

## Mapping and Understanding Thee Recent City Initiatives

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**Boston K0-K1.** With leadership of Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino in 2005, Boston Public Schools (BPS) undertook a rapid expansion to provide full day preschool for 3 (K0) and 4 (K1) year olds. BPS created the Department of Early Childhood as a first step in this initiative. The program is now available in about 85 percent of BPS locations, 6 hours a day, 5 days a week (Sachs & Weiland, 2010). Like the previous programs described, Boston's program includes high personnel qualifications (requires a BA for all staff and advancement towards an MA), public school salaries, though with somewhat weaker requirements for group size. The first few years of the program were focused on quality improvement and professional development. Extensive data are routinely collected on classroom climate, instructional practices, and classroom organization. In addition, regular surveys are conducted with staff. This information is regularly used in coaching and supervision for program improvement. Average scores reported were 4.47 on the ECERS-R and 4.30 on the CLASS instructional support. These scores are substantially better than those in Georgia.

The most rigorous evaluation of the Boston program was carried out by Christina Weiland and Hirokazu Yoshikawa using an RDD approach. Children in the program had strong improvements in vocabulary, literacy and math, as well as on executive function measures of working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013). Stronger effects were found for lower-income families, Latino children, and dual-language learners. The authors estimate pre-K closed the school readiness gap among poor and non-poor children in mathematics, eliminated the school readiness gap between Latino and White children in early reading and mathematics, and significantly narrowed school readiness gaps between White and Black students.

**Denver Preschool Program (DPP).** The DPP is a taxpayer-funded initiative (12 cent voter approved sales tax) with the goal of increasing access to high-quality preschool. The program looks to encourage families to enroll their children in preschool through the use of tuition credits to parents that offset tuition costs. Tuition credits are determined by family's income, family size, and the quality rating of the center the child attends. In parallel, DPP provides funding for centers to obtain and improve their quality rating. The DPP is quite different to the previous programs described in that it does not set particular requirements for programs but rather defines tuition credit levels that match program quality as defined

by their ratings. As a consequence, within the DPP system there are significant variations in teacher qualifications, ratios, class sizes, use of curricula and other structural factors. Outcome evaluations find significant effects on language, literacy, math, and reading through third grade (Robertson, McClelland, Palaich, Rooney and Workman, 2015). However, the initial effects are considerably smaller than those found in Georgia, New Jersey, Tulsa, and Boston, while the long-term effects appear to be based on simple comparisons of outcomes on the third grade tests between children who did and did not attend Denver pre-k without extensive controls for possible pre-existing differences between the families of these children.

**San Antonio PreK 4 SA.** The San Antonio program was spearheaded when in 2011 former Mayor Julián Castro convened a task-force of Chief Executive Officers, Superintendents, and education professionals with the mandate of identifying the most effective method for improving San Antonio's educational quality. The Taskforce recommended the development of a program focused on high quality preschool for 4-year-olds. With the support of a voter approved 1/8 cent sales tax, the program provides full day, five days a week programming and wrap around services, and has high teacher qualifications and high class size and ratio requirements. The program started with a focus on slow growth and processes to strengthen quality and alignment to Kindergarten, and therefore contracted an external evaluator as part of this process. So far, the program has shown growth on children's cognition, literacy and math in a non-equivalent group comparison of children in the program to the norm (Edvance, 2014).

Tables 1 and 2 below provide a quick overview of program characteristics and findings of program evaluations available for these initiatives.

