



Colorado Preschool & Kindergarten Program

2008 Legislative Report



Colorado Department of Education

Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program 2008 Legislative Report

COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Pamela Jo Suckla (R), Chairman, 3rd Congressional District, *Slickrock*

Bob Schaffer (R), Vice Chairman, 4th Congressional District, *Ft. Collins*

Randy DeHoff (R), 6th Congressional District, *Littleton*

Elaine Gantz Berman (D), 1st Congressional District, *Denver*

Evie Hudak (D), 2nd Congressional District, *Westminster*

Karen Middleton (D), 7th Congressional District, *Aurora*

Peggy Littleton (R), 5th Congressional District, *Colorado Springs*



Dwight D. Jones,
Commissioner of Education

Karen L. Mock,
Deputy Commissioner

Vody Herrmann,
Director, Financing Public Schools Unit

Sharon Triolo-Moloney,
Assistant Director, Early Childhood Initiatives

The Colorado Department of Education's *Forward Thinking* plan is designed to increase the graduation rate and close the achievement gap in all Colorado schools. The main goal of *Forward Thinking* is "to create a purpose-driven and dynamic system of educational leadership, service, and support that relentlessly focuses on the learning of ALL students."

The plan was developed by the CDE Leadership Team in July, 2007 and has garnered unanimous support from the Colorado Board of Education. The plan includes the following major goals:

1. Guidance and support to meet district and school needs
2. Professional development in best practices
3. Tools to eliminate gaps and increase achievement for all students
4. A seamless, collaborative leadership system with intentional intensity, urgency and impatience
5. Efficient and effective use of federal, state and private funds
6. A reliable source for research, data, and analysis envied by all professionals
7. A model for building expanded leadership capacity




Twenty Years of Making a Difference

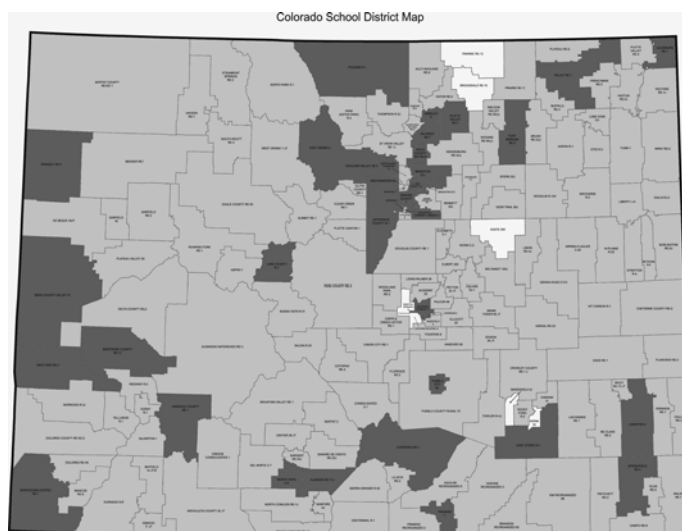
In 1988, the Colorado General Assembly declared that there were substantial numbers of children in Colorado entering kindergarten and the primary grades who were not adequately prepared to learn. They further declared that early school failure may ultimately contribute to these at-risk children dropping out of school at an early age, failing to achieve their full potential, becoming dependent upon public assistance or becoming involved in criminal activities (22-28-102 C.R.S.).

The General Assembly further acknowledged the need to adequately prepare preschool children whose life circumstances lead to greater vulnerability. As a result the “Colorado Preschool Project” was established. Since that time investing in preschool has been increasingly recognized as smart public policy at both the state and federal level. By making preschool and full-day kindergarten available to at-risk families, Colorado legislators have helped parents make the most of their children’s critical early learning years.

Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program at a Glance


- In the 2007-08 school year, CPKP is authorized to serve 16,360 children—13,906 preschool children and 2,454 full-day kindergarten children.
- 171 out of 178 (96.1 percent) school districts in Colorado participate in CPKP.
- With 13,906 preschool slots, the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program has the capacity to serve 19.3 percent of four-year-olds within the state. (Source: CDLA, Colorado Demography Office)
- With 2,454 full-day kindergarten slots, CPKP has the capacity to serve 4 percent of Colorado’s public school kindergarten students.
- In the 2007 school year, school districts identified an additional 8,205 preschool children who were CPKP eligible, but because of a lack of CPKP slots they were unable to serve these children.
- Over the last 20 years, 139,055 preschool children and 13,258 full-day kindergarten children have been served through the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program.

| Map Legend | |
|---|---|
|  | Original 33 school districts participating in the Colorado Preschool Project in 1988. |
|  | School districts that have joined the program since 1988. |
|  | School Districts not currently participating in CPKP |



Who are the Children Served in CPKP?

The population of young children is unique in each county within Colorado. As a result, CPKP slots are allocated to school districts based on the demonstrated need. When determining a school district's CPKP allocation, statute directs CDE to consider the number of eligible children in the district, the dropout rate, test scores, the number of schools, agencies and programs that will be involved in the program, and the school district's collaboration with the community in serving children and families.

| Risk Factors Used to Establish Eligibility for the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program | Percentage of Children Qualifying Under this Risk Factor |  <p>In 2006-07, children funded by the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program averaged 3.6 risk factors in their lives. The more risk factors young children experience, the more likely they are to encounter poor outcomes.</p> |
|--|--|---|
| Child is eligible to receive free or reduced-cost meals | 67.4% | |
| Child is in need of language development including learning English as a second language | 34.7% | |
| Child has been identified with poor social skills | 25.0% | |
| Child's parent has not successfully completed high school | 23.9% | |
| Either parent was less than 18 and unmarried at the time of the child's birth | 10.7% | |
| Frequent relocation of the child's family | 13.0% | |
| Child is receiving services from CDHS as neglected or dependent child | 8.5% | |
| Drug or alcohol abuse present in the family | 8.0% | |
| Child's family is homeless | 6.9% | |
| An abusive adult resides in the home of the child | 4.5% | |

"We understand that the statistical information for our district would typically indicate a healthy learning environment in which children thrive. However, based on our experience, we see a very different picture of the children who do not fit the typical mold of our community. Imagine the experience of a child coming from a home where a number of the risk factors exist: a home where the family is non-English speaking, where domestic violence regularly occurs, a home where substance abuse exists, and where no one has previously graduated from high school. Now picture that child entering a school in which more than 97% of the students graduate from high school and 89% of the 3rd graders are reading at proficient or above levels, and where the median income is \$54,300 per year... We believe we need to help these children establish a firm foundation for their learning."

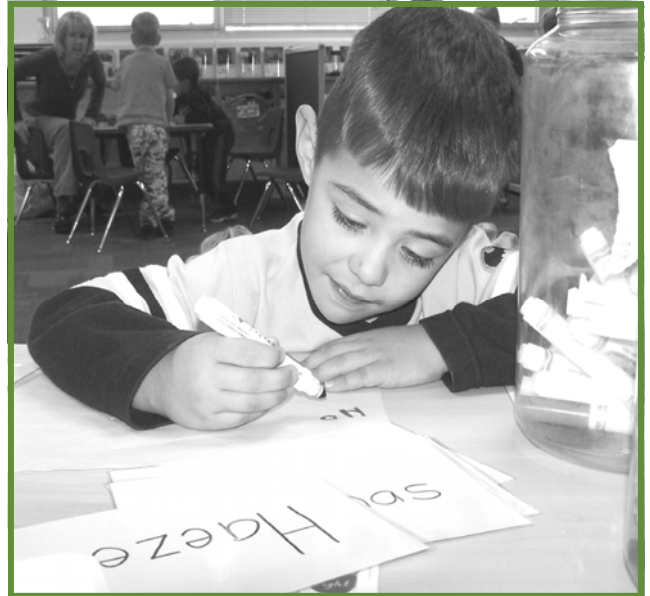
Lisa Mitchell, CPKP Coordinator, Lewis Palmer School District No. 38

Who Serves CPKP Children?

Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten children are served throughout Colorado in a mixed delivery system, which includes Head Start programs, private for-profit programs, non-profit programs, charter schools and other programs within public schools. In 2006-07, CPKP preschool children were served in the following ways:

- 15.1 percent were in Head Start programs
- 19.2 percent were served in community programs
- 65.6 percent were served in public school programs

This is very similar to other state funded preschool programs across the nation. In 2006, the National Institute for Early Education Research reported that two-thirds of children in state funded programs are served in public schools and one-third are in other settings such as private child care and Head Start.



"The school district provides many educational classes for our staff, as well as times to exchange ideas about our program with other preschool teachers. These sessions re-energize us and have helped us realize that as preschool teachers we are an integral part of the public education system. Working with other teachers and special education support staff in the district has added to our knowledge, and has given us a chance to be a part of the team helping to lower the number of children that are at risk of not graduating from high school."

Harold and Elizabeth Harris,
Kid's Campus Preschool LLC
Grand Junction

How Does the CPKP Legislation Ensure Collaboration?

Colorado recognizes that there is significant value in using existing and established early childhood programs, where available, for serving CPKP children. As a result, partnerships are encouraged in the following ways throughout the CPKP Act:

1. District advisory councils are given the responsibility to decide locally who is best qualified to deliver CPKP services. These councils are mandated to include representatives from publicly funded early childhood education agencies, and representatives from privately funded child care centers.
2. At least once every two years, the district advisory council must assess whether alternative community providers are available by releasing a Request for Proposal (RFP).
3. When allocating slots the department must give priority to school districts with proposals that indicate efforts to collaborate with public and private child care agencies located in the district.
4. The state board cannot require preschool teachers to be licensed but must allow the school district, a Head Start agency, or a child care agency to employ non-licensed preschool teachers.
5. In districts with 750 students or less, money may not be spent on new preschool or kindergarten facilities unless the board has considered whether the program can be contracted out to a community program.

The Quality of the Program is Key

Where a child is served in CPKP depends on the resources available within the community. CPKP statute prohibits any local school board of education from contracting out the district preschool program unless the board is assured that the Head Start agency, preschool or child care center will provide a quality program.

In 2006-07, out of the 176 school districts with CPKP preschool slots, 40 percent had no other early childhood program in their community, so the school district had to establish a preschool program in the public school. Twenty-four percent of the districts were in communities with high quality early childhood programs and those districts contracted out all of their slots.

Despite the fact that CPKP only has the resources to serve 19 percent of the four-year-olds in the state, district councils have partnered with a large percentage of the early childhood programs in Colorado. The extent of these partnerships is identified in the table below.

| Type of Early Childhood Program | % in State That Serve CPKP Children |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Licensed Preschools | 58% |
| Licensed Child Care Centers | 19% |
| Charter Schools Operating Preschool Programs | 27% |
| Head Start Agencies | 59% |



Full-Day Preschool

The CPKP preschool program funds a child to participate in an early childhood program for 10 hours per week, per school year. This does not meet the child care needs of low-income working families. The limited funding makes it less cost effective for child care centers - which mostly operate full-day, full-year programs - to serve CPKP children.

Statute encourages CPKP District Advisory councils to coordinate CPKP with extended day programs. Programs are allowed to extend a CPKP preschool child's day with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding, but these resources are limited. Parents may also pay tuition beyond what CPKP provides to meet their child care needs. However, communities have found that families who qualify for free and reduced cost meals often can't afford child care. A limited number of Head Start programs have also braided the part-day funding from Head Start with the part-day funding from CPKP to offer a full-day program.

The Legislature also allows programs to use two CPKP preschool "slots" to fund one child to participate in a program for a full-day. The statute limits the number of slots that can be used in this way to 5 percent or 610 slots (2006-07). In 2006-07, district advisory councils only requested 208 children to be double funded, which was well below the cap.

