

MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR EDUCATION & CHILDREN  
PEAK PERFORMANCE REVIEW

AUGUST 30, 2012

FOR THE PERIOD COVERING: JANUARY 2012-JUNE 2012





## Vision Alignment

**Citywide Vision:** We will deliver a world-class city where everyone matters.

**Agency Vision :** Deliver a City where all children, youth and their families have the opportunity to succeed.

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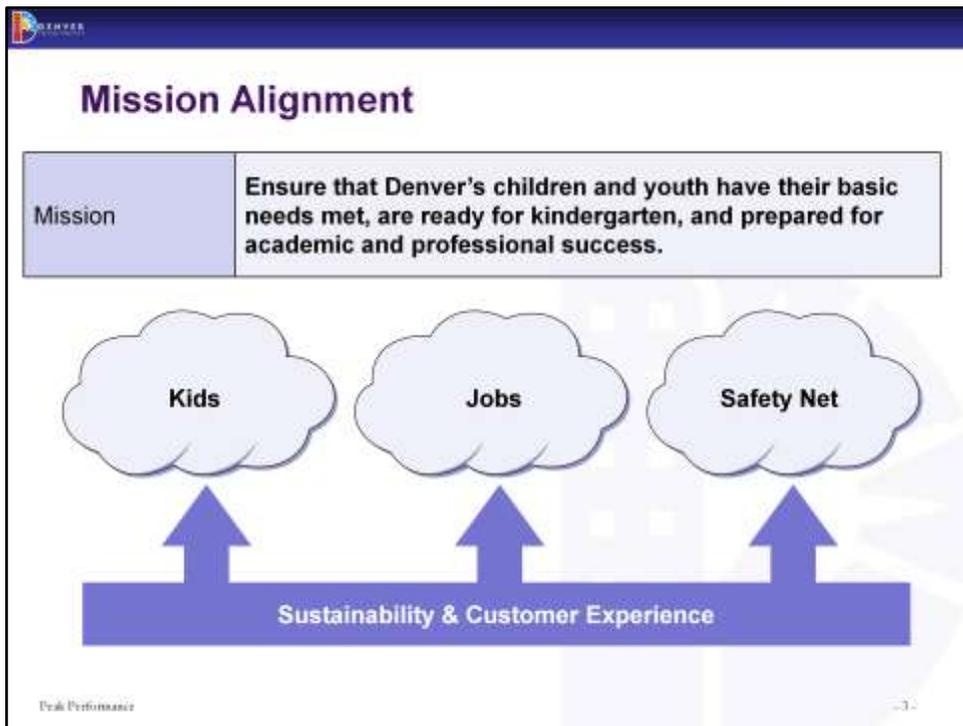
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Today's children are the future leaders of Denver. Unfortunately, too many Denver children face obstacles most of which stem from poverty.

We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to realize his or her potential, regardless of obstacles and challenges. We also believe that the City must work together with the community to extend the reach of programs, services and resources in order to achieve Mayor Hancock's vision and our own.

Finally, we believe that when children are given an opportunity to succeed, their achievements far exceed our expectations. It is our responsibility to create opportunities for Denver children and youth.



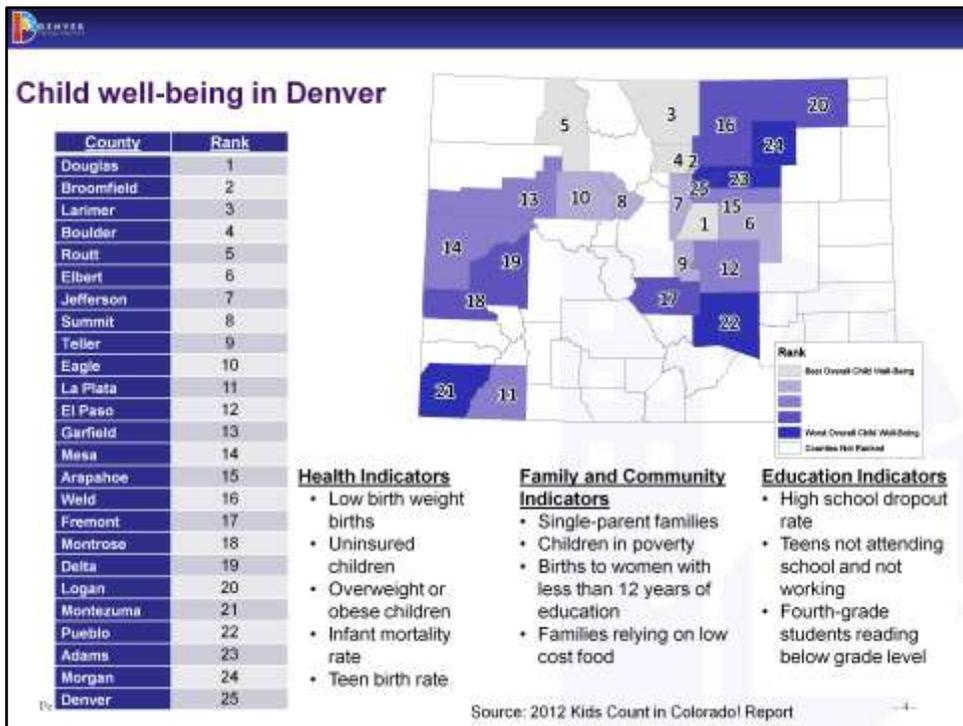
From the highest level, the Office of Children’s Affairs focuses issues facing Denver children and youth from the cradle to career pipeline. The primary focus is on educational opportunity and access. If we are successful, we will have built a “Grow Our Own” pipeline of educated young people who are prepared to lead Denver’s civic and business endeavors.

**Kids** – the Office of Children’s Affairs focuses on increasing access and participation to programs, services and resources for children and youth as well as improve the quality of the programs and services that they utilize.

