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2019-20 RECAP Annual Report: Family Perspectives

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December, 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

RECAP (formally known as the Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership) is a collaborative that provides assessment services to early childhood providers. Since 1992, RECAP has been continuously improving Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) classrooms, programs, and child outcomes through the use of its integrated and comprehensive information system (Infurna et al., 2020). RECAP is made possible through valuable contributions from the Rochester community, including: parents and families, early childhood education program staff, funders, policymakers, and volunteers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Family and Teacher Relationship Quality (*FTRQ*) measures are three questionnaires completed by families, teachers, and CBO directors. These questionnaires assess family and teacher relationships from each of these groups' perspectives, and they assess education environment and program policies from the director's perspective. The content of the family and teacher measures can be compared, as subscales are largely the same. Additionally, the family measure asks questions about initiatives specific to the Rochester City School District (RCSD). With the exception of the director measure distributed only in November, the family and teacher questionnaires are distributed pre-test (November) and post-test (May) to evaluate change in relationship quality over the course of the school year. In 2019-20, RCSD switched from in-person programming to distance learning in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the *FTRQ* post-tests were not administered. Instead, RECAP issued a FTRQ Usage Survey to gain understanding of *FTRQ* completion rates, form and report usage, and measure concerns from program personnel.

Key Findings for 2019-20:

Overall:

- Parent respondents answered questions about their child's teacher favorably, including relationship quality and teacher rating. This finding has been consistent year after year.
- Daily reading between children and parents increased from past years.
- Families rated teachers better than teachers rated themselves when asked questions about *Family-specific Knowledge* (understanding the family's background) and *Respect* (valuing the child and family without judgement).
- Teachers rated themselves better than families rated teachers when asked questions about *Responsiveness, Communication, and Commitment*.

General:

- Each *FTRQ* measure had a return rate below 50%.

FTRQ – Family:

- The return rate for the *FTRQ – Family* pre-test has fallen over the last three years. The pre-test return rate was 30% in 2019-20.
- Family and teacher relationship quality as reported by families has remained numerically the same at pre-test in 2018-19 and 2019-20 for all *FTRQ* constructs and subscales.

- The ***Attitudes*** construct and subscales receive higher scores than ***Knowledge*** and ***Practices***. The ***Practices*** construct and all its subscales are the lowest scoring.
- When asked directly about the relationship quality with their children’s teachers, families rated it 4.3. This has been similar at pre-test over the past three years and is representative of good quality (scale 1-5).

RCSD-specific Initiatives on Family Questionnaires:

- Families reading daily to preschool children has increased from 35% (2018-19) to 41% (2019-20).
- Families reading at least once a week to preschool children has remained high and steady, 96% in 2018-19 and 95% in 2019-20.
- The percentage of families receiving books sent home at least monthly decreased between 2018-19 and 2019-20 (86% to 79%).
- More families have heard of *ReadyRosie* (47%) than in 2018-19 (38%).
- Teachers were rated “A” by families 77% of the time. Teachers were rated “A” the most.
- The prekindergarten program overall received an “A” rating from 70% of respondents.

FTRQ - Teacher:

- Pre-test scores are very similar in 2018-19 and 2019-20 for all constructs and subscales.
- Family and teacher relationship quality as reported by teachers is highest in ***Commitment***.
- Family and teacher relationship quality as reported by teachers is lowest in ***Family-specific Knowledge*** and ***Respect***.

FTRQ – Family and FTRQ – Teacher Comparison:

- Matching subscales of the ***FTRQ – Family*** and ***FTRQ – Teacher*** are different by at least 0.3 in means, but are similar to results seen in 2018-19.
- The largest differences between family and teacher means are in the ***Knowledge/Family-specific*** (0.9) and ***Attitudes/Respect*** (1.1) subscales.
- Significance testing was completed comparing family and teacher results. In 2019-20, families scored ***Family-specific Knowledge*** and ***Respect*** higher than teachers. Teachers scored ***Responsiveness***, ***Communication*** (new finding), and ***Commitment*** higher than families. There was no difference in family and teacher scoring of ***Collaboration***.

FTRQ – Director:

- RECAP’s ***Environment and Policy Checklist*** means are high, but have decreased from 2016-17 (15.4) to present (14.2), but in all years, they remain higher than the Field Study (13.2), completed nation-wide in the spring of 2014 (scale is 0-17).

- The return rate was much higher this year, but this is explained by elimination of questionnaire distribution to school principals. Only Community-based Organization (CBO) Directors were sent the **FTRQ - Director**, the group that has historically been more likely to complete the survey.

FTRQ Link to Student Outcomes:

- In past years, RECAP has compared relationship quality (as measured by the FTRQ) with Kindergarten readiness (as measured by COR Advantage). In 2017-18, a positive link was found; Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) students that were deemed ready for Kindergarten reported better relationships with their teachers. In 2018-19, there was no link found; UPK students deemed ready for Kindergarten reported no better relationships with teachers than students that were not ready for Kindergarten. This analysis could not be completed this year as the post-test was not able to be distributed when school closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FTRQ Usage Survey:

- New in 2019-20, RECAP distributed an electronic **FTRQ** Usage Survey to all known administrators, teachers, education specialists, and family engagement specialists. Twenty percent of personnel responded, mostly from CBOs and mostly working with UPK students.
- The **FTRQ – Director** is most often used to assess if programs are doing the best they can to involve families in their center (24%).
- The **FTRQ – Teacher** is most often used for self-reflection (37%).
- The **FTRQ – Family** is most often used to reflect on the way families feel about their relationships with teachers (17%).
- The **FTRQ – Family** and **FTRQ – Teacher** Comparison is most often used to bridge gaps between teacher perspective and family perspectives (52%).
- Respondents were asked to write-in additional thoughts about the **FTRQ** measures. Recurrent themes included: forms are sometimes lost or destroyed, families find the survey questions too personal, families sometimes misunderstand questions, and there is no professional development for interpreting results and improving practices.

FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measures

In the fall of 2016, RECAP began using the Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ) measures (Kim et al., 2015), which were developed by early education researchers at Westat and Child Trends to obtain feedback from preschool program participants about relationships between teachers and families. The development of these measures was funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation, part of the Administration for Children & Families.

Kim and colleagues posited that the relationship between families and teachers is bi-directional, stating "...families may be more likely to become engaged and involved in their children's development and learning activities when they feel supported, understood, and empowered by programs and providers/teachers and when they are better able to balance work and family responsibilities. At the same time, providers and teachers may become more sensitive and responsive to the needs of families as parents become more involved and engaged in programs."

RECAP used three of five questionnaires developed by Kim et al, 2015: FTPRQ – Parent, FTPRQ – Provider/Teacher, and FTPRQ – Director. RECAP shortened "Provider/Teacher" to "Teacher" and generalized "Parent" to "Family", thus, changing the titles to *Family and Teacher Relationship Quality (FTRQ): FTRQ – Family, FTRQ – Teacher, and FTRQ – Director*. RECAP's population is similar to subjects included in the FPTRQ field study (ethnically, racially, culturally, linguistically, financially, and across different types of early care and education settings).

