Parents Challenge

2019 Evaluation Report

QREM

STRONG **DATA** = SOUND **DECISIONS**

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Executive Summary

There were four key findings of Parents Challenge (PC) parents that measured their satisfaction with their schools over time, and compared them to all Colorado parents.

- **PC Parents are extremely satisfied with the school of their choice –** parents are satisfied with their school, much more so than Colorado parents whose children attend public schools.
- **Satisfaction with school is growing –** PC parent satisfaction increases as the year progresses, as satisfaction has increased by 2.9% since the 2017-18 school year. This is likely due to positive interactions with teachers throughout the year.
- **Satisfaction with teachers, school, and quality of instruction is both high and stable –** parents have stated consistently high satisfaction with their child's teachers and the instruction they receive since the 2017-18 school year. Satisfaction in these areas are higher than Colorado parents by 8.4 to 22.5 points.
- **Parents who homeschool their youth have stronger satisfaction with their decision –** PC parent's decision to homeschool increased by 7.3%, since the 2017-18 academic year. Their level of satisfaction is significantly higher than all Colorado parents who homeschool their youth, by 7.1 points.

In addition, there were three key findings that showed students and parents experienced changes throughout the 2018-19 school year, measured by gains from the Fall 2018 term to the Spring 2019 term.

- **High School students' GPA's grew by 5.3%** – over the course of the school year, high school participants' grade point averages increased from 3.42 in the Fall to 3.60 by the Spring term.
- **Students became more involved in school activities** – PC students became more involved in extracurricular activities as the year progressed. Their involvement in school sports increased by 7.4%, volunteering at the school increased by 7%, and involvement in student government grew by a strong 32.6%.
- **Parents became more involved as well** – parents increased the number of hours they volunteered each term, and they participated more in select activities, specifically volunteering for school-related functions and serving on committees that advised school leaders.

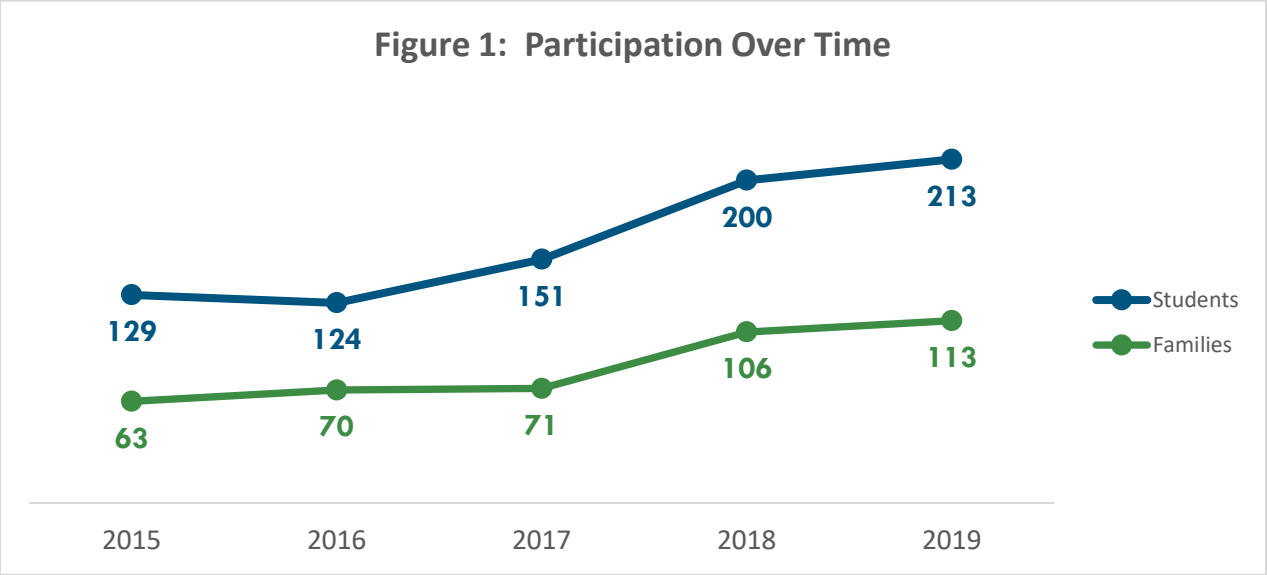
Research Update

School choice, the ability of families to pick the school where they wish their child to receive an education, has sound impacts. Options available with Parents Challenge include private schools, public schools (both traditional and charter) and the child's residence, for those who choose to home school. According to the adjudicated literature, there are several benefits when a child is enrolled at a school of the family's choice. These findings usually focus on the academic effects -- the research shows that students enrolled at choice schools, especially low-income children, usually had stronger academic achievement. Additionally, students who were enrolled in voucher programs for a long duration had lower rates of criminal activity, which is attributed to the higher quality education these students received. These examples show there are sound effects on student academics when families are allowed to make that critical choice (DeAngelis & Wolf, 2016; Miron, Evergreen & Urschel, 2008).

The influence of school choice is not strictly limited to academics. School choice has an impact on the parents as well, who are the key focus of this report. Parents are a critical group of stakeholders, providing guidance and a unique perspective on their children, including participation in extracurricular activities, involvement in the community, and academic performance. How parents volunteer at their child's school and how they interact with educators is affected by school choice, as is making the determination that a particular school provides the proper environment for their children's education.

Hausman & Goldring (2000) found parental choice in education was a strong predictor of higher satisfaction with their children's school and their children's teachers, influence in the school, and school involvement, much higher than with parents whose children were assigned a school. These researchers found that school choice was the primary reason for high satisfaction rates with parents. Research also indicates that school choice parents' higher levels of involvement at their child's school allowed them to verify their initial decision, and to more closely monitor their child's progress. Parents participating in the Parents Challenge program accurately reflect these findings, as is evident in the subsequent sections in this report (Altenhofen, Berends & White, 2016).

Demographics



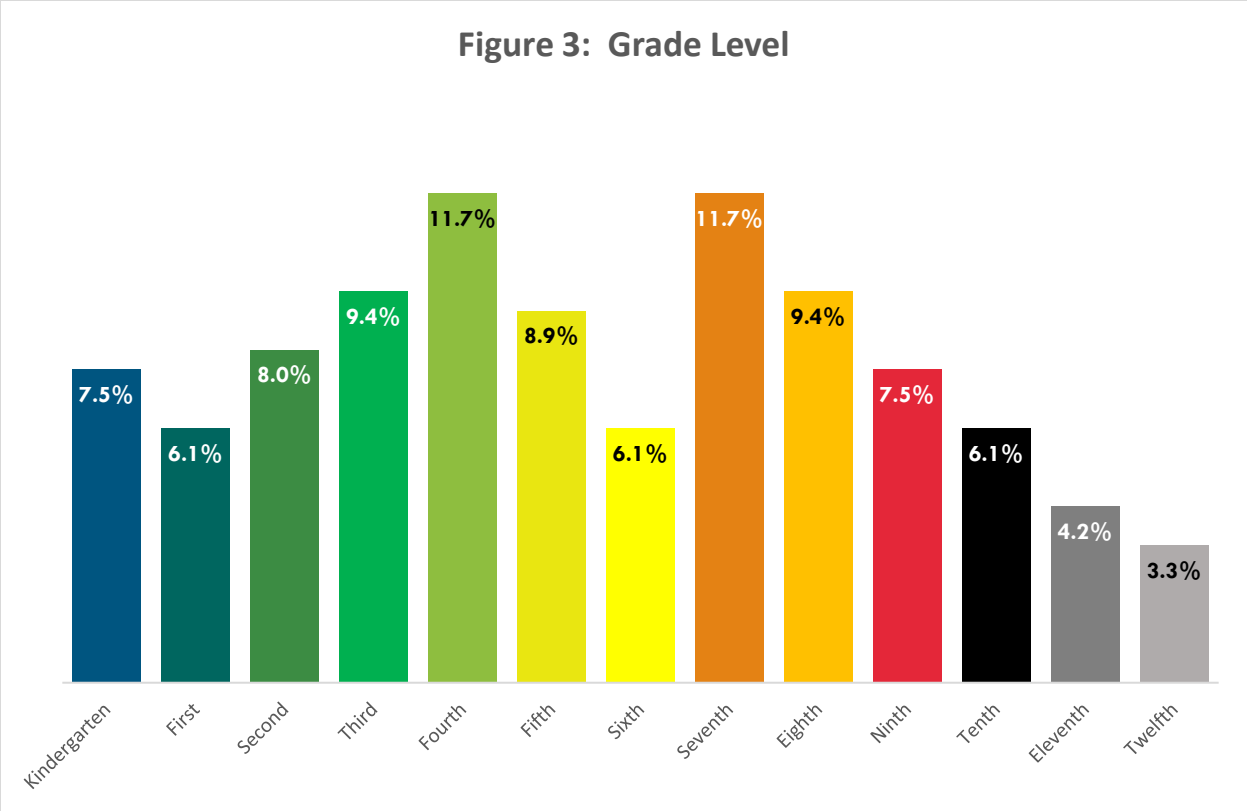
Parents Challenge (PC) in Colorado Springs provides parents with the opportunity to enroll their child at the school of their choice. In 2019, Parents Challenge provided assistance to 213 students, or 113 families. Since 2015, the number of students in the program has grown by 65.1%, while the number of families has grown by 79.4%.

Student Demographics

Figure 2: Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Parents Challenge	Colorado Springs	Colorado Springs Public Schools
African American/Black	16.0%	6.9%	6.7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.9%	0.5%	0.7%
Asian	1.4%	2.5%	2.5%
Biracial	14.1%	10.5%	7.8%
Caucasian	50.2%	58.1%	55.1%
Hispanic/Latino	17.4%	25.7%	26.6%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.2%	0.6%

About half of the Parents Challenge student population are minority students, which is higher than the rate among school-aged children in Colorado Springs (American Community Survey, 2018) and Colorado Springs Public Schools (Colorado Department of Education, 2019). Less than half of the Parents Challenge student population is female (46.5%).

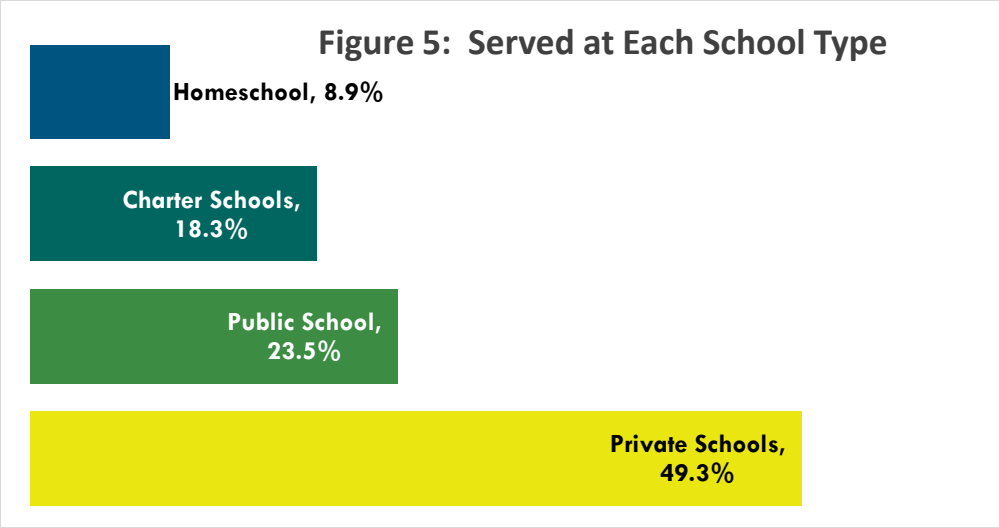


Most Parents Challenge students are in the fourth and seventh grades, with the largest group of students enrolled in the elementary grade levels (Grades 1-5). Figure 4 compares the percentage of participating students by year, with a predicted forecast for the 2019-20 academic year (based on trends of student enrollments).[1]

Figure 4: School Level by Year

Level	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Elementary	40.7%	40.9%	41.4%	45.2%	47.7%	48.4%
Middle	24.8%	23.6%	29.3%	30.6%	29.4%	31.8%
High	34.5%	35.5%	29.3%	24.2%	22.8%	19.9%

[1] This is elaborated further in Appendix C.



Private school students encompass the largest group of participants, while 8.9% in the 2018-19 school year were homeschooled. 41.8% of PC students enrolled at a public school, either traditional (23.5%) or charter (18.3%). The 2018-19 trends continue what was found last year, showing that while enrollment at private schools is declining, it remains the most popular option.