Most of these full-day preschool children were served in community child care centers. District Councils chose to request the double funding for children with very high needs, when no other funding source was available, and the children could not participate in the program unless they were allowed to stay for a full-day. District advisory councils were very cautious in requesting full-day preschool slots because they realized if they served one child with two slots, another preschool child would remain on the waiting list.

Results Matter: Early Childhood Accountability Program

The Results Matter program is a comprehensive accountability program designed to improve student achievement in Colorado's early care and education programs, including those programs that serve CPKP funded children. Results Matter promotes the ongoing collection and use of assessment data to inform day-to-day instructional practices in early childhood programs. It also facilitates the use of child, family, program and system outcomes data to guide decision making at the program, community and state levels.

The program consists of five components:

- Short-term Child Outcomes or Progress Measures
- Longitudinal Studies of Child Outcomes
- Family Outcomes
- Program Quality Measures
- Professional Development Measures



"The Creative Curriculum has provided us with a dynamic, exciting, and flexible approach to meet each student's needs. Our classrooms are richer in the activities available and more individualized since observation of children is emphasized."

Libby Culver
CPKP Coordinator
Durango School District

Short-Term Child Outcomes or Progress Measures

Short-term child outcomes are measured through the ongoing use of one of three early childhood assessment systems. The table below indicates the number of sites and children involved with each of these tools.

| Assessment Tool | Number of Sites | Number of Children |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| The Work Sampling System | 116 | 4,844 |
| High/Scope Child Observation Record | 152 | 4,982 |
| Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum | 656 | 18,298 |

All assessments are managed through secure online systems and include opportunities for administrators, teachers and interventionists to have immediate access to assessment data organized by individual child, class or program site. There are also opportunities for families to view and participate in documenting their child's developmental and educational progress.

| Developmental Domain | % of Children Scoring at Step III in the Fall | % of Children Scoring at Step III in the Spring |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Language | 3% | 44% |
| Literacy | 2% | 36% |
| Mathematics | 2% | 35% |
| Science | 2% | 37% |
| Creative Arts | 2% | 41% |
| Social Emotional | 3% | 48% |
| Approaches to Learning | 2% | 37% |
| Physical Health | 4% | 56% |

The table on the left provides 2006-07 data from school districts who were trained and experienced in using the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum.

In completing this assessment, teachers observe children frequently throughout the year as they participate in program activities. Three times a year, teachers evaluate the information they have documented through observation notes and work samples and then identify each child's developmental step in the identified domains.

Step III represents the highest level in the sequence of development.

CPKP Helps to Close the Readiness Gap Before It Becomes the Achievement Gap

Research demonstrates that children who attend a high quality preschool enter school better prepared to learn—particularly children whose life circumstances lead to greater vulnerability. For at-risk children, preschool can provide the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that can lead to academic success. Without this support, children can begin kindergarten behind and this gap in school readiness may haunt students' performance throughout their school careers. On this page are several examples of how students who attend preschool arrive in kindergarten better prepared to learn than their peers who have not participated in CPKP.

In the Fall of 2006, **Adams #12 Five Star Schools** evaluated kindergarteners entry reading scores, and compared those children who were CPKP graduates with those children who had not attended a preschool program. The evaluation found that overall, CPKP children were better prepared for kindergarten. When considering the English Language Learners (ELL), 43.6 percent of the students attending CPKP preschool were testing at grade level, compared to 22 percent of the ELL students who had not attended preschool.

Yuma School District found only 17 percent of former CPKP preschool students required an Individual Literacy Plan (ILP) in kindergarten, compared to 36 percent of those students not attending preschool.

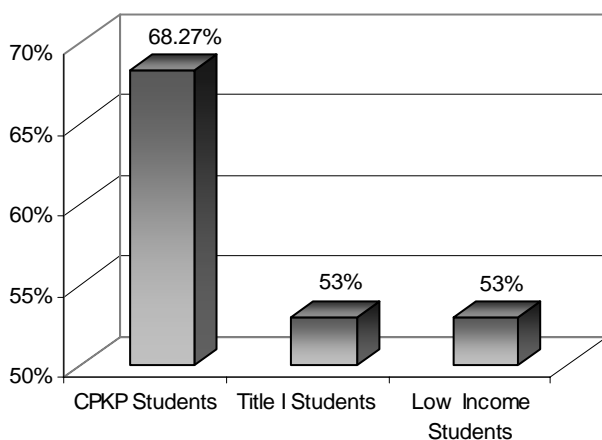
In the **Brighton School District**, the kindergarten teachers of 2005-06 CPKP preschool students report that 85 percent of CPKP students were at or above grade level.

