Project Early K 2005-06 evaluation results

School component

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Executive summary

A summary of evaluation results from the first operational year of the school component of Project Early K (PEK) is provided below. The evaluation assesses: (1) the degree to which PEK provides a high-quality preschool program that is aligned with the Project for Academic Excellence (PAE) of the Saint Paul Public Schools and is integrated into the schools setting, and (2) the impact of PEK on academic and other developmental outcomes of children. It includes classroom observations, interviews with teachers and principals, child assessments, teachers' developmental and behavioral ratings of children, and parent surveys. The evaluation study uses a comparative and longitudinal design to estimate the impact of PEK on children's developmental progress and school readiness. This design and the child assessments being used will permit comparison of PEK results with those of other public school-related preschool programs nationally.

Initial results for the 2005-06 school year are divided into two sections: program implementation and outcomes. During the first year of the program, assessment related to child outcomes was done primarily to establish a baseline for later assessment of change as a result of the program. Wilder Research is the independent evaluator on the project and works in collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Schools' Department of Research, Evaluation and Assessment to conduct the evaluation.

Implementation results

Principals' expectations and opinions

- All principals were strongly in support of the PEK classroom in their schools: children are showing they know the routines and rituals of the classroom and school; children's needs are identified early; families are attracted to the school.
- Most principals regularly visit the classroom and the PEK students are integrated into all school activities.
- Principals are anxious to see the long term effect of PEK as children enter kindergarten. They expect to see children achieve higher standards in kindergarten.

Classroom observations

PEK Classroom Observation Measure - Alignment with PAE

- All classrooms were observed to have most or all of the elements of PAE partially or fully implemented: early childhood workshop, routines and rituals, area of study, standards displayed, etc., were all well implemented by spring. Student engagement was high in all classrooms.

- Active Learning (Guided Discovery) is the one part of schedule that can be developed.

Early Language Literacy and Classroom Observation (ELLCO)

- Classrooms increased their average score on the Book Subscale from 17.2 (range 12 – 20) in fall to 18.8 (range 16 – 20) in spring (highest possible: 20).

- Classrooms increased their average score on the Writing Subscale from 16.9 (range 11 – 20) in fall to 19.2 (range: 17 – 21) in spring (highest possible: 21).

- For the Language, Literacy and Curriculum Subscale (highest possible: 5), classrooms had an average score of 3.79 (range 3.12 – 4.12) in fall and 4.06 (range: 3.75 – 4.37) in spring.

- For the General Classroom Environment Subscale (highest possible: 5), classrooms had an average score of 3.8 (range 3 – 4.4) in fall to 3.8 (range: 3.4 – 4.4) in spring.

Enrollment and target characteristics

- December enrollment figures indicated that 338 children were enrolled in PEK across the 10 schools.

- With regard to the target criteria, 62 percent were from low-income families (qualified for free/reduced-price lunch), 49 percent were English Language Learners (ELL), and 12 percent were receiving special education services. The proportion of students falling in one or more of these three target categories was 80 percent.

Preschool or child care center experience prior to PEK

- Prior to attending PEK, 40 percent of the children had attended preschool, Head Start, or a child care center (although the percentage varied widely by school, from 14% to 69%).

- Only 23 percent of ELL children had prior preschool or child care center experience.

- Having such prior experience did not differ by family income (i.e., free/reduced-price lunch status).

Child care arrangements when not attending PEK

- With regard to current child care arrangements, almost half of the children (45%) were in their parents' care when not in PEK. Another 25 percent were cared for by relatives, friends or neighbors, and 10 percent were cared for by a combination of parents and relatives, friends and neighbors. Small numbers of children were in child care centers (6%) or licensed family child care homes (5%).

Outcomes results

Baseline academic results (fall 2005)

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (in English)

- On average, PEK children were about 10 months behind on receptive vocabulary in English, which is to be expected given the high proportion of ELL children.
- Results for the Peabody show that 39 percent of the PEK children scored below average, 51 percent scored average, and 10 percent scored above average.
- Children from higher income families, those with English as their first language, and those with prior preschool or center care tended to score higher on these assessments.

Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement (Letter-Word Identification, Spelling, and Applied Problems)

- Children's scores were more evenly distributed on the Woodcock-Johnson tests than the Peabody test, although more children scored low than high on 2 of the 3 tests.
- Children performed best on the Spelling test, with 87 percent scoring average or above, followed by the Letter-Word Identification test (70% scoring average or above) and the Applied Problems test (63% scoring average or above).
- Similar to the Peabody results, ELL (except for Spelling), low-income, and those without prior preschool/center care tended to score lower on the tests.

Children's behavior at school (fall 2005)

- Teachers rated PEK children's social skills and problem behaviors. Overall, PEK children's social skills (cooperation, assertion, and self-control) were rated similarly to other children nationally.
- PEK children appeared somewhat less likely to have problem behaviors (externalizing and internalizing problems) compared to children nationally.

Teachers' developmental assessments of children: Work Sampling

- 324 children had work sampling assessments completed in spring.
- Sixty-five percent of PEK children demonstrated proficiency in the standards, 30 percent are in the process of developing proficiency, and 5 percent are not ready for kindergarten on the basis of not demonstrating the standards.
- The area in which the highest percentage of children are proficient is Personal and Social Development (68.5% proficient), followed by Language and Literacy (62% proficient) and Mathematical Thinking (54% proficient).

Partnership between school and family

Parents' satisfaction with PEK and involvement in the child's education

- 96 percent of the parents rated their children's experience in PEK as "very good" or "excellent."
- Almost all parents were satisfied with the teachers' or the school staff's communication with them and felt that enough efforts were made to involve parents.
- About half of the parents intended to send their child to kindergarten at the same school where the child was attending PEK.
- Two-thirds of the parents reported reading to their child most days or every day.
- Almost all the parents reported attending a parent-teacher conference.
- Over half reported attending a social or educational event at the school.
- About 40 percent of the parents had never talked with other parents at the school.

Teachers' communication and contact with parents

- Across both fall and spring conferences, 88 percent of parents were in attendance, with a range of 70 to 100 percent at individual schools. Six teachers reported 90 percent or above parent participation at the spring conference.
- Teachers used multiple methods to maintain contact with families, reflecting the style of the teacher and the school.
- All teachers made contact with parents by phone and this varied from high levels of contact (all families receiving 5 or more calls) to relatively lower levels (less than 15% received one call).
- Seven teachers sent a newsletter home either weekly or monthly, and all schools sent a newsletter weekly, monthly or quarterly.
- Many teachers made contact with parents when they picked up their children; teachers also sent home notes and other correspondence in children's packs.
- All teachers sent home parenting ideas and information, and activities to do at home.

Introduction

This report presents evaluation results from the first operational year of the school component of Project Early K. The evaluation assesses: (1) the degree to which PEK provides a high-quality preschool program aligned with the Project for Academic Excellence (PAE) of the Saint Paul Public Schools and is integrated into the schools setting, and (2) the impact of the PEK preschool program on academic and other developmental outcomes of children. Initial results for the 2005-06 school year are divided into two sections: program implementation and outcomes. During the first year of the program, assessment related to child outcomes was done primarily to establish a baseline for later assessment of change as a result of the program. Wilder Research is the independent evaluator on the project and works in collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Schools' Department of Research, Evaluation and Assessment to conduct the evaluation.

Description of Project Early K school component

The Saint Paul Public School District, aided by a three-year grant from The McKnight Foundation, developed and implemented Project Early K (PEK), an early kindergarten program for four-year-olds. The project aims to facilitate the transition to kindergarten by providing early childhood programming that is aligned with the District's K-12 standards-based comprehensive reform model, *Saint Paul's Project for Academic* Excellence (PAE). The project emphasizes student achievement, a continuum of services, and accountability for results. With the goal of reducing the school readiness gap and improving educational outcomes for higher need children, PEK targets low-income, English Language Learner, and Special Education student populations.

In fall 2005, PEK was implemented in district elementary schools under the supervision of the school principals. Participating schools include Ames, Como Park, Dayton's Bluff, Four Seasons, Hayden Heights, Maxfield, Prosperity Heights, Wellstone, and World Cultures/American Indian Magnet.

Methods and assessments

Project Early K implementation

The intent of PEK is to align early childhood programming with the District's standards based K-12 curriculum and instruction model. The hypothesis tested in this project is that a high- quality, PAE-aligned preschool program will improve educational outcomes for students. The evaluation was designed to identify the progress of the alignment. The PEK objectives specific to alignment are as follows:

1. To what degree has a high-quality preschool program for 4 year-olds been successfully implemented?

2. To what degree has a curriculum aligned with the K-6 school program (PAE) been successfully implemented?

Several methods were used to identify the extent of alignment:

- Interviews with PEK school principals were conducted to determine the extent to which the PEK was aligning with the school, on the basis of the principals' involvement with the PEK students and teacher, and the principals' opinions of the extend of the alignment.

- Classroom observations were completed in spring using an observation tool based on PAE developed by the coaches and program evaluator.

- An environmental assessment measure, the Early Language Literacy and Classroom Observation (ELLCO) was used with all classrooms by an independent assessor. The indicators on the ELLCO are based on best practice and give an indication of how well the teacher has provided a literacy rich classroom environment for students.

Another objective of the implementation evaluation is to assess the degree to which PEK is serving the target population, high-need students (low family income, ELL, special education). The following methods were used to determine the characteristics of the students served:

- School and program records provided information about student enrollment and demographics.

- Teachers asked parents questions during parent-teacher conferences and filled out a questionnaire on the following topics: prior preschool or child care experience; current child care arrangements; living arrangements; and parent's educational attainment.

Assessing the outcomes of Project Early K

The children's classroom skills and behavior were assessed using the following methods:

- In order to measure the children's baseline academic results, tests were administered one-on-one with the children by Wilder Research staff in fall 2005. The following assessments were used: the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III measuring receptive vocabulary, and three subtests of the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III measuring early skills in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.

- Teachers used the Social Skills Questionnaire to rate the children's social skills and problem behaviors in fall 2005.

- Teachers monitored the children's developmental progress by completing the Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist three times during the school year (fall, winter, spring). The three Work Sampling System domains used were Personal and Social Development, Language and Literacy, and Mathematical Thinking.

These assessments will be repeated as the PEK children enter kindergarten and later grades. The evaluation will use a longitudinal design with comparison groups to assess the impact of PEK on children's academic performance. This design and the child assessments being used will permit comparison of PEK results with those of other public school-related preschool programs nationally. See the *Project Early K evaluation plan* (Mueller and Heinrichs, July 2005) for further details.

In addition to measuring the children's academic and social skills, the evaluation also assessed the partnership between school and family. The following methods were used:

- Parents completed a survey at the spring parent-teacher conference. The survey asked for their opinions about PEK and how well the school communicates with them, and about their involvement in their child's education at home and at school.

- Teachers completed a questionnaire about their interaction with parents in spring 2006.

