

# S.C. Early Childhood Quality Standards Survey Findings

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*What Matters Most, Hopes & Concerns*

October 2006

# Methodology

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- ❑ Objective:       Broadest possible input
  - ❑ Design:           Steering Committee  
                      refined DRAFT
  - ❑ Distribution:    Electronic  
                      Paper available upon request
  - ❑ Content:         Ranking  
                      Open-ended questions
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# Caveat

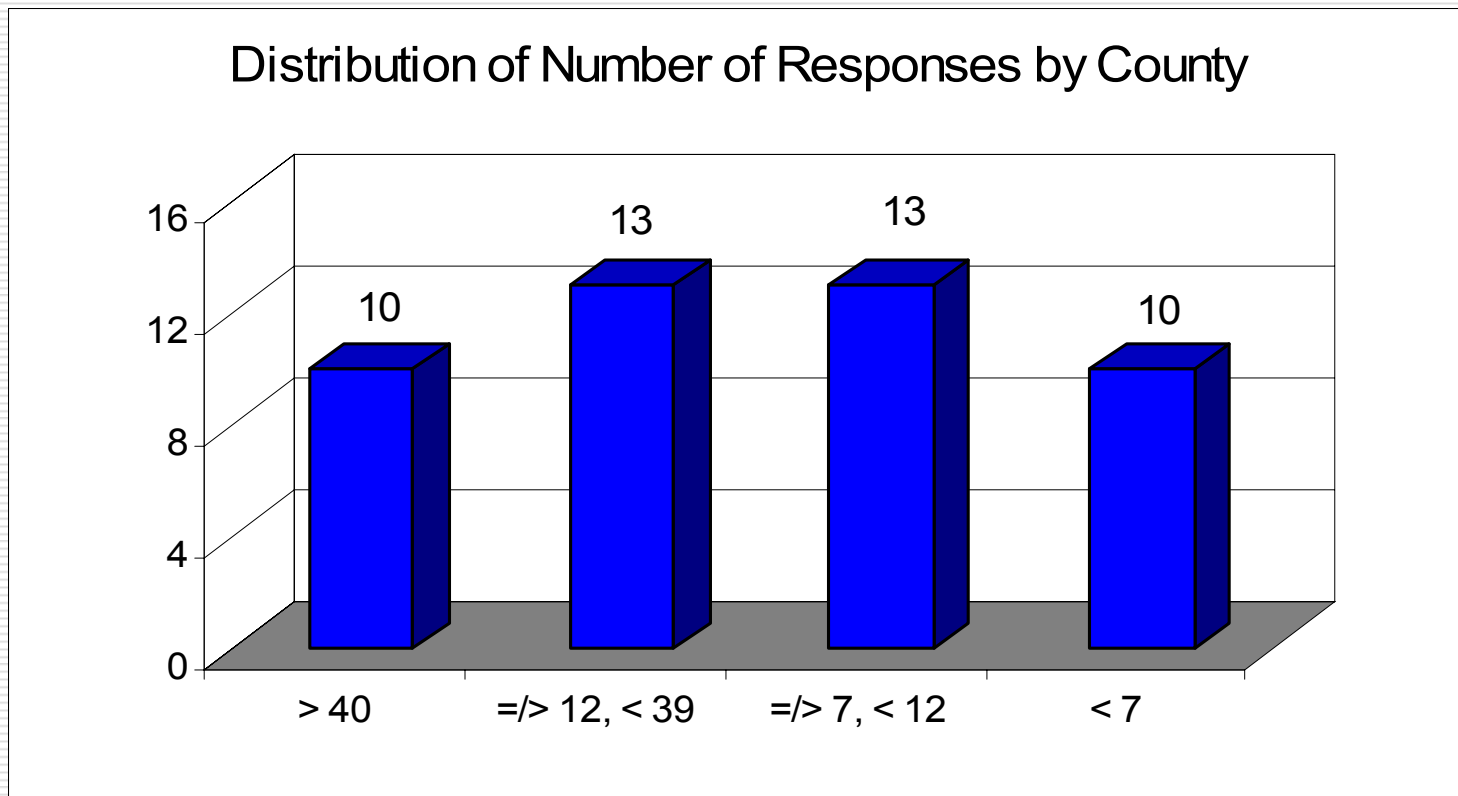
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- ❑ NOT scientific
  - ❑ It is not a random sample of groups
  - ❑ It does provide in-depth views of 1,489 citizens who care about early childhood quality standards
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# Response Rate

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- 1,489 responses representing all S.C. counties\*

