



Universal Preschool (UPK) Program Update

Board of Education

October 10, 2023

UPK Background

- Proposition EE (tax on nicotine products) in 2020- Voters supported funding for high-quality, universal preschool for 4 year olds in a mixed delivery system.
- House Bill 21-1304- Created a new State Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) to coordinate a unified early childhood system and ensure the equitable distribution of resources and programming, including the new universal, voluntary preschool program.
- The research shows that children who attend a high quality preschool in the first few years of life are more likely to experience higher levels of educational attainment and future income and less likely to experience poverty or enter the criminal justice system.

UPK Student Eligibility

- Beginning in the 23-24 school year, the new Colorado Department of Early Childhood is slated to fund up to 15 hours/week of high-quality, voluntary preschool for every Colorado child in their year before entering kindergarten and qualifying three-year-olds only
- Pre-Kindergarten is non-compulsory for families (similar to Kindergarten)
- Participation in the UPK program is voluntary for both families and programs

UPK Student Eligibility

- Some children may qualify for additional state-funded hours based on the risk factors to-be-developed by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC)
 - Information on the risk factors and additional hours of care will be published as it becomes available. Some examples of risk factors may include:
 - A child who lives in a low-income household (270% of the 2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines)
 - A child who is a dual language learner and the native language spoken in the child's home is a language other than English, or the child's native language is not English
 - A child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
 - A child who is currently in a foster care home or in non-certified kinship care
 - A child who is identified as homeless

Early Childhood Education in DCSD

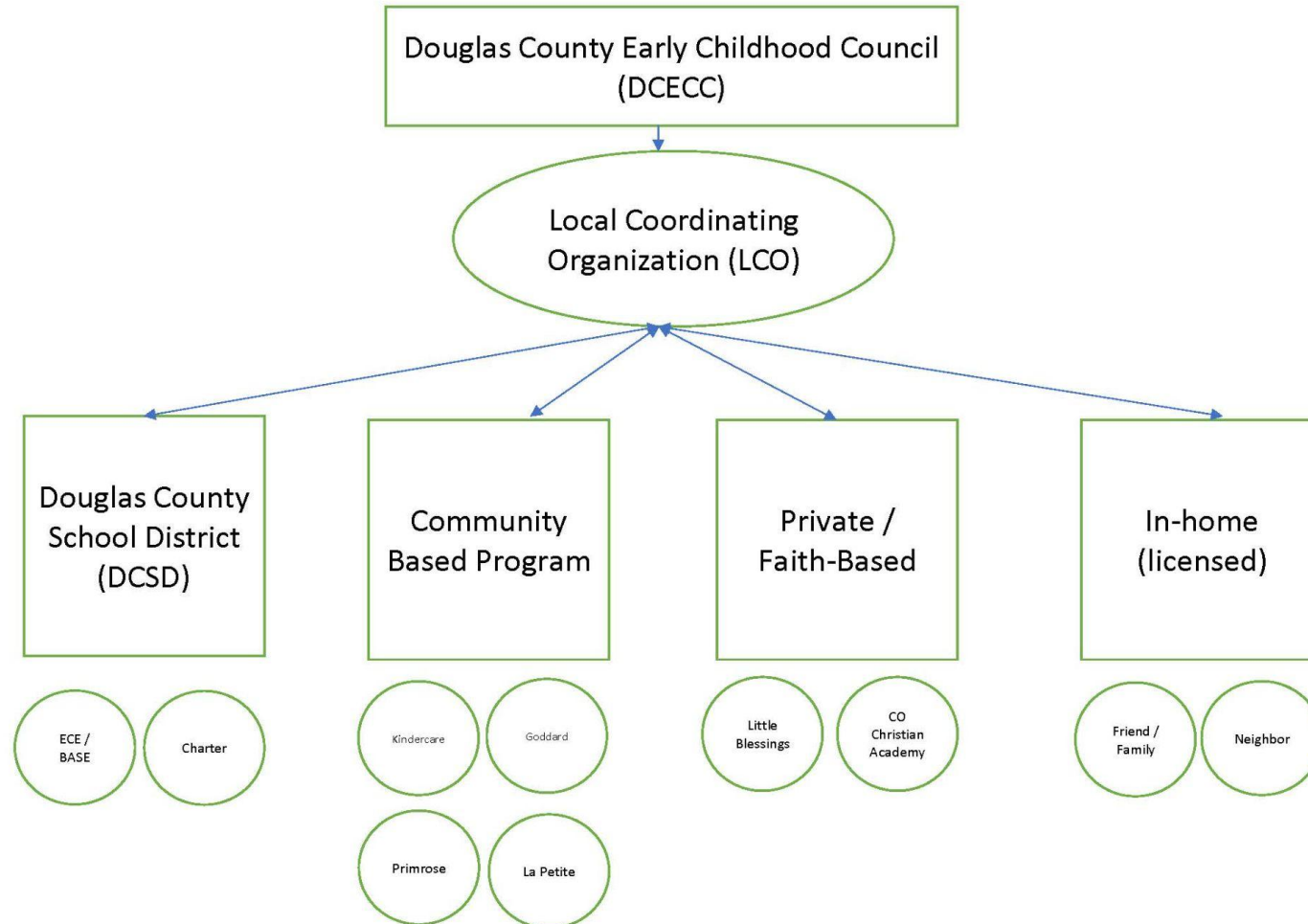
Vision: We collaborate to serve a full continuum of learners where students feel safe, valued, and connected in order to reach their highest potential.

