

Early Childhood Councils

SFY2010 Second Quarter Reporting Addendum*
(October 1-December 31, 2009)

* Please refer to the Early Childhood Councils First Quarter, SFY2009-2010 report for baseline data
(http://www.cde.state.co.us/early/downloads/ECCOUNCILS/firstquarter2010report_extendedversion.pdf)



Photo Courtesy of the Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council



Colorado Department of Human Services
people who help people



Improving
Academic
Achievement

Contact Information

For more information about the data in this report, please contact:

Meg Franko
Senior Consultant, Evaluation
Early Childhood Unit
Colorado Department of Education
franko_m@cde.state.co.us
303-866-6536

Additional reports on Colorado's Early Childhood Councils can be accessed from CDE's website:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/early/ECC.htm>

Introduction

In Colorado, Early Childhood Councils are charged with facilitating the coordination and integration of services for young children (generally, birth-age 8) and their families. These services cross the four domains that address the whole child, as described in the Early Childhood Colorado Framework (http://earlychildhoodcolorado.org/systems_building/): (1) **early learning**, (2) **family support & parent education**, (3) **social, emotional & mental health**, and (4) **health**.

Early Childhood Councils' systems building work falls into three general categories, with the second and third categories aligning directly with the Early Childhood Colorado Framework:

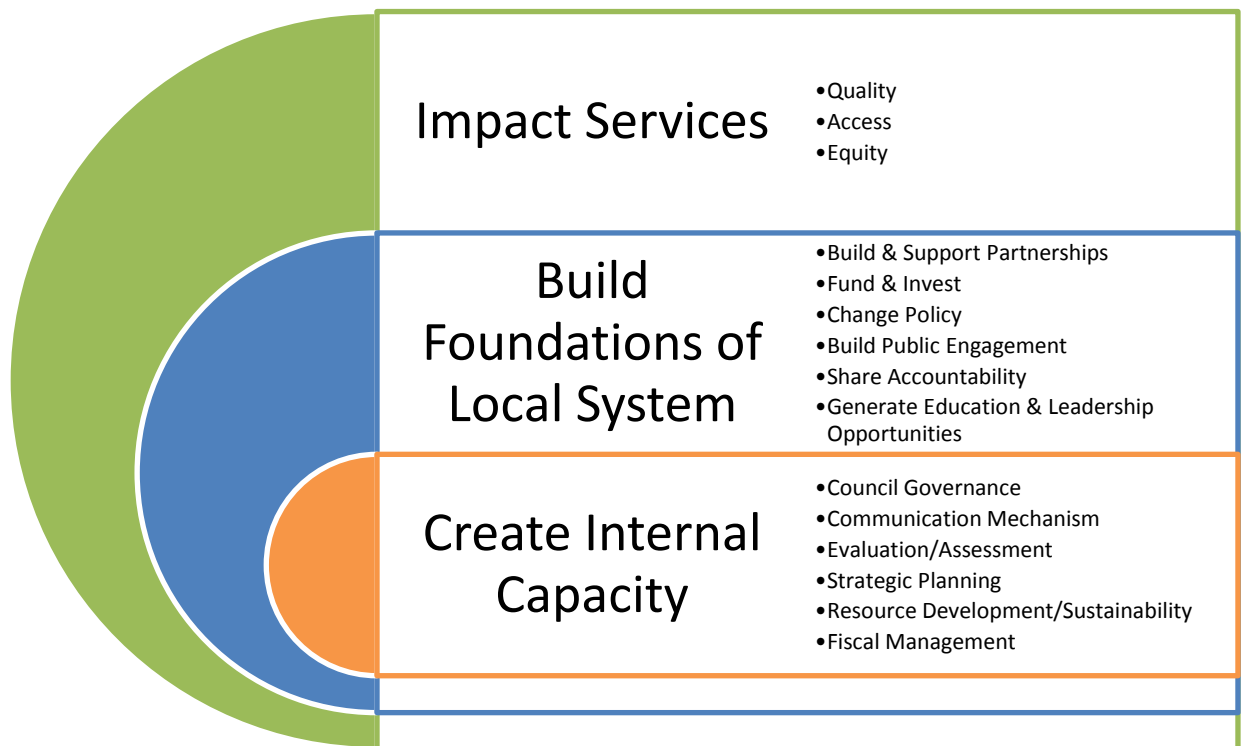
- **Creating Internal Capacity**
 - Council governance
 - Communication mechanisms
 - Evaluation/assessment
 - Strategic planning
 - Resource development/sustainability
- **Building Foundations for the Local System**
 - Build and support partnerships
 - Fund & invest
 - Change policy
 - Build public engagement
 - Share accountability
 - Generate leadership opportunities
- **Impacting Services within the System**
 - Quality
 - Access
 - Equity

Throughout this report, many graphs are color-coded to reflect alignment with the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. Graphs emphasizing the four domains use the colors above that are taken from the Framework. Similarly, graphs relating to Council roles reflect the Early Childhood Council roles that described below. These Council roles draw on the Framework for the last two role categories (Building Foundations and Impacting Services).

An Early Childhood Council's work begins by **creating internal capacity**. Here, the Early Childhood Council brings together local partners from each of the four service areas (domains) to make decisions about how to improve the availability, accessibility, capacity and quality of services locally (referred to as quality, access and equity in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*). The collaborative partners that make up the Early Childhood Council develop a structure for self-governance, collaborative communication, strategic planning, evaluation, resource development, and fiscal management.

The Early Childhood Council’s role continues as the community partners ***build the local foundations*** for collaboratively improving services for children and families. This work includes building and supporting partnerships within and across the domains, making joint funding and investment decisions, improving policies that affect all four domains of the system, engaging the public and stakeholders in collaborative efforts to improve local early childhood services, sharing responsibility for the effectiveness of joint decisions, and building local leadership within the system (across domains).

Finally, the Early Childhood Councils ***impact services***. The collaborative efforts of local partners participating in the Early Childhood Councils mean that all stakeholders in the community are working together to improve the availability, accessibility, capacity and quality of services. Frequently, Early Childhood Councils are not actually delivering direct services to children and families (although they may, depending on the community and any gaps that need to be filled). Rather, the Early Childhood Councils are working with community partners to make sure that local services to young children are plentiful, of high quality, and easily available to anyone who needs them.



New for Second Quarter

Starting this quarter (Second Quarter, State Fiscal Year 2010), Council data can be broken down by state funding levels to Councils and by geographic designation. The following definitions apply throughout this report:

Funding Levels SFY2010*	Geographic Designations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Level I: \$45,000-\$100,000•Level II: \$100,001-\$200,000•Level III: \$200,001-\$325,000•Level IV: \$325,001-\$425,000•Level V: \$425,000-\$625,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•High Plains:<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Otero/Bent/Crowley•Morgan•Logan/Phillips/Sedgewick•Washington/Yuma/Kit Carson•Elbert•Huerfano/Las Animas•Metro Denver:<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Triad (Jefferson, Gilpin, Clear Creek)•Arapahoe•Adams•Denver•Broomfield•Douglas•Mountains:<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Moffat/Rio Blanco•Gunnison/Hinsdale•San Luis Valley (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache)•Delores/Montezuma•Fremont•Park/Teller•Chaffee•Rural Resort:<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Eagle/Lake/Garfield/Pitkin•Summit/Grand•Routt•Delta/Montrose/Ouray/San Miguel•La Plata•Urban: Non-Metro:<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Pueblo•El Paso•Larimer•Mesa•Boulder•Weld

* Funding levels reflect only State Government grant sources. This fiscal year, these include Systems-Building, Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers, School Readiness Quality Improvement Program, and American Recovery & Reinvestment Act grants. Many Councils also leverage funds from local and foundation sources that are not reflected in the funding levels used for analysis here.

Because building a coordinated, collaborative system of early childhood services across four domains is a long process, it is not uncommon for indicators of systems building to show only small changes from one quarter to the next. This second quarter data largely reflects this reality. However, several areas of learning stand out, and these are highlighted in more detail throughout this addendum:

- Council membership across the state is fairly stable and reliable.
- Councils as a group tend to focus their work on building partnerships, public engagement and quality improvement efforts.
- Council capacity varies significantly across the state, as reflected such things as leveraged funding, staffing levels, use of data collection systems, and engagement in activities to change policy.

Creating Internal Capacity

Staffing

Key Learnings from Staffing Data				
<p>Council staffing levels increased by 11 FTE (Figure 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Administrative and coaching positions were most common new hires 	<p>Average Coordinator Salaries vary by geographic location (Figure 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lowest average is in High Plains Councils •Highest average is in Metro Denver Councils 	<p>Coordinator education levels range from AA degrees to Masters (Figure 3)</p>	<p>Budget management and stakeholder engagement are the most common Coordinator responsibilities (Figure 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Eleven Coordinators are responsible for other jobs outside of the coordinator position (Figure 5) 	<p>The more funding a Councils has, the more its staffing needs increase (Figure 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Statewide, Councils need funding for almost 1,500 more staffing hours per week than they currently have (Figure 7)

Figure 1:
Changes in Council Staffing
Second Quarter, SFY2010

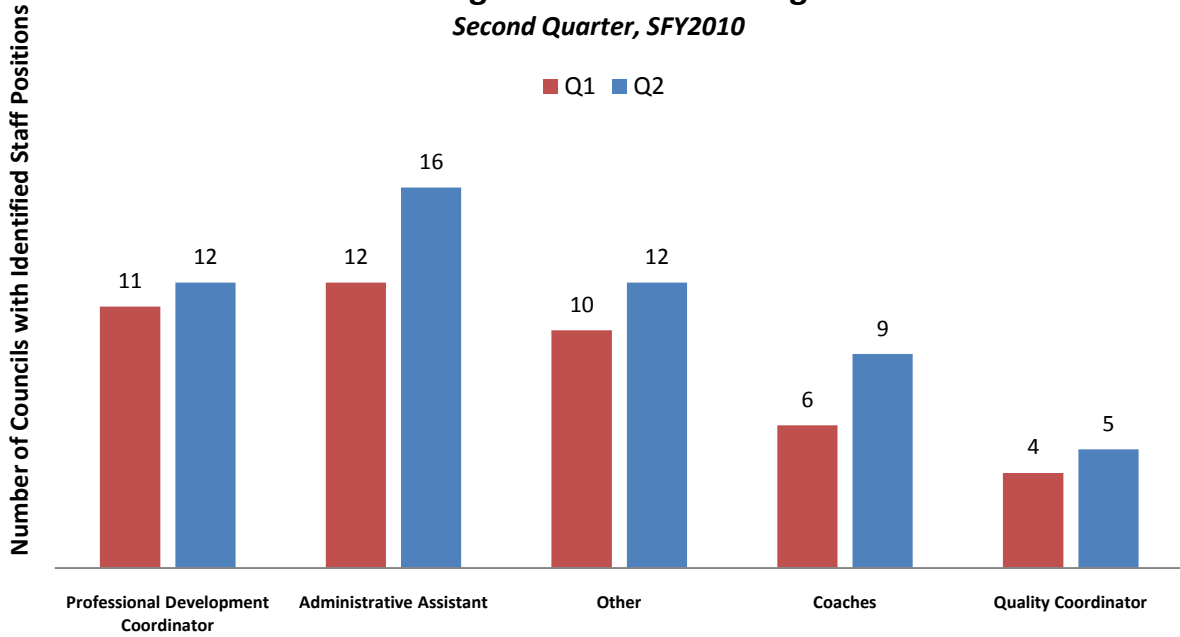


Figure 2:
Average Coordinator Salaries by Geographic Category
Second Quarter, SFY2010

