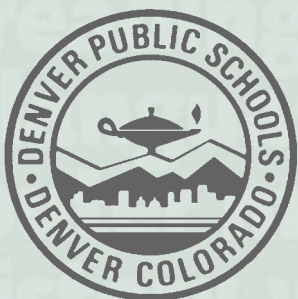
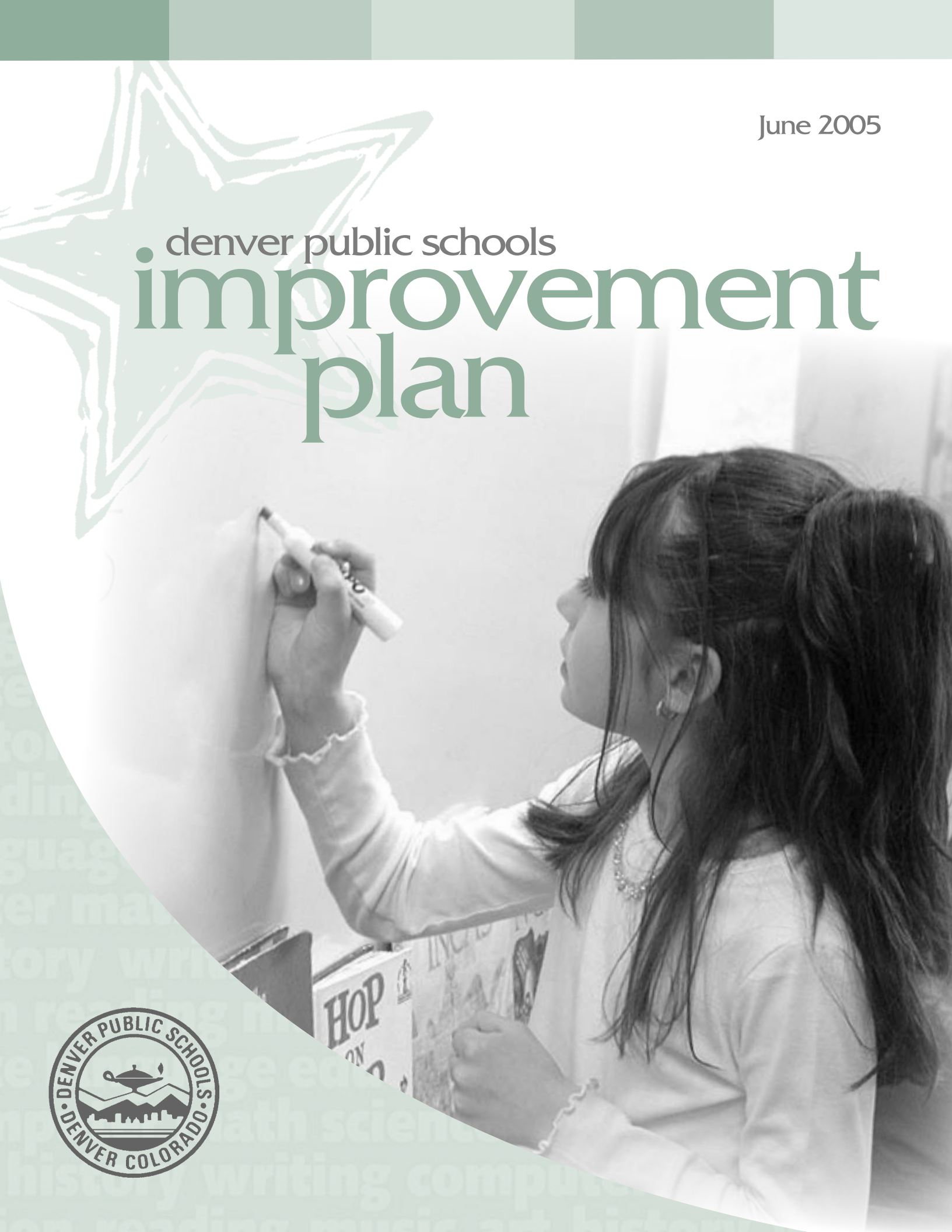


June 2005

denver public schools  
**improvement  
plan**





# Denver Public Schools takes student learning seriously.

Too much is at stake not to, including Denver's next generation of leaders and its future work force. The 2005 district improvement plan highlights the district's challenges and strategies for improvement.