**Table 1. Program Comparison Matrix.**

| CHARACTERISTICS   | CITIES  |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|   | Boston  | Denver  | San Antonio   |
|   | K0 & K1   | Denver Preschool Program  | Prek 4 SA   |
| Program Goals   | To provide all children with a strong and early start to their formal education.  | To encourage families to enroll their eligible children in preschool and encourage preschool providers to improve the quality of their services. <sup>a</sup>   | To increase the amount and quality of early childhood education across the city of San Antonio so that all children are prepared to enter kindergarten, and to be successful in school and beyond. <sup>a</sup>   |
| Outcomes  | Unknown   | Program outcomes have not been formally established. Goal of providing universal access to quality pre-k program has been realized for 70% of 4-year-olds. <sup>a,d</sup>   | Program outcomes have not been formally established. Goal of providing universal access to quality pre-k program has been realized for 54% of 4-year-olds. <sup>h</sup>   |
| Indicators  | Offer K1 seats in 85% of elementary schools, Early Learning Centers and K-8 schools. Also offers 'playgroups' for children 1-3 and their caregivers at some locations.  | 70% of 4-year-olds have access to pre-K. <sup>a</sup>   | 54% of 4-year-olds have access to pre-K. <sup>h</sup>   |
| Teacher credential requirements and systems to support teachers in attaining these requirements   | All BPS early childhood staff are required to have a bachelor's degree and to attain a master's degree within five years of entering the school system. Provide direct classroom coaching for all preschool teachers (1 coach per 10 classrooms for three years) <sup>f</sup> | Varies by star level: 1 star requires very little training. While at 2-3 star programs most staff has an AA degree. And at 4 star programs staff has other an AA or a BA. More detailed information at: <a href="http://www.qualistar.org/what-is-the-qualistar-rating.html">http://www.qualistar.org/what-is-the-qualistar-rating.html</a>   | Master Teachers are degreed and accredited teachers with a minimum of three years teaching experience in early childhood classrooms. Their accreditation is EC-4 or EC – 6, or elementary with a MS in early childhood education. They have a Teacher category which we use for our TAs who have worked with us one or more years and have the appropriate degree and teaching credential. They count their years of experience as TAs with us as teaching experience in early childhood. They are paid at a lower salary, which is still comparable to public school, until they meet all the criteria as a Master Teacher. <sup>l</sup> |
| Oversight and governance structure  | Administered by Boston Public Schools.  | DPP is required to provide status reports to the Denver Office of Children's Affairs (formerly the Mayor's Office for Education and Children), a Denver city agency. A seven-member board of directors and a 25-member board of advisors oversee the program. DPP has four administrative staff: a President/Chief Executive Officer, a Senior Director of Strategy and Communications, a Program Director, and a Business Manager. | The initiative is governed by a City Council appointed 11 member board. City Council provides fiscal oversight for the initiative to include approval of the program's annual budget.s Additional info at: <a href="http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/About/OrganizationalChart.aspx">http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/About/OrganizationalChart.aspx</a>  |
| Delivery system and how public schools, community-based organizations, family child care homes, and other government subsidized programs are incorporated | Offer K1 seats in 85% of elementary schools, Early Learning Centers and K-8 schools. Also offers 'playgroups' for children 1-3 and their caregivers at some locations.  | Tuition support to help families pay for preK, private or public. Public option is tuition based (Only for 4 year olds). <sup>d</sup>   | Only public provision in 4 centers to date.   |