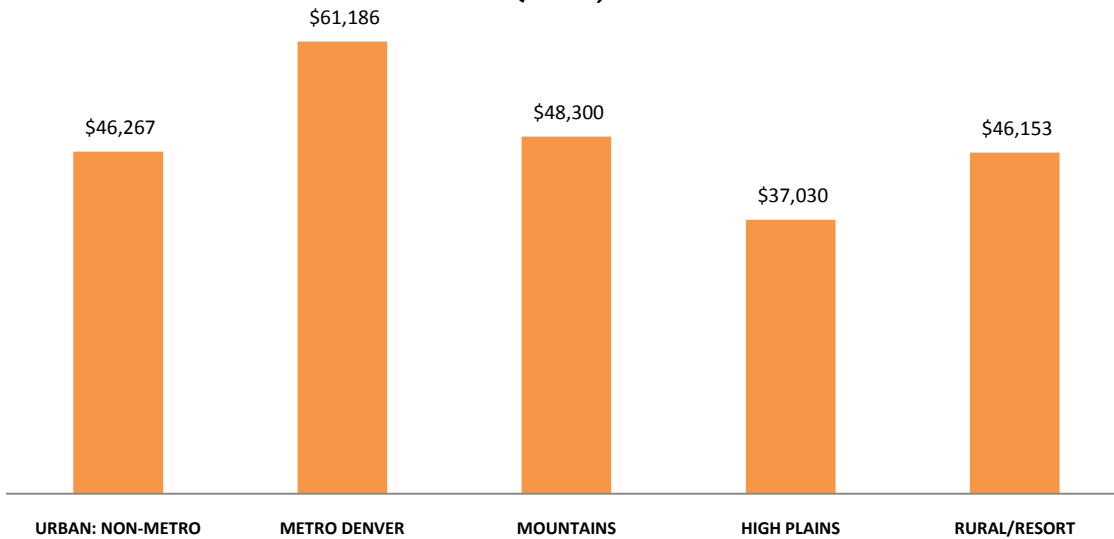


Figure 3:
Coordinator Education by Funding Levels
Second Quarter, SFY2010

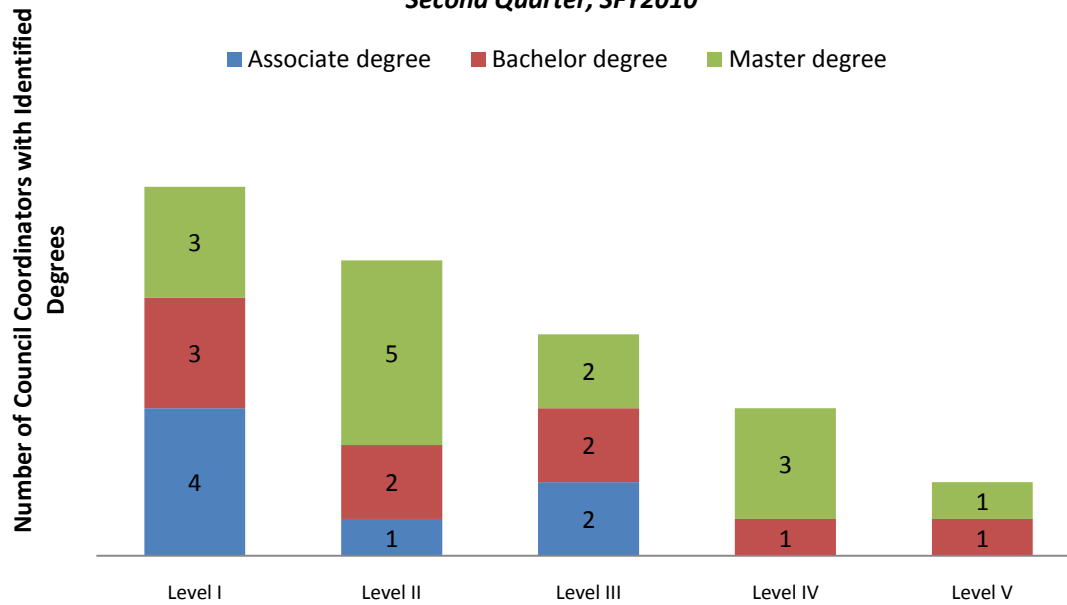


Figure 4:
Council Coordinator Responsibilities
Second Quarter, SFY2010

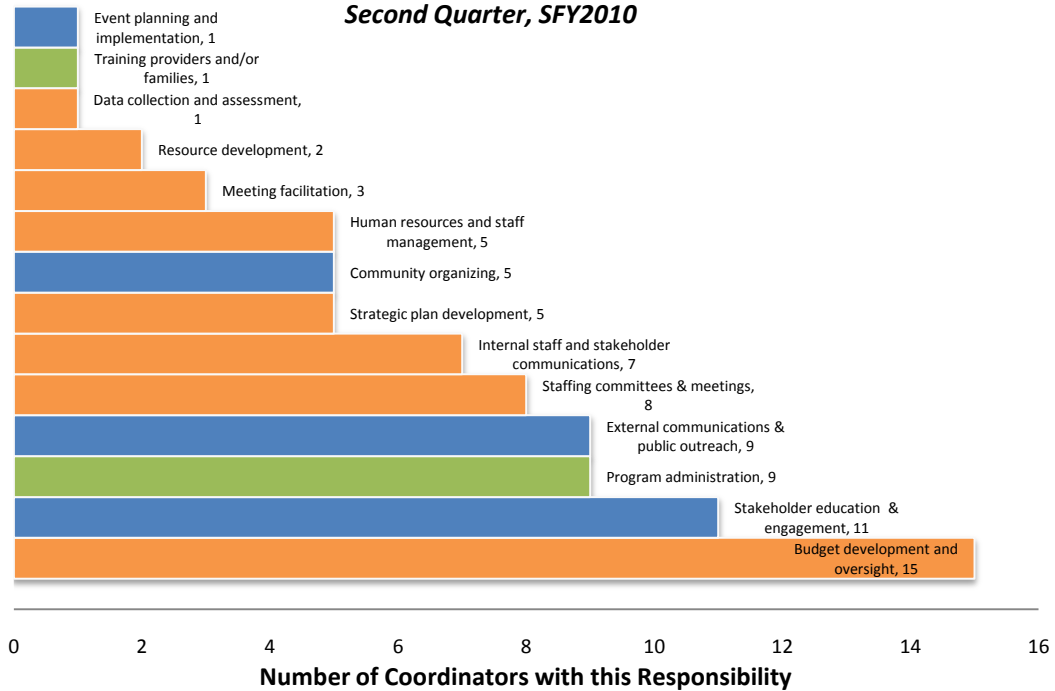
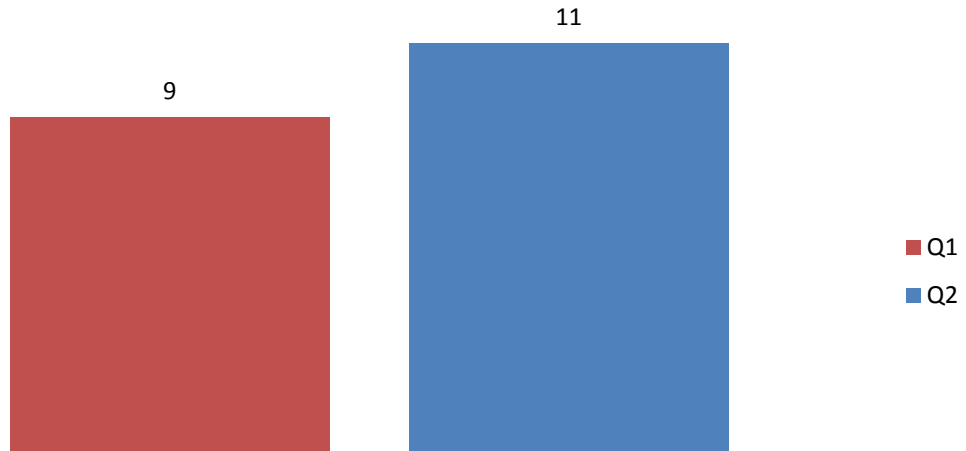
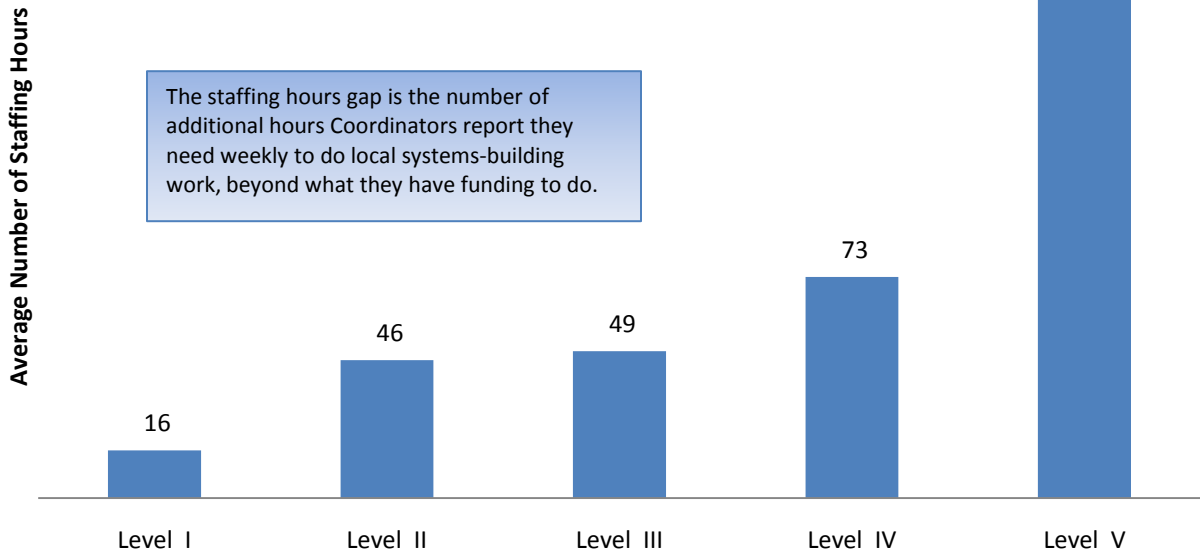


Figure 5:
Coordinators with Braided Responsibilities
Second Quarter, SFY2010



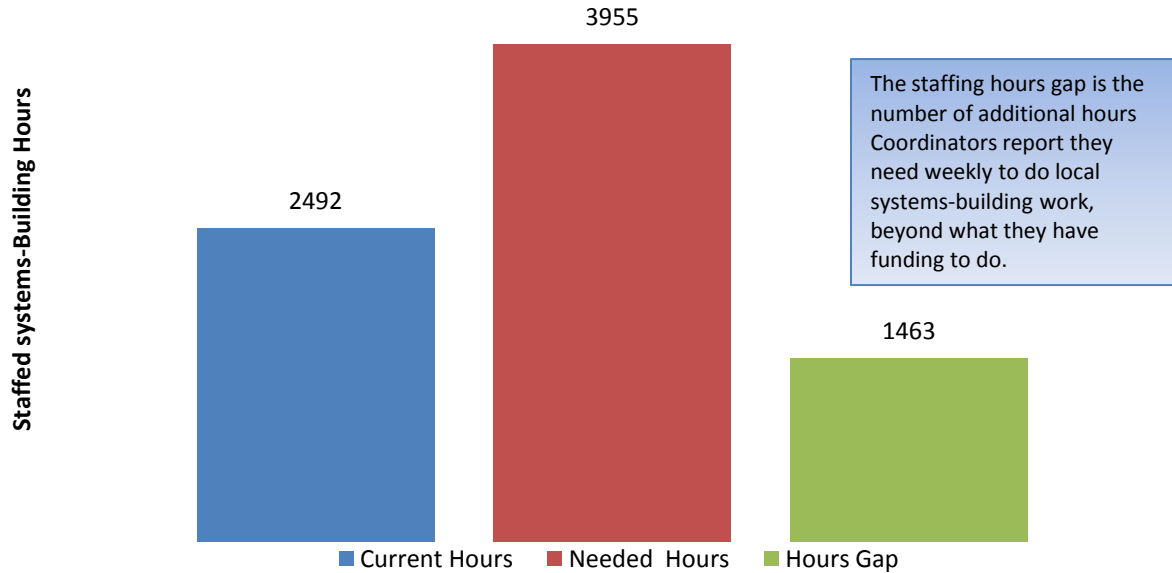
A coordinator would report braided responsibilities if they are funded from another source to perform a discrete job in addition to coordinating the Council (e.g., they also direct the R&R agency or are the Child Find Coordinator).

Figure 6:
Average Staffing Hours Gap by Council Funding Levels
Second Quarter, SFY2010



The staffing hours gap is the number of additional hours Coordinators report they need weekly to do local systems-building work, beyond what they have funding to do.

Figure 7:
Statewide Gap in Systems Building Hours
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Council Governance

Key Learnings from Council Governance Data

<p>Council membership has been very stable (Figure 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early learning is the largest single domain represented on Councils • Changes in decision-making authority and involvement of members primarily reflects improved reporting (Figures 9-10) 	<p>Operating Principles for Councils have seen modest changes (Figure 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More operating principles now address advocacy, gathering input and making decisions. 	<p>The majority of Council committees focus on creating internal capacity and building the foundations of a local system (Figure 12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most commonly committees work on building partnerships, quality improvement, public engagement, and Council governance (Figure13)
---	---	--

Figure 8:
Changes in Statewide Council Membership by Domain
Second Quarter, SFY2010

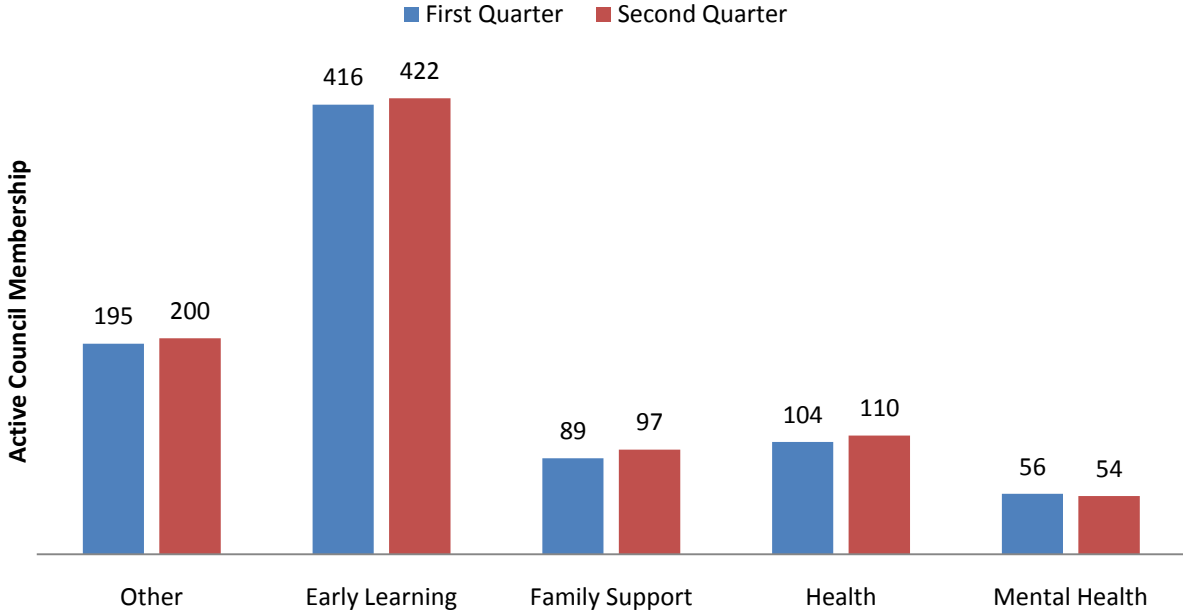


Figure 9:
Changes in Decision Making Authority
Second Quarter, SFY2010

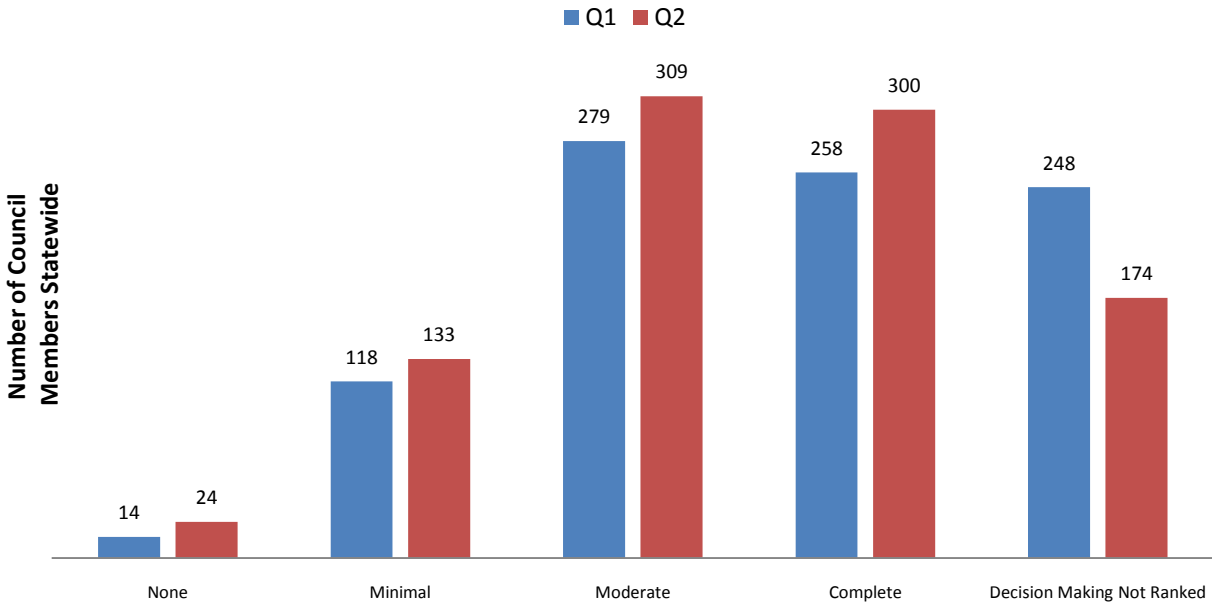


Figure 10:
Changes in Number of Members by Involvement Level
Second Quarter, SFY2010

