



Program Update for the Durham
County Board of Commission and the
DPS Board of Education

May 2026

www.durhamprek.org



What is Durham PreK?

Opportunity

Durham County expands access to high-quality, publicly supported preschool

Main Program Goals

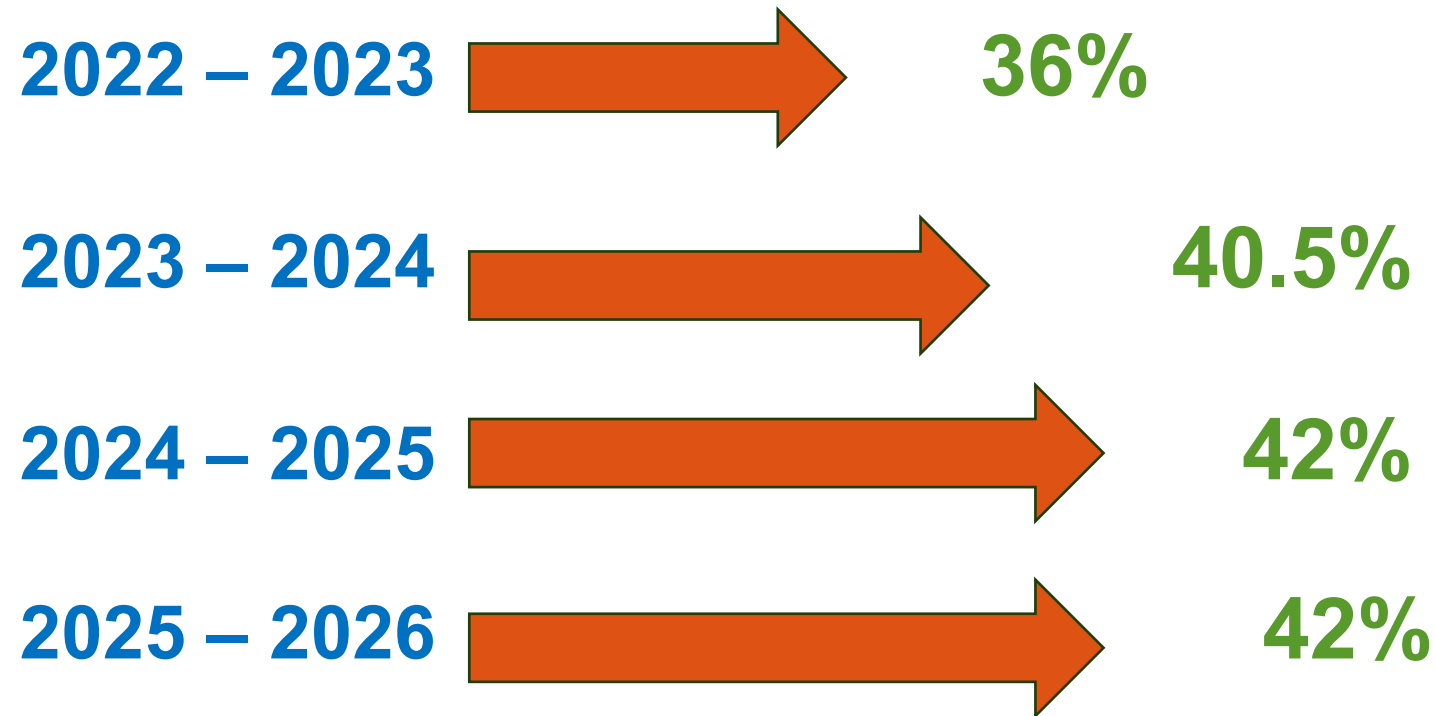
- Prepare Students for Kindergarten
- Improve Classroom Instruction
- Support Family Engagement
- Build Capacity for High Quality