For a more in-depth history of RECAP's adoption of these measures, see the Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership Twentieth and Twenty-First Annual Reports (Infurna et al, 2017; Infurna et al, 2018).

The *FTRQ – Family* asks caretakers general questions about how they interact with their children's teachers, for example, how easy or difficult it is for them to contact their child's teacher and how comfortable they feel talking with the teacher. The *FTRQ – Teacher* asks teachers general questions about how they interact with their students' families, for example, how easy or difficult it is for parents to reach them and how often parents share information about their home life. The *FTRQ – Director* asks program directors and principals general questions about their early childhood education (ECE) environment and about how the program supports family and teacher relationships, for example, how the ECE program communicates with parents and information provided to parents about services.

FTRQ – Family

The **FTRQ – Family** assesses three constructs: ***Knowledge***, ***Practices***, and ***Attitudes***. These constructs contain eight subscales: ***Family-specific Knowledge***, ***Collaboration***, ***Responsiveness***, ***Communication***, ***Family-focused Concern***, ***Commitment***, ***Understanding Context***, and ***Respect***, which describe family and teacher relationship quality from the family perspective. The constructs and subscales are defined by Kim et al., (2015):

The ***Knowledge*** construct includes 1 subscale: ***Family-specific Knowledge***, which is defined as “knowledge and an understanding of families’ cultures; the context in which they live; situations that affect them; and their abilities, needs, and goals”.

The ***Practices*** construct includes 4 subscales: ***Collaboration***, ***Responsiveness***, ***Communication***, and ***Family-focused Concern***. The ***Collaboration*** subscale addresses collaboration and engagement between families and teachers “through joint goal setting, decision-making, and following up on this decision-making process through the development of action plans”. The ***Responsiveness*** subscale is defined as engaging “in sensitive, flexible, and responsive support of families’ identified needs and goals”. The ***Communication*** subscale is defined as promoting “positive, two-way communication that is responsive to families’ preferences” and teachers’ personal boundaries. The ***Family-focused Concern*** subscale is defined as “communication that demonstrates interest in the family as a unit”.

The ***Attitudes*** construct includes 3 subscales: ***Commitment***, ***Understanding Context***, and ***Respect***. The ***Commitment*** subscale is defined as “sensitivity to the needs of children, parents, and families; intrinsic motivation, or viewing work as “more than a job;” and being sincere, honest, encouraging, accessible, and consistent in interactions” with families and children. The ***Understanding Context*** subscale is defined as “having an appreciation for the broader context in which children’s development and families’ lives are situated and viewing the family as a unit, rather than focusing on the individual child”. The ***Respect*** subscale is defined as “valuing the child and the family; being non-judgmental courteous/welcoming, and non-discriminatory; being accepting of divergent opinions of families (e.g., on managing children’s behavior/how to socialize children); and being considerate and patient with families when trying to elicit changes in their behavior”. Please refer to the Twentieth, Twenty-First, or Twenty-Second Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership Annual Report for complete definitions of all constructs and domains, measure modification, and in-depth scoring parameters.

The **FTRQ – Family** contains 25 questions rated on a 1-4 Likert scale, with 4 being the most desirable score. Of note, respondent scores were computed only if more than 90% of questions within the construct or subscale were answered. However, excluding a respondent in one subscale

or construct did not prevent that respondent from being included in a different subscale or construct. Varying sample sizes among constructs and subscales reflects this methodology.

In November 2019 (pre-test), the *FTRQ – Family* was distributed to each child enrolled in 209 RCSD Community-based Organization (CBO) and RCSD School-based prekindergarten classrooms (n=3,266 students’ parents/caregivers). The *FTRQ – Family* was made available in English and Spanish. The COVID-19 pandemic, which closed schools to in-person instruction in March 2020, prevented the post-test distribution set for May 2020. Results reported for 2019-20 are based exclusively upon the pre-tests.

Table 1 shows rates of return for the *FTRQ – Family* from 2017-18 to 2019-20. Returns have been decreasing since 2017-18.

| <i>FTRQ - Family</i> | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Return Rate Pre-test | 42% | 33% | 30% |
| Return Rate Post-test | 30% | 20% | NA |

Figures 1 and 2 present the mean construct and subscale scores, respectively, for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

- Comparison of means from fall 2018 and fall 2019 show little or no numerical difference for any construct or subscale.
- The *Attitudes* (All Subscales) construct and the *Attitudes/Understanding Context* and *Attitudes/Respect* subscales have the highest numerical means over the three time points but exhibited little change from pre to post last year (i.e., 2018-2019).
- In 2018-19, approximately 30% of the pre-survey respondents completed the questionnaire at post-survey administration.

Figure 1. *FTRQ* – Family comparison of construct means for 2018-19 (pre and post) and 2019-20 (pre).