**Jobs** – Many of the programs and services that our office supports include providing children and youth with high quality child care and out of school time programs. When children have access to high quality care, families are able to work and often have increased productivity. Additionally, we are preparing children and youth for their future careers.

**Safety/Safety Net** – Many of the issues that the Office of Children’s Affairs works on have income eligibility requirements and are focused on some of Denver’s most vulnerable children and families. Additionally, through our food programs we are helping meet the most basic of needs.

**Sustainability** – Program and service sustainability are key to the long-term success of Denver children. By responsibly managing limited resources and partnering with City agencies and community organizations, we strive to create a sustainable support



In Colorado, child well-being varies widely from place to place. It cannot be assessed by one factor alone, as many factors contribute to a child’s opportunities to grow up healthy and strong, including education achievement, physical and mental health, and the overall strength and support of the family and community. Simply, the lower the prevalence of disadvantage, the better children’s opportunities are to succeed.

Consistent and reliable data on factors impacting child well-being are available for most of Colorado’s largest counties. The Colorado Child well-Being Index, produced for this year’s KIDS COUNT report, assesses and ranks child well-being in 25 of the state’s largest counties using 12 indicators that provide a snapshot of children’s health, education, and family and community. These 25 counties are home to approximately 95 percent of Colorado’s child population.

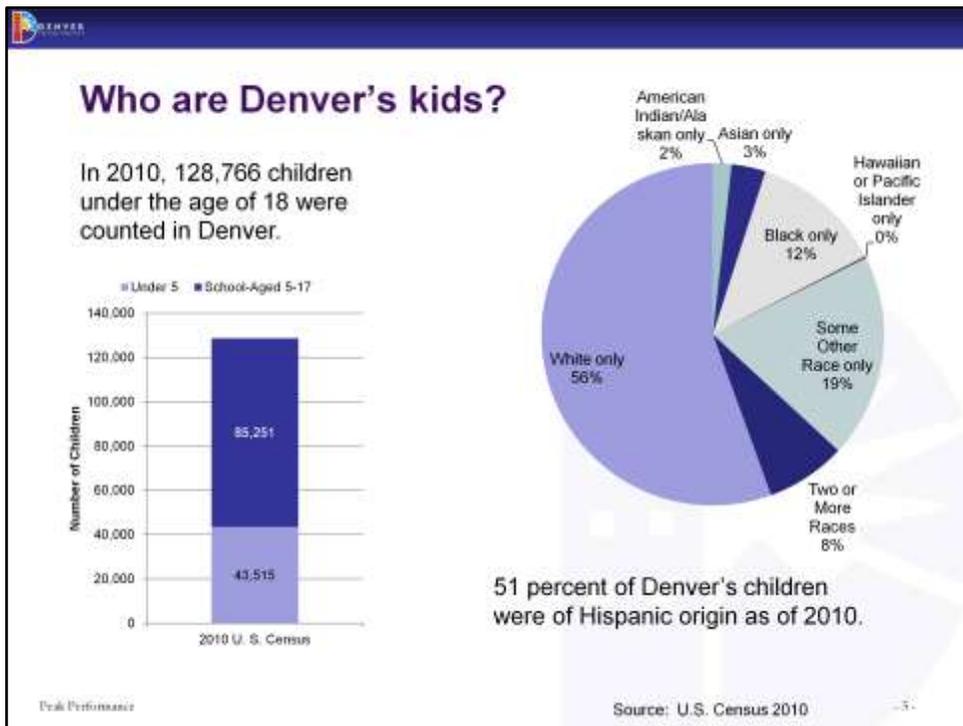
This index is modeled after the national child well-being index used by our partner organization, the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

**12 key indicators are aggregated into one over-all score that measures** child well-being. These factors were chosen because:

They reflect a **wide range of factors** affecting the well-being of children;

They reflect experiences across a **range of developmental stages**; and

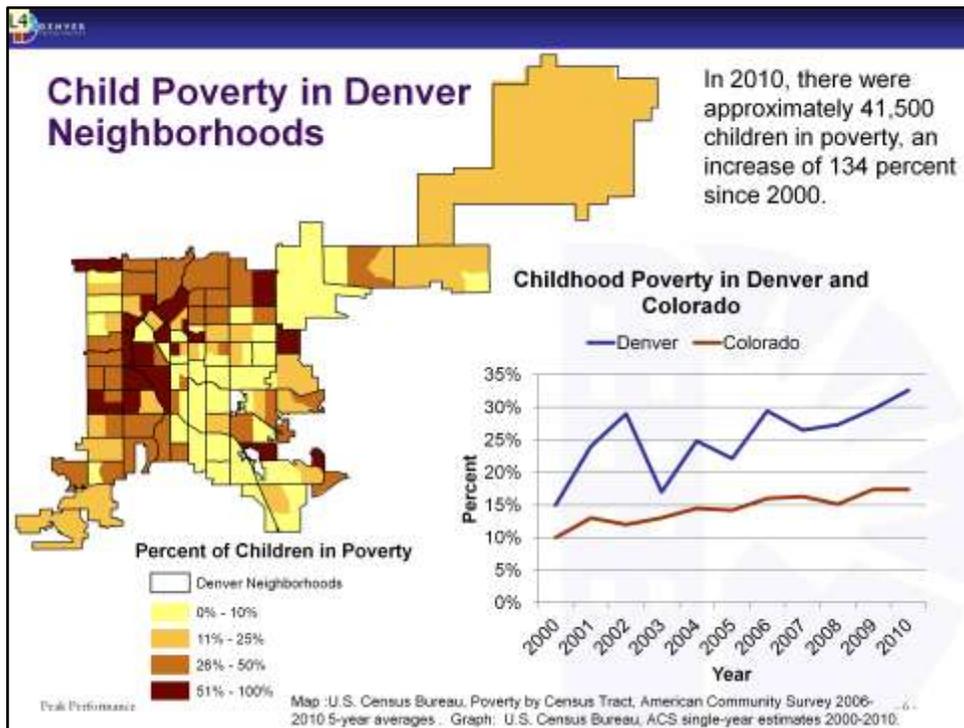
They permit legitimate comparisons because they are **consistent across counties**.



