



Denver Preschool Program Evaluation 2010-2011

Each year, the Denver Preschool Program measures its success through an independent annual evaluation. This year's report shows that the Denver Preschool Program's commitment to quality education is impacting the Denver community and helping students achieve more in the short-term and long-term.

The Denver Preschool Program prepares students for kindergarten.

- Denver Preschool Program students **made significant progress** during their preschool year – above and beyond what would be expected based on normal child development.
- The vast majority of children leave the Denver Preschool Program **ready for kindergarten**, both academically and socio-emotionally.
 - 90% of kids are ready for kindergarten based on literacy assessments
 - 95% of kids are ready for kindergarten based on math assessments
 - 89% of kids are ready for kindergarten based on social and emotional measurements
- Our research suggests that the kids who leave the Denver Preschool Program ready for kindergarten are more likely to be stronger readers in their early elementary years. A vast majority of DPP kids leave preschool ready for kindergarten.

The Denver Preschool Program improves preschool quality.

- In 2010-11, the Denver Preschool Program provided tuition credits to 5,915 children, 91% of whom were enrolled in top-quality preschool classrooms.
- 82% of Denver Preschool Program classrooms were 3- or 4-star rated by Qualistar Colorado¹, the highest possible ratings.
- Almost 85% of preschool providers say that participating in DPP **encouraged them to improve** and nearly a quarter to **improve “to a great extent.”**

¹ *Qualistar rates early childhood programs by awarding points to providers based on such factors as learning environment, family partnerships, staff professional development and work experience, and adult to child ratios.*



Denver Preschool Program parents understand the importance of preschool.

- **Quality preschool appears to be more important to parents than the cost of preschool.** Nearly four times as many parents selected a preschool based on the school's reputation of quality (29.3%) than based on the cost of tuition (7.4%).
- Parents see **preschool as important to a child's development, cognitive, social and emotional growth, and long-term success in school.**
- Close to 90% of parents reported that DPP helped their child maintain **continuous enrollment in preschool.**

About the Denver Preschool Program:

- The Denver Preschool Program is a non-profit organization established and operated through the support of the entire Denver community that helps Denver families pay for high-quality preschool across the city and offers funding to local preschool programs to improve their quality.
- DPP is open and voluntary for all Denver children the year before they are eligible for kindergarten.
- The Denver Preschool Program is the result of a ballot measure approved by voters in 2006 that sets aside .12 percent of Denver sales tax revenue to fund the program. Since January 2007, the city has collected approximately \$10.5 million per year for the program. More than 80% goes directly to the students' education in the form of tuition credits for families and quality improvement funding for preschools.
- The Denver Preschool Program serves some of Denver's lowest income families. Nearly two thirds (66%) of families reported annual family incomes of less than \$30,000.

Methods of the 2010 Evaluation

- Clayton Early Learning Institute and Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) conducted the 2011 evaluation of the Denver Preschool Program based on standardized assessments, DPP data, and research gathered from parents and providers.
- Clayton Early Learning Institute analyzed student outcome assessments in vocabulary, literacy and math based on a representative sample of nearly 200 children. The assessments are nationally normed and form the basis for the conclusions drawn for student outcomes.
- APA analyzed information from a focus group, parent and provider surveys, and in-person and telephone interviews with parents and providers.