We have made progress. Test scores are rising. An ambitious literacy plan is in place, and new rigor in math instruction is bringing focus and consistency to classrooms across the district. Increased community support is also evident after the passage of a major bond and mill levy increase in 2003. These new funds help pay for new schools, repair existing schools, hire art and music teachers in elementary schools, purchase new textbooks and revitalize neighborhood schools, among other priorities.

And we are holding ourselves accountable for results. When schools fail to improve student achievement after receiving extra support and resources, the district and school board have taken swift action. For example, a decision was made to re-design Mitchell Elementary. The district is now accepting proposals to operate a neighborhood school, charter school or contract school for the 2005-2006 school year. An unsatisfactory rating at any Denver public school is unacceptable.

Still, much work lies ahead to improve student performance, close the achievement gap, and provide high-quality professional development to teachers. We must also give principals the tools they need to be successful leaders, improve the high school graduation rate, and increase parental involvement.

Under the federal law No Child Left Behind, districts lagging in student performance must submit an improvement plan to the Colorado Department of Education. We are pleased to share our blueprint with the Denver community.

# What are the fundamental teaching and learning needs in Denver Public Schools?

The data show Denver Public Schools can and must do more to help students who come from poverty, speak a language other than English, or are enrolled in special education programs. Students in middle schools also demand more of our attention.

What do we know about these students, and how can we best help them? What support is DPS providing to teachers to ensure they are successful in meeting the needs of students with great learning potential but difficult odds?

## What Does the Data Tell Us?

To help determine which students are performing well and which students need help, the district examines adequate yearly progress data. The data factor in state test results, academic performance, and graduation rates among different groups of students, including Whites, Native Americans, Asians, Hispanics, Blacks, English Language Learners, and those who are economically disadvantaged or have disabilities.

While data show White and Asian students in Denver Public Schools are performing well, much more must be done to help minority and low-income students. Students whose first language is not English or who face disabilities are also struggling academically. The challenge is especially critical in middle schools and high schools, where the district is investing more resources to advance improvement efforts. Elementary school students have largely achieved adequate yearly progress targets.

White and Asian students are the only groups meeting adequate yearly progress targets at all grade levels. Students who make up the majority of the district's population are Black, Hispanic, or Native American; qualify for free or reduced-priced lunches; speak a first language other than English; or have disabilities. They are struggling to meet the adequate yearly progress targets at all levels.

## Identifying and Meeting the Learning Needs of Students At-Risk

Research shows that certain approaches to teaching and learning can help students who are facing income, language or cultural barriers achieve at higher levels. Researchers at the University of California at Santa Cruz tested the impact of five teaching standards on student achievement among elementary school Latino students from low-income families. The standards included:

- Facilitating learning through a joint activity in which teachers and students work together on a common product or goal, and have opportunities to talk about their work
  - Developing competence in the language and literacy of instruction and in the academic disciplines of reading, writing, and speaking activities
  - Teaching complex thinking through challenging activities that require students to apply their knowledge to achieve an academic goal. Teachers give them clear standards and feedback on their performance.
- The study found that the use of these standards and others resulted in student achievement gains (NABE Journal of Research and Practice, Winter 2003). Denver Public Schools has now embedded similar strategies and others in our math and literacy programs across the district.

## Helping Secondary Students Excel

The challenges facing students in middle and high schools are great. It can be a fragile period for students. Academic achievement often competes with a new and often difficult set of issues unique to secondary schools such as bullying and violence; alcohol, tobacco and drug use; and diminished parental involvement in schools. There is a great sense of urgency to address the needs of Denver's secondary school students.