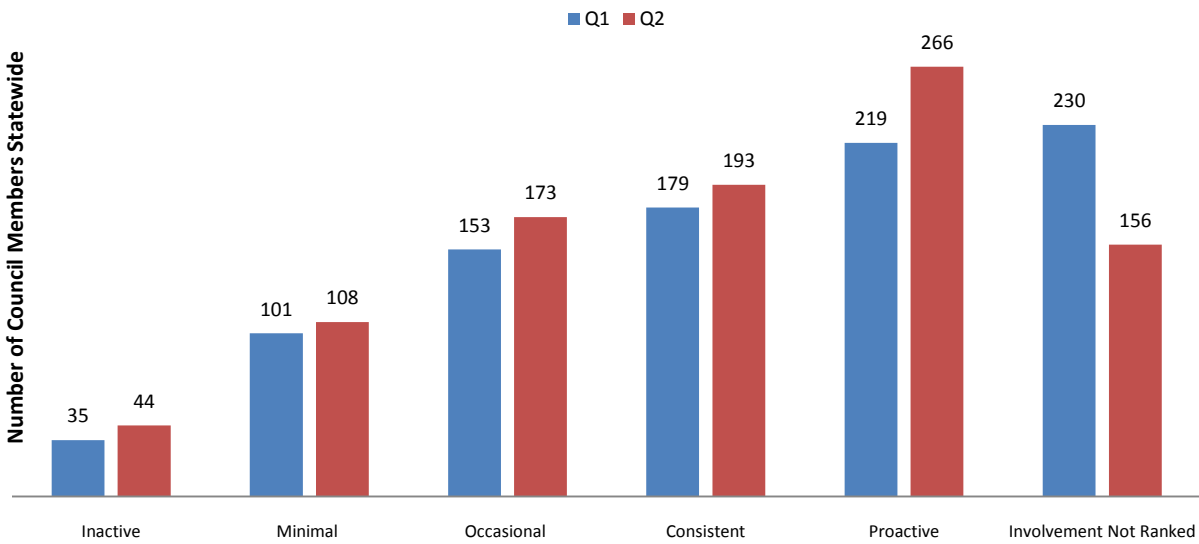


Figure 11:
Changes in Operating Principles
Second Quarter, SFY2010

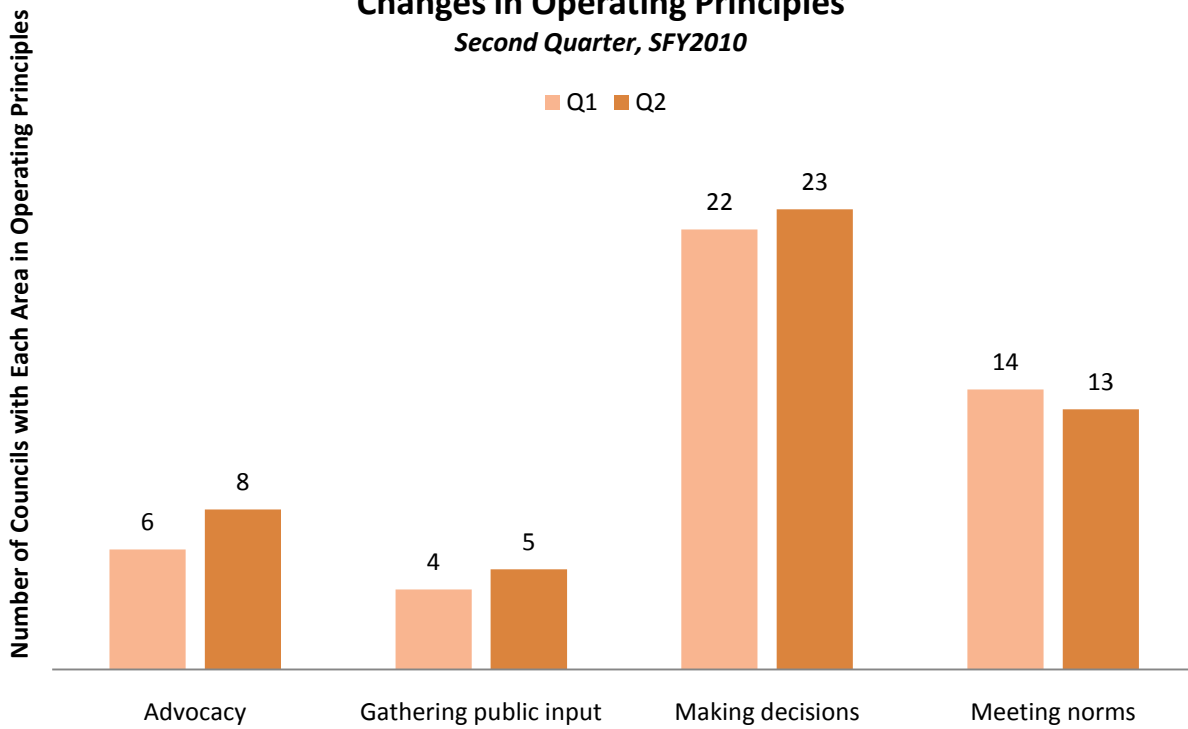
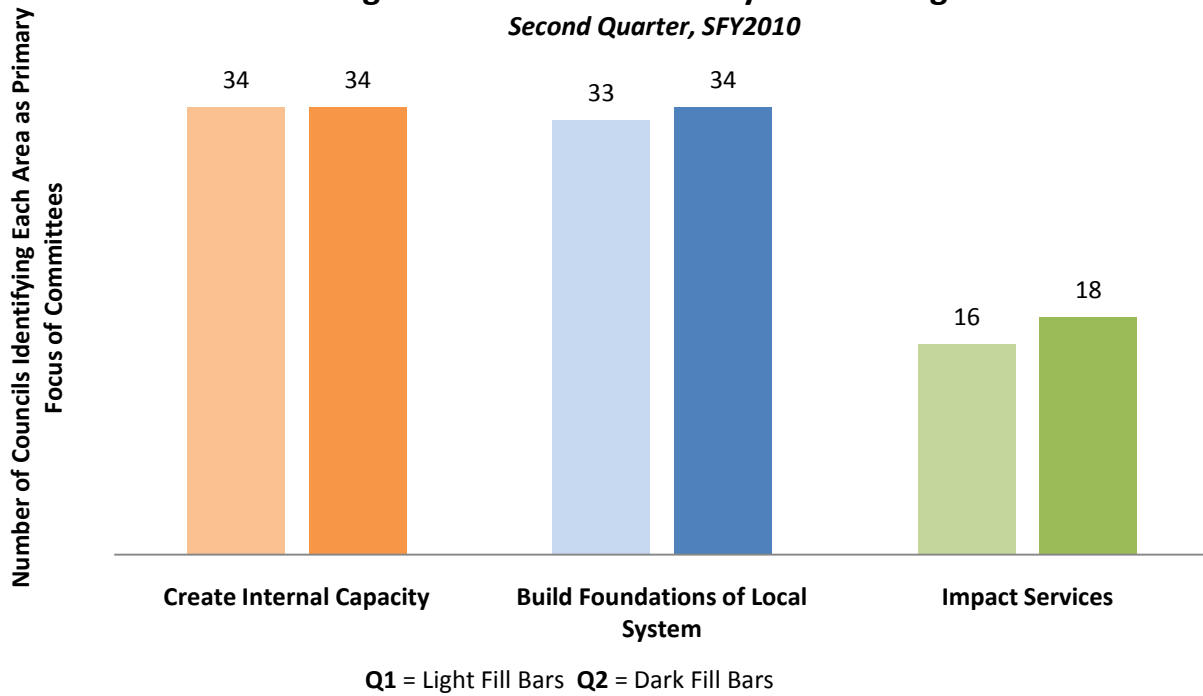
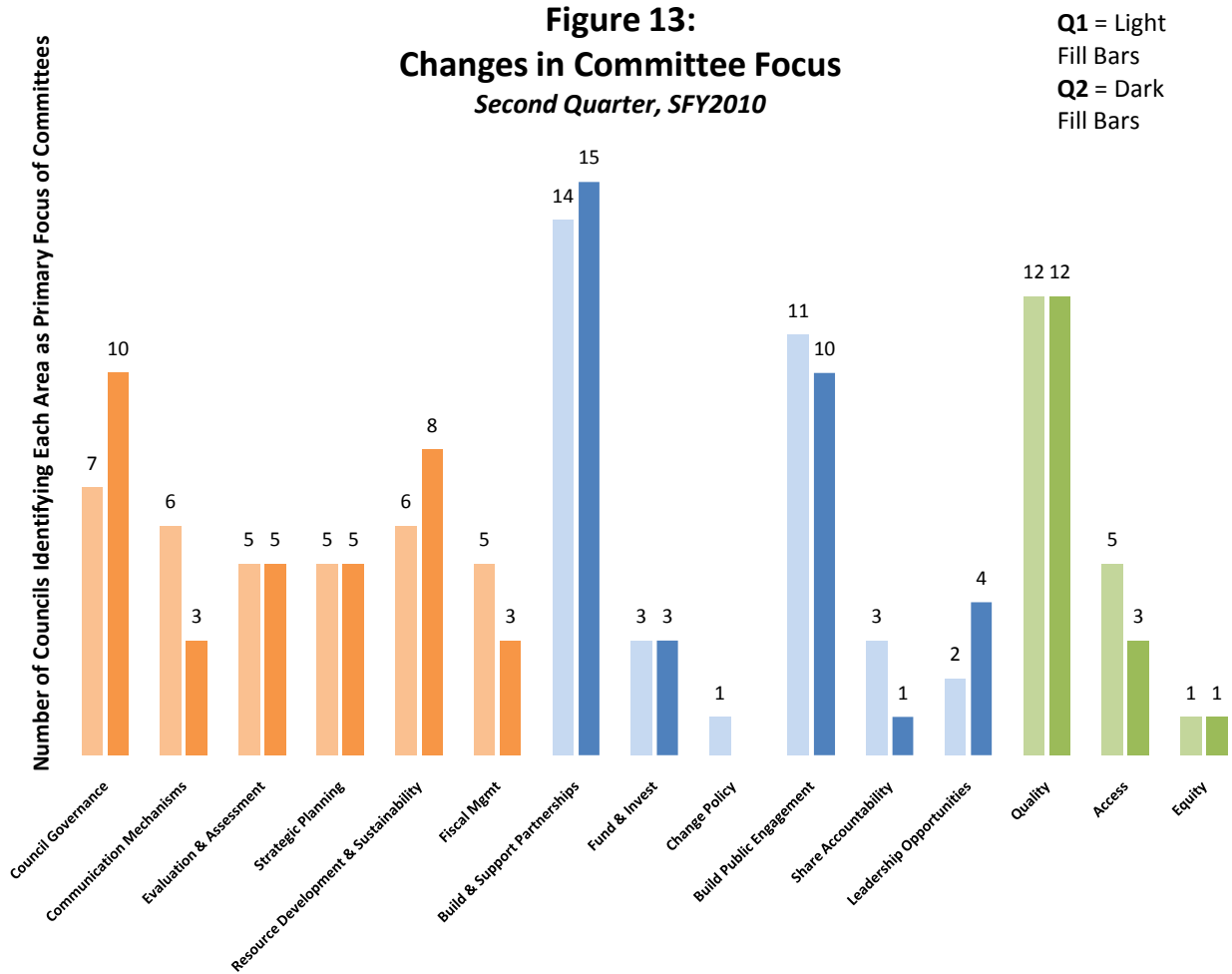


Figure 12:
Change in Committee Focus by Circle Categories
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Councils report quarterly on the top three issues their committees are charged with addressing. Each issue falls within one of the three general categories of Council roles, displayed here.



Councils report quarterly on the top three issues their committees are charged with addressing. The issues reflect the Council roles that fall within three more general categories of Creating Internal Capacity, Building the Foundations of a Local System, and Impacting Services.

Key Learnings from Evaluation and Assessment Data

Data collection systems vary significantly across Councils (Figure 14)

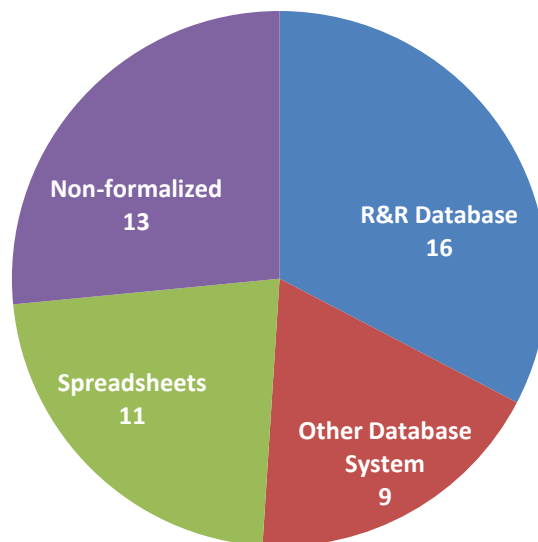
- Only 9 Councils have their own database system
- 11 rely on spreadsheets

Councils with higher funding levels are more likely to invest in higher-technology data collection systems (Figure 15)

- Only 28% of Councils with \$200,000 or less funding are using either spreadsheets or databases to collect data.

More Councils collect program and service provider outcomes than child or system outcomes (Figure 16)

Figure 14:
Data Collection Tools
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Numbers may total more than the 30 EC Councils Statewide since some Councils use more than one kind of tool for data collection.

