

Alaska Preschool Project

In April of 2009, the Alaska Legislature provided EED with \$2,000,000.00 in General Funds for a pre-kindergarten project. The application process offered bonus points in the Request for Application (RFA) for partnerships with other entities and for those willing to participate in Department-offered training. EED also required the use of certified teachers with an early childhood background along with specific pre- and post-assessments for outcomes for both the children and the program.

Districts

- The Anchorage School District (ASD) provided two new complete classrooms in partnership with Kids Corps Inc. (KCI) Head Start. Both are federally recognized Head Start classrooms being jointly provided by the ASD & KCI in a school district setting.
- The Bering Strait School District (BSSD) project is a partnership among three educational agencies: BSSD, Kawerak, Inc. Head Start, and RurAL CAP Head Start. All four BSSD programs are housed in Head Start settings and jointly provided by the district and either of the two Head Start programs.
- The Juneau School District (JSD) provided two complete classrooms in partnership with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) Head Start. Both are federally recognized Head Start classrooms being jointly provided by the JSD & CCTHITA.
- The Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) provided services to children in one school-based classroom in Bethel.
- In Nome, the program ran two classrooms: one in the Nome Preschool (a private entity) and the other a Kawerak Head Start. Both are run jointly with the Nome Public Schools.
- Yukon-Koyukuk School District (YKSD) provided two new preschool classrooms. One was a district-run program in Allakaket (building in one additional hour of Athabaskan language immersion daily as requested by the community). The other new classroom in Minto was in partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Head Start. They also worked in Huslia, and Kaltag with TCC Head Start programs.

Early Learning Efforts in Other Districts

The department provided \$300,000 to increase funding for early learning projects in Lower Yukon School District and Yupiit School District.

- Lower Yukon School District hired an Early Childhood Specialist in 2010 who focused her work in two directions; providing family training and activities for children who will transition into Kindergarten in Nunam Iqua. Additionally the department provided Lower Yukon School District with training and technical assistance on site for district staff and community members.

- Yupiit School District hired a coordinator to work with district run home visiting programs, local Head Starts, and other local early care and education providers in their three communities; Akiak, Akiachak, and Tuluksak. Work focused on transition and alignment between the birth to three programs, Head Start or other early care and learning programs and the five year olds' transition to Kindergarten programs and the K-12 system. An Early Childhood Leadership Team with local representatives from early learning programs was created and joint outreach to local councils is ongoing.

The following chart shows the number of students being served by program in the 2010-2011 school year and funding:

Program	Students Served	State Funding
Anchorage School District	35	167,684
Bering Strait School District	48	362,828
Juneau School District	23	201,073
Lower Kuskokwim School District	21	337,732
Nome City Schools	35	219,539
Yukon-Koyukuk School District	12	325,445
Lower Yukon School District	90	150,000
Yupiit School District	55	150,000
THREAD (Pre & Post Program Assessments-ECERS)		85,699
Totals	319	2,000,000

Assessments

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) provides information on vocabulary and receptive language development. Large numbers of children entering the AP3 program in the fall were significantly below their same age peers nationally. As a result of participation in the program, 72% of the children made above expected growth in vocabulary.

The Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL -3) provides information on three areas of development in relation to school readiness: Motor Development; Concept Development; and Language Development. In the fall 73% of children entering the AP3 program were significantly below their same age peers nationally. Spring assessments show that 28% of the children are in the top quartile as compared to the 9% in the fall and that 29% have moved out of the bottom quartile.

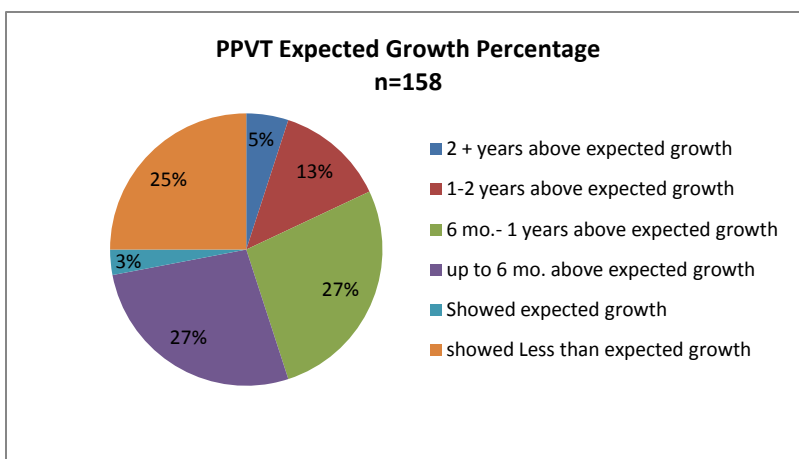
The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) was used to determine the quality of the environment in which the programs took place. Programs were rated in the fall and again in the spring. The AP3 programs began the year above minimal on the scale and ended approaching

good (almost a full point of improvement in less than a year's time). This represents significant programmatic growth.