Denver Public Schools is tackling these issues in multiple ways, including putting in place a well defined staff development program for middle school and high school teachers that is designed to improve their content knowledge and instructional skills, especially in the areas of math and literacy. We are striving to create a safe, supportive and nurturing environment for all of our students. Throughout this report, you will read more about what we are doing in these areas and others.

## WHAT'S ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The federal law, No Child Left Behind, requires all districts to assess whether students are making adequate yearly progress in math and science. State test results, the number of students taking the state test, and graduation rates help determine whether schools and, ultimately, a district are making adequate yearly progress.

In all, there are 150 adequate yearly progress targets the Denver Public Schools must meet each year. If a district fails to achieve even one of those targets, it has failed to show adequate yearly progress according to the federal law.

In Colorado, 57 districts out of 178 districts statewide have not made adequate yearly progress for two years in a row. Denver is one of them. Most of these districts are large and have diverse student populations. As a result, the districts have more targets to reach.

For more information about adequate yearly progress, go to: [www.cde.state.co.us/ayp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ayp).

## Providing Teachers with the Right Tools

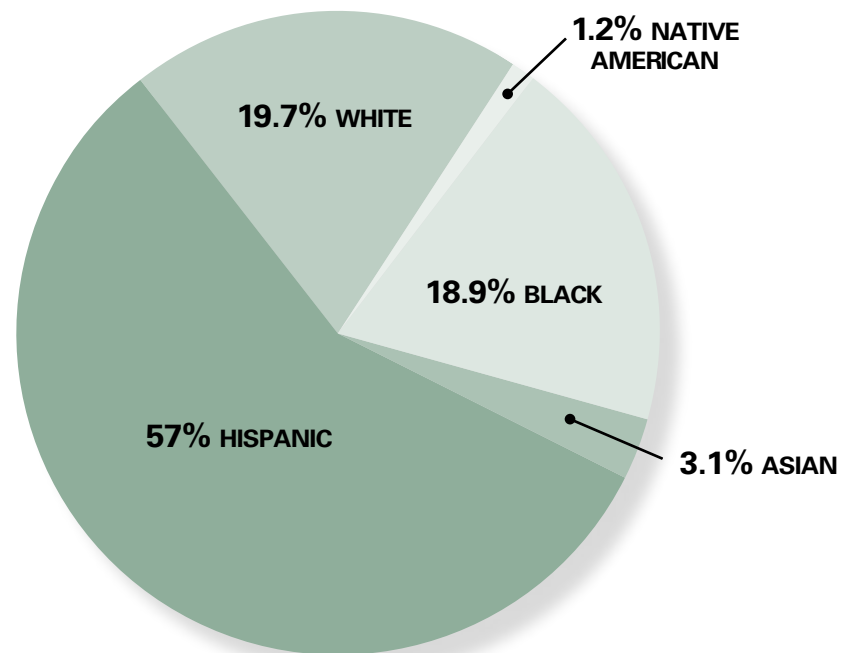
The learning needs of Denver students are great, and we must help teachers help all children succeed. Teachers are working harder and smarter than they ever have before. The number of professional development hours has increased and the quality has improved. Professional development is now aligned to what we know works with our students who are struggling the most to learn. Teachers are also collaborating in teams to ensure every child's learning needs are met. In other words, everyone shares responsibility for educating every child in Denver Public Schools.

More specifically, teachers who work with special education students, for example, now receive professional development in curriculum based assessment, classroom management, and therapeutic crisis intervention training. They will also be able to access professional development that digs deeper into curriculum and instruction ranging from reading fluency to differentiated instruction to using student data to guide instruction. (Later in this report, we discuss how we are improving professional development to serve other at-risk student populations such as English Language Learners.)

## Making Progress

We believe all students can achieve at high levels and the district's improvement plan reflects this belief. Efforts are under way to help all children succeed, and early results are promising. Governor Bill Owens named Denver Public Schools the most improved district – the only district statewide to receive the designation two years in a row starting in 2002.

