

Colorado Preschool Program Ideas Worth Considering

On the following pages are a selection of noteworthy procedures and ideas taken from the 2008 and 2009 CPP Expansion Applications and the 2010 Reapplication and Annual Report. This is by no means an exhaustive list. Reviewers identified a sampling of these ideas worth considering.

The intent of this document is to provide “food for thought” for coordinators, district advisory council members, and school district administrators as they work toward implementing exemplary Colorado Preschool Programs.

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Contact information for the coordinators quoted in this document is included. For more detailed contact information, please refer to the CPP Coordinator Directory at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/download/Resources/DistrictCoordinatorDirectory.pdf>

CPP District Advisory Council Ideas

A school district is required by statute to establish a “district advisory council.” This district advisory council insures that decisions about the program are made locally and that major stakeholders have opportunity for input.

Colorado Preschool Program Handbook

The district advisory council plays a key role in not only managing and supporting the district’s implementation of CPP, but also in assisting communities with the development of systems and local policies that address the needs of young children and families. The council’s function should be tailored to meet the needs of each community. The following are examples from across the state of CPP district advisory council best practices.

CPP Administration and Support

Lewis Palmer

- Twice a year, CPP Council members along with elementary school principals evaluate and make suggestions for improvement by using an instrument called the Program Monitoring Tool. The Monitoring Tool assesses quality interactions, a curriculum that promotes active learning, parent communication, level of staff training, indoor and outdoor environments, health and safety, and effective administration of the program.

CPP Contact: Julie Jadowski, jjadowski@lewispalmer.org

Garfield 16 (Parachute)

- Our CPP District Council has functioned within a larger advisory/accountability group for the Center for Family Learning (CFL). Some council meetings address only topics specific to CPP.
- As part of the larger group, members of the council have been on the school's accountability team looking at outcome data for the preschool program as well as participating in advisory groups concerned with broader projects .

CPP Contact: Katie Walton, kw Walton@garcoschools.org

Liberty J-4 (Joes)

- Our council has been involved in rewriting policies for the District Council and in looking at the quality of the program and assessments.
- The council helps to maintain the upkeep of the playground and a couple of times a year they come in to help sanitize and clean the room.

CPP Contact: Tammy Jackson, tjackson@plainstel.com

Holyoke RE-1J

- From the district council, we have set up a smaller council for reviewing student applications for CPP funds. Their knowledge of families in our communities has greatly assisted us in the process of selecting students who qualify for CPP funding and to best select the children with the greatest needs.

CPP Contact: Marcia Walter, Dragon's Wagon, dwps@pctelcom.coop

Community Systems Development

Summit RE-1

- Our local CPP Council is a 501(c)(3) governing board. The board is a community based early childhood council, charged with overseeing a variety of early childhood initiatives in Summit County.

Current Contact: Kristin Radloff, kradloff@summit.k12.co.us

Garfield RE-2 (Rifle)

- Representation of different community programs makes us more aware of what we can offer to families.
- Another impact involves having so many agencies at the table, which allows us to distribute information to our community through presentations, brochures, health care providers, district preschools, Even Start, Head Start, Human Services, etc.
- We provide an informal forum for much networking to occur before and after our meetings. These times are perfect for face-to-face contact to ensure interagency cooperation in meeting the needs of children ages birth to five.

Current CPP Contact: Deb Ghan, dghan@garfieldre2.k12.co.us

Community Outreach

Cripple Creek

- The council also impacted our services for medical and dental care by supporting the school based health center which is now opened 3 days a week and bringing the Ronald McDonald Dental van to our community twice a year for dental preventive and follow up care with a dentist and hygienist.

CPP Contact: Patty Waddle, pwaddle@ccvschools.com

Holyoke RE-1J

- The CPP District Council has allowed us to work in partnerships with local businesses and agencies to provide resources for needy students. The funds have allowed us to begin building parent/student/teacher relationships at an earlier age.

CPP Contact: Marcia Walter, Dragon's Wagon, dwps@pctelcom.coop

Eaton RE-2

- The CPP District Council worked hard to maintain and continue the development and use of Creative Curriculum outreach to our targeted population by contacting local farmers and dairies.

