



# SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Participant Demographic Summary

Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan:  
A Dynamic Plan by and for Nebraskans

# The Vision of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan is ...

*...to provide all Nebraska children and their families with access to quality early childhood services that support children's healthy development from birth through age 8.*

The goal of **SPEAQ** Up! Nebraska meetings was to support **S**trategic **P**lanning for **E**quitable **A**ccess to **Q**uality early care and education for **ALL** Nebraskans.

# SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Priority: Include More Diverse Voices

In the 2022 SPEAQ Up! Nebraska process, we prioritized raising family voices and reaching people in more diverse communities across the state—including rural areas, people of color, families of children with disabilities, and more.

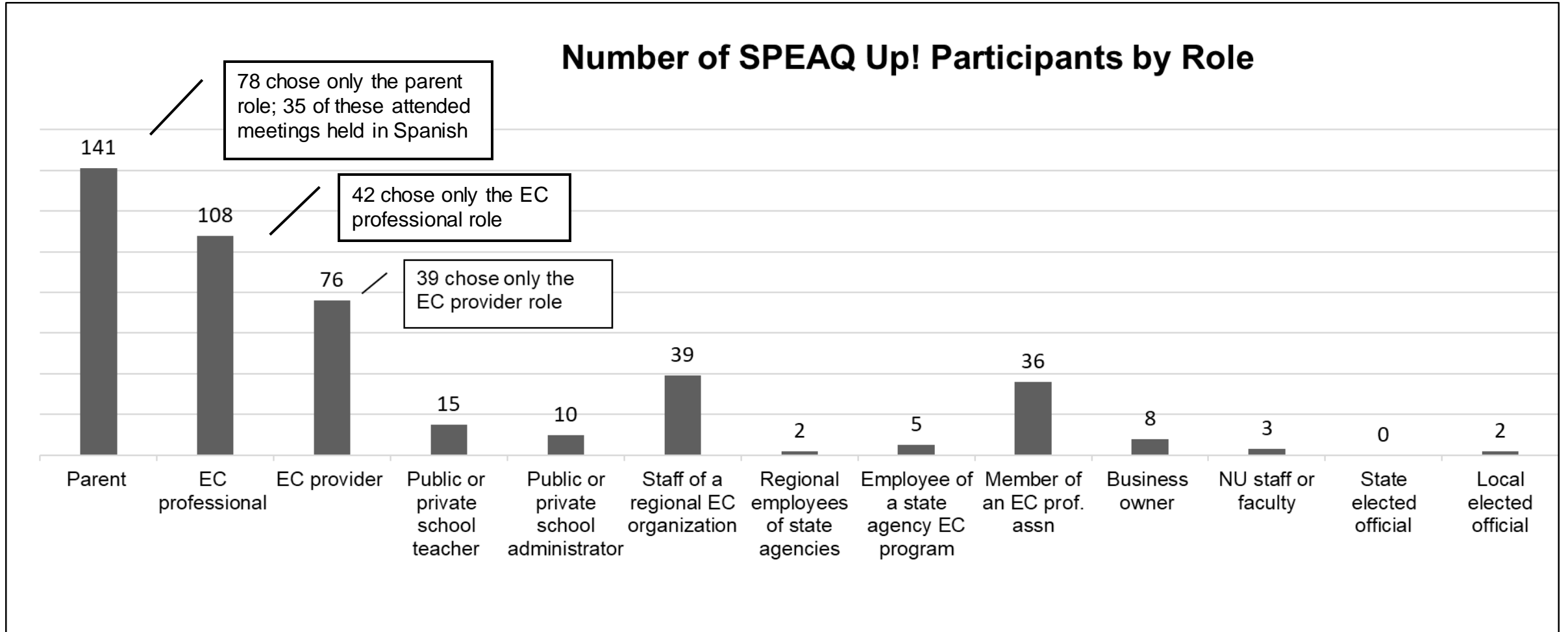
We extended the time frame for the meetings to ensure that we could include the perspectives and priorities from these communities in the 2023 Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan.

We are grateful for the amazing work of the 22 facilitators who hosted 56 meetings that reached parents, families, early childhood professionals and providers, and other early childhood collaborators across the state.