Focus To create an optimal play-based, early learning environment that enables all preschoolers to develop ready-to-learn skills. Learning opportunities are maximized through nurturing & responsive relationships and a variety of differentiated, instructional approaches. Our ECE teams are cognizant of the *whole child* and facilitate the development of foundational social-emotional, physical, language, and pre-academic skills in our youngest learners by utilizing developmentally appropriate, child-centered practices.

Douglas County UPK Organizational Structure

Colorado
Department of
Early Childhood
(CDEC)

Douglas County
Community



Note - The DCECC is not directed by the Douglas County School District

DCSD Preschool Capacity Data

DCSD Current Neighborhood School **Capacity**

Early Childhood Education:

- 66 classrooms (AM & PM sessions)
- 4 y/o with IEP = 528
- 4 y/o w/o IEP = 528
- 3 y/o with IEP = 528
- 3 y/o w/o IEP = 528

BASE PreKindergarten (5 classrooms):

- 4 y/o w/o IEP = 120



Total (ECE and BASE) 4 y/o (only) spots = 1,176

Comparison of Preschool & BASE PreK

	ECE	BASE
Quality Rating	3	3
# Classes / Bldgs	66 / 44 (see list as of 23-24)	5 / 3 (CRUN, CCE, MVP)
# Students / Staff	16 / 2 + SSPs	24 / 2
Hours/day / Days/wk	2:45 (AM / PM) / 4 (M-Th) ECC South PM (only) = 3:45 M-Th	10.5 (7:00-5:30) / 5 (M-F)
Calendar	Generally follows DCSD calendar including PD and break schedules	Provides PreK during PD days and breaks (185 or 260 days/year)
Staff Vacancies (as of 10/2/23)	ECI (1), EA IV (12), SLP (2), ECSE (1.5), OT (1), Psych (1)	Lead (2), Sub (1)

UPK Funding Information

The Colorado Universal Preschool Program is expected to save families an average of \$4,300 per year on child care.

Funding recommendation, per statute, must be at 40% of CO statewide base pupil rate.

For Example:

- Base pupil rate for FY2024: \$8,076.41
- UPK minimum rate: \$3,230.56 PPR

Note - Base pupil rate may vary by region

If funding remains available, other eligibility factors may be considered.

