2025-2026

LEARN WELL ANNUAL REPORT

san diego county office of EDUCATION
FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES℠

SAN DIEGO QUALITY PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE

First 5 San Diego

The 2025–2026 program year marks the first year of the latest contract cycle with First 5 San Diego through the Learn Well contract, which provided $4million in funding to implement the San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI). In addition to funding from First 5 San Diego, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) leverages resources from the California Department of Education, California Department of Social Services, and First 5 California to create a streamlined quality improvement system of support for early learning and care programs.

These combined funds help ensure that high-quality supports in forms of professional learning, technical assistance, coaching, and resource sharing are available to strengthen teacher-child interactions and promote positive learning environments across San Diego County's early learning and care (ELC) mixed-delivery system. This system includes school districts, center-based programs, Family Child Care (FCC) programs, and Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) providers.

HELPING YOUNGSTERS THRIVE

SDQPI.org



WHO WE SERVE

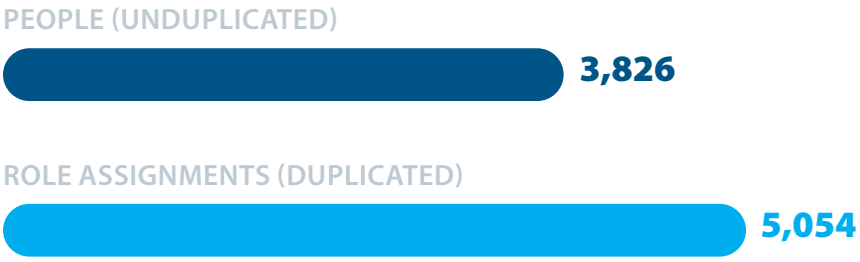
A total of 559 ELC sites participated in SDQPI during 2025-2026. There were 286 Family Child Care Homes, 269 Center-based providers and five Family Friends and Neighbors.

The focus of SDQPI's work is to partner with the educators who work within the 559 ELC sites to provide opportunities to participate in a continuous growth through participation in coaching, training, and technical assistance. A total of 3,826 workforce members participated in SDQPI, with several staff members serving in more than one role — an occurrence that is widely acceptable in the field of early learning and care and typically does not receive extra compensation. For this reason, we collected 5,054 staff role assignments. Most of the role assignments are for individuals working directly with children.

PROVIDERS BY SETTING



PEOPLE VERSUS ROLE ASSIGNMENTS

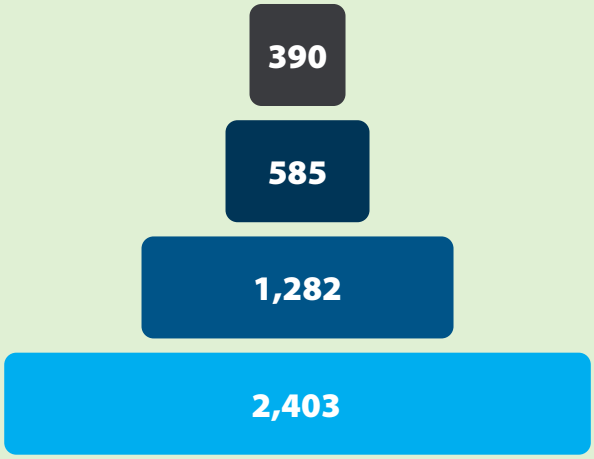


Gap of 1,228 assignments: staff who hold more than one role at their agency.

3,244
Instructional staff assignments

1,282 lead teachers plus 1,962 instrucional assistants

HOW THE WORKFORCE IS STRUCTURED



AGENCY LEADERSHIP
366 program directors, 24 assistant directors

SITE LEADERSHIP
487 site directors, 98 assistant site leaders

LEAD TEACHERS
Lead classroom teachers

CLASSROOM SUPPORT
1,962 instructional assistants, 441 floaters

WHERE THE WORKFORCE SITS

Share of all 5,054 role assignments by function



Classroom
3,685

Leadership
975

Data
394

WHAT STANDS OUT

72.9%
of roles are classroom facing

Lead teachers, instructional assistants, and floaters account for 3,685 of 5,054 role assignments, concentrating the workforce where the children are.