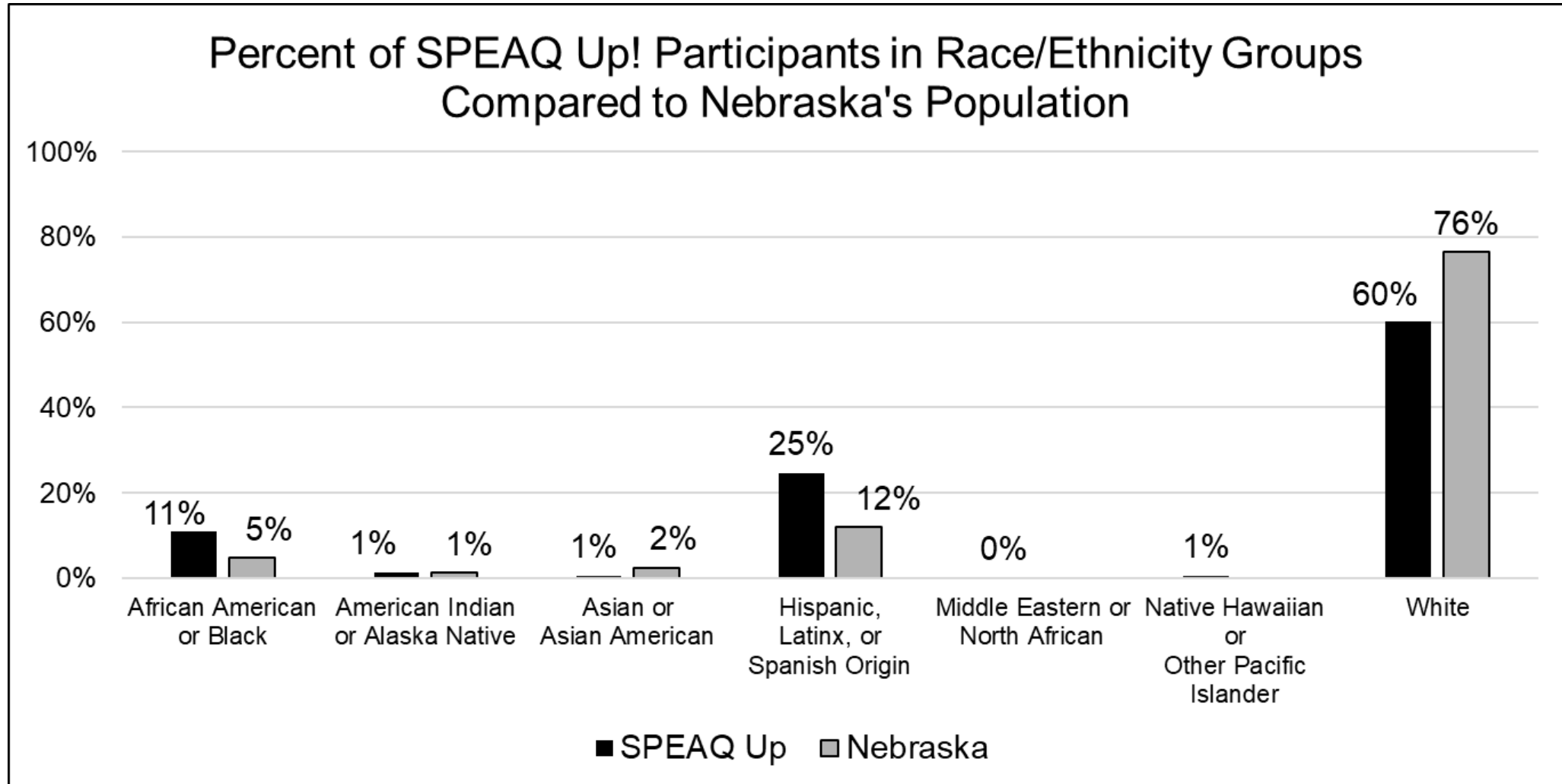
# Who Participated in SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Meetings?

# The largest group of people represented in SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings were parents.



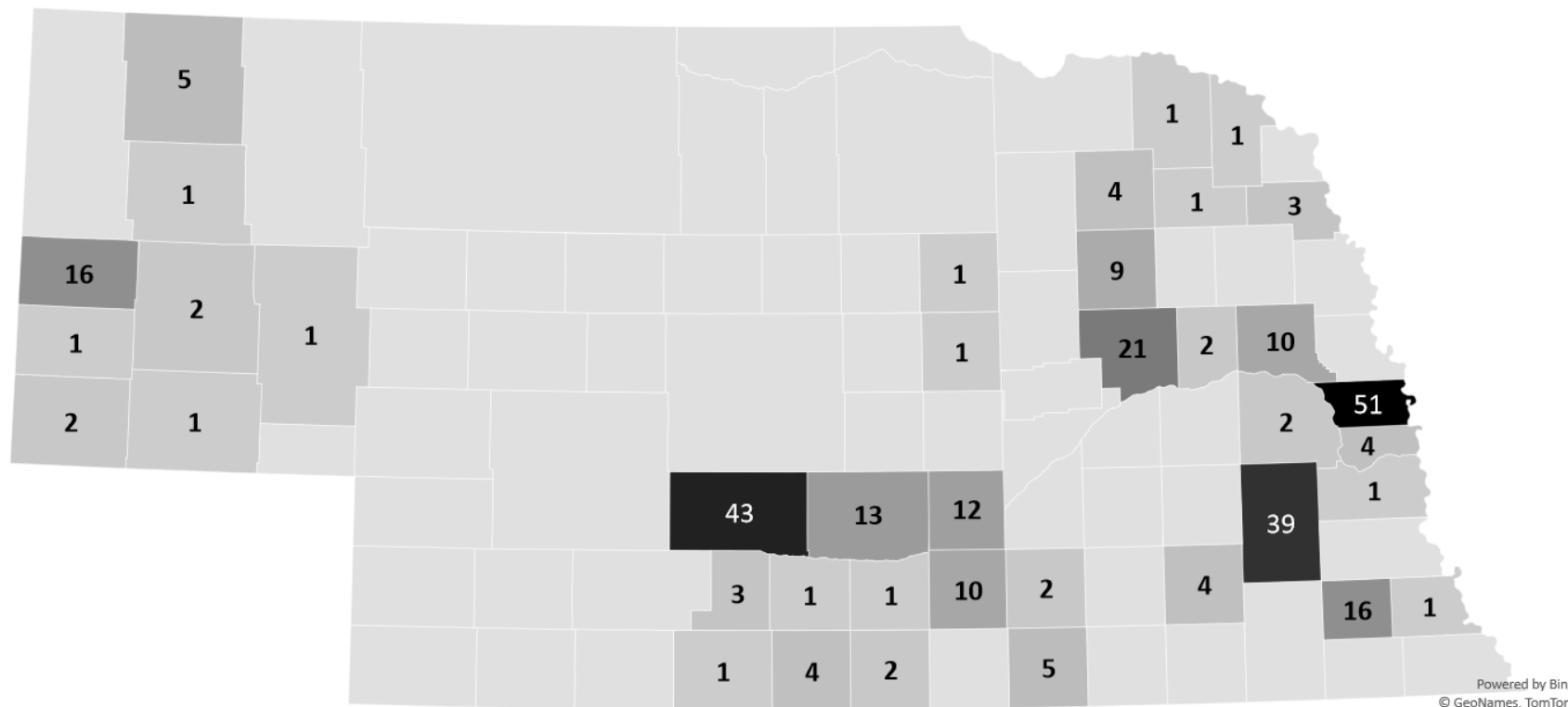
Participants could identify with more than one role; 78 people identified only as a *parent*.