Figure 15:
Use of Council Data Collection Tools
by Funding Level
Second Quarter, SFY2010

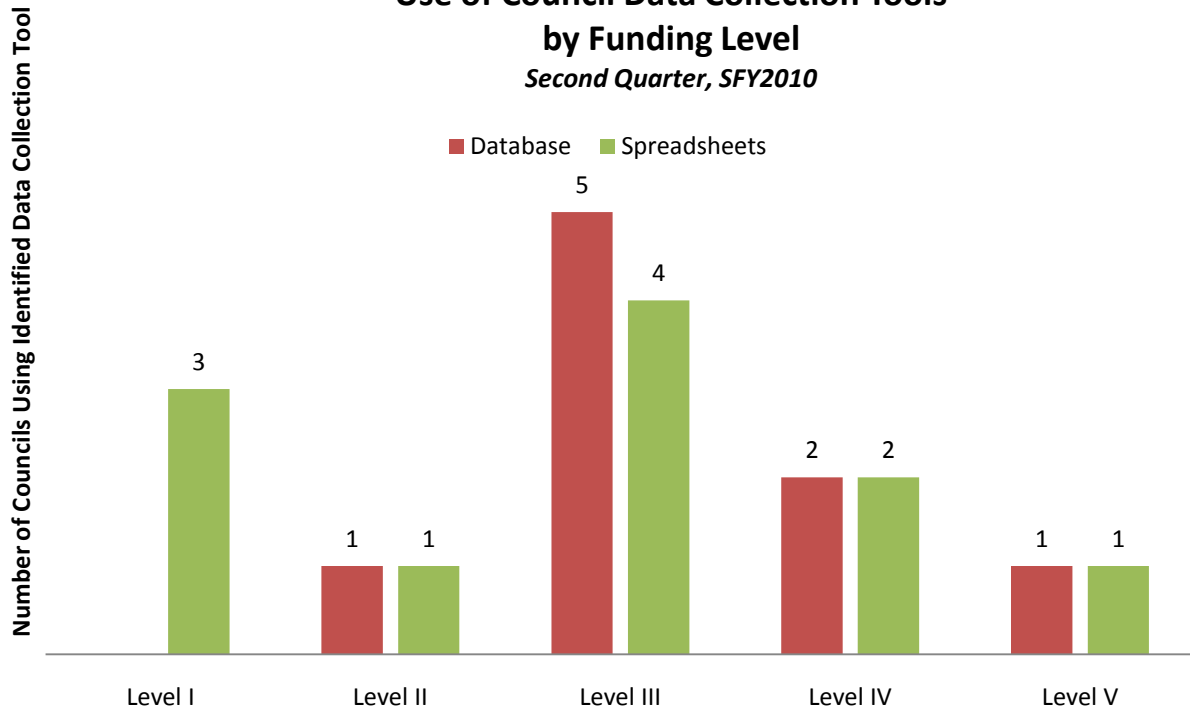
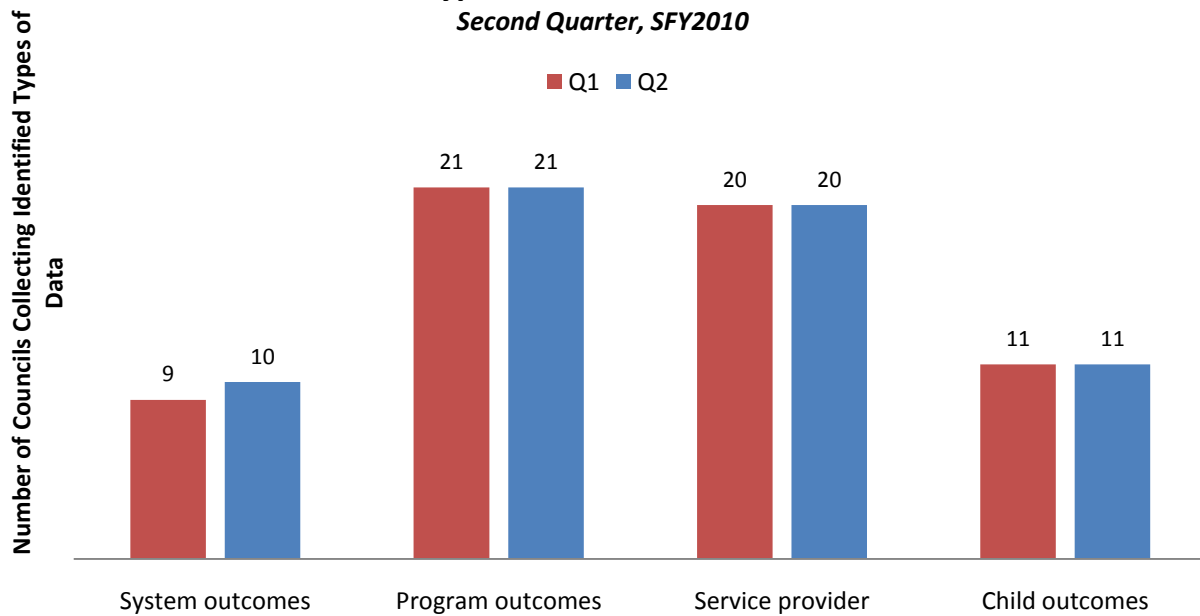


Figure 16:
Types of Data Collected
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Strategic Planning

Key Learnings from Strategic Planning Data

<p>All Councils have Strategic Plans and most have Community Assessments (Figure 17)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 20% of Councils have Resource Development Plans • The Strategic Plan is the only required planning document for Councils. Other plans, including Professional Development Plans, are optional. 	<p>During the second quarter, Councils had a total of 125 active priority areas they were working on (Figure 18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over half of all priorities were cross-domain strategies (Figure 19) 	<p>The most common priority strategies for Councils include (Figure 20):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacting the Quality of services for young children • Building Partnerships • Impacting families' Access to services for young children
---	---	---

Figure 17
Changes in Council Planning Documents
Second Quarter, SFY2010

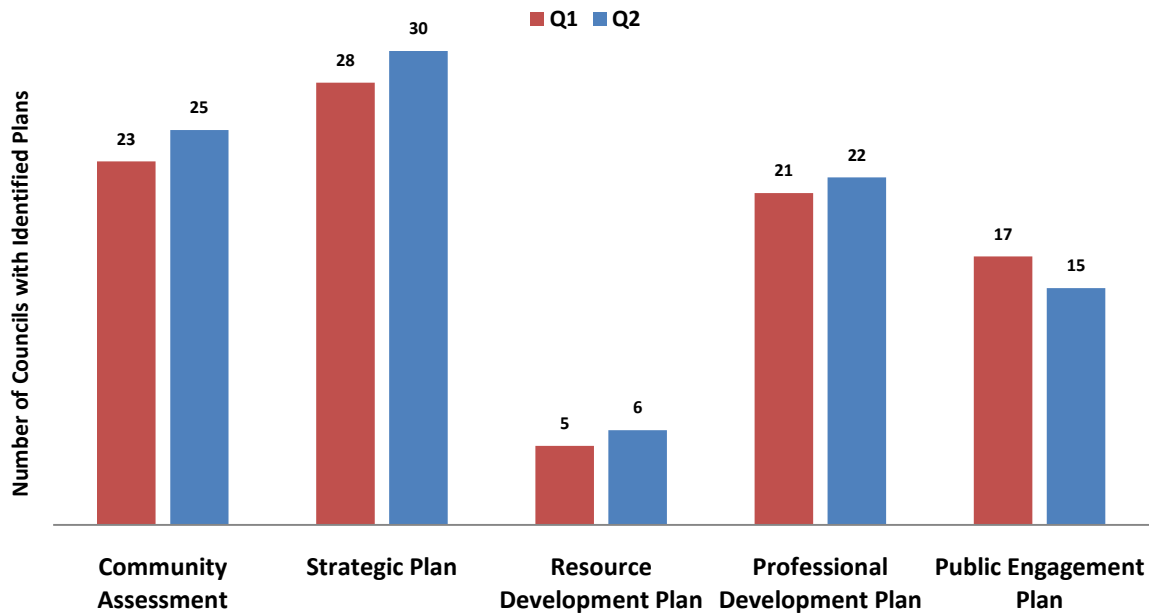


Figure 18:
Change in Status of Council Priorities
Second Quarter, SFY2010

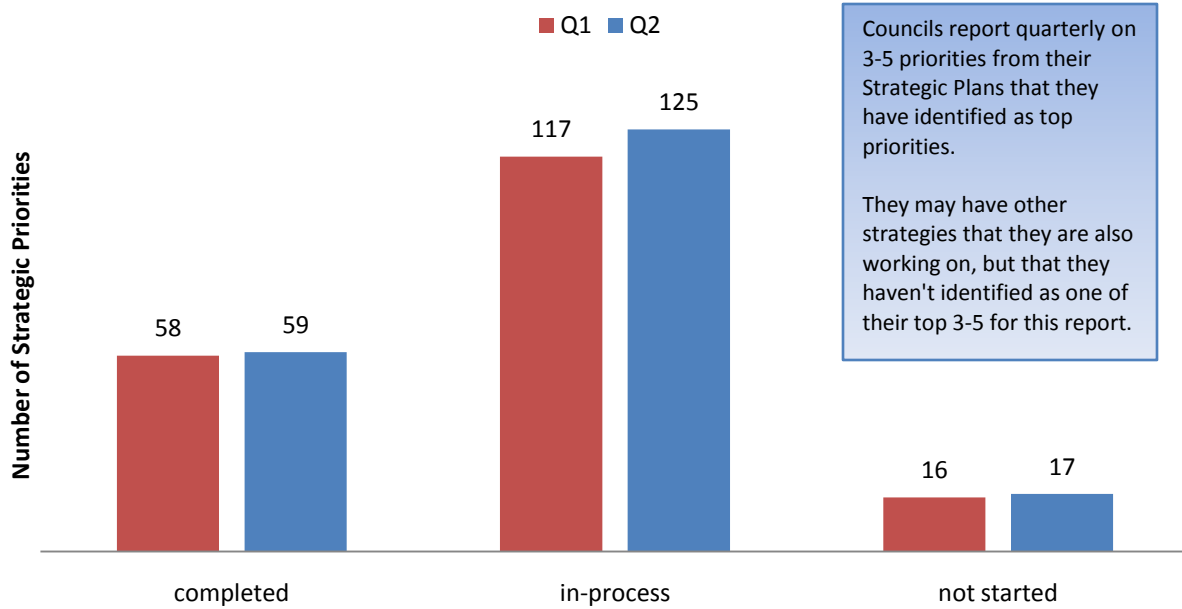


Figure 19:
Changes in In-Process Priorities by Domain
Second Quarter, SFY2010

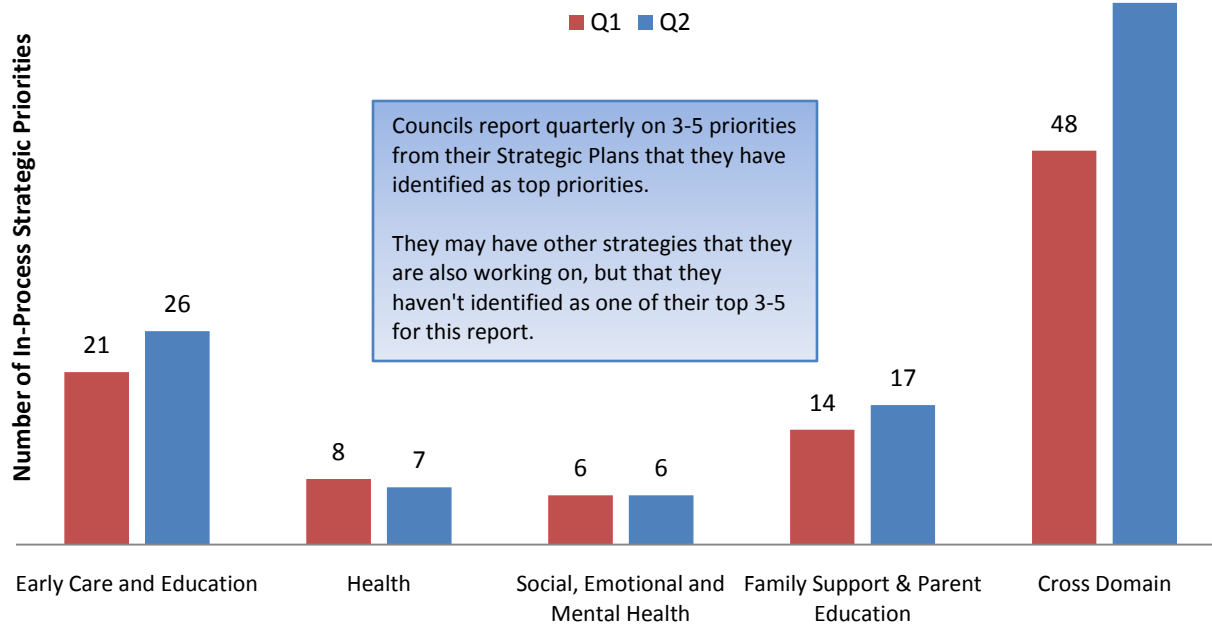
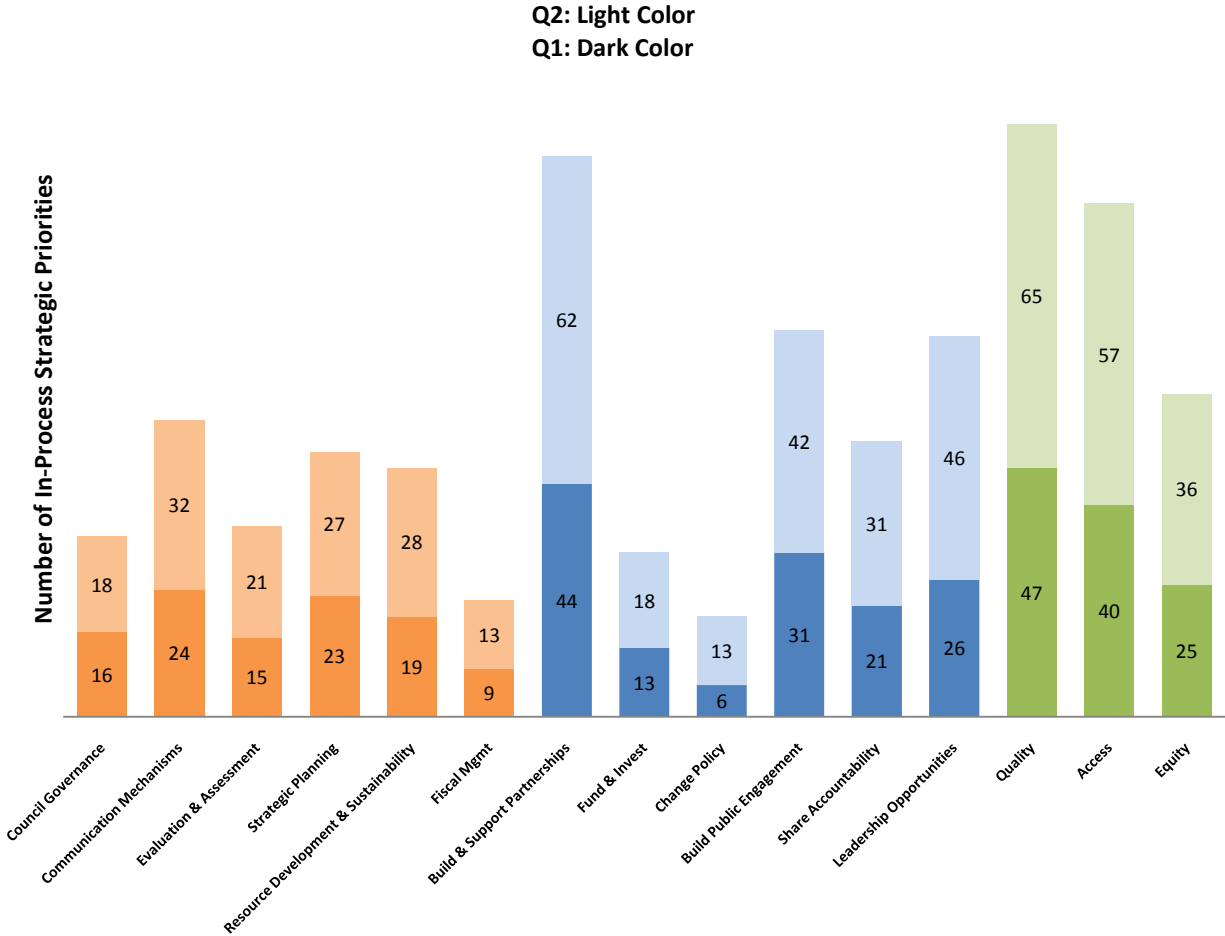


Figure 20:
Changes in In-Process Priorities by Council Roles
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Councils report quarterly on 3-5 priorities from their Strategic Plans that they have identified as top priorities. They may have other strategies that they are also working on, but that they haven't identified as one of their top 3-5 for this report.