CPP Contact: Debbi Campbell, dcampbell@eaton.k12.co.us

Other ideas to engage CPP district councils in supporting local programs:

- Assist during local Child Find activities
- Become active participants in district kindergarten transition activities
- Assist with home visitation and welcoming new families
- Assist with hiring preschool staff and identification of staff development needs
- Assist with the development of family activities to encourage comfort within the school setting
- Assist with the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences, and during the conference day with serving refreshments, giving building tours, escorting parents to classrooms, etc.
- Develop a lending library of learning materials, books, and/or toys, home to school learning
- Volunteer in the classroom environment or program office
- Create and disseminate a parent satisfaction survey and make recommendations based on the results
- Attend school board meetings to provide advisement and to update early childhood staff about district decisions

Family Support and Involvement Ideas

My child has developed his skills with writing and problem solving. We have changed as a family because we now do more "learning" things together – all of us.

Parent, Thompson School District

In a quality early childhood program, parents and providers learn how to be partners in a child's education. Programs that are able to engage parents in their children's education can strengthen parents' abilities to support their children and reinforce the learning that occurs in the classroom. Early childhood programs can break down barriers between schools and families to set a pattern of parent involvement that can be followed throughout a child's school career.

Recruitment/Engagement/Involvement

Canon City/Fremont Re-2

- ECHO screens all applicants for CPP, Head Start, EHS, all young children in child protective services, and all children who may need special education services. By coming to ECHO Screening parents are assisted to find the early childhood program, which best fits their desires, their child's needs, and their eligibility. This integrated approach assures that children over 1000 of the 2200 children birth to school age receive comprehensive screening periodically. In this manner, ECHO identifies many children who are at risk or who need special education programs.
- Parents know that ECHO Screening is "the place to come" to find preschool and other early childhood services for their child. ECHO Screening and Access Program also serves as the Child Find Program for Canon City and Florence RE-2 Schools.

CPP Contact: Pam Walker, walkerp@canoncityschools.org

Widefield

- We polled parents to find out what they felt they could contribute to the Colorado Preschool Program and how they could be more involved. Interestingly, many of the comments were similar to those we received in past years.
- They include volunteering in and out of class, donating supplies, working with their children at home, and supporting/extending what is being taught at school. We offer every family the opportunity to contribute/be involved in our program in these and other ways. These comments indicate to us that we are meeting the needs of families, and encouraging/supporting their involvement in their children's education

CPP Contact: Andrea Waltermire, waltermirea@wsd3.k12.co.us

Wiggins RE 50 J

- Home visits are conducted for every child enrolled in the preschool.
- Families are asked to give the staff information about their child in areas of health, cultural preferences, children's interests and needs, and any other concerns the family might have.

CPP Contact: Lisa Trautwein, misslisa@wiggins50.k12.co.us

Mesa County Valley (Grand Junction)

At the beginning of each school year, parents help to develop a partnership in learning with the staff to develop goals and set expectations for the year. Ideas they generate often include the following:

- Getting their child to and from school
- Being ready for learning
- Volunteering
- Participation in planned outings with their child's preschool

Current CPP Contact: Kim Self, Kim.Self@d51schools.org

Sheridan

We understand that many family members can no longer volunteer during the day, so we attempt to provide opportunities outside of the school day, such as our bookbag program to encourage reading at home, evening family nights, and evening parent-teacher conferences.

CPP Contact: Aimee Chapman, chapmana@sheridan.k12.co.us

Ellicott

We have educational backpacks for checkout, and each building has a lending library for children to check out books of interest to share at home.

CPP Contact: Marcia Mangan, marciamangan@ellicottschools.org

Liberty J-4 (Joes)

We had the annual back to school BBQ, parent orientation, and Kindergarten Roundup, and raised funds for the Lending Library Program, Dads and Donuts Program, and the Moms and Muffins Program.

CPP Contact: Tammy Jackson, tjackson@plainstel.com

Cañon City

Fatherhood Involvement Coordinators are employed by EHS at the Family Center and at Fremont County Head Start. Fathers plan and carry out monthly activities for dads and children only.

CPP Contact: Pamela Walker, walkerp@canoncityschools.org

Lake County (Leadville)

All parents are given surveys in the spring, about the effectiveness of the CPP program for the year, and in the fall, about the effectiveness of transition processes into kindergarten.