Figure 6: Type of School Attended by Year

Type of School	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Private School	64.6%	61.5%	59.1%	53.3%	49.3%
Traditional Public	9.7%	12.8%	17.3%	15.0%	23.5%
Charter Public Schools	17.7%	17.1%	13.4%	19.4%	18.3%
Homeschool	8.0%	8.5%	10.2%	12.2%	8.9%

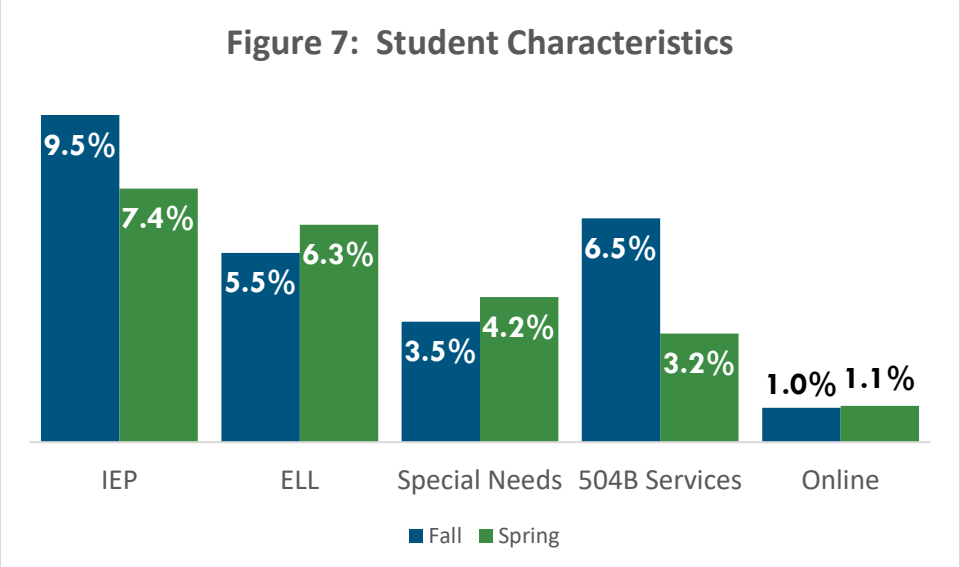


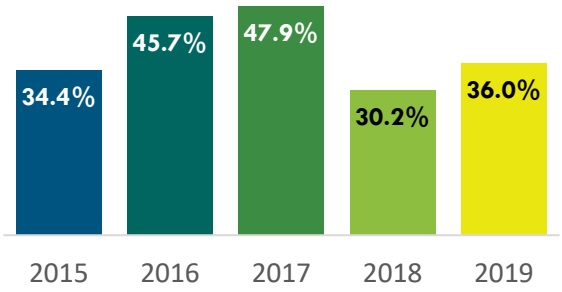
Figure 7 highlights Parents Challenge student requirements, indicating the different services they need for their educations. This chart also includes the proportion of students taking online courses.

Family Demographics

Figure 8: Household Type

Type	Fall	Spring	Colorado Springs
Two Parent Family	61.4%	60.7%	91.4%
Single Parent	37.7%	31.3%	8.6%
Guardian/ Grandparent	3.5%	4.5%	1.2%
Active Military	0.9%	0.9%	0.4%
Retired Military	4.4%	2.7%	18.1%

Figure 9: Colorado Natives



Most families are from two-parent households, but a higher proportion of parents surveyed during the 2018-2019 school year are heading single-parent households – approximately four times higher than the rate of families from the Colorado Springs metropolitan area. More than one-third of all participating families are Colorado natives (American Community Survey, 2019; Current Population Survey, 2019; Chalabi, 2015). Figure 10 highlights household income for these families. They are predominantly low-income, as stipulated by the Living Wage Calculator, approximately $70,228 for a family of four, consisting of two working parents and two children (Glasmeier & Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019). However, many families reported an increase in their income levels, as 13.2% of families earned more than $52,559 per year by the Spring term, compared to 9.6% of families in the Fall term.

Figure 10: Income Ranges

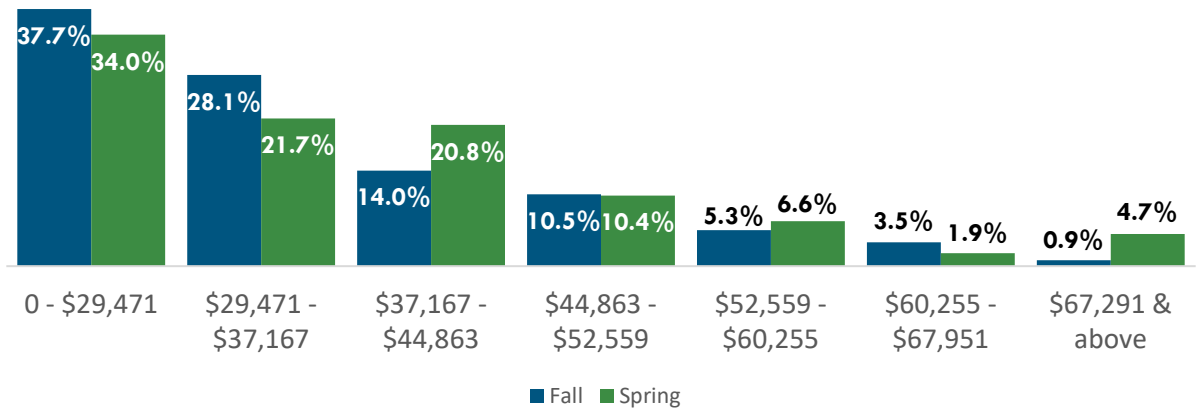
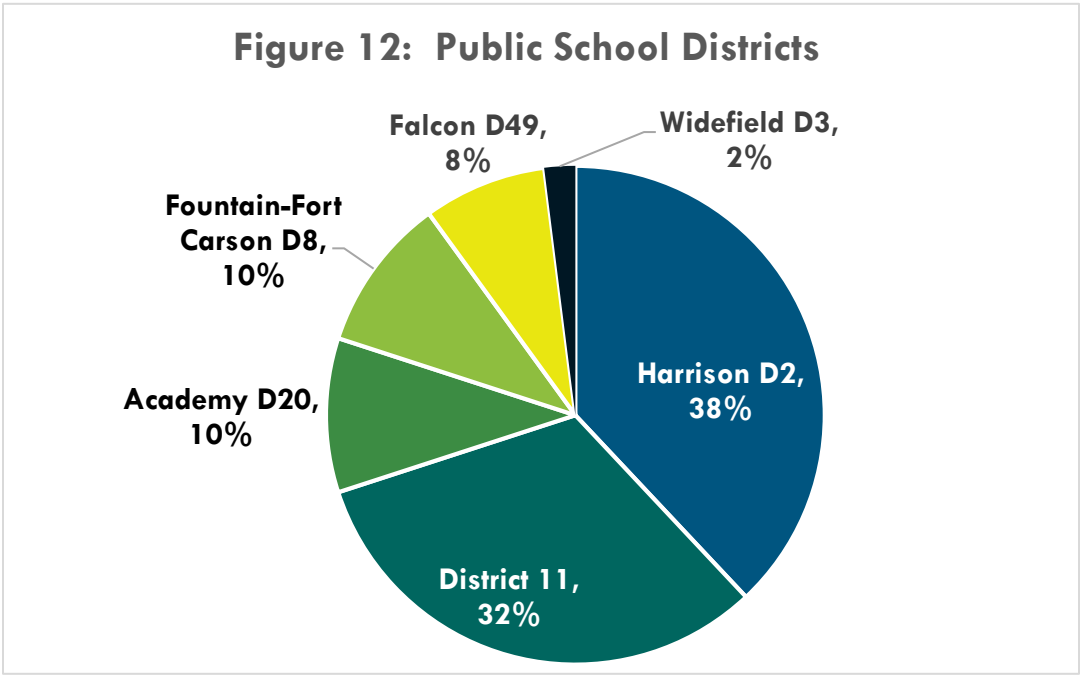


Figure 11: Highest Educational Attainment

Type	Fall	Spring	Colorado Springs
Did not graduate high school	0.88%	0.94%	<.01%
Certification or Trade School	3.51%	1.89%	3.37%
High School Diploma	6.14%	6.60%	32.24%
Some College	35.09%	24.53%	20.07%
Associate's Degree	12.28%	19.81%	6.68%
Bachelor's Degree	28.07%	28.30%	28.62%
Master's Degree	13.16%	15.09%	4.39%
Ph.D./Professional Degree	0.88%	2.83%	4.64%

PC households have a higher level of education than their peers in Colorado Springs. 44.3% of all Colorado Springs residents with school-aged children have a college degree (Associate's degree or higher), while 54.4% of PC parents in the Fall had completed their degree – a feature that increased to 66.04% by the Spring (Current Population Survey, 2019).

Public School Findings



Of the 50 Parents Challenge students enrolled at public schools, most attended Harrison D2 and District 11 School Districts.

Private School Enrollment

Figure 13: Private School Enrollment

School	Percent of Families	Percent of Children	Average No. of Children
Corpus Christi Catholic School	7.6%	7.8%	1.60
Colorado Springs Christian Schools	25.8%	26.5%	1.59
Divine Redeemer	7.6%	7.8%	1.60
Evangelical Christian Academy	10.6%	10.8%	1.57
Heritage Christian Academy	10.6%	10.8%	1.57
Hillel	1.5%	2.0%	2.00
Hill Springs Academy	1.5%	1.0%	1.00
Pikes Peak Christian School	10.6%	9.8%	1.43
Springs Baptist Academy	7.6%	6.9%	1.40
St. Mary's High School	4.5%	3.9%	1.33
St. Paul Catholic School	1.5%	2.0%	2.00
The University School	10.6%	10.8%	1.57

Among the private school participants of Parents Challenge, Colorado Springs Christian Schools is the most popular (25.8% of families, 26.5% of students). Families that chose to homeschool had an average of 1.58 children per household.

Academic Comparisons

Academic Performance

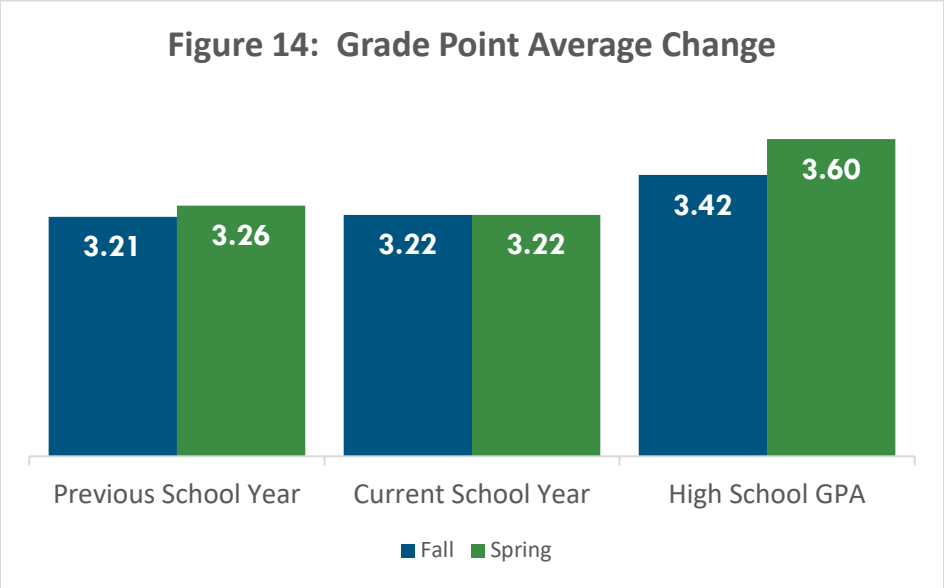


Figure 14 highlights the academic achievement of youth throughout the year, based on parent reporting. Overall student GPA remains strong with the average being a solid 'B'. Examining the high school students, we see a substantial 5.3% increase in their GPA over the duration of the year – increasing from a B+ average to an A- from Fall to Spring. These findings reflect what was found in the research literature, as many studies have found students in choice programs, especially low-income students, perform better than their non-choice counterparts at traditional public schools. Furthermore, performance at grade level reaffirms last year's report, where there was a strong academic difference between Parents Challenge students and their peers in Colorado Springs (Figure 15; Colorado Department of Education, 2019; DeAngelis & Wolf, 2016; Miron, Evergreen & Urschel, 2008; Pearman et al., 2019).[2]

Figure 15: 2018-19Academic Performance

Group	Reading	Math
Parents Challenge	86.8%	86.8%
Total Public-School Students	48.3%	35.3%
Low-Income Public-School Students	35.9%	24.0%

[2] Proficiency data from parents are verified through report cards and other documentation submitted to Parents Challenge. Subjects are not separated, so Math and Reading proficiencies are reported together. Additional information on comparison student performance by district is found in the appendices.

Attendance

Figure 16: Attendance Rates

School District	Length of School Year	Attendance Rates	Truancy Rates
Harrison D2	176.2	91.5%	4.8%
Widefield D3	165.4	92.4%	0.8%
Fountain-Fort Carson D8	168.2	92.6%	2.6%
District 11	164.6	89.5%	4.3%
Academy D20	165.3	93.2%	1.0%
Falcon D49	168.2	94.3%	2.9%
Total	167.2	92.2%	2.8%

Figure 16 represents the attendance rates at the school districts where Parents Challenge students are enrolled. Students in these school districts attend school approximately 92.2% of the time, with an average truancy rate (unexcused absences) of 2.8%. Figure 17 shows the differences in attendance rates for Parents Challenge students -- it is evident that a higher proportion of students missed more days of school during the Spring term than the Fall term. Attendance is a critical measure, as a higher attendance rate usually translates into greater academic success. Lower attendance rates are an indicator for both reduced academic success and increased high school drop-out rates (NCES, 2009). Chronic absenteeism, which is defined as missing at least 15 days in a school year, is a concerning feature, as 16% of all students in the United States are identified as chronically absent, similar to the rate present in Colorado Springs (16.6%). There is a notable jump between the Fall and Spring terms for PC students, where the proportion of students who fit this definition increased from 2.5% to 6.8% (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; Colorado Department of Education, 2019).

