



Colorado Preschool & Kindergarten Program

**2007
Legislative
Report**



Colorado
Department of
Education



2007 Legislative Report

Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program



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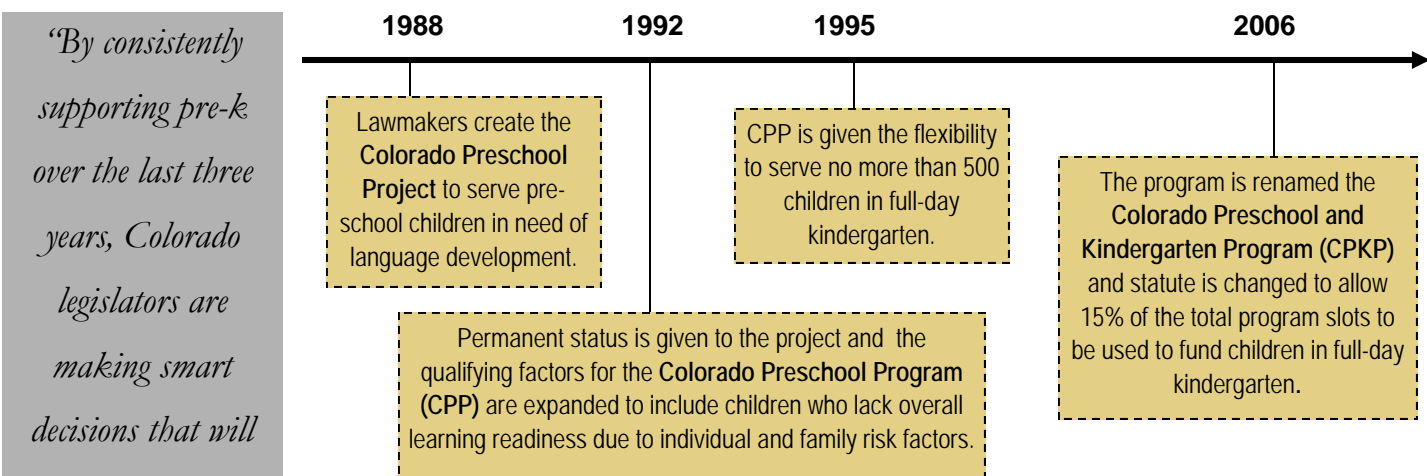
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Introduction to the Program

Quality early childhood programs produce beneficial outcomes for children and the community in which they live. The Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program (CPKP) provides funding to establish early childhood education programs that serve preschool and kindergarten children with the toughest educational challenges. Over the last eighteen years, the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program has been able to demonstrate that early educational experiences do make a difference for at-risk children. Strong early learning leads to more successful students, better educated, more employable individuals, as well as less remediation throughout the education system, which benefits all of Colorado.



Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program Timeline



Quick Facts for the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program

- In the 2006-2007 school year, CPKP is authorized to serve 14,360 children.
- 2,154 or 15% of the available 14,360 CPKP slots must be used to provide full-day kindergarten services.
- 610 or 5% of the preschool slots may be used to extend a child’s preschool day.
- 169 out of 178 (94.9%) school districts in Colorado now participate in CPKP. Participation on the part of school districts is voluntary.
- With 12,206 preschool slots, the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program has the capacity to serve 17.4% of four year olds within the state. (Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Colorado Demography Office)
- In the 2006 school year, school districts identified an additional 7,931 children who were CPKP eligible, but because of a lack of CPKP slots were unable to serve these children.

CPKP Provides Support for the Children that Need it Most

James Heckman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist from the University of Chicago, has pointed out, “The most economically efficient way to remediate the disadvantage caused by adverse family environments is to invest in children when they are young.”

The Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program serves children who are at risk for being unprepared for school. Conditions that may precipitate a child to be at-risk include low family income, foster care, violence or neglect in the home, parents who haven’t successfully completed high school, parent chemical addiction, and delays in development. Eligibility for children to participate in the program is determined by criteria established by the state legislature and local district councils.