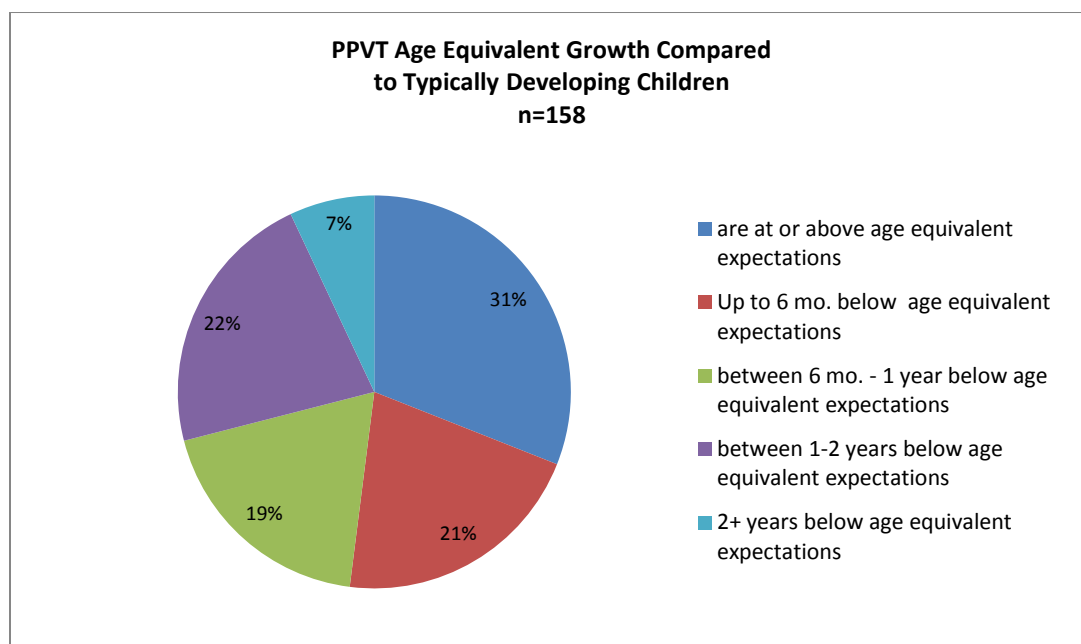
State Aggregate **PPVT Child Outcomes**

The following chart illustrates children's actual growth compared to the expected growth for the time between assessments.

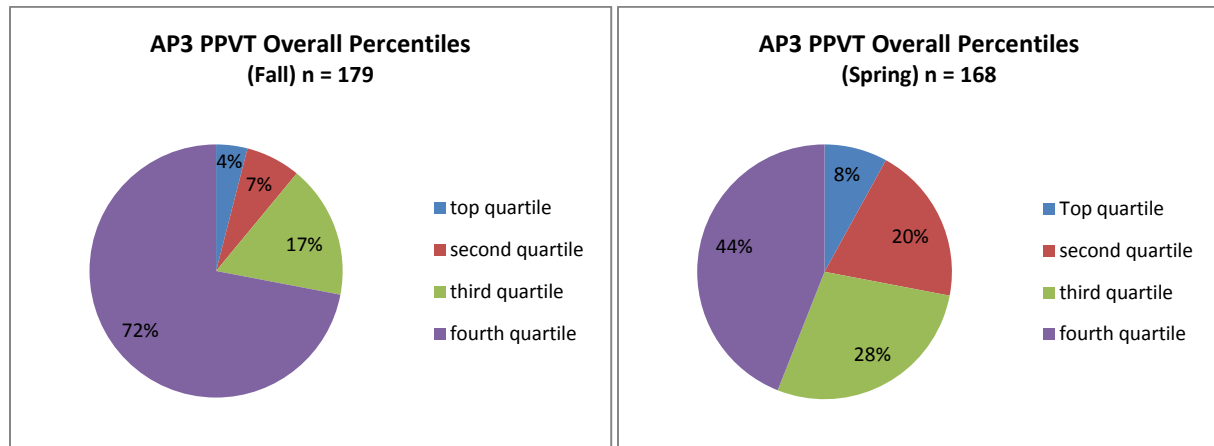
State Aggregate



The following chart illustrates the students' growth in relation to an age-equivalent typically-developing child on a national level.