Denver is home to nearly 130,000 children under the age of 18. In order to frame the focus of the Office of Children’s Affairs and the Children’s Cabinet, we thought it would be important to provide some background information on who Denver’s kids are.

Denver is a diverse community composed of numerous racial and ethnic groups. Non-English speaking populations under 18 make up more than half of the poverty level groups.

The Census Bureau reports race by category as illustrated in the pie chart. Hispanic origin is defined as an ethnicity and not a racial category. Therefore, it’s possible to identify as Hispanic in any racial category (i.e. white Hispanic, Black Hispanic, Asian Hispanic).



- The federal poverty line (100%FPL) is \$22,050 for a family of four.
- A percentage of the federal poverty level (FPL) is often used to determine eligibility for programs such as Head Start and free and reduced-price lunch programs.
  - Head Start Eligibility: 100%FPL
  - Free Lunch: 130% FPL (\$29,055 for a family of four)
  - Reduced Price Lunch: 185%FPL (\$41,348 for a family of four)
    - Denver has 72% or about 58,256 of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Most of these children (66%) are eligible for free lunch and 7% are eligible for reduced-price lunch.
- Child poverty is not evenly distributed in Denver. Some areas have a high percentage of children living in poverty while other areas do not.



## What we do...How we do it

**What:**

- Increase access
- Increase participation
- Improve quality

**How:**

- Using data to identify gaps in programs and services.
- Collaborating internally and externally to remove barriers.
- Convening and connecting programs, services, funders, the business community
- Streamlining how city agencies work together and with DPS to serve children.
- Developing innovative strategies to address gaps and expand areas of strength (*Children and Youth*)
- Train and educate families, providers and the community (*Children and Youth*)

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The Office of Children’s Affairs plays an important role within the City and in the community. For the most part, we do not provide direct services or run programs. We administer funds for important programs like Head Start and provide some funding for things like Lights on After School, but we are not an actual provider with the exception of the 5 By 5 Project.

Our office is undergoing a transformation and moving from measuring inputs and outputs to establishing baselines that will allow us to measure child outcomes as much as possible.

We are part of an important effort right now that involves the Piton Foundation, Mile High United Way, and our office to develop shared indicators on key children’s issues. This will allow us to measure progress the same way around shared indicators and start moving the broader service community to thinking about how their work actually impacts a child’s life. It is our hope that this work leads to more strategic, high quality programs and services for Denver’s children and youth.

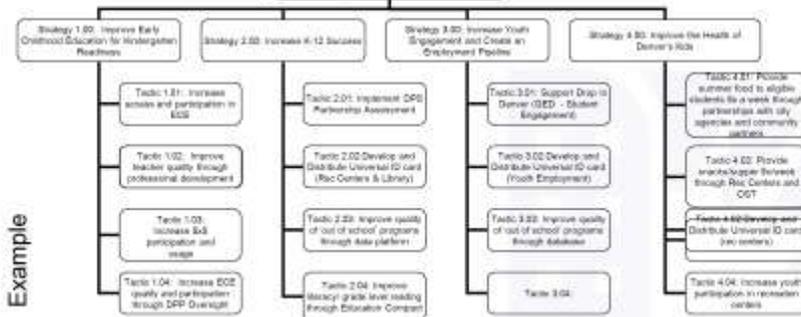
## Priority Areas and Key Initiatives

- **School Readiness:**
  - Denver Education Compact – Early Literacy
  - Denver Great Kids Head Start
  - 5 By 5 Project
  - Denver Preschool Program Oversight
- **K-12**
  - Funder of Lights on After School Initiative
  - Lead Partner on Out-of-School-Time Alliance
  - Student ID Program
- **Youth Success**
  - Drop In Denver
  - Mayor's Youth Commission
  - Mayor's Youth Awards
- **Health**
  - Summer Food Service Program
  - After School Meals Program



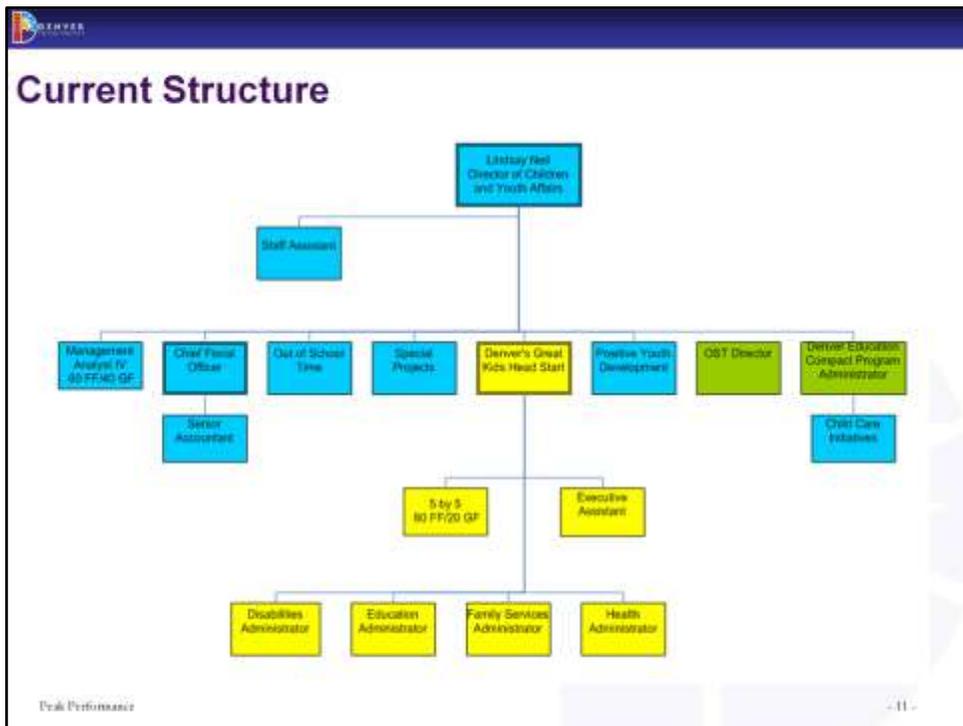
# Strategic Plan Overview

Mission: Ensure Denver's At-Risk Youth have the basic needs met, are ready for kindergarten, and academic and professional success



Example





In order to achieve our goals, the Office of Children’s Affairs has spent the last eight months moving from a funding-driven structure to a function driven structure.