Figure 17: Parents Challenge Attendance

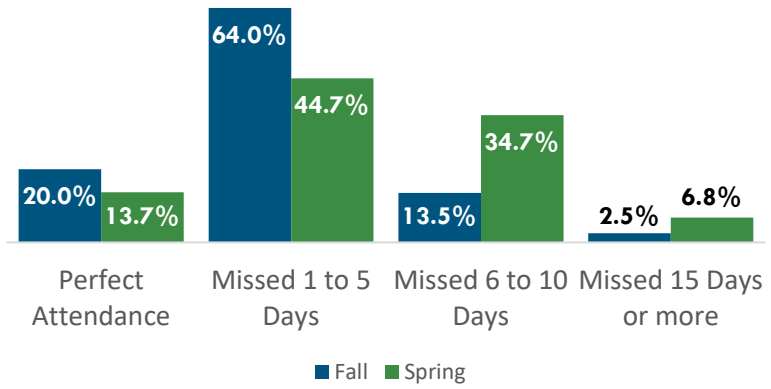
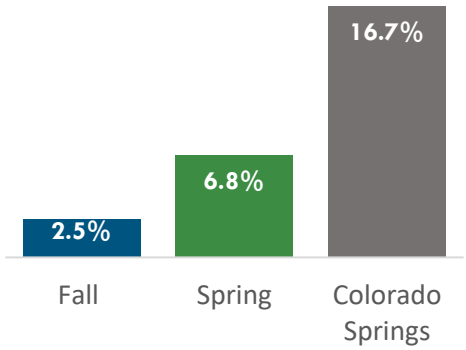
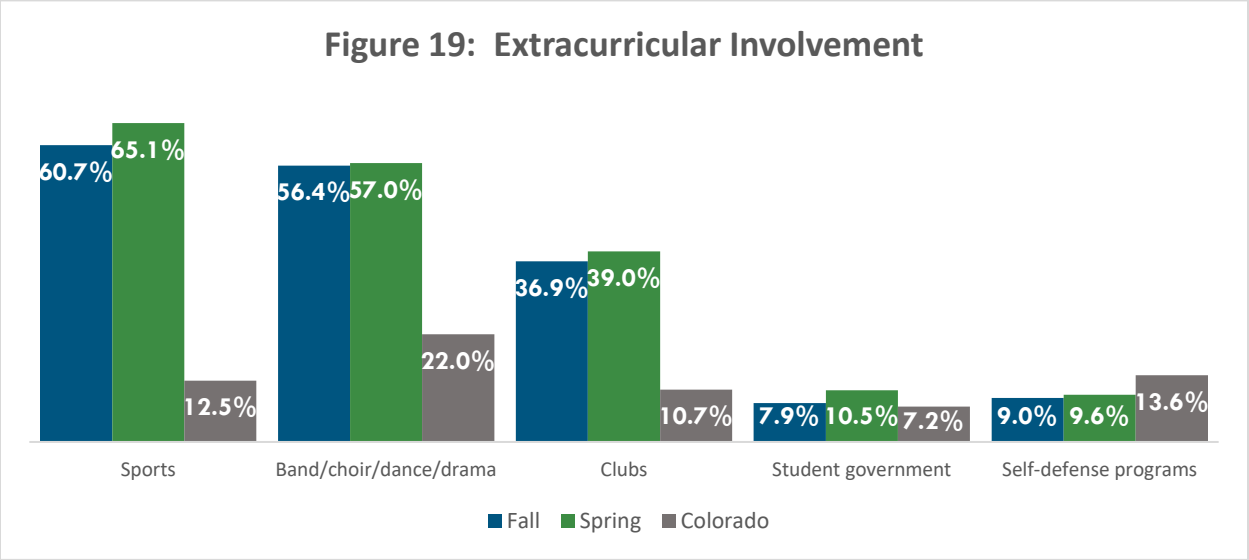


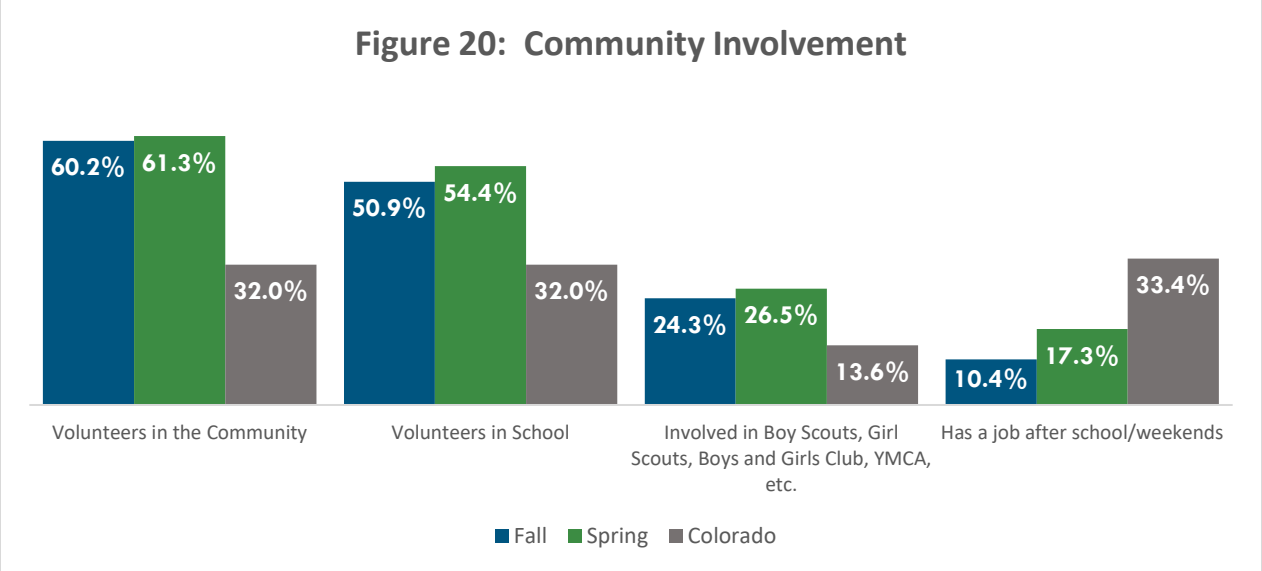
Figure 18: Chronic Absenteeism



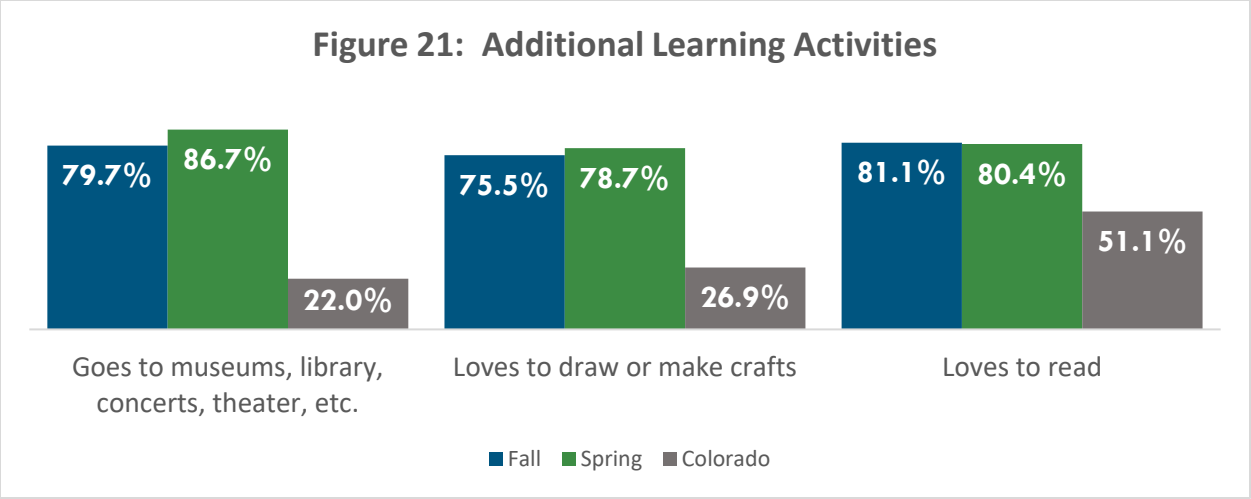
Extracurricular Participation



Parents Challenge students are more involved in sports, musical activities, clubs, and student government, and they were more involved in the community than their peers, with the exception of working after-school or on the weekend.[3]



[3] Data were gathered from the Educational Longitudinal Survey (2002-12) and the National Household Education Survey (2012) from the National Center for Education Statistics (2018).



Parents Challenge students were more involved in supplemental learning activities outside of school, and exhibit more positive extra-learning qualities than their Colorado peers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). PC students also became more involved/active in school functions as the school year progressed, notably in student government and sports, and more involved in activities within their community. These findings indicate that these youth are becoming more comfortable with the environment of the school, and are acclimating themselves into their school's culture.

Figure 22: Student Extracurricular/Community Participation Change

Activity	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Change
Has a job after school/weekends	10.4%	17.3%	67.0%
Student Government	7.9%	10.5%	32.6%
Involved in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, etc.	24.3%	26.5%	9.1%
Goes to museums, library, concerts, theater, etc.	79.7%	86.7%	8.7%
Sports	60.7%	65.1%	7.4%
Participates in self-defense programs	9.0%	9.6%	7.2%
Volunteers in School	50.9%	54.4%	7.0%
Clubs	36.9%	39.0%	5.5%
Loves to draw or make crafts	75.5%	78.7%	4.1%
Volunteers in the Community	60.2%	61.3%	1.7%
Band/Choir/Dance/Drama	56.4%	57.0%	1.0%
Loves to Read	81.1%	80.4%	-0.7%

Parents Perspectives on Schools

Construct Definitions

This section emphasizes the reasons why Parents Challenge parents selected a specific school for their child, and how satisfied they were with their choice. Four constructs were developed to measure these satisfaction levels:

- Choice – the level of satisfaction regarding their decision to choose these schools. Quintessentially, this measures how satisfied parents are with the choice they made;
- Teachers – the quality and satisfaction with the staff, where a higher score translates into a stronger relationship between teachers and parents;
- School Characteristics – measure the perspectives of the school, such as safety, involvement and class sizes;
- Quality of Instruction – the parents' perceptions on the quality of academics.[4]

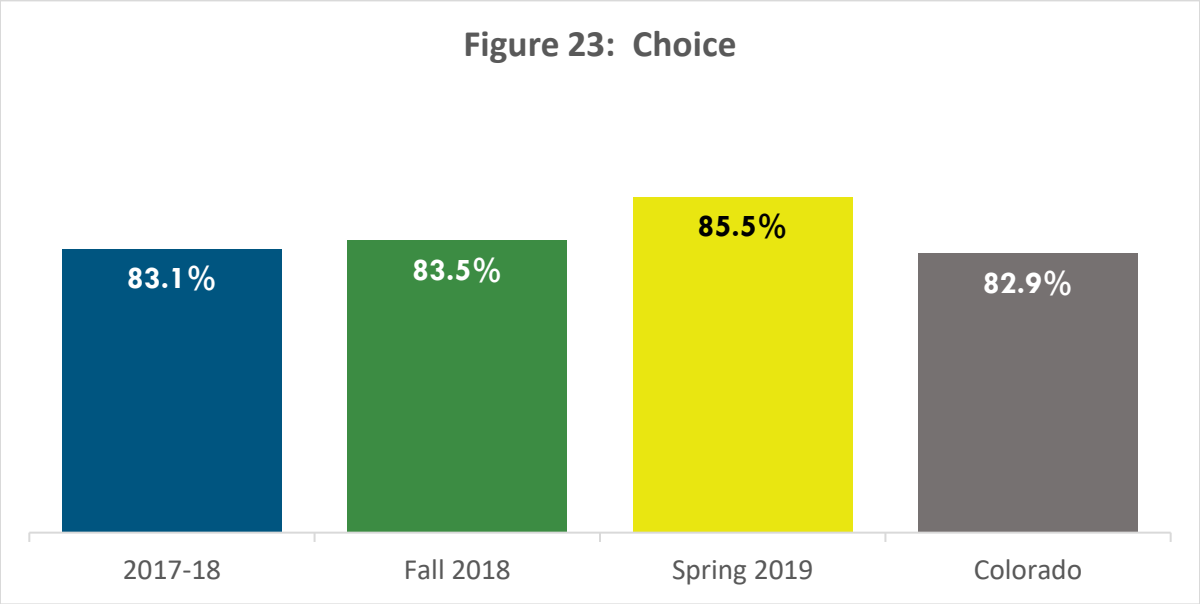
PC parents who elected to homeschool their children were asked separate questions pertaining to their specific experience, which were compared to other parents who homeschool their children in Colorado (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). The degree of satisfaction with their decision and reasons behind homeschooling were captured by these four constructs:

- Decision to Homeschool – this construct is derived from the motivations these families have to homeschool, measuring how satisfied they were with this decision;
- Home School Instruction – the quality of instruction these families provided;
- Participation – how much these families participate with other groups, including involvement with public-school students and community-based activities;
- Child's Needs – additional reasons why these families desired to homeschool their children. This includes bullying, special needs, and disabilities.

All comparative data used to measure the attitudes of Colorado parents, including those who attend non-choice traditional public schools and Colorado parents who homeschool, came from the National Center for Education Statistics (2018).

[4] The primary comparison for all constructs measured was the Spring of 2019, which is used to represent the end of the school year. A further description of the methodology employed can be found in Appendix D.

Parents School Choice Satisfaction



These parents are highly satisfied with their choice of school, more so than Colorado parents involved with traditional public schools. Parent's satisfaction grows over time, indicating the foundation of a strong long-term impact.[5] This finding aligns with the results from the research literature, which state that families are more satisfied with their children's schools when school choice is available, than if they were assigned to a school. The literature also states parents become more comfortable the longer they are involved with the school of their choice, accounting for some of the growth in satisfaction (Hausman & Goldring, 2000; Maddaus, 1990).

Figure 24: Choice Items

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
Provides sound academic curriculum	88.3%	88.6%	90.6%	87.2%
Offers extracurricular activities	86.5%	81.3%	82.6%	68.4%
Offers programs for Special Needs students	61.1%	72.6%	75.5%	75.9%

[5] Findings for Choice were significant only between Colorado and Parents Challenge at $p < .05$. Findings between Parents Challenge by year or term were not found to be statistically significant.