Key Learnings from Resource Development and Fiscal Management Data

Nearly two-thirds of Councils receive \$200,000 or less in State Grant funding (Figure 21)

- State grant funds this year include general systems grants, EQ Initiative funding, School Readiness grants and one-year only American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Council longevity and geography are both reflected in Council funding levels (Figures 22-23)

- All but one Council funded at the lowest levels entered the work in 2007
- Most High Plains, Mountain and Rural Resort Councils are funded at \$200,000 or below this fiscal year.

Most funding going into Councils in Colorado originates at the Federal level and is distributed by the State (Figures 24-25)

- Councils use state grant funds to leverage foundation and local funding

Only one Council changed its fiscal agency structure during the second quarter (Figure 26)

- Council's choices of fiscal agents does not appear to be impacted by geographic location (Figure 27)

Figure 21:
EC Council Funding Levels
Second Quarter, SFY2010

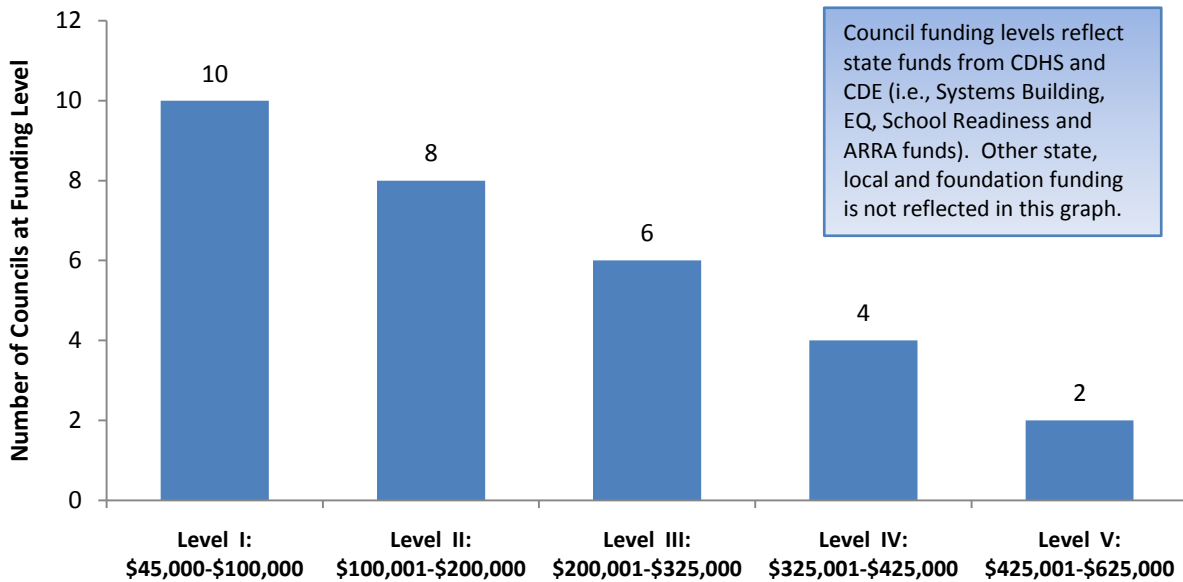


Figure 22:
Funding Based on Year of Council Establishment
Second Quarter, SFY2010

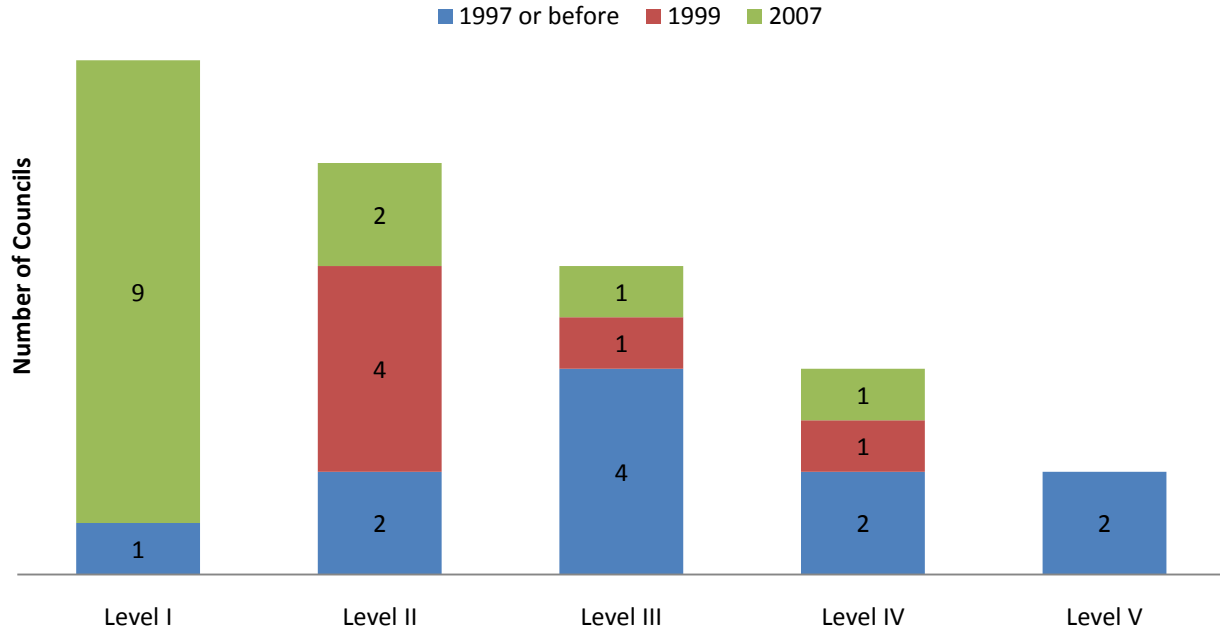
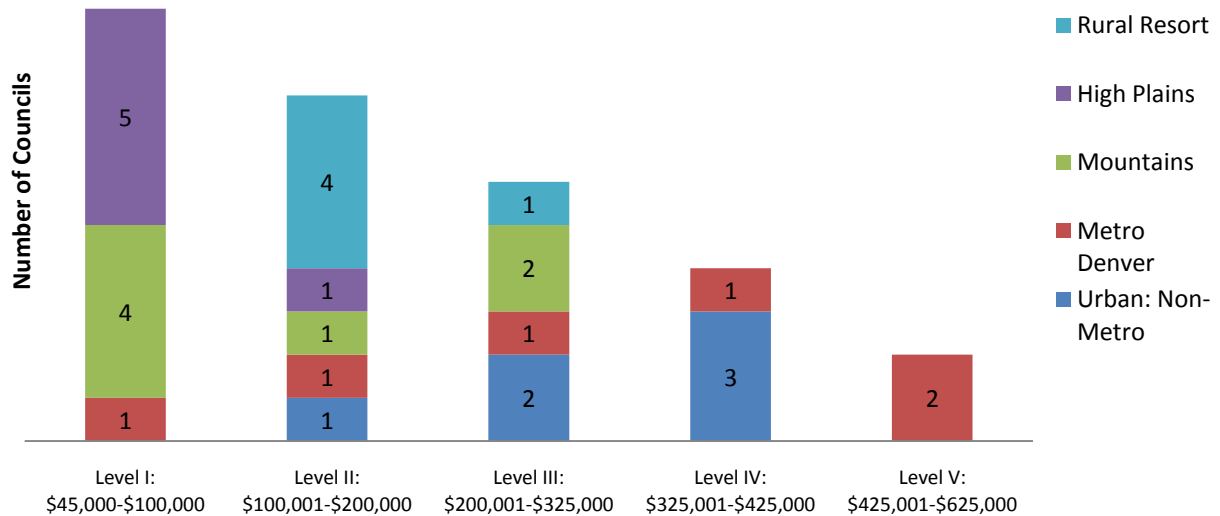


Figure 23:
Funding Levels by Geographic Category
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Funding levels reflect only State government grant sources. These include Systems-building, Expanding Quality for Infants & Toddlers, School Readiness Quality Improvement Program and American Recovery & Reinvestment Act grants. Many Councils also leverage funds from local and foundation sources that are not reflected in this chart.

Figure 24:
Changes in Origination of Funding for EC Councils
Second Quarter, SFY 2010

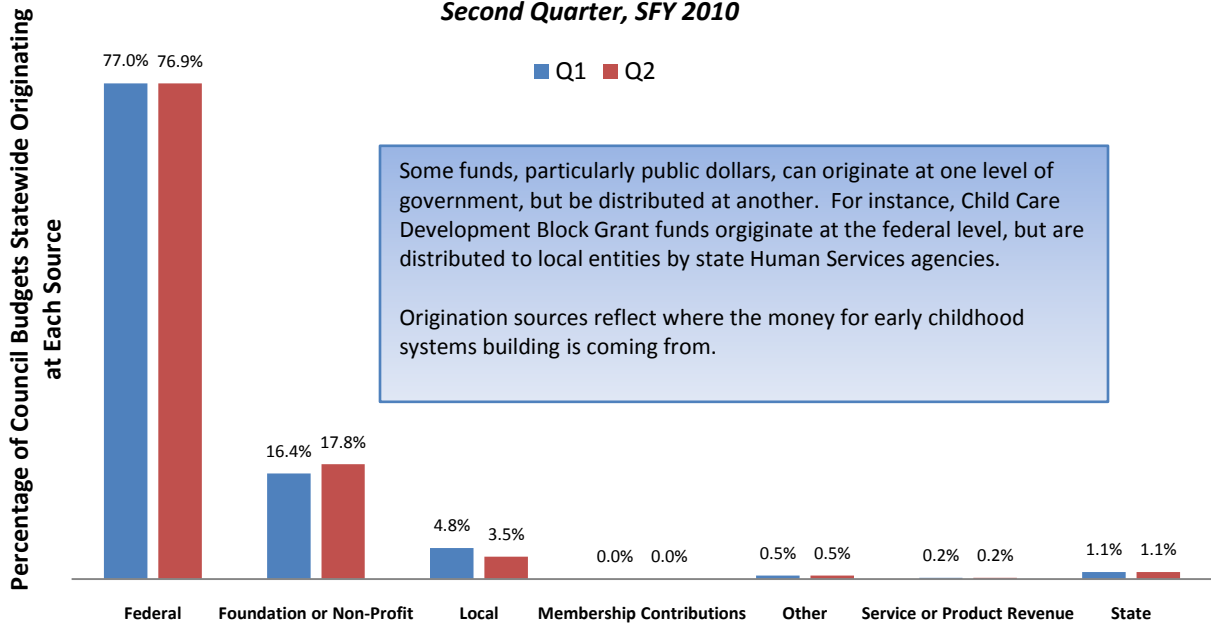
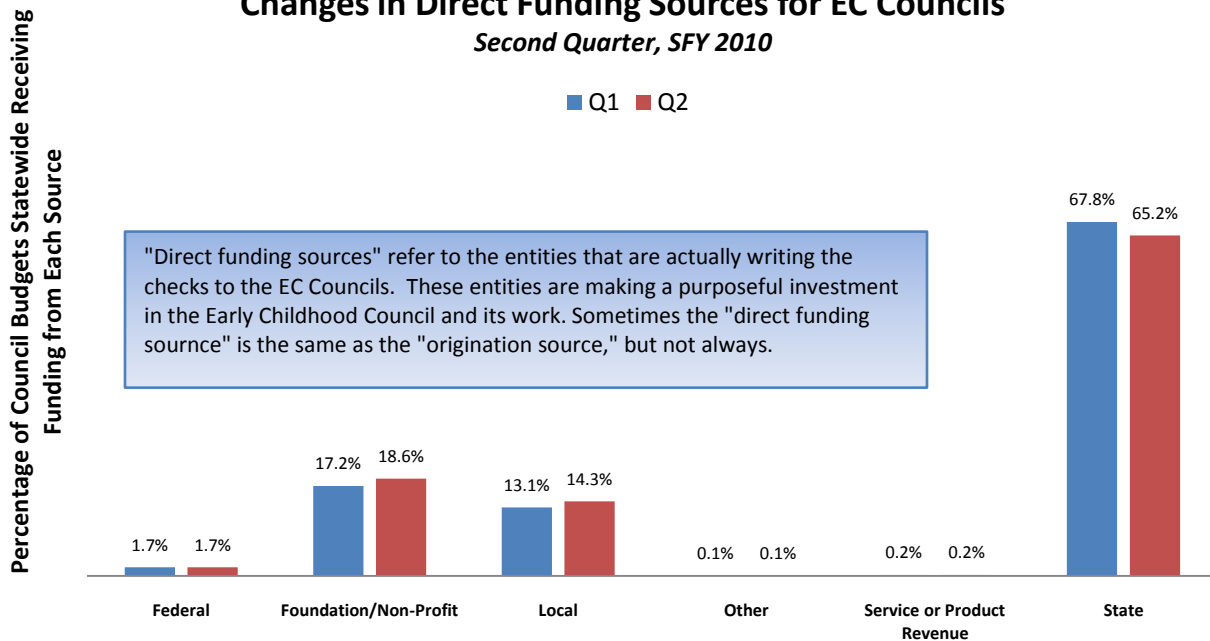


Figure 25:
Changes in Direct Funding Sources for EC Councils
Second Quarter, SFY 2010