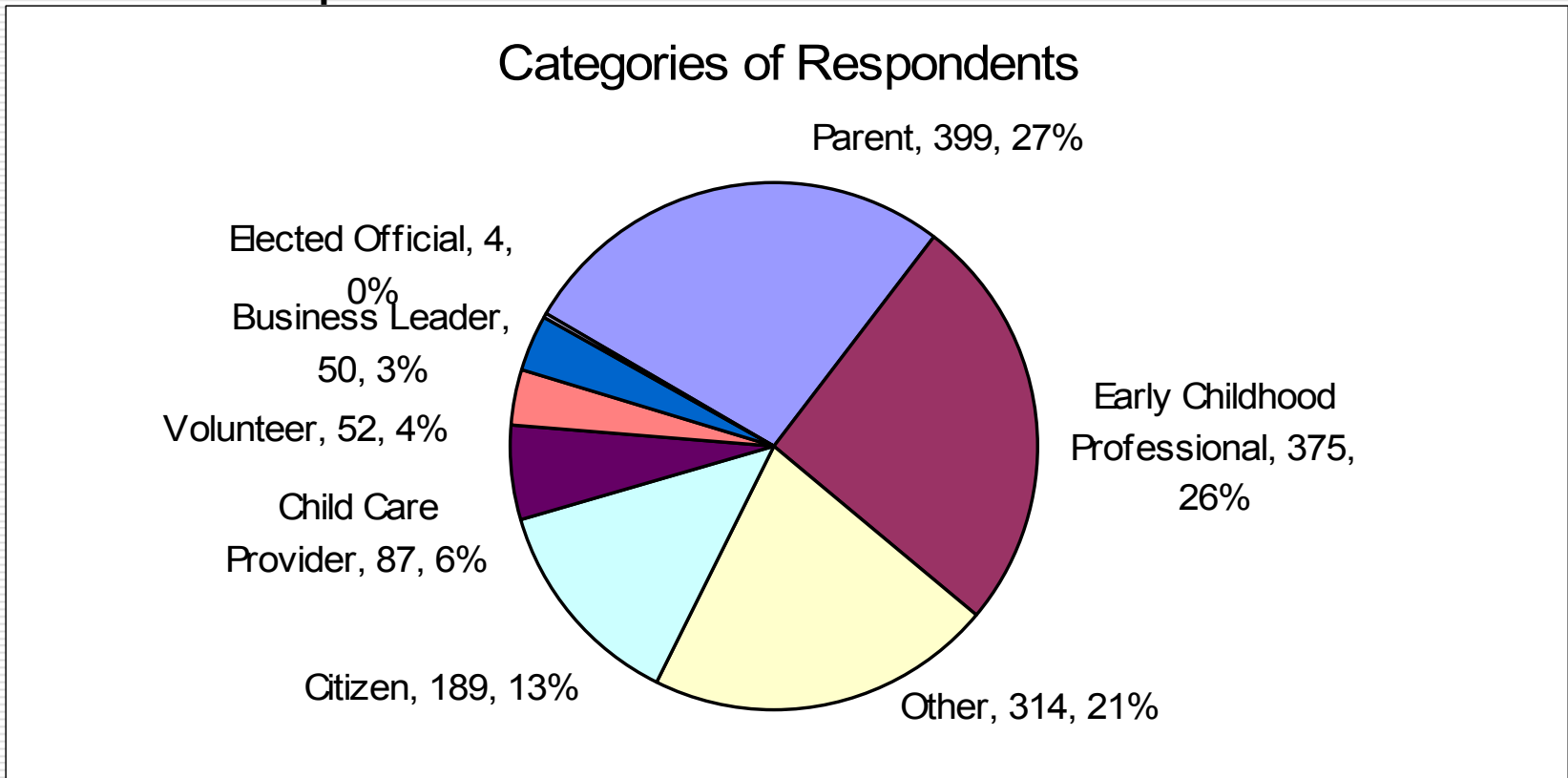


\*See separate sheet on responses by county

# Responses by Perspective

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□ Who responded?



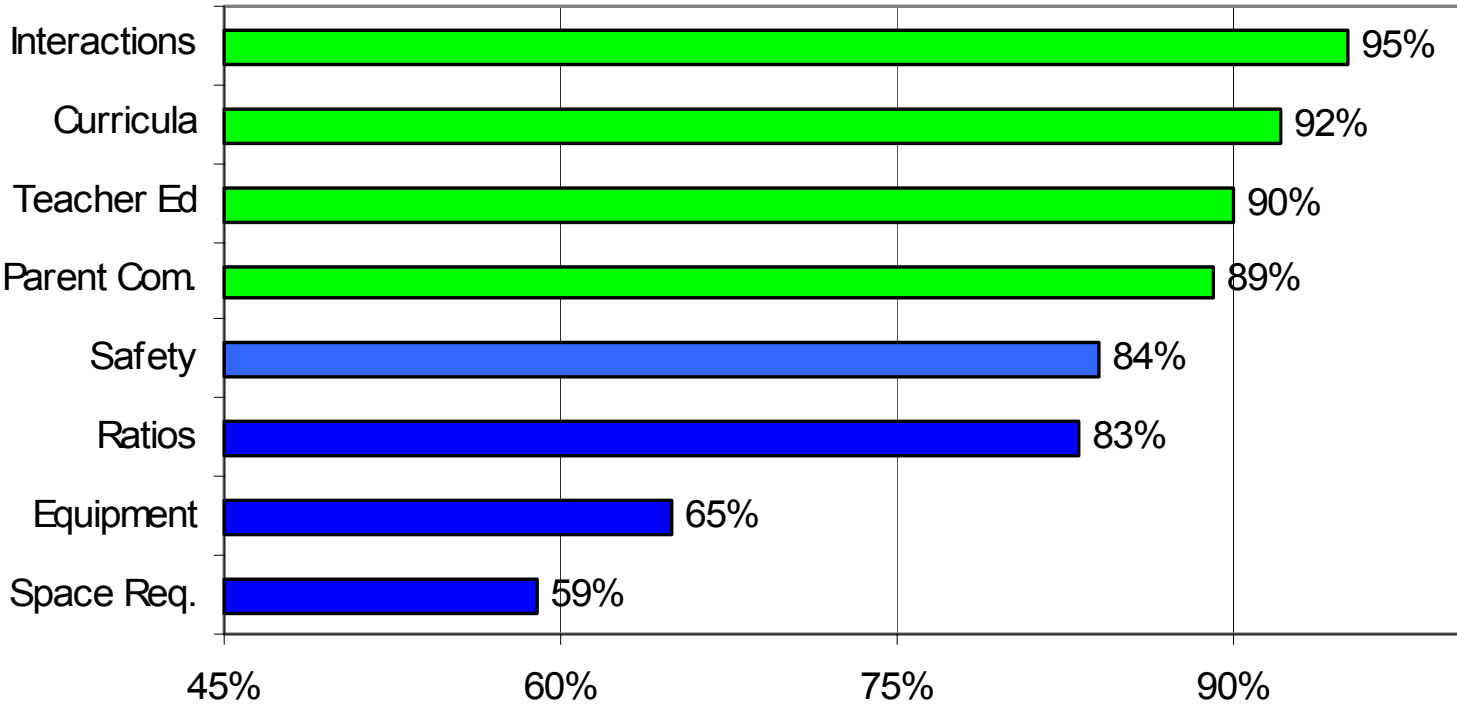
# Closed-End Ranking Question

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- Rank the following in terms of *impact on a child's future success in school*:
    - Safety Standards
    - Developmentally Appropriate Curricula
    - Teacher Education, Training, Experience
    - Ratios of Adults to Infants/Children
    - Space Requirements
    - Furniture and Equipment
    - Quality of Teacher:Child Interactions
    - Communications with Parents
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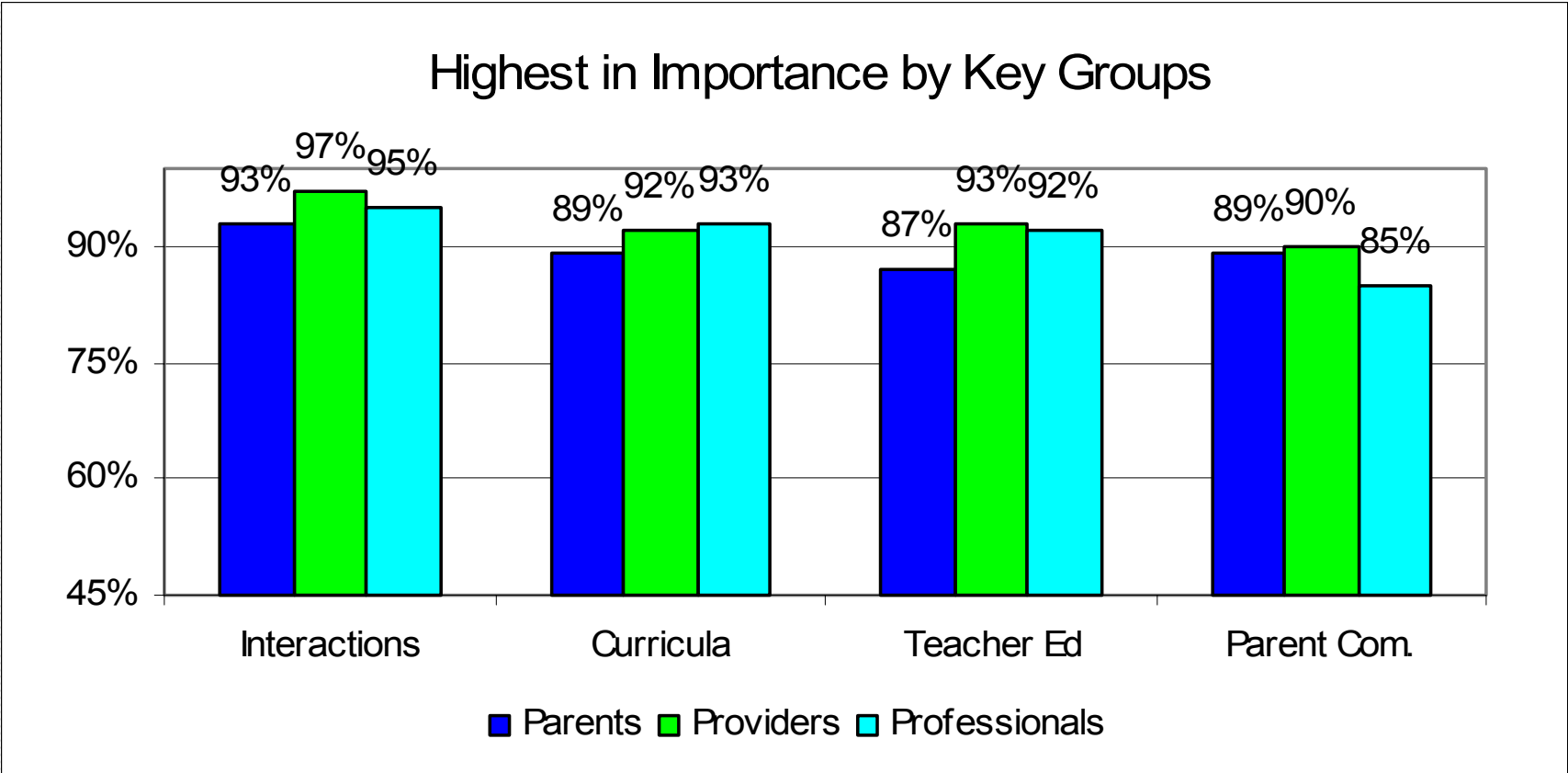
# Key Findings: What Matters Most?