Statutorily Defined Risk Factors Used to Establish Eligibility for the Colorado Preschool Program	Percentage of Children Qualifying Under this Risk Factor
Child is eligible to receive free or reduced-cost meals	65%
In need of language development including learning English as a second language	35%
Child has been identified with poor social skills	25%
Child’s parent has not successfully completed high school	23%
Either parent was less than 18 and unmarried at the time of the child’s birth	12%
Frequent relocation of the child’s family	12%
Receiving services from CDHS as neglected or dependent children	9%
Drug or alcohol abuse present in the family	8%
Child’s family is homeless	5%
An abusive adult resides in the home of the child	5%

“We found significant factors facing ACSD14s children and families. Overall, a 20% increase in the number of risk factors per child was seen from the 2004-05 to 2005-06 school yearsThere were significant increases in the areas of low social skills, low scores/possible developmental delays, homelessness, family issues, parent education, low language/ second language and income. Each of these risk factors alone can contribute to the needs of children and families. When combined, we believe we are experiencing a shift in our community.”

*ACSD 14
Coordinator*



“We will always have families with financial burdens; however, I feel children today are faced with different obstacles to overcome. Over the last two years my center has enrolled children with risk factors never encountered since our program began, i.e. five parents incarcerated, eight grandparents raising grandchildren, meth moms and dads, child and domestic abuse on the rise, seven restraining orders on estranged parents...it is without hesitation that I would recommend the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program receive additional slots to serve more families.”

Director, Early Childhood Community Program, Western Slope

WHO SERVES COLORADO PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM CHILDREN?



“We have been a contract site for District 12 since 1995. Although many things have changed since the inception of the Colorado Preschool Program, the one constant has been the dedication of our district to provide quality programs for as many children as possible. Every year we have more eligible children than we have slots.”

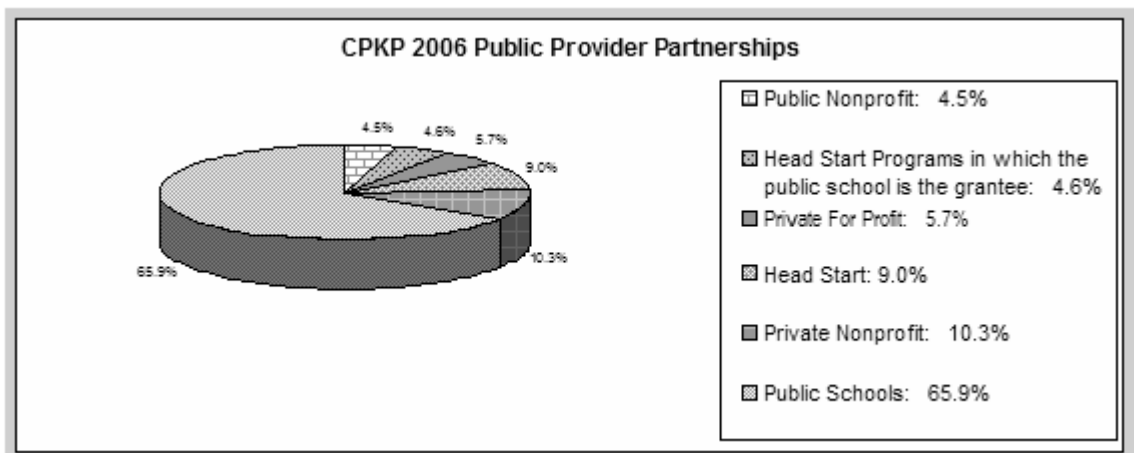
Director, Community Program in Adams 12 Five Star

Research demonstrates that the higher the quality of a program, the better the outcomes for children and families, so quality is the primary concern in determining where CPKP children will be served.

The CPKP legislation gives CPKP advisory councils the responsibility to decide locally who is best qualified to deliver CPKP services. As a result, children funded by CPKP are served throughout the state in a variety of settings. These settings include Head Start programs, private for-profit programs, non-profit programs, charter schools and programs within public schools. By including these partners in the delivery of services, this maximizes the public and private investments already made in early childhood, and strengthens the partnerships between early childhood education and elementary education.

Because CPKP is only funded to provide an early childhood education program that averages 10 hours per week for nine months—CPKP’s strongest partnerships are with community providers that operate part-day programs.