Implementation results

Principals' expectations and opinions of the first year of PEK

PEK principals were briefly interviewed in early fall and all were enthusiastic about the prospects of a classroom for 4 year-olds in their schools. They anticipated the following benefits:

- The PEK experience will support children's academic success.
- Children will continue to attend the same school.
- The PEK classroom will help to build a loyal base of parents.
- PEK will build a strong connection with K-6.
- The PEK classroom will help the students make a smoother transition into kindergarten. Or, as one principal put it, "PEK children will hit the ground running in kindergarten."

For a principal who had a classroom for 4 year-olds the previous year, the benefits were already apparent:

> The evidence this year is testimony to the success of a four year old program. The children feel more comfortable in kindergarten. They are able to do what is expected of them.

Principals did not expect that there would be any difficulty aligning the PEK classrooms with the rest of the school.

Interviews were repeated at the end of the first year. Principals were just as enthusiastic in spring as they had been in fall. Below are a few of their comments:

> Kids are better prepared for kindergarten. The PEK kids are already ahead of where our incoming kindergarten kids were…their reading, writing and social skills are ahead – they are used to the rituals and routines. When they come here for kindergarten, we won't have to start from scratch with them. (Zelma Wiley, Maxfield Elementary)
>
> Many of the children will be ready for kindergarten and won't be two grade levels below; they'll be better prepared to move forward. If they come in behind, they stay behind. (Delores Henderson, Ames Elementary)

> This is the best thing ever in SPPS – a jump start for kids – getting the oral language developmental piece before they come to kindergarten. This is the best way to do it. (Christine Osorio, Wellstone Elementary)
>
> It was everything I hoped: reinforcement of routines and rituals; introduction of standards based instruction, and an opportunity for students to participate in early education. It used to be that in kindergarten you were preparing the child and building the foundation; now it is happening in pre-K. Bottom line: accelerating the learning continuum. (Andrew Collins, Dayton's Bluff)

Principals reported that their expectations had been met. The most common themes included the following:

- Principals see the PEK children learning basic skills, such as writing their names, knowing letters and colors, holding a book, and knowing the routines and rituals of the classroom (e.g., circle time, appropriate behavior) and of the school (e.g., walking in hallways, lunchroom and bathroom behavior). These are the skills that are normally learned in kindergarten, so with 50 percent or more of these children entering kindergarten, principals anticipate that there will need to be higher expectations for children in kindergarten, and this expectation will continue up to higher grades. With a PEK classroom in the school, all grades will be able to increase academic rigor.

- An important benefit of PEK is the opportunity to know each child's abilities and needs, and to know their families at this early stage. Children with special needs can be identified before kindergarten. Children who are ELL are identified. There is a "profile" of the child as he or she enters kindergarten. Not only are children ready for kindergarten, but kindergartens are ready for each child.

- A PEK classroom attracts more families to the school; it enhances the reputation of the school in the community. When families know there is a PEK classroom at the school, they show a lot of interest in coming to the school.

- Several principals stated that having a classroom of four-year-olds added a strong positive contribution to the dynamics within the school:

  > [Having the PEK classroom] added to the atmosphere – seeing these four-year-olds growing and developing. (Sharon Freeman, Prosperity Heights)
  >
  > It was amazing – it [PEK] provides a sense of energy – these kids are so eager to learn. (Kris Peterson, Hayden Heights)

Integration and alignment of PEK with the school

Principals were asked how well the PEK classroom was aligned with the rest of their school. They reported that alignment was occurring in multiple ways.

- The Workshop model was used in the PEK classrooms, so the instructional framework is the same as that used in K-6.

- PEK teachers and teaching assistants are treated the same as all other staff in the school building. Some are participants in site councils and leadership teams. They attend all school meetings and professional development. Some schools included PEK in focus or learning walks. PEK classes attended assemblies when appropriate for the young children. In some schools, PEK and K teachers were encouraged to work more closely together and the classrooms had physical proximity in the building; PEK students had visited the K classroom. PEK teachers had access to literacy coaches and librarians; prep teachers and ELL teachers spent time in the classrooms. For example, at American Indian Magnet, the Ojibwa prep teacher included the PEK classroom in her lesson about learning etiquette for the powwow. Principals stated that problems that occurred with PEK classrooms were dealt with in the same manner as any other classroom in the building; if a teacher needed additional support, the principal worked with the teacher to get her what she needed. Principals made sure that teachers had the resources they needed.

- Some of the principals stated that the parents of PEK students were actively involved with the school through participation on governing councils and family events. For some principals, parent involvement could be better, while for others, high parent involvement had occurred this year. For example:

> [At Four Seasons], some of the parents are really happy their kids are in the four-year-old program and they attend everything…A flourishing PTO has formed with the parents of PEK children. (Howard Wilson)
>
> [At Maxfield Elementary], most of the PTO are PEK parents. They've had 'movie night' to raise dollars for an ice cream social. They are producing a newsletter. They're involved in site council and they showed up for K roundup. (Zelma Wiley)

- All principals acknowledged their role as the educational leader of PEK classrooms, but six of them stated they need to spend more time in the PEK classroom. Principals' reports of visits to the classroom varied from three times a week to once or twice each month. Principals tended to see all the students either at the beginning or end of class, at recess, and in the lunch room. Some of the principals spent time in the classroom

reading to students. A couple principals reported they spend as much time in the PEK classroom as in all the rest of the classrooms in their building.

Challenges

When principals were asked if there were any problems in the first year of implementation of PEK, most immediately said that there were none. A few issues were then raised, but it can be concluded that overall, problems were considered to be minimal. Some challenges include:

- Absence and performance of teaching assistants
- Transportation
- Attendance
- Prep schedule
- Registration

One unique challenge is experienced by World Cultures and American Indian Magnet schools who share the same PEK classroom and teacher. While the class benefits from the input of both schools, and the principals are very positive about this addition to their schools, there is a difficulty for both principals when scheduling school events. For the PEK classroom to be included, all events for one school need to occur in the morning, and all events for the other need to occur in the afternoon. The PEK teacher has to work with two sets of expectations.

Goals for Year 2

Parent involvement

Several principals stated that parent involvement would be a focus in the coming year. At Wellstone Elementary, there were some meetings of parenting groups last year, and the principal would like to see them become more linked with all parents. At Prosperity Heights, there will be a Book Club specific to PEK and K parents. At World Cultures, the principal wants to reach out to more Hmong families and is working with PEK staff to develop parent education resources. In addition to increasing parental involvement at school, it is hoped that these activities will foster more relationships among parents. During the first year of PEK, a large percentage of parents (41%) reported that they had never talked with other parents at school.

Instructional alignment

Principals had a number of ideas for how to increase and strengthen the alignment between PEK and K-6. At Prosperity Heights, the principal has hired an ELL teacher just for PEK and kindergarten. This will allow for a common planning time between the two grade levels and encourage teaming and integration. At Ames, the PEK and kindergarten teachers will spend more time together in planning. Principals appreciated the fact that understanding how PAE can look in the four-year-old program is an evolving process and it will become more clear to them how to supervise the classrooms as PEK administration more clearly defines the standards. All principals expected to see continued growth in their teachers.

> The alignment of the PEK classroom and the school is continually improving in two ways. The teacher's understanding of PAE continues to increase as the PEK administration clarify what it expects [it] to be. At the same time, K-6 is also becoming more aligned in instructional practice with PAE. So growth with respect to alignment is happening throughout. (Nancy Stachel, Como Elementary)

Several principals stated that their concern was in keeping the program in place.

> It's proven itself. It is necessary. We were seeing kids come into kindergarten that had never experienced a learning community. It's an equity issue. It puts kids on par with their peers. These kids are getting a head start. (Howard Wilson, Four Seasons Magnet)

Several principals stated they would like to expand the program, both to include more students, and to extend the time to a full day. Principals also want to keep PEK students in their schools. They hope to increase the percentage of families that will stay with the same school.

Summary of principals' opinions

Principals gave a highly favorable review of the first year of PEK. They saw it having tremendous value, and looked forward to observing the continued growth of the program.

> PEK is supposed to be preparing kids to move into [the] PAE method of instruction – knowing the basic skills. Children should understand rituals and routines and the workshop model. They should be familiar with independent work time, and how sharing works at the end of the day. Will the students demonstrate knowledge of the workshop format? Will the K teacher see differences next year? (Nancy Stachel, Como Elementary)

Principals also gave credit to PEK staff, appreciating the resources, supplies, and training. Principals' meetings with Ann Lovrien, PEK manager, are useful, and monthly emails describing the standards from coaches are helpful.

> This was the best thing I could have done. I see it as a real positive. There's been great support from Ann and the PEK staff. I have a great teacher. I like the rigor and high expectations in the PEK classroom. (Zelma Wiley, Maxfield Elementary)

Classroom observations

PEK classroom observation, fall 2005

PEK teachers were interviewed at the end of November, 2005, to obtain an early indication of the extent of the alignment with PAE. As coaching and professional development with respect to PAE implementation was at an early stage at this point, expectations for PAE alignment were minimal. Teachers were simply asked about their implementation of several aspects of PAE, and a brief inspection of the classroom occurred while class was not in session.

All teachers reported that they really didn't know much about PAE. For example, two teachers stated that they had heard about accountable talk but didn't exactly know what it meant. Several of the teachers stated that they had a word wall but didn't know how it should be used.

The following aspects of PAE implementation were reported:

- All teachers were using the model of the Early Childhood Workshop (ECW).
- Six of the teachers reported high levels of involvement with the school – regular attendance at assemblies, committee meetings, and principal involvement with their classrooms.
- Eight of the classrooms had at least one standard posted on the wall, either outside or inside of the classroom.
- All classrooms adhered to a daily schedule.
- Student work was in evidence on classroom walls and this ranged across classrooms, from a small to large amount relative to other postings.

Areas for future growth:

- Three of the teachers reported that they needed more development of the active learning portion of the ECW; they needed assistance with ideas to extend the *area of study* throughout each of the centers. Two of the teachers reported that the *regroup to revisit* (conclusion of ECW) needed more development.
- Increased levels of school involvement; only one teacher reported feeling isolated within the school.
- More evidence of student work in the classroom and less teacher produced work.
- Increase in use of word walls: five classrooms had word walls; two had word walls that were made only of names. Teachers tended not to know how the word wall should be used.
- Several teachers remarked that they would like more clear expectations of PAE implementation.

In summary, the first semester assessment of PAE implementation shows that classrooms are showing clear evidence of PAE in their instruction and environment.

PEK classroom observation, spring 2006

A classroom observation assessment was developed by PEK coaching staff and the internal program evaluator. The assessment captured the basic expectations for PAE alignment that had been emphasized in professional development and coaching throughout the year. See Appendix for the *PEK Classroom Observation Measure*. Observations were conducted by the internal evaluator from April 20 to May 8. Each classroom was visited for one entire session, either morning or afternoon. Figure 1 summarizes the findings. Results indicate that all classrooms have either fully or partially implemented all aspects of the initial expectations.