Durham PreK Addresses Equity by Expanding Access and Improving Quality



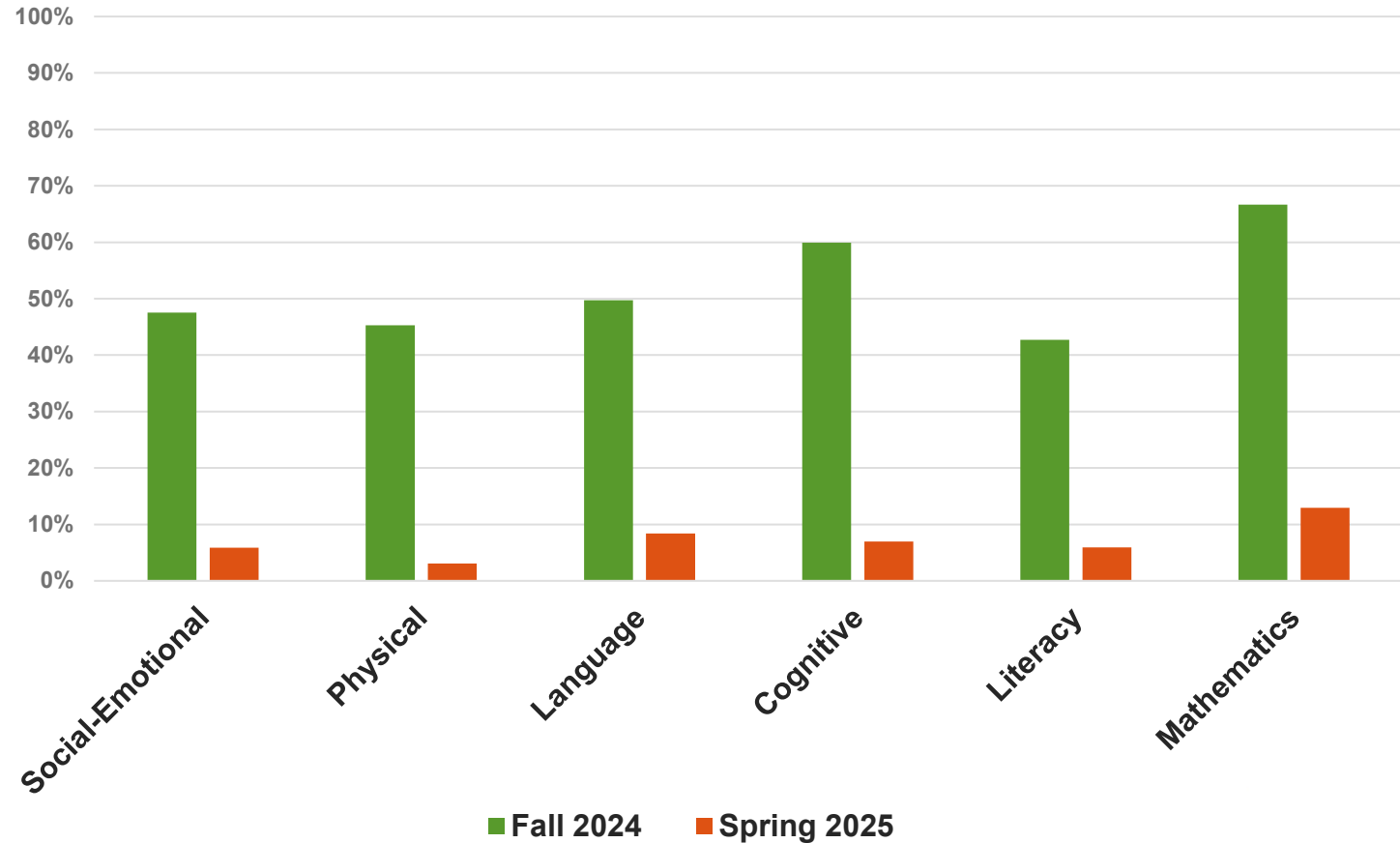
Durham Community Goal - established in 2018 by the Preschool Task Force based upon the Durham Supply and Demand Study: Expand public preschool seats to serve up to 75% of the total four-year-old census



Teaching Strategies Gold report

Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) Assessment Data
% of Children Below Expectations