Many full-day, child care programs find it difficult to serve CPKP children because CPKP’s part-day funding will not cover a programs’ full-day costs for those families that need child care to work or go to school. Programs are allowed to blend CPKP funding with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding for working families, but these resources are limited. Parents may also pay tuition to extend their child’s day; however, communities have found that families who qualify for free and reduced cost lunches, oftentimes can’t afford this option.



2006 Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program Expansion

With the passage of HB 06-1375, the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program was expanded to serve an additional 2,000 students, 1,346 preschoolers and 654 full-day kindergarteners.

- As a result of this expansion, eight new school districts were provided the opportunity to participate in the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program.
- All the full-day kindergarten slots were given to school districts that currently had no CPKP full-day kindergarten allocations. Nineteen new school districts obtained funding for full-day kindergarten. (The only exception was for Denver Public Schools. The Legislature eliminated funding for full-day kindergarten in unsatisfactory schools and CPKP full-day kindergarten slots were awarded to offset this reduction in funding.)
- Over the last two expansions (2005 and 2006), the number of school districts receiving funding for full-day kindergarten has doubled from 26 school districts to 52 school districts.



As the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten program has expanded over the last four years, two trends have been identified (as illustrated in the table below):

- More school districts with no other licensed early childhood center or preschool in their community are applying to CPKP, so that their students will have an opportunity to attend preschool in the future.
- Fewer school districts are not contracting out slots if they have a licensed provider in their community.

Type of Delivery System	2002-03			2005-06		
	Number of School Districts	Percentage	Total Number of Preschool Slots in Those Districts	Number of School Districts	Percentage	Total Number of Preschool Slots in Those Districts
CPKP district councils with no other licensed preschool or child care center in the community to contract with	49	32%	497	63	39%	903
CPKP district councils that contract out all allocated CPKP slots	37	24%	1,510	43	26%	1,503
CPKP district councils that choose to provide services in both community and public school settings	42	27%	6,376	40	25%	7,941
CPKP district councils with at least one other licensed center or preschool in the community, but no slots are contracted out. Provider(s) may be unable (they are a sectarian program) or unwilling (they don't want to reduce class size to 15 children) to contract with CPKP.	26	17%	1,046	15	9%	511
<i>Total Number of School Districts Participating in CPKP</i>	<i>154</i>		<i>9,429¹</i>	<i>161²</i>		<i>10,858¹</i>

¹ Some CPKP Slots were unfunded because of duplicate counts, or children not attending during the count period.

² South Conejos only served full-day kindergarten children through CPKP so they are not included in this table.

Results Matter: Colorado's Early Childhood Accountability System

Results Matter says it all. They do matter. Early identification, intervention and sustainable support all go toward making successful learners. My humble opinion is the Results Matter program provides these professionals a centralized location to share their findings in an online environment.

This allows for increased time for accessing and analyzing data, reporting results, and implementing strategies.

Robert Templin,
Lewis Palmer School District
#38
Instructional Technology
Coordinator

Colorado is to be commended for its efforts to support children and families by investing in an infrastructure to produce much needed information about how well programs are serving children and families. Results Matter is a well conceptualized and innovative approach to outcomes measurement.

Kathy Hebbeler,
National Director
The Early Childhood
Outcomes Center

Results Matter is a comprehensive assessment system used in Colorado's early care and education programs, including those programs that serve CPKP funded children. The system is designed to promote the use of ongoing child assessment in order to measure child outcomes or progress.

In the Results Matter system, child outcomes data, as well as information gathered on parent satisfaction, family outcomes and overall program quality, is used to inform daily teacher instructional practices, in-service training development and program policy planning. Teachers and administrators use the child outcomes information to help keep families informed of their child's progress and to demonstrate early childhood educational outcomes for local, state and federal accountability reporting.



All the Results Matter assessment systems are completed on-line with systems that have the capacity to easily and quickly generate useful reports on student progress for teachers and families as well as for necessary accountability reporting.

