

Policies and Practices to Mitigate the Negative Effects of Student Mobility: Observations from Arlington Public Schools

Arlington Public Schools, 2009

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Participation in preschool programs has shown:

- Significant overall gains that contribute to closing the achievement gap that include:
 - higher rates of high school graduation
 - lower rates of retention in a grade
 - lower rates of placement in special education
 - higher achievement scores
- Although preschool benefits all children, economically disadvantaged children benefit the most from attending preschool



Arlington
Public
Schools
ARLINGTON, VA

Arlington Public Schools Preschool Evaluation 2001-2002



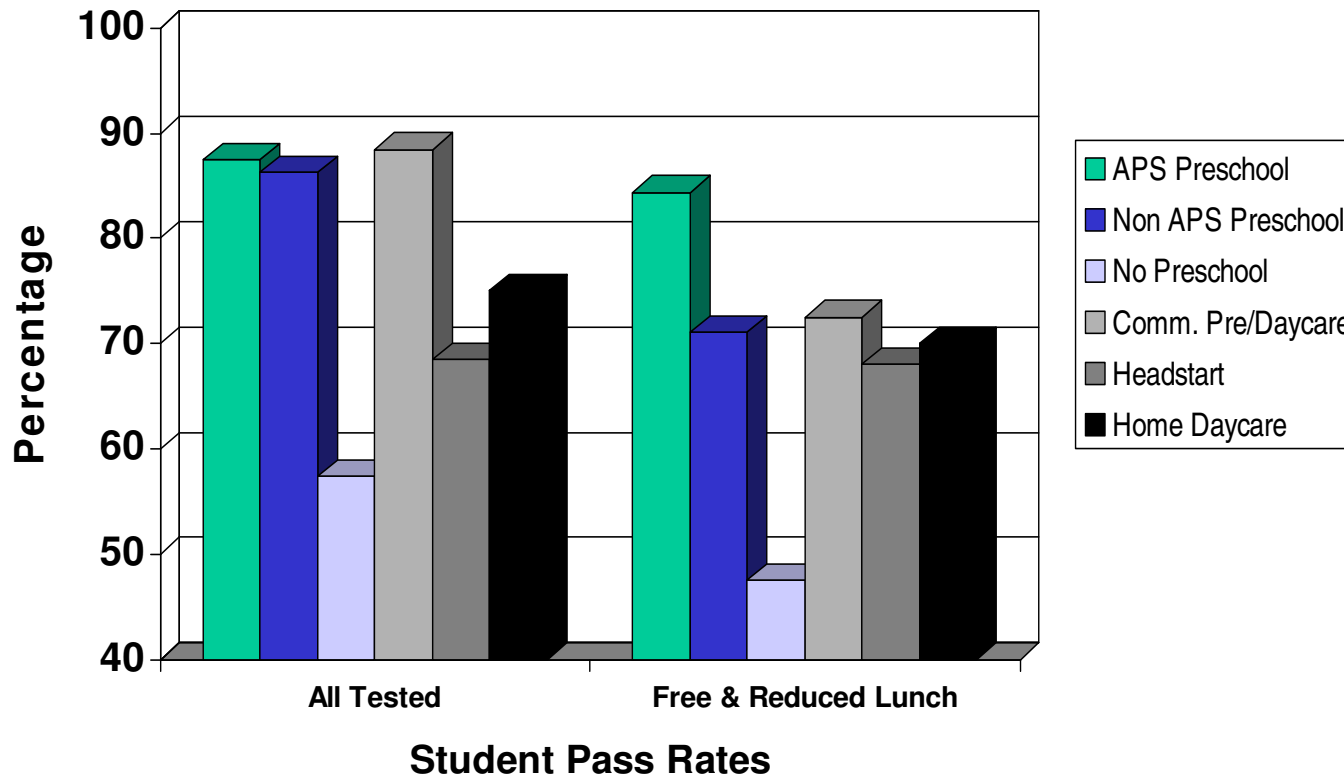
PALS-K

- Phonological Awareness
- Letter recognition (upper and lower)
- Letter sounds (sound-symbol correspondence)
- Concept of word
- Word recognition