In the **Canon City School District**, 51 percent of the CPKP kindergarten students achieved "benchmark" in their beginning kindergarten literacy assessment, which was 13 percent higher than their peers.

"I care deeply about my community and the educational opportunities that are available to all children — not just those children whose parents can afford to provide such opportunities."

Christina A. Landeryou
Attorney, Durango

Comparison of Students Statewide Scoring Proficient or Above on the 2006 Third Grade Reading CSAP



Academic Gains for Children Participating In Preschool are Long Lasting

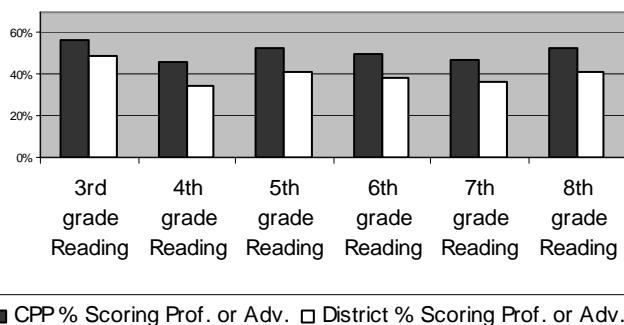


Poor quality early childhood programs may generate small educational benefits that diminish over time, but high quality programs result in larger benefits that endure into adulthood.

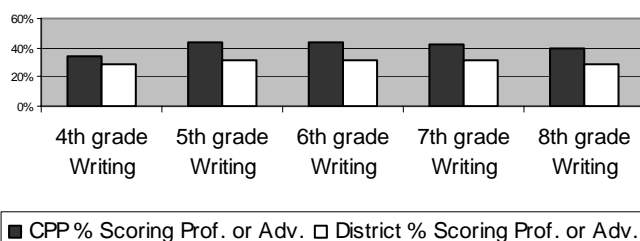
Below are data from two districts that have been able to track groups of CPKP preschoolers into the middle school years on multiple CSAP assessments. CPKP funded preschool children outperform their peers on 3rd grade CSAP assessments and these gains are maintained through the middle school years.

CPKP Cohorts in Denver Public Schools

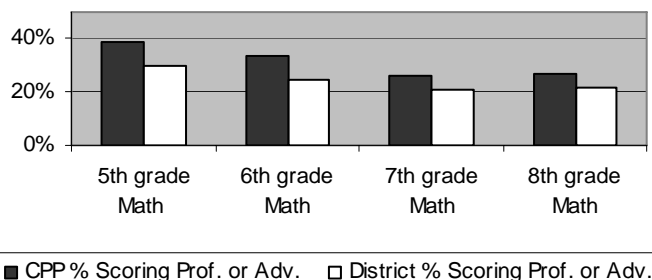
CSAP Reading Outcomes in Grades 3-8 for Students Participating in CPP