|   | <b>K0 &amp; K1</b>   | <b>Denver Preschool Program</b>   | <b>Prek 4 SA</b>  |
|---|--|---|---|
| Child eligibility, selection process, and demographic characteristics | Lottery system. <sup>e</sup>   | Anyone living in Denver can apply. <sup>d</sup>   | Lottery System for those living in San Antonio in the participating districts. More detail under tuition structure. <sup>c</sup>  |
| Children served and how this has changed since program inception      | In his 2005 State of the City address, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino directed the Boston Public Schools (BPS) to “provide all 4-year-olds in the city with full day school within five years.” The system serves 3 and 4 year olds and is part of an initiative “Engaging families, educators and the community in a citywide effort to enhance early learning opportunities and to support successful transition into kindergarten.” <a href="http://www.countdowntokindergarten.org/materials.html">http://www.countdowntokindergarten.org/materials.html</a> | 580 served in 2007-2008, 5056 in 2008-2009, 5,467 in 2012-2013. Roughly 70% of 4-year-olds in Denver served. 52% of families reported incomes of less than \$30,000 in 2013 (full graph available on page 18 of resource). <sup>d</sup>   | Lottery System 700 slots in 2014, 1500 in 2015, planning on having 3,700 by 2017. <a href="http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/about.aspx">http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/about.aspx</a>   |
| Tuition structure (if applicable)                                     | Free. <sup>e</sup>   | Tuition assistance: families receive aid increasing with family size, decreasing with family income, and increasing with preschool quality, as well as depending on if the program is part-time (At least 5 hours per week), full days(at least 25 hours per week), extended days(at least 33 hours per week); more aid is received for longer programs. <sup>h</sup> Preschools are ranked 1-4 starts and reevaluated every two years. Four-star system rates the quality of preschool classrooms in five areas: (1) learning environment, (2) family partnership, (3) staff training and education, (4) adult-to-child ratio, and (5) accreditation through a national accrediting agency. <sup>d</sup> | Four year olds whose family would receive free or reduced lunch, who are unable to speak and comprehend the English language, who are homeless, who are the child of a member of an active duty the armed forces of the United States, who are the child of a member of the armed forces who was injured or killed while serving on active duty, who are or has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing. For those who do not receive free access, or do not live in a participating district, there is scaling tuition: increasing with family income and decreasing with family size. <sup>i</sup> |
| Cost per child and how this has changed since program inception       | Roughly \$12,000. <sup>e</sup>   | Families can have \$10 to \$419 per month of their preschool bill paid for. Due to financial constraints of the program, the maximum tuition credit awarded has been reduced from a high of \$1,400 in 2007 year, down to \$539 in 2011, \$374 in 2012, and \$419 in 2013. <sup>d</sup>   | \$14,533 in 2014. \$14,631 in 2015. (Transportation services, facilities lease, professional development, program assessment spending all not included) <a href="http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/PreK4SA/FY2015%20Annual%20Adopted%20Budget.pdf">http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/PreK4SA/FY2015%20Annual%20Adopted%20Budget.pdf</a>   |
| Funding mechanism   | Boston Public Schools.   | Denver voters approved a 12 cent sales tax on \$100 purchases. Since 2007, over \$40 million in tuition support. <sup>d</sup>   | Voter-approved sales tax increase to fund public preschool: 1/8 cent sales tax increase to provide roughly \$31 million. <sup>a</sup>   |

|   | <b>K0 &amp; K1</b>  | <b>Denver Preschool Program</b>  | <b>Prek 4 SA</b>  |
|---|---|--|---|
| Teacher compensation structure          | Teachers on same pay scale as K-12 system with same educational requirements. <sup>e</sup>  | Varies by program  | Teachers are City of San Antonio employees. Master Teacher: min. BS in elementary education EC-4 or EC - 6, 3 yrs. Early childhood teaching experience salary range: \$60,057.66 - \$90,086.36. (In reality, the top salary for our most experienced teachers is currently in the low \$70's)<br>Teacher: min. BS in elementary education EC-4 or EC - 6, 1 year experience as a TAIL with Pre-K 4 SA salary range: \$49,634.26 - \$74,451.52.<br>Teacher Assistant II This position is the full time co-teacher in each classroom. Min. 48 hrs. of college with coursework in early childhood education, 3 years experience teaching in early childhood, beginning salary: \$12.52/hour. Teacher Assistant I This position supervises the students on the bus, provides relief in the classroom for teachers' lunches, and supports wherever needed, e.g. substituting, etc. This position also is used for the extended day staff. Min. HS Diploma or GED and experience working with young children, beginning salary: \$11.08/hour.<br>Teacher and TA II hours are 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (about 30 minutes longer than public school teachers, with 3:00- 4:00 being collaborative planning time. One day each week is for Professional Learning Community). <sup>1</sup> |
| Classroom structure and characteristics | Program provides services 6 hours a day. <sup>e</sup>   | Varies by program  | Program provides services 7 hours a day. <sup>b</sup>   |
| Classroom Size and Ratio                | Teacher and paraprofessional. Staff to child ratio 1:11. <sup>e</sup>   | Varies by program (Receive better ranking for better staff to child ratios). <sup>d</sup>  | Maximum class size is 20; lead and assistant teacher. Staff to child ratio is 2:20. <sup>c</sup>  |
| Hours of operation                      | 6 hours a day. <sup>e</sup>   | Increased funding for increased day length. Day length is broken into categories: part-time (At least 5 hours per week), full days (at least 25 hours per week), extended days(at least 33 hours per week). <sup>d</sup> | 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Afterschool care from 3:00 to 6:00 pm & Extended day care beginning at 7:15 am. 5 days per week. <sup>i</sup>   |
| Length of School Year                   | Parallels the school year. <sup>k</sup>   | Varies by program  | Parallels the school year (177 days). <sup>a</sup>  |
| Curricula required or used              | Opening the World of Learning (OWL), by J.A. Schickedanz and D. Dickinson and the mathematics curriculum (Real Math Building Blocks: PreK, by D.H. Clements and J. Sarama) for all preschool programs. <sup>e</sup> | Varies by program  | Engaging lessons with Frog Street Press and Teaching Strategies Curricula <a href="http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/Facts.aspx">http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/Facts.aspx</a>   |
| Approach to family engagement           | Unknown   | Varies by program  | Sixty-four family events were held in the first half of the year with an average attendance of almost 26 (25.6) individuals. Eighty-eight events were held in the second half of the year with an average attendance of nearly 22 (21.9) individuals. <sup>a</sup>  |