Under Results Matter, each program that serves children in the CPKP chooses one of three assessment systems to measure children's progress during the pre-school year. Choices include the *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum*, the *Work Sampling System* and the *High/Scope Child Observation Record* all of which are based on ongoing, documented observations of children at work in the preschool program. Since the spring of 2006, the State has sponsored training on the use of the Results Matter assessment systems for over 1,000 teachers and administrators. In addition, CDE has insured that any early childhood program in Colorado can join Results Matter and access the on-line assessment systems at greatly discounted rates of approximately \$10.00 per child.

This school year, more than 200 public and private programs will be participating in Results Matter. Teachers who use the ongoing assessment systems report an increased understanding of child development and early education principles, an increased ability to plan instruction that is responsive to children's educational and developmental needs and an increased sense of confidence and professionalism as they go about their day-to-day practice. This, in addition to the cost savings, training and related supports, has led numerous programs that are not part of state or federal mandates to electively participate in Results Matter, bringing the total number of children involved in this first full year of implementation to 30,000.



"We are so excited about the Results Matter initiative. It protects the integrity of early childhood while fulfilling our obligations for accountability to our community. It is truly a win-win situation where teachers use authentic observations for reporting on child progress and for planning instruction while the community receives information on the effectiveness of our early childhood programs."

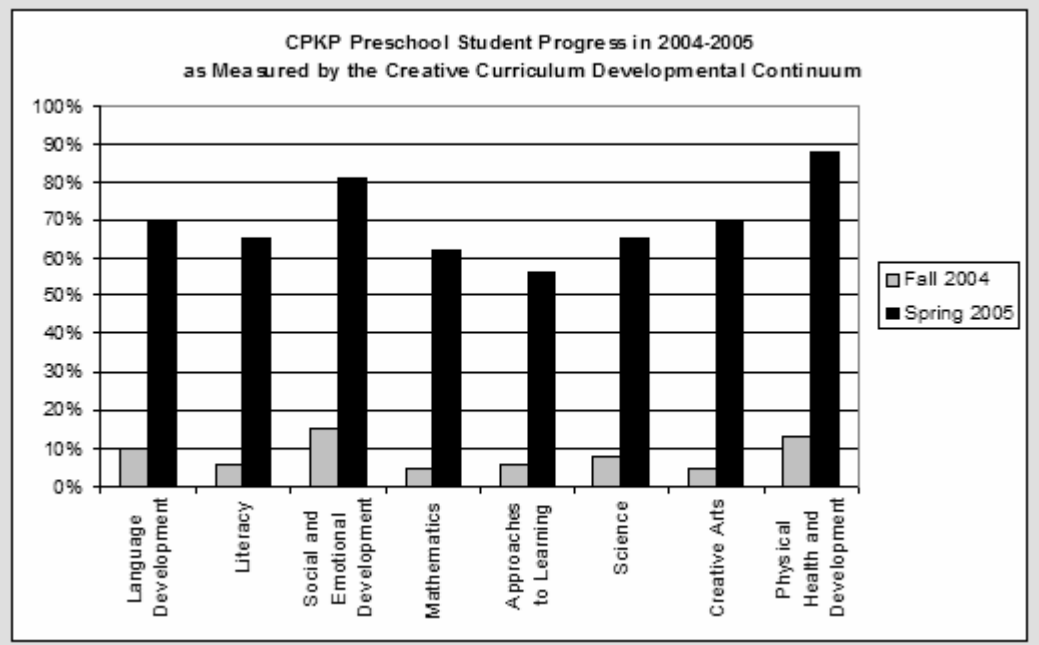
Julie Knowles, Director of Assessment and Special Programs, Garfield RE-2

Preschool Narrows the School Readiness Gap

School districts involved in the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program report significant progress for children who participate in high quality preschool programs. As a result of this preparation, the school readiness gaps are narrowed when these children move into kindergarten.

We have found significant growth through the program. At the beginning of the preschool year less than 25% of the children have been exposed to rich text, stories, scissors, glue, games, music and movement and arts. Fine and gross motor skills are lacking and social skills need lots of work. By the end of the year over 90% can write their name, color within the lines, paint a recognizable picture, identify letters, sounds, and numbers, use scissors successfully, play group games, have a beginning understanding of phonemes and participate in musical plays and games.