The organization is still in flux as staff retire and staff skills are aligned with the needs of the office.

Key:

Blue – General Fund

Yellow – Head Start (federal funds)

Green – Special grant funds

**School Readiness: Head Start**

Denver Great Kids Head Start is a quality early learning program that prepares children to enter kindergarten confidently with the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive skills and competencies necessary for continued school success.

- The City of Denver is a federal Head Start grantee charged with managing an 8.8 million dollar budget and overseeing 6 delegate agencies.
- Denver Great Kids Head Start serves 63% of all Head Start children in the City and County of Denver and 29% of eligible children.
- The program is funded to serve 1,153 children and their families.

**Children Served in Denver Great Kids Head Start**

School Year	Below Poverty	Public Assistance	Foster Children	Homeless
2008-2009	~1,000	~150	~100	~50
2009-2010	~1,000	~150	~100	~50
2010-2011	~1,000	~150	~100	~50

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**What it is:**

Head Start serves children ages 3-5 prior to entering kindergarten.

Denver Great Kids Head Start Program is focused on the 4 priority areas of school readiness, health, mental health and disabilities, and family engagement.

Delegate agencies are community providers that actually provide the education services to the children. The 6 delegate agencies are:

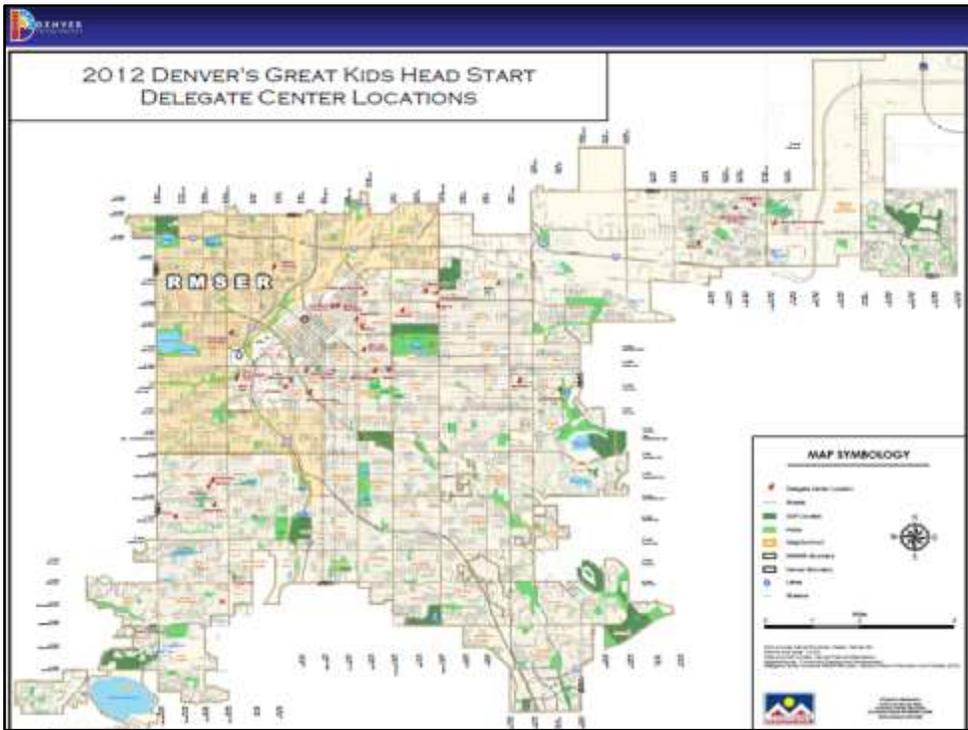
Denver Public Schools, Mile High Montessori, Clayton Early Learning, Catholic Charities, Family Star, Volunteers of America

There are two Head Start grantees that serve the City and County of Denver – Denver Great Kids Head Start and Rocky Mountain SER.

17 percent of Denver Great Kids Head Start children have a disability.

**Where we are:**

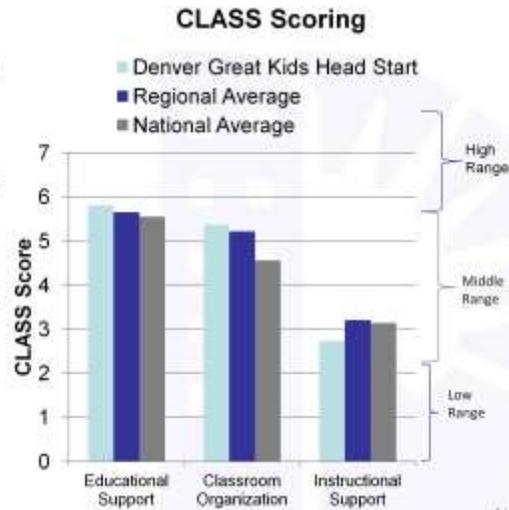
We have made significant changes in our staffing structure, our focus on outcomes and use of data to guide strategies. That will be enhanced with the addition of the Director of Research and Analysis, Dr. Lisa Piscopo. We have also taken a close look at how we can increase operational efficiencies in order to save money that can and must be reinvested in the program. Finally, we are working diligently to improve our program



Denver Great Kids Head Start services are offered at 33 child care centers through 55 classrooms.