1.53
instructional assistants per lead teacher

1,962 instructional assistants support 1,282 lead teachers, a staffing pattern that shapes both coaching load and professional learning design.



SDQPI WORKFORCE AND CHILD IMPACT

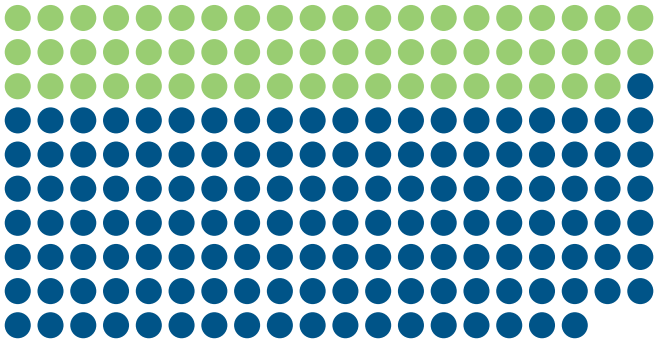
The intentional services provided to the participating SDQPI workforce have a direct impact on the children attending their programs. A total of 19,890 children are cared for in programs participating in SDQPI. As San Diego is a highly diverse county with a rich variety of languages and cultures, it is important to recognize that 7,269 children come from homes where a language other than English is spoken, including 5,562 children from Spanish-speaking homes.

This data is important in ensuring that coaching, training, and technical assistance are intentionally designed to support staff in engaging with children in their home language whenever possible. This practice promotes cultural proficiency, cultural humility, and developmentally appropriate best practices while supporting children's learning and sense of belonging.

Another important consideration is that only 29% of children enrolled in participating programs are in infant and toddler slots. This represents a significant discrepancy from the demonstrated need for infant and toddler care in San Diego County. However, the cost of providing infant and toddler care can make it challenging to offer affordable care, as lower adult-to-child ratios require additional staffing and resources.

CHILD ENROLLMENT ACROSS PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS

Each dot represents 100 children. 199 dots, 19,890 children served in 2025-25.



Infant / Toddler
5,859 children | 29.5%

PreK
14,031 children | 70.5%

3 in 10
children are in infant or toddler settings

Age Group Split

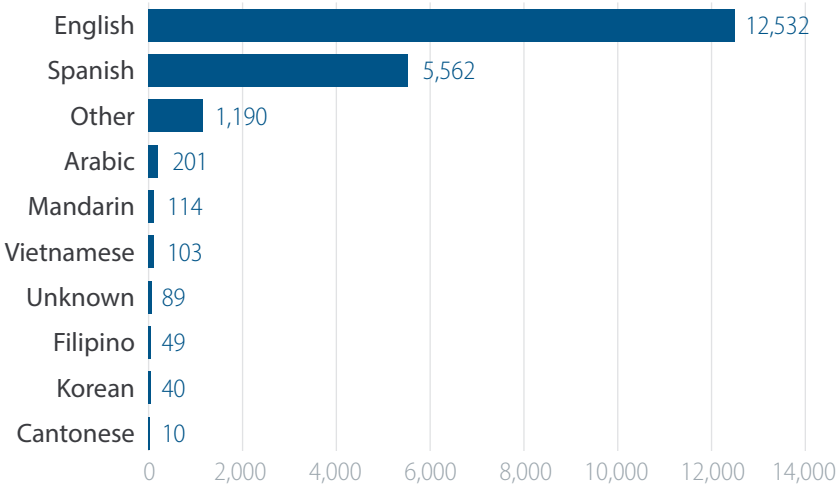
Infant / Toddler
5,859 | 29.5%

PreK
14,031 | 70.5%



CHILDREN'S LANGUAGES

Families report eight identifies home languages. 7,269 children come from homes where a language other than English is spoken.



5,562
Spanish-speaking homes
28.0% of children served, the largest multilingual group by a wide margin.

