way to allow the potential coach to be stair-stepped into the work, based of years of experience
- Having material available in set languages of the community served.
- Having more training opportunities for CCA staff around diversity and cultural awareness.
- Having PA indicators that are more flexible to reflect cultural variation to teaching young children, helping coaches recognize what these flexible areas could be
- high school transcript diploma access, not always able to get. affects star rating and thus funding support
- important to have parents, providers, support team to routinely be invited to provide input and feedback
- In order to support the growth of a more diverse and culturally responsive coaching pool, DHS needs to develop multiple tracks to becoming a coach. In addition, ongoing professional development for coaches is needed.
- Invest in developing coaches, PDAs, other support staff from within the underserved communities.
- It is imperative that we address the racism in our field. Coaches should not have to face the racism of providers and providers should not have to be marginalized by coaches that do not understand their culture or language.
- Match coaches to the providers and the “dynamic” of the provider’s location (e.g., small town vs. big city)
- Measurement of how PA is actually working to prepare all children for kindergarten
- Meeting educators where they are at in terms of what they are currently providing children and families, letting them know they are offering value and the rating system is fair and attainable
- Metrics in place to examine current cultural proficiency for coaches and frontline support personnel *and* set targets
- More diverse cultural training would be beneficial to keep the importance of cultural diversity in the front of all providers, and the families they work with, minds.
- More learning opportunities for coaches and PDAs regarding various cultures.
- More training for the system on culturally responsive practices
- Need more system staff of diverse cultures
- Quality definition does not consider cultural differences.
- require more cultural responsiveness/DEI training as part of endorsement process
- require more DEI training as part of endorsement process
- Revise indicators based on feedback so that the performance measures are culturally responsive.
- Spanish speaking PDA needed, other languages possibly. Have one Somali speaking PDA currently
- Systems and accountability
- There is no real precedence in a QRIS system to truly prioritize equity. However, we do not want to create a system, like that K-12 system in MN that routinely fails BIPOC children. For that reason, we must determine a way to highlight and eradicate racism amongst providers.

This will include multiple interventions such as training, coach involvement, etc.

- We judge what quality child care is for families in general and that might not be a quality situation for the family or child.
- We assume parents want providers to have a coach or a stranger coming in and that might not be true for a parent.
- We don't know what "quality" looks like in other cultures.

4.4.3 Over the next 1-2 years...What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?

- Accelerated does not require CLS, is this fair?
- Broaden the lens of what culturally inclusive would mean, language access is one part. PA educators should be able to incorporate unique traits about their program not feeling like they need to fit it into the PA approved boxes
- Checking in with educators to see how equitable the process felt ROUTINELY.
- Culturally responsive teaching must be fair to all children
- For more ethnically aware or bilingual coaches, beware that even though they may look like me (African American, Native American, and white), they may not have had an experience common to me because I was raised in a primarily white culture; this happens in a lot of situations. Need to match up with the correct experiences and background.
- Getting too locked into having all things translated (paperwork) instead of big picture relationship building. Having good best practices of approaching those with other cultures/languages
- Ignoring the experience of veteran providers and not considering them as "highly qualified"
- Incorrect records
- It will take time to build the system to meet the needs of all participants
- It would be a missed opportunity not to put some "teeth" into how we address issues of racism. Meaning that we do not want to create a system where we accept racist behavior and ideologies, there should be consequences for overt and covert racism.
- Need to ensure the process/system doesn't become a separate but equal kind of system.
- Not adjusting what is currently happening with documents not being offered in all languages, issuing prepaid visa cards with the grant balance so that all educators can access the grant without having to go through their coach
- Some regions choose not to participate in trainings that make them "uncomfortable" or implement the changes needed.
- Trouble hiring coaches and bilingual coaches
- We are not going to 'hire' away issues of equity. We can't hire in all areas of the state Coaches that look like all educators in the field.

4.5 Language Access, Jargon

4.5.1 Round 1 Summary

Challenges, issues, needs	Ideas, options
<p>English primacy: Language barriers prevented many providers from joining PA or completing the process; newly rated ELL providers struggle to keep up with the timelines, training, coaching, and content</p>	<p>Lean into community-based resources to hire / develop new bilingual support team members; build or access more training in other languages; support providers to complete process in home language; support language-specific peer networks; market to parents in home languages</p>
<p>Jargon: Excess jargon is a barrier for all participants, and can make the process impenetrable for ELL providers</p>	<p>As the PA process is simplified, streamlined, and clarified, edit all written materials and guidance to plain language standards, and make it sustainable</p>

Potential Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unrated providers learn about Parent Aware in their home language, and those who choose to become rated receive language-specific coaching, training, materials, and other supports from start to finish • Language-specific peer-to-peer and mentoring networks throughout the state advance provider success through relationships, information, and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents learn about Parent Aware from information in their home language, and are able to find and access providers who reflect their language and cultural background • Parent Aware content and implementation is in plain language, making it more accessible and beneficial to providers, parents, and children regardless of their home language

4.5.2 Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?

- Develop additional supports, outside of LAL, to help all coaches work with bi-lingual providers.
- Hire recruiters who speak other languages, or are from BIPOC communities, or add additional recruiters for language support
- Making coaching and advising in other languages an option to tap into across the state. Rural MN does have a need to support educators who speak languages other than English but not necessarily the ability to hire language-specific support in every Region.
- Making sure that providers and parents can learn in their home language
- Making the language level around a 2nd grade level as what is best practice in most public documents
- Online goal setting, it was really hard to formulate a goal that met the requirements; there were rules about how they were supposed to be written -- and the jargon *within* those goals -- but those rules weren't explained; need examples, templates, and other supports so we can be successful
- Plain language is so important. Ensuring translations and interpretations are done in a culturally responsive way so that the early childhood jargon in English has a direct link to culture & language.
- Similar to another one of the topics, giving more time to go through Parent Aware will allow for the additional time needed to get everything they need out of the program.
- Translate all documents to other languages, not just application and agreement
- Using English at a level that connects with parents, but that does not overwhelm them or belittle them
- Work with ELL communities in hiring bi-lingual and bi-cultural coaches. Take a good look at our requirements for bi-lingual coaches.