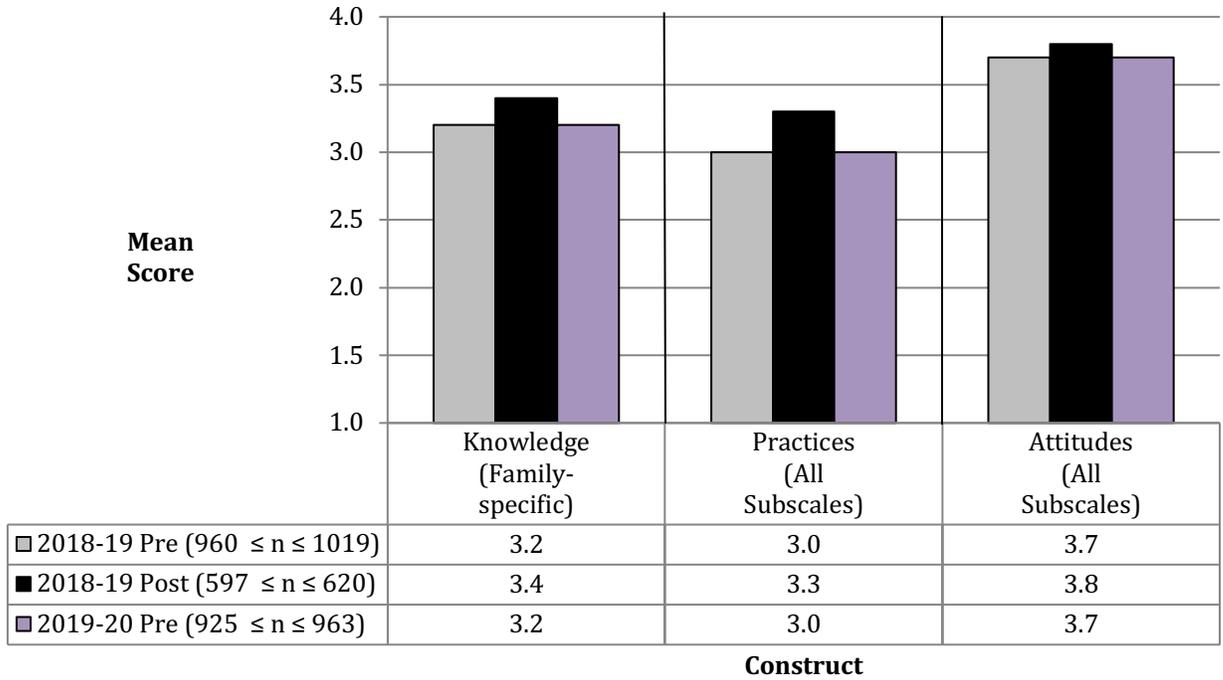
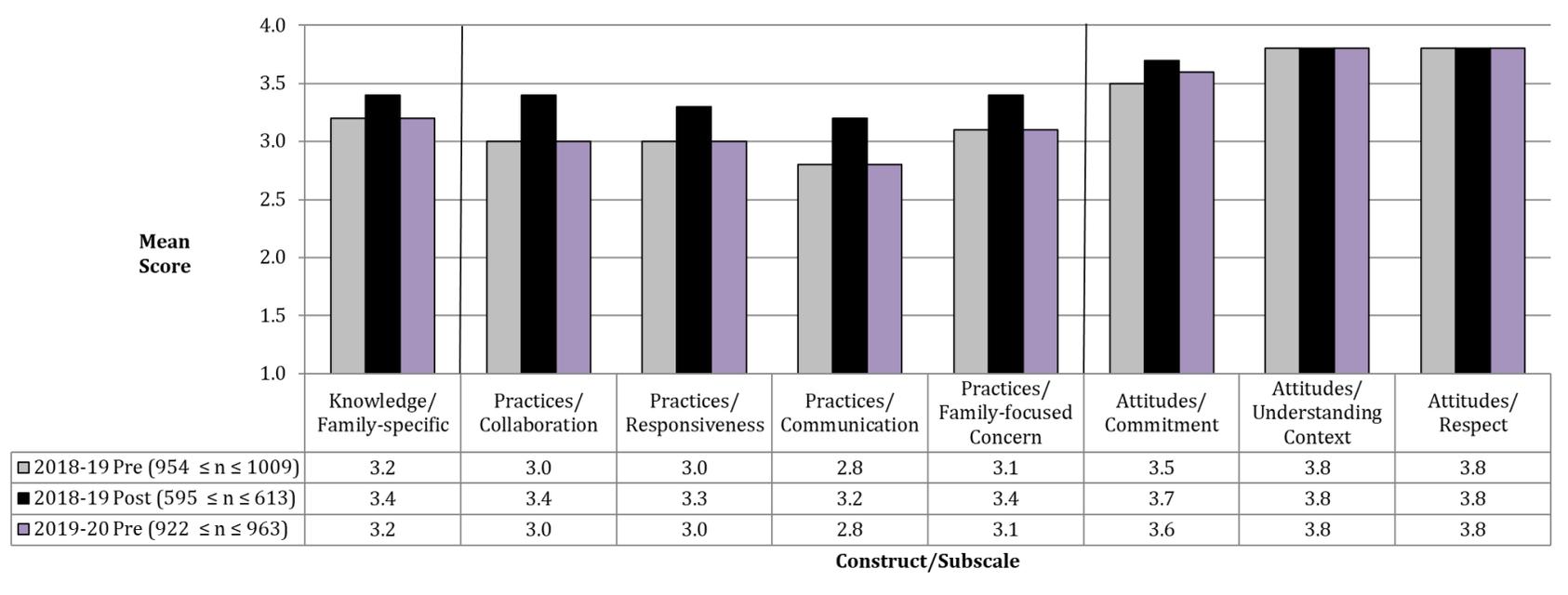


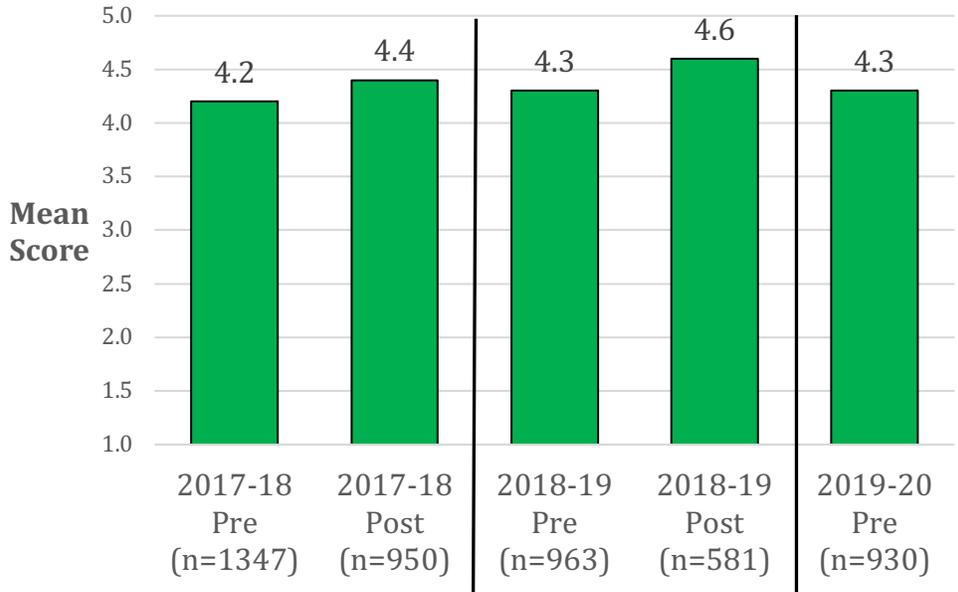
Figure 2. FTRQ – Family comparison of subscale means for 2018-19 (pre and post) and 2019-20 (pre).



Parents/Caretakers were asked how they would rate their relationship with their child’s teacher on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the worst imaginable and 5 being the best imaginable). Figure 3 shows the mean for the past three years. Starting and ending means are numerically similar.

- Pre-test scores are similar for the last three years.
- There is numerical growth from pre to post in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Figure 3. *FTRQ – Family* comparison of means for caregiver-reported family and teacher relationship quality in 2017-18 (pre and post), 2018-19 (pre and post), and 2019-20 (pre).



Absence of post-test data prevents analysis and significance testing of score changes in 2019-20.

RCSD-specific Questions

In the summer of 2019, the FTRQ committee (a subset of RECAP’s Assessment Team) refined 18 questions which were added to the end of the *FTRQ – Family* to gather information about RCSD initiatives with regard to books, technology, and school relationships (Table 2).