Impact on Success in School: Highly Important Rankings



# Key Findings: What Matters Most?

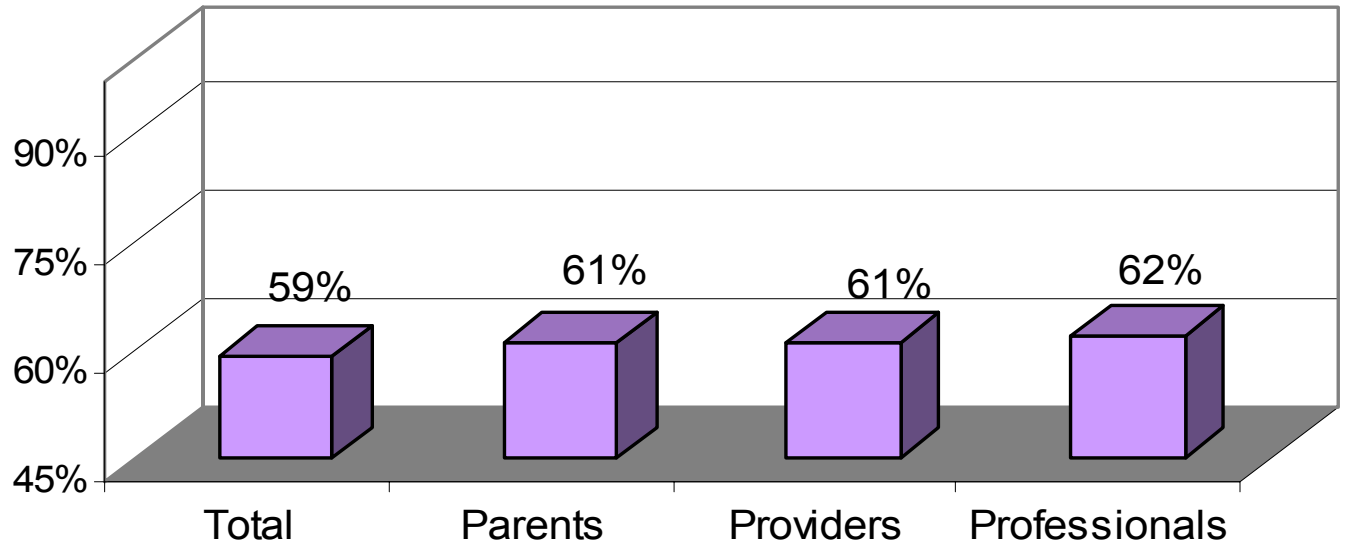
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# Ranking: Space Requirements

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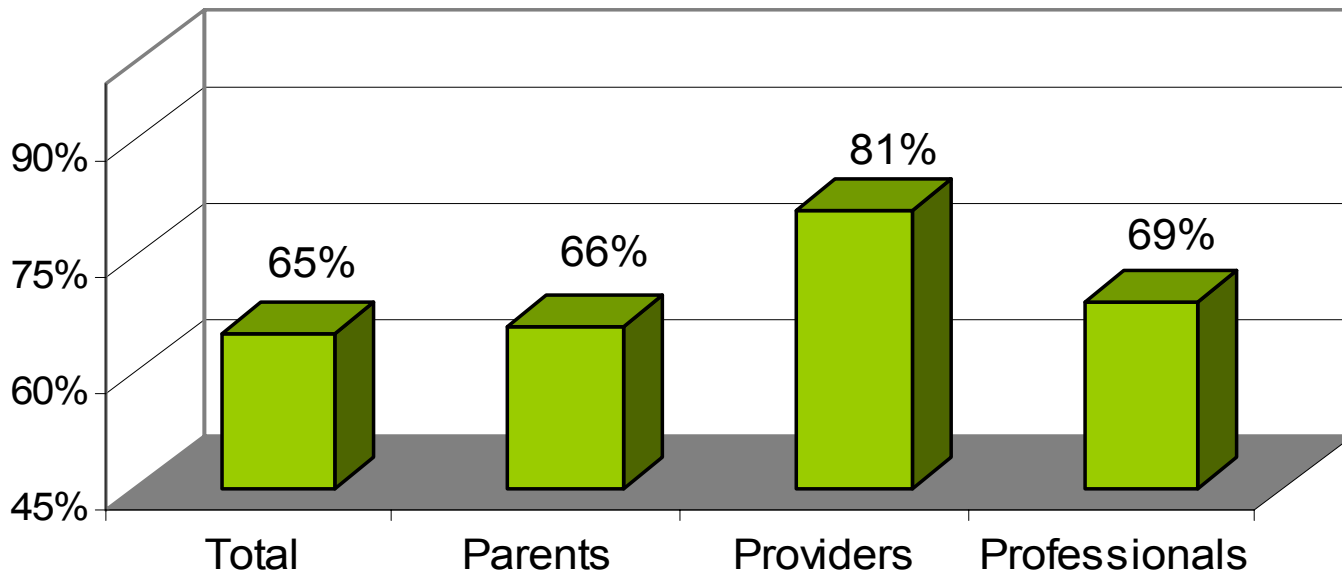
Space Requirements: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Furniture & Equipment