## Quality Measures: CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System)

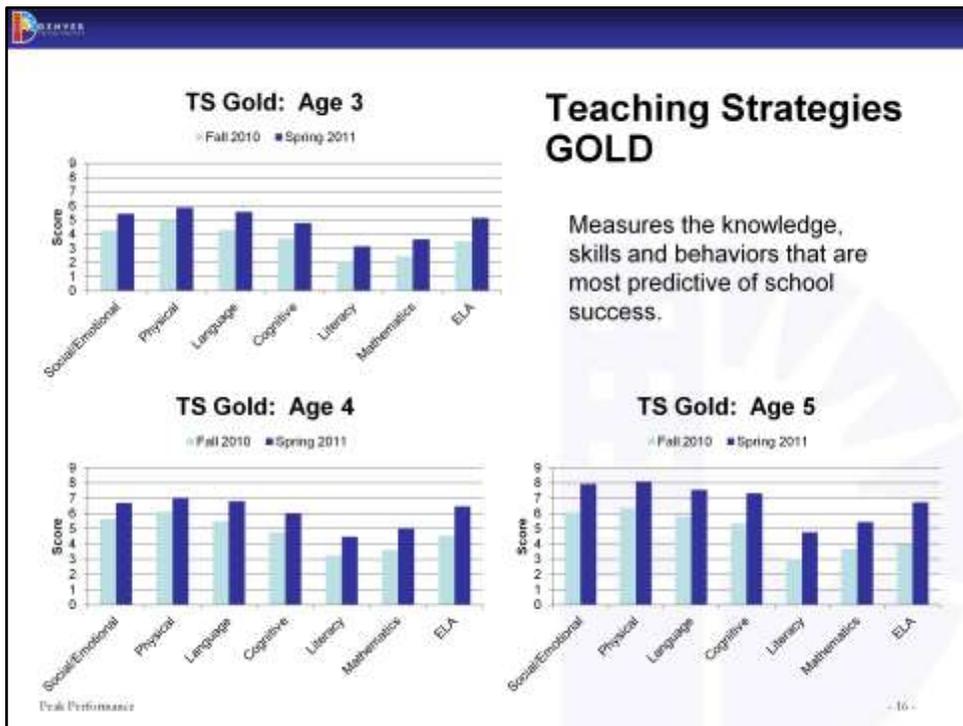
- The CLASS is a new assessment tool designed to measure teacher-child interactions that lead to increased student learning.
- The number one in school factor of student success is the quality of the teacher.
- 5 out of the 6 Denver Great Kids Head Start Delegate agencies and the Denver Preschool Program are using CLASS.





•DGKHS monitors teacher qualifications twice yearly and has incorporated this measure in the Education Administrator’s annual performance plan. Historically DGKHS has always exceeded the national requirement for teacher qualifications.

•DGKHS continues to invest resources for credentialing teachers and teacher assistants and is investing an additional \$55,000 toward this effort.

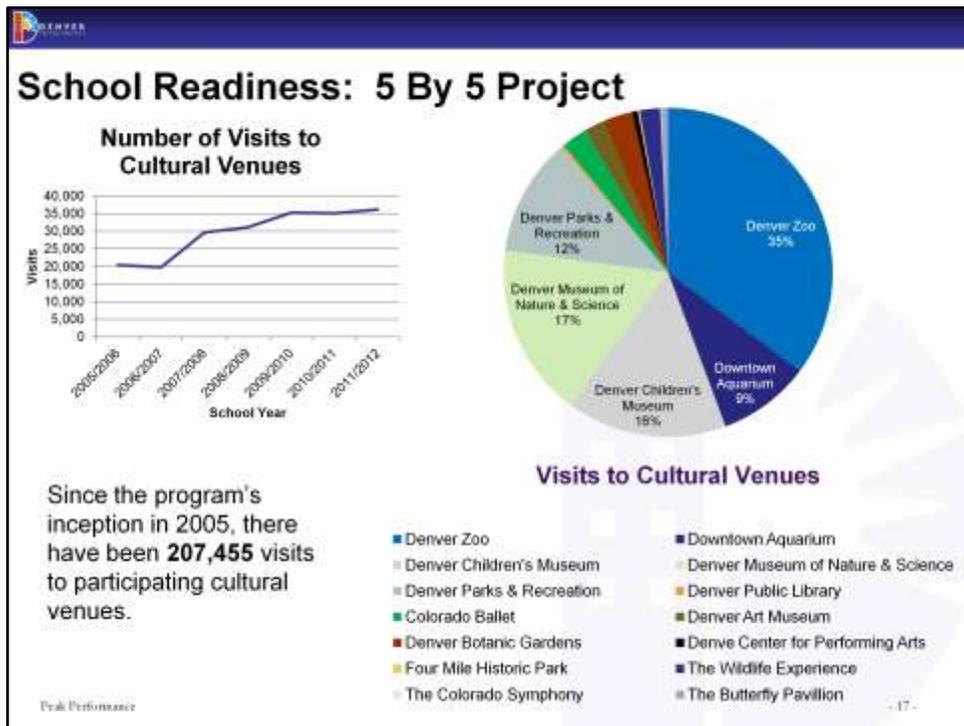


Teaching Strategies GOLD is an assessment tool for early childhood teachers that enables them to increase effectiveness of their assessments while decreasing the time it takes to effectively record and compile important learning outcome information.

Teaching Strategies GOLD is based on 38 research-based objectives that guide teachers throughout the assessment cycle. They include predictors of school success, and are aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, Common Core Standards, and early learning standards for each state. The objectives are organized into 10 areas of development and learning, including broad developmental areas, content areas, and English language acquisition.

All DGKHS content area staff have goals tied to increasing school readiness as measured by the Teaching Strategies GOLD.

All delegates collect the same way, allowing accurate aggregation of data for all State reports available for the state, DGKHS, delegates, classrooms, and child. Plan to tie to DPS student ID to track progress into K-12



### What it is:

- The 5 By 5 Project was created in 2005 and provides children the opportunity to visit at least 5 cultural venues by the age of 5.
- Through the 5 By 5 Project, families enrolled in Denver Head Start or Early Head Start programs with children under the age of 5 receive FREE admission throughout the year to world-class exhibits and performances. Head Start and Early Head Start staff also receive professional development training along with educational materials that are used to enhance their classroom curriculum and student achievement.