State PPVT Percentages

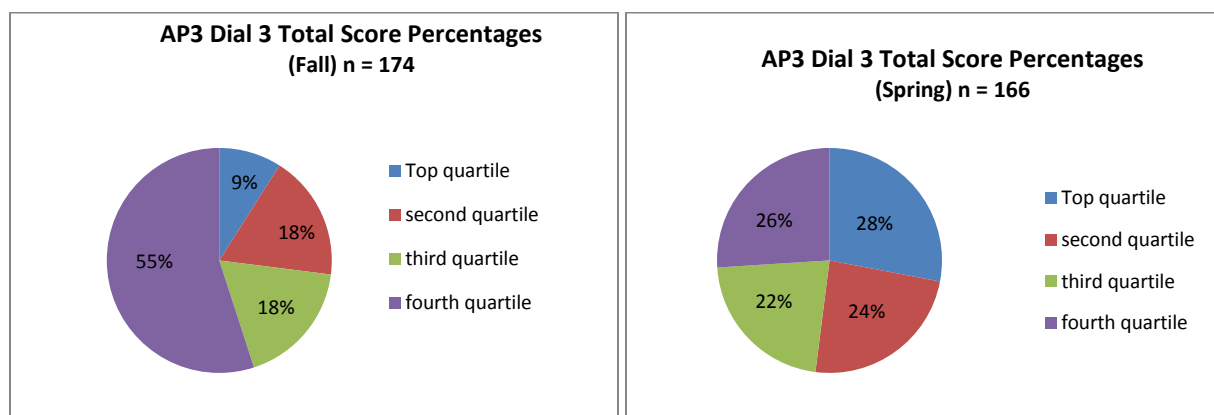


DIAL – 3 State Aggregate Results

Total Score Fall & Spring DIAL - 3

The following charts illustrate the large numbers of children entering the AP3 program significantly below their same age peers nationally and the numbers of children showing significant improvement in percentile ranking compared to same age peers nationally.

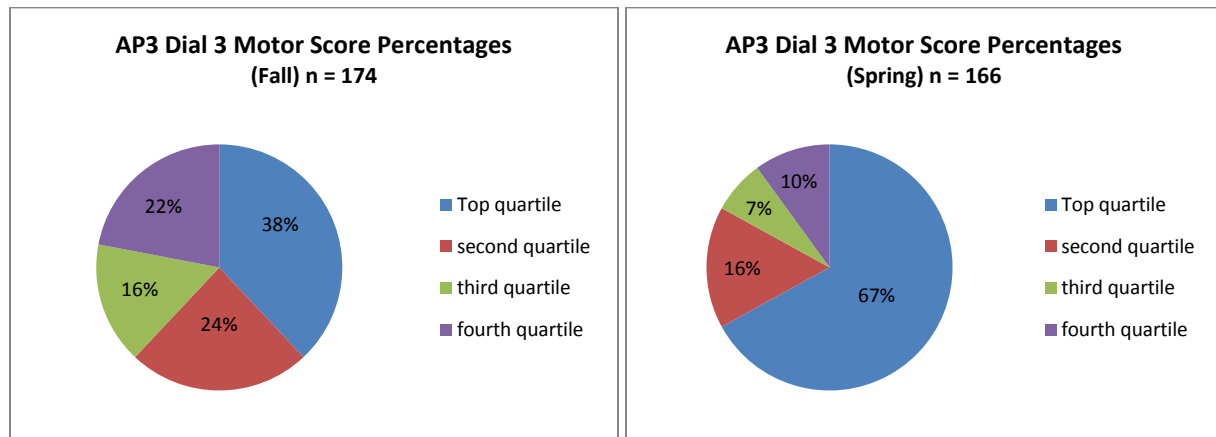
State Dial-3 Total Score Percentages



Motor Development Score Fall & Spring DIAL-3

The charts below illustrate the placement of children entering the AP3 program compared to their same age peers nationally in motor development and the improvement of children in the AP3 program.

