

Research Brief

Moving out of the Opportunity Quartile

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What is the Opportunity Quartile? The Opportunity Quartile represents the 25% of DPS students in grades K-11 who are most in need of significant intervention from educators to get them back on track, as evidenced by their academic scores (DRA/EDL scores for grades K-2, TCAP Reading scores in grades 3-10, and Colorado ACT in grade 11). In order to achieve the Denver Plan goal of closing the opportunity gap, DPS is committed to understand: 1) the characteristics of students in the Opportunity Quartile, 2) the trends and movement patterns of students among the quartiles, and 3) the instructional strategies that have been successful in moving students out of that quartile.

Part I. What are the characteristics of students in the Opportunity Quartile?

Demographics	Schooling pattern	School characteristics
Mostly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minority ▪ Low income ▪ ELL students ▪ Males of color over-represented ▪ Students with Disabilities over-represented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lower attendance rates ▪ Shorter enrollment ▪ More disciplinary incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Slightly lower parent engagement and satisfaction rates

Part II. Do students in the Opportunity Quartile move out of that quartile?

- A large number of students remain in the Opportunity Quartile year after year.
- Generally, the younger the student, the more likely they are to move out of the Opportunity Quartile within three years.
- Students who move out of the Opportunity Quartile typically transition to the next highest quartile and remain there over time.
- Students found in the Opportunity Quartile in 3rd Grade typically begin in the Opportunity Quartile when they were in Kindergarten.

Part III. What factors contribute to moving students out of the Opportunity Quartile?

Schools and classrooms that beat the odds in moving students out of the opportunity quartile have the following commonalities:

1. **Consistency of staff and strategies implemented school-wide and over time**
2. **Specific strategies implemented in a structured and actionable manner**
3. **Time for teacher planning and collaboration and time for student learning**
4. **People: Availability and quality of instructional staff and wrap-around support staff (e.g., interventionists or psychologists)**
5. **Positive school culture and approaches to discipline**

For the complete series of analyses presented to the DPS Board of Education, please visit the Board Docs website:

Opportunity Quartile Part I --Student Profile:
[http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9PFLZ256EBB5/\\$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileProfile%20Preso%20Oct%202014.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9PFLZ256EBB5/$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileProfile%20Preso%20Oct%202014.pdf)

Opportunity Quartile Part II--Trend Analysis:
[http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9RH3D570CE87/\\$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileTrend%20Preso%20Dec%202014.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9RH3D570CE87/$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileTrend%20Preso%20Dec%202014.pdf)

Opportunity Quartile Part III--Effective Strategies:
[http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9WMRL36E664F/\\$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileStrategi esPresoMay2015-Final.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/files/9WMRL36E664F/$file/BoE%20OpportunityQuartileStrategi esPresoMay2015-Final.pdf)