Table 2. RCSD-specific questions about books, *ReadyRosie*, and school relationships in 2018-19 (pre and post) and 2019-20 (pre).

| RCSD-specific questions (Books, <i>ReadyRosie</i> , school relationships) | Percentage of families that: | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | Look at books with their child daily [new question 2019-20] | Read to their child at least once a week | Read to their child daily | Receive books sent home at least monthly | Are satisfied or very satisfied with the books being sent home | Have never heard of <i>ReadyRosie</i> | Can talk to at least one person at their child's school about their concerns | Can talk to more than three people at their child's school about their concerns |
| Pre-test (November 2018) | NA | 96% (n*=1019) | 35% (n=1019) | 86% (n=1004) | 85% (n=1008) | 62% (n=963) | 91% (n=968) | 46% (n=968) |
| Post-test (May 2019) | NA | 96% (n=617) | 33% (n=617) | 98% (n=606) | 96% (n=615) | 44% (n=583) | 94% (n=584) | 50% (n=584) |
| Pre-test (November 2019) | 46% (n=960) | 95% (n=959) | 41% (n=959) | 79% (n=944) | 82% (n=938) | 53% (n=936) | 94% (n=931) | 52% (n=931) |

*sample size (n) denotes the total number of responses to each question

- Proportions of families who read to their child at least once a week remained steady over three time points.
- Families who read to their child daily increased in 2019-20.
- Families who receive books sent home at least monthly decreased at pre-test in 2019-20 from 2018-19.
- Families who have never heard of *ReadyRosie* decreased at pre-test in 2019-20 from 2018-19.
 - The families that reported having heard of *ReadyRosie* are most often informed by their child’s teacher (both in 2018-19 and 2019-20).
- Families who can talk to at least one person or more than three people at their child’s school about their concerns remained steady over three time points.

On a scale of “A” to “F”, where “A” is the best grade, families were asked to rate aspects of their child’s prekindergarten program. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. RCSD-specific questions - Grading the program in 2018-19 (pre and post) and 2019-20 (pre).

| RCSD-specific questions (Grading the program) | Percentage of families that gave a grade of “A” (Excellent) to their: | | | |
|--|---|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Teacher | Parent Contact | School Principal or Center Director | Prekindergarten program |
| Pre-test (November 2018) | 73% (n*=1013) | 50% (n=890) | 56% (n=997) | 66% (n=1011) |
| Post-test (May 2019) | 84% (n=617) | 60% (n=550) | 61% (n=604) | 74% (n=613) |
| Pre-test (November 2019) | 77% (n=956) | 57% (n=866) | 60% (n=943) | 70% (n=956) |

*sample size (n) denotes the total number of responses to each question

- Teachers received ratings of “A” at a rate of 77%, the most compared to the other categories.
- Parent contacts and principals or center directors were rated “A” the least (57% and 60%, respectively) and were the only groups to receive “F” ratings, but at very small percentages (all were $\leq 2\%$).
- The prekindergarten program overall received an “A” rating from 70% of respondents.
- The prekindergarten program was rated “A” 61% of the time for meeting children’s academic/learning needs and 62% of the time for meeting children’s social and emotional needs.
- The prekindergarten program was rated “F” by 1% of respondents in regards to meeting children’s academic/learning and social/emotional needs.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

FTRQ – Teacher

The *FTRQ – Teacher* (developed by Kim et al., 2015) is distributed at the same time as *FTRQ – Family* in the Fall and Spring and is an optional survey for teachers. It is suggested by the measure’s authors that when the *Family* and *Teacher* measures are examined at the same time, the quality of a relationship from family and teacher perspectives can be compared (i.e., the subscales are largely the same).

The *FTRQ – Teacher* assesses three constructs: *Knowledge*, *Practices*, and *Attitudes*. These constructs contain seven subscales: *Family-specific Knowledge*, *Collaboration*, *Responsiveness*, *Communication*, *Commitment*, *Openness to Change*, and *Respect*, which describe family and teacher relationship quality from the teacher perspective. The *FTRQ – Teacher* eliminates the *Family-focused Concern* subscale in the *Practices* construct. In the *Attitudes* construct, the *FTRQ – Teacher* eliminates the *Understanding Context* subscale and adds the *Openness to Change* subscale. The *Openness to Change* subscale is defined as a “willingness to alter their normal practices in order to be sensitive to an individual child, parent, or family’s needs, and a willingness to be flexible in varying their practices based on input received from a parent/family member” (Kim et al., 2015). Please refer to the Twentieth, Twenty-First, or Twenty-Second Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership Annual Report for complete definitions of all constructs and domains, measure modification, and in-depth scoring parameters. The *FTRQ – Teacher* contains 23 questions rated on a 1-4 Likert Scale, with 4 being the most desirable score. Of note, respondent scores were computed if more than 90% of questions within the construct or subscale were answered. However, excluding a respondent in one subscale or construct did not prevent that respondent from being included in a different subscale or construct. Varying sample sizes among constructs and subscales reflects this methodology.

In November 2019 (pre-test), the *FTRQ – Teacher* was distributed to 213 teachers in RCSD CBO and School-based prekindergarten classrooms. Results reported for 2019-20 are exclusively pre-test.

Table 4 shows rates of return for the *FTRQ – Teacher* from 2017-18 to 2019-20. Return rates dipped in 2018-19.

| <i>FTRQ - Teacher</i> | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Return Rate Pre-test | 38% | 30% | 37% |
| Return Rate Post-test | 40% | 28% | NA |

Figure 4 and Figure 5 graphically show teachers' FTRQ construct and subscale means for two years, along with the measure authors' FPTRQ field study results.

In 2018-19 and 2019-20, the *FTRQ – Teacher* survey was administered to RECAP partners as a modified short form. The field study means are derived from the original measure development project for the long form measure (Kim et al., 2015). Field study means were calculated by dividing the Center-based program means by the number of questions in the construct. The field study was done between January and April 2014. The timing of the field study places these results between the RECAP pre (November) and post (May) results.

- The lowest mean was *Knowledge/Family-specific* at 2019-20 pre-test.
- Numerically, the field study had higher construct means than RECAP with a (presumably) shorter relationship length. However, the RECAP and field study means are not numerically different by a large margin. Smaller RECAP sample sizes could be a limitation of comparison.
- The *Attitudes* construct for RECAP shows no numerical variability throughout 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- RECAP pre-test scores are very similar in 2018-19 and 2019-20 for all constructs and subscales.
- Teachers score relationships with families are much lower, numerically, in *Knowledge/Family-specific* and *Attitudes/Respect* than other constructs/subscales.
- Teachers score relationships with families are much higher, numerically, in *Attitudes/Commitment* constructs/subscales.

Figure 4. *FTRQ – Teacher* mean construct scores for the FPTRQ field study, RECAP 2018-19 (pre and post), and RECAP 2019-20 (pre).

