



## Power Points

*For use by educational leaders in presentations about important issues related to public education*

### Before and After

*High-quality early childhood education and after-school programming*

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**Key Message:** Children are our greatest resource. Parents, communities and schools are responsible for working together to ensure that all children realize their full potential, have the opportunity for fulfilling lives, and become contributing members of society. This awesome responsibility begins before children enter kindergarten and extends after the traditional school day.

Minnesotans have always known how important teaching and learning is for the lives of our children. Throughout history, we have intrinsically understood the value of surrounding children with love, security, support, and other assets. We have known that our economic and social success depend upon a sound, comprehensive system of public education. Before we ever read “It takes the whole village to raise a child,” we formed neighborhoods and communities and villages. Now, with the accelerating speed of change in our world, it is clearer than ever that our responsibility is not limited by calendars or clocks. Research confirms that it is important to the future of kids and our society that we offer high-quality educational opportunities in early childhood, and that children have access to after-school programming.

**Invest early...** for the greatest human and economic returns.

- ◆ “High-quality early childhood education is more than an admirable goal; it is fundamental to making sure all children have the opportunity to succeed.”<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ “Every child needs a good early childhood education. That’s an ethical principle that transcends what the data says.”<sup>2</sup>
- ◆ “There is persuasive evidence that a child’s first few years are a sensitive period for brain development and set a trajectory for his or her success in school and later in life. Well-focused and -funded investments in early childhood development programs produce substantial returns for disadvantaged children and, to even a greater degree, for the public.”<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ “If a child from birth through age five receives support for development in cognition, language, motor skills, adaptive skills, and social/emotional function, he or she is more likely to succeed in school and in the workplace.”<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ Three of the most significant studies on the economic impact of high quality preschool programs (High/Scope Perry Preschool Project, Abecedarian Project, and Chicago Child-Parent Centers) reveal a significant personal and public return on each dollar spent. The public benefit for each dollar spent ranged from \$2.69 to \$7.16. Including both the personal and public benefit, the range was from \$3.78 to \$10.15 for each dollar invested in 2002 dollars.

<b>Cost/Benefit factors of high-quality early childhood education<sup>5</sup></b>	<b><i>Targeted program serving 3- and 4-year-olds from families in the lowest quarter of the income distribution; costs &amp; benefits in Minnesota<sup>5</sup></i></b>	<b><i>Projected costs and benefits for a universal voluntary high-quality pre-K program serving all 3- and 4-year old children:<sup>5</sup></i></b>
When the program would start paying for itself	3 years	9 years
Annual cost if the program had been fully phased in 2008	\$32 million	\$567 million
Total benefits in 2050	\$4 billion	\$16.8 billion
Costs in 2050	\$146 million	\$1.7 billion
Ratio of total benefits to costs in 2050	\$27 to 1	\$10.2 to 1

1. Dr. Vincent Ferrandino, executive director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals
2. Larry Schweinhardt, head researcher, *High/Scope Perry Preschool Study*
3. Arthur Rolnick, Ph. D. and Rob Grunewald, *Achieving a High Return on Early Childhood Investment*
4. C.T. Ramey, F.A. Campbell, M. Burchinal, M. L. Skinner, D.M. Gardner, S. L. Ramey, *Persistent Effects of Early Childhood Education on High-Risk Children and Their Mothers*, "Applied Developmental Science"
5. *Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation*, Robert Lynch, professor of economics, Washington College

**At the end of the day...** Every day, at least eight million kids are left alone and unsupervised once the school bell rings. <sup>1</sup> "That time can represent either an opportunity to learn and grow through quality after-school programs, or a time of risk to youth's health and safety." <sup>2</sup> Parents, especially low-income and minority, worry about how their children use time when they are on their own. <sup>3</sup> In fact, kids who don't participate in after-school programs that are safe and structured are "at greater risk of being victims of crime, or participating in anti-social behaviors." <sup>2</sup> They are 49% more likely to have used drugs and 37% more likely to become teen parents than are those students who spend one to four hours per week in extracurricular activities. <sup>2</sup>

After-school activities play an important role in the development of today's youth. A 2004 Public Agenda survey indicated that 79% of America's middle and high school students regularly participate in activities after school and on weekends, and 57% had some kind of nonschool activity nearly every day. Unfortunately, low-income and minority parents have much more difficulty finding high-quality, convenient and affordable programs for their children. <sup>3</sup>

## The Need for After-School Programs

- ◆ More than 28 million school-age children have parents who work outside the home.
- ◆ As many as 15 million “latch-key children” return to an empty home after school.
- ◆ Almost 100% of people polled in a recent survey agreed that it is important for children to have an after-school program that helps them develop academic and social skills in a safe and caring environment.
- ◆ One study found that twice as many elementary and middle school parents wanted after-school programs than were currently available.

## Helping Children to Succeed

- ◆ After-school programs keep children of all ages safe and out of trouble.
- ◆ The after-school hours are the time when juvenile crime hits its peak.
- ◆ After-school programs can help to improve the academic performance of participating children. For many children, their reading and math scores have improved.
- ◆ After-school programs contribute to raising children's self-confidence and academic performance.
- ◆ Teachers and parents report that children who participate in after-school programs develop better social skills and learn to handle conflicts in more socially acceptable ways.
- ◆ Families able to enroll their children in good programs indicate that their children are safer and more successful in school.
- ◆ After-school programs provide a structured, safe, supervised place to be after school for learning, fun, and friendship with adults and peers alike.

Support our kids and our future by supporting early childhood through graduation and after-school activities.

*Materials taken from:*

1. *U.S. Department of Education, September 2000*
2. *After School Programs Fact Sheet, National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center, safeyouth.org.*
3. *Out-Of-School Activities Play Crucial, Positive Role, Public Agenda, 2004*
4. *After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice.*



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