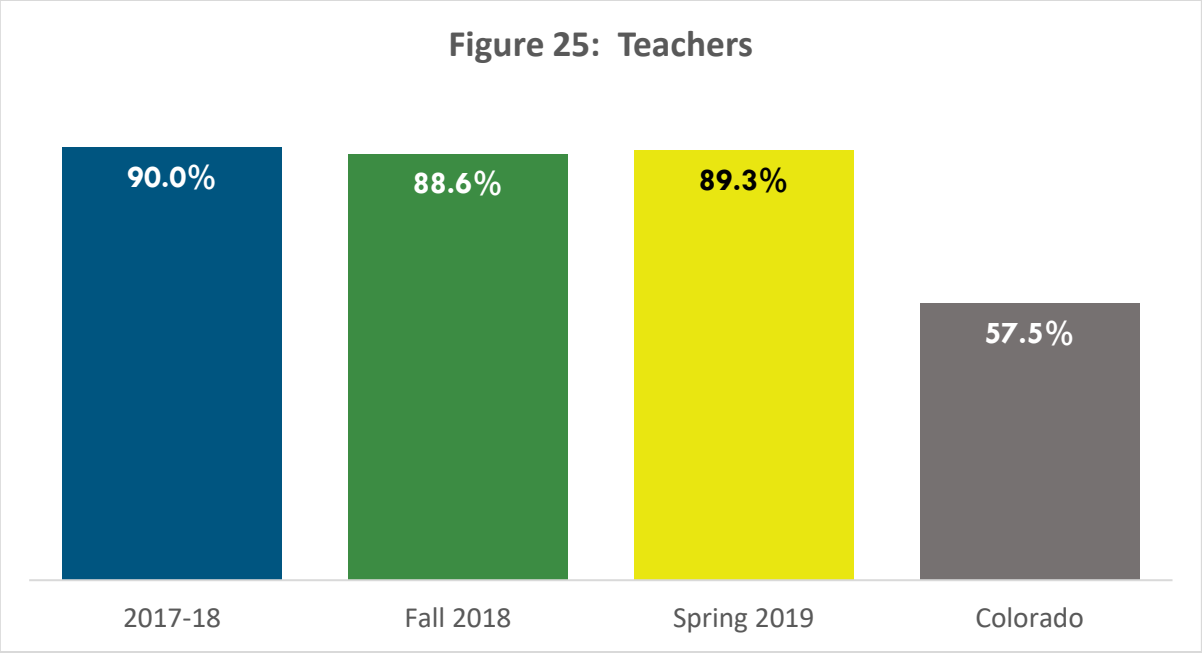
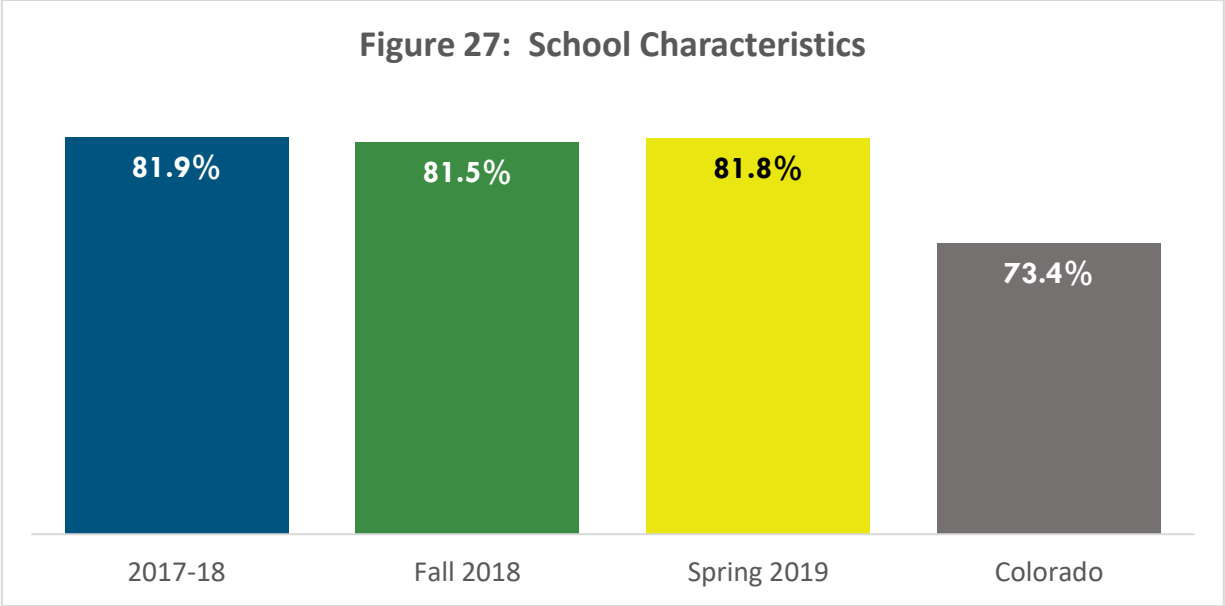


Figure 25 builds upon these results, as parents have a very high level of satisfaction with their children's teachers, much more so than their counterparts at Colorado public schools. The level of satisfaction remains constantly high, changing incrementally over this period of time (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018).[6]

Figure 26: Items on Positive View of Teachers

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
My child's teachers are accessible	85.7%	86.9%	88.3%	48.8%
School administrators provide good leadership	84.6%	85.0%	84.8%	86.5%
The teachers keep me informed of what my child needs	80.0%	80.6%	79.1%	21.9%
The teacher contacts me when my child is doing well	75.3%	78.0%	76.7%	36.3%

[6] Findings for Teachers were significant only between Colorado and Parents Challenge at $p < .01$. Findings between Parents Challenge by year or term were not found to be statistically significant.

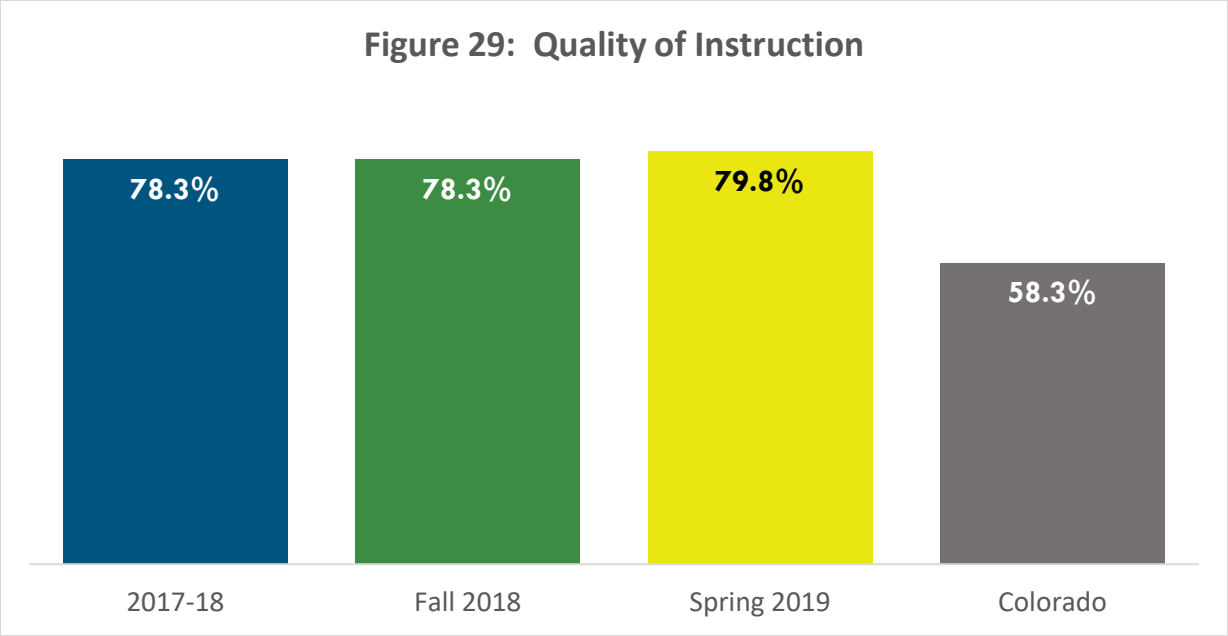


Parents gave similarly strong results pertaining to the characteristics of these schools, as their level of satisfaction about these characteristics have remained constant over time and are significantly higher than their counterparts. Several studies have shown a stronger degree between parental satisfaction and safety, which is a key quality noted by many participating parents (approximately 88%) (DeAngelis & Wolf, 2016; Witte, 2000; Howell et al., 2006; Kisida & Wolf, 2015).[7]

Figure 28: Items on Positive View of Teachers

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
School is safe	88.3%	88.3%	88.1%	87.2%
School encourages parental involvement, i.e. PTO, PTA	86.5%	83.8%	83.8%	68.4%
School has a Building/School Accountability Committee	76.9%	81.0%	79.3%	26.2%
Class sizes are small	76.7%	75.1%	74.5%	91.8%
Diversity of school	75.6%	75.6%	79.8%	65.5%

[7] Findings for School Characteristics were significant only between Colorado and Parents Challenge at $p < .01$. Findings between Parents Challenge by year or term were not found to be statistically significant.



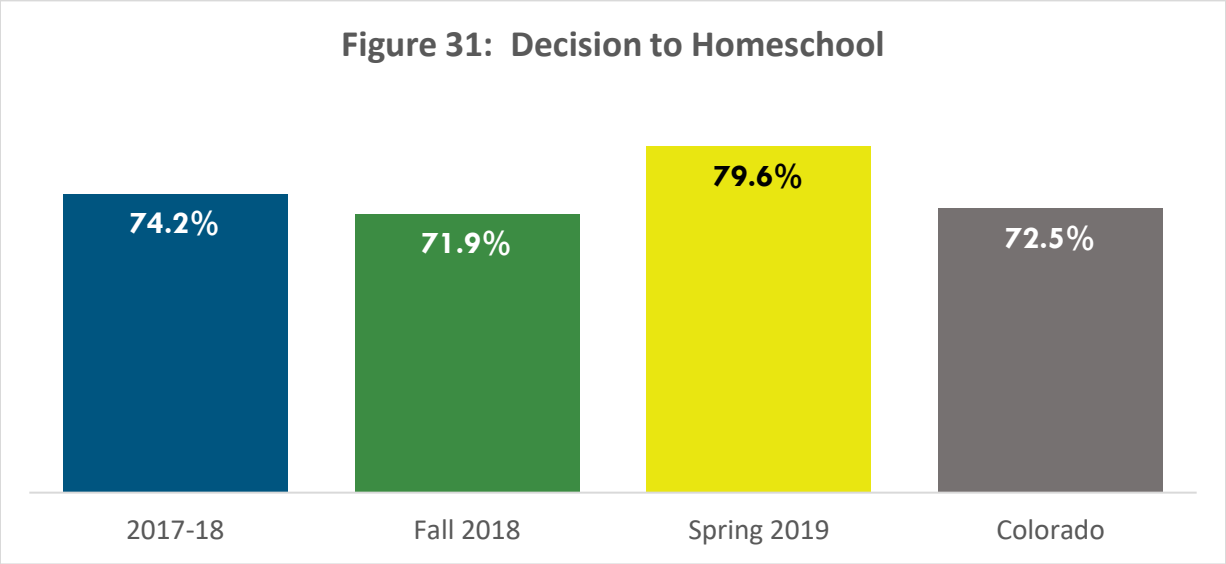
PC parents are very satisfied with the instruction provided at these schools, much more so than their Colorado counterparts. Parent satisfaction with the quality of instruction is very stable over this time period, with slight growth in Spring of 2019. It may be prudent to determine if satisfaction varies among parents who are new to the Parents Challenge program compared to experienced parents, in order to measure any change in satisfaction or perception.[8]

Figure 30: Items on Quality of Instruction

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
Provides college preparatory curriculum	82.7%	80.9%	82.5%	66.1%
Provides classical instruction	78.8%	79.8%	80.9%	91.8%
Provides religious instruction	80.9%	77.4%	75.2%	71.8%
Offers extracurricular activities	80.5%	81.3%	82.6%	71.5%
Provides ELL or ELS support	68.3%	71.1%	74.0%	19.5%

[8] Differences for Quality of Instruction were significant only between Colorado and Parents Challenge at $p < .01$. Findings between Parents Challenge by year or term were not found to be statistically significant.