### Where we were:

- The Project started with approximately 2,000 students and 10 cultural partners.

### Where we are:

- The program has expanded to 2,800 students with 15 cultural partners.
- Since the Project began in 2005, participating families have logged more than 200,000 visits to the cultural attractions, using the 5 By 5 learning opportunities to broaden their perceptions of the world.
- This year, the recently opened History Colorado Center joins the 5 By 5 Project's list of cultural partners in welcoming Denver families with unlimited Free visits.



## School Readiness: 5 By 5 Project

### Strategies to Increase Access and Participation, and Improve Quality

- **Make Classrooms "Whole"**

Cultural partners agreed to expand their offerings to other students intergraded into Head Start program that met the low-income guidelines but are funded through another source. Approximately 250 students were added.

- **Professional Development Offered to Staff**

In the past Head Start staff were encourage to attend professional development trainings offered at the cultural venues. Five trainings were offered a year. This year 7 trainings will be offered and Head Start staff will be expected to attend two.

- **Staff Visits to Cultural Venues**

Staff will be expected to visit at least 5 cultural venues and work with at least one cultural education coordinator to support the classroom curriculum and activities

- **Parent Training**

Parents will be expected to attend one parent training offered twice a year.

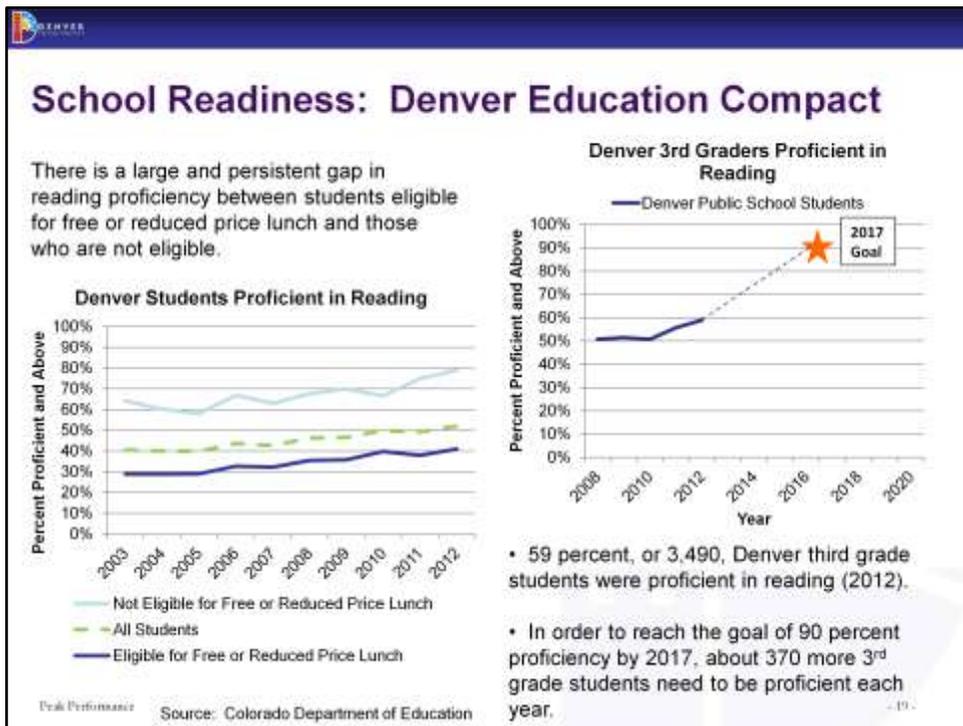


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### Where we want to go:

- Our goal is to increase access to the 5 By 5 Project for additional children and families, expand the number of professional development opportunities for teachers and Head Start /Early Head Start parents, and add an additional cultural partners.
- Cultural venues and Head Start/Early Head Start Staff will capture data uniformly that will connect the student, family and staff visits and trainings to specific classrooms.



### What it is:

The Denver Education Compact was established by Mayor Hancock in the summer of 2011. The body of 26 civic, business, education, and philanthropic leaders are charged with developing a shared agenda that will dramatically improve educational outcomes for Denver children and youth using a cradle to career pipeline approach. The end game is generations of young people prepared with the skills necessary to ensure Denver’s long-term economic success and quality of life. They will do that by investing people, time and money through high-leverage strategies.

### Where we are:

The Compact has identified its three main areas of focus: school readiness, students who graduate high school with the necessary skills to choose a postsecondary pathway, and postsecondary access and completion.

At its most recent meeting, the Compact selected and approved its first area of focus – school readiness via early literacy development. They set their first goal of having at least 90 percent of DPS third grade students reading proficiently by 2017.

### Where we want to go:

We are in the process of developing 7 action options for the Board’s consideration in October.

We are also hiring a Compact Director. The Compact will reside in the Office of

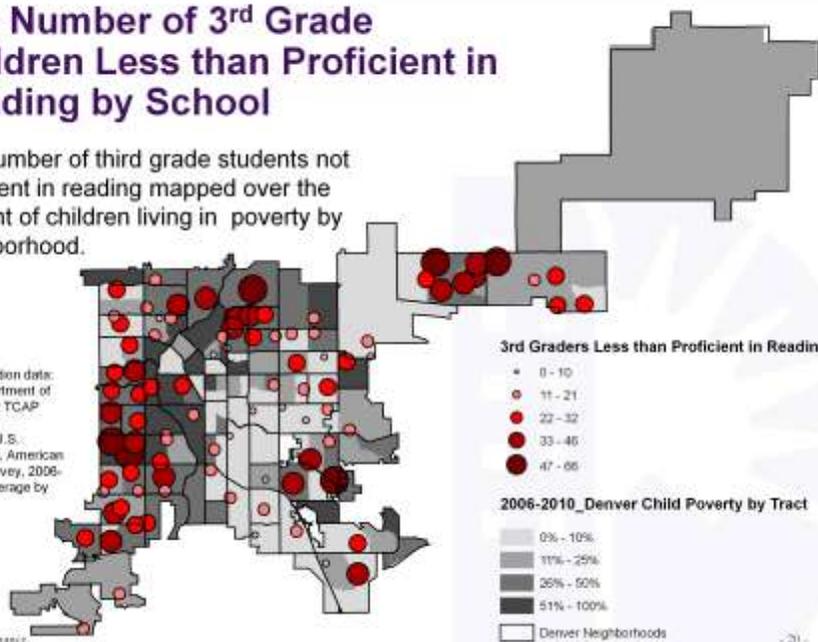
## The Number of 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Children Less than Proficient in Reading by School