CSAP Writing Outcomes in Grades 3-8 for Students Participating in CPP

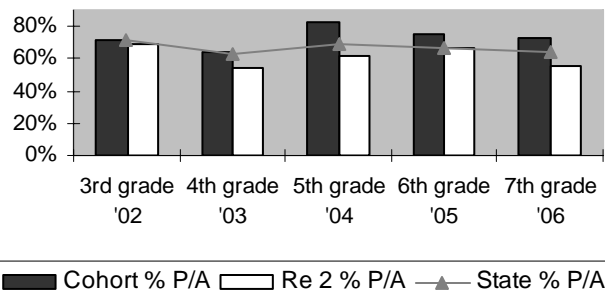


CSAP Math Outcomes in Grades 3-8 for Students Participating in CPP

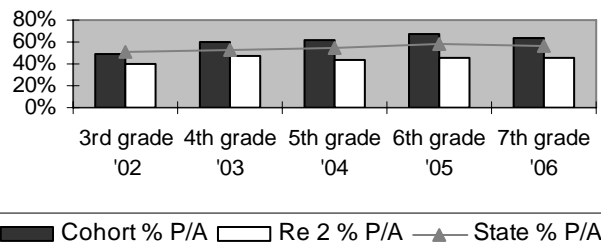


CPKP Cohorts in Garfield RE-2 School District

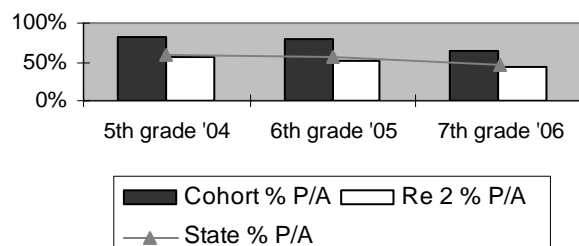
CSAP Reading Outcomes in Grades 3-7 for Students Participating in CPP



CSAP Writing Outcomes in Grades 3-7 for Students Participating in CPP



CSAP Math Outcomes in Grades 5-7 for Students Participating in CPP



Strong Partnerships with Families are Key

An important component of the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program is family support and involvement. Programs that are able to engage families in their child's education can strengthen parents' ability to support their children throughout their school career. This leads to longer lasting achievement—particularly for children at-risk.

The Results Matter program is using a national survey developed by the Early Childhood Outcomes Center to gather information about families' experiences in Colorado's early childhood programs. The survey was piloted last year with a small number of families in rural, mountain and urban communities. 300 families participated in this pilot. Below are some of their responses to the survey questions.

Professionals who work with you and your child want to know if the things they do are working. How often is your family able to tell if your child is making progress?

47 percent of families indicated that they "almost always can tell" if their child is making progress

32 percent of families reported that they "usually can tell" if their child is making progress

To what extent has your child's preschool program helped your family know how to help your child learn?

56 percent of families indicated that their child's preschool program did an "excellent job"

33 percent a "good job" of helping them know how to help their child learn

To what extent has your child's preschool program encouraged your family to be actively involved in your child's education level?

53 percent of families surveyed say, "Our child's preschool program has done an excellent job of encouraging us to be actively involved in our child's education"

34 percent say their child's program has done a "good job"

To what extent has your child's preschool program included your family as a full partner in making decisions about your child's education?

66 percent reported that their child's preschool program did an "excellent job" of including them as a full partner

23 percent said their child's program did a "good job"



"To say that our family has had a run of bad luck in the last year is an understatement, but I thank my lucky stars that we were able to qualify to get into a class like this."

Strasburg Parent

"I was really concerned about how my son would do in a preschool setting. He was so young and often I couldn't understand what he wanted and needed. His teacher helped him learn how to communicate in class and has helped me learn how to use the same strategies at home. Now he is much happier and we feel more confident and successful as parents. I feel that his preschool made all the differences for him and for us."

Windsor Parent

"The benefit of the CPKP program to parents and community is two-fold. First, the parents learn strategies that they can use to assist their children in learning and continue to share those strategies with their younger children to increase student skills even more. Second, parents begin to share strategies with other parents or community members and eventually to their grown children who will in turn share it with their children and so forth. The CPKP benefit is ever lasting."

Cynthia Smart, Principal, Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary School, Durango

Full-Day Kindergarten

Currently, the legislature authorizes 2,454 children in the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program to attend full-day kindergarten. In the CPKP Act, the number of CPKP slots that can be used for full-day kindergarten is capped at 15 percent.

Including the children in the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program, 34 percent of the kindergarteners in Colorado attended a full-day kindergarten program in the 2006-07 school year. However, only the CPKP children were funded in the School Finance Formula at a full FTE. Assessment data provided by the 60 school districts with CPKP full-day kindergarten allocations corroborates the importance of early education on children's readiness for school.