4.5.3 Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?

- Do not allow a high price tag on providing ELL services to be a barrier for access to ELL providers.
- Do not assume because you have translated documents you have a system that is open to ELL providers. Take a look at which documents make sense to translate and which document might be better in video format or some other format that reflects the culture of the providers.
- Don't assume that translating a document into another language "gets the job done." That's just scratching the surface of support needed for educators who speak languages other than English. Multimedia content would be a much better surface-level support.
- Language barriers
- Make sure to work WITH ELL communities in creating additional supports for ELL providers.
- Placing English over other languages for simplified communication. Culture and language are twin-skin to understanding others

4.6 Expertise Definitions, Recognition

4.6.1 Round 1 Summary

Challenges, issues, needs	Ideas, options
<p>Education and related documentation: Immigrant providers and those with limited higher education opportunities are prevented from fully benefiting from Parent Aware</p>	<p>Begin by assuming trust and best intentions, and learn from other agencies and organizations how to work with non-US information <i>and</i> recognize capabilities without higher education degrees</p>
<p>Credentialing: Advanced education isn't counted, other trainings and credentials aren't recognized, and there's no method of recognizing and crediting many years of experience; these are barriers to joining PA and frustrate and are unfair to rated providers</p>	<p>Create in-house systems or learn from others to recognize and credit other sources of expertise, and welcome a more diverse set of providers with broad credentials, experiences, and backgrounds</p>

Potential Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A diverse range of providers who bring a range of professional, educational, and experience-based backgrounds are welcomed into Parent Aware; their expertise is recognized and valued, they are supported to be successful, and they provide high-quality programs that prepare children well for Kindergarten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A “culture of support” permeates Parent Aware – in the people, processes, materials, and information. It centers on equity, providers feel it from their first encounter, and support team members eagerly bring it alive every day. Everyone’s job is to support success for every provider who wants to participate.

4.6.2 Over the next 1-2 years....Looking at these improvement ideas and the outcomes, what changes are critical?

- Accelerated pathway does not require CLS, is this fair?
- accepting training and experience in replacement of diplomas and degrees.
- accessibility to Develop, getting in the door
- Achieve - high school transcript access can prevent CLS higher than foundational awareness
- Appropriate/sufficient Education/ Credentials
- Build process for demonstrating 'learned' knowledge and how it fits in PA
- bypassing the high school diploma.
- can things be competency based instead?
- Clear communication on what documents are needed, broadening what is accepted and giving options for growth OUTSIDE of formal higher ed
- Creating a more accessible pathway for training while on the job--like nursing. There's a basic CNA level course, then a 1 yr, 2 yr, 4 yr and beyond. See NAEYC unifying framework/power to the profession :) EC I, II, III
- Creating a system of recognizing years of experience for providers AND coaches. Expertise is NOT ONLY through educational systems.
- Define a variety of areas that can be used to move up from FA without a formalized document from an American approved institute
- Developing standards that recognize other means of expertise. Years of experience, references from colleagues
- Education and documentation requirements are not equitable...immigrant providers have a hard time obtaining documentation to obtain high Rating, this could be where it is needed most
- Experience needs to be recognized a measure of quality.
- For people who don't have the right paperwork, need another way of determining their qualifications
- High School Transcript/Diploma access prevents a higher CLS, unable to achieve higher star rating
- Higher education can't be the only measurement of knowledge and quality. We need to be able to give credit for experience and ongoing professional development while in the field.
- How can we look at ways to move providers up to in career lattice so they can get a 3- or 4-star rating--so those families can access scholarships, etc.
- if a provider has higher education credentials should not need to go backwards and require high school diploma.
- If higher education is a measure of quality, then it needs to be accessible to everyone without having to apply for complicated scholarships. It just needs to be easily accessible.
- immigration status preventing from being lead teacher qualified
- Making sure that life experience counts towards education
- Measuring years of work in a quality program?
- Multiple ways to get above Foundational Awareness
- Not having a clear understanding of Develop and Achieve prevents programs from higher rating due to timing.
- Not having access to educational documents to help you move up the career lattice
- Paperwork does not equal quality.
- Support finding people to be PD Specialists and ECE Reviewers
- The issue of credentials from other countries is one we have been talking about for years. We need to form an exploratory committee to look at our options for this, including looking at other fields of discipline to see how they handle this issue. Again, this is a technical problem with a solution we can find.
- There is value in quality experience how do we add this to the Parent Aware system?
- Years of experience needs to be added as a Parent Aware indicator with points earned based on years of experience like we give points earned based on the career lattice level (education level)

4.6.3 Over the next 1-2 years....What are the most serious pitfalls that must be avoided?

- Don't assume that because someone's life, experience, and background are *different*, that it's not as good
- Ensure the current process which allows for good 'paper' raters doesn't continue AND that we don't build a process of giving credit for experience that isn't quality or applicable
- ESL and getting GED, what if they were teacher/engineer/etc., in other country?
- Ignoring the experience of veteran providers and not considering them as "highly qualified"
- Include simple instructions to programs on options
- Lack of professionalism and growth due to various levels of improving staff
- Language and cultural barriers - materials, training, resources, supports
- Must make sure that providers are still educated.
- One size does not fit all in how a lead provider is determined....maybe could qualify in a variety of ways like they do for licensing.