**2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR  
DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT POPULATION**



# What are the district's measurable student achievement goals?

## Denver Public Schools has three overarching goals:

- Set high expectations for all students.
- Raise the overall achievement level.
- Close the achievement gap.

To achieve these goals, Denver Public Schools is concentrating its efforts more intensively on reading and math. Under No Child Left Behind, all students in the district must be proficient in these subjects by 2014. We will talk more about the district's strategies in section three of this plan.

How will the district measure progress toward achieving proficiency in math and reading? Denver Public Schools will increase by 2 percent the adequate yearly progress targets each school year. Accomplishing this goal would result in all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, income level, disability, or language, being partially proficient or above in reading and math as measured by the Colorado Student Assessment Program by 2014.

Progress is under way. In 2004, the district made 121 of 150 adequate yearly progress targets spanning multiple grade levels in math and reading.

### DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS TARGETS

Year	Percentage of targets to be met
2003	
2004	80.67%
2005	82.60%
2006	84.53%
2007	86.47%
2008	88.40%
2009	90.33%
2010	92.27%
2011	94.20%
2012	96.13%
2013	98.07%
2014	100%

# What strategies will be implemented to achieve these goals?

The district is focusing on six strategies: enhancing literacy and math skills; offering more after-school help; strengthening middle and high schools; improving professional development for principals and teachers; and, increasing parental involvement.

## Strategy 1: Continue to assess, refine, and build the district's literacy programs at all grade levels.

Research shows that the more students read, the better they perform in all academic subjects. The district's literacy programs are grounded in research-based practices. They have a track record of success with all students, including low-income students and those whose primary language is not English. The programs now offer consistency in instruction and curriculum, which also helps students who move from school to school within the district. Like other urban districts, Denver Public Schools faces a high student mobility rate.

Denver Public Schools is committed to making sure the literacy programs are achieving results for every student in every classroom. In the past, new programs were introduced but little support was put in place to evaluate their effectiveness and ensure their success.

Rather than simply "hoping for the best," Denver Public Schools is now taking a much more proactive approach. Immediate action is taken to address lack of success or poor program implementation. Everyone is held accountable for results and plays a role in improving the literacy skills of all students. For example, literacy coaches, specialists, and area superintendents visit classrooms on a regular basis to determine whether the program is being implemented properly, trouble-shoot with teachers, offer advice and support, and work with the school's principal to evaluate the program's effectiveness and make mid-course corrections along the way. Together, the team ensures that each component of the literacy program is working in the classroom.

In elementary schools, students are participating in the new Denver Elementary Literacy Program – a daily, three-hour block of time dedicated to reading, writing, and comprehension. Teachers work with students in large and small groups as well as one-on-one. Students practice reading with accuracy and understanding, and learn how to become better writers by practicing different types of writing, telling stories, and talking about books they have read.

In secondary schools, students are enrolled in Studio Course, a program that sets aside 90 minutes daily for reading, group discussion, and learning about different forms of writing. Students constantly assess their work and continue to strengthen their comprehension skills.

Each year, new components are added to these programs, including new curricula, professional development, instructional practice, and resources. Helping teachers and administrators understand and implement these new components takes time and commitment.



## Professional Development for Teachers on Literacy

To ensure students receive high-quality instruction, the district has invested in more job-embedded, on-site professional development for teachers. Virtually all schools now have literacy coaches who work side by side with classroom teachers. Literacy coaches, in turn, receive help from specialists in each of the district's four area superintendents' offices. Everyone is working toward the same goal, while learning and growing from each other's expertise and experience.

## Help for Struggling Readers and Writers

The district is also zeroing in on students who need extra help, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and those who are economically disadvantaged. Students for whom English is not their first language – also known as English Language Learners – are now developing their understanding of English using the *Avenues* curriculum. Materials for students are available in Spanish. Teachers who work with these students take 150 hours of instruction in English language acquisition strategies – a more concentrated and strategic approach than what was done in the past. Literacy coaches also receive intensive professional development.