Additional eligibility factors may include:

- 3 or 4 y/o with an IEP
- 3 y/o who meet other qualifying criteria for eligibility (former CPP)
- 4 y/o who meet other qualifying criteria for eligibility (former CPP)

Note - only Administrative Units (AU's are districts) are eligible to serve eligible 3 year olds

UPK Funding Information

- Douglas County annual rates for 2023-2024
 - Part Time (10 hours) = \$4,662.16
 - Half Time (15 hours) = \$5,825.82

Category of Funding	2022-2023 Final Revised Budget	2023-2024 Year End Forecast
UPK Revenue	\$0	\$6.49M
Tuition Revenue	\$1.77M	\$0.74M
CPP Revenue	\$0.74M	\$0
Total Program (School Finance Act) for ECE on IEP	\$2.87M	\$0
Total ECE General Fund Revenue	\$5.38M	\$7.23M



*Preliminary forecast from 2 months of enrollment estimate ECE funding in General Fund will be **~\$1.85M higher** in 2023-2024 than in 2022-2023.*

UPK Positive Impacts

- Pilot program at Early Childhood Center South offering 15 hours/week for 4 year olds (PM)
- Enrollment of students in District programs is greater than anticipated

3 year olds:

<u>As of 10/2/22</u>		<u>As of 10/2/23</u>		<u>Difference</u>
Tuition	348	Tuition	274	-74
CPP	29	UPK	156	+127
IEP	253	IEP	250	-3
Total	630		680	+50

4 year olds:

<u>As of 10/2/22</u>		<u>As of 10/2/23</u>		<u>Difference</u>
Tuition	370	UPK	472	-15
CPP	117	(=Tuition + CPP)		
IEP	297	IEP	347	+50
Total	784		819	+35

Grand total 2022 = 1414 2023 = 1499 Difference = +85

UPK Challenges

- Traditional 3 Year old pupil count on November 1 has shifted to October 1 resulting in less students being counted and funded
- Dual enrollment process via Statewide UPK enrollment system + local enrollment process
- Continuous changes with the statewide system for student enrollment, accountability and funding structures
- Capacity limits for various high-requested locations/regions (Parker, Castle Rock and Roxborough)
- Continued confusion by families regarding available spaces for enrollment
- Ongoing clarification of the collaboration and responsibilities between CDE & CDEC

DCSD UPK Task Force

The DCSD UPK Task Force is focused on the planning and implementation of UPK programming for the 2022-2025 school years. The Task Force is focused on a Comprehensive, Collaborative, Unified PK-12 system that is integrated in our schools. The Task Force meets quarterly for a half day.

Participants:

- Deputy Superintendent
- Executive Director of Special Education
- Executive Director of Schools (x2)
- Building Principals (x5)
- Director, ECE/Preschool
- Director, BASE
- Area Manager, BASE

Additional Participants:

- Director, Health, Wellness and Prevention
- Coordinator, School Readiness & Assessment
- Coordinator, Postsecondary Readiness
- Director, DCECC
- Project Manager, LCO
- Others as Relevant

UPK Considerations Moving Forward

- How do we address the capacity needs for preschool programming in schools and regions with increasing enrollment?
- For the 2024-2025 school year, how might we pilot full day prekindergarten options, beyond BASE?
 - What is the benefit to students in a full day vs partial day program?
 - How do we address the different licensing requirements for full day programs versus half day programs?
 - What will be the cost of adding full day programs?
 - Where might we have the capacity to increase full day options without eliminating other essential student programs?
- If we increase preschool programming, will we be able to hire high-quality staff?

UPK Plans Moving Forward

- We will continue to reflect, monitor and enhance our preschool programming options gradually as there continue to be many unknowns and changes with the state's UPK implementation.
 - Community Interest
 - Capacity Needs
 - Student Funding
 - Staffing Availability
 - Risk Factors and Additional Hours of Care
 - Other

Questions?