The number of third grade students not proficient in reading mapped over the percent of children living in poverty by neighborhood.

Source: Education data: Colorado Department of Education 2012 TCAP

Poverty data: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006-2010 5-year average by census tract.

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## School Readiness: Denver Education Compact

**Strategies to reach our goal:**

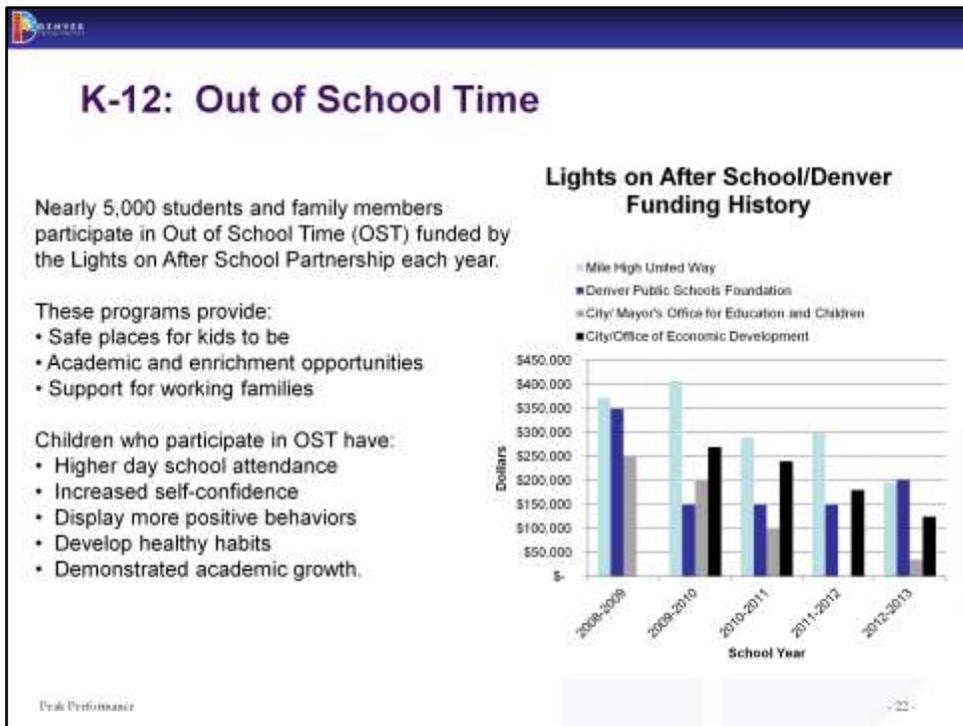
- City-wide public engagement campaign in English and Spanish
- Access to books
  - Develop a tiered business sponsorship model that includes adopting an early childhood center or classroom and defining what that relationship means
- Improve quality of early childhood programs
  - Work with local higher education institutions to diversify course offerings and the time of day they're offered
  - Explore tuition assistance options for ECE providers
- Increase access to quality Pre-K programs and full day kindergarten
- Improve the transition from preschool to kindergarten, building on an existing foundation
- Increase the number of DPS students who have access to small group literacy tutoring
- Expand summer ELA academies for English Language Learners

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There are 7 main strategies that are being developed that will impact children ages 0-8.

In order to accomplish our ambitious goal, we must have strategies that both focus on foundation building while children are young, but also invest in intervention strategies for children who are already in school and behind.

The 35 stakeholders who helped us develop a literacy plan for the city through the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and the National Civic League's All America City Awards will become the working groups of the Compact. They are the "doers" or community providers who will carry out the Compact's action plan and will be sound advisors.



Out-of-School-Time (OST) programs provide young people with expanded learning opportunities that build a student’s social, emotional, physical, cultural, and academic skills.

These programs support working parents by providing safe and supportive environments in school-based and community –based settings during non-school hours.

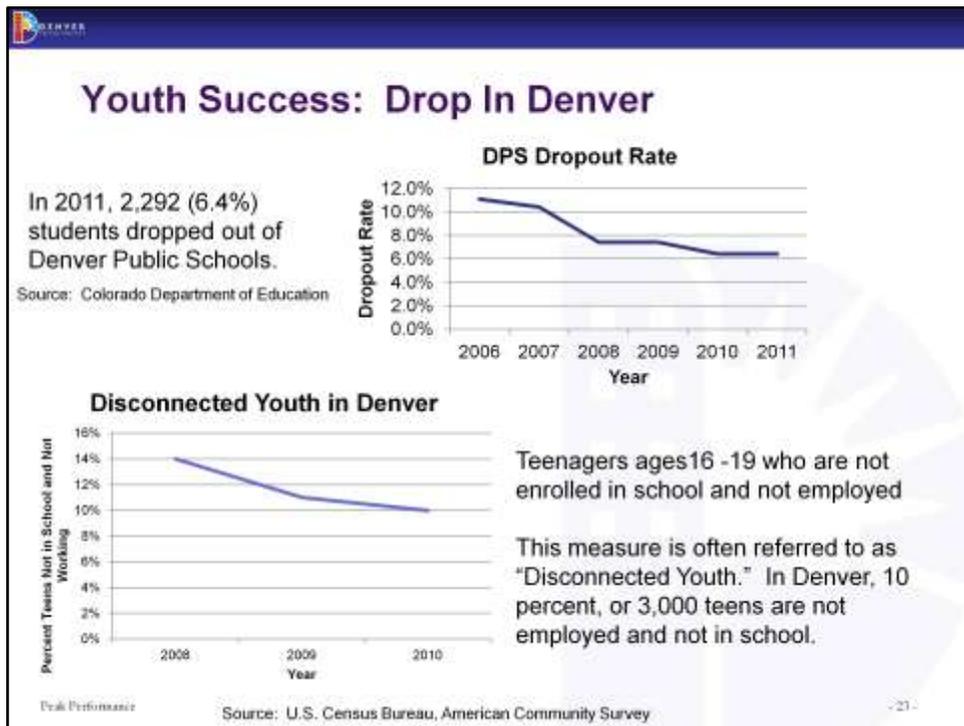
The Wallace Foundation grant brings \$765,000 over 3 years to Denver, with an additional \$250,000 of local matching resources. The money will allow the City to build an infrastructure to support and expand quality OST services for children and youth.

