

Evaluation of 2009-2010 Denver Comprehensive School-based Programs



There is strong evidence for the positive impact of Denver's OST programs. Attendees were more likely to attain proficiency in reading in all eight schools and had better day-school attendance.

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Out of School Time (OST) programs throughout Denver and the nation are an effective strategy to improve student achievement and turn around low performing schools. During the 2009-2010 school year, Denver Public Schools' Department of Extended Learning, and two long-time managing partners, Catholic Charities and Mi Casa Resource Center, provided school-based programming at eight sites.

Each site utilizes nationally recognized best practices to increase student achievement, day school attendance and pro-social skills and attitudes. These programs share many common characteristics including:

- Aligning with day-school programming;
- Providing a mixture of academic and enrichment programming;
- Engaging parents and community members through adult education and parenting activities;
- Supporting on-site coordination so programming reflects community need;
- Combating summer learning loss through summer programming, and
- Utilizing a multitude of community partners.

OST program sites included in this evaluation are:

Colfax, Cowell, Eagleton, Force and Johnson Elementary Schools
Cole Arts and Science Academy (K-8)
Lake and Skinner Middle Schools

How Were Programs Evaluated?

Each of these sites utilizes effective systems to record and track program attendance, staffing, student and community need as well as program impact. Program data were used to identify students that were "regular attendees", attending 30 days or more. In total, sites served 1223 students with 528 defined as regular attendees. Archival data for CSAP scores, day school attendance and demographics was collected using Denver Public Schools (DPS) district data. Additionally, each site surveyed students to measure impact on attitudes and skills.

What Were the Findings?

Data from the eight sites were aggregated to analyze trends in Denver's Out of School Time programs. Results from this evaluation, in line with national research, demonstrate that Denver's OST programs support students in increasing student achievement, connecting to school and increasing pro-social behaviors.

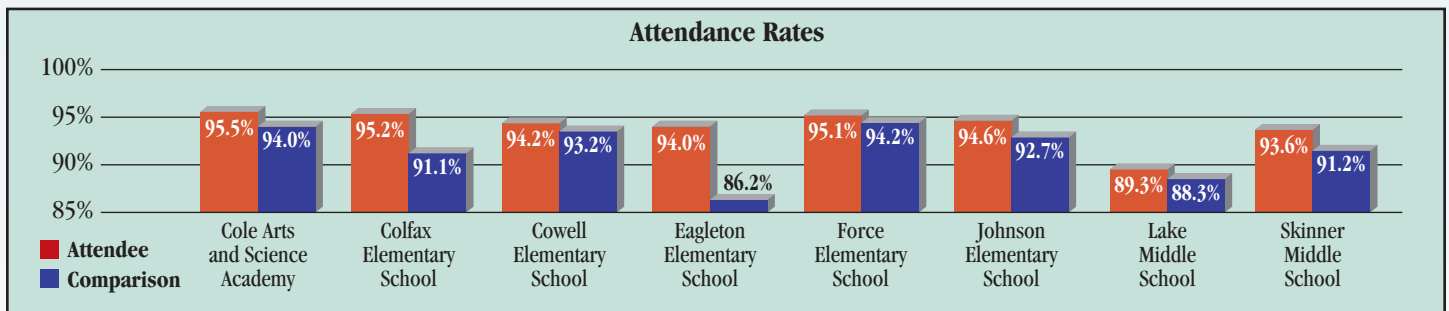
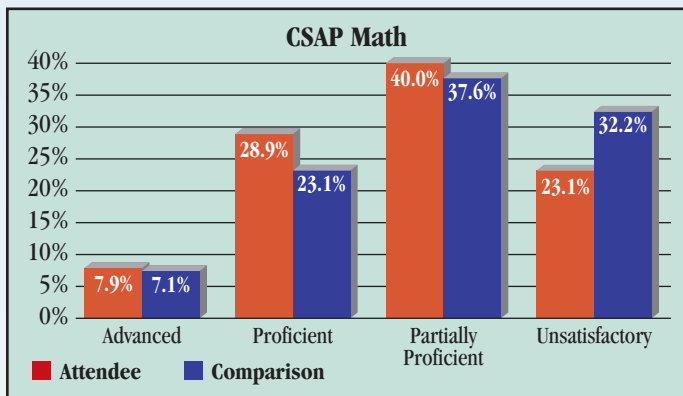
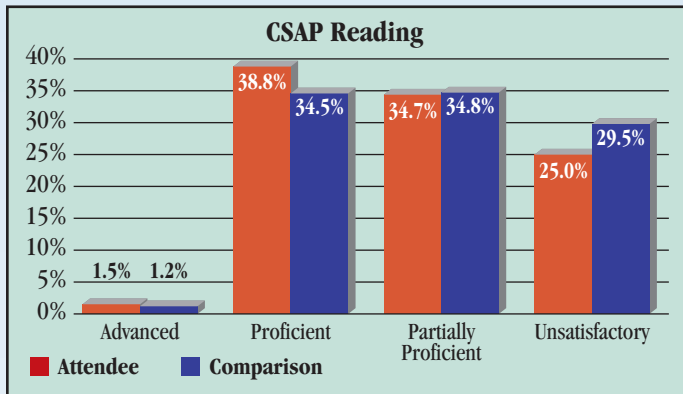
Demographics of evaluation participants:

N = 528
Female: 55%
Male: 45%
English Language Learner: 56%
Special Education Students: 14%
Free and Reduced Lunch: 86%
Students of Color: 92%
Elementary Grades: 61%
Middle Grades: 39%

Denver's OST programs provide programming based on community need with three major goals:

Goal #1: To support students' acquisition of knowledge and information as measured by CSAP scores.

- The 2010 CSAP scores of students who regularly attended Out of School Time programming were consistently higher than students who did not attend, or did not regularly attend programming.
- Across schools and content areas, attendees were more likely to be proficient or advanced and less likely to be unsatisfactory than non-regular participants.



Goal # 2: To develop students' connection and a sense of belonging within their school as measured by day school attendance.

- Students who regularly participated in Out of School Time programs demonstrated an attendance rate that was 3% higher than students who did not attend or did not attend for 30 days.
- The 2009-2010 school year had 169 school days, meaning that the 3% increase reflects an additional 5 days of school for regular attendees.

Attendance rates are important indicators of student success because they correlate highly to high school graduation. In fact, according to a study conducted by DPS Department of Accountability, Research & Evaluation, as 9th grade attendance decreases the odds that a student will graduate from DPS within 4 years drops dramatically. On average, the graduation rate drops approximately 9% for every 4 days students are absent before leveling off at 25 or more days.

Goal # 3: To re-engage and strengthen students' engagement in pro-social behavior as measured by self-report student surveys.

Surveys were completed by students who regularly attended OST programming. These surveys were divided into 7 sub-categories, each reflecting an attitude or skill. Students who reported improvements in these attitudes and skills were between 87% and 92%.

Students reported that their OST programs:

- Benefited them overall: 92%
- Helped them better interact with adults: 92%
- Supported their families: 90%
- Helped them feel safe: 91%
- Developed their social interaction skills: 88%
- Improved their self-confidence: 90%
- Improved their school performance: 87%



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