1. Indicators of PAE alignment

Indicators – fully or partially implemented by all classrooms
NCEE and/or MN standards posted
Area of study evident throughout the classroom
Children's work displayed throughout the classroom
Children's names displayed in multiple ways and places
Word wall available to children
Sign-in procedure
Shared reading in evidence around the room
Shared writing in evidence around the room
Weekly lesson plan available
Community circle time with mini-lesson
Teacher can articulate current literacy goals
Literacy props in all active learning centers
Mini lesson extended into active learning
Regroup end-of-day meeting
Two read alouds per day
Two shared readings per day
Indicators – more implementation required by some or all classrooms
Use of word wall in classroom
Active learning centers have materials that reflect area of study and engage children
Teacher and assistant engage children with open-ended questions that extend learning; evidence of language modeling
Meal time is used as valuable teaching time
Classroom expectations

All classrooms had implemented the Early Childhood Workshop (ECW) with all three aspects clearly defined, with children very familiar with the routines. The ECW began with community circle and most children were highly engaged throughout. Community circle included a greeting, calendar, weather, read aloud, and mini lesson. In several cases, this time was divided into two sessions.

Community circle is followed by active learning where each of the areas of the classroom should support materials that follow the theme. In the fall interviews, teachers reported they had the most difficulty with this aspect of the ECW and this continues to be an area

to develop. In some classrooms, purchased materials are used in many of the centers and children did not show consistent engagement throughout.

The final aspect of the ECW is regroup to revisit. In fall, teachers had reported that this was a difficult part of the schedule, but teachers now showed a well-developed conclusion for the ECW. While this looked very different in each of the classrooms, it tended to be very effective and engaging. For example, in one classroom, children would place finished projects on a chair in the community circle area during active learning. At regroup, they would have the opportunity to explain their projects to the whole class. In another classroom, children reviewed one of the projects they had worked on that was related to the mini lesson. This project had paper frogs on a log, and children sang a song using the props. This was going home in an envelope for children to use with their parents; the regroup time was a time to revisit the project with the children. In another more extended regroup, the children wrote in their journals the activities and learning they had had during the day.

The physical environment of the PEK classrooms were closely aligned with PAE standards. The area of study was clearly in evidence in each classroom, with connections made to the area of study in the majority of the centers (with only a few exceptions such as in a block area). NCEE and/or MN standards with student supporting work were posted in all the classrooms or in hallways where parents and others could read them. Children's work was displayed throughout the classrooms and teacher-produced work was minimal. Children's names were posted in numerous ways throughout the classrooms. Word walls were in evidence, both posted on walls, but also in some classrooms, were present in baskets on writing tables where they were being used regularly. A sign-in procedure was used by all teachers, although with variation. Most classrooms had a sign-in on the wall with children writing their names in a specific location; one classroom had a large poster paper on a table for children to gather around and write their names; one classroom had a name wall for children to select their name and place it in the "present" list. Evidence of shared reading was present in all classrooms and in most classrooms there was also evidence of shared writing (writing was just being introduced by coaches at the time of the observations).

Several aspects of PAE alignment did not meet the standard and are recommended for further development. Most of the classrooms had a meal time (breakfast or lunch) in the cafeteria. Only two of the teachers used this as a time to engage the children in conversation and vocabulary building. In general, language modeling was not heard regularly during the periods other than the circle time. Overall student engagement was high, but in several classrooms, children became less engaged during the active learning time. This is consistent with teachers' concerns that they need more ideas for the active learning centers. Overall, teachers' interactions with students are positive and they show

a lot of warmth and acceptance of children. But as children became less engaged, there were displays of peer negativity and irritability that took up the teachers' time. A related issue is that in many classrooms, teaching assistants were observed to be less engaged. Instead of being equally involved with all children in the classroom, some of the teaching assistants tended to wait for direction from teachers. For example, a frequently seen occurrence was a teaching assistant working at one center, while a teacher needed to move to all centers in order to fix a computer, or help to engage children, or a teacher needed to tell a teaching assistant to interact with a child who needed attention.

Early Language Literacy and Classroom Observation (ELLCO)

The ELLCO provides a research-based examination of literacy and language supports within the preschool classroom. Reported here are outcomes from the nine PEK classrooms (World Cultures and American Indian Magnet are combined because they use the same teacher and classroom); observations took place in the fall and the spring of 2005-06.

The ELLCO identifies the classroom practices and environmental supports that promote children's early literacy and language development. This measure is divided into three sections: the Literacy Environment Checklist, the Classroom Observation and Teacher Interview, and the Literacy Activities Rating Scale. The observation portion details 14 independent dimensions of literacy practice and is supplemented by a short teacher interview. The rating scale summarizes the literacy-related activities that were observed.

Targets that are reported here are introduced for the first time and will be used with coaches during the second year of program implementation. The ELLCO indicators are consensus-based, so targets must be determined by the user. In this case, targets are the same as those used for the past three years in SPPS' Early Reading First Grant (CHOICE Project). In the Book and Writing Subscales, targets are set high as these scales identify how the classroom environment has been organized with respect to books and writing materials. The other two subscales have a grading rubric that varies from *deficient* to *basic* to *excellent*. In this case the expectation is that the classrooms will be rated as higher than basic.

While this is the first time targets have been introduced, classroom teachers were introduced to the ELLCO at the beginning of the year and used the assessment as a standard to set up their classrooms. Thus, scores are expected to be relatively high.

Scale description and targets

The assessment is comprised of four subscales:

1. Book Subscale includes items in the domains of Book Area, Book Selection, and Book Use – 12 items that assess the kinds of books that are present and the areas in the classroom that invite book use. There is a total possible score of 20. It is expected that classrooms will attain a score of 18-20.

2. Writing Subscale includes items in the domains of Writing Materials and Writing Around the Room – 13 items that assess the types of writing tools that are available, the areas in the room that are set up for writing, and displays of writing in the classroom. There is a total possible score of 21. It is expected that classrooms will attain a score of 19-21.

3. Language, Literacy and Curriculum Subscale includes 10 items that assess the interaction between adults and children in the room such as the richness of reading and writing instruction, assessment techniques used by teachers and the meaningfulness of curriculum. Total possible score is five. Scores range from 1: Deficient – 3: Basic – 5: Exemplary. It is expected that classrooms will score above the basic level, with an average score of four or above.

4. The General Classroom Environment Subscale includes six items that assess different aspects of classroom literacy such as the organization and contents of the classroom, the presence and use of technology, opportunities for child choice and initiative, classroom management strategies and classroom climate. The total possible score is five. Scores range from 1: Deficient – 3: Basic – 5: Exemplary. It is expected that classrooms will score above the basic level, with an average score of 3.75 or above.

Results

Figure 2 shows the average scores across all classrooms for subscales and indicators. Table A1 in the Appendix shows the breakdown of subscale scores by school.

<u>Book Subscale</u>

The nine classrooms had an average score of 17.2 (range 12 – 20) in fall and an average score of 18.8 (range: 16 – 20) in spring. Six classrooms had reached the target in fall; seven had reached the target in spring, with the remaining two within two points of reaching the target.

Writing Subscale

The nine classrooms had an average score of 16.9 (range 11 – 20) in fall and an average score of 19.2 (range: 17 – 21) in spring. Four classrooms had reached the target in fall; seven had reached the target in spring, with the remaining two within two points of reaching the target.

Language, Literacy, and Curriculum Subscale

The nine classrooms had an average score of 3.79 (range 3.12 – 4.12) in fall to 4.06 (range: 3.75 – 4.37) in spring. Six classrooms achieved the target of 4.0.

General Classroom Environment Subscale

The nine classrooms had an average score of 3.8 (range 3 – 4.4) in fall to 3.8 (range: 3.4 – 4.4) in spring. Four classrooms achieved the target of 3.75.

2. ELLCO assessment, spring 2006

	Mean score across classrooms	Number of classrooms achieving expected rating
Literacy Environment Checklist		
Description (possible points)		
Book area (3)	2.9	
Book selection (8)	8	
Book use (9)	7.9	
Book Subscale (20)	18.8	7/9
Writing materials (8)	7.7	
Writing around the room (13)	11.6	
Writing Subscale (21)	19.22	7/9
Classroom Observation		
General Classroom Environment		
Description (possible points)		
Organization of the classroom (5)	4.2	
Contents of the classroom (5)	3.7	
Presence/use of technology (5)[a]	2.8	
Opportunities for child choice and initiative (5)	3.9	
Classroom management strategies (5)	3.6	
Classroom climate (5)	3.6	
General Classroom Environment Subscale (5)	3.8	4/9

[a] *Not included in subscale total on the basis on psychometric analysis, as recommended in Technical Manual.*

2. ELLCO assessment, spring 2006 (continued)

	Mean score across classrooms	Number of classrooms achieving expected rating
Language, Literacy, and Curriculum		
Description (possible points)		
Oral language facilitation (5)	3.9	
Presence of books (5)	4.1	
Approaches to book reading (5)	4.2	
Approaches to children's writing (5)	4	
Curriculum integration (5)	4.4	
Recognizing diversity in the classroom (5)	3.8	
Facilitating home support for literacy (5)	4	
Approaches to assessment (5)	4	
Language, Literacy, and Curriculum Subscale (5)	4.1	6/9

[a] *Not included in subscale total on the basis on psychometric analysis, as recommended in Technical Manual.*

Student enrollment and demographics

Enrollment figures from December 2005 indicated that a total of 338 students were enrolled in PEK across the 10 schools. Enrollment numbers for each school are shown in Figure 3. Enrollments at the eight schools with two classrooms ranged from 34 to 40. The two schools with only one classroom had 20 and 21 students, respectively.

Also shown in Figure 1 are student age, gender, ethnicity, free/reduced-price lunch status (family income indicator), English Language Learner (ELL) status, and special education status. Students' ages (as of October 1, 2005) ranged from 4 years, 0 months, to 5 years, 1 month, with an average age of 4 years, 7 months. Students are quite evenly divided by gender, with slightly more females. PEK students are of diverse ethnicity with African Americans and Asians being the largest groups. Sixty-two percent of the students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch, indicating that they are from low-income families. (It is likely that there are more children from low-income families, but some families chose not to apply for free or reduced-price lunch.) About half of the students are ELL and 12 percent receive special education services.

The proportion of students falling in one or more of the three target categories for PEK (low-income, ELL, special education) is 80 percent.

3. Project Early K students enrolled in December 2005 (baseline): Demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number	Percent
Total		338	100%
School	American Indian	20	6%
	Ames	37	11%
	Como Park	34	10%
	Dayton's Bluff	39	12%
	Four Seasons	37	11%
	Hayden Heights	40	12%
	Maxfield	34	10%
	Prosperity Heights	39	12%
	Wellstone	37	11%
	World Cultures	21	6%
Age (years-months) as of October 1, 2005	4-0 to 4-2	51	15%
	4-3 to 4-5	89	26%
	4-6 to 4-8	74	22%
	4-9 to 4-11	97	29%
	5-0	26	8%
	5-1	1	<1%
	Total	338	100%
	Average	4-7	
Gender	Female	173	51%
	Male	165	49%
Ethnicity	American Indian	10	3%
	Asian	90	27%
	Hispanic	67	20%
	African American	104	31%
	Caucasian	66	19%

3. Project Early K students enrolled in December 2005 (baseline): Demographic characteristics (continued)

Characteristic		Number	Percent
Free/reduced price lunch	Free	163	48%
	Reduced-price	48	14%
	Full price[a]	127	38%
English Language Learner (ELL)	Yes	165	49%
	No	173	51%
Special Education	Yes	42	12%
	No	296	88%
In target population[b]	Yes	270	80%
	No	68	20%

[a] *Includes both children who were not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and those whose families did not apply.*

[b] *Child is in one or more of the following categories: 1) eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 2) ELL, or 3) receives Special Education services.*

Preschool, child care, and family characteristics

Teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire with parents at the parent-teacher conferences in November 2005. For the parents who did not complete the questionnaire in November, they were asked to complete it at the parent-teacher conference in March 2006. The questionnaire asked about the following areas:

- The child's preschool or child care center experience prior to attending PEK
- Current child care arrangements when the child is not attending PEK
- With whom the child lives and parents' education

Completed questionnaires were received for 304 of the 338 PEK children for a response rate of 90 percent.