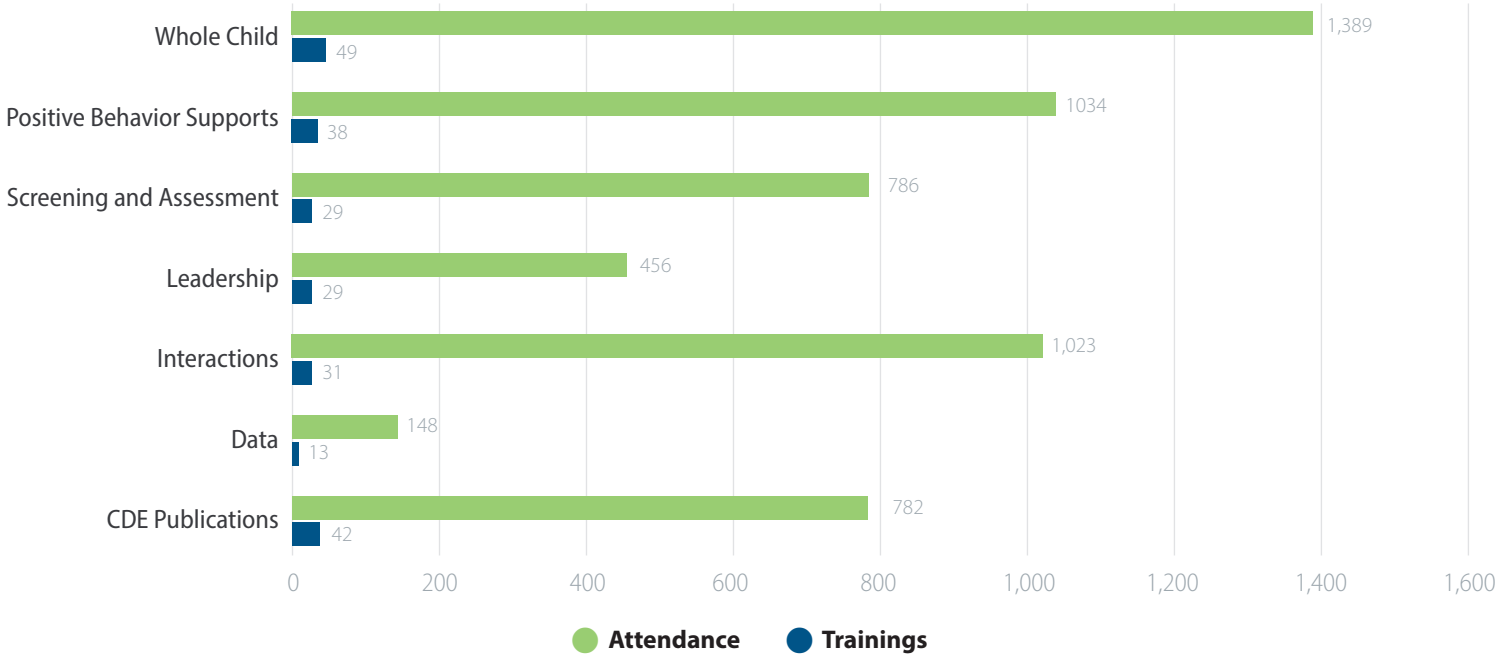
7,269
Multilingual learners
36.5% of children served. Excludes the 89 records reported as Unknown.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The professional learning offered by the SDQPI Quality, Learning, and Instruction Team includes coaching, technical assistance, and training designed to strengthen the knowledge, skills, and practices of early learning and care professionals. This comprehensive approach is grounded in the elements of the Quality Counts California Quality Continuum Framework, which serves as the foundation for developing individualized quality improvement goals for each site participating in SDQPI.

During this program year, SDQPI offered 231 professional learning trainings, reaching 5,618 participants. To increase access and meet the diverse needs of the early learning and care workforce, trainings were offered through both virtual and in-person modalities and were available in English and Spanish. This flexible approach allowed educators across San Diego County to participate in professional learning in ways that were responsive to their schedules, settings, and language preferences.

TRAINING GROUPS



Coaching and technical assistance are at the heart of quality improvement, providing educators with ongoing support to strengthen practices and achieve their quality improvement goals. All participating programs engaged in both individual and group coaching designed to address their specific needs.