Fiscal Management

Figure 26:
Changes in Fiscal Agency Arrangements
Second Quarter, SFY2010

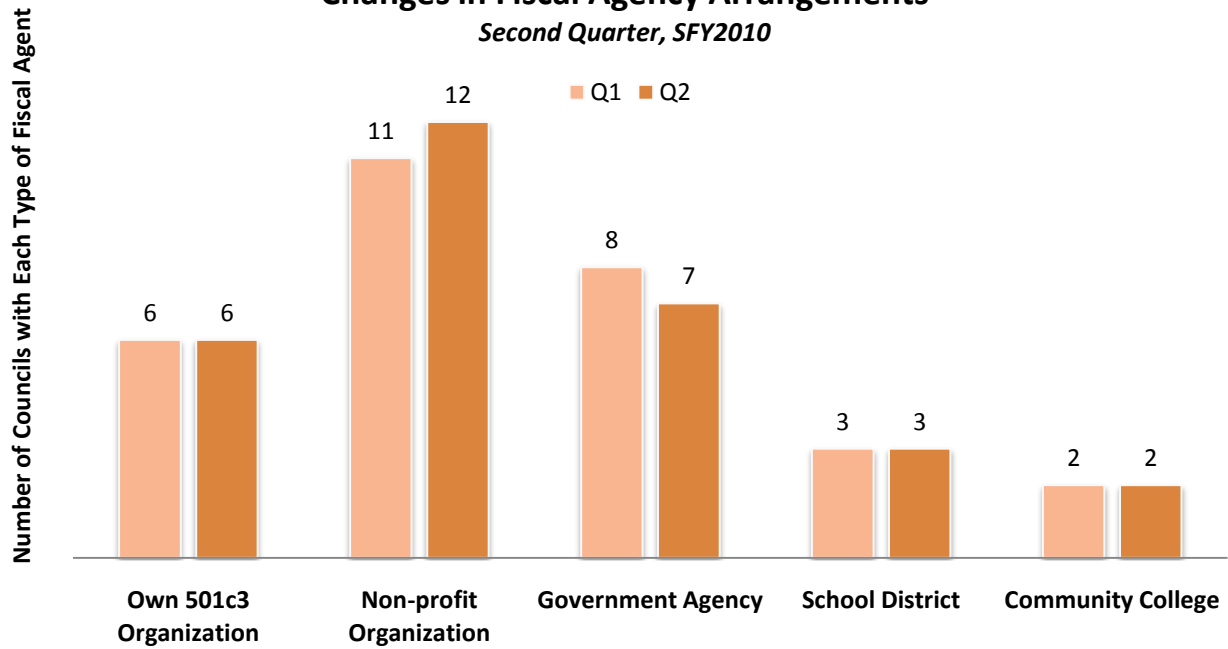
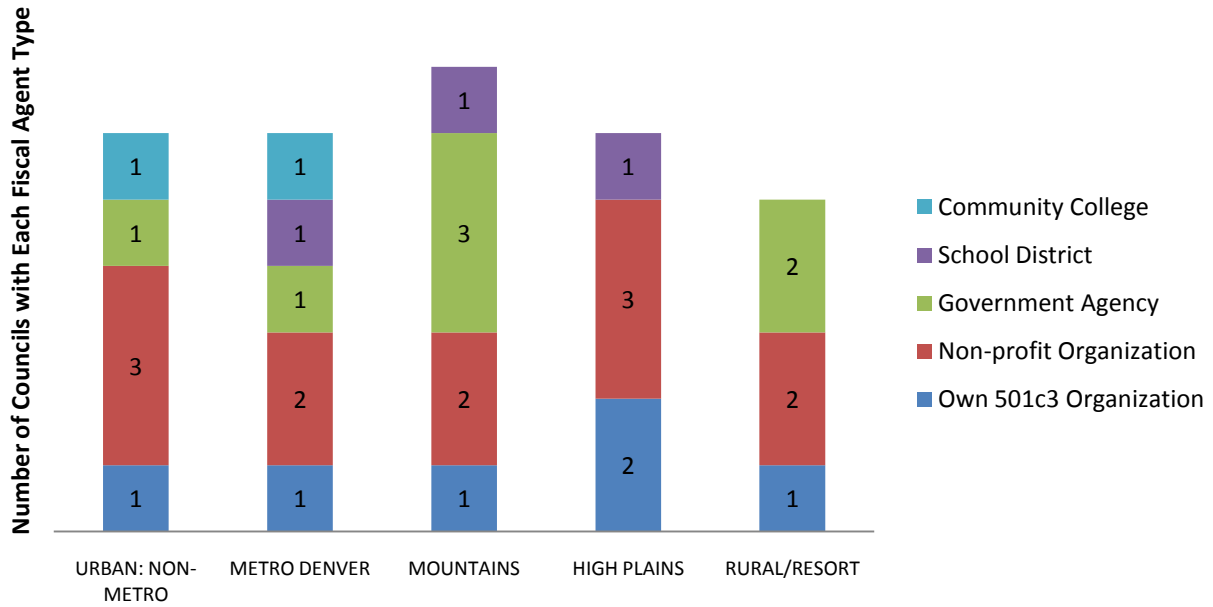


Figure 27:
Fiscal Agent Type by Geographic Location
Second Quarter, SFY2010



Building Foundations of a Local System

Key Learnings for Building Foundations of a Local System

Councils reported on five questions that together tell us what is currently most important to Council work. These questions looked at (Table 1):

- Top governance issues for Council Committees
- Areas of recognition or knowledge
- Areas of high Technical Assistance requests
- Top systems-building functions
- The focus of strategic priorities

Building and Supporting Partnerships is the core activity for building a local early childhood system

- This Council role consistently rose to the top as an area in which Councils focused their efforts in the second quarter, followed by building public engagement and generating leadership opportunities

Most Councils are not currently doing as much work on:

- Funding and Investing,
- Changing Policy, or
- Sharing Accountability

Table 1: Key Indicators of Building a Local System of Early Childhood Services

Indicator	Build & Support Partnerships	Fund & Invest	Change Policy	Build Public Engagement	Share Accountability	Generate Leadership Opportunities
# of Council Indicating This Role as a Top Governance Issue for Committees	15	3	0	10	1	4
# of Councils Identifying This Role as an Area of Recognition or Knowledge	10	3	2	8	1	7
# of Councils Requesting TA around this Role	11	2	7	8	4	6
# of Councils Identifying this Role as a Top Systems Building Issue	16	2	0	4	2	1
% of In-Process Priorities with this Role as a Focus ¹	50%	14%	10%	34%	25%	37%

¹ Percentages across roles may add to more than 100% since many priorities have more than one role focus.

Figure 28:
Changes in Top Systems Building Tasks
Second Quarter, SFY2010

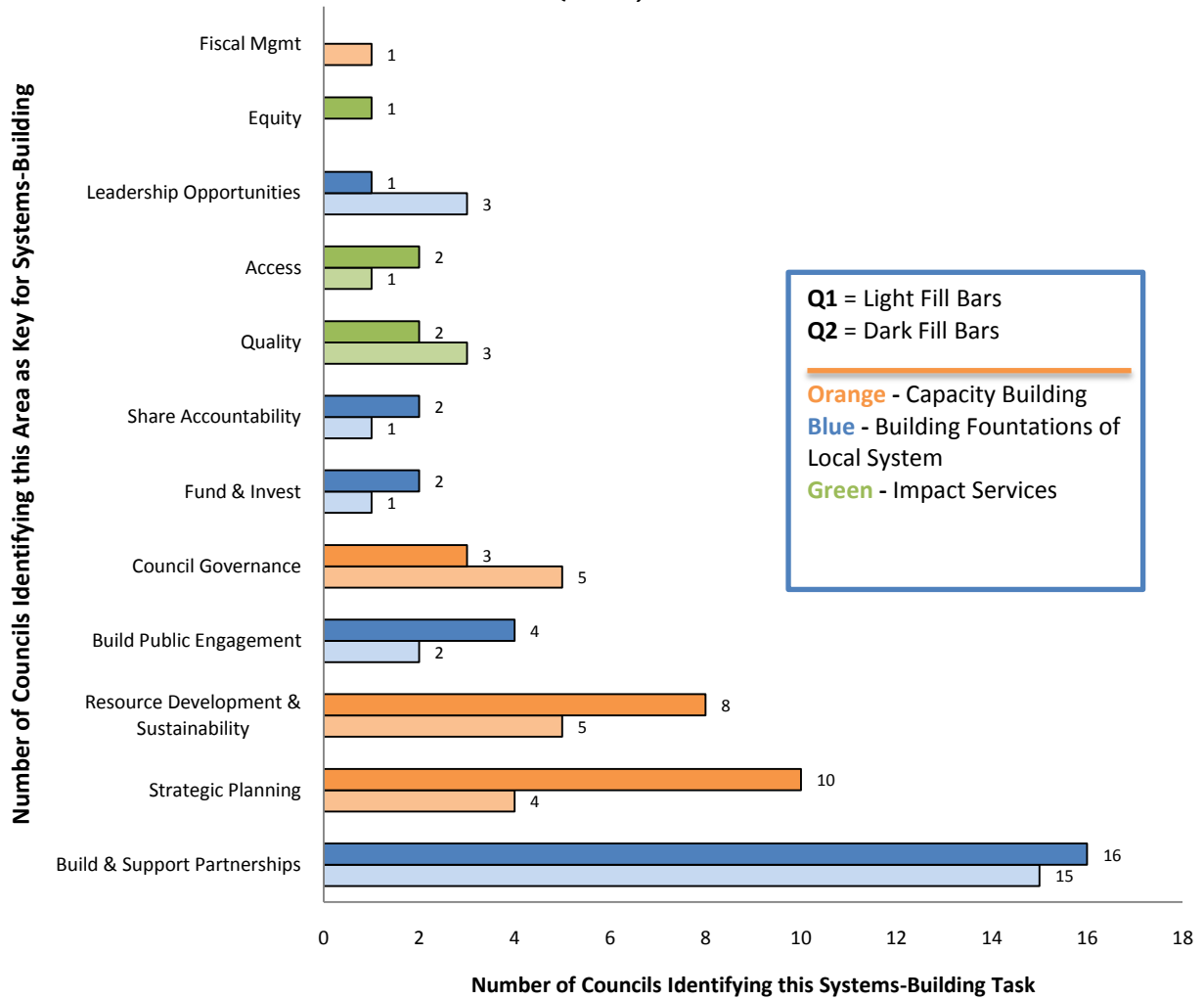
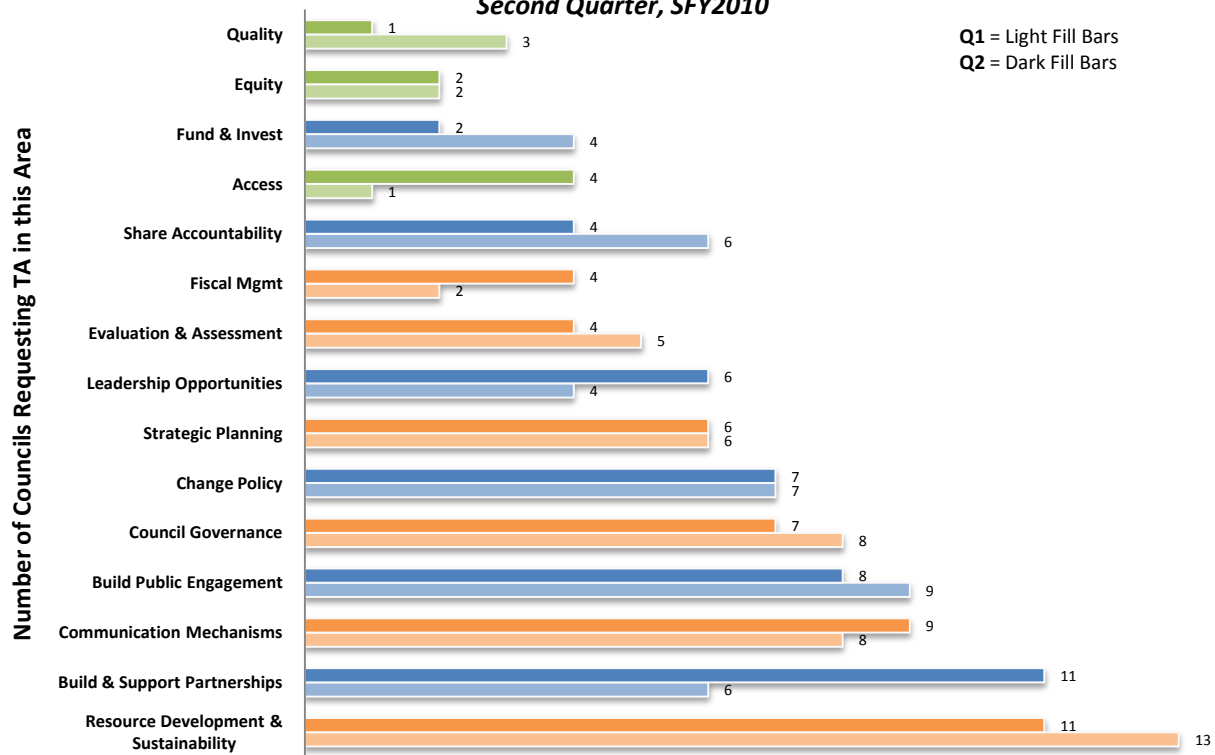


Figure 29:
Changes in TA Needs
Second Quarter, SFY2010



More Learnings from Systems Building Indicators

Most Councils do not currently take positions on bills, rules and policies (Figures 30-31)

- Councils focus more on establishing partnerships and forming cross-system alignments*

The most common cross-system alignments are coordinating trainings or programs/services across agencies (Figure 32)

The most common leadership-generating activities for Council members and staff were (Figure 33):

- Joining a committee of a partner organization; and
- Educating elected officials

Councils with smaller state grants were more likely to report the occurrence of leadership-generating activities (Figure 34):

- This probably reflects an earlier organizational development phase that requires a strong emphasis on leadership development

* Cross-system alignments are defined as: “the coordination of similar or possibly duplicative activities that were previously taking place within separate organizations that have now been coordinated or aligned between two or more organizations within the early childhood support system.”

Figure 30:
Changes in Indicators of Building System Foundations
Second Quarter, SFY2010

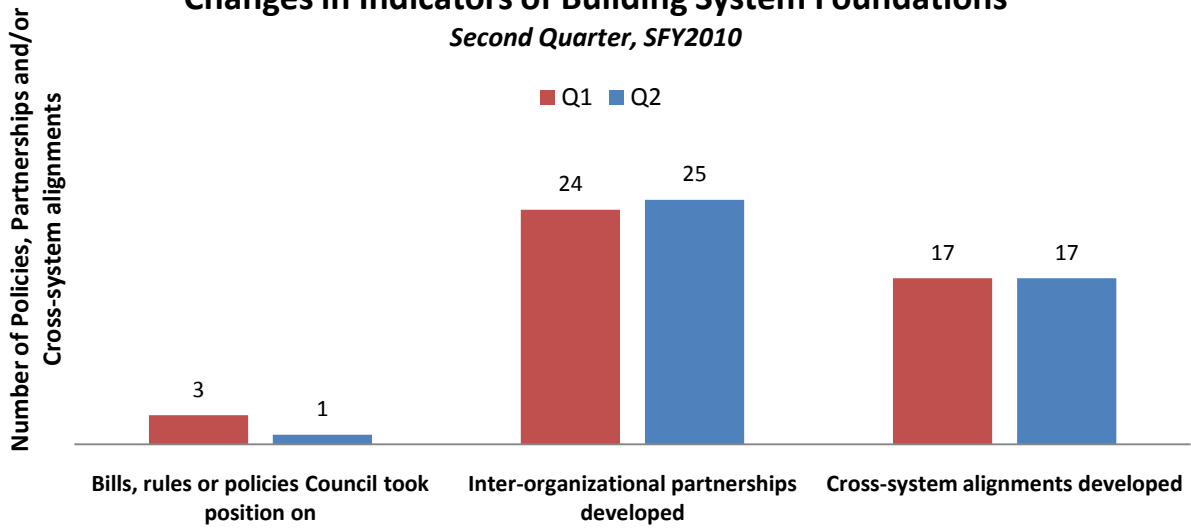
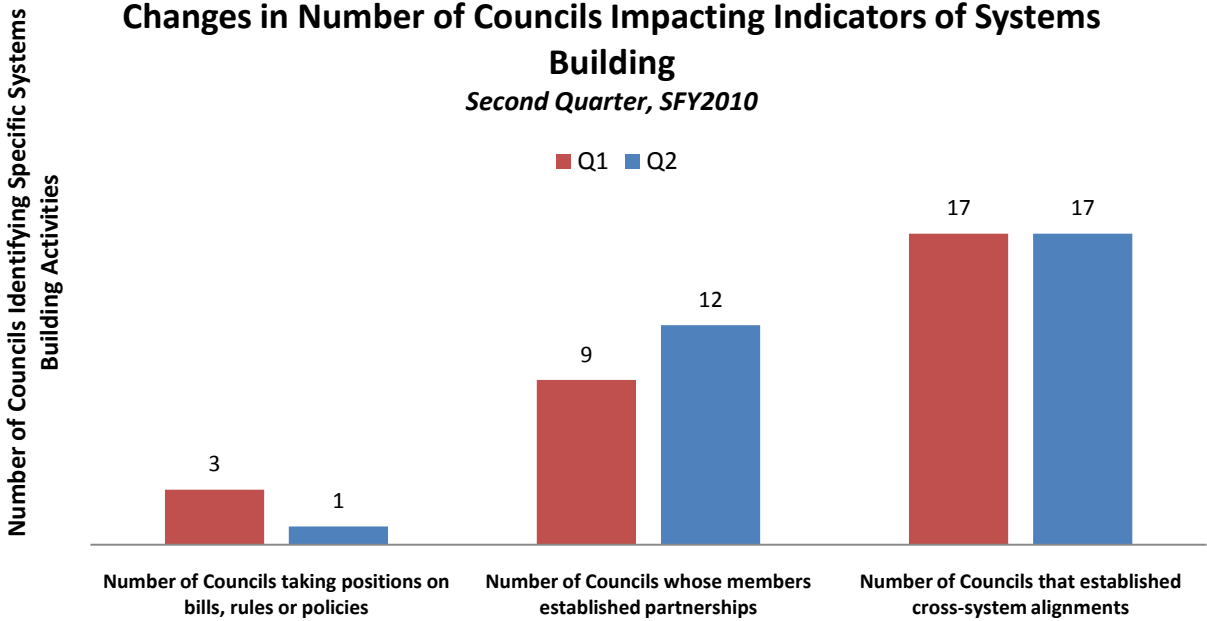


Figure 31:
Changes in Number of Councils Impacting Indicators of Systems Building
Second Quarter, SFY2010



The indicators of systems building collected through the Quarterly Reporting tool and reflected on this page and elsewhere in this report are based on research conducted by Julia Coffman for The Build Foundation in 2007.