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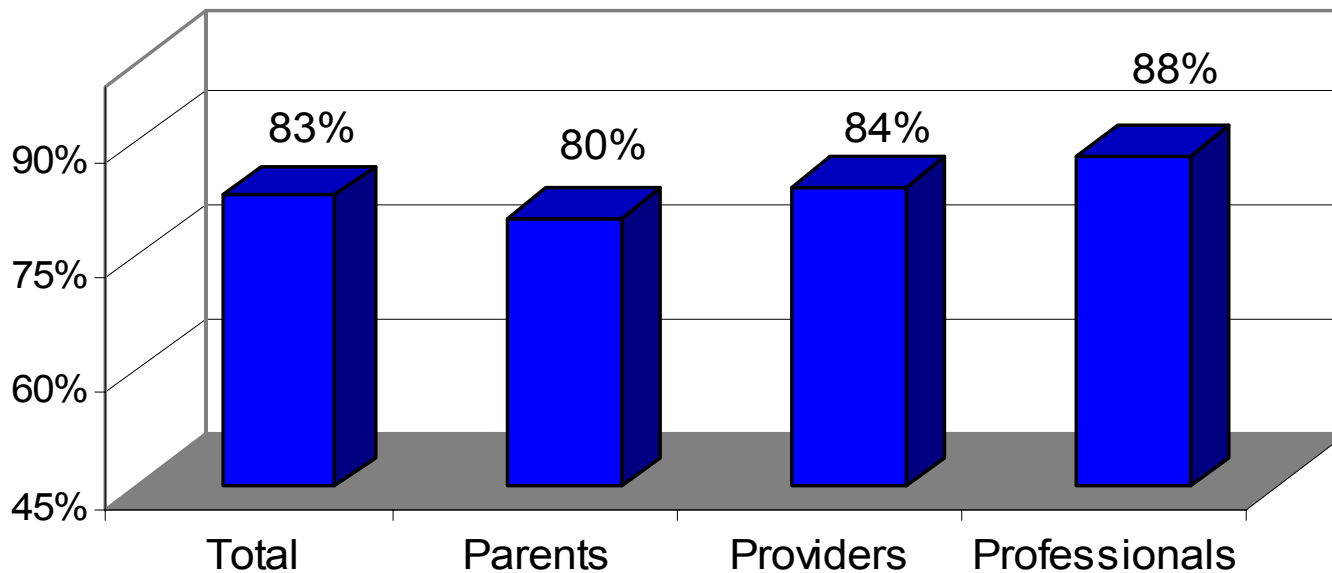
Furniture/Equipment: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Adult:Child Ratios

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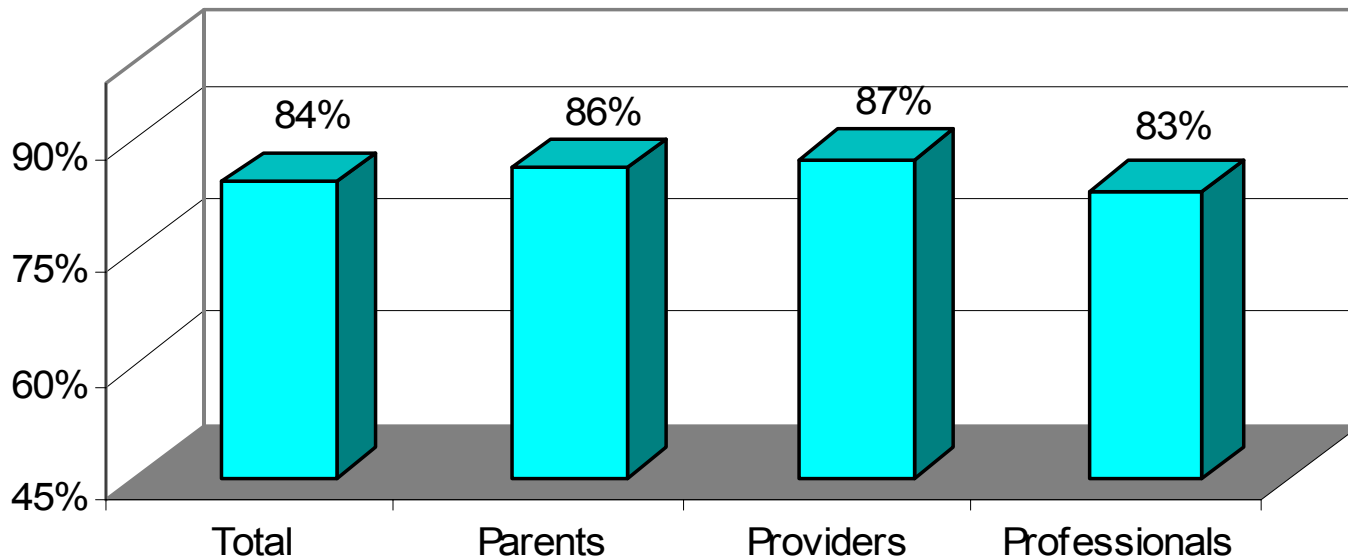
Adult:Child Ratios: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Safety Standards

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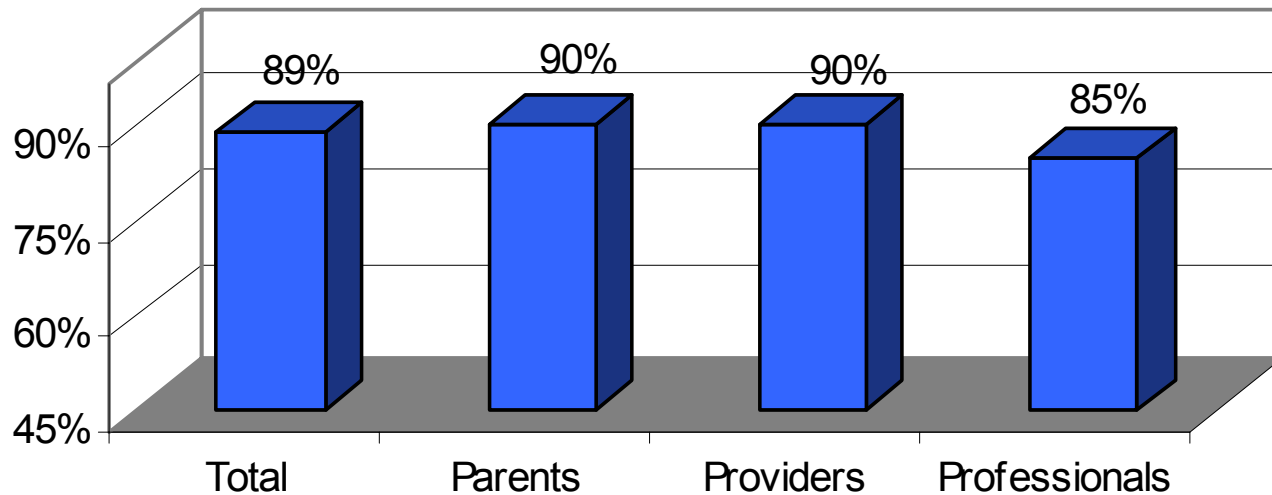
Safety Standards: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Parent Communications