Teachers who work with students with disabilities – such as attention deficit disorder, dyslexia, or physical handicaps – now work closely with literacy coaches and district literacy coordinators to adapt the district's literacy program to the students' unique needs. Teachers also receive more tailored professional development that is designed to help them teach these students in different classroom settings, whether the setting is a regular classroom that has a mix of students at different levels or a setting that has only students with special needs.

The district is also upgrading classroom materials and libraries over the next year to ensure students have access to a rich array of reading materials in English and Spanish. District literacy coaches also are providing job-embedded, on-site professional development for classroom teachers working in the district's high-poverty schools.

## Strategy 2: Continue to assess, refine and build the district's math programs at all grade levels.

One of the biggest challenges facing the district is a significant achievement gap in math among different demographic groups of students, especially low-income students, minority students, students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

To address this disturbing trend, the district is better aligning rigorous, research-based materials with standards, and ensuring that these materials are used consistently in all classrooms. This is especially significant in a district such as Denver that faces a highly mobile student population. By creating consistency in instruction from classroom to classroom and school to school, the district can make sure precious learning time is not compromised as families are forced for economic and other reasons to move around the city. This also makes good use of district staff development dollars by ensuring that training at one school is helpful to teaching effectively at other schools.

In 2003, Denver voters approved a mill levy increase. A portion of these funds will pay for Everyday Mathematics in elementary schools, Connected Mathematics in middle schools, and Carnegie Learning's Cognitive Tutor Algebra in high schools. (See Denver Public Schools Math Programs on page 6 for more information.) The district is also expanding upper-level math classes for all students. Currently, all high school students must take three years of math to graduate, including one year of algebra and one year of geometry. Students get to choose the third math class they want from the district's course offerings.

To ensure all students receive the best instruction in math, teachers in elementary schools and all secondary math teachers will participate in intensive professional development during the next three years. They will receive tools to help them fully implement the programs and monitor student progress. All students have recently received new learning materials such as textbooks, reference guides, calculators,

## DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS LITERACY PROGRAMS

The Elementary Literacy Program focuses on phonics, grammar, spelling, and diction. During a three-hour block of time, students:

- Select books from an extensive classroom library that focuses on their interests, offers a variety of genres and provides an array of reading levels
- Plan, draft, and write in a writer's notebook
- Attend regularly scheduled reading conferences with their teacher to assess progress

Middle schools and high schools offer the Studio Course for students, a carefully sequenced curriculum. During a 90-minute block of time, students:

- Enhance their reading, writing, and comprehension skills
- Draw reading materials from classroom libraries of more than 1,000 high-quality novels and magazines
- Discuss what they are reading with their teachers and classmates, and assess their work regularly

For more information about the district's literacy programs, click on <http://curriculum.dpsk12.org>.

## MATH PROGRAMS

### EVERYDAY MATHEMATICS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

This curriculum builds on children's intuitive and concrete knowledge, and features:

- Expanding on what students have learned in the previous grade, starting with kindergarten
- Practicing addition, subtraction, and other math concepts daily to hone skills
- Arranging topics in a spiral – that is, introducing students to new math concepts and building upon their understanding of these concepts at each grade level in elementary schools – so learning and practice of skills and basic concepts are distributed over time, rather than all at once

### CONNECTED MATHEMATICS MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Organized so students routinely solve problems that focus on important mathematical concepts and skills, this curriculum features:

- Frequent opportunities to practice skills in multiplication, problem solving, and other math concepts
- Emphasis on higher-level thinking and multiple approaches to problem solving
- Regular opportunities for teachers to assess what students are learning

### COGNITIVE TUTOR ALGEBRA AND GEOMETRY HIGH SCHOOLS

This course features the use of software, student collaboration, and real-world problem solving. Features include:

- Individualized instruction
- A mix of software and individual or group problem-solving activities in the classroom

The district also is currently field-testing a new geometry curriculum in most high schools, and will implement the new curriculum in 2005-2006.

and software programs. The district is also doing more to inform parents and guardians about what students are learning in math and how they can support these efforts.