# People of color were overrepresented at SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings compared to the state's population.



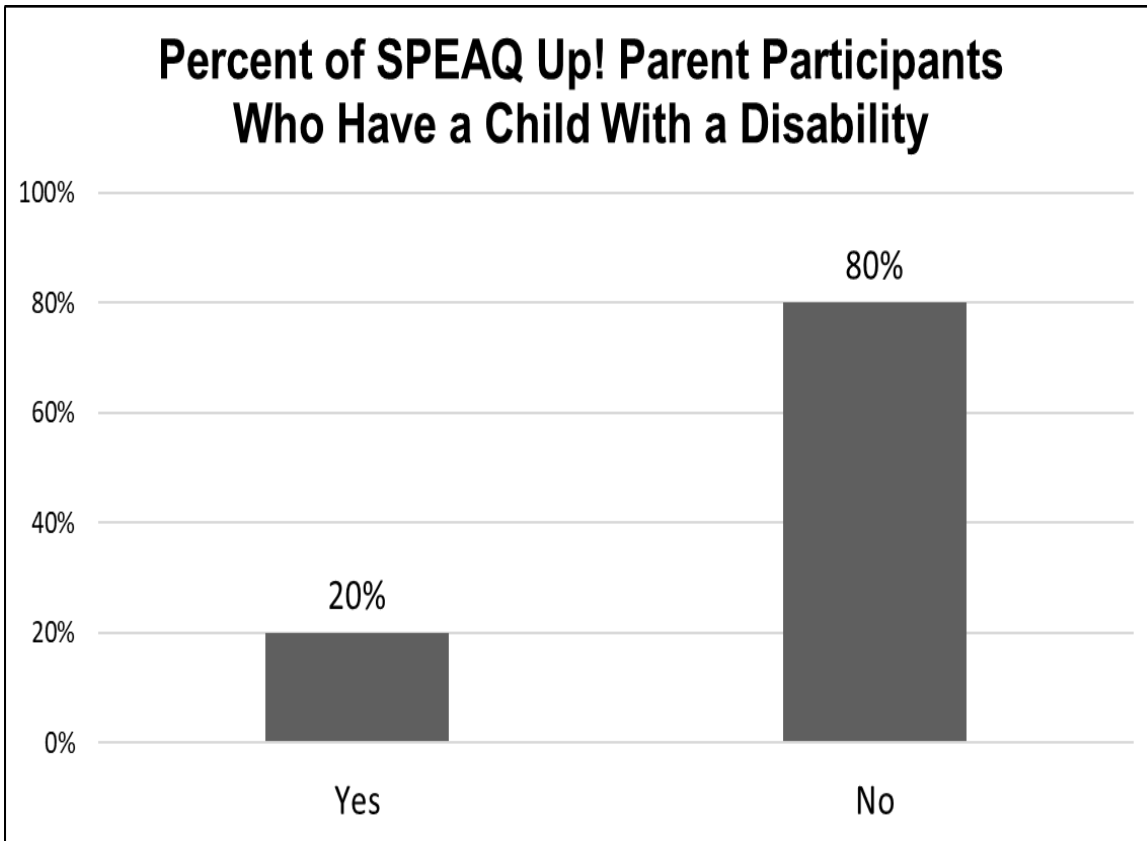
# Most people attending SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings lived in counties outside of the major metro areas.