Woodlin R –104 School District



The above preschool student growth was measured in the Community Partnership for Child Development Program which contracts with Harrison #2 School District

Canon City: Children who are fortunate enough to receive the CPKP spaces are able to do better than their typical counterparts in the two measures of school readiness utilized by our school district. In 2004-05, 67% of CPKP graduates were at grade level for reading in kindergarten compared to 58% of their peers. In addition, kindergarten teachers reported 83% of CPKP children as “kindergarten ready” compared to the rest of the school district who were rated 77.5% ready. The district knows that CPKP services make a difference for children.



Aurora: When examining kindergarten assessments over the last four years, CPKP graduates have consistently performed at a level similar, if not higher, than their peers. This reaffirms that high quality early childhood experiences do make a difference.

Cripple Creek-Victor: In September we administer the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment to each kindergarten student. This assessment measures children’s literacy development. In analyzing these scores, we have found that the children who could not participate in CPKP were twice as likely to be behind and need substantial intervention than the children who could participate in CPKP.

Adams #12: Reported that the percentage of ELL students on grade level in the fall of their kindergarten year was twice as high for those students who had attended preschool vs. those who had not.

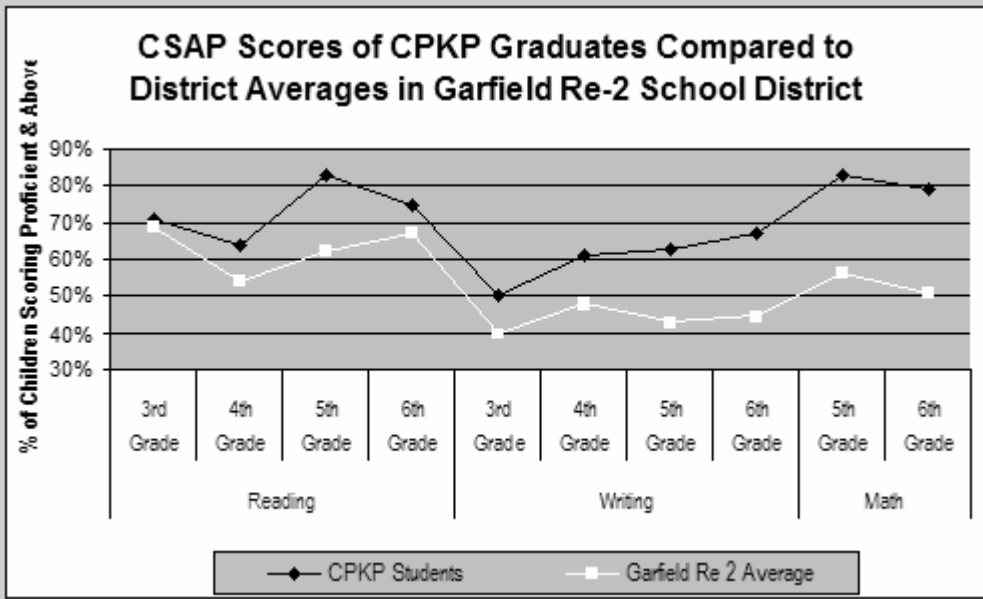
Benefits of Preschool Persist Long After Children Enter Kindergarten

CPKP has proven that quality preschool programs have an impact not just on kindergarten readiness, but on participants' learning and success in later grades. Better prepared students can leverage all other educational investments, because they develop skills and abilities that facilitate later learning. As the following data demonstrates, for children with the toughest educational challenges, CPKP improves academic outcomes in the later years and reduces the need for remediation.



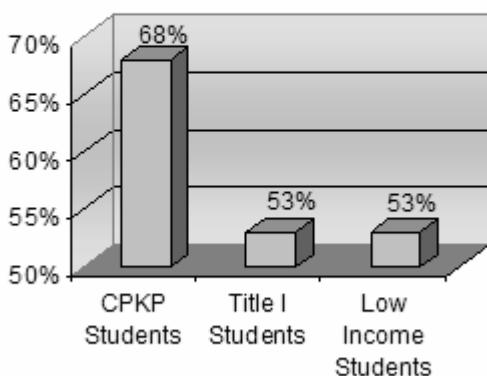
"As I work with children on a daily basis, I see the need for early education and intervention in my classroom. Unfortunately, the effects of a lack of early childhood education takes years to correct. The earlier we catch a struggling child, the easier it is to make a positive change. Even a below grade level child as young as second grade will take considerably longer to help reach proficiency than a child in kindergarten."