Figure 32:
Changes in Cross-System Alignments
Second Quarter, SFY2010

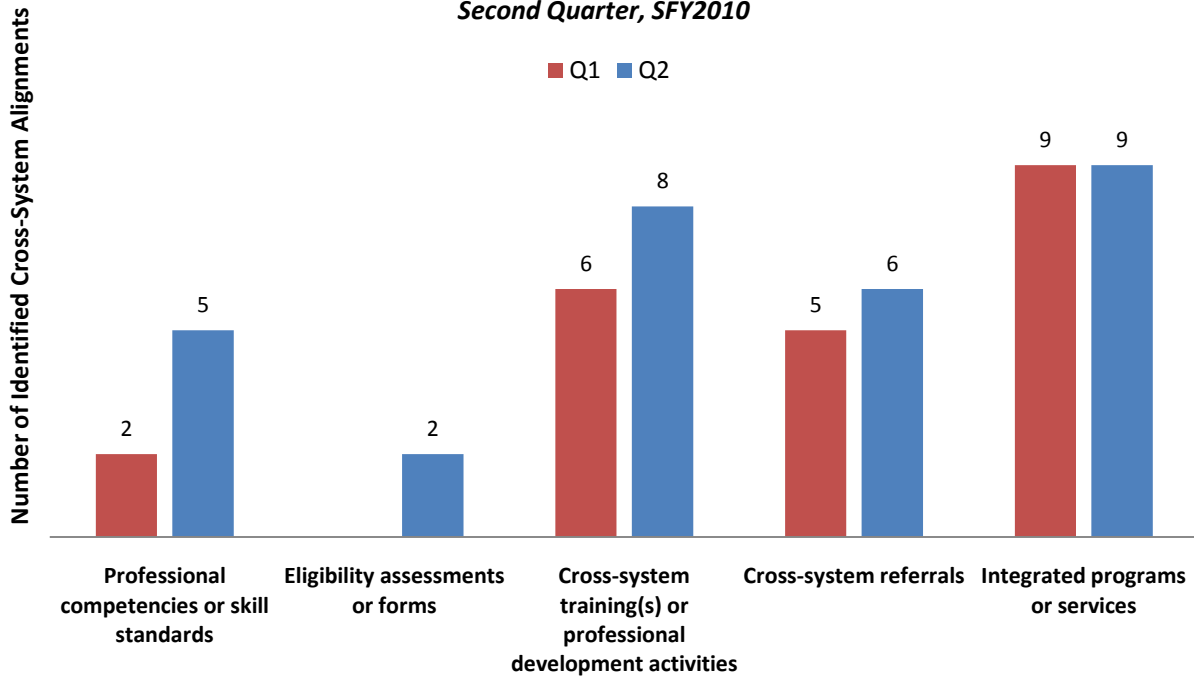


Figure 33:
Changes in Leadership Activities
Second Quarter, SFY2010

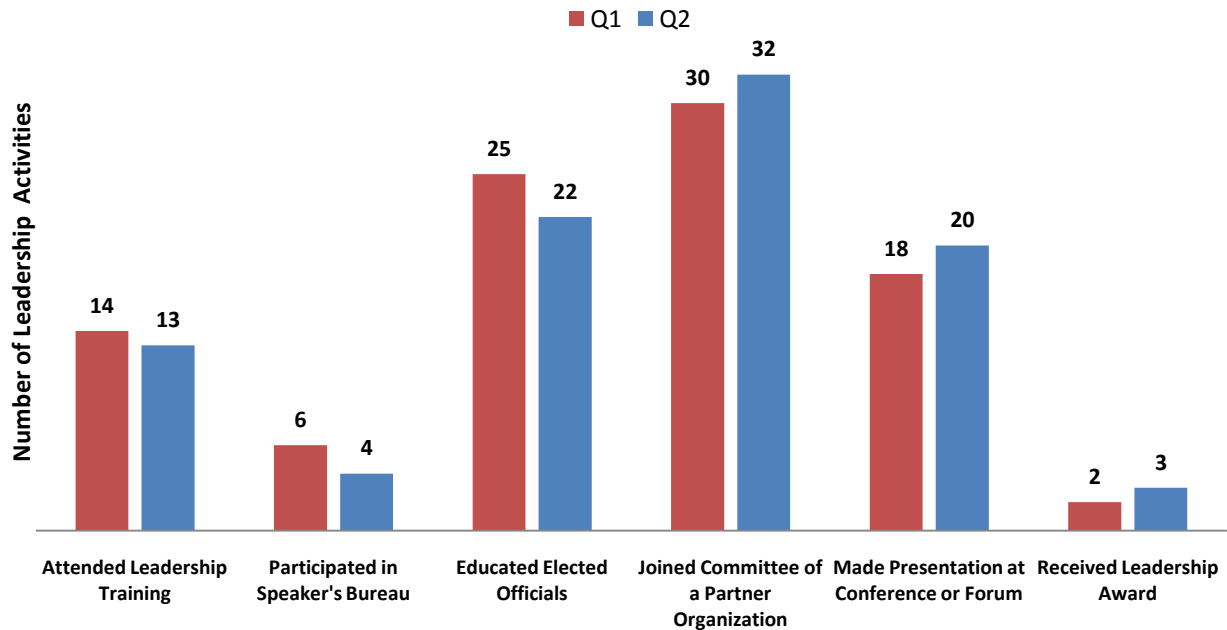


Figure 34:
Leadership-Generating Activities by Funding Level
Second Quarter, SFY2010

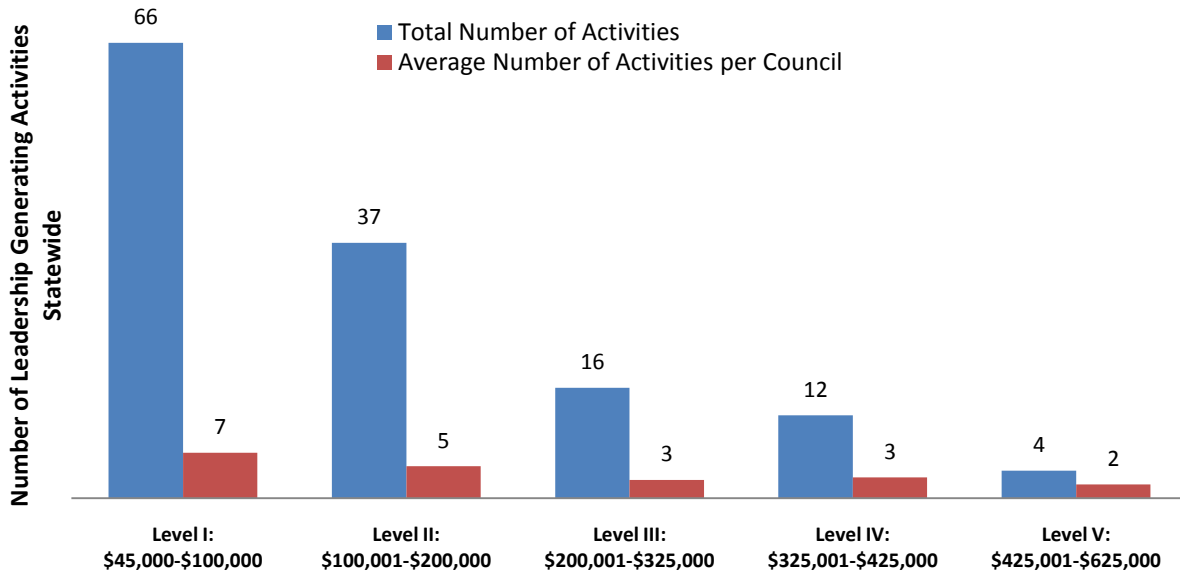
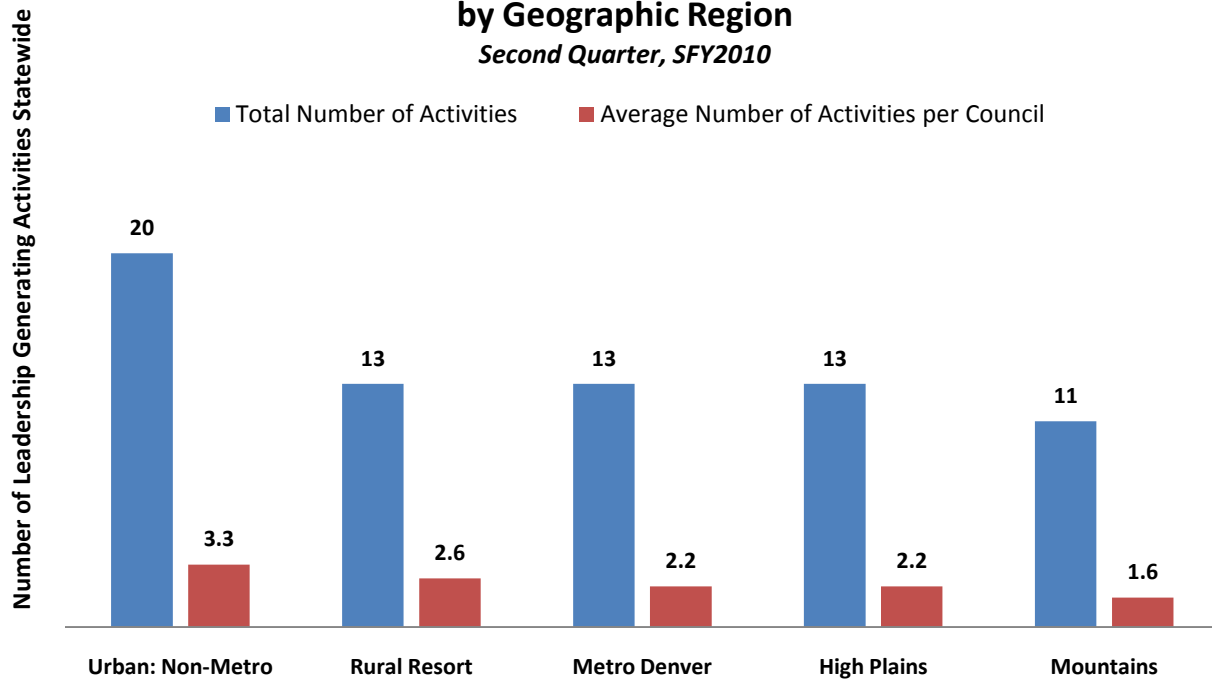


Figure 35:
Engagement in Leadership-Generating Activities
by Geographic Region
Second Quarter, SFY2010



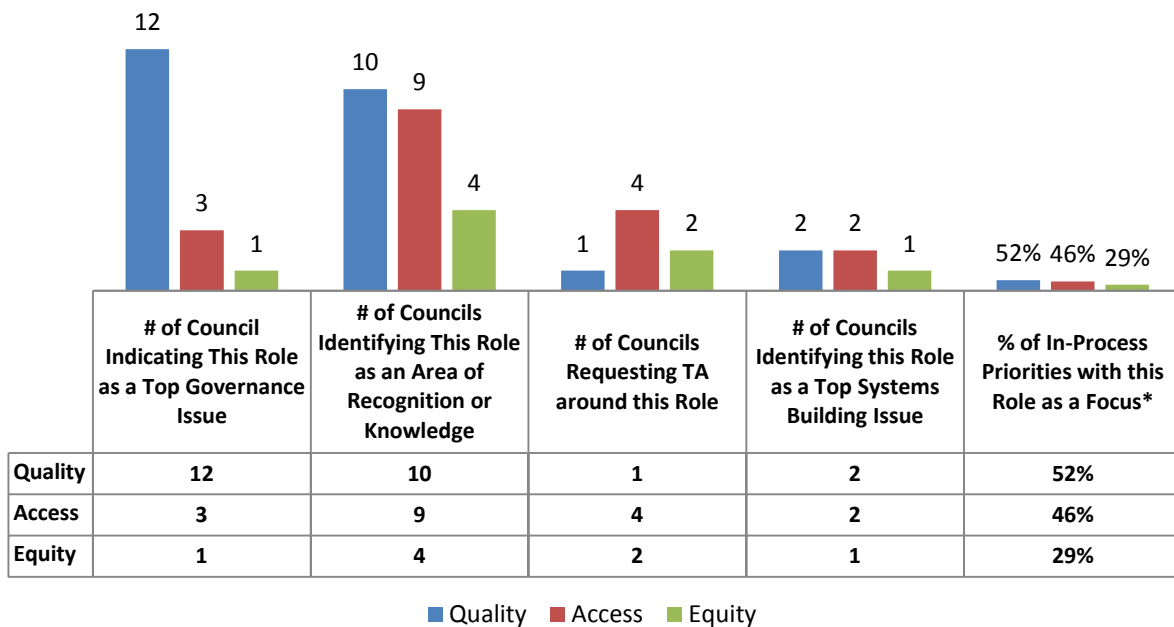
Impact Services

Key Learnings around Impacting Services

Quality is the top focus for Councils working to impact services (Figure 36)

- Over half of all Council priorities statewide have some quality component
- Access shows up in almost half of Council priorities, but it not typically a focus of Council committees
- Equity strategies are reflected in less than a third of Council strategies and are not typically cited by Councils in other indicators of work focus.

Figure 36:
Comparison of Indicators
Councils' Service Impact Roles
Second Quarter, SFY2010



* Percentages across roles may add to more than 100% since many priorities have more than one role focus.