Number of SPEAQ Up Participants in Nebraska Counties

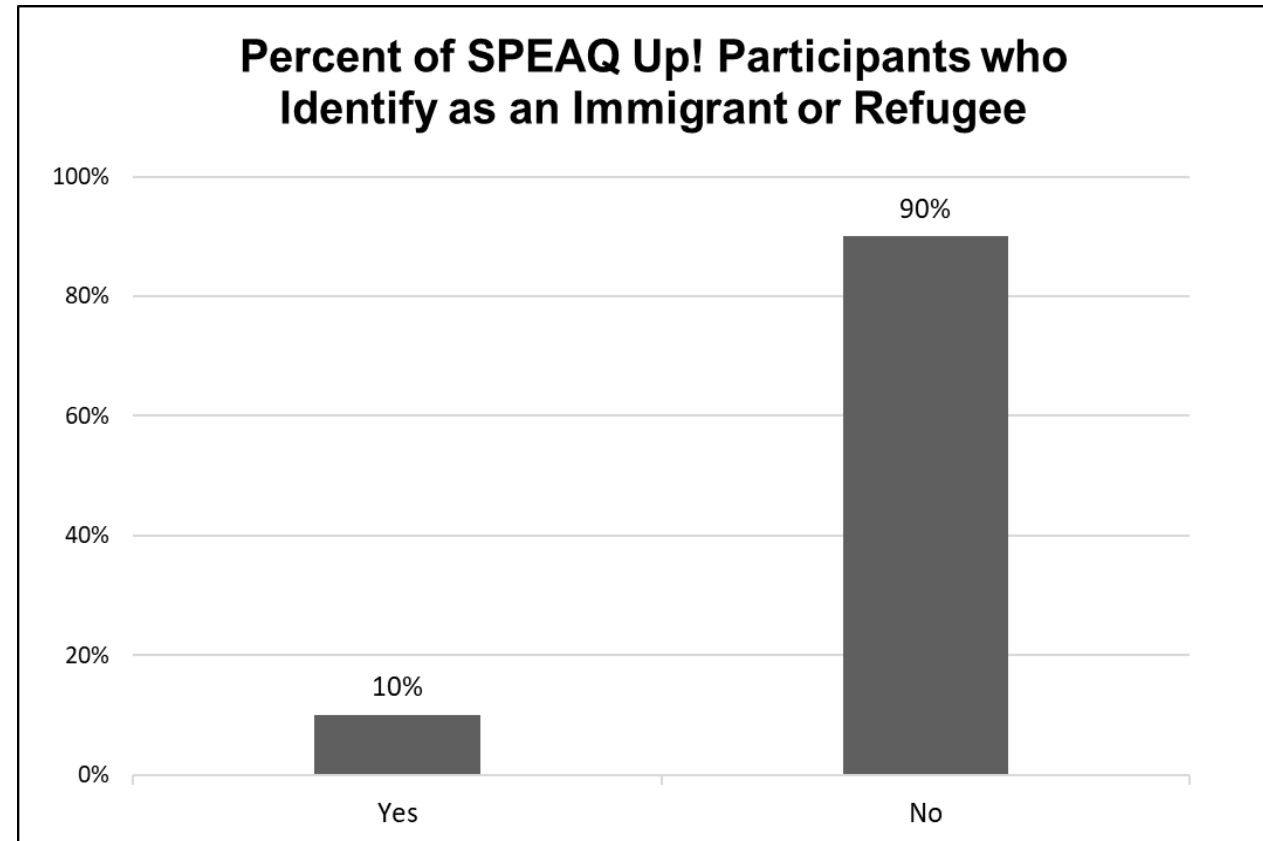


Counties	% of Total
Douglas, Lancaster, & Sarpy counties	29%
All other counties	69%
Panhandle counties	10%
Counties from other states adjacent to NE	1%

Among the parents who participated, 20% reported having a child with a disability.



Ten percent of the SPEAQ Up! participants were immigrants or refugees.



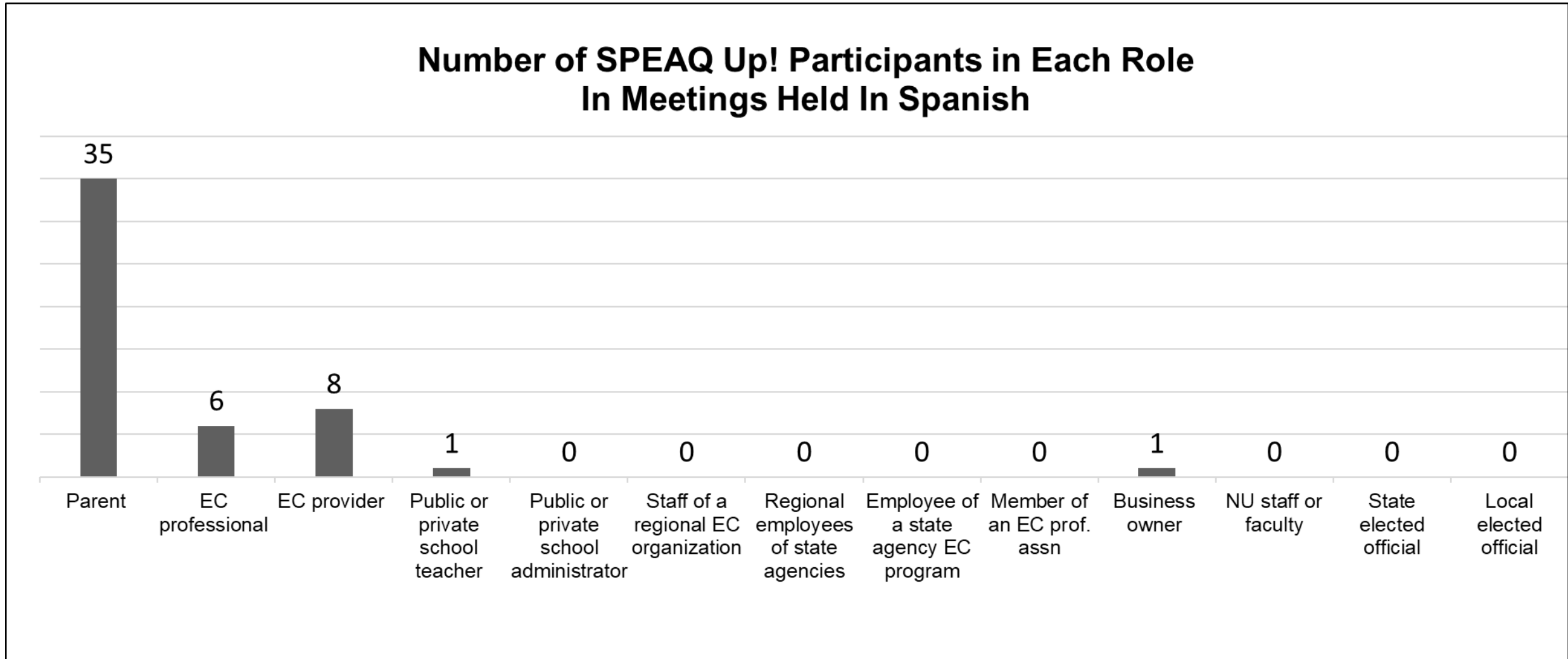




# Who Participated in the Eight SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Meetings Held in Spanish?

A total of 45 people participated in these meetings.