### Help for Low-Performing Students in Math

The district is addressing the needs of underachieving students in multiple ways. For English Language Learners, the district is developing a guide to enhance students' understanding of English during math instruction. The guide will help students better understand the curricula and learn the language of mathematics. The district is also providing more professional development for teachers who work daily with English Language Learners focusing on English language instruction techniques. In summer 2005, the district will provide professional development for high school math teachers who work with English Language Learners on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol model of instruction. This is in addition to the regular professional development they receive in high school math instruction.

To help students with disabilities, the district will provide specialized professional development for educators to address the needs of these students as they participate in Everyday Mathematics. Special education teachers will team up with classroom teachers to work collaboratively on the district's math initiatives.

The district also has placed math coaches in schools with high numbers of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches to support quality program implementation.

### Strategy 3: Provide extended learning time for students through a variety of research-based supplemental programs in reading and math.

While providing more opportunities for students to learn and grow is not new to Denver Public Schools, the district is now offering greater variety in its tutoring and in before- and after-school programs. Work is under way to better align these programs with the curriculum and state standards, and to ensure they are research-based. To increase students' access to this extra help, many schools offer after-school buses to transport students who live too far to walk home.

The district's before- and after-school programs in reading and math include:

- **Reading First.** The district's lowest-performing elementary schools receive more internal literacy support, including intensive staff development, additional coaches, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and regular reporting of progress.
- **Summer Scholars Summer School Program.** Students in 18 elementary schools have the opportunity to participate in this summer reading and enrichment program.
- **Reading Recovery.** First-graders reading below grade level are tutored in 12 schools.
- **Read to Achieve.** Second- and third-graders reading below grade level in 15 schools receive after-school tutoring.
- **Mathematics After-School Tutorial Program.** Students in this program receive after-school small group instruction from teachers who use the district's elementary school math curriculum.
- **Supplemental Educational Services (Title I).** Students from 31 schools whose reading and/or math performance is below grade level participate in before- and/or after-school tutoring or small group instruction. Instruction is offered by providers approved by the Colorado Department of Education.
- **Lights on After School (LOAS).** This newly minted program offers students at 89 schools before- and/or after-school reading and/or math tutors and small group instruction. The Denver Public Schools Community Study Hall is an integral part of this effort.
- **High School Extended Learning Opportunities.** High school students get extra support to complete graduation requirements.

## Strategy 4: Improve student performance in middle schools and high schools.

Our students in middle school and high school can and must do better, and we must do more to help. Students in secondary school lag in achievement compared with their counterparts in elementary school, and the dropout rate among high school students is unacceptable. The need for secondary school improvement is urgent and the stakes are high.

The district will tackle dismal student achievement at the secondary level by transforming secondary schools, upgrading curriculum, and ensuring all students receive superb classroom instruction so they graduate with the skills they need to be successful in college or a career.

Key initiatives include:

- **Implement the Secondary Teaching and Learning Project.** This project provides content-based professional development for teachers to develop a deeper understanding of content and more effective instructional strategies. This work also involves redesigning curricula in all secondary core content areas – English, science, math, and social studies – to reflect higher expectations, research-based practices, and instructional coherence in and between schools. Examples follow:
  - U.S. history courses will use primary sources, such as historical documents, and secondary sources, such as textbooks, so that students may pursue guided inquiries that encourage them to evaluate and analyze resources and think more like historians.
  - Biology will use science labs more extensively and emphasize a more hands-on approach to learning.
  - Geometry will focus on student investigation using a variety of tools – such as dynamic software, graphing calculators, and measurement tools – to sharpen students’ deductive and inductive reasoning skills.
- **Increase the number of kindergarten through grade 8 schools.** A growing body of evidence suggests the kindergarten through grade 8 configuration provides a more positive learning environment for students in high-poverty areas. Research suggests students feel more connected to their teachers and experience easier transitions between elementary and middle schools.
- **Implement the Advancement Via Individualized Determination (AVID) program.** This program has proven effective in increasing the success rate of minority, low-income, and English Language Learners by using rigorous coursework. AVID taps tutors and specially trained teachers to prepare students for success in college. The program has expanded this year into 12 schools. Now 22 middle and high schools have the potential of serving more than 2,000 students who read near grade level and are not taking accelerated courses.
- **Implement recommendations of the Denver Public Schools Commission on Secondary School Reform.** The district has convened a group of community leaders that has identified strategies to transform high schools and build community support to improve achievement, increase student graduation rates, and ensure students successfully transition to postsecondary education and the work force. The commission, which released its recommendations in March 2005, has suggested more decision-making authority for principals, entrance interviews to get into high school, theme-related schools such as the arts or technology, and other ideas.

