



Denver Preschool Program Evaluation: 2011-2012 Fact Sheet

This year's independent evaluation confirms that **Denver Preschool Program students are prepared for kindergarten:**

- More graduates of the Denver Preschool Program in Denver Public Schools are reading at or above grade level in kindergarten than district kindergarteners overall.
- The vast majority of Denver Preschool Program graduates are ready for school, both academically and socio-emotionally.
- DPP students scored 94% and 93% on literacy and math assessments, respectively, compared to just 69% expected for the general population.
- English language learners and other children at risk of falling behind in school due to poverty are showing evidence of making progress toward closing the achievement gap by the end of preschool.

The Denver Preschool Program has dramatically expanded preschool access:

- Since 2007, over \$40 million in tuition support has helped more than 25,000 Denver families access the high-quality preschool of their choice. DPP tuition support is available to all Denver families, regardless of income.
- Almost 70 percent of Denver's 4-year-olds – nearly 6,000 children annually – are enrolled in the Denver Preschool Program today, up from fewer than 7 percent in 2007.

The Denver Preschool Program improves preschool quality:

- The DPP investment has enabled over 250 preschools across the metro area to be independently rated for quality so that families can choose the best alternative for their child.
- Since the Denver Preschool Program came into existence, quality reputation has grown to become the number one factor parents are considering while making their preschool choice, outranking such factors as cost and location.
- DPP improves preschool quality by investing in coaching, materials and professional development for participating programs.
- More than 90 percent of DPP children now attend top-quality preschools.

DPP graduates are emotionally and behaviorally ready for school:

- Teachers gave more than 95 percent of DPP children high marks for positive behaviors such as forming secure relationships with adults, taking initiative, and demonstrating self-control.
- Teachers identified behavioral problems as an area of concern for only about 6% of children, far less than the 16% that would be expected.

Parents benefit:

- An increasing number of parents report that preschool is allowing them to work or attend school.
- Denver families can choose from a variety of preschools – all rated for quality – to find the option best suited to meet their child’s needs. DPP partners include: 24 Montessori preschools; 16 nationally accredited sites; 80 public school locations; 150 community-based centers; and 19 family child care homes.

Demographics:

- While DPP support is available to all Denver families with a child in the last year of preschool before kindergarten, approximately 70% of participating families report incomes that qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program.
- Hispanics made up 52% of DPP students during the 2012 school year, followed by those who identified as White at 26%, Black at 13%, Asian at 4%, and Multiracial at 4%.
- 58 percent of students come from families who speak English as their primary home language; 32 percent come from families who speak Spanish as their primary home language.

Methods of the 2011-2012 Evaluation:

- Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) and the Clayton Early Learning Institute conducted the 2012 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 and parent and provider surveys.

About the Denver Preschool Program:

In 2006, Denver voters approved a 12-cent sales tax on a \$100 purchase to fund preschool tuition support, giving all Denver families access to high-quality preschool. Denver families with a child in the last year of preschool before kindergarten can choose from a wide variety of preschools, public and community-based. A seven-member Board of Directors makes all financial and business decisions which guide the Denver Preschool Program, Inc. an independent, non-profit organization created to operate the Denver Preschool Program under a contract with the City and County of Denver.