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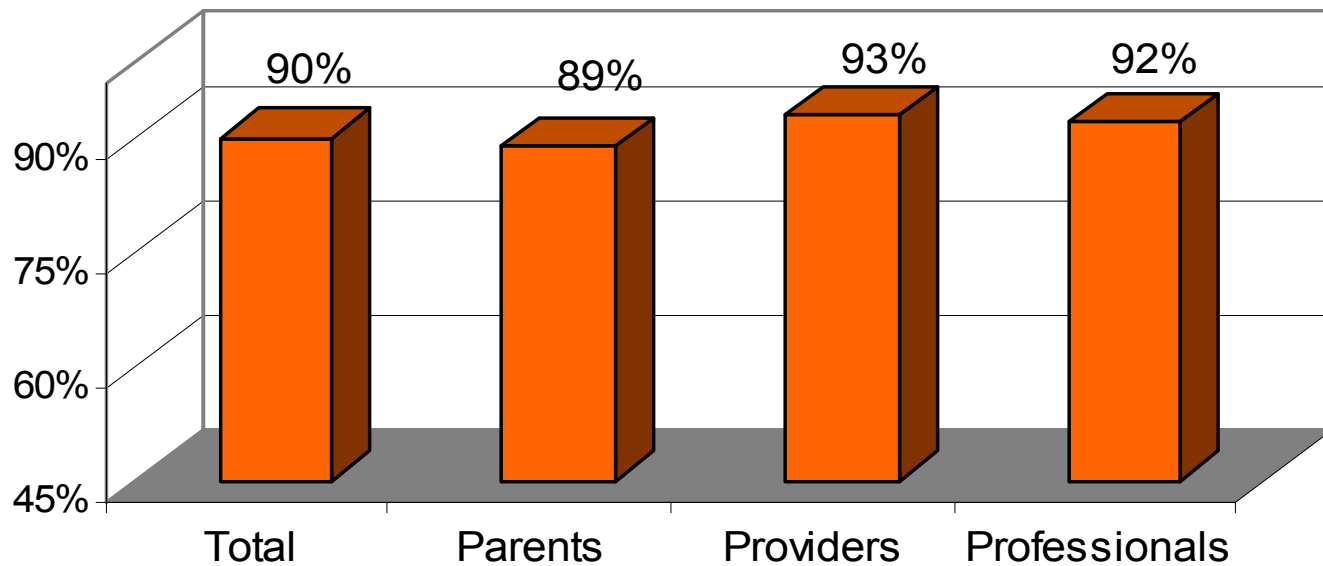
Parent Communications: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Teacher Education

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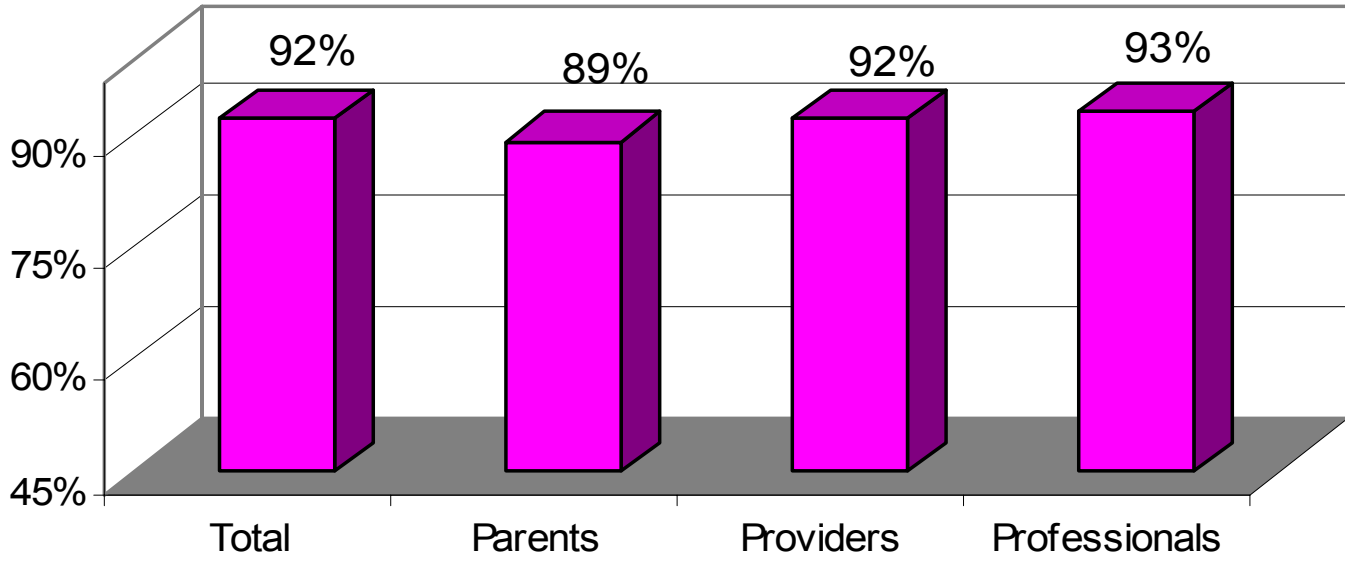
Teacher Education: Highly Important Rankings



# Ranking: Appropriate Curricula

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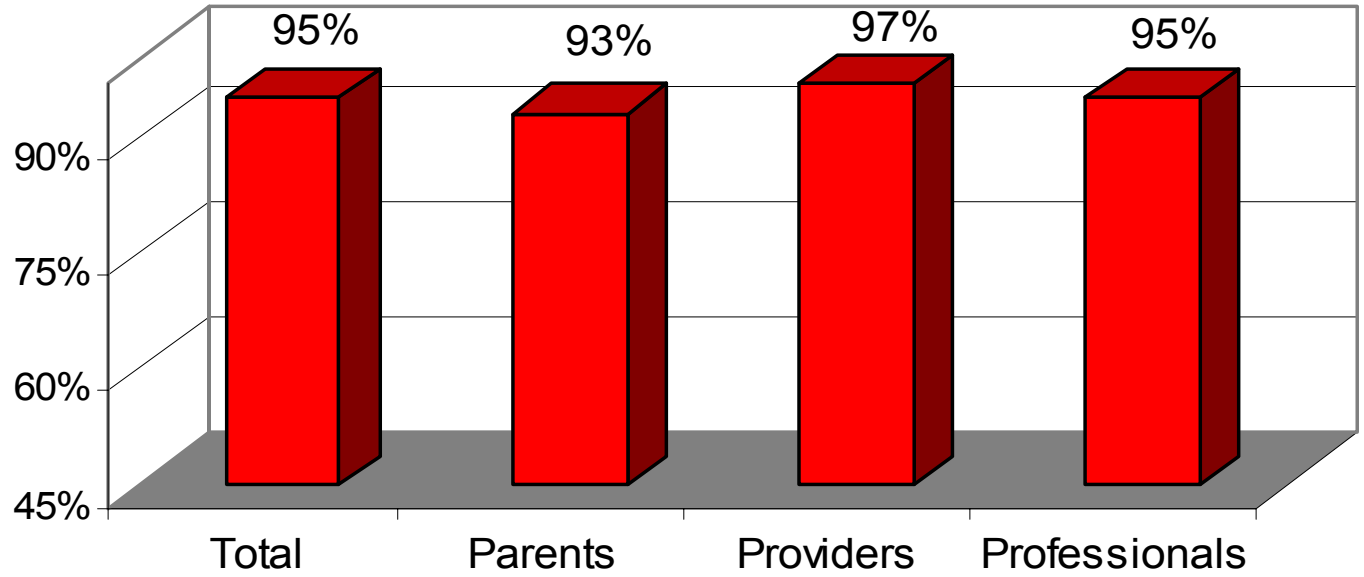
Developmentally Appropriate Curricula: Highly Important