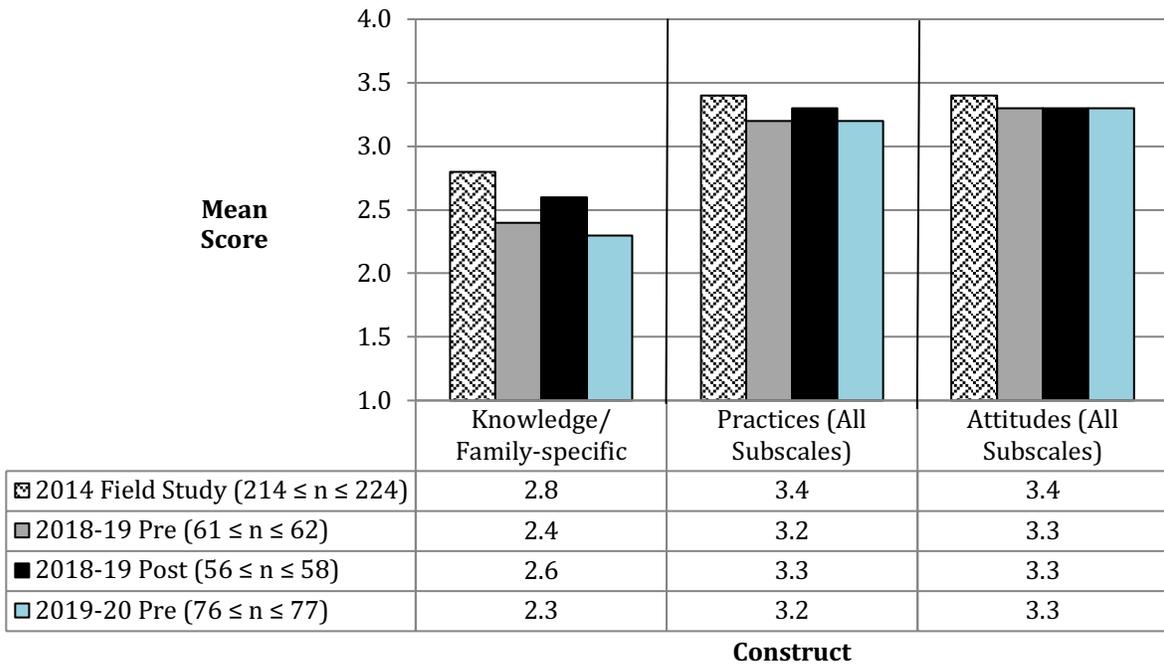
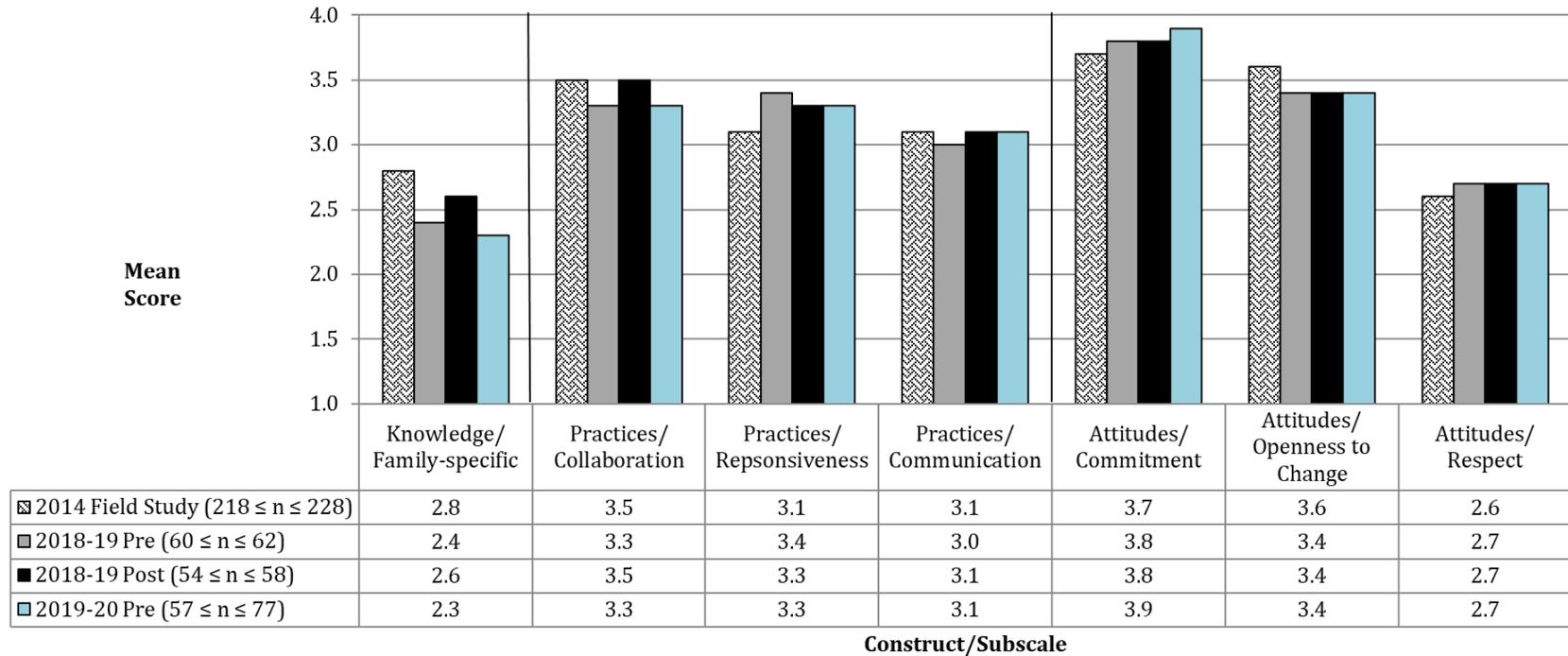


Figure 5. *FTRQ – Teacher* mean subscale scores for the FPTRQ field study, RECAP 2018-19 (pre and post), and RECAP 2019-20 (pre).



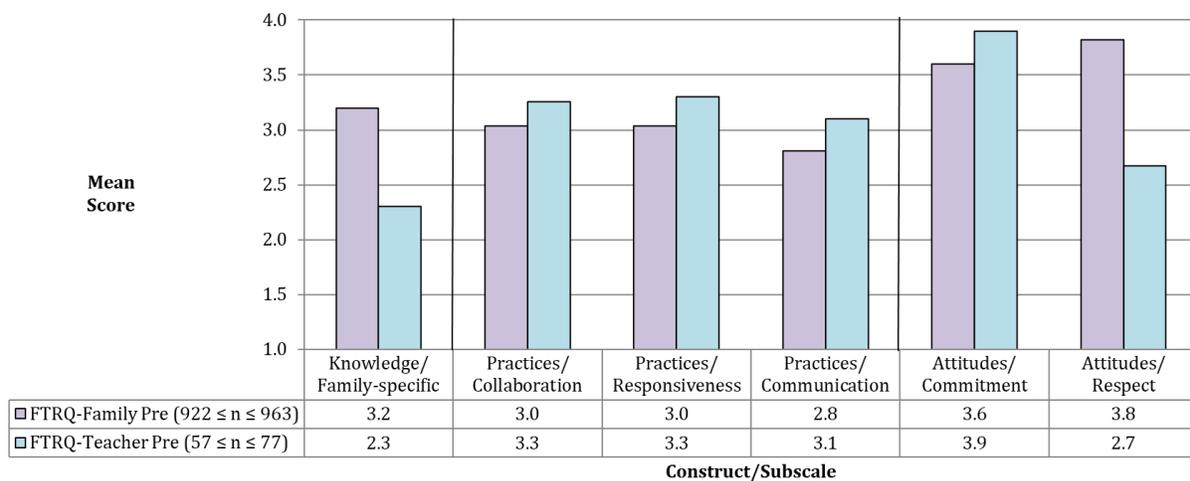
Absence of post-test data prevents analysis of score changes, including significance testing, for 2019-20.