Requirements for CPKP Full-Day Kindergarten Programs

In addition to providing an extended day of kindergarten, CPKP full-day kindergartens must meet the following program requirements. Many staff, parents and administrators feel these requirements make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of full-day kindergarten.

- Eligibility is determined for each individual child. Kindergarten children funded in the program must meet the eligibility factors established in statute for CPKP.
- Programs must limit class size to 20 and provide a paraprofessional for at least the half day supported by CPKP funds.
- The effectiveness of the programs and outcomes for children must be measured and reported to CDE annually.
- Programs must meet the program Quality Standards and CPKP Advisory Council Members must provide on-site visits at least twice a year.
- Family involvement and support is required.

Alamosa School District implemented CPKP full-day kindergarten for the first time in the 2006-07 school year. District assessment data collected on CPKP kindergarten classrooms for the first year indicate CPKP student's performance exceeded that of their peers.

| | <i>Initial</i> | <i>Final</i> |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| BEAR – Basic Early Assessment of Reading | | |
| <i>CPKP classroom</i> | 66% | 88% |
| <i>Kindergarten average at benchmark</i> | 65% | 81% |
| DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy | | |
| <i>CPKP students at benchmark</i> | 20% | 100% |
| <i>Kindergarten average at benchmark</i> | 46% | 78% |
| <i>Kindergarten children attending two half-day programs, with different staff and classrooms each half-day.</i> | 24% | 61% |



Denver Public Schools: Of the low income children attending full-day kindergarten and preschool in DPS, 74 percent were reading at grade level. Of those who attended only kindergarten and no pre-school, only 48 percent read at grade level.

Full-Day Kindergarten: One District's Story Before and After CPKP

In 2006, Pueblo City School District was awarded Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program (CPKP) full-day *kindergarten* funding to improve the quality of kindergarten in five of their Title I elementary schools. All of these schools were already providing full-day kindergarten to their communities. But with the addition of CPKP funding, resources were provided to make the following required programmatic changes. The table below identifies the major changes.

| 2005 Full-Day Kindergarten Program | 2006 CPKP Full-Day Kindergarten Program |
|--|--|
| No limit on class size | Class size limited to 15 |
| No instructional assistant support in classroom. | Instructional assistant added to each classroom. |
| All schools provided a minimum of 60 minutes of Guided Reading Groups and Literacy Centers. Only one rotation was teacher directed and two rotations had to be independent due to the lack of additional instructional support in the classroom. | Literacy blocks were still devoted to guided Reading Groups and Literacy Centers but now included one rotation that was teacher directed, another rotation that was lead by an instructional assistant and only one rotation that was independent. |
| Instruction was mostly direct, whole group. | Developmentally appropriate curriculum components were added including center based play time which helped students develop vocabulary skills, increase cooperation with peers, practice handling conflict, use higher level thinking skills and multiple intelligences. |
| District wide kindergarten professional development was provided to teachers once a month. | Additional professional development was provided to both teachers and instructional aides on supporting language development, problem solving skills within the play centers, and best practices in early childhood. |