# Ranking: Quality of Interactions

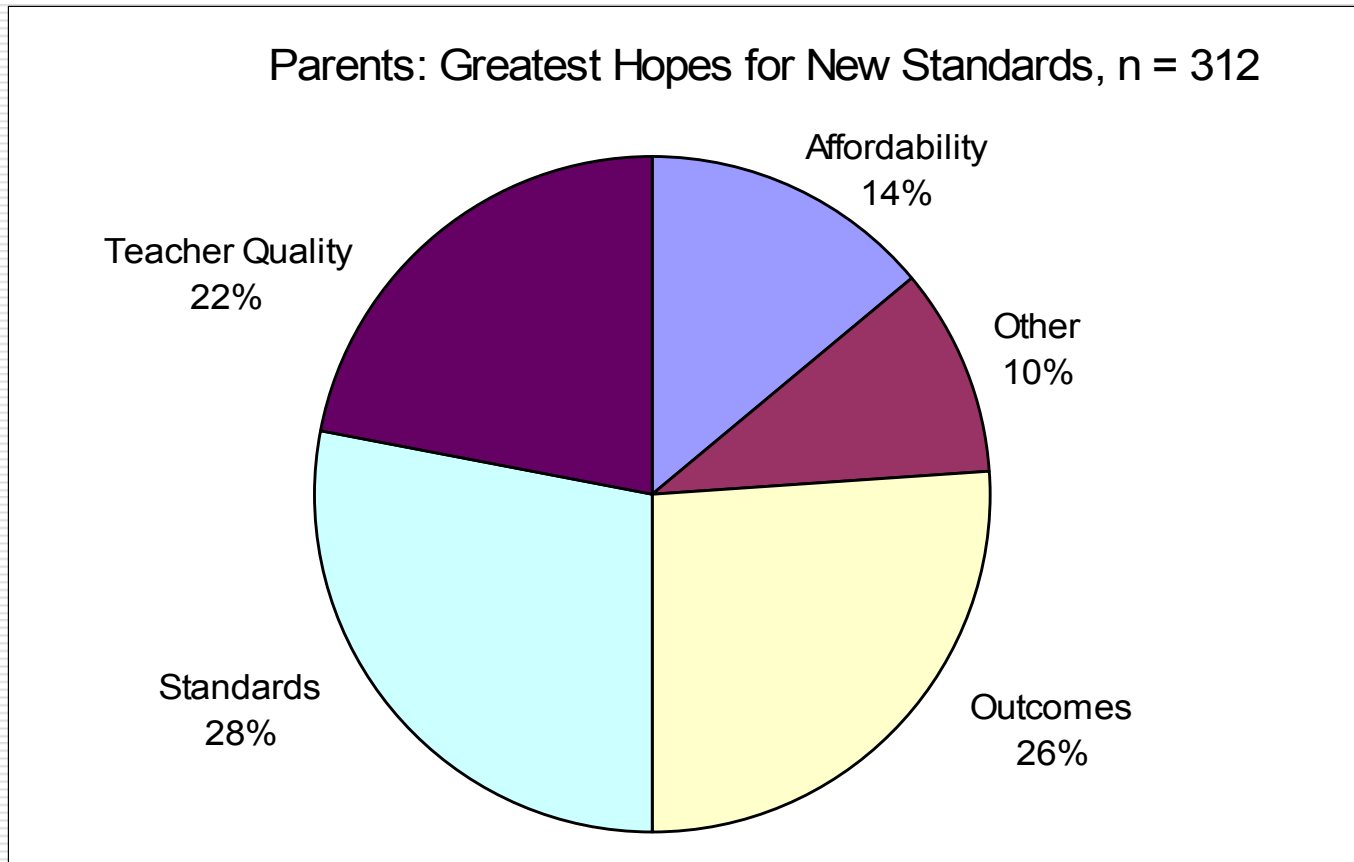
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Quality of Teacher:Child Interactions: Highly Important



# Open-Ended: Parent Hopes

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# Open-Ended: Parent Hopes

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## Higher Standards

- Better curriculum
- Lower ratios
- Developmentally Appropriate
- Smaller groupings

## Outcomes

- Children ready for 1<sup>st</sup> Grade
- Preparedness for school
- That kids are learning

## Better Prepared Staff

- All staff are trained
- Caregivers are encouraged to HOLD infants

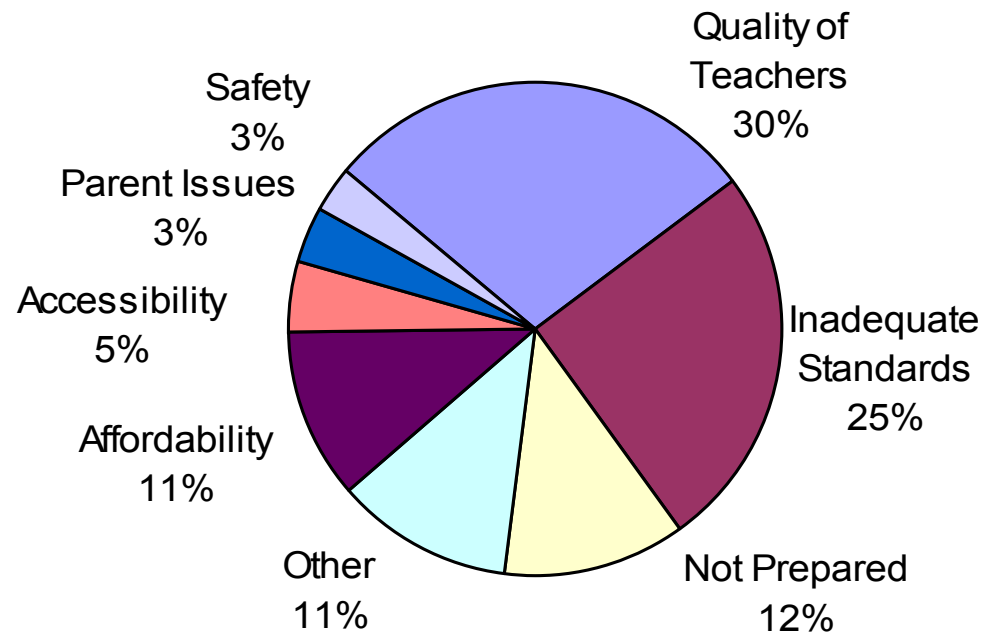
## Affordable/Accessible

- All children have access to quality care
  - Every child will have a chance
  - Open to all families, not just low income
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# Open-Ended: Parent Concerns

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Parents: Greatest Concerns About New Standards, n = 297



# Open-Ended: Parent Concerns

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## ❑ Low Quality Teachers

- Apathy, boredom
- Poorly trained teachers
- Teachers that punch a time clock
- Unskilled, untrained staff