Several subscales for the *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher* are the same. Please note any conclusions drawn from comparing these corresponding subscales are limited because both surveys are optional and because families are completing the questionnaire about their child’s main teacher while the teacher is completing the questionnaire on an aggregate level about all the families of children in their classroom.

Regardless, Figure 6 represents the family and teacher perspectives in corresponding subscales for the 2019-20 fall/pre assessment.

- All subscales show a difference in means between family and teacher surveys of at least 0.3.
- The largest differences between means are in the *Knowledge/Family-specific* (0.9) and *Attitudes/Respect* (1.1) subscales.
- The difference in pre-test means between families and teachers are similar to those reported in 2018-19.

Figure 6. 2019-20 *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher* comparison of pre-test (November 2019) means.



A Mann-Whitney *U* test was performed using Statistics Kingdom’s website on the pre-test data in 2019-20 and added to the results of significance testing done in previous years. Table 5 shows the results for the past four years.

- Families have consistently responded more positively to teachers’ family-specific knowledge and respectful attitudes than the teachers have responded about themselves in these areas.
- In 2016-17, parents/caregivers rated teachers as being more collaborative than teachers rated themselves; this was flipped in 2017-18, and in 2018-19 and 2019-20 the responses were not significantly different between the two groups.
- Responsiveness was seen as more positive by families in 2016-17, but since then, the teachers have responded more favorably in the pre-tests in 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20. No significant differences in responsiveness were noted at the time of the post-tests in 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- Communication was rated higher by teachers in 2019-20 (pre-test) after being rated the same by families and teachers for the pre-tests and post-tests in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19.

- In 2017-18 and 2018-19, teachers rated their commitment higher than caregivers rated the commitment of their children's teachers. This is a change from 2016-17, when there was no difference in means.

Table 5. Significant increases in means when comparing the *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher* from 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19, collected during the fall and spring.

| FTRQ - Family and FTRQ - Teacher | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Significance comparison of mean scores for 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 (pre and post) and 2019-20 (pre) | | | | | | |
| Pre 2016-17 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration* | Practices/ Responsiveness* | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Post 2016-17 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration* | Practices/ Responsiveness* | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Pre 2017-18 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration* | Practices/ Responsiveness* | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment* | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Post 2017-18 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration* | Practices/ Responsiveness | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment* | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Pre 2018-19 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration | Practices/ Responsiveness* | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment* | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Post 2018-19 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration | Practices/ Responsiveness | Practices/ Communication | Attitudes/ Commitment* | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| Pre 2019-20 | Knowledge/ Family-specific* | Practices/ Collaboration | Practices/ Responsiveness* | Practices/ Communication* | Attitudes/ Commitment* | Attitudes/ Respect* |
| *Differences in means between <i>FTRQ – Family</i> and <i>FTRQ – Teacher</i> are significant at $p < .05$ | | | | | | |
| No difference between Family and Teacher means | | | | | | |
| Family means are greater than Teacher means | | | | | | |
| Teachers means are greater than Family means | | | | | | |

DIRECTOR PERSPECTIVES

FTRQ – Director

The *FTRQ – Director* (Kim et al., 2015) is distributed in conjunction with the *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher* in the Fall as an optional survey for directors and principals. The *FTRQ - Director* asks 47 questions about the educational and care environments and about program policies.

The *FTRQ - Director* asks questions about the educational and care environments, as well as program policies. There are 3 constructs, containing 6 subscales that describe family and teacher relationship quality from the director perspective. The constructs are the *Environment and Policy Checklist*, *Communication Systems*, and *Information about Resources*. The *Environment and Policy Checklist* construct is the only construct containing separate domains and for which the authors provide comparison statistics. The four domains in this construct are: *Welcoming*, *Culturally-diverse information*, *Peer to peer support*, and *Ways to provide parenting information*. The *Welcoming* domain asks directors about family involvement in visiting and shaping their child's classroom. The *Culturally-diverse information* domain asks about having specific written material available to families with different languages and education levels. The *Peer to peer support* domain asks directors about providing opportunities for families to gather with other children's families. The *Ways to provide parenting information* domain asks about providing parenting information in workshops or classes or via bulletin boards.

Please refer to the Twentieth, Twenty-First, or Twenty-Second Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership Annual Report for complete definitions of all constructs and domains, measure modification, and in-depth scoring parameters. All 17 questions in the *Environment and Policy Checklist* construct are answered yes or no, receiving a score of 1 or 0, respectively.

Table 6 shows rates of return for the *FTRQ – Director* from 2017-18 to 2019-20. The return rate increased in 2019-20 after being similar in 2017-18 and 2018-19. Please see the note (*) for additional clarification.

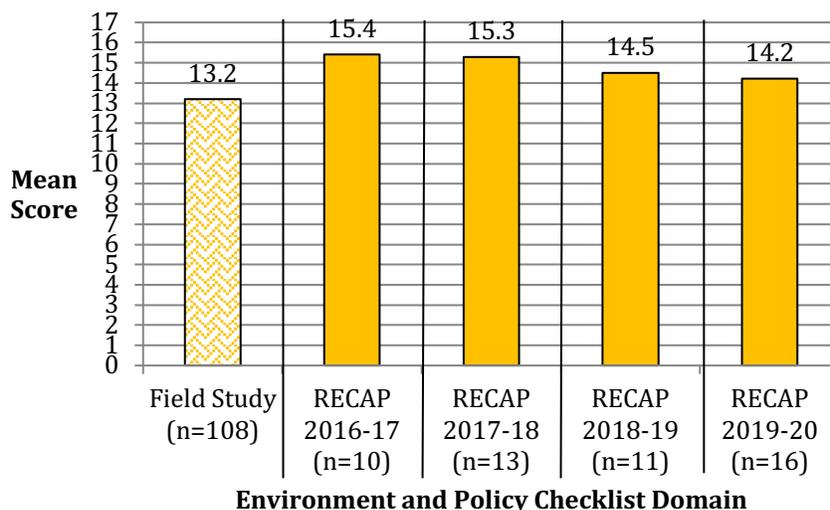
| <i>FTRQ - Director</i> | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Return Rate – One-time distribution (fall) | 19% | 17% | 48%* |

*In 2019-20, the *FTRQ – Director* was sent to CBO Directors (School-based Principals were excluded from the distribution). Before 2019-20, both RECAP CBO Directors and School-based Principals were sent the survey. See Figure 7 for the number of respondents, which is similar across years.