CPP Contact: Emily Bordogna, eadams@lakecountyschools.net

Family Support

Delta

All preschool classrooms have an equal percentage of children on IEP's. They are integrated into the classrooms with CPP, Even Start, and Tuition based children, without incident. Progress of all children is monitored closely through the Creative Curriculum Assessment. Child Find staff members are partners in helping children be successful, happy learners. Bimonthly RtI meetings are held with Child Find staff at the Delta Center.

CPP Contact: Angela Fedler, afedler@deltaschools.com

Mapleton

- The Mapleton Early Learning Center (MELC) has implemented the Incredible Years Dinosaur School training for parents for the past six years. This parent group is a 14-week training which provides parents with the skills they need to play, praise, interact, and appropriately discipline their children.
- Day care, dinner, materials, door prizes, and incentives are provided to the families that attend.
- In addition , each family who completes the training receives a yearly membership to the Denver Children's Museum.

CPP Contact: Jill Fuller, fullerj@mapleton.us

Canon City

- Because CPP, Special Education, and EHS Center based give parents a choice of 5 licensed centers and 2 preschools for these services, parents can combine funding from CPP or special education funds and EHS with CCCAP to achieve affordable full day/full year services for their children.

CPP Contact: Pamela Walker, walkerp@canoncityschools.org

Sheridan

- A number of classes are set up at the center around specific needs identified by families. Those classes include parenting skills, English as a Second Language, and tutoring for GED testing.
- In addition, other classes have included discipline, personal budget counseling, home ownership, health services, and life transitions.

CPP Contact: Aimee Chapman, chapmana@sheridan.k12.co.us

Widefield

- We have school nurses that assist parents with immunization, dental care, nutrition information, insurance needs, and recommend evaluations for appropriate medical services as needed.

CPP Contact: Andrea Waltermire, waltermirea@wsd3.k12.co.us

Durango 9R School District

- We work closely with TriCounty Head Start/Early Childhood Programs as well as staff administering the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program to ensure that children and families can receive full-day, full-year services if that is indicated as a need.

CPP Contact: Lauri Kloepfer, lkloepfer@durango.k12.co.us

Community Partnership Ideas

We started partnering with Commerce City Early Childhood Council in 2006 and witnessed the great benefits that the CPP program brought to our Center and continues to bring to our community.

- *The quality of services provided to the children continues to improve.*
- *Parent involvement in their children's education has increased.*
- *Teachers continue to use the online tools to track children's early childhood educational development.*
- *Teachers are taking additional college courses to improve their credentials and quality of service to the children.*
- *In the last period, we increased the number of children we serve to 40 and plan to get approval from the Child Care Department to reorganize the classrooms and increased capacity in the preparation for additional funded slots.*

The above benefits motivate the center to continue working with the program to serve more children.

Alfredo Esguerra, Council Chairperson, Commerce City Early Childhood Council,
Maria E. Esguerra, Director, Little Giants Learning Center, Adams 14

Partnerships and Collaboration

Garfield RE-2 (Rifle)

We are proud to collaborate with Colorado Mountain College to provide 17 CPP spaces to students attending their Early Learning Center. This partnership is particularly rich, for while the children are enrolled in preschool, the parents take ESL or GED classes at our community college. We love the opportunities for both child and adult education.

CPP Contact: Deb Ghan, dghan@garfieldre2.k12.co.us

Yuma

Also housed in the District's preschool facility is Yuma County Head Start, a cooperative effort since the preschool was built in 1995. The Preschool and Head Start staff have worked together to strengthen and improve their programs. They share equipment and space, and other resources. The staff work together to share duties on the playground as well as planning special events such as field trips, parties and parent nights. The collaborative effort is also extended to BOCES.

CPP Contact: Tiffany Roundtree, roundtreet@yumaschools.org

Garfield 16

Head Start is in charge of providing the curriculum for the all day program. Many additional details have been worked out in order to meet both Head Start and CPP requirements.

To ensure good communication between the two programs, Head Start sends a representative to the CFL Advisory Board Meeting, the Head Start teacher attends CFL's weekly Preschool in service meetings, and the Head Start staff attends some of the relevant CFL all-staff meetings. Head Start and the CFL Preschool have also blended some of the parent events.