*Read to Achieve Coach
Peyton Elementary School.*



Garfield Re-2 School District has found that over multiple years in multiple subjects, CPKP students outperform their peers on the CSAP assessments.

Comparison of Students Statewide Scoring Proficient or Above on the 2005 Third Grade Reading CSAP



Quotes from School District's CPKP Annual Reports:

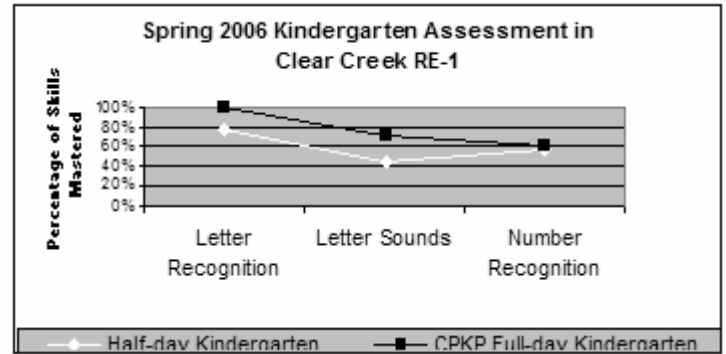
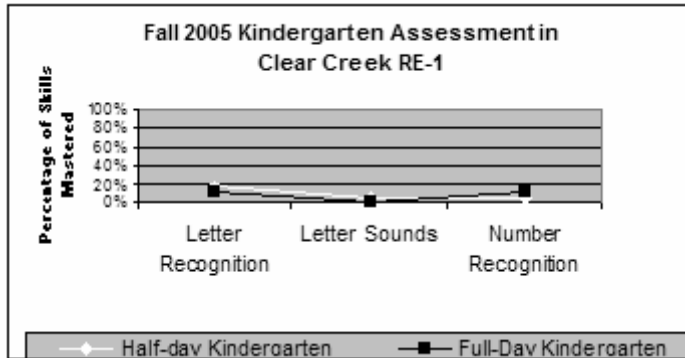
Cherry Creek: We have collected third grade CSAP data on former CPKP students for the last several years and we have found our scores have matched the scores of the district as a whole. This is especially significant in a district like Cherry Creek, where CSAP scores run high. We are taking clearly "at-risk" students and giving them a solid start in a competitive environment.

Greeley: In studying the reading CSAP scores for 3rd through 6th grades, CPKP students have scored 5% to 10% higher each year than those students not attending preschool.

Commerce City: An analysis of 3rd and 4th grade CSAP assessments in reading and writing over the last four years demonstrate students who attend preschool have

CPKP Full-Day Kindergarten

School districts participating in the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program report that full-day kindergarten leads to improved academic achievement for disadvantaged students. Below is an example from Clear Creek RE-1 School District which demonstrates that children in full-day kindergarten start behind their half-day kindergarten peers at the beginning of the school year, and then by the end of the kindergarten year are able to perform at higher levels.



Early intervention, rather than later remediation has to be the way to go. By providing full-day kindergarten for our youngsters, we are giving them the gift of twice as much academic stimulation. This year, we had 30 children in our full day kindergarten. All 30 were below grade level to start the year. With seven weeks of school remaining, all but four are at grade level. Without that extra help, I

Canon City School District: Children in CPKP full-day kindergarten gained 1 year and two months in literacy skills compared to the 8 month gain for children in half-day kindergarten. In addition, 93% of the CPKP full-day kindergarten children were reading at grade level by the end of school compared to 58% of all other children in kindergarten!

Sheridan School District: At the beginning of the school year, 45.3% of full-day kindergarten students were identified as needing intense interventions as measured by the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). By January 2006 that percentage dropped to 17.3% of those students needing intense interventions.