Home School Parent Satisfaction

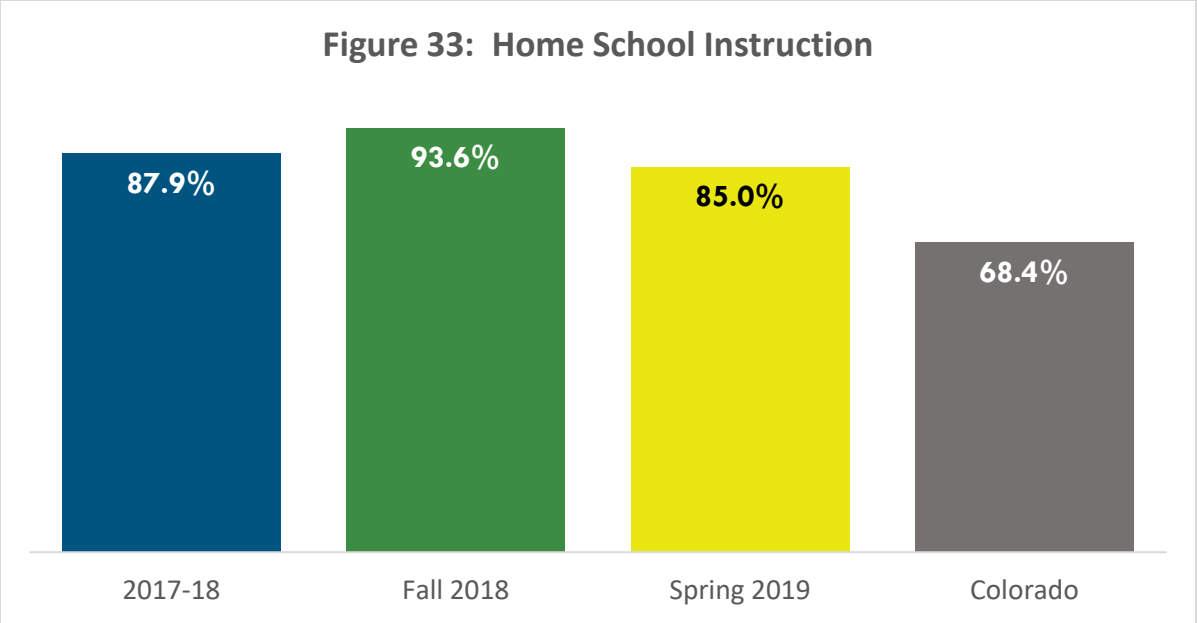


These parents are very satisfied with their decision to homeschool their youth, and their satisfaction grew as time progressed, reinforcing their initial decision.[9] These findings reflect the adjudicated literature, which shows that the choice of educational venue leads to increased overall satisfaction (Hausman & Goldring, 2000; Mathis, 2016).

Figure 32: Items on Decision to Homeschool

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
To provide religious or moral instruction	80.0%	77.5%	83.8%	58.9%
Concern about environment of schools	67.6%	51.3%	59.0%	89.4%
Dissatisfaction with academic instruction in schools	66.7%	37.5%	42.9%	75.3%
One or family members were homeschooled	20.6%	36.4%	38.1%	44.1%

[9] Differences between Spring 2019 Parents Challenge and Colorado were statistically significant at $p < .01$. All other differences were not found to be statistically significant using a Chi-Square Goodness of Fit test.

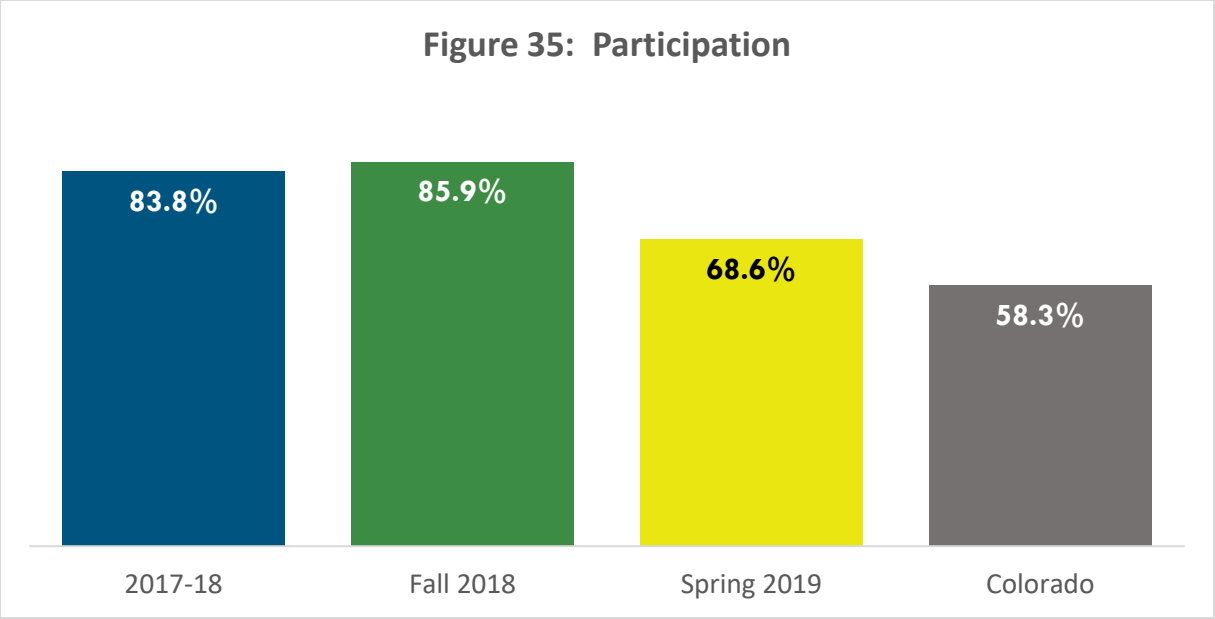


Several of these constructs demonstrated a degree of decline, especially from the Fall of 2018 to the Spring of 2019, some due to external changes (see Figures 35 and 36 on the next page), while other declines reflect changes in personal structure over time. The results on Figures 33 and 34 reflect more of the latter scenario than the former. Specifically, there was a decline in the use of libraries (100% to 83.8%), use of textbooks (100% to 91.2%), and instructing their children at least four days a week (94.1% to 87.5%). These declines allude to changes with instruction mechanics, rather than its quality. Despite this decrease, PC parents are providing a stronger level of instruction than their Colorado counterparts.[10]

Figure 34: Items on Quality of Instruction

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
The library is a source of instructional resources	97.2%	100.0%	83.8%	70.0%
Academic calendar requires at least four days a week	94.4%	94.1%	87.5%	94.2%
My instruction is totally hands-on with text books	88.2%	100.0%	91.2%	48.6%
Fifty percent of student instruction is computer-led	18.9%	30.6%	31.4%	32.5%

[10] There was no statistical difference between the 2017-18 and the Spring 2019 year, but differences between Spring 2019 Parents Challenge and Colorado were statistically significant at $p < .01$.

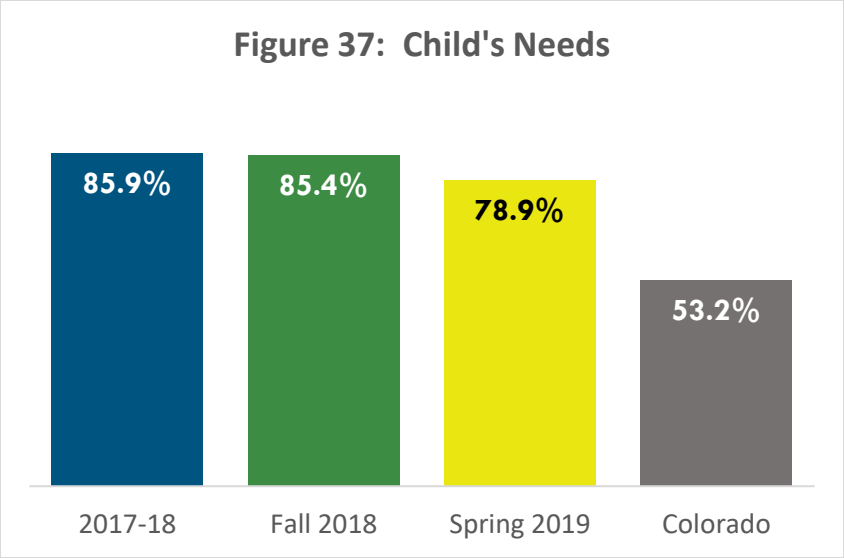


The decline in overall participation seem to reflect external factors beyond the control of the homeschooling students and their families mentioned on the previous page. These declines appear to be attributed to a lower proportion of families who participated in academic programs at public/charter schools, which declined from 55.6% to 28.6% over the course of the year. The reason behind this decline is not explained, but it may be due to changes beyond the control of the parent, such as changes made in the public school schedule that prevented these families from participating. This should be more closely examined in the future, to see if this is an ongoing trend.[11]

Figure 36: Items on Participation

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
Student participates in home school enrichment programs	78.1%	63.3%	57.1%	68.3%
Student is involved in sports program	51.2%	56.1%	55.3%	39.5%
Student participates in public/charter school academic programs	50.0%	55.6%	28.6%	23.1%

[11] All differences between Spring 2019 and the other groups were found to be statistically significant at $p < .01$.



Child's Needs also demonstrated a slight decline. However, the decline is likely due to parents realizing their children are not experiencing bullying, or dealing with schedules that do not fit their children's needs, after their students are removed from the environment where these situations took place. While Parents Challenge students experienced more bullying or disciplinary issues in Fall of 2018 than Colorado students (29.7% to 17.2%), the PC rate dropped from 29.7% to 18.9% in Spring 2019, an encouraging change (NCES, 2018). The National Center for Education Statistics (2003) and Redford et al., (2017) reported that school environment was a significant motivator for parents to homeschool. These numbers indicate that this is not the case for Parent Challenge households.[12]

Figure 38: Child's Needs

Item	2017-18	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Colorado
It was my child's choice	58.8%	52.6%	54.8%	19.1%
Schedules were not flexible	48.1%	48.3%	37.9%	67.6%
Child has special needs	15.6%	17.5%	15.4%	9.2%
Child has a physical or mental disability	15.2%	19.5%	10.5%	19.7%
Child experienced bullying or disciplinary issues	15.2%	29.7%	18.9%	17.2%

[12] The only statistical difference for Figure 37 was between Spring 2019 and Colorado residents using a Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test at $p < .01$. Differences between the other comparisons on Figure 37 were not statistically significant.

Family Engagement

Volunteering & Involvement

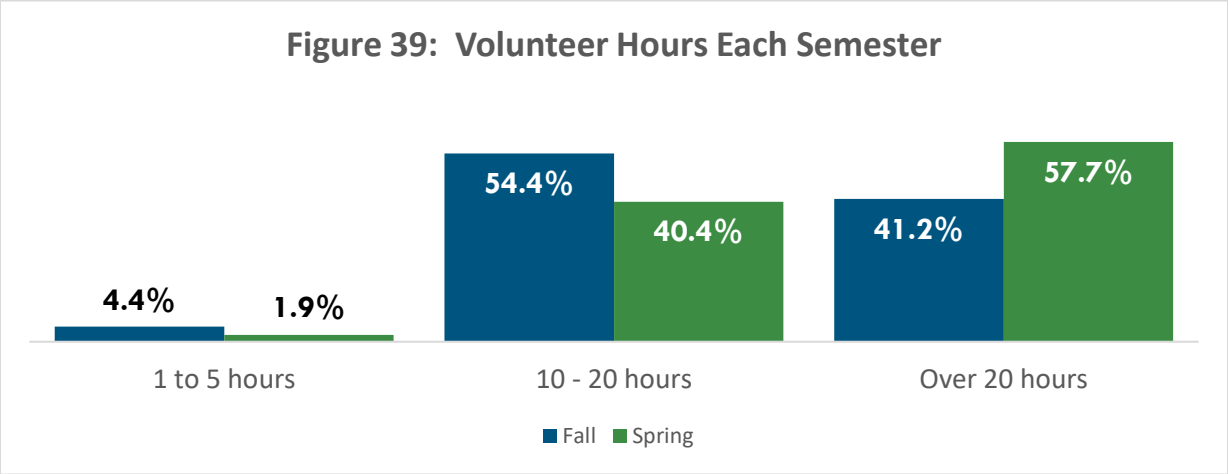


Figure 39 illustrates that these parents are devoting themselves to their children's schools, as volunteer hours increased significantly. Additionally, parents appear to be volunteering more of their time each year.[13] Between 2015 and 2019, an increasing number of parents are working more than 20 volunteer hours each semester at their child's school. This is a possible indicator of higher satisfaction with their child's school, and parents doing what they can to maintain the high quality of their school (Hausman & Goldring, 2000).[14]

Figure 40: Volunteer Hours

	1 to 5 hours	10 - 20 hours	Over 20 hours
2015	1.7%	66.7%	31.7%
2016	1.4%	69.6%	29.0%
2017	2.8%	50.7%	46.5%
2018	6.7%	50.5%	42.9%
2019	1.9%	40.4%	57.7%

[13] 2019 data reported on Figure 39 represent the results of the Spring term.

[14] Comparison data on volunteerism of Colorado Springs parents can be found in the appendices.