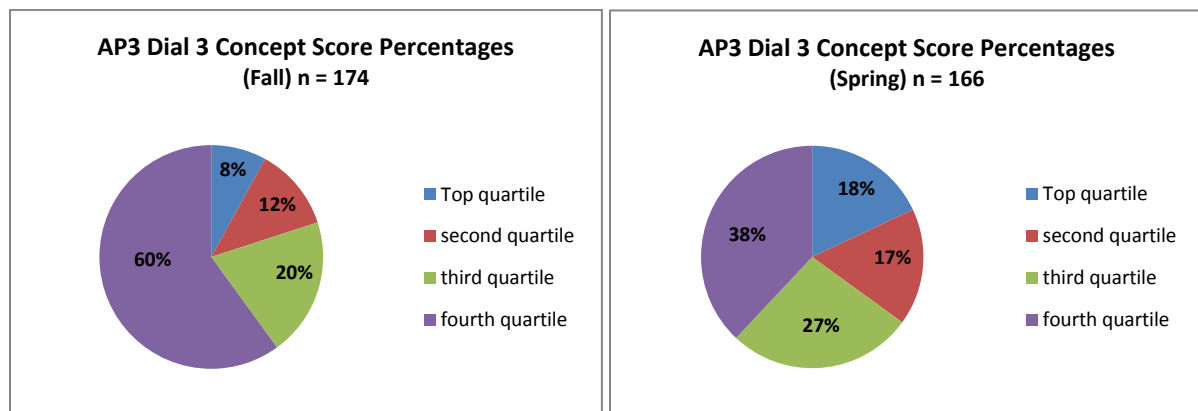
State Dial-3 Motor Score Percentages



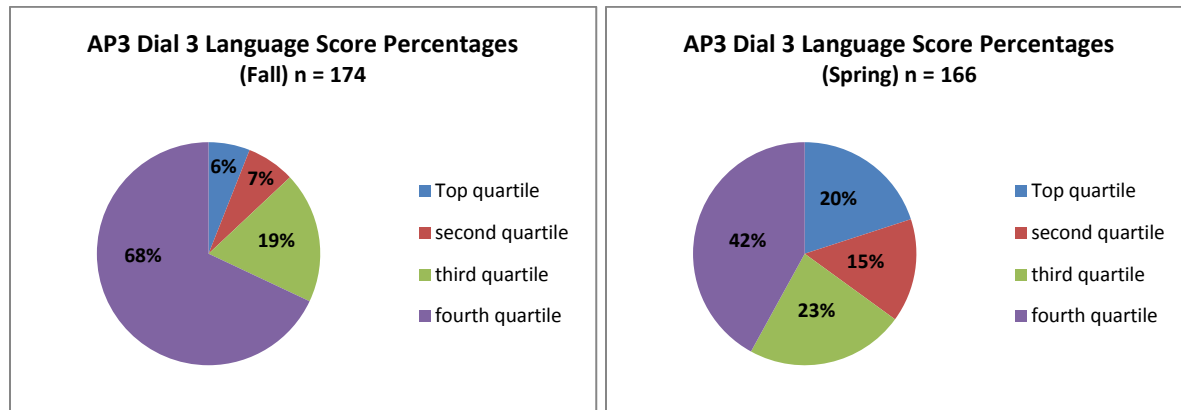
Concept & Language Development Scores Fall & Spring DIAL - 3

The next sets of charts show the large numbers of children entering the AP3 program significantly below their same age peers nationally in both concept and language development, and the improvement of children participating in the AP3 program.

State Dial-3 Concept Score Percentages



State Dial-3 Language Score Percentages



87% of AP3 children are entering the program in the bottom two quartiles. 35% of AP 3 children are finishing the program in the top two quartiles. 22% have moved from the bottom two quartiles to the top two quartiles.

The following chart shows the number of preschool students statewide who participated in the fall entry and spring exit on the PPVT and DIAL-3 testing for the AP3.

Test Numbers for the 2009-2010 School Year

District	PPVT Entry	PPVT Exit	DIAL 3 Entry	DIAL 3 Exit
Anchorage	35	29	34	28
Bering Strait	49	46	46	45
Juneau	33	30	32	31
Lower Kuskokwim	21	22	19	21
Nome	20	19	22	21
Yukon Koyukuk	21	22	21	20
Total All Districts	179	168	174	166

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ECERS-R) Program Outcomes

ECERS-R is designed for use in classroom-based early childhood care & education programs aged two to six years. It is organized into seven scales observing classroom environments,

activities and interactions, program structure, and parents and staff communication and interaction.

The first table shows the state aggregate overall scores and the seven scale scores in a fall/spring comparison. The second table shows the overall scores for each district in a fall/spring comparison. One is inadequate, three is minimal, five is good and seven is excellent.

State Aggregate	Fall	Spring
Overall Score:	3.76	4.69
Space and Furnishings	3.06	4.08
Personal Care Routines	2.64	3.33
Language-Reasoning	4.10	5.43
Activities	3.16	4.33
Interaction	4.54	4.80
Program Structure	4.26	5.41
Parents and Staff	5.44	6.13

AP3 Programs	Overall Score - Fall	Overall Score - Spring
Anchorage School District	4.56	4.72
Bering Strait School District	3.76	4.24
Juneau School District	2.91	5.4
Lower Kuskokwim S. District	3.17	5.38
Nome Public Schools	3.52	5.09
Yukon Koyukuk School District	4.05	4.45

Project data shows a continuing need for quality early childhood programs. While the Pre-K children are making large strides in their development and a large number have closed the gap, there are still children performing below expectations. The unprecedented levels of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between Head Start programs and school districts are leading to improved alignment, transition and common planning & training.