## ❑ Poor Standards

- Compromise in quality of care
- Large classes
- Too many children with 1 teacher
- No rating system

## ❑ Children not Prepared

- Child not be ready for school
- If not early care, they fall behind in school
- Leaving out subjects children will need

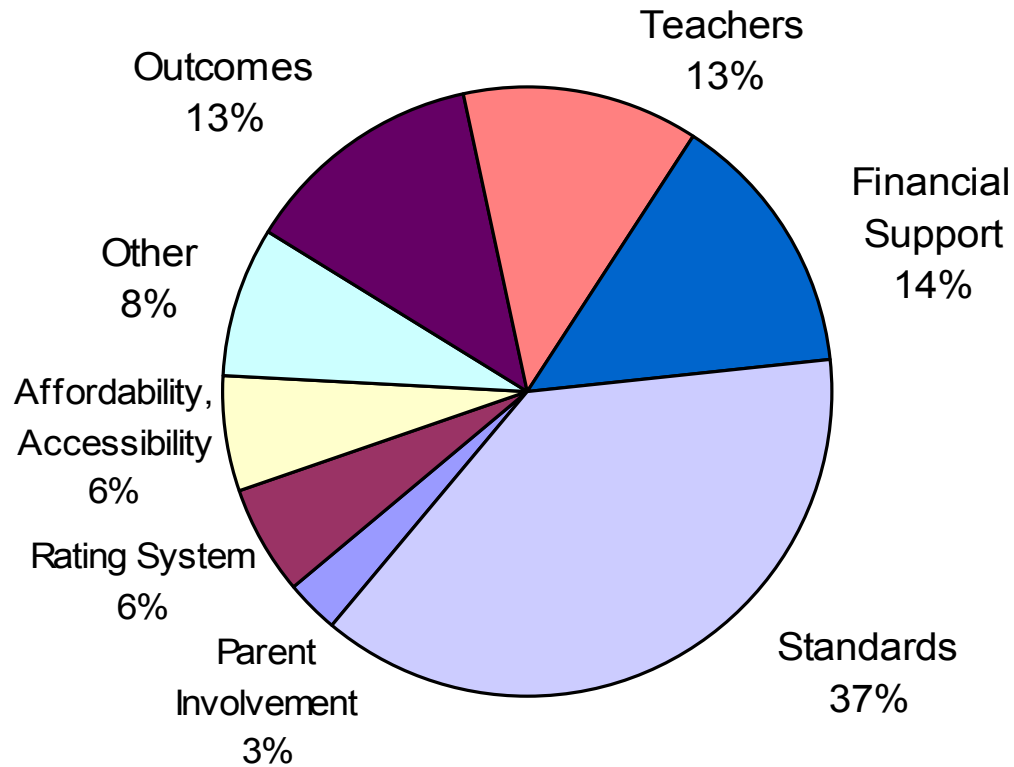
## ❑ Affordability

- That you must “qualify” for 4K
  - Unaffordable for some deserving kids
  - EVERY 4 YEAR OLD DOES NOT GET A CHANCE
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# Open-Ended: Provider Hopes

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Providers: Greatest Hopes for New Standards, n = 184



# Open-Ended: Provider Hopes

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## Higher Standards

- Better ratios
- Higher state standards
- Go beyond basic health and safety issues

## Financial Support

- Grants for centers to maintain teaching tools
- Subsidized salaries
- Continued funds thru teach
- Receive same resources as public schools

## Better Teachers

- All teachers have certificate or degree in early childhood
- More on-site help to train teachers
- People with long experience will be valued

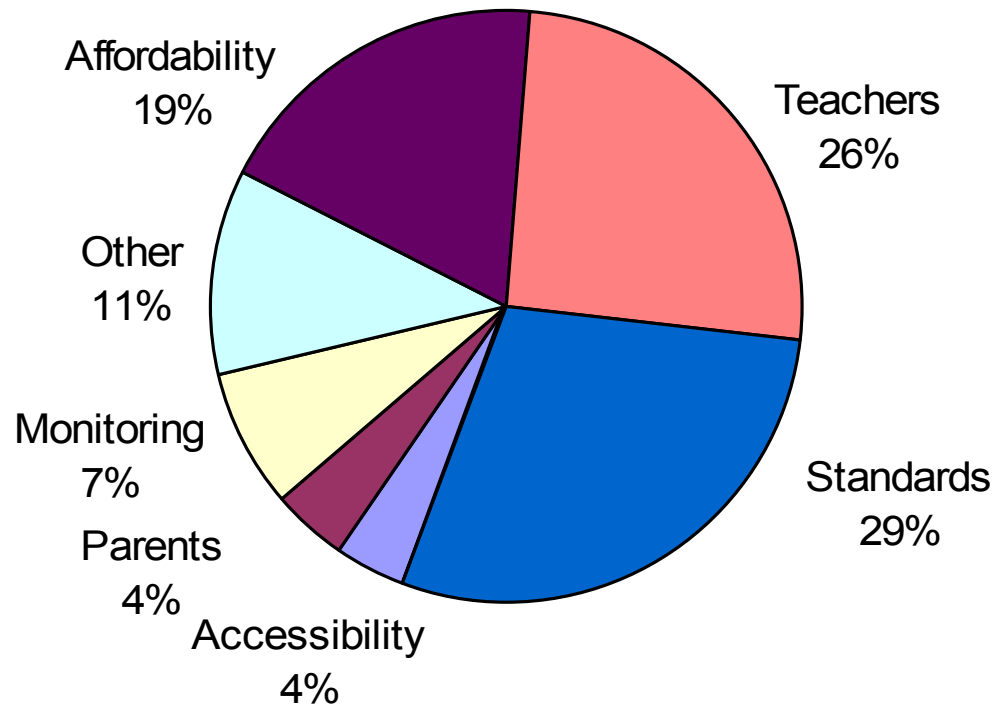
## Outcomes

- Better care for children
  - Increased literacy
  - No child, parent, teacher left behind
  - Make children want to learn
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# Open-Ended: Provider Concerns

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Providers: Greatest Concerns About New Standards, n = 174



# Open-Ended: Provider Concerns

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## □ Standards

- Unreasonable rating system
- Cut back in ratios hurting private profit centers
- For profit powers will force lower quality care
- Standards too low

## □ Teachers

- Shortage: qualified staff
- Lack of teacher training
- Teacher pay – high turnover (in for profit)
- Degrees will matter and not the person

## □ Affordability

- Centers closing
- Must have \$s to raise bar
- No financial support to meet standards
- > standards, > costs, > regs, same rates