Figure 41: Parental Involvement

Activity	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Change
Served on Principal or Superintendent Advisory Committee	1.8%	4.0%	128.0%
Home School Co-op	8.8%	19.6%	123.9%
Home School strategy meetings	7.9%	14.3%	81.0%
Home School District Programs	6.1%	10.5%	71.4%
Building Accountability Committee	0.9%	1.5%	67.6%
Volunteered for Field Trips	50.9%	64.6%	26.9%
Classroom/School Monitor Volunteer	43.0%	54.3%	26.2%
PTO or PTA	25.4%	30.4%	19.4%
Strategic Plan Development	7.9%	7.8%	-1.3%
School Accountability Committee	7.9%	7.4%	-6.9%
School Board Member	2.6%	1.3%	-51.3%

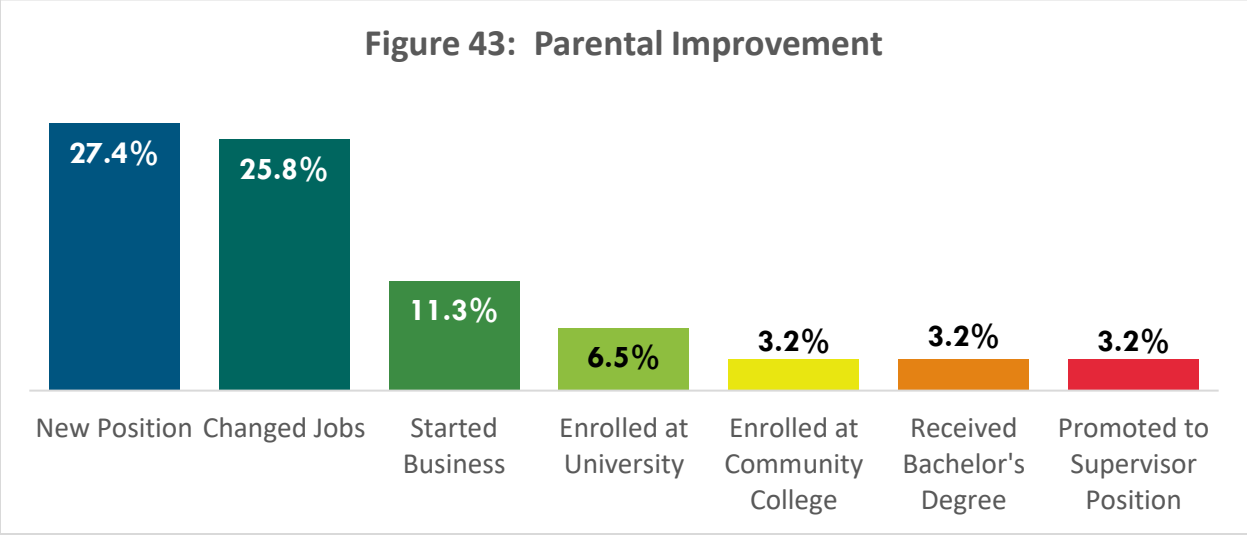
Figure 41 shows the activities Parents Challenge parents participated in during the Fall term and the Spring term. Parents were most interested in volunteering for field trips, being a classroom/school monitor, and being a member of the PTO or PTA. Percentages were fairly steady for participating in an advisory committee. By positioning themselves where they can influence decisions, even in an informal way, they are behaving in a way alluded to by Hausman & Goldring (2000), where parents become more involved so they can keep the school's quality similar to when they first enrolled their child.

Figure 42: Dinner with Family

Dinner with Family	Fall	Spring
Seven Days	30.4%	33.0%
Six Days	15.2%	17.9%
Five Days	29.5%	21.7%
Four Days	16.1%	17.0%
One Day	2.7%	6.6%
Never	6.3%	3.8%

Another sign of involvement is eating dinner with one's family, which serves as a proxy variable for involvement and engagement (American College of Pediatricians, 2019; Putnam, 2015). A higher proportion of parents are eating with their children six or more days each week. However, these rates are far less than the proportion of all families in Colorado Springs with children who eat together every night (91.3%) (Current Population Survey, 2013).

Parental Improvement



As these parents become more involved at their child's school, they are also improving their own educations or occupations, often for higher pay. Figure 43 shows 53.2% of parents took a new work position or changed jobs, another 11.3% started a business, and nearly ten percent went back to school. A much higher proportion of PC parents went back to a four-year college or university than parents in Colorado Springs (Current Population Survey, 2018). While these findings are interesting, it is hard to determine if this is due to their exposure to other parents at their child's school, an event that would not occur without the Parents Challenge program, or if these actions were planned prior to participating in the Parents Challenge program. It is recommended this should be explored in future evaluations to determine the source of inspiration behind these actions.

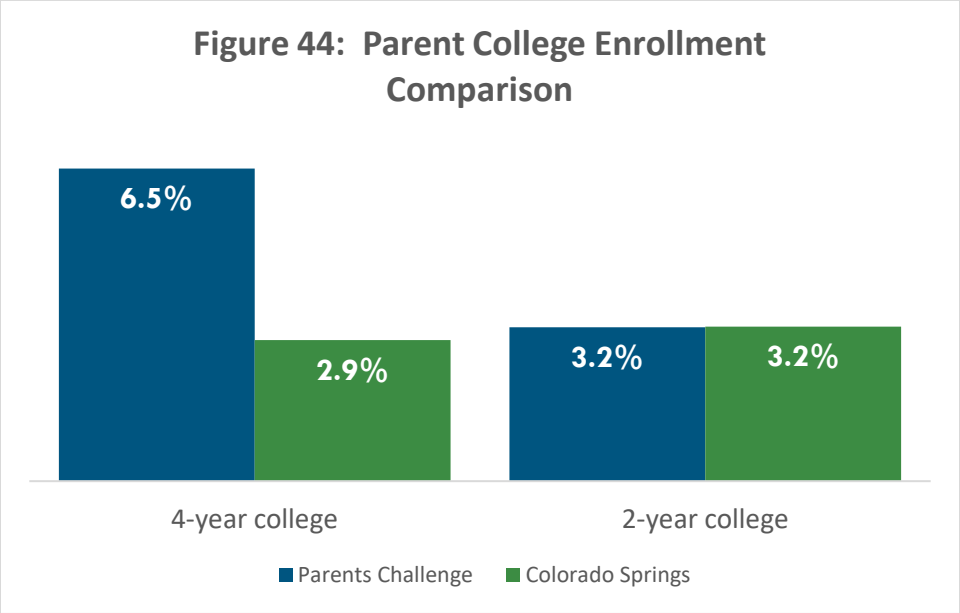


Figure 45: Fall Parent Advocacy Sessions Attendance

Event Name	Percent
August - Peacemakers in Training	88.2%
August - Parent/Teacher Conferences (New Families)	87.9%
August - 10 Tips for Successful Homeschooling	86.5%
September - Practical Skills for Improving Student Learning	86.6%
September - Succeeding at Home and at School without Feeling Overwhelmed	82.3%
October - College Preparedness and Tour (UCCS)	84.4%
October - Mental Health (Coping)	89.0%
October - How to increase family financial resources	85.2%
November - The Brain and How Boys Learn	95.8%
Sept./Oct - Special Session - Strategies for Success (Parent Class)	94.1%

Figures 45 and 46 show the attendance at the 2019 Parent Advocacy sessions for each term, demonstrating that every event was very well attended.

Figure 46: Spring Parent Advocacy Sessions Attendance

Event Name	Percent
January - Braintraining and Tapping	87.5%
January - How to Identify the Unique Talents and Gifts in your Child (NSCW)	85.2%
February - How to Improve Communication Skills	86.7%
February - The Outcomes of Adolescent Marijuana Use	91.2%
March - USAFA College Tour	92.5%
March - Parent Class Refresher	88.0%
April - How to Research School Choice Options	89.7%
April - How to Keep Kids Safe on the Internet	90.4%
April - Practical Life Skills for Teenagers	88.9%

Figure 47: Fall Facilitators Ratings

Event Name	Percent
Corlette Sande - Relational Wisdom 360	85.6%
Dr. Wendy Birhanzel – Harrison School District 2	83.8%
Barbara West - Homeschooling since 1988	88.1%
Steve and Sheilah Shapiro - The Learning Connection	83.3%
Bob Heavers - Priority Management	79.0%
Kristi Smith - Colorado Springs Early Colleges	88.9%
Donna Grojean - National Alliance on Mental Health "NAMI"	83.3%
Josh Shi - Bridge to Wellbeing	86.4%
Dedrick Sims, CEO - Sims-Fayola Foundation	94.1%
Sandra Kwesell - Strategies for Success	91.7%

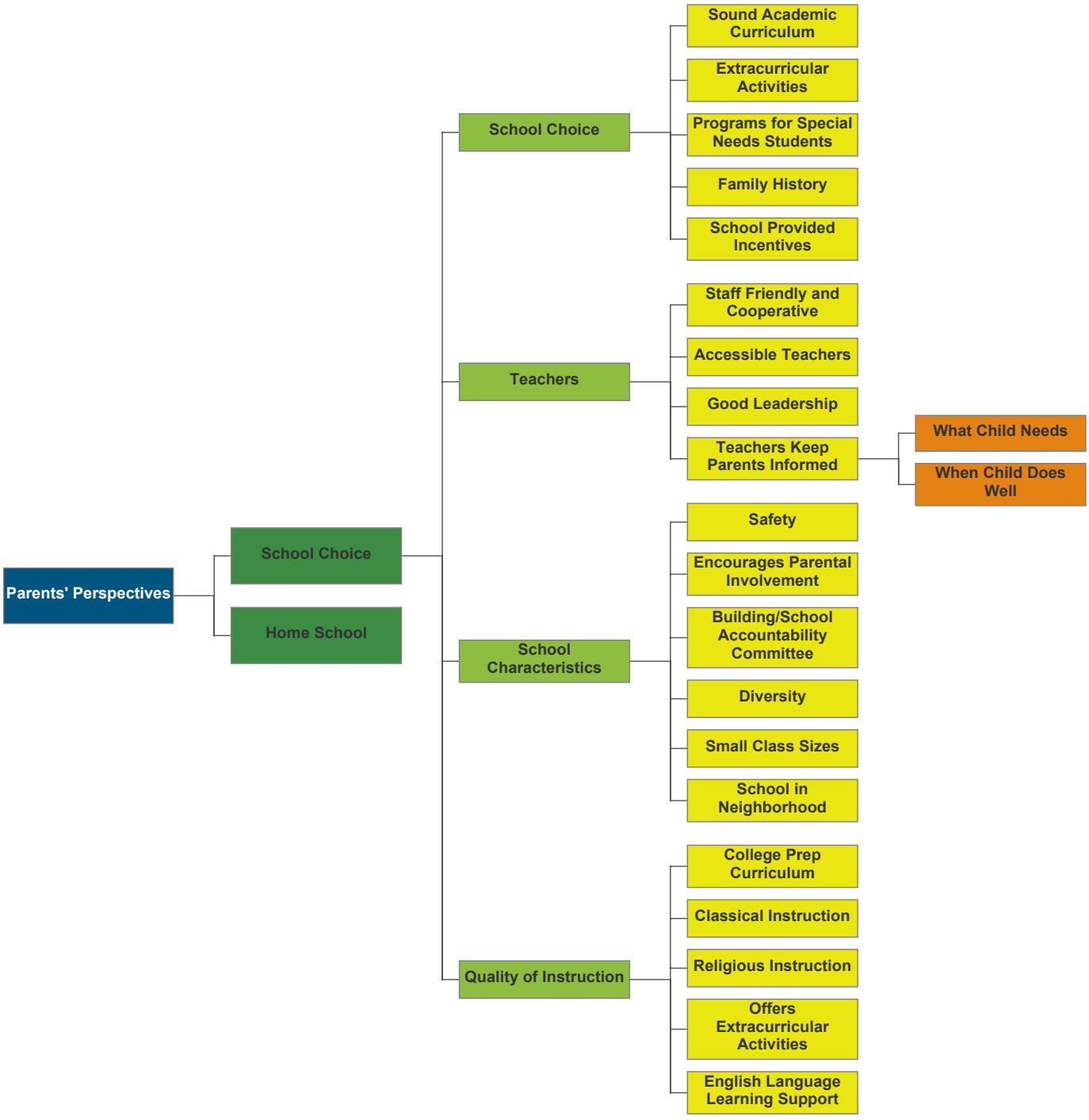
Figures 47 and 48 show the strength of the presenters, demonstrating that the parents thought very highly of these presenters. Based on these results, Dedrick Sims was the highest rated facilitator during the Fall, while Jo McGuire was the highest rated Spring facilitator.

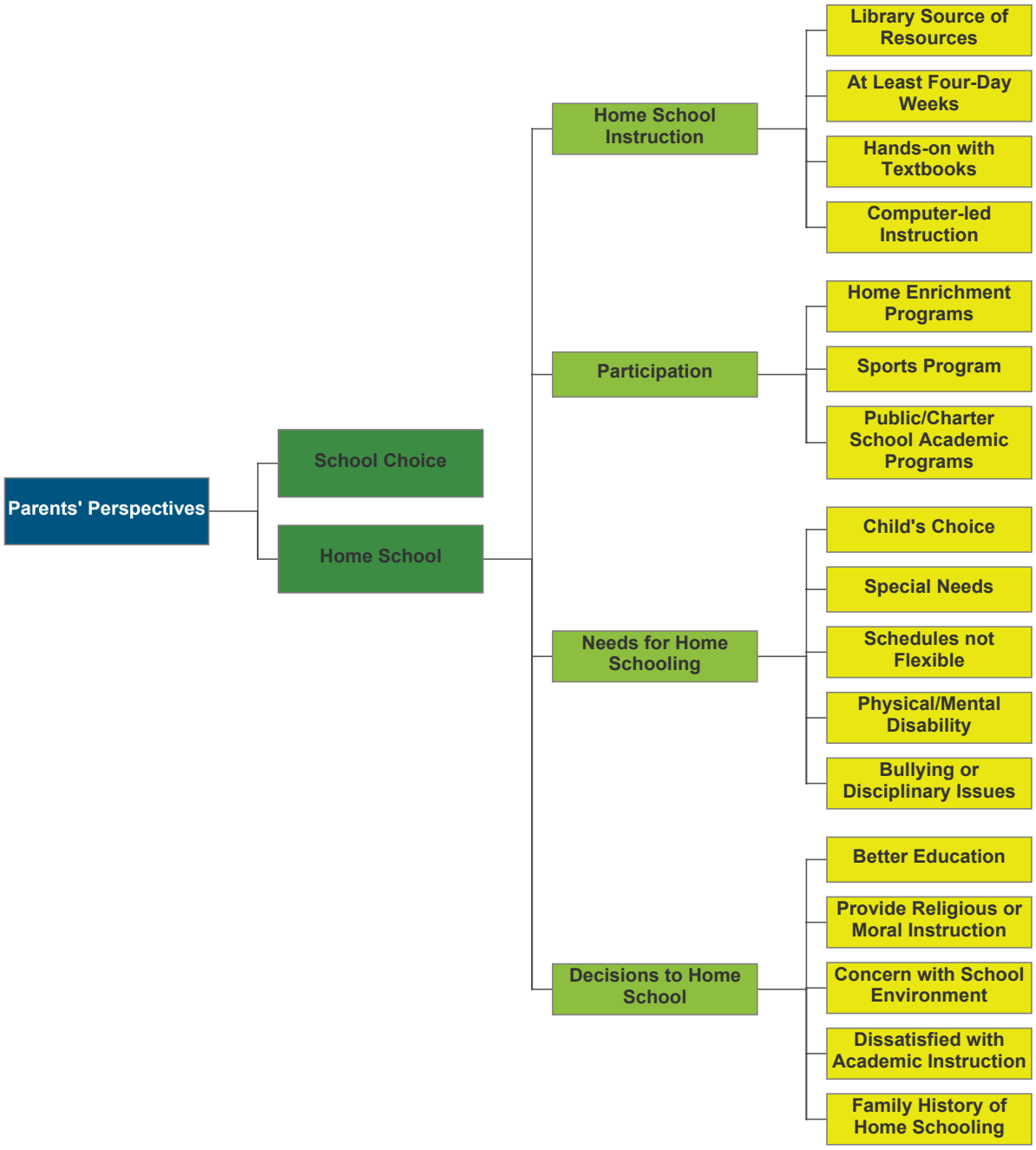
Figure 48: Spring Facilitators Ratings

Event Name	Percent
Judy Hanke - Mindbuilders / Nancy Kelly – Syntrak International	86.2%
Ivette Diaz - The LIBRE Institute	88.1%
Zak Kubin - Grassroot Leadership Academy	83.8%
Jo McGuire - Five Minutes of Courage	91.3%
Randy Cubero - Parents Challenge Board Member	90.5%
Sandi Kwesell - Pillars for Success	88.4%
Angela Dougan - Grassroots Leadership Academy	85.7%
Brittany Barden & Edward Macdonald - Apex Generation Leadership	87.9%
Brittany Barden – Apex Generation Leadership	85.7%

Appendix A – Variable Map

This is a map of the features that helped define the constructs built to assess parents' perspectives.




