



Denver Preschool Program Evaluation 2009-2010

About Denver Preschool Program (DPP):

- Since 2007, Denver Preschool Program (DPP) has been providing tuition credits for parents and quality improvement grants to preschools in Denver.
- DPP is open and voluntary for all Denver children the year before they are eligible for kindergarten.
- DPP provided tuition credits to 5,921 children in 2009-10 school year (up from 628 in 2007).

2010 Evaluation Data Show DPP Supports Children, Parents and Preschool Providers

DPP Kids Shown to Be Ready for Kindergarten:

- According to the evaluation, a majority of children enrolled in DPP leave the program academically, socially and emotionally **ready for kindergarten**.
- **DPP children were shown to make progress** in vocabulary, literacy and math during their preschool year, beyond what is expected based on normal development of children entering kindergarten.
- Teachers report significantly **more positive behaviors** and fewer behavioral concerns among DPP kids over the course of their year in a DPP program.

DPP Parents Keep Kids Enrolled in Preschool

- Nearly a third of parents reported they **would not have enrolled their children in preschool at all** were it not for the availability of the DPP tuition credit.
- Close to 90% of parents reported DPP helped their children maintain **continuous enrollment in preschool**.
- Tuition credits made preschool **more affordable** and gave many parents the option to increase enrollment hours for their children attending preschool.

DPP Providers Improve Programs Thanks to DPP

- 75% of DPP classrooms were 3- or 4-Star rated by Qualistar¹. 21% of DPP classrooms earned a 4-Star rating, which is the highest possible rating.
- 85% of DPP students are enrolled in 3- and 4-Star quality programs.
- Almost 90% of preschool providers report that participation in DPP **encouraged them to improve**. Nearly one-third of preschools reported that DPP encouraged them to **improve the program “to a great extent.”**
- This year, 127 classrooms at 74 DPP sites completed the Qualistar re-rating process and **96% either improved or maintained their rating**.

¹ *Qualistar rates early childhood programs by awarding points to providers based on the learning environment witnessed in a visit, family participation in questionnaires about with the program, level of professional development and work experience, adult to child ratios and accreditation by a nationally recognized early childhood organization.*



Methods of the 2010 Evaluation

- The evaluation was based on information from a focus group, parent and provider surveys, in-person and telephone interviews with parents and providers, and analysis of standardized assessments and DPP data.
- The evaluation team analyzed information from a focus group of parents with children not enrolled in DPP, 24 interviews with DPP staff and providers, 163 completed surveys from a sample of parents and 50 completed surveys from a sample of DPS, community-based, and home-based preschools.
- Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA), a Denver-based policy-consulting firm, and Clayton Early Learning Institute conducted the 2010 evaluation of the Denver Preschool Program.
- APA evaluated the results of the focus group, interviews and parent and provider surveys.
- Clayton Early Learning Institute administered and analyzed the students' outcome assessments, including assessments in vocabulary, literacy, and mathematics.
- Clayton Early Learning Institute individually administered the child assessments to a sample of 200 children enrolled in DPP. The assessments are nationally normed and form the basis for the conclusions drawn for the student outcomes.
- Clayton Early Learning Institute analyzed the results of the parent and teacher assessments to measure the child's socio-emotional progress during their DPP year.