% of children below expectations at the end of the school year 2025



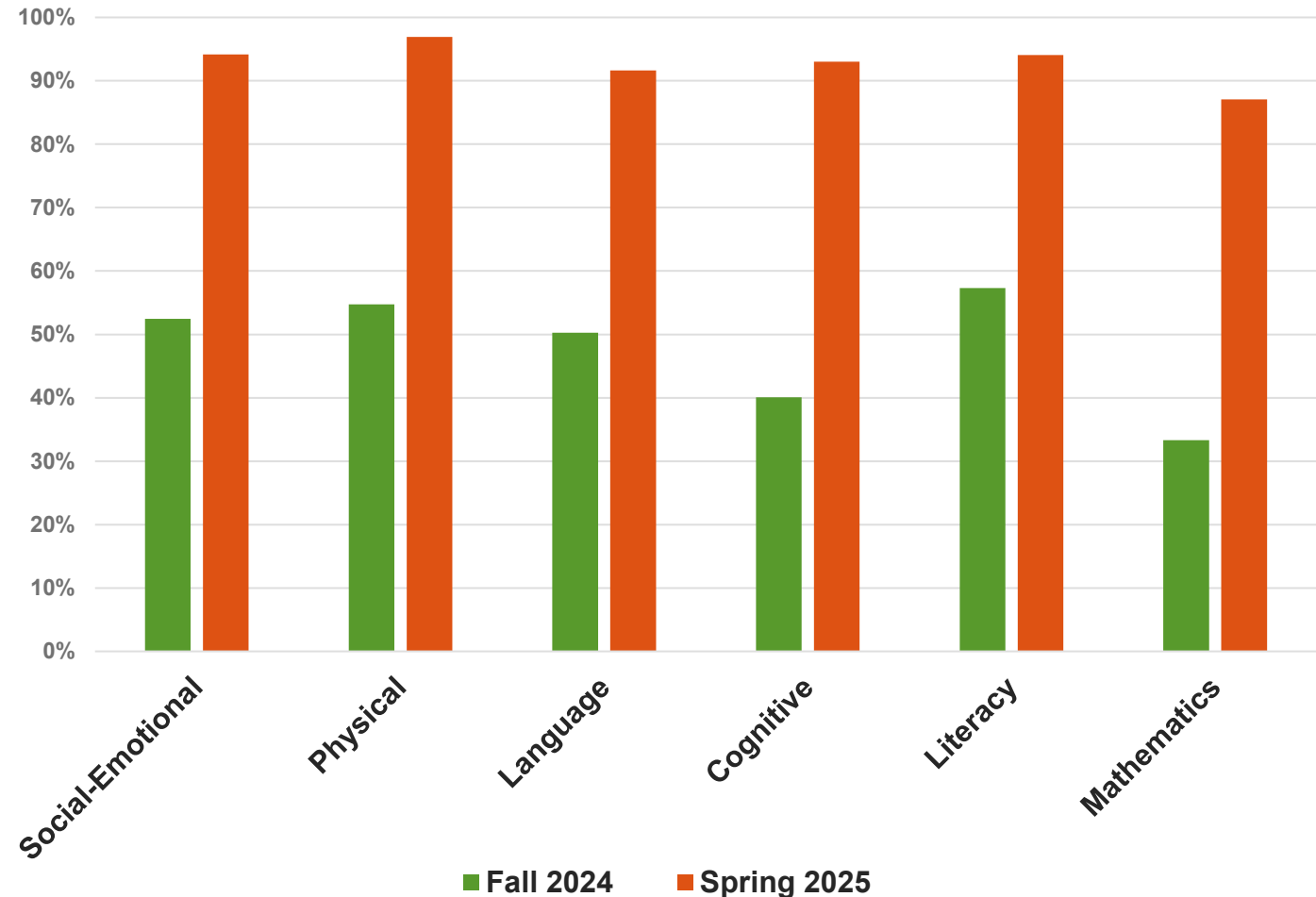
Instructional Impact 2024 – 2025 School Year

TSG report

% of children meeting or exceeding expectations at the end of the school year 2025

- 94% in *social-emotional* development,
- 97% in *physical* development,
- 92% in *language* development,
- 93% in *cognitive* development,
- 94% in *literacy* development
- 87% in *mathematics* development.

Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) Assessment Data
% of Children Meeting or Exceeding Expectations



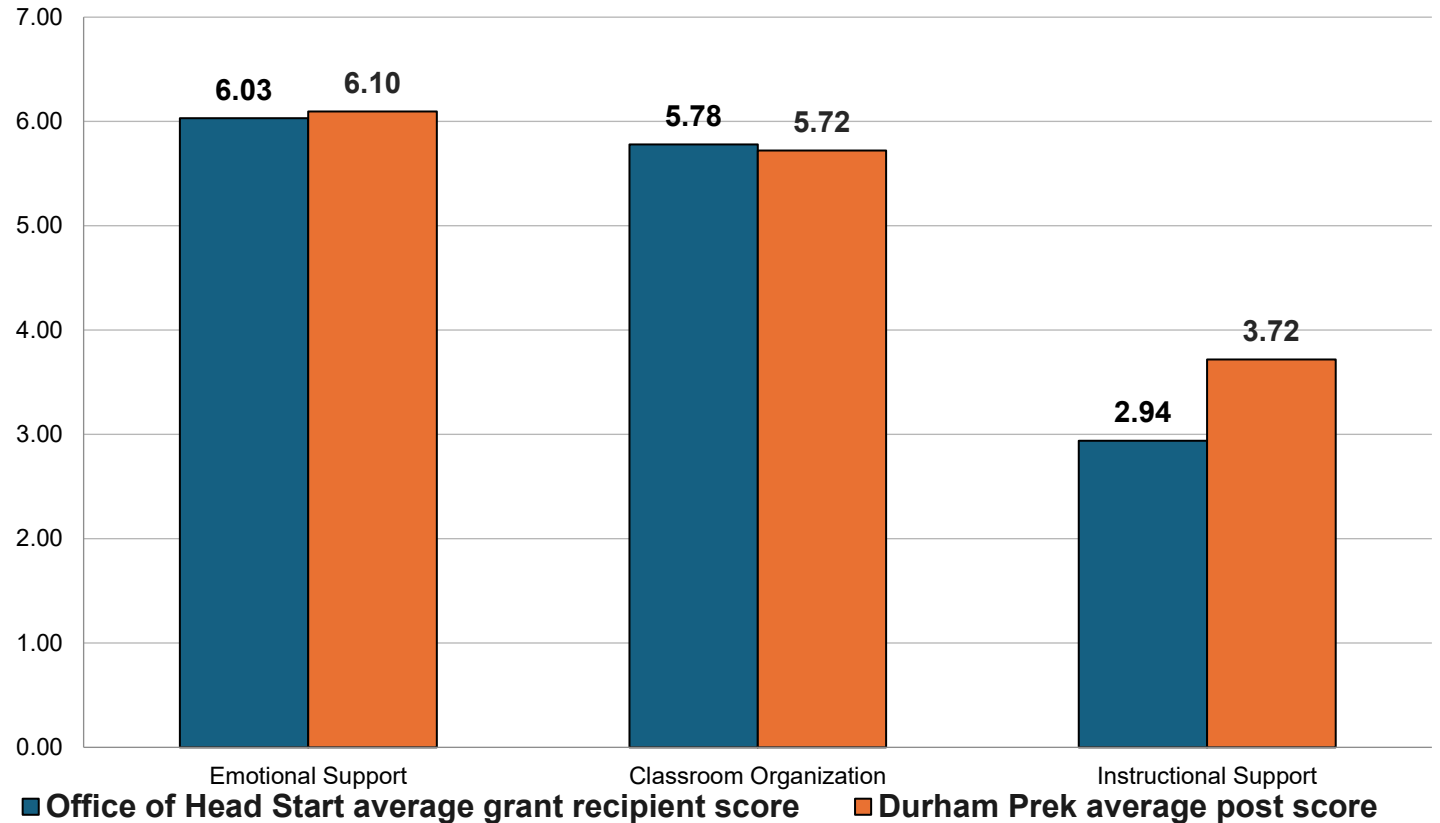
Instructional Impact

2024 – 2025 School Year

To improve instructional practices,
DPK coaches use the research-based
Classroom Scoring System
(CLASS™)