Parents' Perspectives
School Choice
Home School
Home School Instruction
Library Source of Resources
At Least Four-Day Weeks
Hands-on with Textbooks
Computer-led Instruction
Participation
Home Enrichment Programs
Sports Program
Public/Charter School Academic Programs
Needs for Home Schooling
Child's Choice
Special Needs
Schedules not Flexible
Physical/Mental Disability
Bullying or Disciplinary Issues
Decisions to Home School
Better Education
Provide Religious or Moral Instruction
Concern with School Environment
Dissatisfied with Academic Instruction
Family History of Home Schooling

Appendix B – Comparison Districts

All data in this section relate to the academic performance and key demographics for the six school districts where Parents Challenge students are enrolled. This is meant to provide perspective of what these students' lives would look like if Parents Challenge did not exist. According to the Colorado Department of Education (2018), there are 104,568 students who live in these school districts. Approximately 44.5% of students are considered minorities, and about 40.5% are low-income, as determined by Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program eligibility (Colorado Department of Education, 2019).

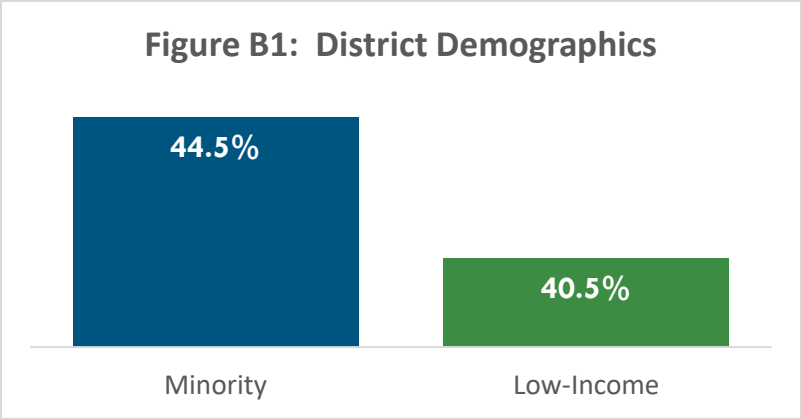
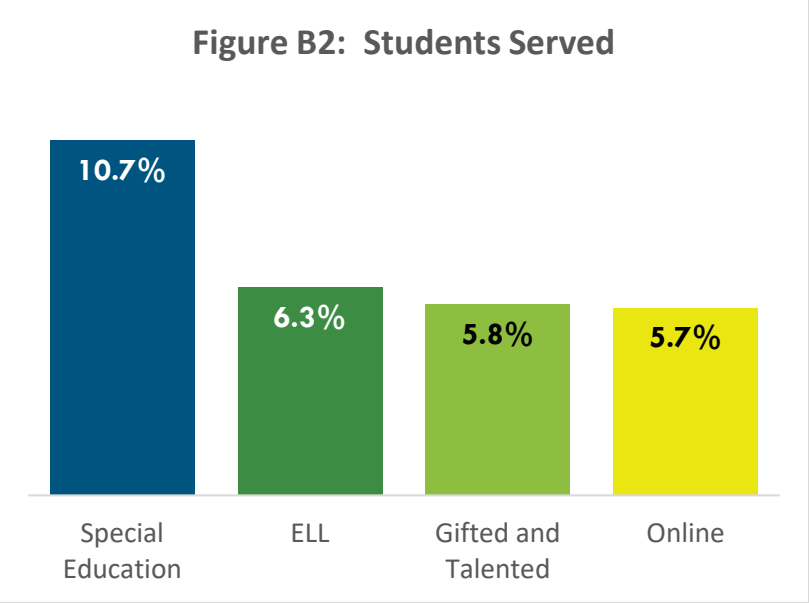


Figure B2 illustrates the proportion of Parents Challenge students that fall into four specific groups: (1) special education, (2) English language learners (ELL), (3) gifted and talented, and (4) online students. This is meant to identify the proportion of students who require additional services provided by Parents Challenge (Colorado Department of Education, 2018).



Comparison Districts Academic Performance

This section highlights the proportion of students in all eight school districts who performed at or above proficiency in reading and math, according to the latest CMAS results. Figure B3 shows the proficiency rates of students based on income status. The gap between low-income students and all students is 11.3 to 12.4 points (Colorado Department of Education, 2019).

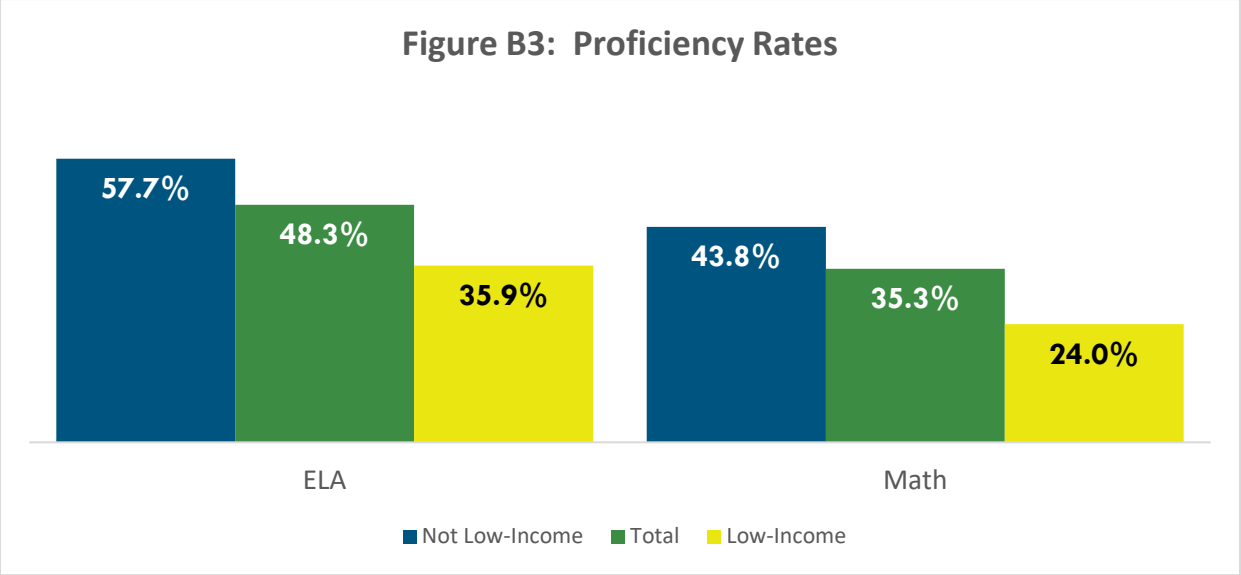


Figure B4: Total Performance

	English		Math	
Grade Level	Total Students	Low-Income	Total Students	Low-Income
Third	41.7%	29.9%	43.9%	34.5%
Fourth	50.1%	38.4%	36.7%	25.4%
Fifth	52.3%	38.4%	37.7%	26.3%
Sixth	43.6%	32.4%	25.5%	14.7%
Seventh	50.5%	38.1%	29.8%	18.0%
Eighth	51.8%	39.1%	38.0%	24.5%

College Readiness

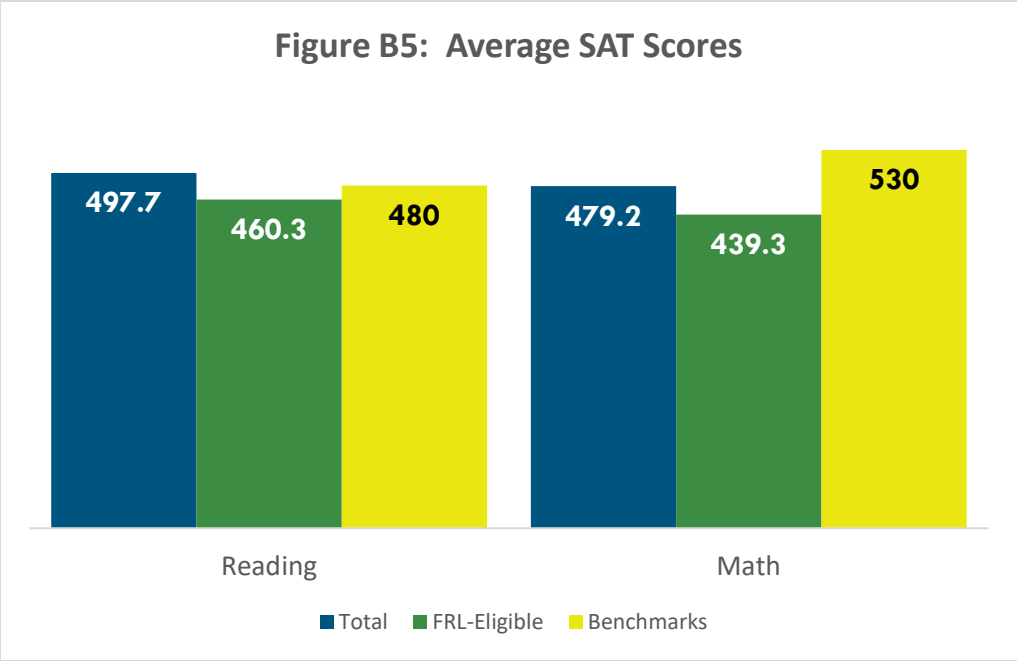
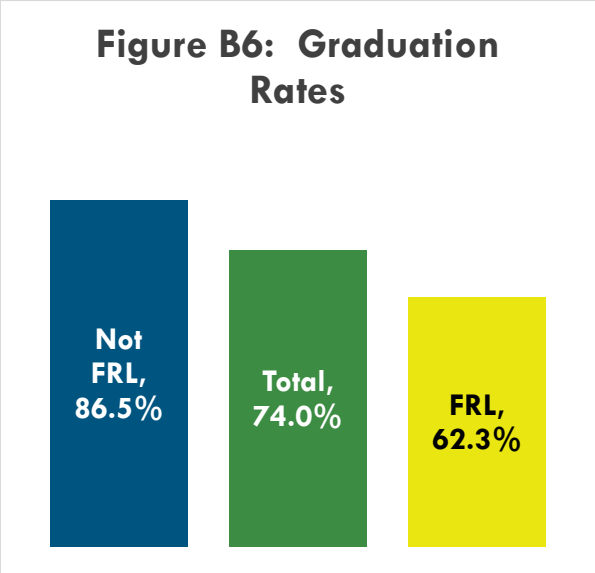
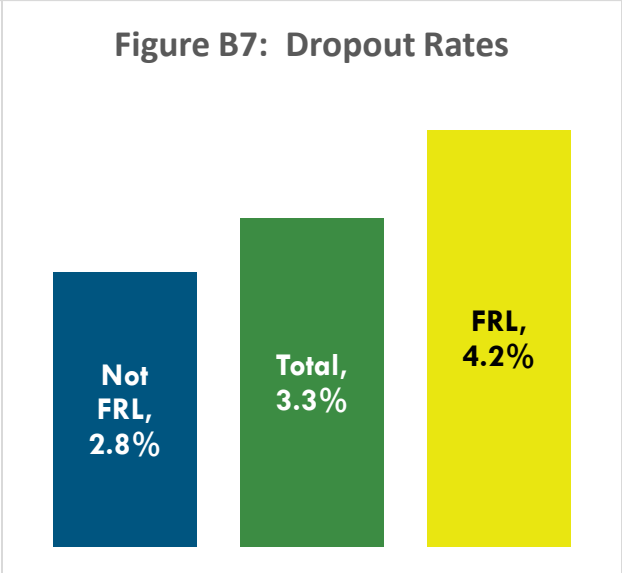
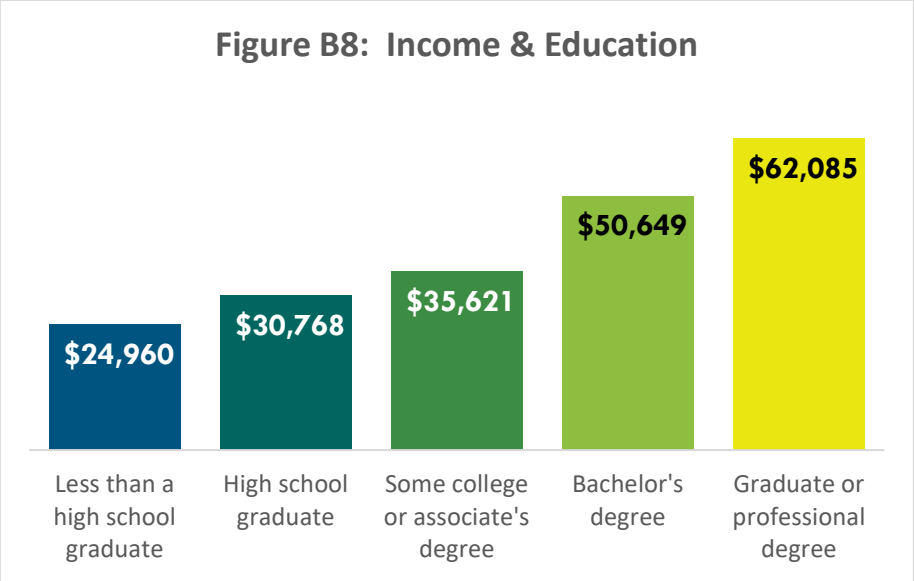


Figure B5 shows the average SAT scores for the students in these six school districts, along with the benchmark scores (yellow). According to the College Board (2019), the benchmark scores predict with a 75% probability that a student will earn at least a 'C' in a corresponding college course (Colorado Department of Education, 2019).