Prior preschool or child care center experience

Results indicated that about 4 in 10 children (40%) had attended preschool, Head Start or a child care center prior to enrolling in PEK (see Figure 4). Although results were not available for all the children, there appeared to be wide variation in the proportion of children who had attended preschool/center care across the 10 PEK schools – the percentage attending ranged from a low of 14 percent to a high of 69 percent (see Figure

5). The proportion of children having prior preschool/center care experience also varied by demographic characteristics. Children more likely to have such experience were: African American, Caucasian or American Indian; not ELL; and receiving special education services (see Figure 6). It is noteworthy that no difference was seen by free/reduced-price lunch status.

Of the children who attended preschool/center care prior to PEK, about 6 in 10 (58%) began attending at age 3 or older. Almost 30 percent started at age 1 or younger. The largest proportion of children (40%) had attended such a program/center for 7-12 months, although 24 percent had attended two or more years. At their most recent program/center, most children attended 4-5 days per week (73%) and most attended for half a day (70%) rather than a full day (see Figure 4).

4. Children attending preschool, Head Start or child care center prior to attending PEK program

Number attending program/center		Number	Percent
Attended such a program?	Yes	120	40%
	No	182	60%
	Total	302	100%
Of those who attended such a program/center:			
Age of children when first attended (in years)	<1	20	18%
	1	12	11%
	2	15	13%
	3	52	46%
	4	13	12%
	Total	112[a]	100%
Number of months attended such a program	6 or fewer	17	17%
	7-12	39	40%
	13-24	18	18%
	25-36	10	10%
	37+	14	14%
	Total	98[b]	100%

[a] *No information was reported by 8 parents.*

[b] *No information was reported by 22 parents.*

[c] *No information was reported by 2 parents.*

[d] *No information was reported by 5 parents.*

4. Children attending preschool, Head Start or child care center prior to attending PEK program (continued)

Number attending program/center		Number	Percent
Of those who attended such a program/center:			
Days per week attended most recent program/center	1	8	7%
	2	14	12%
	3	10	9%
	4	29	25%
	5	57	48%
	Total	118[c]	100%
Child attended full or half day at most recent program/center	Half day	80	70%
	Full day	35	30%
	Total	115[d]	100%

[d] *No information was reported by 5 parents.*

5. Children's prior preschool/child care center attendance by school attended for PEK

School	Number reporting	Did the child attend a preschool, Head Start or child care center before attending the Early K program? Yes	No
American Indian	18	50%	50%
Ames	36	22%	78%
Como Park	22	32%	68%
Dayton's Bluff	29	14%	86%
Four Seasons	37	43%	57%
Hayden Heights	39	36%	64%
Maxfield	32	69%	31%
Prosperity Heights	37	41%	59%
Wellstone	34	38%	62%
World Cultures	18	67%	33%
Total	302	40%	60%

6. Children's prior preschool/child care center attendance by demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number reporting	Did the child attend a preschool, Head Start or child care center before attending the Early K program? Yes	No
Total		302	40%	60%
Gender	Female	155	38%	62%
	Male	144	41%	59%
Ethnicity	American Indian	9	67%	33%
	Asian	79	17%	83%
	Hispanic	60	33%	67%
	African American	88	56%	44%
	Caucasian	62	48%	52%
Free/reduced price lunch	Free or reduced	179	40%	60%
	Full price	120	39%	61%
ELL	Yes	145	23%	77%
	No	154	55%	45%
Special Education	Yes	36	75%	25%
	No	263	35%	65%

Current child care arrangements

Most commonly, the parent(s) cared for the child when he/she was not attending PEK (45%), followed by care from a relative, neighbor or friend (24%), or a combination of the two (10%). Smaller proportions of children went to a child care center (6%) or licensed family child care (5%) (see Figure 7). Hence, for many PEK families, a parent was home during the day.

7. Current child care arrangements

Most frequent arrangements when child is not in PEK[a]	Number	Percent
Parent(s) only	136	45%
Relative, neighbor or friend	73	24%
1) Parent and 2) relative, friend, or neighbor[a]	30	10%
Day care center	18	6%
Licensed family child care	14	5%
Other child/sibling watches child	6	2%
All other arrangements	24	8%
Total	301	100%

[a] *Respondents could list up to two arrangements.*

Living arrangements and parent educational attainment

Most children enrolled in PEK lived with both their parents (70%), while 17 percent lived with only their mother. Quite frequently other adult relatives lived in the household besides the parents (see Figure 8).

With regard to highest level of educational attainment, most parents graduated from high school or attended some college (but didn't receive a four-year degree). About 15 percent of the parents finished college, including about 5 percent who received post-graduate degrees. Fewer than 2 in 10 parents had not completed high school (see Figure 9).

8. Adults with whom child lives

Child lives with:	Number	Percent
Mother and father	162	55%
Mother, father and other adult(s)[a]	43	15%
Mother only	49	17%
Mother and other adult(s),[a] not father	19	6%
Mother and stepfather[b]	13	4%
Father and other adult(s),[c] not mother	4	1%
Father only	2	1%
Grandparent(s) only	2	1%
Grandparent(s) and other adult(s)	1	<1%
Total	295	100%

[a] *Includes grandparents, other relatives, adult children, and other adults.*

[b] *Other adults might also be in the household.*

[c] *Includes step-mother, grandparents, and other adults.*

9. Educational attainment of parents

	Mother/female caretaker		Father/male caretaker	
Highest level of education attained	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
8th grade or less	23	8%	18	7%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	27	9%	26	10%
High school diploma or GED	89	30%	97	36%
Some college (includes 2-year degree)	114	39%	85	32%
Four-year college degree (B.A., B.S.)	30	10%	27	10%
Post-graduate degree (Masters, Ph.D., M.D., etc.)	11	4%	15	6%
Total	294	100%	268	100%

Outcomes results

Baseline academic assessment results: Peabody and Woodcock-Johnson Tests

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III and the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III (Letter-Word Identification, Spelling, and Applied Problems subtests) were administered to children enrolled in PEK at the 10 schools. The Peabody assesses receptive vocabulary and the Woodcock-Johnson subtests assess early skills related to reading, writing and math. The assessments were administered one-on-one to the children by Wilder Research staff. The first round of baseline testing occurred in October 2005 and the results were previously reported. A second round of testing occurred in December 2005 with children who had enrolled after the October testing, and with some students for whom it wasn't possible to obtain a test score in October due to language barriers or other reasons. Baseline results, including children from both rounds of assessments, are reported below. Students who were assessed in October but left the school by December are not included in the results.

Overall results

Results for the Peabody showed that half of the children (51%) scored average and 10 percent scored relatively high (moderately high or extremely high). Almost 40 percent of the children scored low (moderately low or extremely low). The average age-equivalency score for all the children was 3 years, 9 months, compared to their average actual age of 4 years, 7 months. Hence, on average, children were 10 months behind on English receptive vocabulary, as measured by the Peabody test (see Figure 10).

10. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	3	1%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	28	9%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	166	51%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	59	18%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	67	21%
Total	323	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 9 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-10 months	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

Note: *Results of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III for individual schools can be found in the Appendix.*

Results tended to be more evenly distributed on the Woodcock-Johnson tests, although for two of the three tests more children scored low or very low than scored superior or very superior (see Figure 11). Results were the most evenly distributed for the Spelling test and least evenly distributed for the Applied Problems test (i.e., more scoring low), with the Letter-Word Identification test results falling in the middle.

11. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score Classification	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Superior/very superior	18	6%	8	2%	14	4%
High average	42	13%	40	12%	40	13%
Average	166	51%	236	73%	147	46%
Low average	68	21%	22	7%	55	17%
Low/very low	30	9%	19	6%	61	19%
Total	324	100%	325	100%	317	100%

Note: *Results of the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III for individual schools can be found in the Appendix.*

Results by demographic characteristics

Tests results often varied by children's demographic characteristics. Average (mean) standard scores for the Peabody and Woodcock-Johnson tests are shown within demographic categories in Figures 12-15. (Standard scores have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 in the national normative sample; higher scores indicate stronger skills.) As expected, ELL children scored much lower than non-ELL children on the Peabody, a measure of English language receptive vocabulary. This likely accounts for the low scores of Asian and Hispanic children on this test, many of whom are ELL. Children from lower income families (eligible for free or reduced-price lunch) and children who did not have prior experience with preschool/center care also tended to score lower (see Figure 12).

12. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test results by demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number	Standard score mean[a]
Total		323	88.4
Gender	Female	166	87.3
	Male	157	89.6
Ethnicity[b]	American Indian	10	90.1
	Asian	85	73.4
	Hispanic	64	79.5
	African American	100	93.0
	Caucasian	63	110.1
Free/reduced price lunch[b]	Free or reduced	197	84.7
	Full price	126	94.2
ELL[b]	Yes	157	75.4
	No	166	100.8
Special education	Yes	39	86.6
	No	284	88.7
Attended preschool/child care center prior to Early K[b]	Yes	111	94.4
	No	170	85.2

[a] *In the national normative sample, the standard score mean is 100 and the standard deviation is 15.*

[b] *The difference in standard score means between/among the categories is statistically significant (p<.05).*

For the Woodcock-Johnson Letter-Word Identification test, Caucasian children tended to score higher than children of other ethnicities. In addition, children tending to score higher were those from higher income families, non-ELL children, and those with prior preschool/center care experience (see Figure 13).

13. Woodcock-Johnson Letter-Word Identification test results by demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number	Standard score mean[a]
Total		324	97.0
Gender	Female	167	97.4
	Male	157	96.7
Ethnicity[b]	American Indian	10	92.6
	Asian	86	93.2
	Hispanic	64	93.0
	African American	100	98.0
	Caucasian	63	105.4
Free/reduced price lunch[b]	Free or reduced	197	95.2
	Full price	127	99.9
ELL[b]	Yes	158	93.6
	No	166	100.3
Special education	Yes	38	96.1
	No	286	97.2
Attended preschool/child care center prior to Early K[b]	Yes	111	100.7
	No	171	95.5

[a] *In the national normative sample, the standard score mean is 100 and the standard deviation is 15.*

[b] *The difference in standard score means between/among the categories is statistically significant (p<.05).*

Results for the Woodcock-Johnson Spelling test indicated that the following groups tended to score higher: girls, Caucasians, children from higher income families, those not receiving special education services, and those with prior preschool/center care experience (see Figure 14).