CPP Contact: Katie Walton, kw Walton@garcoschools.org

Adams 14 (Commerce City)

We continue to build our partnership with the Lion's Club through their KidSight Program. We had originally planned for Lion's Club volunteers to attend preschool screenings, yet found this did not work well in their schedule. Instead, the volunteers screened a total of 450 enrolled preschoolers and 525 kindergarteners. We also did a test run screening 80 first graders at one school. This comprehensive free vision screening provides seven different vision screens with a 95% accuracy rate. If a child did not "pass", they were connected to physicians that accept Medicaid to further evaluate the child's vision needs. Lions Club will also fund these visits, glasses or services if the child doesn't have Medicaid and can't afford the cost.

CPP Contact: Sue Okerson, sokerson@adams14.org

Harrison 2 (Colorado Springs)

- Community Partnership for Child Development and School District 2 have committed to an early childhood partnership with a vision of ensuring that all children who need access to an excellent, early childhood program and whose parents are unable to pay for those services, will have that opportunity.
- We are accomplishing this vision through a variety of models offered through Harrison's adult and family education programs, programs for teen parents to support them in finishing high school, CPCD's Early Head Start programs, and blended Head Start and CPP classrooms.

CPP Contact: Dan Snowberger, dsnowberger@hsd2.org

Mentoring and Quality Improvement

Aurora

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which outlines the instructional and classroom environmental expectations necessary for collaboration with Aurora Public Schools has been signed by the community partners. Expectations regarding participation in professional development offered through the Early Childhood Education Department were included, as well. This agreement will be renewed prior to the start of the 2011/2012 school year to ensure that all APS students who participate in ECE programming will receive comparable preschool experiences

regardless of their site location. The goal for the 2011/2012 school year will be to monitor these agreements and provide ongoing instructional support opportunities.

CPP Contact: Sheri Charles, sbcharles@aps.k12.co.us

Jefferson County

Extensive staff development participation is mandatory in our district as follows:

- Mentor program established to assist new providers in classroom environments, curriculum development, and staff development with the intent to provide quality programs for children, families, and staff.
- The mentor hired to improve classroom environments advised on staff education and implemented curriculum worked directly with the program director and staff.

CPP Contact: Sherri Fast, sfast@jeffco.k12.co.us

Colorado Springs D-11

Responsibilities of Community Contracts:

- Ensure Head Start and community sites meet guidelines for special education and CPP
- Provide full day services
- Monitor all community contracts to ensure compliance and proper billing
- Provide differentiated support for community sites with non-certified staff as required by CPP
- Provide cohesive collaboration with local child care community
- Ensure a learning environment not a child care environment
- Facilitate and ensure positive and productive working relationship between community provider and D11
- Conduct Child Find and IEP reviews for community sites
- Provide required trainings to community sites
- Provide monitoring to ensure that special needs children are making progress on IEP goals within community settings
- Assist in preventing and resolving compliance issues
- Contribute to improved quality of care throughout community centers

CPP Contact: Kathy Howell, howelkl@d11.org

RFPs, Slot Allocations, and Funding (from 2008 and 2009 Expansion Applications)

Adams 12 Five Star Schools (Northglenn)

We sent our last RFP in January 2008. Out of 40 sent, five Early Childhood Programs responded. Out of five respondents, only two met CPP criteria. Even though only two programs qualified, it was worth the time it took to complete the task because it provided more opportunities to network with local day care sites.

CPP Contact: Celeste Scott, celeste.scott@adams12.org

Durango School District 9-R

Centers are not provided a “quota” that they are allowed. Slots are allocated based on the risk factors of the children who have applied in any given year, so these allocations change each year based on who applied and the kind of risk factors that the child brings.