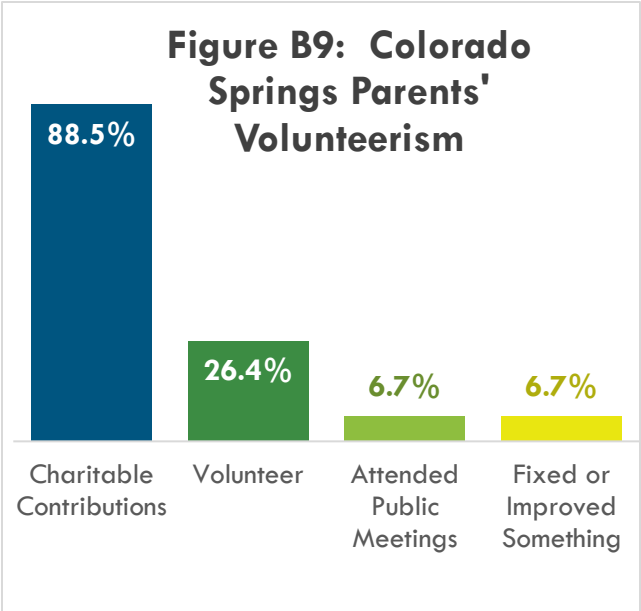




Figures B5 and B6 show these districts' graduation rates and dropout rates. In essence, low-income students have a higher probability of not graduating within four years, and have a higher probability of dropping out of school as well (Colorado Department of Education, 2019).



These are the median earnings of individuals 25 and older in the Colorado Springs metropolitan area. The median wage for someone without a high school diploma is particularly notable, because it is barely above the living wage for the Colorado Springs area: $24,933 (American Community Survey, 2019; Glasmeir and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019). Getting students to graduate from high school –at a minimum –will result in a greater likelihood of their earning above the living wage in Colorado Springs.



Parent Volunteerism Comparisons

Figure B10: Volunteer Activity

Activity	Colorado Springs Parents
Tutor or teach	35.6%
Mentor youth	34.1%
Fundraise or sell items	31.8%
Collect, prepare, serve food	28.4%
Coach, referee, supervise	19.6%
Usher, greeter, minister	14.8%
Collect clothing	13.2%
Provide general office	5.8%
Provide professional	5.8%
General labor	5.4%

Figures B9 and B10 serve as reference point for how Colorado Springs parents volunteer, specifically how their volunteering compares to other philanthropic/civic activities (Figure B9), and what these parents do when they volunteer (Figure B10) (Current Population Survey, 2015).

Appendix C – Estimated Growth

This section highlights the estimated forecasts of the student population for Parents Challenge, based on the number of students by grade level, and by the proportion of students who will comprise the specific school levels (elementary, middle and high school) for the 2019-20 school year.

Figure C1: Number of Students

Level	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Elementary (Grades 1-5)	46	45	58	84	94	***119***
Middle (Grades 6-8)	28	26	41	57	58	***78***
High (Grades 9-12)	39	39	41	45	45	***49***

Figure C1 highlights the estimated number of students by each specific school level, along with a forecasted estimate of these students for the 2019-20 school year. Figure C2 shows the proportion of students at each school level served by the Parents Challenge organization.

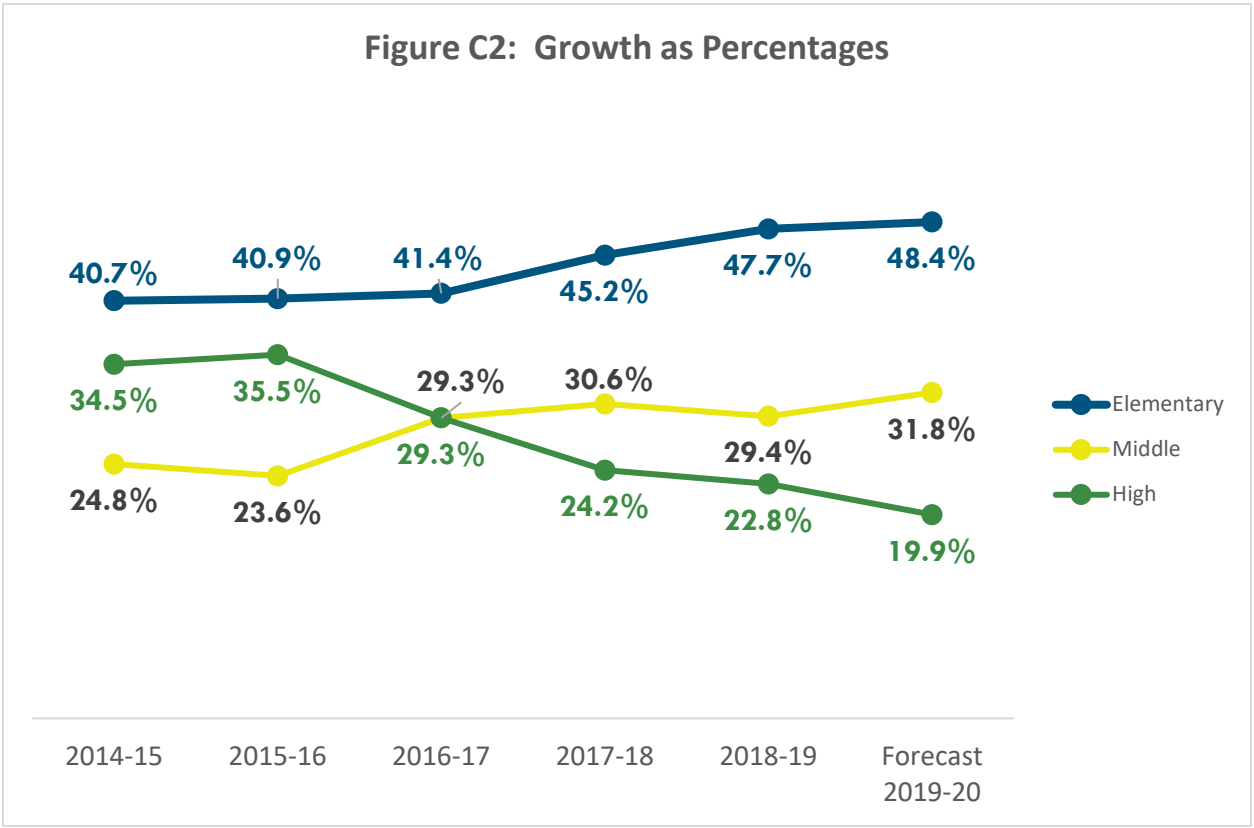


Figure C3: Number of Students by Grade Level

Grade Level	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Pre-Kindergarten	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	15	14	11	14	16	10
First	9	10	12	16	13	20
Second	7	12	16	15	17	12
Third	11	3	14	19	20	18
Fourth	10	9	7	22	25	23
Fifth	9	11	9	12	19	25
Sixth	10	10	17	17	13	23
Seventh	8	9	14	23	25	14
Eighth	10	7	10	17	20	16
Ninth	16	8	12	15	16	32
Tenth	12	12	9	12	13	15
Eleventh	7	11	11	9	9	12
Twelfth	4	8	9	9	7	5
Total	129	124	151	200	213	225

Figure C3 highlights the number of students served at each grade level by the Parents Challenge organization, including students in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.

Appendix D – Methodology

Parent and student data were collected by Parents Challenge utilizing surveys and other data collection methods. All individual identifiers were masked and no master lists are maintained, with only aggregate data being reported. All comparative data were derived from open-access data sets, available at the National Center of Education Statistics, the US Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Colorado Department of Education. All data collected for this report remain the property of Parents Challenge and were analyzed according to the ethics and standards outlined and promoted by the American Evaluation Association.

Analytical techniques employed in this section utilized non-parametric techniques, as most of the comparative data focused on attitudes and perspectives – fluid concepts with no concrete means. All statistical tests focused on comparing the end of year date, in order to ascertain the impact of the program on these stakeholders, as they would have at least one year of experience in the program. Results from the Spring of 2019, serving as the best proxy for having at least one year of experience in the program, was compared to data collected by Parents Challenge from the Fall term of 2018, the previous academic year (2017/18), and compared to data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

The data from NCES did not change from their previous examination, so current results remain static from the previous year. Statistical tests were not conducted on Fall 2018 data to NCES data or to the previous year, as too little time would have passed to properly compare these results. Social science criteria for comparison were met, as research allows for the comparison across categorical lines (gender, ethnicity, etc.) with a minimum sample size of 30 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998).

Appendix E – Recommendations

Future Data to be collected

These data provide a sound foundation for comparison, but additional data should be collected in order to measure the full results of the program, such as determining the length of time families have participated in the program. It is estimated that the data are highly influenced by families who have participated in the Parents Challenge program for many years. It would be intriguing to compare parents and students that have been in the program for multiple years to families that are new to Parents Challenge.

There are several pieces of data that are not available, either due to data collection, or to how schools report information, etc. To strengthen further evaluations and subsequent impacts, it is highly recommended that Parent's Challenge collect data that matches their public-school counterparts as closely as possible, to ensure accurate, direct comparisons.

For example, we recommend:

- Collect student performance, specifically on how many were at or above proficiency in English and Mathematics, preferably utilizing a standardized test, such as the Iowa Assessments, ACT Aspire, Terra Nova, etc.
- Collect information about students graduating from high school, and their overall college matriculation from the National Student Clearinghouse.

These data are crucial to measure the impact of Parents Challenge by comparing the performance of PC students to their peers who attend public schools (see Appendix B for items that can be compared to data Parents Challenge is recommended to collect). It is also suggested some questions used on these surveys emulate the questions used on national databases and sources, in order to provide a direct comparison from PC families to their counterparts in Colorado and Colorado Springs.

Parent Recommendations

Figure E1: Parent Recommendations

Suggestion	Percent
Positive, no recommended change	36.3%
Other sessions	22.2%
More scholarships for children	11.3%
Communication	5.7%
Youth activities	4.7%
More money for opportunities	4.2%
Unknown	3.8%
Networking opportunities	2.4%
School supplies assistance	2.4%
Tutors	2.4%
Social activities	1.9%
Assist parents	1.4%
Better equipment used at sessions	0.5%
Parents Challenge Gear (Cups, T-shirts, etc.)	0.9%

Figure E1 on the previous page shows the various types of suggestions parents are recommending to improve their overall experience. More than 36% of all parents had nothing but positive things to say about the Parents Challenge program and could not make any other suggestions. Other parents wanted more sessions (to be elaborated in Figure E2, below), and 11.3% wanted more of their children to receive a scholarship, as they consider the two-child policy too limiting for their families. This alone indicates stronger demand for the program – establishing these parents are fully committed to the program's success by wanting more of their children to participate. These parents wanted to have more communication, usually about tracking the sessions, or follow-ups of the sessions, in case they could not attend. They also wanted more activities available for the youth, either at the sessions or social events their children could enjoy. The more money for opportunities is more encompassing, as this item ranges from additional scholarship funds to more opportunities for gift cards. The Assist Parents code is also broad, as statements within this item represented a desire for translators and assisting single parents.

Figure E2: Other Sessions Desired

Suggestion	Percent
Youth education	43.3%
More options/sessions	26.7%
Educational opportunities	6.7%
Mental health	6.7%
Special needs	6.7%
Assistance with aid	3.3%
Community engagement	3.3%
Networking	3.3%

Parents desire more sessions to be offered. More than one-quarter of parents asking for more sessions wanted more options for sessions, specifically a variety of dates or locales to facilitate attendance. Parents also wanted more youth education opportunities (43.3%), where sessions could be offered that prepared their children for college, the job market, or living independently. The remainder requested sessions where they could learn how to network with others, be engaged with the community, and learn about supplemental education opportunities.

Appendix F – Works Cited & Consulted

Data Sources

- American Community Survey
- Colorado Department of Education
- Current Population Survey
- Glasmeir & Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- National Center for Education Statistics

Works Cited

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QREM

STRONG **DATA** = SOUND **DECISIONS**