14. Woodcock-Johnson Spelling test results by demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number	Standard score mean[a]
Total		325	99.2
Gender[b]	Female	167	101.4
	Male	158	97.0
Ethnicity[b]	American Indian	10	98.6
	Asian	88	99.1
	Hispanic	64	98.2
	African American	99	96.7
	Caucasian	63	104.6
Free/reduced price lunch[b]	Free or reduced	198	97.8
	Full price	127	101.5
ELL	Yes	160	98.8
	No	165	99.7
Special education[b]	Yes	38	94.4
	No	287	99.9
Attended preschool/child care center prior to Early K[b]	Yes	110	101.7
	No	173	98.6

[a] *In the national normative sample, the standard score mean is 100 and the standard deviation is 15.*

[b] *The difference in standard score means between/among the categories is statistically significant (p<.05).*

Finally, results for the Woodcock-Johnson Applied Problems test indicated that Asians tended to score the lowest while Caucasians scored the highest, with the other ethnic groups in-between. Other groups tending to score higher on the test were children from higher income families, non-ELL children, and those with prior preschool/center care experience (see Figure 15).

15. Woodcock-Johnson Applied Problems test results by demographic characteristics

Characteristic		Number	Standard score mean[a]
Total		317	94.7
Gender	Female	165	94.9
	Male	162	94.5
Ethnicity[b]	American Indian	10	93.1
	Asian	83	84.6
	Hispanic	62	92.2
	African American	99	95.9
	Caucasian	62	109.3
Free/reduced price lunch[b]	Free or reduced	193	91.7
	Full price	124	99.3
ELL[b]	Yes	153	87.5
	No	164	101.4
Special education	Yes	37	89.9
	No	280	95.3
Attended preschool/child care center prior to Early K[b]	Yes	109	99.0
	No	167	92.8

[a] *In the national normative sample, the standard score mean is 100 and the standard deviation is 15.*

[b] *The difference in standard score means between/among the categories is statistically significant (p<.05).*

Peabody and Woodcock-Johnson test results for each school are provided in the Appendix (Figures A2-A21).

Children's behavior at school

Children's classroom behavior was assessed using the Social Skills Questionnaire, Preschool Level (Gresham and Elliot, 1990). In November-December 2005, Social Skills Questionnaires were completed by teachers for 323 of 338 children (96%). Teachers will be asked to complete the Social Skills Questionnaire on these same children in kindergarten and subsequent grades as well. The Social Skill Questionnaire consists of two domains: Social Skills and Problem Behaviors.

Social Skills

There are 30 items on the Social Skills scale. For each item, teachers rated how often the student exhibited the behavior described: never, sometimes, or very often. A Social Skills total score was calculated along with scores for three subscales: Cooperation, Assertion, and Self-Control. Higher scores on the scales indicate stronger social skills. Below are sample items for each of the Social Skills scales, rated by teachers.

Scale	Sample Items
Cooperation	Follows direction; Participates in games or group activities
Assertion	Helps teacher without being asked; Makes friends easily
Self-Control	Responds appropriately to teasing by peers; Waits turn in games or other activities

Figure 16 shows the results for the Social Skills scale, both the average standard score and the distribution of scores by behavioral levels. The average standard score was 101, with a standard deviation of 15.7, and a range of 60 to 131. This result is similar to that of the national normative sample, which has an average score (mean) of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The behavioral levels are determined by standard score ranges: less than 71 is categorized as "low," 71 to 84 is "below average," 85 to 115 is "average," 116 to 129 is "above average," and above 129 is "high." Sixty-five percent of the children were in the average level of social skills and almost 20 percent were in the above average level.

16. Social Skills

		Social Skills Scale (N=322)
Standard Score	Mean	101.0
	(SD)	15.7
	Range[a]	60-131
Behavioral level	Low (<71)	3%
	Below Average (71-84)	14%
	Average (85-115)	65%
	Above Average (116-129)	15%
	High (>129)	4%

[a] *The social skills total standard score ranges from 60 to higher than 130. For those children with the highest score, their standard score is set at 131.*

The scores on the Social Skills subscales are translated into three behavioral levels: fewer, average, and more. A student who scores "more" on the Cooperation scale is considered to be exhibiting more positive cooperation skills than average. Figure 17 shows that most of the students scored average on each of the subscales (63% - 78%). The students tended to be somewhat stronger in cooperation and self-control than in assertion.

17. Social Skills Subscales

		Social Skills Scale (N=318-321)		
		Cooperation	**Assertion**	**Self-control**
Behavioral level	Fewer	10%	26%	16%
	Average	78%	64%	63%
	More	12%	10%	22%

Figure 18 shows the Social Skills average ratings by child's gender, ethnicity, ELL status, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch, special education status, and prior preschool/ center care experience. Caucasian and American Indian children had higher average scores than the other groups. However, these differences were not statistically significant. ELL children and children with special education needs received lower average ratings.

18. Social skills by child characteristics

		N	Standard Score Mean
Gender	Female	163	100.3
	Male	159	101.8
Ethnicity	American Indian	10	103.7
	Asian	84	100.1
	Hispanic	64	98.9
	African American	99	100.3
	Caucasian	64	104.7
ELL[a]	Yes	156	98.9
	No	166	103.1
Free/reduced price lunch	Free or reduced	197	100.7
	Full price	125	101.6
Special education[a]	Yes	39	94.3
	No	283	102.0
Attended preschool/center care program prior to Early K	Yes	111	100.6
	No	173	101.8

[a] *p <.05*

Problem Behaviors

Teachers were also asked to rate the children's problem behaviors. For each of the 10 items on the Problem Behaviors Scale, teachers rated how often the student exhibited the behavior described: never, sometimes, or very often. Higher scores on the instrument indicate more problem behaviors. The Problem Behaviors Scale includes two subscales: Externalizing problems and Internalizing problems. Listed below are sample items from each of the subscales.

Scale	Sample Items
Externalizing problems	Has temper tantrums; Argues with others
Internalizing problems	Appears lonely; Says nobody likes him or her

Average standard score and behavioral levels are shown in Figure 19. The average standard score on the Problem Behaviors scale was 91, with a standard deviation of 9 and range of 84 to 135. The average for the national normative sample was 100, with the

standard deviation of 15. The behavioral levels are determined by standard score ranges: less than 71 is categorized as "low," 71 to 84 is "below average," 85 to 115 is "average," 116 to 129 is "above average," and above 129 is "high." More than half of the children were in the below average level of problem behaviors (i.e., fewer behavior problems). Fewer than 3 percent were in the above average level.

19. Problem Behaviors

		Problem Behaviors (N=323)
Standard Score	Mean	90.6
	(SD)	(9.4)
	Range[a]	84-135
Behavioral level	Low (<71)	0%
	Below Average (71-84)	53%
	Average (85-115)	44%
	Above Average (116-129)	2%
	High (>129)	<1%

[a] *The Problem Behaviors total standard score ranges from less than 85 to 135. For those children with the lowest score, their standard score is set at 84.*

Scores on the Problem Behaviors subscales are described using three levels: fewer, average, and more. Figure 20 shows most of the students scored average on each of the subscales. More than 20 percent showed fewer externalizing problems than average.

20. Problem Behaviors Subscales

		Problem Behaviors (N=323)	
		Externalizing	**Internalizing**
Behavioral level	Fewer	21%	0%
	Average	75%	99%
	More	4%	1%

Figure 21 shows differences in Problem Behaviors ratings by child's gender, ethnicity, ELL status, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch, and prior preschool/center care experience. There were differences by ethnicity, with African Americans having a higher average standard score than the Asian and Hispanic groups (i.e., more problem behaviors). The Native American group also seemed to have a higher average standard score than other groups, but there were only a small number of children in the group and

the difference was not statistically significant. ELL children tended to have fewer problem behaviors than other students. Children with special education needs tended to receive higher scores than other students, but the difference was not statistically significant. Children who attended a preschool/center care prior to Early K had a slightly higher average score than those who did not.

21. Problem Behaviors by child characteristics

		N	Standard Score Mean
Gender	Female	164	89.8
	Male	159	91.4
Ethnicity[a]	American Indian	10	94.2
	Asian	84	88.1
	Hispanic	65	89.1
	African American	99	93.6
	Caucasian	64	90.0
ELL[a]	Yes	157	89.2
	No	166	91.8
Free/reduced price lunch	Free or reduced	198	91.3
	Full price	125	89.5
Special Education	Yes	39	94.2
	No	284	90.1
Attended a preschool/center care prior to Early K[a]	Yes	111	91.7
	No	174	89.4

[a] *p<.05*

Relationships between Social Skills, Problem Behaviors, and academic achievement

Figure 22 indicates the relationship (i.e. correlation) of Social Skills and Problem Behaviors scores with academic achievement. The academic measures include Letter-Word Identification, Spelling, and Applied Problems of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement. The Social Skills score was significantly and positively related to all of the academic measures. The Problem Behaviors score was significantly and negatively related to Spelling and Applied Problems. The correlations were low to moderate. They were generally stronger for Social Skills than for Problem Behaviors. As expected, Social Skills and Problem Behaviors standard scores were significantly correlated. The correlation was -.35.

22. Social Skills and Problem Behaviors with academic achievement

	Woodcock-Johnson Standard Score		
	Letter-Word Identification (N=316-317)	Spelling (N=317-318)	Applied Problems (N=310-311)
Social Skills Standard Score	.12[a]	.24[b]	.27[b]
Problem Behaviors Standard Score	-.08	-.23[b]	-.14[a]

[a] $p < .05$

[b] $p < .001$

Teacher's assessment of children's development: Work Sampling assessment

The assessment used to monitor children's progress is the Work Sampling System,[1] a performance assessment that guides the teacher in observing and documenting children's classroom skills and behavior. The Work Sampling assessment is based on national standards and is curriculum embedded, that is, the assessment occurs within the context of normal classroom activity. Teachers in PEK complete the Work Sampling Developmental Checklist for three domains: personal and social development (13 indicators), language and literacy (12 indicators), and mathematics (8 indicators). The Work Sampling checklist is completed three times across the school year. It should be noted that the initial checklist in fall is not completed at school entry but in November in time for the fall conference. Work Sampling is based on the premise that the teacher will observe the child over time in the classroom before completing the checklist; thus the fall checklist is an indication of the progress the child has made after approximately three months in the program. The analysis presented here is a report on the growth made by children across the school year and the differences in proficiency and growth across groups.

Work Sampling observations for individual items in the Developmental Checklist are scored as follows:

- **3: proficient**; indicates that the skill or knowledge represented by a performance indicator is demonstrated consistently, and is firmly within the child's repertoire;
- **2: in process**; indicates that the skill or knowledge represented by a performance indicator is intermittent or emergent, and is not demonstrated consistently;

[1] Dichtelmiller, M.L., Jablon, J.R., Dorfman, A.B., Marsen, D.B. & Meisels, S.J. (2001). *Work Sampling in the Classroom: A Teacher's Manual*, Pearson Education, Inc. New York.

- **1: not yet**; indicates that a child cannot demonstrate the skill or knowledge represented by a performance indicator.