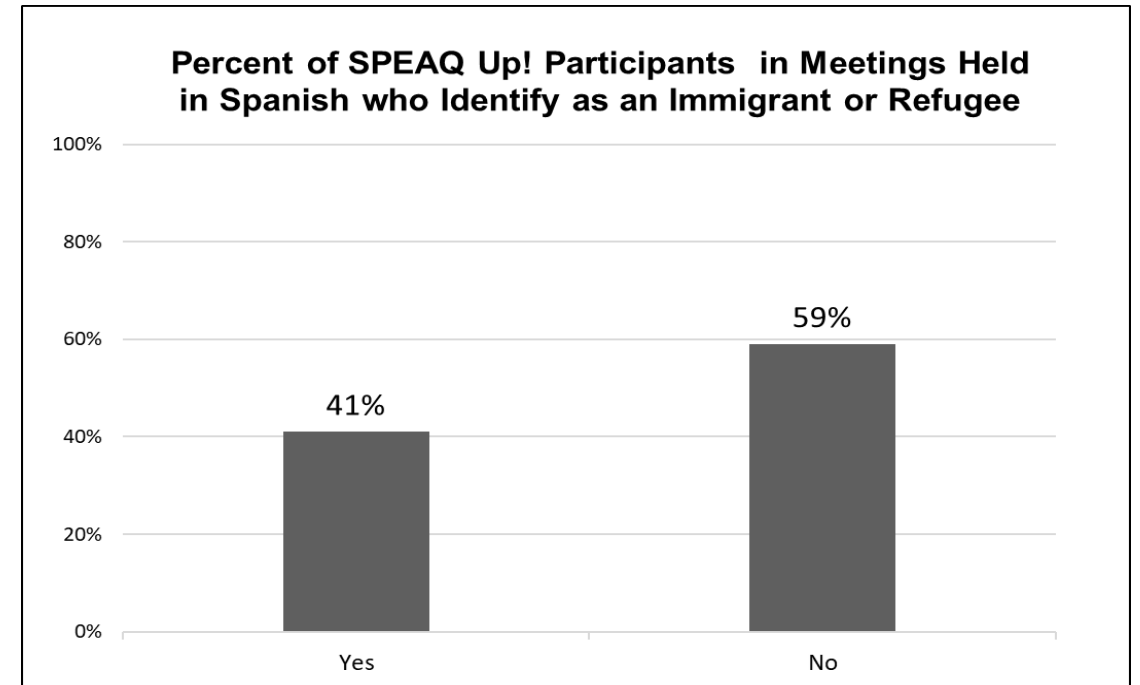
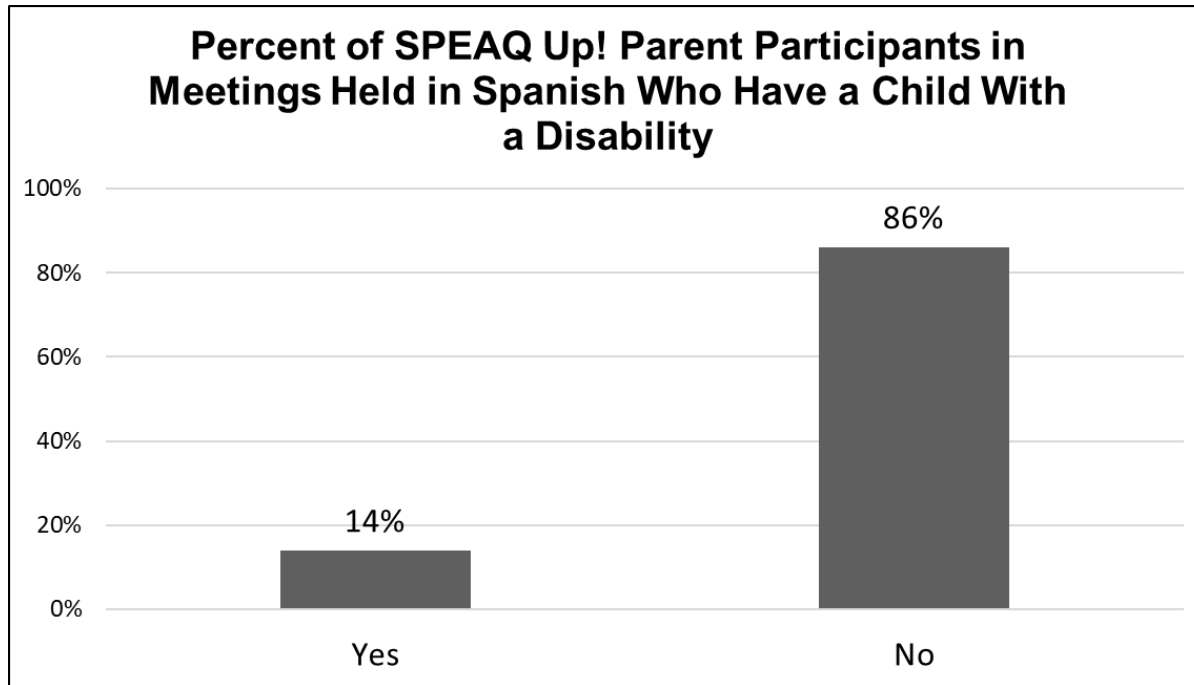
# More parents participated in Spanish-only SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings than people in other roles.