## Strategy 5: Allocate new funding to enhance student achievement and make schools more attractive to current students and potential students and their parents.

In 2003, voters approved a revitalization concept as part of a larger \$20 million package. A committee was formed to make recommendations on how to allocate \$2.5 million earmarked for revitalization – or, more specifically, improving student achievement and attracting more students back to “neighborhood schools.” Thirteen schools were chosen for this initiative. (See Revitalizing Denver Schools on page 10.)

### A CLOSER LOOK AT THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION ON SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM

In its report, “Not a Moment to Lose! A Call to Action for Transforming Denver’s High Schools,” the 27-member commission called for dramatic changes in high schools in the district. Recommendations include increasing the degree of rigor in coursework, making the learning experience more relevant to students’ lives, interests and future plans, and building safe, respectful and caring learning environments. Of particular concern are significant gaps in learning between Latino and African American students in comparison to white students.

The commission also advises that the district’s role must

change to create a culture and the capacity to support continuous improvements in each high school. Superintendent Jerry Wartgow pledged full support from district staff. “The dropout rate is simply too high and the graduation rate is simply too low for anybody who cares about students today to think that the status quo is acceptable,” says Wartgow. “It’s not... this report will launch meaningful reform that will impact this district positively for years to come.”

For a complete copy of the report, access <http://dcssr.dpsk12.org>.

The schools were selected based on specific guidance in the mill levy proposal approved by voters. For example, the proposal gave priority to schools operating at or below 70 percent of student enrollment capacity and receiving “low” or “unsatisfactory” state ratings on school accountability reports. Schools that have 35 percent or more of the children in the neighborhood opting to attend another public or private school are also included in the mix.

The new resources enhance or expand the schools’ offerings and strengthen the academic program. Among the programs adopted for schoolwide improvement are the International Baccalaureate Programme at the elementary and middle school levels; academic and enrichment programs, including an accelerated instructional model for highly motivated students called Early High Strides; a better match between instruction and student learning styles and talents; and a more strategic approach to weaving the arts and science into math and reading at the elementary school level.

## REVITALIZING DENVER SCHOOLS

Elementary schools selected for the revitalization program are:

BRADLEY  
BROWN  
FORD  
GILPIN  
MONTCLAIR  
REMINGTON  
SABIN  
STEDMAN

Middle schools are:

HENRY  
HILL  
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.  
SKINNER  
COLE

## Strategy 6: Implement the Denver Public Schools Leadership Initiative.

Denver Public Schools will fail to realize increases in student achievement without developing a cadre of new education leaders who are dedicated to closing the achievement gap and setting higher expectations for all students. This work is now underway. The Denver Public Schools Leadership Initiative provides professional development for district principals, assistant principals, and executive-level administrators to help them become even more visionary, strategic, and inspiring leaders.

The initiative focuses on:

- **Principal and Assistant Principal Institutes.** The institutes offer professional development and support to guide the successful implementation of the district’s reform efforts, including developing leaders’ understanding of curricular initiatives and strategies.
- **Executive-Level Administrator Institutes.** The institutes provide opportunities for administrators to meet with their counterparts in other urban districts to problem-solve, learn about best practices, and collaborate.
- **Professional Development for New Principals.** The district will provide mentoring for new principals by tapping a cadre of principal mentors.

