The San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI) is focused on continuous quality improvement of early education programs, enhancing the development and learning trajectory of children from birth through age five, and supporting educators with resources. SDQPI is an effort to strengthen San Diego’s early learning and care system to support young children and their families.

SDQPI serves as San Diego County’s local Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), which operates as part of Quality Counts California (QCC). SDQPI is funded by QCC and First 5 San Diego, and operated by San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE).

Quality improvement support for all participating sites includes: individualized leader coaching, professional learning sessions for all site staff, monetary staff stipends, and site incentives (e.g., equipment and learning materials for the site, based on qualification).

SDQPI continues to grow and develop through the funding of First 5 San Diego. The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) provides a framework for differentiated and individualized support to the field through the provision of coaching, incentives, and healthy eating and active living supports, just to name a few.

In the QRIS/QIS system there have been significant accomplishments in providing support to the early education workforce in their recovery from the COVID 19 Pandemic. One of the most significant issues that had been noted during the pandemic is the lack of technology for those who are working in centers and family child care programs. This digital divide created a disconnect for those who were working to provide quality programming to children in their programs. Providers that did not have access to technology were not able to attend professional development opportunities, maintain required data sets for reporting, and lacked basic ability to engage in quality learning opportunities. Through local contract dollars that are braided with the QCC compendium of grants, we have been able to provide computers based on a localized vetting process for recipients and coach supervision that leads to program quality through access to technology. Along with access to the computers, there is also a basic technology class that must be completed as part of the program. In addition to the program, we have also begun to put together a technology strand for providers that will support their increased knowledge of how to use technology more effectively in their programs.

As the state continues to revisit the QRIS Matrix related to equity, the San Diego County QCC Consortium has made the decision to suspend rating and move to quality improvement activities. Those who participate in San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative will not be rated unless they receive CSPP funding. We will continue to rate CSPP sites that are mandated through educational statute.

SDQPI has been working to promote inclusionary practices. The SDQPI team has been learning about how to effectively promote and create inclusive environments that are supportive of inclusive practices using IEEEP Grant funding. We have also been reaching out to SDQPI sites to promote additional support to children with disabilities within their programs. We have created a partnership with the HOPE Infant Toddler Program to provide extra special education support from HOPE Infant Toddler staff as well as funding through the IEEEP grant to provide financial support to purchase incentives for accessibility.
IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT DELIVERY MODEL TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL SITE NEEDS

The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) provides a framework for differentiated and individualized support to the field. SDQPI continues to work on development and refinement of the MTSS as the main structure at the center of Learn Well. The updated QIP Planning Tool 2.0, which had been revised based on user feedback, is fully in use. The revised QIP 2.0 tool that SDQPI coaches have been using since November 2021 has taken into consideration the unique needs of the family child care and friends, family and neighbors (FCC/FFN) population as well as small and larger centers including LEAs.

REFINING THE MTSS

EXPANDED ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The sdqpi.org website houses information on how providers can most effectively take part in SDQPI, access to the Professional Learning Catalog, and a variety of resources that are updated regularly in the Provider Resources tab.

COACHING AND TRAINING

Coaching and subsequent trainings are all based on improvement science and continue to grow as the MTSS program evolves. These sessions are based on the providers’ self evaluation using the QIP Planning Tool 2.0, and through this work, the coaches are able to connect providers and their teachers to professional learning opportunities that support the quality improvement goal attainment.

PARTICIPATING SITES as of JUNE 2022:

Large, publicly funded centers, like Head Start and California State Preschool Program (CSPP):

502 Sites

Agencies:

106

Total number of children impacted:

13,444

Licensed Family Child Cares (FCCs):

284 Sites

Unlicensed Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN):

18 Sites

Home Visitor (HV):

49 Programs

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

There were 415 professional learning offerings that 11,312 attendees participated in throughout San Diego County.

There have been approximately 382 provider participants and 176 family participants that have completed professional learning in the Dual Language Learner (DLL) Grant Phase 3 “Personal Oral Language Learning” (POLL) strategies.

DATA SUPPORT

Through ongoing data collection, the SDQPI team is able to identify areas of need working closely with site providers to formulate a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Goal. Coaches are able to track progress on that goal and provider success through MTSS logs which are analyzed by leadership staff in an effort to look for patterns of need within the field related to quality improvement through a cycle of continuous improvement.

Testimonials:

“SDQPI helps me support my parents with resources and how I can connect in a meaningful way - one way is through art; it’s so important for the children to enjoy and learn the process, not just about the product.”

— ANGELA CARROLL, CARROLL’S LEARNING ANGELS FAMILY CHILDCARE

“I am so excited that QPI changed how the participants participate and develop a shared goal that is not too broad. This allows the site staff to concentrate on a specific goal and really dive deeper into it. Altadena is a small site, and we celebrate successes and strengths as well as sharing techniques to improve if necessary.”

— LAURA PHILLIPS, SITE SUPERVISOR, ALTADENA HEAD START