Key Learnings for School Readiness

The coaching and mentoring emphasis from first quarter became less of a focus during the second quarter (Figure SR1):

- Resource strategies rose as coaching and mentoring dropped
- Coaching and mentoring strategies were still perceived by Councils as the most effective strategy type in both quarters (Figure SR2)

During the second quarter, Councils directed more focus in all strategy areas toward facilities with higher star ratings (Figures SR4-SR6)

There was a small shift in the barriers to implementing School Readiness strategies (Figures SR7):

- Defining roles became less of a barrier; and
- Spreading resources too thin became more of a barrier

Figure SR1:
Changes in School Readiness Funding Allocations, by Strategy Type
Second Quarter, SFY2010

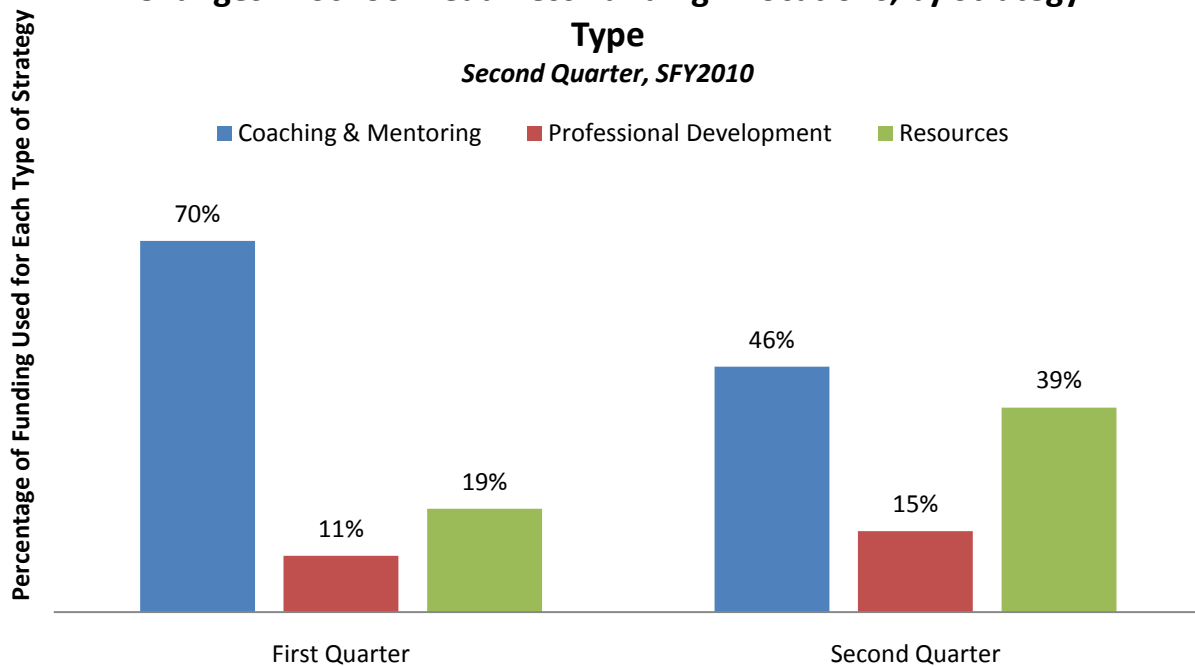


Figure SR2:
Changes in Most Effective Strategies to Promote Facility Improvements
Second Quarter, SFY2010

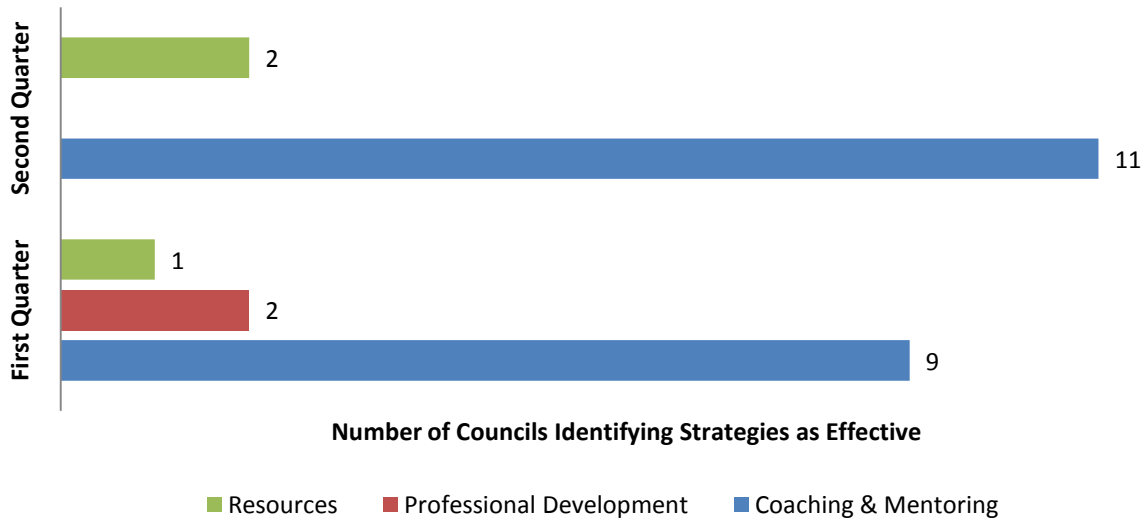


Figure SR3:
School Readiness Strategies by Star Rating
Second Quarter, SFY 2010

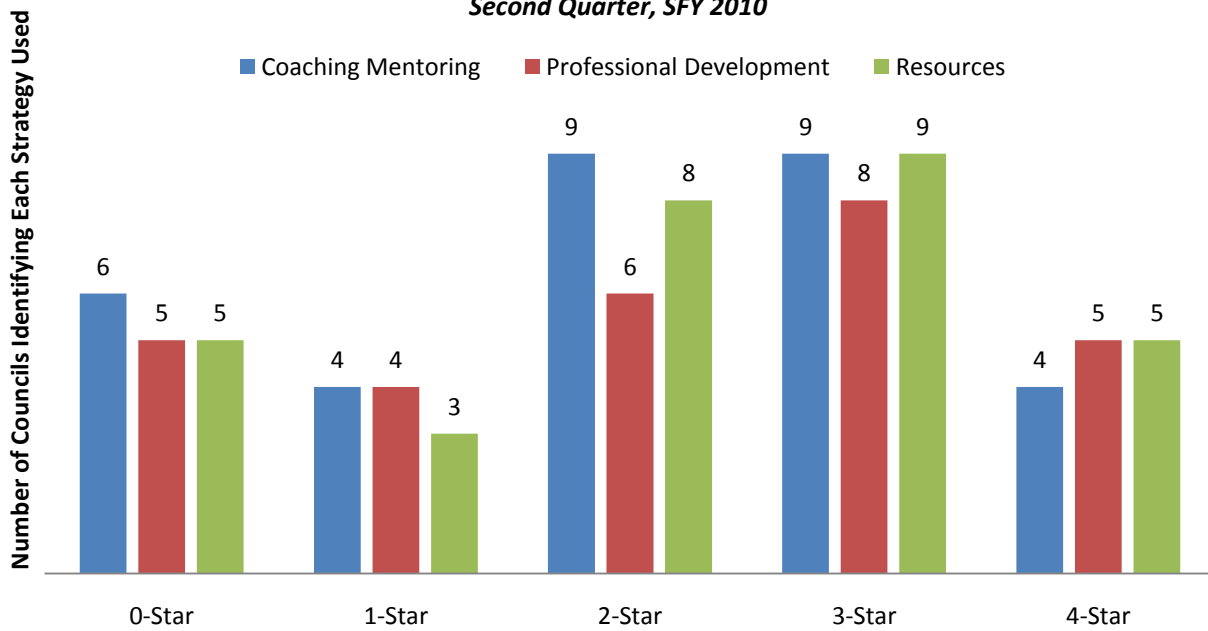


Figure SR4:
Changes in Use Of Coaching & Mentoring Strategy, by Star
Rating
Second Quarter, SFY2010

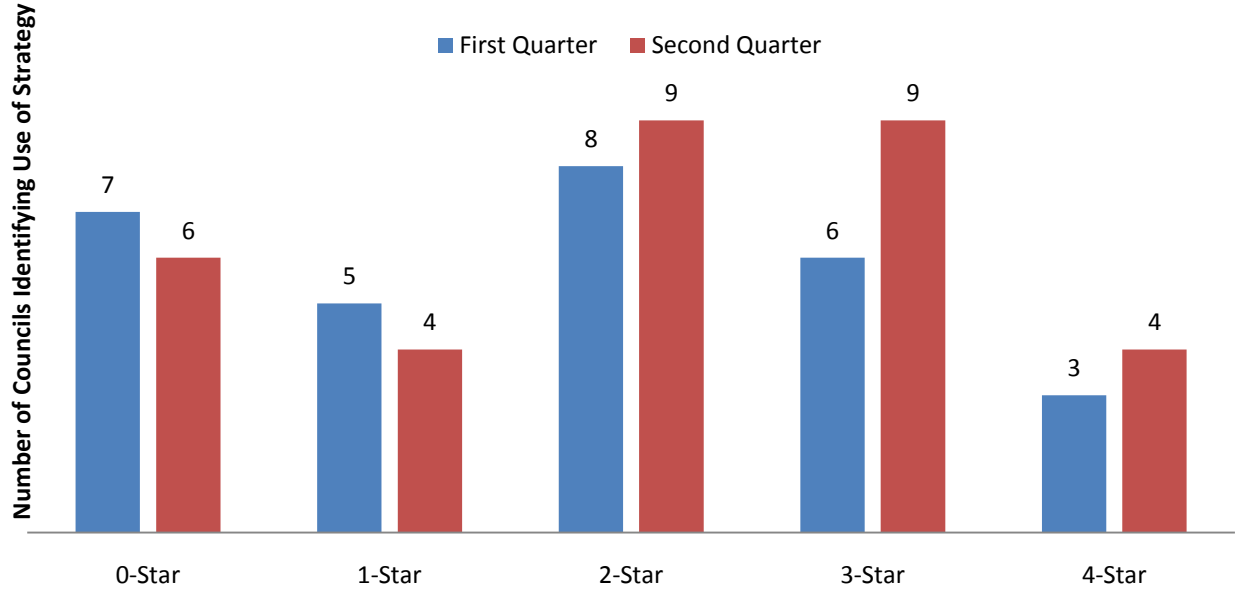


Figure SR5:
Changes in Use Of Professional Development Strategy, by Star
Rating
Second Quarter, SFY2010

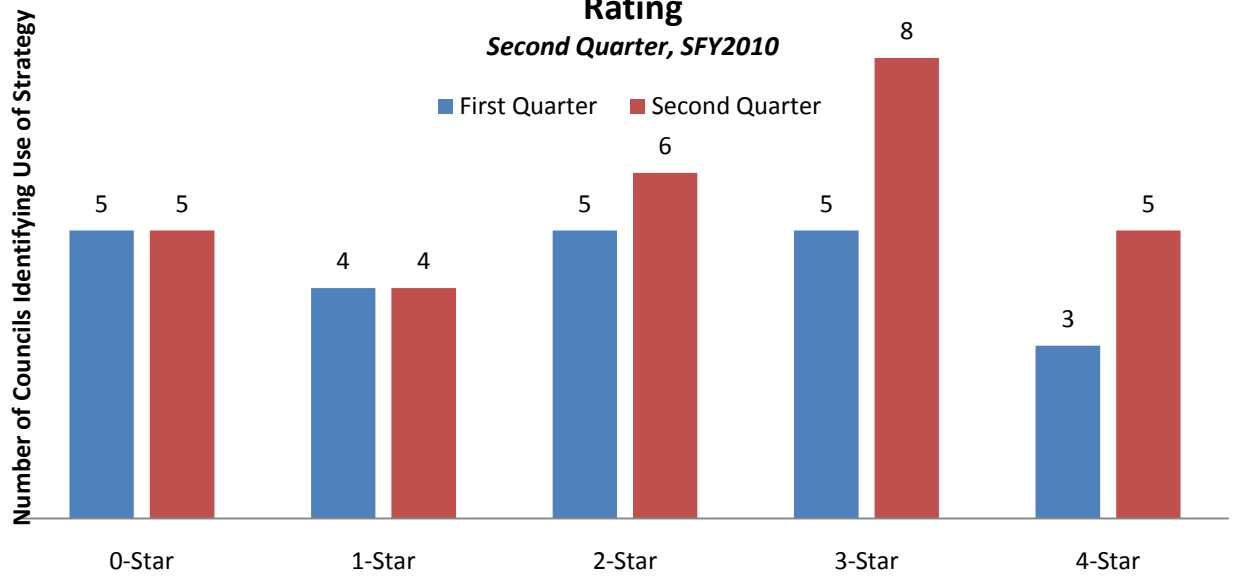


Figure SR6:
Changes in Use Of Resource Strategy, by Star Rating
Second Quarter, SFY2010

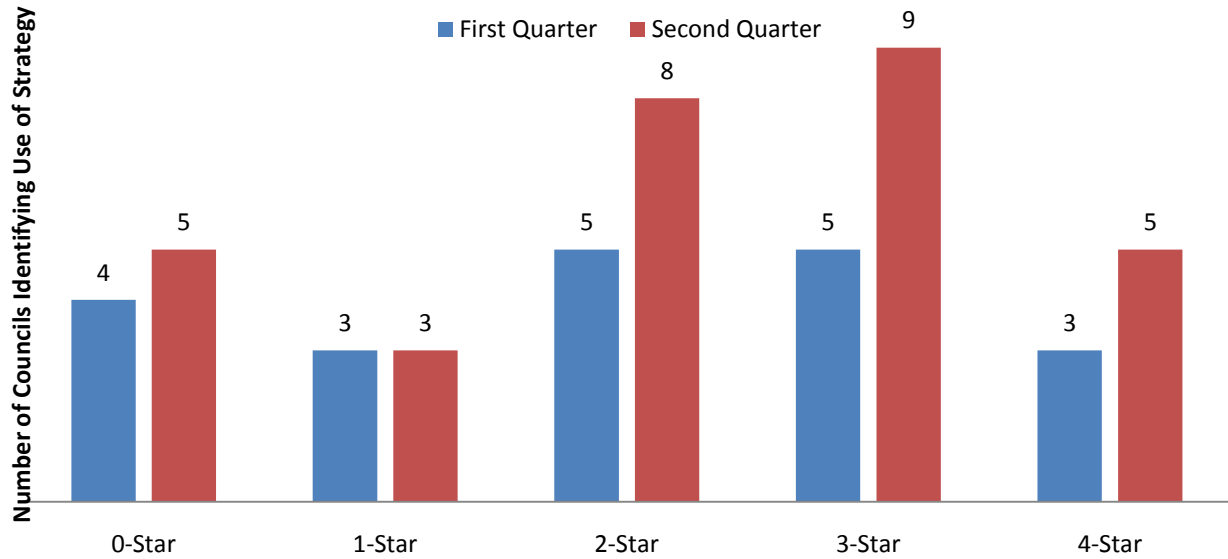


Figure SR7:
Changes in Barriers to Implementing School Readiness Strategies
Second Quarter, SFY2010