- 5.0 and above in *Emotional Support and Classroom Organization* domains are consistently linked to improved student outcomes, including better math, literacy, and social emotional gains
- *Instructional Support* domain includes concepts such as higher order thinking and quality feedback. 3.3 considered a benchmark for positive outcomes. DPK classrooms exceed that score at 3.72

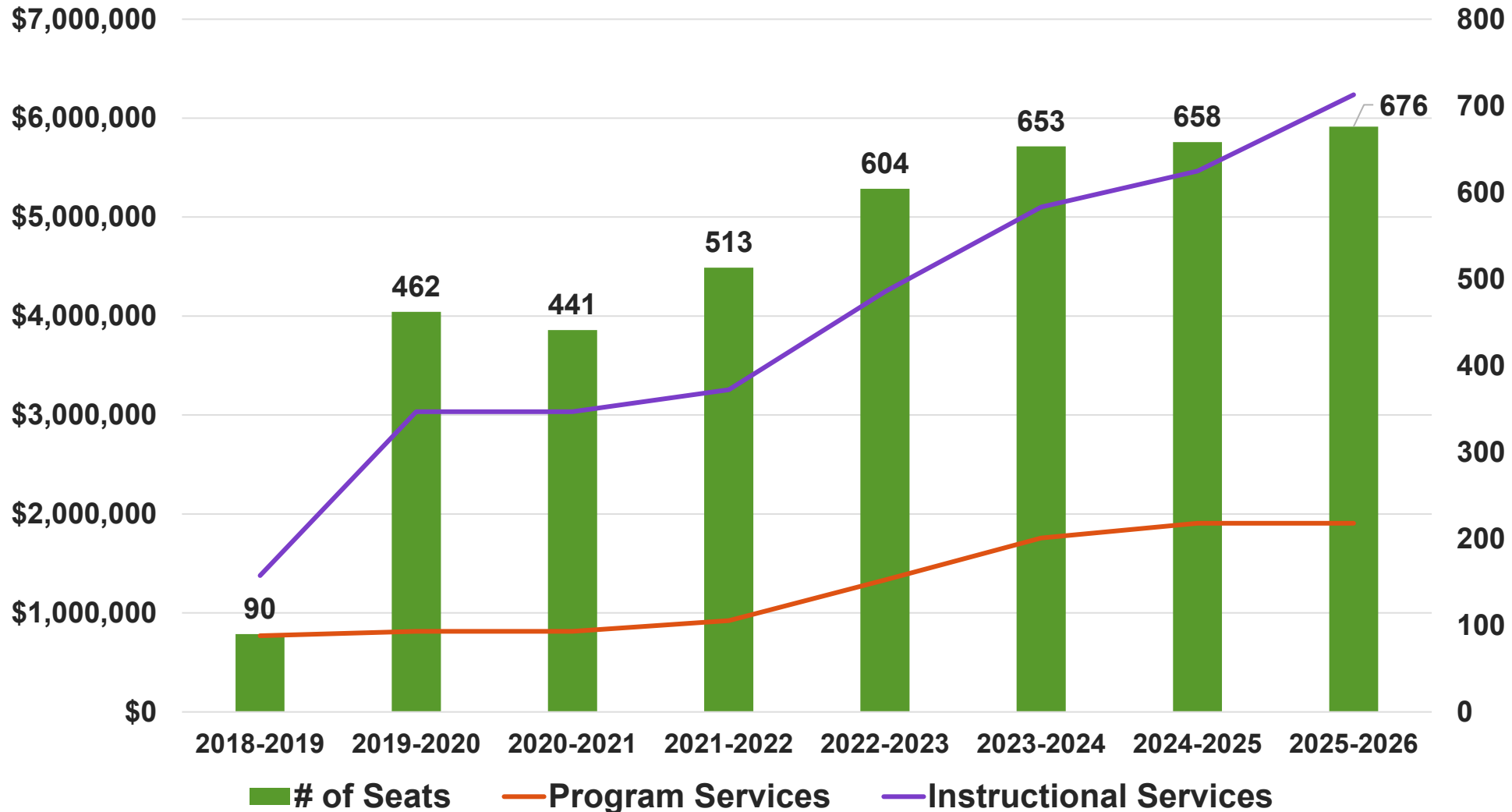
Durham PreK Compared to National Head Start:
Average CLASS Scores by Domain



Historically due to broad public investments, classrooms in Head Start score much higher than programs without public resources on CLASS™ assessments.