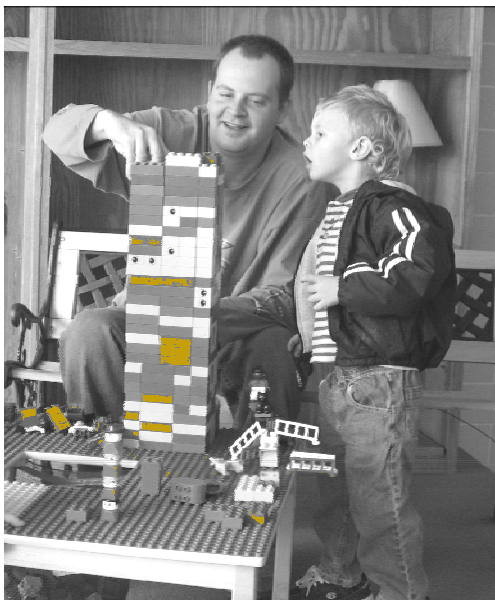
Mapleton School District: In 2005 the percentage of full-day kindergarten students at or above grade level was 96%. This is compared to 61% of kindergarteners in the district who were at or above grade level. Children who are struggling in literacy are placed on Individual Literacy Plans at the end of the year. At the end of the 2004-05 school year there were 32% of the half-day kindergartners on ILP's compared to 0% of the full-day kindergarten children.

West End School District: The Paradox Valley Charter School reports that prior to receiving CPKP full day kindergarten slots 66% of their kindergarten students were retained. With full-day kindergarten, no students are retained.



In the table at the right, Harrison School District #2 in Colorado Springs compares the progress made by kindergarteners in half-day programs vs. full-day kindergarten programs funded by CPKP.

	Half-day kindergarten classes	CPKP full-day kindergarten classes
% of students reading at or above grade level	70.86%	90.04%
% of students on ILP's	20.20%	3.03%



FAMILY INVOLVEMENT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Quality early childhood programs build collaborative relationships with families. They recognize that families' participation is crucial to the continual progress in all developmental areas. A vital component of the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program is to strengthen families and support them as participants in their child's education.

In 2005-06 programs surveyed families and report the following results:

- 81% of parents strongly agreed and 18% agreed that their child has benefited as a result of being in CPKP
- 74% of families strongly agreed and 23% agreed that they are comfortable participating in their child's education.

"I really feel my preschooler has acquired the skills that will help him be successful next year in kindergarten. If it weren't for the financial assistance we received from the CPP program, that would not have been possible for our family."

Parent from St. Vrain Valley School District

"My children have had a strong positive start in their education. Living in a very rural area doesn't offer a lot of opportunity for my children to be around their peers. Preschool has given them a wonderful opportunity to meet friends and learn to interact with them."

Parent from Cotopaxi School District

"I am so thankful my child was accepted into the program. She really needed the social interaction and we were not able to afford preschool. She has blossomed and grown in every way. It has been a pleasure to watch her."

Parent from Weld County Milliken RE-5J

"El programa de prescolar nos ha ayudado en que enseñándole a respetar a sus compañeros u sobre todo tener confianza en ella misma y que sienta gusto por cada cosa que aprenda." (The preschool program has helped us in that it has taught her—our daughter—how to respect her classmates and above all to have confidence in herself and to enjoy everything that she is learning.)"

Parent from Boulder Valley School District

"The CPP on Ft. Carson is so helpful. In the last four years most families have had a parent deployed to war more than once. I witness the stress and struggle in my house and others...My son will be much more prepared for school and life because of this program. Thank you."

Parent from Fountain/Ft. Carson School District

"Our family has gone through a rough time lately. Preschool has provided a safe and structured environment for him to escape to. It makes me happy to know that he is happy and doing so well in his academics."

Julesburg Parent

"The focus in my classroom is not only to help develop successful learners and individuals, but also to get parents actively involved in their child's education. Offering a variety of ways for parents to be involved helps to encourage even the most reluctant parents to take part."

Preschool Teacher, Mesa County Valley School District #51.



QUALITY IS KEY TO PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

National research demonstrates preschool and kindergarten programs can produce beneficial outcomes for children. However, it is not enough just to provide access to programs. Children need to participate in programs that are educationally effective - otherwise their potential is squandered.