The next chart is presented for illustrative purposes only due to the small sample sizes. Figure 7 displays *FTRQ – Director* results from the measure creators’ field study (completed spring 2014) and RECAP in 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20.

- RECAP means have numerically decreased from 2016-17 to present, but in all years, they remain higher than the Field Study completed nation-wide in the spring of 2014.

Figure 7. *FTRQ – Director* comparison of means for the Environment and Policy Checklist domain for the FPTRQ Field Study (spring 2014) and RECAP in 2016-17 (pre), 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20.



In past RECAP Annual Reports, the association between positive family-teacher relationships and positive child outcomes was explored. By using post-test results for the *FTRQ – Family* and period 3 results from COR Advantage (COR+), an academic measure completed by teachers), we investigated whether or not families of UPK children that were deemed kindergarten ready by COR+ reported a better relationship with their child’s teacher. The COVID-19 pandemic, which closed schools to in-person instruction on March 13th, 2020, prevented the post-test distribution of the *FTRQ – Family* set for May 2020 and period 3 collection of COR+ data (March – June 2020). Therefore, these analyses were not performed with 2019-20 data.

FTRQ USAGE SURVEY

In place of the post-test distribution of the *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher*, RECAP sent a survey to 258 Directors, Teachers, Parent Contacts (Adult Family Educations, Parent Liaisons, Family Navigators, etc.), and other applicable CBO and School-based personnel asking if they complete these measures and how they use the results. The Family and Teacher Relationship Quality (FTRQ) Usage Survey was created in Microsoft Forms and the link was distributed directly to 258 persons with instructions to pass it on to anyone that would like their input included. Fifty-two persons submitted surveys, yielding a response rate of 20%. The survey was available to respondents from 6/11/2020 to 6/26/2020 and contained four sections with questions about the forms and reports for the *FTRQ – Director*, *FTRQ – Teacher*, and *FTRQ – Family* measures, and about the report for the comparison of the *FTRQ – Family* and *FTRQ – Teacher* measures. The survey asked respondents to define their organizational role and based on their answer, they were taken to the appropriate section(s) of the questionnaire. Surveys took an average of 6 minutes 50 second to be completed. Figures 8, 9, and 10 offer breakdowns of respondent grade level, preschool setting, and organizational role, respectively.

Figure 8. The grade level of children the respondents work with.

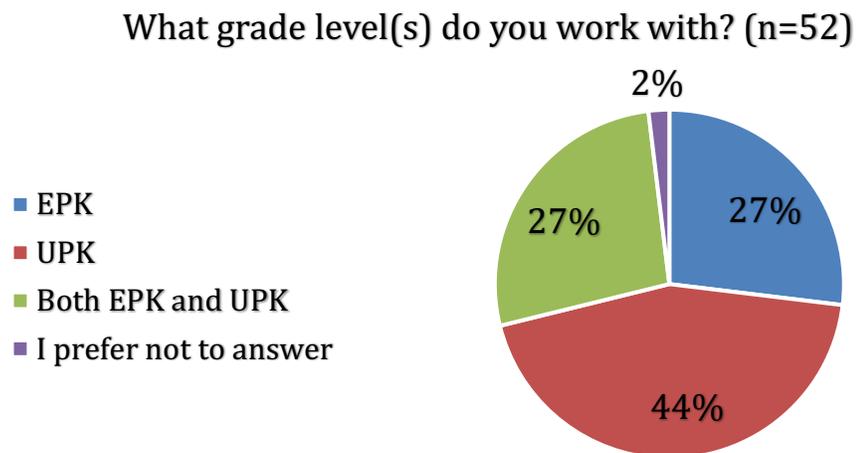


Figure 9. The respondents' preschool setting.

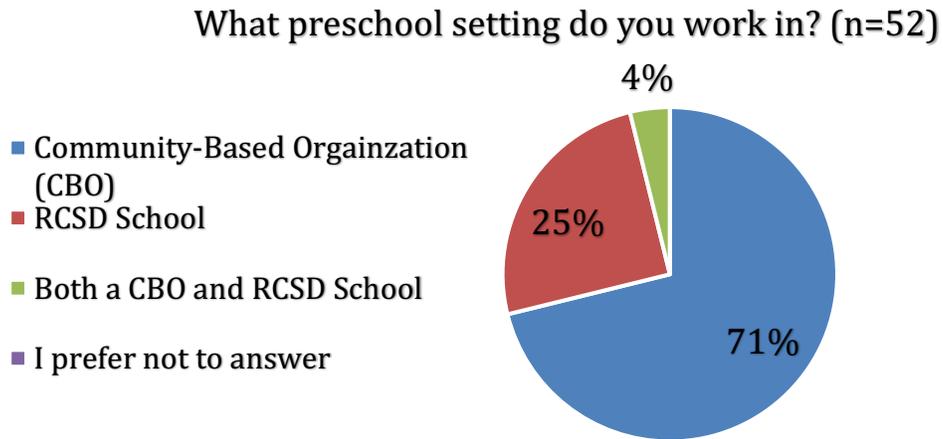


Figure 10. The respondents' organizational role.

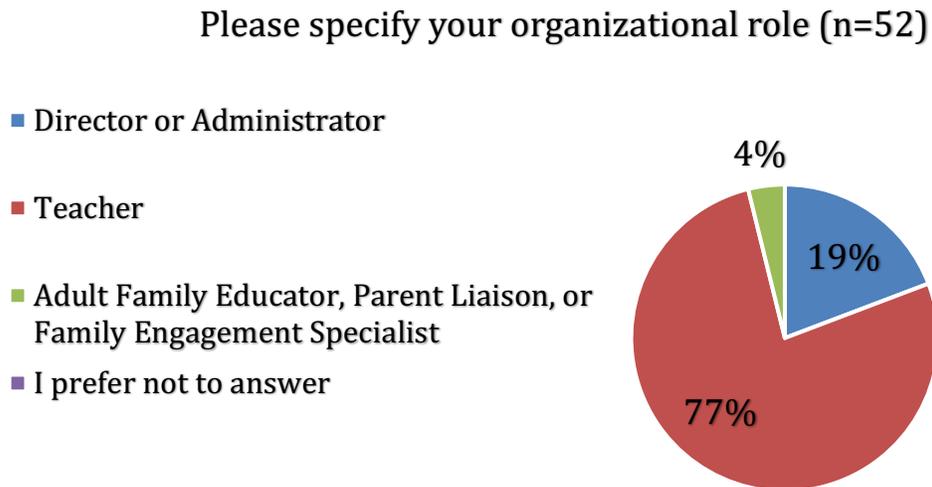


Table 7. Answers to other questions asked in the Family and Teacher Relationship Quality (FTRQ) Usage Survey.