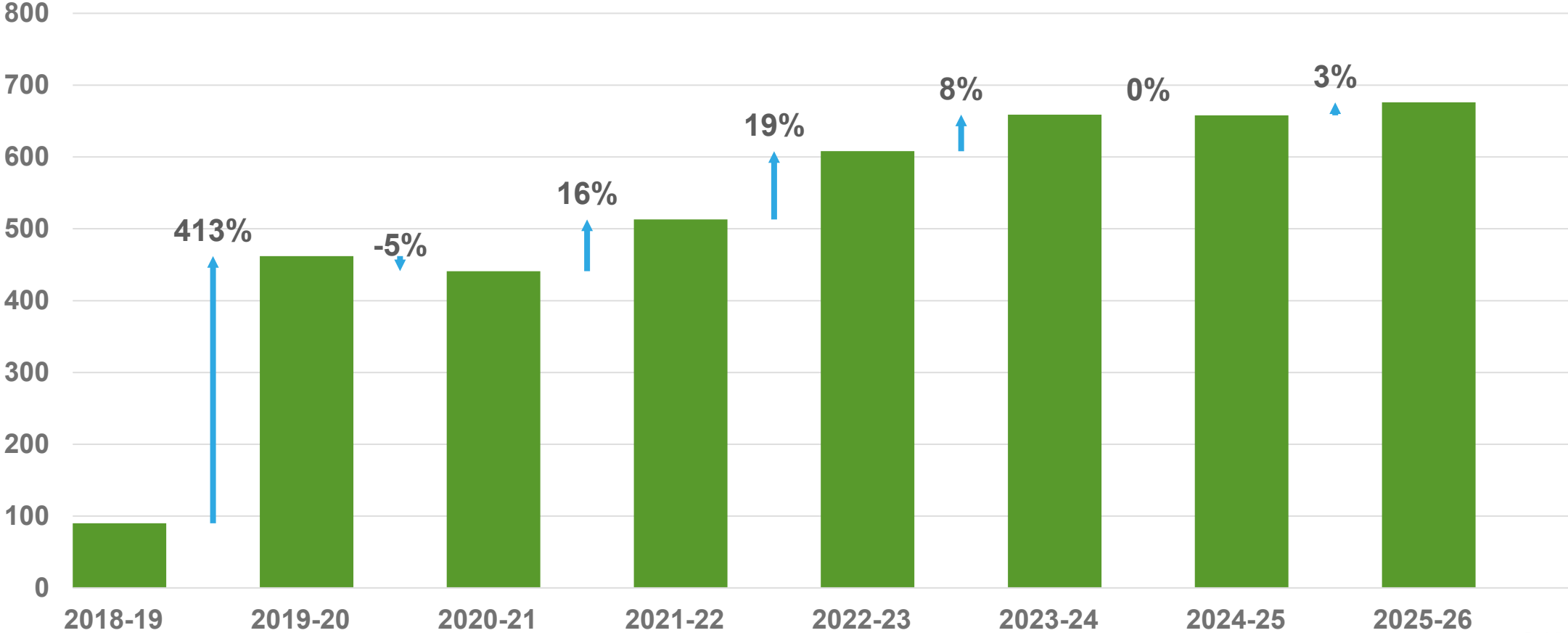


DPK Budget



DPK Growth

DPK % Seat Growth Annually



Applications

For 2026 – 2027 as of May 1, 2026

- 1,025 Applications in the online portal that opened March 2026
- 3% Increase to date compared to 2025 opening

For 2025 – 2026 as of May 1, 2026

- 1,833 Applications received in the online portal that opened in February 2025
- Enrollment is open until April during the school year

The Durham PreK Application Opens
March 2, 2026!

Complete an interest form to receive a reminder when the application opens!