CPP Contact: Laurie Kloepfer, lkloepfer@durango.k12.co.us

Denver Public Schools

Targeted sites for expansion CPP slots awarded to Denver Public Schools will include:

- Denver community agencies not currently participating in CPP and community child care sites in neighborhoods where demographics indicate a gap between available child care slots and family need.
- Current CPP community sites where wait lists indicate a need for additional slots and where appropriate classroom space exists

CPP Contact: John Crawford, john_crawford@dpsk12.org

Professional Development Ideas

"I have enjoyed the partnership between Thompson School District Preschool Program and Front Range Community College. The vision they have created for the paraprofessionals in their program is one of the most exciting I've witnessed in my 31 years in education. It is a pleasure to work with administrators who offer college credit and group leader qualification to classified staff working with children and parents. This partnership will create highly trained paraprofessionals who will have a positive impact on the early childhood program and services for parents and children."

Richard Wagner, Early Childhood Program Director
Front Range Community College – Larimer Campus

The key factors of building quality professional development for CPP and early childhood staff are diverse collaborations and intentional planning allowing for focus and time. The following examples show what some districts are doing to provide quality professional development for CPP staff.

Providing Time for Training and Planning

Mapleton

- The staff meets weekly for problem solving, curriculum planning, preparation, and overall program or children concerns. These weekly meetings are also used for staff training and home visits.
- Each member of the professional staff is scheduled monthly to consult and train the other staff in their area of expertise.

CPP Contact: Jill Fuller, fuller@mapleton.us

Durango School District 9-R

- All Durango School District 9-R teaching staff members are receiving one-and-a-half hours every Friday afternoon to participate in Professional Learning Communities.

CPP Contact: Laurie Koepfler, lkloepfer@durango.k12.co.us

Promoting Collaboration between Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers

Pueblo 60

- Over the past several years, the Pueblo City Schools preschool program has developed the motto of "Teachers Supporting Teachers". A new and highly effective aspect to "Teachers Supporting Teachers" was implemented within monthly professional development in the way of a Teacher Showcase in which several teachers share focused successful classroom developments and/or strategies with the preschool group as a whole. The Teacher

Showcase has proven to provide a strong link between classroom practices and monthly professional development.

CPP Contact: Daryl Gagliano, dgagliano@pueblocitieschools.us

Trinidad

- Each fall and spring, the results of the DIBELS assessment are shared with the preschool directors and teachers so that they can note the progress their former pupils have made in the reading arena.

CPP Contact: Olivia Bachicha, olivia.bachicha@trinidad.k12.co.us

Widefield

- The teachers have the opportunity to observe kindergarten programs within our district in order to achieve better transition services for children entering elementary school.
- This past spring, district preschool teachers met with a group of kindergarten teachers in a roundtable discussion regarding kindergarten readiness skills and developmentally appropriate practice.

CPP Contact: Andrea Waltermire, waltermirea@wsd3.k12.co.us

Encouraging Training and Educational Opportunities

Adams 50

- This year, the ECC has partnered with the CU BUENO Equity Assistance Center to provide the staff professional development in the area of early literacy for culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

CPP Contact: Tami Brungard, tbrungard@adams50.org

Adams 14 (Commerce City)

- Staff development in Adams 14 includes monthly ECE focused in-service and training, weekly district supported walkthroughs, on-going classroom supports, English language acquisition, plus district wide professional development.
- Additionally, "data talks" are held after each Results Matter Checkpoint to provide teachers and their principals a review of children's progress, determine areas of need and an opportunity to develop action plans. These talks enable teachers to plan their focus for the next checkpoint and grading period; thus meeting our district's goal that data drives instruction. Being able to use our High/Scope COR data has provided teams and principals with a real measure that is useful and relevant to our youngest learners.

CPP Contact: Sue Okerson, sokerson@adams14.org

Thompson School District (Loveland)

- This spring, 12 of our classroom paraprofessionals completed ECE 103 through Front Range Community College. The class was a phenomenal success due to the collaboration between the college, the district, and the early childhood council.

CPP Contact: Theresa Clements clementst@thompson.k12.co.us

Delta

- This year, the District has implemented a new salary schedule for preschool teachers. It will increase some of their salaries significantly. It also provides incentive to pursue an ECE degree and promotes longevity in the field.

CPP Contact: Angela Fedler, afedler@deltaschools.com

Boulder Valley

- One focus this year will be use of Creative Curriculum data to plan for groups of children as well as individual children. Staff will form professional learning communities to examine data, trends, pose questions about groups of children's learning and plan classroom experiences based on data.