Proficiency ratings were calculated for individual domains and for total score using the following method:

- **proficient**: the checklist has no "1: not yet", and more "3: proficient" than "2: in process." The mean score is greater than 2.50
- **in process**: the mean score ranges from 2.0 – 2.5 and includes means above 2.5 if there is a "1:not yet" in the checklist
- **not yet**: the mean score is below 2.0

Figure 23 shows the breakdown of proficiency levels for all children for whom there was a work sampling checklist completed in spring. (About 10% of these children did not have a fall checklist, presumably starting late in the year.) Sixty-five percent of children are assessed by teachers to be proficient in the standards, 30 percent are well on their way to demonstrating proficiency, and only 5 percent could be considered not ready to enter kindergarten on the basis of not demonstrating the standards. Children demonstrate highest proficiency on the standards for personal and social development.

23. PEK Work Sampling Developmental Checklist, spring 2006, all students (N=324)

	Not yet	In process	Proficient
Total Work Sampling scores	17 (5%)	98 (30%)	209 (65%)
Personal and Social Development	8 (2.5%)	94 (29%)	222 (68.5%)
Language and Literacy	22 (7%)	102 (31%)	199 (62%)
Mathematical Thinking	12 (4%)	136 (42%)	174 (54%)

All further analyses on the Work Sampling checklist in this report only include children who have both fall and spring scores. The assumption is that with both a fall and spring score, children have attended most or all of the school year and it is possible to make fair assessment of change during the year.

Figure 24 shows the breakdown of proficiency levels and the change in level from fall to spring. There is a statistically significant change for all domains (using the chi square

test), with children showing increasing proficiency from fall to spring. While fewer children gain high proficiency in the language and literacy domain compared with the personal and social development domain, there are also more children who begin the school year with lower proficiency in language and literacy. Children are not as likely to gain proficiency in the standards for mathematical thinking by spring, and they start from a higher level of proficiency in fall.

24. Change in proficiency rating from fall to spring: PEK Work Sampling Developmental Checklist, 2005-06 school year, all students who have both fall and spring scores (N=291)

		Not yet	In process	Proficient
Total Work Sampling Scores	Fall	89 (31%)	187 (64%)	15 (5%)
	Spring	15 (5%)	82 (28%)	194 (67%)
Personal & Social Development	Fall	66 (23%)	204 (70%)	21 (7%)
	Spring	7 (3%)	84 (29%)	199 (68%)
Language & Literacy	Fall	96 (33%)	181 (62%)	14 (5%)
	Spring	18 (6%)	85 (29%)	187 (65%)
Mathematical Thinking	Fall	63 (22%)	218 (75%)	10 (3%)
	Spring	6 (2%)	119 (41%)	164 (57%)

Group differences in Work Sampling proficiency levels

Only 15 children have an overall proficiency level of "not yet." This number is too small to be considered without due caution. Characteristics of these children are:

- more likely to be ELL
- more likely to be children of color
- less likely to be a special education child
- more likely to be female

Children who are ELL are also less likely to be proficient on the standards in spring than those children who are not ELL. Note in Figure 25 that these children start off with lower levels of proficiency in fall.

25. Change in Work Sampling proficiency levels from fall to spring of children, ELL and not ELL

		not yet	in process	proficient
Fall	ELL	53 (37%)	85 (59%)	5 (4%)
	Not ELL	36 (24%)	102 (69%)	10 (7%)
Spring	ELL	11 (8%)	47 (33%)	85 (59%)
	Not ELL	4 (3%)	35 (23%)	109 (74%)

There are also differences in levels of proficiency by ethnicity in the spring checklist. Figure 26 shows the distribution of scores; the implication is that children who are not Caucasian are not as proficient on the standards as Caucasian children. An analysis of these same children's fall scores shows a similar profile, that is, Asian, Hispanic, and African American children have lower levels of proficiency on the Work Sampling standards than do Caucasian children when they start out in fall, and this continues through spring.[2]

26. Work Sampling proficiency levels in spring by ethnicity[a]

Ethnicity	Not yet	In process	Proficient
Asian American	6 (8%)	21 (26%)	52 (66%)
Hispanic	4 (7%)	19 (34%)	33 (59%)
African American	5 (6%)	27 (31%)	55 (63%)
Caucasian	0 (0%)	8 (13%)	52 (87%)

[a] *American Indian children not included because of small sample size.*

[2] In an earlier report, differences by ethnicity were not statistically significant. This initial analysis was conducted on all children who had entered the program. The current analysis only includes the children who remained in the program.

Another way to consider individual differences is to look at the progress made by children over the year. Only 5 percent of children were rated as proficient in fall. Thus 95 percent of children had the possibility of moving either one or two levels, that is, from "not yet" to "in process" or "proficient", and from "in process" to "proficient." Two hundred fourteen or 77.5 percent of the children moved up one or more levels during the year, while 62 or 22.5 percent stayed at the same level of proficiency. Analyses revealed the following:

- ELL status was not a factor in whether a child was determined to be at a higher level of proficiency
- Gender was not a factor
- Special education children tended more often to stay at the same level than those who were not in special education
- Caucasian children were more likely to increase proficiency than non-Caucasian children; there was no difference between Asian, African American and Hispanic children
- African American non-ELL children were more likely to stay at the same level than Caucasian non-ELL children[3]

The analysis suggests that there may be some differences in teachers' perceptions of children's abilities across race. Several factors should be considered: differences in instruction across the sites, scoring differences across the sites, undetected bias in the instrument, and actual differences across racial groups.

Partnership between school and family

Parents' reports of communication with the school and involvement in their child's education

Parents were asked to complete a survey during the spring parent-teacher conference. Parents of 227 children out of 338 children completed the survey, for a response rate of 67 percent. Twenty-three parents completed the survey in Spanish and the rest of the parents completed the survey in English.

The survey asks parents' opinions about how well the school communicates with them and about their involvement in their child's education at home and at school.

[3] Other ethnicities were not included in this analysis because of small sample sizes.

Figure 27 shows that most parents (95% to 99%) indicated that the school does "OK" or "very well" on all areas of communication listed. Parents gave the highest ratings on how well the child's teacher or someone else at school sends home notices, sends home news about things happening at school, and tells them how their child is doing in school (90%, 88%, and 84% of the parents, respectively, gave a rating of "very well").

27. Communication with school

How well does your child's teacher or someone at school do the following:	Number	Poor	OK	Very well
Tells you how your child is doing in school?	227	<1%	15%	84%
Tells you what skills your child needs to learn?	225	3%	23%	74%
Sends home news about things happening at school?	227	1%	11%	88%
Sends home activities for you to do with your child?	226	4%	26%	70%
Sends home clear notices that you can read easily?	226	2%	8%	90%
Contacts you if your child is having problems?	218	3%	22%	75%
Contacts you if your child does something well or improves?	216	5%	31%	64%
Provides information on community services that you want to use?	200	4%	36%	60%

Figure 28 shows that almost all parents (93%) reported that they ask their child about what he or she is learning at school every day or most days. Almost all parents reported that they talked to their child's teacher at least once. About two-thirds of the parents read with their child every day or most days and almost a quarter of the parents read with their child once a week. Four parents responded that they never visited their child's school and two parents never talked to their child's teacher. More than 40 percent of the parents never talked with other parents at school.

28. Parent involvement in child's education and development

How often do you …	Number	Never	Once in a while	Once a week	Everyday/ most days
Read with your child?	223	-	10%	22%	67%
Watch or talk about television with your child?	224	1%	12%	17%	71%
Ask your child about what he or she is learning in school?	225	-	1%	6%	93%
Visit your child's school?	222	2%	48%	11%	39%
Talk to your child's teacher?	227	1%	53%	17%	29%
Talk with other parents at the school?	222	41%	41%	9%	10%

In terms of amount of TV watching, parents reported that, on average, children watched TV slightly more than two hours a day. About one-third of the parents reported that their child watched more than two hours a day (Figure 29). Turning back to Figure 28 above, 71 percent of the parents reported that they watched or talked about television with their child everyday or most days.

29. Amount of TV watching

How many hours a day does your child usually watch TV	Number	Percent
Less than one hour	4	2%
1-2 hours	141	66%
3-4 hours	54	25%
5-6 hours	12	6%
7-8 hours	2	1%
Average	2.3	

Figure 30 shows levels of parent participation in school activities or events. Nearly all parents reported that they have attended a parent-teacher conference. More than half of the parents indicated that they have attended a family social or educational event or an open house. The least attended school events or activities were classes for parents or adults and school committee or site council meetings.

30. Participation in school activity or event

Since the beginning of the school year, have you attended any of the following activities or events at your child's school	Number	Percent
Open house	225	64%
Parent-teacher conference	224	99%
Student performance program	221	47%
Family social or educational event	222	54%
Class for parents or adults	220	11%
School committee or site council meeting	220	15%
Parent organization or group meeting (PTO, PTA)	223	18%
Volunteer in child's classroom	223	19%
Something else: donating snacks, field trips, attending graduation ceremony, non-specified	134	21%

Most parents (96%) reported that their child's experiences in Project Early Kindergarten were "excellent" or "very good." Almost all parents were satisfied with the program (99.6%); one person was not satisfied. Ninety-four percent indicated that enough efforts were made to involve parents.

Thirty-five percent of the parents reported that they had another child attending the same school. When asked where their child would attend kindergarten, 52 percent of the parents indicated that their child would attend kindergarten at the same school, 21 percent at another school within the Saint Paul Public Schools, and 7 percent at a charter school or another school outside the Saint Paul district. Twenty-one percent of the parents did not know, did not provide an answer, or mentioned multiple schools.

Parents were asked their suggestions for improving the Project Early Kindergarten program. Most parents liked the program and did not offer any suggestions for improvement. Suggestions offered included extending the hours, having more contacts with parents, providing homework or ideas for family activities, and providing more or different types of activities at school (e.g., writing and learning the alphabet). Parents' answers are summarized in Figure 31. Their full answers can be found in the Appendix.

31. Parent suggestions for improvement

Theme	Number	Percent
The program is good, none, no suggestions	71	31%
Extended hours, all day	11	5%
More or different academic activities at school	5	2%
More contacts with parents, update on child's progress	5	2%
Provide homework or activities for family	4	2%
Bilingual staff	2	1%
Other responses, multiple answers	10	4%
No response	119	52%
Total	227	100

Teachers' communication and contact with parents

Teachers completed a questionnaire in April 2006 which addressed the ways in which they interacted with parents. Teachers responded to questions about methods of contact, frequency of contact, parent education, volunteer activities, and parents' attendance at conferences and other school activities.

Most teachers reported high participation by parents at school conferences. Overall 88 percent of parents attended conferences, with a range of 70 to 100 percent at individual schools (see Figure 32). Although the teachers reported high parental participation at conferences, parents' self-reports indicated even higher participation. Nearly all the parents reported having attended conferences since the beginning of the school year.