|                          | <b>K0 &amp; K1</b>   | <b>Denver Preschool Program</b> | <b>Prek 4 SA</b>   |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Support Services         | Unknown  | Varies by program               | The following support services are present: breakfast, lunch and 2 snacks, workshops to families, transportation, family specialists supporting families, information sessions on child development, health and education. <sup>1</sup>  |
| Professional Development | Provides direct classroom coaching for all preschool teachers (1 coach per 10 classrooms for three years). Ensures consistent and targeted professional development Offer a professional early childhood fellowship for elementary school principals. <sup>f</sup> | Varies by program               | Professional development is a major focus of Pre-K 4 SA. Fourteen coaches with backgrounds ranging from child development to bilingual studies and special education are available to collaborate with partner school districts to impact early childhood education in San Antonio. <sup>i</sup> |

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**Table 2 Descriptions of Local Pre-K Evaluations.**

| State              | Year Study Began | Research Questions  | Research Design  | Data Collection Protocol |  |   | Summary of Findings   | Reference   |
|--------------------|------------------|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|---|---|
|                    |                  |   |  | Age of Follow-up         | Measures   | Sample Size (children)                      |   |   |
| <u>Boston</u>      | 2008             | What is the impact of the prekindergarten program on children's early mathematics, language, literacy, EF, and emotional development? Do some child subgroups (as defined by family income, race or ethnicity, or child gender) benefit statistically significantly more from the prekindergarten program than others?  | RDD  | Pre-K                    | PPVT (language) /WJ (LW & AP; literacy & math)/ERQ & TOQ & FDS & BDS & Pencil Tapping & DCCS (emotional development & EF skills) | 2,018                                       | Significant effects on language, literacy, math, emotional development, and EF skills.  | Weiland & Yoshikawa (2013)                                |
| <u>Denver</u>      | 2008             | To determine if there is a persistence of preschool effects on third grade academic performance.  | PSM  | Pre-K                    | TCAP Reading, TCAP Math, TCAP Writing, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)  | Matched DPP = 2,431, Sample Non-DPP = 2,496 | Significant effects on language, literacy, math, and reading.   | Robertson, McClelland, Palaich, Rooney and Workman (2015) |
| <u>San Antonio</u> | 2013             | 5a.) Is the Pre-K 4 SA program associated with a change in Pre-K 4 SA children's GOLD outcomes at the end of Pre-K 4 SA? How do Pre-K 4 SA children compare to a nationally representative normed sample of children? 5b.) Do differences in findings exist based on child characteristics, the area of readiness for kindergarten, or location children attended (North or South center)?+ | Non-equivalent group comparison (to the normed sample) | Pre-k                    | Teaching Strategies GOLD (cognitive, literacy, mathematics, oral language, physical, socio-emotional)                            | 75.1% of children in the program; n = 555   | Higher than the norm on cognition, literacy and math. At the norm on oral language, physical, and social-emotional development. | Edvance (2014)  |

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