CPP Contact: Donna Arnold, donna.arnold@bvsd.org

Colorado Springs D-11

- CPP classrooms receive monitoring and technical assistance by coordinators or supervisors between one to eight times per month, depending on the needs of the staff and children.
- The assigned Preschool Coordinator completes an ECERS evaluation on all new teachers. If a classroom, new or existing, does not meet an overall score of "5" on the ECERS, they receive a technical assistance plan. Each year we follow up on the areas where the classroom scored below four in any area. We repeat the ECERS every three years or as needed if a classroom shows signs of not meeting the standards.

CPP Contact: Kathy Howell, howelkl@d11.org

Jefferson County

- All private and public preschool sites have individualized staff development plans for each staff member. Additionally, each program has a long-term plan for professional development as determined through assessment of staff needs.
- By utilizing a staggered schedule, all staff have the opportunity to attend trainings throughout the year and receive the same quality information from the instructional coaches.

CPP Contact: Sherri Fast, sfast@jeffco.k12.co.us

Engagement of K-12 Administration Ideas

“Working with the CPP administrator is an excellent resource for elementary schools. It builds a collaborative process that helps to build a bridge between these two levels and helps us to align our instruction. At the elementary level, we appreciate the student information we receive from CPP to help determine the best placement for students entering kindergarten.”

Celeste Hyland, Principal, Garfield Elementary
Thompson School District

Educating and Including Administration

Pueblo 60

The Quality Standards are part of a "Classroom Quality Checklist" that elementary principals reference in understanding the teaching practices and learning environmental requirements for Pre-K classrooms with their buildings.

CPP Contact: daryl.gagliano@pueblocitieschools.us

Adams 14 (Commerce City)

- District wide, Adams 14 continues to provide weekly "walkthroughs" utilizing a formal observation process in all grades, preschool through 12th. Teams of administrators, coordinators and principals visit every classroom weekly to check for standards-based curriculum, review delivery of instruction, and check for student engagement.
- Walkthroughs are a quick method for these teams to take a snapshot of instruction and engagement. The ultimate goal is to increase the quality of instruction identifying specific needs for professional development at every grade level.

CPP Contact: Sue Okerson, sokerson@adams14.org

Widefield

- We have begun to use the new P-12 state standards, as well as the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum objectives to drive our instruction. Curriculum Calendars, based on standards and benchmarks, have been developed and are being utilized as a scope and sequence to direct teaching.
- Four of the preschool teachers have served on the district Curriculum Alignment Teams for literacy, math, science and social studies

Boulder Valley School District

- During this school year, some principals working collaboratively with the Assistant Director of Early Childhood used portions of the checklist during their classroom observations. The principals found the information very useful in their work with preschool teachers. During the 2009-2010 school year, the Assistant Director of ECE will meet quarterly with P-5 principals to build a stronger understanding of best practices in early childhood.
- Principals will receive a manual with information ranging from basic child care licensure requirements to early childhood curriculum.

CPP Contact: Donna Arnold, donna.arnold@bvsd.org

Garfield RE 2 (Rifle)

The early childhood team meets once a month on Friday for professional development activities. This year, principals will attend these meetings as appropriate.

CPP Contact: Deb Ghan, dghan@garfieldre2.k12.co.us

Adams-Arapahoe 28J (Aurora)

This year, for the first time, elementary school principals and community site directors have received professional development on Creative Curriculum and the overall expectations for preschool instruction. This increased awareness and understanding of preschool curriculum has resulted in several school principals requesting new or additional preschool classrooms for their elementary school sites.

CPP Contact: Sheri Charles, sbcharles@aps.k12.co.us

Administrative Support for Programs

Thompson School District (Loveland)

- A full-time early childhood principal serves as the director of the entire program. The principal is the director of the CPP program and works with the coordinator staff to complete CPP requirements. In addition, secretarial support is provided to the CPP program to provide administrative and enrollment support.
- We will be adding extra hours for staff in the summer time to provide additional screening opportunities and time to place children in classrooms. We are also exploring the option of adding a data entry person on a temporary basis to help with the set-up of the files, student data system, and Creative Curriculum.

CPP Contact: Theresa Clements, clementst@thompson.k12.co.us