# In SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings held in Spanish...

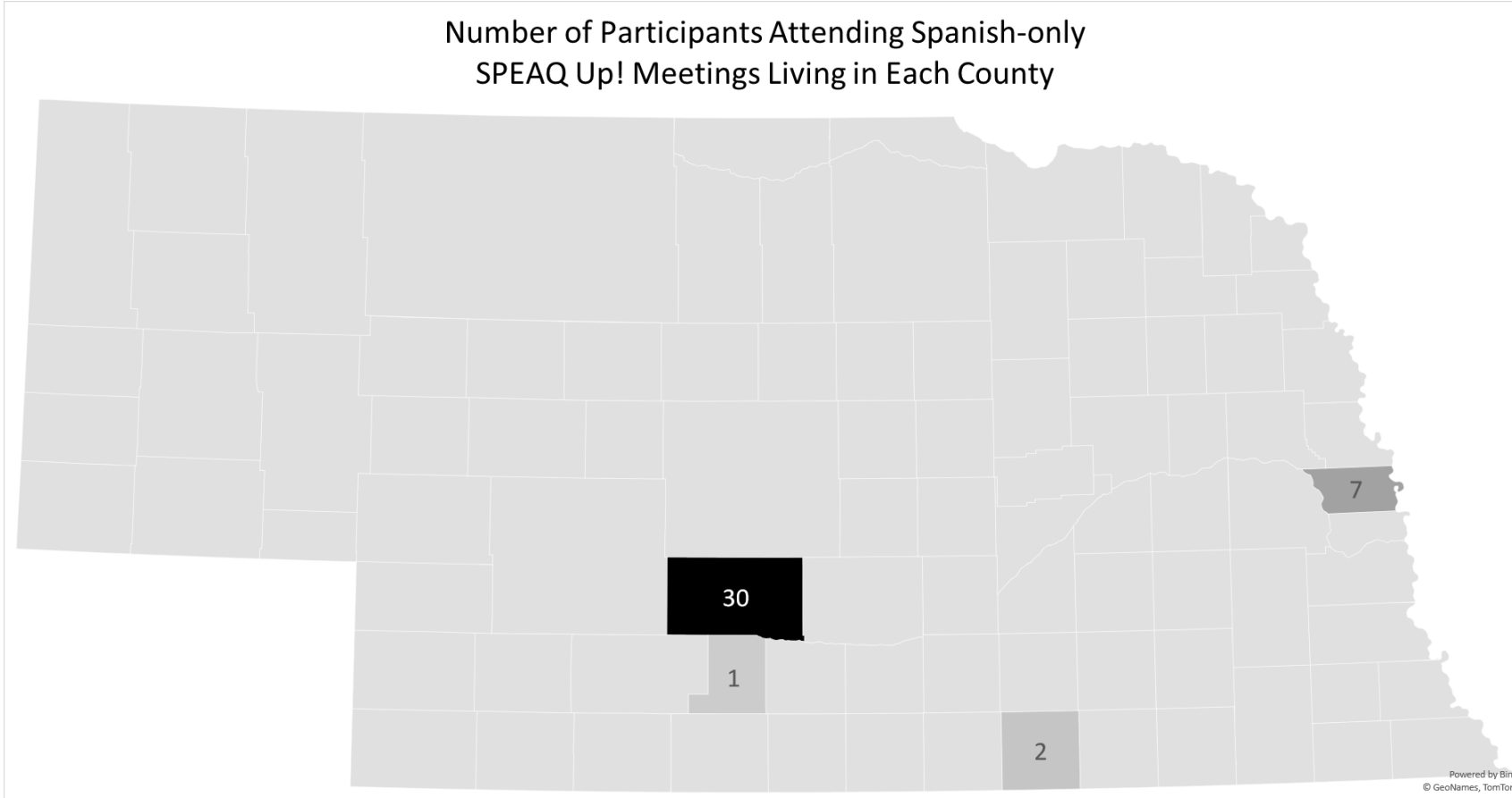
... among the parents who participated, 14% reported having a child with a disability.

... 41% of the SPEAQ Up! participants were immigrants or refugees.



# Most people attending Spanish-only SPEAQ Up! meetings lived in central Nebraska.

Number of Participants Attending Spanish-only  
SPEAQ Up! Meetings Living in Each County



Counties	Number
Dawson	30
Douglas	7
Gosper	1

# Of the participants in SPEAQ Up! meetings held in Spanish . . . .

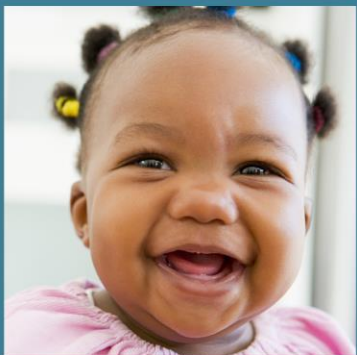
## **91% identified as Hispanic.**

- 2% identified as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 7% indicated a preference to not answer

## **87% reported speaking Spanish at home.**

- 9% reported speaking English at home

## **90% had education level of high school or lower.**



Who Participated in SPEAQ Up!  
Nebraska Meetings Focused on  
the Definition of Quality?

# SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Priority: The Definition of Quality

The 2020 Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan introduced a shared definition of *quality early childhood care and education*. The draft definition was based on early childhood research and evidence-based practices.

It was suggested that this definition should be used across the early childhood system in Nebraska. This would mean using a single definition for quality in:

- Policies
- Training and education of the workforce
- Family education materials
- Child assessments
- Provider evaluation tools

# SPEAQ Up! Nebraska Priority: The Definition of Quality

Twelve of the SPEAQ Up! Nebraska meetings focused on the draft definition of quality with parents and other early childhood collaborators.