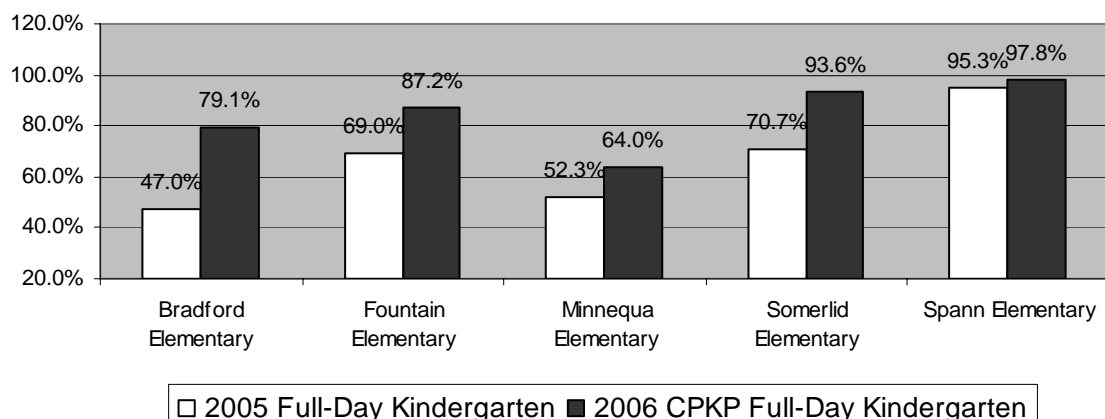


*"In all of our combined years of teaching kindergarten at Bradford Elementary... we have never had students experience such gains in literacy skills. **Our students truly soared!** It is quite evident that the kindergarten program at Bradford has experienced far more success than in any prior year and we believe that these gains and milestones are a direct result of the successful implementation of the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program."*

Bradford Kindergarten Teachers in Pueblo #60 School District

As a result of these changes children's performance on the end of year literacy assessments increased in all five Pueblo elementary schools receiving CPKP full-day kindergarten slots. This data indicates it is not the length of the day alone that contributes to children's success in kindergarten, but the quality of the program is also key to children's achievement levels.

Comparison of Percentage of Full-Day Kindergarten Students Achieving "Benchmark" on the Spring DIBELS Assessment Before and After CPKP was Implemented



Colorado Department of Education

For More Information, Please Contact:

Lori Goodwin Bowers

CPKP Senior Consultant
School Finance Unit
(303) 866-6783
Bowers_L@cde.state.co.us

Jane Miyahara

CPKP Consultant
School Finance Unit
(303) 866-6334
Miyahara_J@cde.state.co.us



Colorado Department of
Education

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

We also want to extend a special thank you to the children, teachers, and families whose pictures are featured throughout.

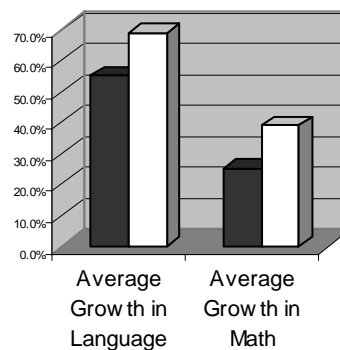
Final Thoughts on CPKP Full-Day Kindergarten:

"We know first hand what works: quality kindergarten programming (i.e., smaller class size, additional classroom support, curricular changes, and the implementation of scientifically based reading research strategies appropriate for young children) yielded outstanding results for communities with some of the highest poverty indicators in Pueblo. As a result of implementing quality kindergarten programming, not only has student academic achievement improved, but teachers report substantial growth in children's affective development, social skills, expressive language, and problem solving abilities."



Daryl Gagliano Ed.S., Pueblo #60, Director of Early Childhood Education

Percentage of Growth for Half Day Kindergarten Students vs. Full Day Kindergarten Students in Lake County in 2006-07



"One of the great strengths of the program is the small class size and the number of teachers in the room. By having two teachers working with no more than fifteen children, the students are supported, given enough time to engage in different activities and provided with regular, consistent individualized attention. The benefits of a small class size, and teacher-student ratio cannot be stressed enough for students with backgrounds such as those who qualify for CPKP."

Emily Adams,
CPKP Coordinator, Lake
County School District

The Colorado Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age, in access to employment in, or provision of any of CDE's programs, benefits or activities. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding this policy. Please contact either:

Patrick Chapman
Colorado Department of Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1450
Denver, CO 80202

Wendi Kispert
Colorado Department of Education
201 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80202



*For further information about the
Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program, contact:*

Lori Goodwin Bowers, CPKP Senior Consultant
School Finance Unit
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Ave., Room 409
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-6783
bowers_l@cde.state.co.us

or

Jane Miyahara, CPKP Consultant
School Finance Unit
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Ave., Room 409
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-6334
miyahara_j@cde.state.co.us