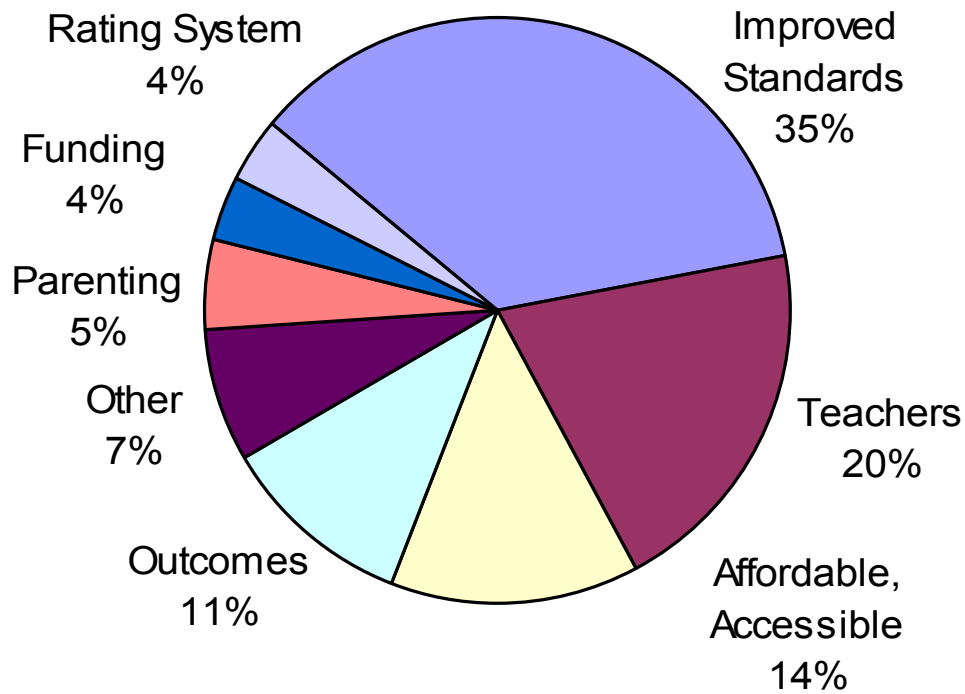
## □ Implementation /Monitoring

- Consistency in regulations
  - Low quality programs are given funds
  - Effectiveness will not be monitored
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# Open-Ended: "Expert" Hopes

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Professionals: Greatest Hopes for New Standards, n = 333



# Open-Ended: “Expert” Hopes

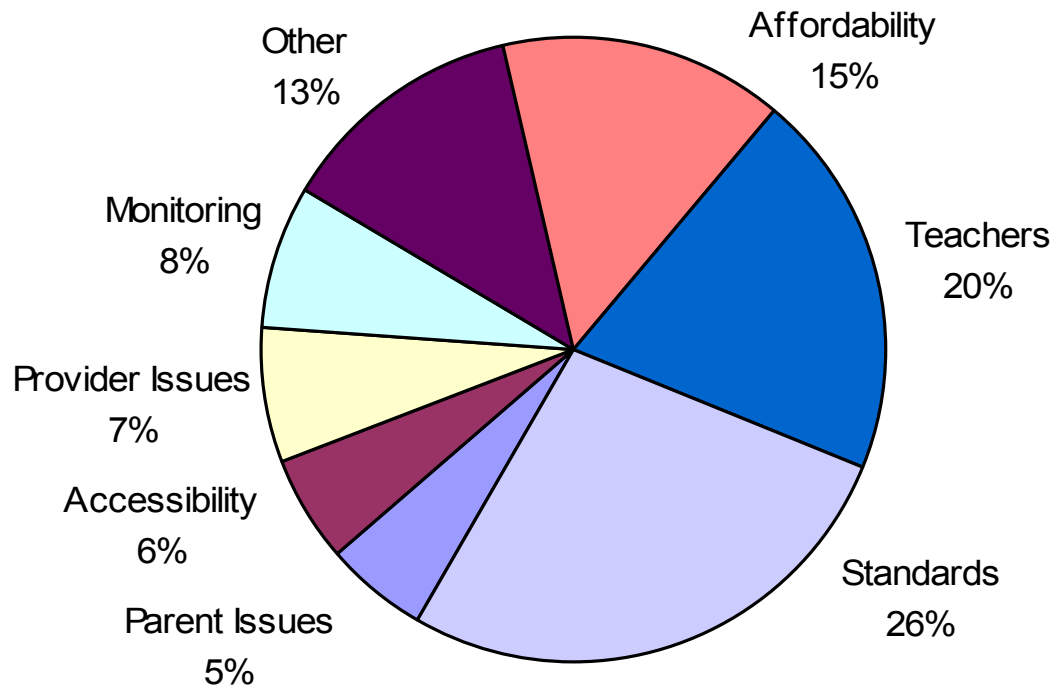
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- Higher Standards
    - Best education in world
    - Focus on literacy
    - Better ratio – caregiver/child
    - Comprehensive, research-based
    - Smaller class sizes
  - Better Teachers
    - Better teacher standards and pay
    - Qualified teachers that are formally educated
    - Teachers truly interested in student success
  - Affordable/Accessible
    - Accessible to all children
    - All children 0-5 able to get quality care
    - Available to ALL children
    - Fair and equal
  - Improved Outcomes
    - Children reaching fullest potential
    - Excellence that lasts a lifetime
    - That children are safe, healthy and happy
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# Open-Ended: "Expert" Concerns

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Professionals: Greatest Concerns About Standards, n = 329



# Open-Ended: "Expert" Concerns

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## □ Standards

- Accepting weak standards
- High ratios
- Ignoring need for more space per child
- Lack of rating system
- Existing substandard programs

## □ Teachers

- \$ to pay for appropriate staff
- Lack of qualified teachers
- Too much turn over in the field
- Low pay->turnover->inconsistency->poor attachment
- Not looked at as professional

## □ Affordability

- Having funds to support these efforts
- Not enough money to make a difference
- Lack of state funding to support programs
- Best practices are sacrificed for \$\$

## □ Monitoring

- Need to be linked w/ assessment measures
  - Not enough site monitoring of centers
  - Uneven implementation /lax enforcement
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# Summary: Themes in Hopes

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	Parents	Providers	“Experts”
<b>Greatest Hopes for Standards:</b>	n = 312	n = 184	n = 333
Higher <b>Standards</b>	28%	37%	35%
<b>Outcomes:</b> Improved Readiness	26%	13%	11%
Better Prepared <b>Teachers</b>	22%	13%	20%
Broader <b>Accessibility/ Affordability</b>	14%	6%	14%
<b>Financial Support</b> for Standards		14%	

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# Summary: Themes in Concerns

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	Parents	Providers	“Experts”
<b>Greatest Hopes for Standards:</b>	n = 297	n = 174	n = 329
Weak, Inadequate <b>Standards</b>	25%	29%	26%
Children <b>Not Prepared</b> for School	12%		
Ill-prepared <b>Teachers</b> w/Turnover	30%	26%	20%
Unfair <b>Accessibility/ Affordability</b>	16%	23%	21%
Inconsistent <b>Monitoring/Regulating</b>		7%	8%

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# Conclusions:

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## □ Tight consensus on what matters most

- Quality of Teacher-Child Interactions
- Developmentally Appropriate Curricula
- Teacher Education, Training and Experience

## □ Greatest Hopes

- Higher Standards – Ratios, Curricula, Group Size
- Better Prepared Teachers – Better Pay, Training, Respect, Dedication
- Tangible Outcomes – Students Prepared, Healthy, Love Learning

## □ Greatest Concerns

- Weak Standards, Teacher Turnover, Lack of Affordability
  - Lack of funding to truly make a difference
  - Uneven, highly limited access to high quality care
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