The purpose of these conversations was to ask parents and early childhood professionals to give their feedback on the definition based on their own experiences. They discussed questions like these:

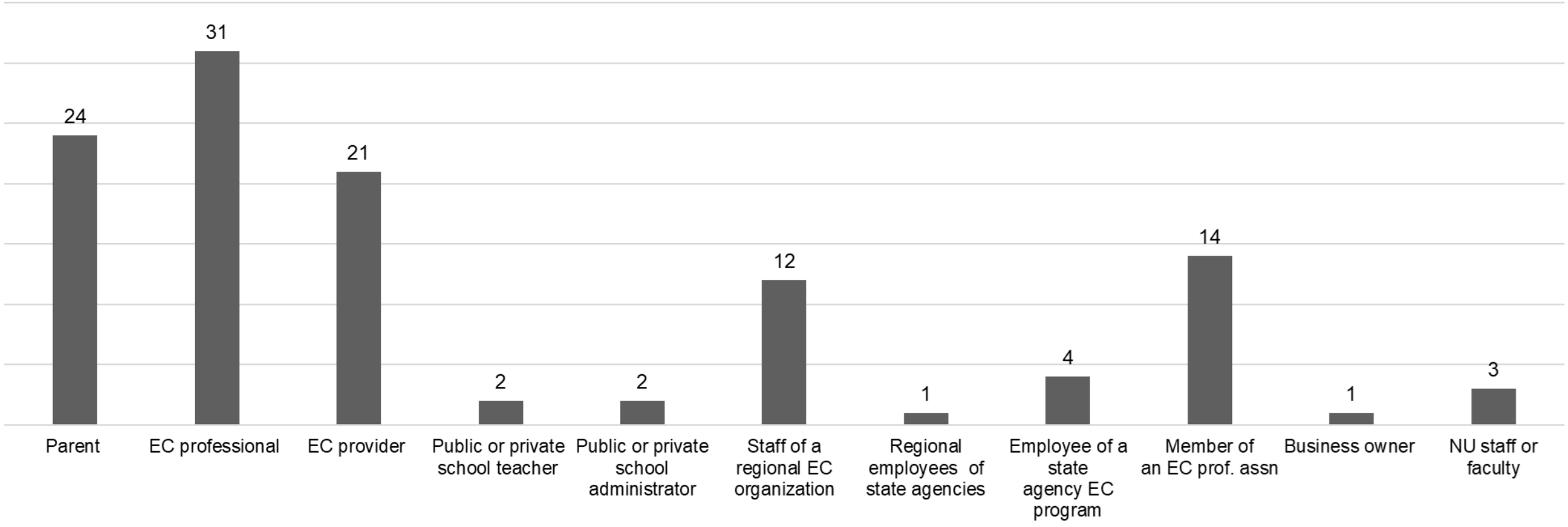
- Does the definition sound like quality early care and education to you?
- Are the ways adults can promote a quality experience described the right ones?
- Can you see any unintended consequences of using this definition widely in Nebraska?

Based on their input, the definition of quality to be included in the 2023 Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan will better reflect the experiences and expectations of families and early childhood professionals across the state.