The *Denver OST Alliance* will bring together stakeholders to develop a unified vision and long-term strategy.

Community Partnership System (CPS):

Denver will launch this community-based data platform that will inventory all OST programs and services throughout the City.

This data system will link these programs with DPS student outcome data allowing programs to measure impact on participants.

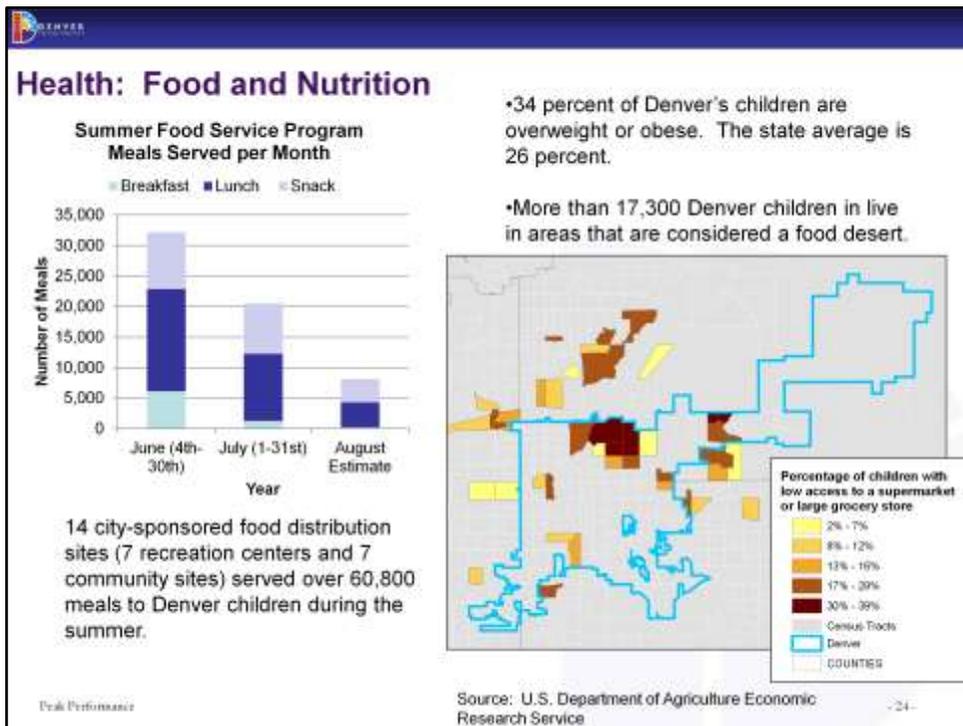


As a city we're consistently seeing around 2,000 students dropping out of school per year. Over time, the impact of that trend on the health and well-being of those young people and their families as well as the City's resources and economy are significant.

It is our obligation to go out and find those students and let them know that we need them back. We need them to complete school and we need them to build skills that support them entering the work force.

The City and County of Denver, along with DPS and other metro area schools districts, have partnered with Colorado Youth for a Change in an effort to get youth who have dropped out of school reengaged and on the road towards a high school diploma.

In addition to Drop In Denver, we are run the Mayor's Youth Commission – 11 youth and 10 adults whose primary responsibility is to advise the Mayor and his cabinet on key issues impacting Denver youth as well as generate new ideas for consideration. The Commission is in the process of overhauling its scope and developing action goals for the coming year which kicks off in September.



\*\*Food deserts are defined as low-income communities without ready access to healthy and affordable food.

The school door swings two ways. It is our responsibility to ensure that the basic needs of Denver children and youth are met when they are out of school, so that they can focus on learning when they are in school.

After seeing the Kids Count data on child hunger, the need for food assistance, and childhood obesity, as well as issuing a youth perceptions survey to 350 youth ages 13-18 through the Youth Commission, we knew the City needed to engage in providing free, healthy food to kids across the city.

This summer, our office became a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsor, taking on the administrative burden of serving food and supporting 14 sites to deliver healthy meals across the city.

We recently received a grant from the National League of Cities and the Walmart Foundation to do similar work with the At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program. We expect to start serving super-snacks to young people, primarily through recreation centers this fall.



## Next review

- **Next Performance Review: November 2012**
- **Strategies and Tactics of focus for next meeting -**
  - The addition of the Children's Cabinet
  - Initial participation rates for the MY Denver Card
  - Goals and metrics for the Mayor's Youth Commission
- **Update on projects and opportunities -**
  - Updated Head Start metrics

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We are excited about where we are going. Our success depends on having the following:

- Aligned mission and vision
- Baseline data
- New, consistent, and relevant tracking methods implemented
- Systems and strategies in place to clearly track and move inputs and outcomes
- Internal city-wide collaboration and cooperation
- Community connections