32. Teachers' report of parent participation at conferences

School	Fall conference	Spring conference
World Cultures/American Indian[a]	75%	90%
Prosperity Heights	92%	90%
Four Seasons	100%	95%
Dayton's Bluff	70%	75%
Hayden Heights	95%	85%
Maxfield	85%	79%
Como Park	96%	92%
Wellstone	95%	95%
Ames	97%	97%

[a] *The teacher for World Cultures and American Indian Magnet gave a single report for the two schools.*

Teachers reported that interpreters were available for most parents who needed them. Only two teachers reported that additional resources would have been helpful: at Four Seasons, there were only Hmong interpreters and an interpreter for Vietnamese families would have been helpful; at Hayden Heights, there was a Hmong interpreter but no Spanish interpreter.

All teachers communicated with parents by telephone but there was large variation in the number of calls made by teachers. The teachers at World Cultures/American Indian, Maxfield, Wellstone and Ames called all parents from one to five times. In contrast, other teachers reported making fewer calls to parents (see Figure 33).

33. Teachers' report of telephone calls to parents

School	Percentage of parents receiving calls	Frequency of calls
World Cultures/American Indian[a]	100%	Every family received at least 5 calls
Prosperity Heights	25%	Not available
Four Seasons	39%	1 – 5 calls to families
Dayton's Bluff	13%	1 call
Hayden Heights	30%	1 call
Maxfield	100%	1 – 2 calls
Como Park	44%	4 calls to families who bus children
Wellstone	100%	At least 3 times
Ames	100%	At least once

[a] *The teacher for World Cultures and American Indian Magnet gave a single report for the two schools.*

Teachers called parents for a variety of reasons, among them:

- kudos regarding child
- returning calls from parents
- behavior problems in class
- rescheduling conferences
- informing parents of situation that happened
- questions or information that teacher wished to share
- school closings

- good news from school
- late to pick up
- class or bus issues
- reminding them about special dates
- calling to ask about missing school

Communication to parents through newsletters also varied across schools from weekly to quarterly. Seven of nine teachers sent out a classroom newsletter weekly or monthly, and newsletters from the school were sent monthly by all but one school (see Figure 34).

34. Teachers' report of newsletters to parents

School	Newsletter from teacher	Newsletter from school
World Cultures/American Indian[a]	None	Monthly
Prosperity Heights	Monthly	Monthly
Four Seasons	Weekly	Monthly
Dayton's Bluff	Weekly	Monthly
Hayden Heights	Weekly	Monthly
Maxfield	Weekly	Monthly
Como Park	Weekly	Monthly
Wellstone	None	Quarterly
Ames	Monthly	Weekly

[a] *The teacher for World Cultures and American Indian Magnet gave a single report for the two schools.*

Other ways teachers communicated with parents were:

- notes sent home with child
- email
- chat with parents when they arrive to pick up child
- correspondence attached to folder or homework which is sent home weekly
- mailers

In open-ended questions, teachers report that parent involvement can take the following forms:

- volunteering on governing councils
- volunteering in the classroom
- volunteering on field trips
- attending Parent Day
- attending school-wide events

Teachers did not track the number of parents that participated in these activities during the year, so the reports of participation rates were teachers' best estimates. PEK parents participated in governing councils at three schools. Four teachers had parents helping during field trips. Eight teachers reported attendance at Parent Day ranging from four to 19 parents, with a median of nine. Seven teachers reported that parents would volunteer in the classroom, helping out during activity time and reading to small groups. Four teachers reported that parents attended school-wide events such as Family Fun Night, Culture Fair, and Camp Learn-A-Lot.

In an open question regarding parent education, all teachers reported sending home information to parents. Most teachers used the information provided by Kate Bonestroo, PEK staff member. Teachers who wrote newsletters often included parent tips, "things to do," activities, and songs. Three of the teachers reported sending worksheets home for children to complete.

Appendix

Project Early K classroom observation measure

Detailed ELLCO results (subscale scores)

Peabody and Woodcock-Johnson test results for each school

Parents' suggestions for improving Project Early K

Project Early K classroom observation measure

PEK Classroom Observation Measure		
Date:		School:
Teacher:		am/pm:
Other adults:		Observer:
Number of Students:		
Area of Study	**Topic:** _____	
	Environment	**Observation**
❒	There are NCEE and/or MN standards with supporting student work posted outside (or inside) every classroom.	
❒	An area of study is evident throughout the classroom [Connections are made from area to area: could be posted, visible in large group time and reading time, song, shared reading.]	
❒	Children's work is displayed throughout the classroom. [Child initiated, produced work, not teacher directed. This includes word wall if it is student work. Document observations of child's work that has been teacher directed separately.]	
❒	How many ways are children's names displayed? [Target: 4-7 places in the classroom] [e.g., cubby, check-in, sign-in, etc.]	
❒	A word wall is available to children. [At child's height, visible, set up for kids.]	
❒	It is evident that the word wall is understood and used by the children.	
❒	A sign-in procedure is evident in the classroom. [Teacher is seen to be scaffolding with children; teaching is going on at the same time, not necessarily with all children but at least with some children.]	
❒	There is evidence of shared reading around the room for children to extend learning. (i.e.: charts, big books, co-created stories, lists and other appropriate activities)	
❒	There is evidence of shared writing around the room for children to extend learning. (i.e.,: co-created stories, lists and other appropriate activities) [must show evidence of child initiated writing; can include sign-in; does not include copying what teacher has written.]	
❒	A weekly lesson plan is available. [Ask teacher.]	
	Community Circle	
❒	Community circle time includes a mini-lesson with one teaching point	Teaching Point (ask teacher)
❒	Children are actively engaged in the circle activities, (i.e.: greeting, calendar, weather, read aloud, shared reading)	

	Environment	Observation
	Active Learning	
❒	There is a 45 – 60 minute active learning time scheduled into the day	Time:
❒	There are intentionally placed activities and materials that reflect an area of study, based on children's interest, as well as a standard. [Children are consistently interested and engaged as a result of the selection of materials.]	
❒	The teacher is able to articulate the current literacy goals embedded in the available activities.	1. What is the goal for this activity? (dramatic play) 2. What is the goal for this activity? (art or writing)
❒	All active learning centers contain literacy props; (i.e.: books, writing tools, clipboards)	
❒	The Mini lesson is extended into active learning or small groups	
❒	The teacher and assistant(s) moves around the room engaging with children, asking open ended questions and making observations that help children extend learning and encourage critical thinking.	
	Regroup to Revisit	
❒	The meeting is brief and focused on revisiting a highlight connected to the teaching point for the day	
❒	Children are actively engaged in the conversation	
	Rituals and Routines	
❒	Classroom expectations are clear (i.e.: children seem to understand what to do; when there is a transition, during active learning time, when they have a problem, during structured group times). Down time is minimized for students and time is effectively managed.	
❒	Meal time is used as a valuable teaching time, for example, a time to build vocabulary and conversation skills	
❒	Number of read alouds observed: [Target: minimum of two per day]	
❒	Number of shared readings observed: [Target: minimum of two per day]	
	Rituals and Routines (continued)	
❒	There is evidence of language modeling. [Teacher repeats or extends children's responses, brain storming, open-ended questions; clear and intentional effort by the teacher to promote children's language use; children engage in extended conversations with one another.]	
❒	Student engagement. [Target: Students are actively engaged and engagement is sustained throughout.]	
❒	Positive Climate. [The overall tone of the classroom, warmth of teacher's interactions with students, and students with each other; enjoyment and respect.]	
❒	Negative Climate. [The overall tone of expressed negativity in the classroom; teacher displays anger, sarcasm, irritability, or peer negativity.]	

Detailed ELLCO results (subscale scores)

A1. Change in ELLCO scores from fall to spring

School	ELLCO Subscale	Fall	Spring
Ames	Book Subscale	15	16
	Writing Subscale	19 T*	19 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	3.1	3.75
	General Classroom Environment	3.8 T	3.6
Como Park	Book Subscale	12	16
	Writing Subscale	20 T	17
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	4 T	3.75
	General Classroom Environment	4.2 T	4 T
Dayton's Bluff	Book Subscale	14	19 T
	Writing Subscale	16	20 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	3.6	4.1 T
	General Classroom Environment	3	3.6
Four Seasons	Book Subscale	20 T	19 T
	Writing Subscale	11	21 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	4.1 T	4.4 T
	General Classroom Environment	4.2 T	4.4 T
Hayden Heights	Book Subscale	18 T	20 T
	Writing Subscale	15	18
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	3.5	4.4 T
	General Classroom Environment	3.4	4.4 T
Maxfield	Book Subscale	18 T	19 T
	Writing Subscale	19 T	20 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	4.1 T	4.1 T
	General Classroom Environment	3.4	3.8 T
Prosperity Heights	Book Subscale	19 T	20 T
	Writing Subscale	17	19 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	3.9	3.9
	General Classroom Environment	3.8 T	3.4

* *T = target met*

A1. Change in ELLCO scores from fall to spring (continued)

School	ELLCO Subscale	Fall	Spring
Wellstone	Book Subscale	20 T	20 T
	Writing Subscale	15	19 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	3.7	4 T
	General Classroom Environment	4 T	3.4
World Cultures/American Indian	Book Subscale	19 T	20 T
	Writing Subscale	20 T	20 T
	Language, Literacy, Curriculum	4 T	4.1 T
	General Classroom Environment	4.4 T	3.4

* *T = target met*

Peabody and Woodcock-Johnson test results for each school

American Indian

A2. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	1	5%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	1	5%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	7	35%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	6	30%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	5	25%
Total	20	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 5 months	
Actual age	4 years, 6 months	
Difference	-13 months	
Average standard score	83.1	
SD	20.5	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A3. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
High average	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%
Average	8	40%	14	70%	11	58%
Low average	10	50%	3	15%	5	26%
Low/very low	1	5%	2	10%	3	16%
Total	20	100%	20	100%	19	100%
Average standard score	90.5		94.4		90.9	
SD	9.9		11.8		8.8	

Ames

A4. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	1	3%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	19	54%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	6	17%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	9	26%
Total	35	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 4 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-15 months	
Average standard score	81.9	
SD	21.9	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A5. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	2	5%	0	0%	1	3%
High average	7	19%	3	8%	2	5%
Average	16	43%	28	76%	21	57%
Low average	7	19%	4	11%	1	3%
Low/very low	5	14%	2	5%	12	32%
Total	37	100%	37	100%	37	100%
Average standard score	96.7		96.7		92.2	
SD	16.0		10.6		18.5	

Como Park

A6. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	3	10%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	16	53%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	4	13%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	7	23%
Total	30	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 9 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-10 months	
Average standard score	87.1	
SD	23.6	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A7. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	2	7%	0	0%	1	3%
High average	1	3%	4	13%	5	17%
Average	13	43%	24	80%	7	24%
Low average	11	37%	1	3%	6	21%
Low/very low	3	10%	1	3%	10	35%
Total	30	100%	30	100%	29	100%
Average standard score	93.0		99.4		89.0	
SD	12.5		8.8		21.3	

Dayton's Bluff

A8. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	2	5%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	16	43%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	9	24%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	10	27%
Total	37	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 6 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-13 months	
Average standard score	85.4	
SD	19.3	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A9. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%
High average	2	6%	1	3%	3	8%
Average	25	69%	28	78%	14	39%
Low average	4	11%	2	6%	11	31%
Low/very low	4	11%	4	11%	8	22%
Total	36	100%	36	100%	36	100%
Average standard score	94.4		96.8		90.3	
SD	11.2		11.8		14.0	