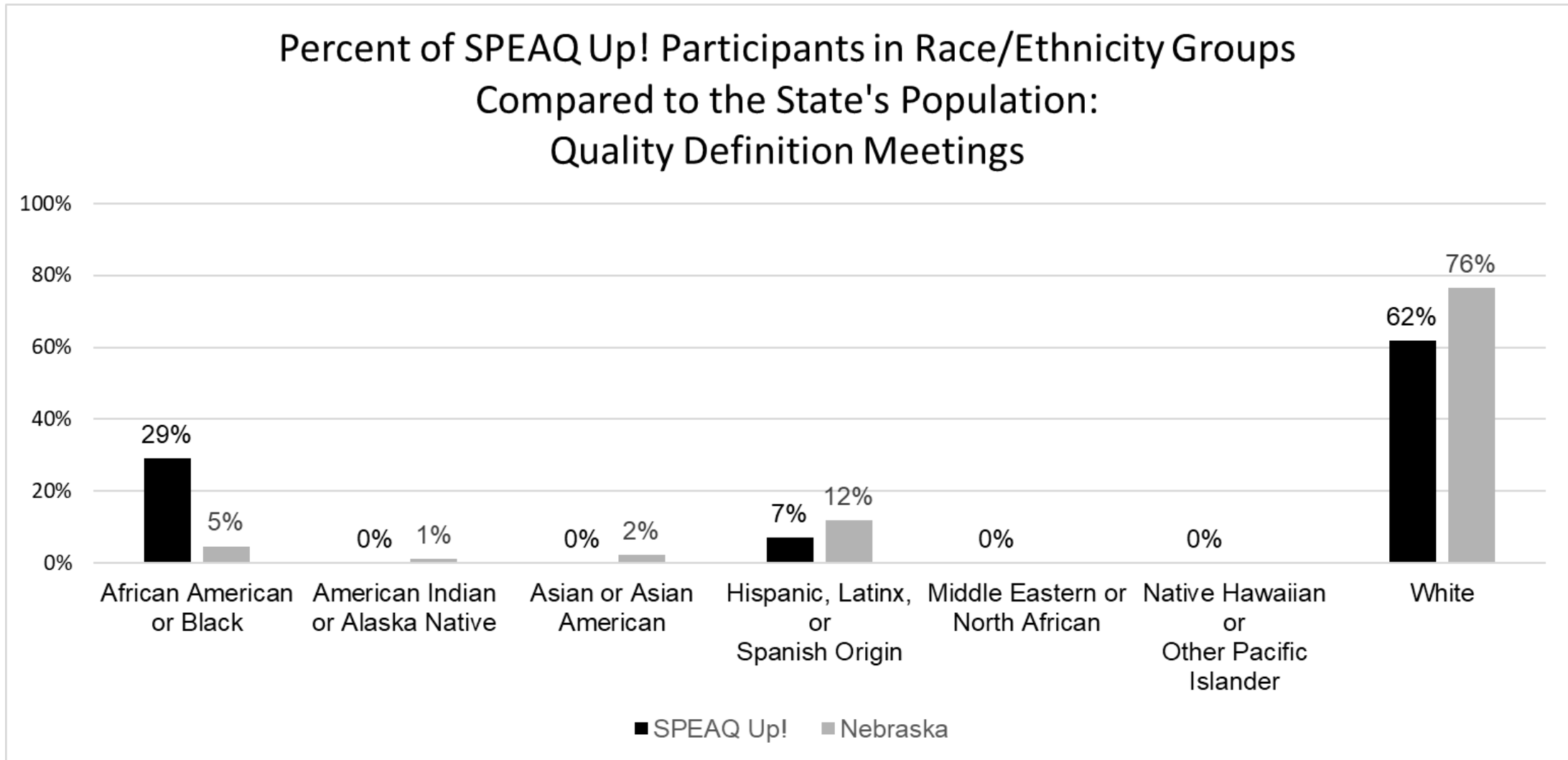


# EC professionals were the largest group in discussions of the definition of quality.

Number of SPEAQ Up! Participants by Role:  
Quality Definition Meetings

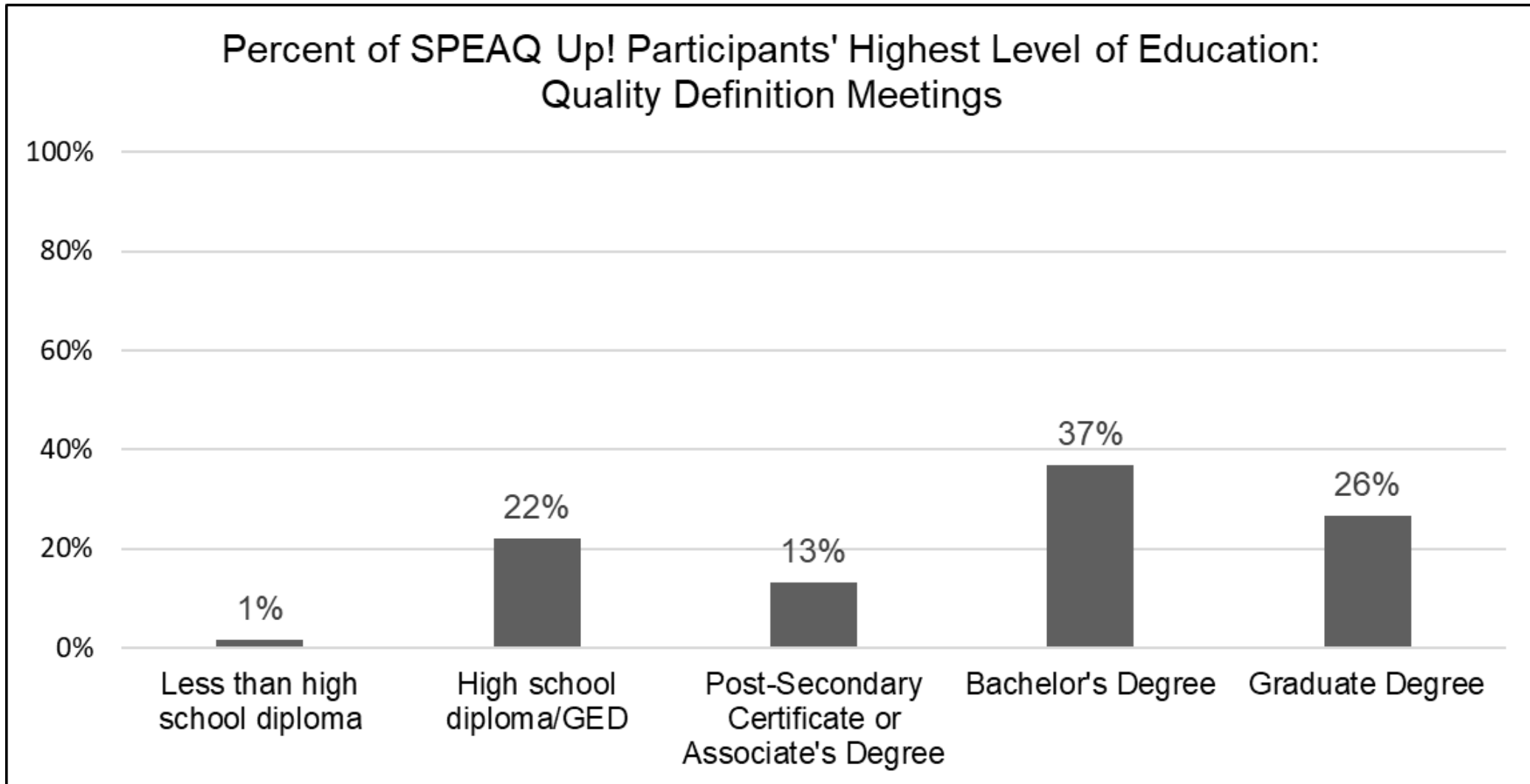


# Nearly 30% of the SPEAQ Up! Nebraska participants who discussed the definition of quality were African American or Black.





The majority of SPEAQ Up! Nebraska participants who discussed the definition of quality had a college degree or higher.





## Coming Next:

- Summaries of changes to the strategic plan and an opportunity to give feedback
- Links to resources for needs expressed

Learn more at  
[NEearlychildhoodplan.org](http://NEearlychildhoodplan.org)

**Thank You So Much!**  
Your voices have made the  
2023 Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan  
truly “by and for” all Nebraskans.

### Acknowledgments

- Facilitation of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan is provided by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska as part of a broad collaborative effort of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, and a number of other organizations.
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