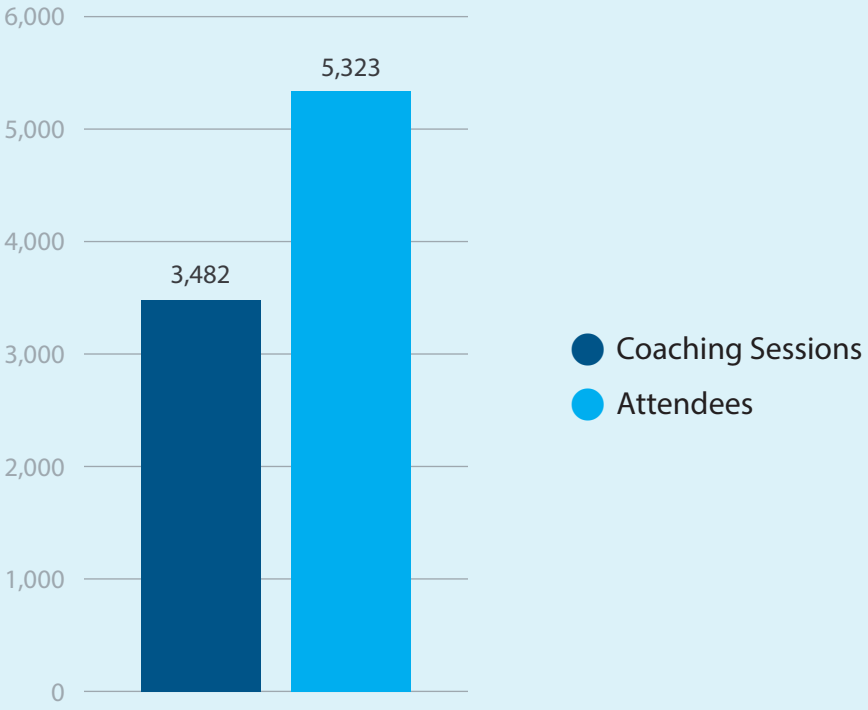
Group coaching provided opportunities for early learning and care educators to connect with like-minded colleagues who share similar goals and challenges. These learning communities encouraged collaboration, shared problem-solving, and networking while allowing educators to learn from one another and build sustainable professional relationships.

This combination of individual and group coaching allowed SDQPI to respond to participant needs, expand access to support, and strengthen a connected workforce committed to continuous quality improvement.

A total of 3,482 coaching sessions were provided, and due to the group coaching efforts, 5,323 participants benefited from this service.

COACHING




6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
3,482
5,323
Coaching Sessions
Attendees



STIPENDS AND INCENTIVES

The SDQPI Stipend supports continuous quality improvement and professional growth in ELC settings such as center-based programs, FCC, and FFN providers. Recognizing that these efforts often require time beyond the typical workday, this stipend is designed to acknowledge and promote additional time ELC workforce members invest in strengthening program quality and advancing their professional development.

A total of 2,708 SDQPI participants earned a stipend by successfully completing all program requirements. Each eligible participant received $1,240, made possible through the leveraging of multiple funding sources. Learn Well alone funded 1313 stipends.

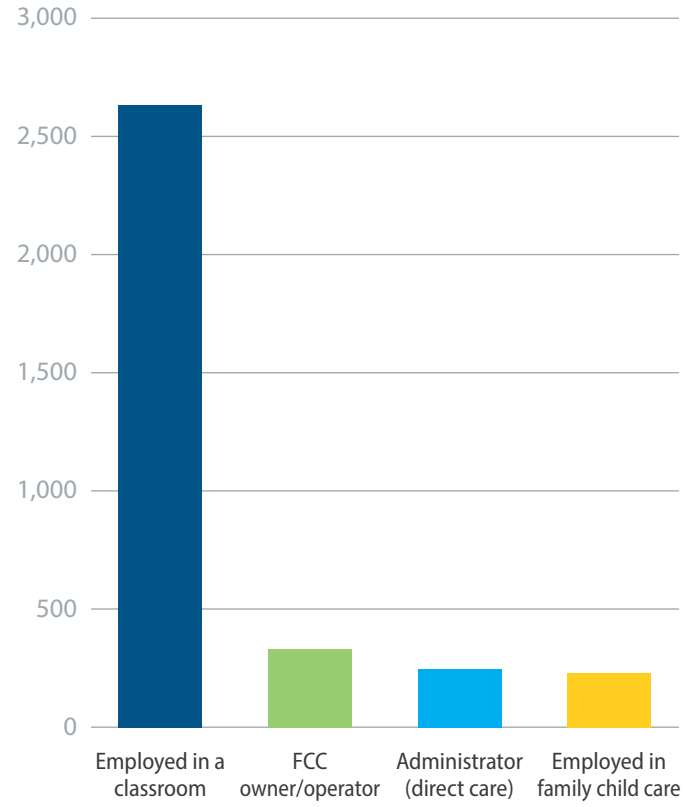
The majority of stipend recipients served in the roles of Teacher or Assistant Teacher, aligning with the program's goal of supporting the early childhood workforce, particularly educators in positions that traditionally receive lower wages, with the majority living within the City of San Diego, with the large majority being English speakers followed by Spanish speakers, mirroring the demographics of the children in participating programs.