Four Seasons

A10. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	1	3%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	5	14%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	22	61%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	6	17%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	2	6%
Total	36	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	4 years, 6 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-1 months	
Average standard score	99.1	
SD	19.3	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A11. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	4	11%	3	8%	2	6%
High average	8	22%	6	16%	7	19%
Average	16	44%	23	62%	19	53%
Low average	5	14%	4	11%	4	11%
Low/very low	3	8%	1	3%	4	11%
Total	36	100%	37	100%	36	100%
Average standard score	103.7		102.6		99.1	
SD	16.1		12.6		17.5	

Hayden Heights

A12. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	1	3%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	10	26%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	13	33%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	5	13%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	10	26%
Total	39	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	4 years, 0 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-7 months	
Average standard score	90.7	
SD	27.3	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A13. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	2	5%	1	3%	6	16%
High average	7	18%	6	15%	4	11%
Average	17	44%	29	74%	17	46%
Low average	10	26%	1	3%	4	11%
Low/very low	3	8%	2	5%	6	16%
Total	39	100%	39	100%	37	100%
Average standard score	98.2		101.5		100.0	
SD	16.1		12.5		17.7	

Maxfield

A14. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	1	3%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	24	73%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	5	15%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	3	9%
Total	33	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	4 years, 0 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-7 months	
Average standard score	92.4	
SD	18.0	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A15. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	4	12%	1	3%	1	3%
High average	2	6%	7	22%	4	13%
Average	19	58%	18	56%	17	55%
Low average	4	12%	4	13%	6	19%
Low/very low	4	12%	2	6%	3	10%
Total	33	100%	32	100%	31	100%
Average standard score	98.4		101.0		97.4	
SD	14.8		12.1		13.1	

Prosperity Heights

A16. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	3	8%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	21	58%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	6	17%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	6	17%
Total	36	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 11 months	
Actual age	4 years, 6 months	
Difference	-7 months	
Average standard score	91.2	
SD	21.2	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A17. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	2	5%	0	0%	1	3%
High average	7	19%	5	14%	7	19%
Average	19	51%	29	78%	18	49%
Low average	6	16%	3	8%	7	19%
Low/very low	3	8%	0	0%	4	11%
Total	37	100%	37	100%	37	100%
Average standard score	98.5		100.5		96.4	
SD	14.1		8.2		17.0	

Wellstone

A18. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	0	0%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	25	68%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	4	11%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	8	22%
Total	37	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	3 years, 7 months	
Actual age	4 years, 7 months	
Difference	-12 months	
Average standard score	88.0	
SD	16.9	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A19. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%
High average	6	16%	4	11%	7	19%
Average	21	57%	28	76%	19	51%
Low average	7	19%	0	0%	6	16%
Low/very low	2	5%	4	11%	5	14%
Total	37	100%	37	100%	37	100%
Average standard score	98.8		96.9		97.2	
SD	12.2		13.8		13.2	

World Cultures

A20. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

Score classification	Number	Percent
Extremely high score (Standard scores 131 or higher)	0	0%
Moderately high score (Standard scores 116-130)	2	10%
Average (Standard scores 85-115)	3	15%
Moderately low score (Standard scores 70-84)	8	40%
Extremely low score (Standard scores 69 or lower)	7	35%
Total	20	100%
	Average	
Age equivalent score[a]	2 years, 9 months	
Actual age	4 years, 6 months	
Difference	-21 months	
Average standard score	76.4	
SD	20.7	

[a] *Students with an age equivalent score of less than 1 year 9 months were given a score of 1 year 8 months for purposes of this analysis.*

A21. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III Baseline Results: Fall 2005

	Letter-Word Identification		Spelling		Applied Problems	
Score classification	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Superior/very superior	0	0%	1	5%	2	11%
High average	1	5%	3	15%	1	6%
Average	12	63%	15	75%	4	22%
Low average	4	21%	0	0%	5	28%
Low/very low	2	11%	1	5%	6	33%
Total	19	100%	20	100%	18	100%
Average standard score	92.5		101.2		88.7	
SD	10.8		11.3		18.1	

Parents' suggestions for improving Project Early K

Do you have any suggestions for improving Project Early Kindergarten?

The program is good; none; no suggestions (71 respondents)

Continue what you're doing.

Doing great.

Don't get rid of program.

Good as is.

Good work.

Great addition to the school programs.

Great program.

Great program. Keep up the good work.

I feel it's doing very well.

I love the program.

I think it is going very well for my child. I'm very glad to know she is learning all things she needs to. I think it's a great program for the kids.

Everything is good because they are working with letters and numbers.

I believe that the attention is good. Everything is good.

I think positive reinforcement is very important in keeping children involved and liking school. I wish I knew more about the good things as well as things that need improvements. I do not have any complaints about this program and it has made my child love school. I hope it stays that way.

I think they have helped out a lot in preparing her for kindergarten.

I'm very happy with our experiences.

I'm very happy with our experiences.

None really. Keep up the good work.

No, I think it's enough.

No suggestions at this time. Overall I am extremely pleased with the program as well as the teacher and aids. Thank you.

None. Class is very good for my daughter.

None. Everything is going well.

None. I think program's great. Love everything. Don't change.

None. I think the program is good.

None. I think they are doing a wonderful job. My daughter enjoys going and has learned many new things.

Right now I have no suggestions. I think the program is excellent.

Seems to be working just fine for my son.

It is satisfactory. Keep it up.

It is satisfactory. Keep it up.

Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work. I think this is an excellent program.

Keep up the good work. We love especially the arts and crafts, painting, music, and problem solving skills that are part of this class. Research shows that exposure of children to this enhances their academic development. We are happy that our child can be part of this and is exposed to letters, numbers, shapes, etc. at the same time.

None. Keep funding the program. It really gets children ready for kindergarten. Let them learn letters/numbers in a more explicitly taught way as well as continue the themes.

None. The program has been really great. Please keep it going for the future children.

I am very happy with my daughter's learning, and I suggest to the teachers that they never lose their patience, their interest, and their wisdom, for the education of all their students, because their profession is very important and very respected. Thanks for everything!

It very good what you guys have for now. Always keep up the good work. Thank you.

Thank you to the program.

Thank you. It's very good as is.

This program was so amazing. The progress my son made before coming here is astounding. Thank you very much for allowing my son to learn so much this year.

What a great opportunity. Keep it up and going.

My daughter only started attending the program in January but I can already see great improvement.

The program is very good. My girl is very happy and she is learning a lot. Just keep going with the good job.

This is a great program. It's helped my daughter a lot. Thanks.

This program has been excellent.

This program has excellent teachers.

You have been doing a great job in helping my kid to learn. She improved her learning every day she comes home from school. Thanks for your program.

No comments at this time, no suggestions at this time, none (17 respondents).

All the kids and the teacher enjoy each other. My daughter loves to come to school and is very fond of her teacher. I think everything is going very well for now. A happy parent.

None. It's wonderful. The teachers, the school even the lunch staff are all great. I love how they all know my daughter's name. I think it makes her feel very welcome. Thank you.

None. The teacher is awesome. My son is learning many new things and enjoys school.

Nothing. My son has learned so much. He is an only child and has never been to daycare so I was afraid he would not do too good but he loves his class and he always talks about his teacher. She is a really good teacher.

Only I want to say thank you for this program especially for the teachers. They are wonderful.

I feel a school is as good as its teacher and my child had a great teacher. Couldn't be more pleased with your school.

I think the teacher is wonderful. I can't improve on how she runs her classroom.

Longer time, more (11 respondents)

All day program at every site.

All day program.

All day program.

All day.

Continue the program to create a year-round pre-k for all students.

Extended hours of learning and extra-curricular or after-school program.

More hours. Great program.

It should be all day. I think the program is really good. My daughter loves her teacher and the things they do in class. She comes home and can't stop talking about it. She's learned so much and she's even teaching her little sister.

Children with more needs have longer class time to help normal class development.

More.

I wish it was a little longer and that if we could, as parents, we could volunteer more days a week.

More contacts with parents; updates on child's progress (5 respondents)

I would appreciate informal progress reports and more suggestions on how to improve and build on skills they are working on. Other than that we have loved the PEK program.

More contact with the parents.

More frequent progress report on how my child is doing (well/needs help in). Everything else has been wonderful. My child is excited about learning and going to school. I feel my child is better prepared for a successful education due to her positive experience in this program.

More updates on child's progress.

Overall, this is a great program. My daughter loves to go to school, always has something to say about her day at school, and is growing as a person. However, I just don't hear very much about what she is doing. I know what the class is doing, and what's going on at school, but I don't hear about her but I can tell she is ready to go to kindergarten because of this program.

Academic activities at school (5 respondents)

Writing more.

I would like to have my child working more in a small group and teach my child to count, learn alphabet, letters, and practice the ABC sound before my child can read and write.

Provide more learning materials.

Since the teacher/student ratio is not particularly set up to spend a lot of time with one student, I would only suggest that hopefully more can be done to challenge the students.

Classes in Spanish.

Provide homework or activities for family (4 respondents)

More homework over the weekend.

More parenting or family at-home activities to do with my child.

Possibly have a sign up sheet in the classroom for parent/volunteer activities. Send home "homework" over weekends and any break. My child loves the time with me and its fun to help your child learn.

That on the occasions when the children bring books home, that they could send them in Spanish to the Latino families, because the child asks that we read them and many of us do not pay attention to the books because we lack an understanding of English.

Need bilingual teacher/staff (2 respondents)

That there would be bilingual teachers so that – we parents who don't speak English and we are interested in participating more in our children's things – we could do it. One wants to attend, but always with fear if someone is going to speak our language – and many times one tried to study the language, but well after work, but well I realize that one also has to do their part.

Bilingual in Spanish.

Other response (7 respondents)

I work a lot not too active in programs, but I do come and sit in class when I am off work early.

More money is needed.

Borrow chairs for parent conferences. Would like it all day.

Guidelines and rules need to be amended or changed for busing. A child should never be left from the school bus in the wrong address or left by the bus if there is not an adult present in particular if the child attends the four-year-old program. This happened to our son and we have yet to hear from the transportation department for the bus.

Maybe have busing for next year.

> That the teacher practice the names of the students with them more, "a little more."
>
> The only complaint I have is what sorts of things are available for breakfast. The children have too many sugar options.

Multiple answers (3 respondents)

> At the beginning of the year orientation/open house: 1) have parents wear name tags – can help them meet each other. 2) Have a sign-up sheet for possible volunteer opportunities. This could remain posted all year. 3) Post a map of the local area and put a little pin in where each family lives. This could help parents find who lives nearby for play dates, car pooling to school, etc.
>
> If possible offering other school activities, sports, art and crafts, etc. on weekends or after school. Send home letters/notes for parent's involvement or volunteer for school activities/field trips, etc. Send frequent updates/follow-ups on a child's development or progress in school.
>
> Need longer days. Full days are ideal. I use my lunch break (work) to pick up my 4 year old from pre-kindergarten. I cannot always make it daily so she suffers by having poor attendance. It would be nice if Ames was a busing school. That could make that difference. Thanks.

No response (119 respondents)