| The respondent... | FTRQ - Director | FTRQ - Teacher | FTRQ - Family | Family and Teacher Comparison (Report Only) |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| always or sometimes completes the questionnaire | 70% (n=10) | 80% (n=50) | 87% (n=52) | NA |
| does not complete the questionnaire, is unsure if it is completed, or prefers not to answer | 30% (n=3) | 20% (n=10) | 13% (n=7) | NA |
| most often does not complete the questionnaire because... | the form doesn't reach me 100% (n=1) | (tie) it isn't required & I need a tutorial on how the survey can be useful 50% (n=1) | my families will not complete the survey 100% (n=2) | NA |
| uses both the form and the generated report to garner information | 71% (n=7) | 43% (n=40) | 31% (n=45) | NA |
| most often used the results from the questionnaire... | to assess if we are doing the best we can to involve families with our center 24% (n=6) | for self-reflection 37% (n=25) | to reflect on the way families feel about their relationships with teachers 17% (n=24) | to bridge gaps between teacher perspectives and family perspectives 52% (n=14) |
| most often did not use the results from the questionnaire because... | (tie) I don't know how to interpret the report & I need support translating the results into realistic goals 50% (n=1) | I don't see the results; my center/administrator doesn't share them with me 44% (n=4) | I don't see the results; my center/administrator doesn't share them with me 29% (n=5) | I don't see the results; my center/administrator doesn't share them with me 29% (n=4) |
| said the technique most often used to encourage returns of the questionnaire was... | NA | this survey is mandatory at my center 44% (n=18) | one person at the center is in charge of distribution and collection of surveys 30% (n=16) | NA |
| said the return rate was ≥50% | NA | 54% (n=22) | 40% (n=18) | NA |
| said the return rate was <50% or they were unsure of the rate | NA | 46 % (n=19) | 60% (n=27) | NA |
| said the reason the response rate was <50% was because... | NA | Other 50% (n=3) [written in: parents don't return; there is a lot of information to answer] | the forms are lost or destroyed by the children/families 58% (n=11) | NA |

Additionally, respondents were asked “Is there anything else you think we should know about the FTRQ questionnaires that would help make them more useful to you and your center/school?” Write-in answer themes:

- The survey results are not accurate because:
 - few families return questionnaire
 - questionnaire is not mandatory
 - some families do not answer questions correctly (sometimes due to language barrier)
 - families are unaware of all school programming (sometimes due to time constraints)
- The rating scale is confusing to interpret
- Questions are not always applicable to both CBO and School-based programming
- Parents complain...
 - questions are very personal
 - questionnaire is too long and overwhelming (reminiscent of homework)
 - questionnaire is too negative
- Questionnaire should be online to prevent form loss
- There should be professional development tied to questionnaire
- Interest in incentive items for questionnaire completion: books, craft kits/materials, gift cards
- Questionnaire results should be given directly to teachers

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, with regard to the **FTRQ** measures, RECAP found:

- Return rates for each FTRQ measure were below 50% during 2019-20.
- **FTRQ – Family** construct, subscale, and Q7 means were almost the same, at pre-test in 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- In November 2019-20, 41% of respondents read to their child daily, an increase from November 2018-19.
- 77% of responding parents/caregivers gave their child’s teacher a rating of “A” (Excellent).
- **FTRQ – Teacher** construct and subscale means were essentially the same at pre-test in 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- When the perspectives of families and teachers are compared, these groups have differing opinions about the specific areas of relationship strength and weakness, the largest discrepancies were in **Knowledge/Family-specific** and **Attitudes/Respect** (families rated both approximately one point higher than teachers).
- **FTRQ – Director** mean for the **Environment and Policy Checklist** domain has declined since 2016-17, but is numerically higher than the FPTRQ Field Study (spring 2014); however, sample sizes are small.
- The COVID-19 pandemic, which closed schools to in-person instruction in March 2020, prevented the post-test distribution set for May 2020, eliminating change analysis and relationship quality/academic outcome link exploration.
- In replacement of the post-test distribution of the **FTRQ – Teacher** and **FTRQ – Family**, a FTRQ Usage Survey was created and sent to center and school personnel. The response rate was 20%, but RECAP is better informed about if and how questionnaire results are used.

LIMITATIONS

The most prominent limitation in 2019-20 is the lack of post-test data due to the transition to distance learning in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were not able to analyze growth in relationship quality as reported by families and teachers. In addition, when student assessments were not collected, the link between relationship quality and kindergarten readiness could not be explored.

As has been stated before, the *FTRQ* questionnaires have low return rates. It is possible that without greater participation, we are missing vital information from persons who choose not to complete the surveys. In other words, persons and programs that are most likely to complete this survey may be self-selected and offer limited scope of relationship quality. Higher return rates would yield a more thorough analysis. Each paper *FTRQ – Family* questionnaire has the child's name pre-printed on it and distribution is, in most cases, carried out by the teacher. Families that are concerned with negative consequences of unflattering responses may be discouraged from completing surveys. The same logic can be applied to teacher submissions of the *FTRQ – Teacher*. Of note, each family completes the survey about their child's teacher, but the teacher completes one survey about their class as a whole. Families are instructed to answer questions about the lead teacher in the classroom, but they may be thinking about a Teaching Assistant or other classroom adult when completing the survey; only the lead teacher has an opportunity to complete the *FTRQ – Teacher* survey.

In the FTRQ Usage Survey, preschool personnel made multiple mentions of the possibilities that families may not understand the questions as a result of reading skills or language barrier.

The *FTRQ – Director* has always had small sample sizes; therefore, analysis has been limited to illustration only purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The *FTRQ* measures have been used for four years. These measures continue to be a minimally explored resource within RECAP. Family engagement improvement ideas can be found in questionnaire results. In the future, these measures could be used to recommend specific family engagement-themed professional development, a topic universities often do not cover in their curriculum and a topic teachers and administrators are frequently left to navigate on their own.

FTRQ return rates have always been below 50%, sometimes far below. Increasing the submissions would give a more complete picture of the relationship quality teachers have with their students' families and vice versa. This questionnaire distribution remains paper-based. A move to electronic distribution (all student assessments are completed electronically) may significantly increase return rates among all participants: families, teachers, and directors. Electronic distribution would also eliminate reported loss and destruction of paper forms by preschool personnel and the minimal amount of human error that is inherent with form processing. *FTRQ* results collected electronically could be seen immediately, instead of weeks after submission. The non-anonymous nature of the paper *FTRQ* surveys (discussed further in the Limitations section) supports a move to electronic collection as well. Identification of survey respondents could hopefully be eliminated to all but Children's Institute analysts to encourage honest answers and increase response rates.

Expanded high-level RCSD administrator support of *FTRQ* completion and professional development may also significantly increase returns and staff buy-in. There are important insights from parents and teachers that could be used to strengthen programming and improve practices that could lead to increased family engagement in education.

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