PALS 1-3

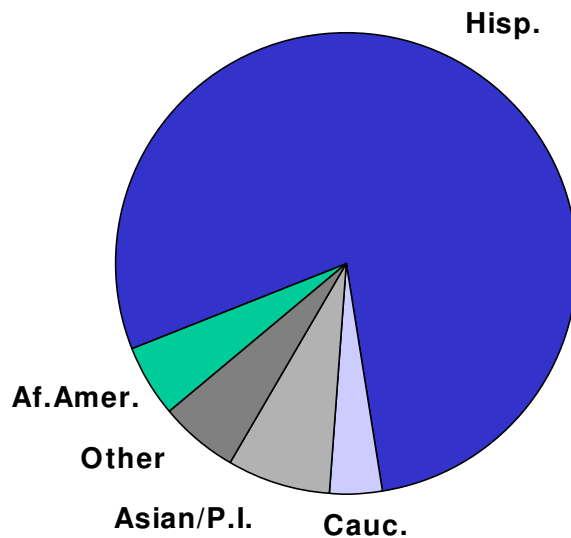
- Passage comprehension and fluency

2001-2002 Kindergarten PALS Pass Rates
by Preschool Experience

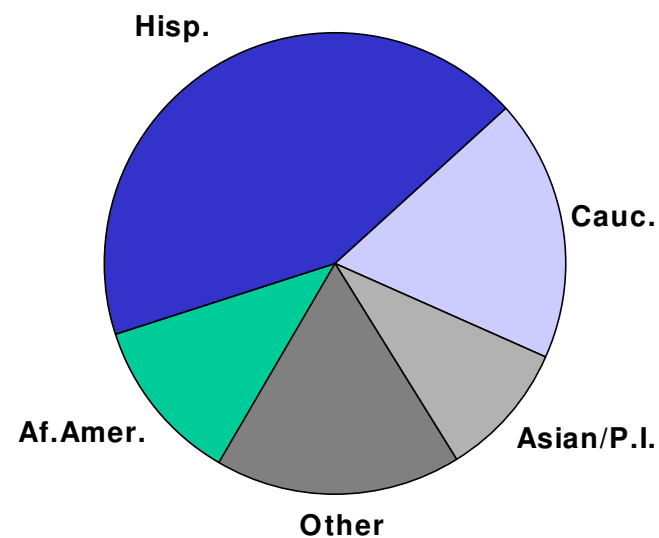


Race/Ethnicity for 2001-2002 Kindergarten Students Who Reported No Preschool Experience

Free and Reduced Lunch



No Free and Reduced Lunch



What did parents say?

- Need for more affordable preschool
- Transportation
- Extended Hours
- Close to home, work or another family member
- Easy to enroll children



APS Preschool Plan

- Developed in response to Early Childhood Program Evaluation (2002) and the Arlington Task Force for Four-year-old Children
- Guide the work of the School Board and the Early Childhood Office as they made decisions about prek programs
- Recommendations included the following:
 - Provide access to a prek program in the Arlington Public Schools for all four-year old children who qualify for free lunch subsidies
 - Locate prek classrooms in neighborhood schools
 - Provide prek options in every APS elementary school

Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

- VPI program: funding: state and local
- Traditional preschool program - focused on literacy and numeracy
- Serves **496, at-risk** 4 year-olds
- VA Certified Teacher
- Instructional assistant in each classroom
- 16 children per class
- Full school day (6.5 hours) program



Montessori Primary Program

- Multi-age (3, 4, and 5 year old children), **163 at-risk preschoolers**
- Based on work of Dr. Maria Montessori
- Full school day (6.5 hours) program
- Montessori Trained Teacher Instructional Assistant in each classroom
- 22 children per class



Goal:

To ensure children have experiences that will best promote student success in kindergarten and beyond



- Classes located at neighborhood elementary schools
- Countywide program options
- Transportation provided
- Extended Day provided



- Curriculum developed the whole child
- Consistent curriculum and pacing across program
- Student identification number can be accessed throughout the State
- Students can remain at current program if they move within Arlington
- Access to health/dental care; family resources



Parent Engagement

- Home visits
- Multiple parent-teacher conferences
- Parent education
- County-wide celebrations



Formative Data

- Work Sampling, PALS Pre-K, teacher observation

Summative Data

- Kindergarten PALS Results
- English Language Arts Program Evaluation, 2006
- Hanover Research Council Longitudinal Study
- Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL): Early Childhood Program Evaluation (in process)

	APS Prek	Non-APS Prek	No Prek
	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)
ED	83%	71%	54%
Non-ED	93%	98%	92%

*ED refers to economically disadvantaged or students who qualify for free and reduced lunch program.

Arlington Fall K-PALS Data 2007

Language and Preschool Experience

	APS Prek	Non-APS Prek	No Prek
	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)	Met or Exceeded PALS-K (%)
LEP	84%	76%	57%
Non-LEP	93%	98%	89%

*LEP refers to Limited English Proficiency

English Language Arts Program Evaluation, 2006

Groups	Number of students in APS Preschool	Fall 02 Grade 1 % Pass PALS	Spring 03 Grade 1 % Pass PALS	Spring 04 Grade 2 % Pass DRP	Spring 05 Grade 3 % Pass Reading SOL
Took all 4 Tests	110	93.6%	92.7%	91.8%	85.5%
Took PALS & SOL only	79	62.0%	73.4%		41.8%



Hanover Research Council

Longitudinal Analysis of APS Preschool

Background

- APS provided demographic and academic assessment data for cohort of 2,840 students, collected between 2000-2001 and 2006-2007
- Performance Assessments included:
 - Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS-K) and (PALS 1-3)
 - Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) grades 2, 4
 - Virginia State Standards of Learning (SOL) in grades 3, 4, and 5
- Data was disaggregated and examined in several ways including: full cohort (all students), Pre-K attendees, No Pre-K, Montessori, VPI, Special Education, and Dual Enrolled Special Education

Research Questions

1. Were the effects of PreK program participation lasting or did they diminish over time?
2. How do students participating in specific PreK programs perform compared to other groups?



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Longitudinal Analysis of APS Preschool

Key Findings

1. Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Pre-K participants consistently performed higher than non-participants who were also ED; this difference persisted through grade five
2. Montessori students outperformed VPI students on all assessments from kindergarten through the fifth grade in terms of mean scores
3. LEP students who participated in a Pre-K program outperformed students who did not participate and maintained their lead over non-participants through the fifth grade.



- Funding to meet the need for additional classes
- Space
- Providing greater extended hours, before 7 AM, after 6 PM



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