SCAN ME

Logos: Early Years, Partnership for Children, FCR Families & Rising, DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS, DURHAM COUNTY



2025-2026 Enrollment by Site Type

	FY25	FY26				
	# Seats Allocated	# Seats Allocated	# Seats Filled - April	Enrollment Rate - April	# Seats Filled - February	Enrollment Rate - February
Private Sites	562	574	538	94%	539	94%
Head Start	168	165	152	92%	150	91%
DPS	607	591	469	79%	473	80%
SubTotal	1337	1330	1159	87%	1162	87%
EC Children	419	406	N/A			
Grand Total	1756	1736				

Note: Number of seats filled are for children confirmed to have started, not just those who have accepted their placement.

Sources for enrollment numbers:

- NC Pre-K at Private Sites, DPK Only, and DPK Enhanced – SMA Accepted Seats Report and Site Rosters as of as of 5/5/26 for April data, as of 2/17/26 for February data
- NC Pre-K Head Start and NC Pre-K DPS – March NC Pre-K attendance sheets for April data, January NC Pre-K attendance sheets for February data
- Title I Only, EC Children, and Montessori – Enrollment/Capacity numbers shared from DPS 5/1/26 for April data, shared from DPS 3/3/26 for February data



2025-2026 Enrollment by Seat Type

	# Seats Allocated	# Seats Filled (April)	Enrollment Rate (April)	Enrollment Rate (February)	Enrollment Rate (December)	Enrollment Rate (October)
NC Pre-K	575	533	93%	91%	89%	85%
Private Sites	376	347	92%	94%	91%	89%
Head Start	142	133	94%	85%	82%	71%
DPS	57	53	93%	89%	91%	91%
DPK Only (All)	360	325	90%	89%	88%	82%
DPK Only at Whitted	80	54	68%	69%	59%	45%
DPK Only	280	271	97%	95%	96%	93%
DPK Enhanced	316	294	93%	96%	94%	91%
Title I Only	228	158	69%	72%	68%	62%

Note: Number of seats filled are for children confirmed to have started, not just those who have accepted their placement, as of the dates below.

Sources for enrollment numbers:

- NC Pre-K at Private Sites, DPK Only, and DPK Enhanced – SMA Accepted Seats Report and Site Rosters as of 5/5/26
- NC Pre-K Head Start and NC Pre-K DPS – March NC Pre-K attendance sheets
- Title I Only – Enrollment/Capacity numbers shared from DPS 5/1/26



Review of Placement Priority

2024-2025	
Poverty Level	Percent
<130%	48%
131-185%	10%
186-200%	3%
201-250%	8%
251-300%	5%
301-399%	8%
>=400%	19%

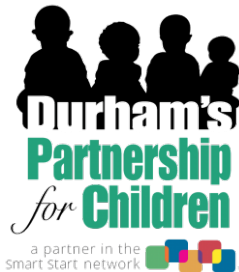
2025-2026	
Data as of March 2026	
Poverty Level	Percent
<130%	44%
131-185%	12%
186-200%	3%
201-250%	9%
251-300%	5%
301-399%	5%
>=400%	22%



Durham PreK Partners



A Comprehensive Approach to
Enhancing Early Care and Education



Expanding Access

Enrollment

94%
Enrollment in
locally funded
seats, not
including DPS
sites, during
2025 - 2026

Barriers

- Transportation Needs
- Access to Wrap Care (before and after school)
- Community Awareness

Strategies

- Expand seats in locations that are convenient to parents
- Increase transportation for high need families
- Increase hours for before and after school across all sites
- Preserve and expand access to wrap care scholarships for before and after school
- Improve and enrich outreach and marketing strategies (by *all members of the preschool collaborative*)

SY24-25 Family Survey Results

- **Would you recommend Durham PreK to a friend or fellow family?**
 - 95% yes
- **Which aspect of Durham PreK needs to be changed the most?**
 - 30% Pre-K site placement process
 - 26% Transportation
 - 25% Availability of before/after care



“The Pre-K program has been incredibly helpful in preparing our child for kindergarten. It has greatly improved his social and communication skills. We’re truly grateful to the Pre-K organizers— thank you so much!”





Program Update for the Durham
County Commission February 2026

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