The district also will more aggressively promote the Ritchie Scholars Principal Development Program, a collaboration between Denver Public Schools and the University of Denver. More work will be done to recruit highly qualified individuals who have rich content knowledge in one of the four core subject areas and who aspire to become a principal in Denver Public Schools.

# How will high-quality professional development that focuses primarily on improved instruction be provided for instructional staff?

Throughout this improvement plan, the district has shown how professional development is now woven into all aspects of our work, especially in the areas of literacy and math – major areas of concentration as the district ramps up school improvement efforts.

Professional development received a boost when new district initiatives were adopted in the last several years. This training now includes comprehensive summer institutes for teachers; ongoing professional development throughout the year; and a team of central office coordinators, area specialists, and school coaches who work together and with teachers. For example, the district now has more than 160 literacy and math coaches.

Denver Public Schools also is undergoing a change in the culture of how we approach professional development. Based on research of what works, the district is embracing “learning communities,” which has the power to transform all schools into results-oriented organizations by synthesizing best practices in curriculum development and assessments, teacher preparation, school leadership, and school-parent partnerships.

# What strategies will be implemented to promote effective parental involvement?

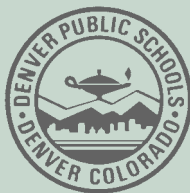
Research shows that parental involvement has a direct impact on student achievement. When parents are involved in their children's learning, students are more likely to attend school, participate in class, and graduate. The district deeply values the contribution of parents, and it is stepping up its efforts to more meaningfully engage parents in the hard work of improving schools and student performance.

Key strategies include:

- **Field-test three parent engagement models in diverse schools districtwide.** The district is testing the models, and based on the results, the models may be integrated in a menu of activities that schools can use to strengthen parent and community engagement. The models will be aligned with the district's curriculum and will meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind.
- **Study, research, and develop a Denver Public Schools model for parent and community engagement in elementary schools.** The district is gathering and analyzing best practices and lessons learned from its schools on how to meaningfully engage parents. These findings will inform the design of a model to involve more parents in their children's learning at the elementary school level. Information is being collected about strategies to help parents understand what is expected of their child in school, provide parents with information about the district's literacy and math programs, create more effective parent-teacher conferences, and explain student performance data on school accountability reports.
- **Identify and highlight existing effective practices for parent engagement in middle schools.** Similar work at the elementary school level described above is also happening at the middle school level. The district will review effective strategies for parent engagement, including how to work with different populations of parents who may feel uncomfortable in a school setting such as non-English speaking parents or parents who themselves have had negative experiences in school. A preliminary framework for parent engagement at both the middle and elementary school levels is expected to be unveiled in June. Once it meets with school board approval, the framework will be rolled out in schools in the fall of 2005.
- **Incorporate parent involvement strategies, including the development of parent compacts, in each school's improvement plan.** The district is breathing new life into parent compacts by making them an active component of each school's improvement plan. Parents, students, teachers and principals sign the compact, which will vary from school to school based on each school's goals. Students might be responsible for respecting their peers and teachers, coming to school each day or following the rules of conduct. Responsibilities for parents might include making sure their child's homework is turned in on time, understanding the school's absentee policy, or providing a quiet place for study at home. Teachers and principals' responsibilities might include providing frequent reports to parents on their children's progress, access to observe or volunteer in the classroom, high-quality instruction, effective classroom management, and a rigorous curriculum. The compact signifies a shared responsibility among parents, students, and school staff for learning.
- **Increase educational program choices for district students and encourage parents to choose the program or school that best meets their child's needs.** The district will ensure that choice options are widely publicized and access to programs is equitable.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is the foundation of the district's instructional improvement initiative. The professional development calendar is available on the department of Curriculum and Instruction Website at [http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/pd\\_cal/pd\\_calendar.htm](http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/pd_cal/pd_calendar.htm).



For questions about the district's  
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