This year, newly participating sites were given the opportunity to create shopping carts for learning materials. These materials were provided as an incentive to support high-quality early learning environments and align with each site's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) goals in their first year of SDQPI.

A total of six sites participated in the shopping cart incentive. These sites are not recipients of state or federal subsidies, making them eligible for this support.

Additionally, 46 sites that had received incentives only once during the previous contract cycle qualified for the Enhancement Program. This program provided pre-selected, high-quality learning materials designed to strengthen and enrich classroom learning environments.

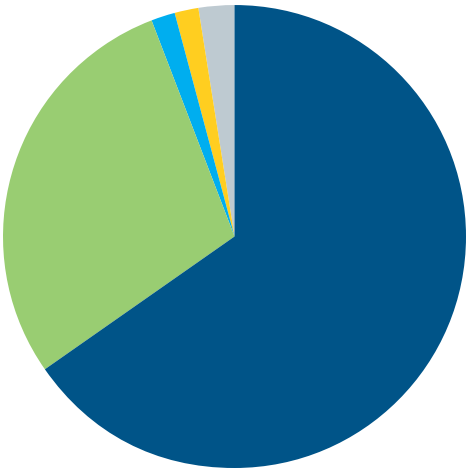
RECIPIENT ROLE



PRIMARY LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS

Reflects linguistic diversity of this segment of the workforce.

- **English — 2,259** (65.4%)
- **Spanish — 996** (28.8%)
- **Farsi — 65** (1.9%)
- **Arabic — 54** (1.6%)
- **Other — 81** (2.3%)



IMPACT

The 2025–2026 program year demonstrates the collective impact of SDQPI's investment in the ELC workforce and the children they serve. Through the strategic leveraging of $4 million in Learn Well funding from First 5 San Diego, alongside state and local resources, SDCOE provided a comprehensive system of professional learning, coaching, technical assistance, stipends, and incentives to support 559 participating sites and 3,826 workforce members. These efforts reached nearly 20,000 children and were intentionally responsive to the diverse languages, cultures, and needs of San Diego County's children and educators. By expanding access to individualized and group coaching, offering professional learning in English and Spanish, recognizing educators' professional growth through stipends, and investing in high-quality learning environments, SDQPI strengthened the capacity of the ELC workforce to provide responsive, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate experiences for children. Together, these efforts reinforce SDQPI's commitment to continuous quality improvement and to building a connected, supported, and sustainable early learning and care system across San Diego County.

559
PARTICIPATING SITES

3,826
WORKFORCE MEMBERS

20,000
CHILDREN SUPPORTED

TESTIMONIALS

Learn Well trainings and coaching have helped me to move forward with confidence. I have the resources, talent and skills to create my desired results. I have gained full confidence in my own competence, and it has helped me to create the positive energy to inspire everyone in my program to fully engage in their work and keep our attention focused on where we want to go as a center / program and what is most important, recognizing children and individuals. — *Learn Well Provider*

I worked with my coach on improving my consistency and accountability. Focusing on daily habits and taking ownership of my performance helped me become more confident and reliable. It made a big difference in how I handle pressure and contribute to my team. — *Learn Well Provider*