Identification of high quality programs where CPKP children can be served is one responsibility of CPKP district councils. District councils are required to make at least two on-site visits per year to all individual providers in their district that serve CPKP children. These councils are also charged with the responsibility of sustaining quality in those programs.

In monitoring and supporting the improvement of these programs, district councils use “Colorado’s Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services,” which is a set of program standards developed from nationally accepted standards for preschool programs. These standards address the importance of low teacher-child ratio, small group sizes, qualified teaching staff trained in child development, meaningful learning and play experiences, positive teacher-child interactions, family involvement and family support.



Additional Methods District Advisory Councils Use to Monitor and Support Quality in CPKP Classrooms	Number of districts with programs using this method of assessing quality	Average rating
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R): A method of measuring overall classroom quality on a 7 – point Likert scale, indicating a range of quality from inadequate (1) to excellent (7).	34	5.41
Qualistar Rating: A nonprofit organization which provides a four star rating system for early care and education programs based on 5 criteria – learning environment, family partnerships, training/education of staff, adult-to-child ratios and group size, and accreditation.	65	3.04
NAEYC Accreditation: A national, voluntary, professionally sponsored assessment system for early childhood programs. Programs engage in an extensive self-study which is verified during a site visit by validators and reviewed by a national commission.	46	N/A

“Although conventional wisdom may regard a “small” preschool class size as one with 20 children or less, an overview of the evidence suggests that substantial effects of class size—particularly for disadvantaged children—may be obtained only when classes for 3– and 4-year-olds are reduced to 15 or fewer children.”

NIEER Preschool Policy Brief I July, 2006

“For many of the children who end up placed in CPKP based on their risk factors, attention and consistency is exactly what they need to bloom and grow. The fact that the program is set up to maximize this type of environment where students are supported, given enough time to engage in different activities and provided with regular, consistent individualized attention is what makes it so incredibly effective for our students. In addition to the support provided, teachers are also able to provide more experiential and discovery learning opportunities as a result of the class size and teacher to student ratio.”

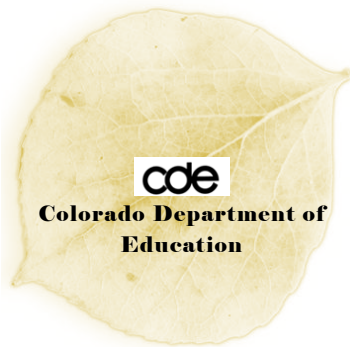
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The Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program would like to thank each of the CPKP Coordinators and CPKP district council members for their efforts in collecting and reporting data on the effectiveness of CPKP.

We would also like to thank Karen Weaver, Kathy Miller, Sheryl Hough, Terry Hotz, Becky Byron, Ann Cecilia McGovern, and Emily Adams for their special contributions to this report. And we want to extend a special thank you to the children, teachers, and families whose pictures are featured throughout.



FINAL THOUGHTS FROM CPKP TEACHERS

For many of our children this is the first time they've been away from their mom, for most of them it is the first time they've been in a school setting, and for some of them it is their first time to interact with a group of other children. When all of these first time experiences happen in a CPKP classroom, it makes their transition to kindergarten all that much easier.

Preschool Team, Glenwood Springs Elementary School

I would like to share with CDE and the State Legislators how important the Colorado Preschool Program is to our community. We live in a very small rural area, where there are no other types of preschool or day care centers for our children to attend....Parents from here cannot afford gas or tuition to get their child to a program outside our community. The CPP has allowed parents to play an important role in their students learning inside and outside the classroom. In addition, this program has allowed parents to see that they can also achieve their goals. As a preschool teacher for the last sixteen years, I have observed how this program has enriched many lives of students, parents, school, and community. We would like to say....Thank you.

Preschool Teacher, Debeque School District

Nothing can describe the feeling of pride I have in my children that go on to kindergarten, than for a kindergarten teacher to tell me "I can tell which of the children I have that have been in preschool."

I know that they are ready to learn and grow and be proud of what they accomplish in their lives. I feel that it is so important to reach all those children out there that are eager and ready to learn. I truly believe that preschool makes a difference in the lives of children and their families.

Teacher, Adams #14 School District

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