Denise Louie
Education Center

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the Board President

Dear friends of Denise Louie Education Center,

As we close the 2025–2026 program year, I write to you not only as president of this board, but as a proud graduate of Denise Louie. The classrooms you have helped sustain today are the classrooms that shaped me. That is why I do this work, and why I am so grateful to you for standing with us.

This year we powered through a federal shutdown that threatened to close our program, and we continue to navigate an uncertain funding climate for the low-income, immigrant, and refugee families we serve. What grounds us is our steadfast mission: to promote school and life readiness for the children and families who need us most, in the languages and cultures they call home.

Our deepened partnership with Mary's Place has built a bridge from shelter to classroom. Roughly one in ten of our Early Head Start children this year was experiencing homelessness. Now, instead of losing a full year of learning at the most formative age, children moved directly into our Early Head Start and preschool classrooms. For those children, our classroom is often the calmest, most predictable part of their day.

Like me, Super Bowl champion Jaxon Smith-Njigba was a Head Start kid. This year, I had the joy of celebrating with Jaxon and his family at our Day of Play, hosted by the JSN Foundation and surrounded by our community. His mother, Jami, speaks openly about the support Head Start gave her family. This is a story I know, because it was my family's story too. The children in our classrooms today are the leaders, athletes, and neighbors of tomorrow.

Denise Louie has walked alongside Seattle's youngest learners for nearly fifty years. At this time next year, our new permanent home in the Rainier Valley will open, a milestone half a century in the making, and a place from which we will serve the next generation with the stability and beauty our families and children deserve.

With gratitude,

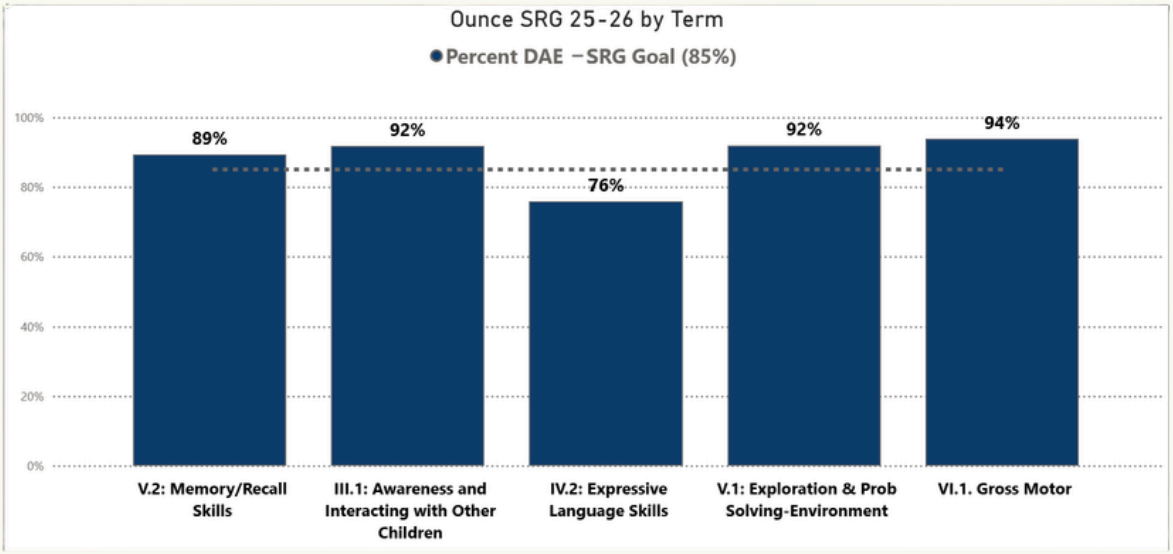
Xiu Wen Li
Board President, Denise Louie Education Center
DLEC alumna

The 2025-2026 program year ran from September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Our EHS Home Visiting program supports pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and families through weekly home visits focused on child development, parenting, health, literacy, and school readiness. Families also participate in socializations where they can connect with other families and take part in fun learning activities. We continued our partnership with Mary's Place, bringing Early Head Start services directly to families staying at the shelter. Through both programs, we support families, connect them to resources, and help children build the skills they need to thrive.

In the 2025-2026 program year, we served 51 infants, 96 toddlers, and 16 pregnant mothers!



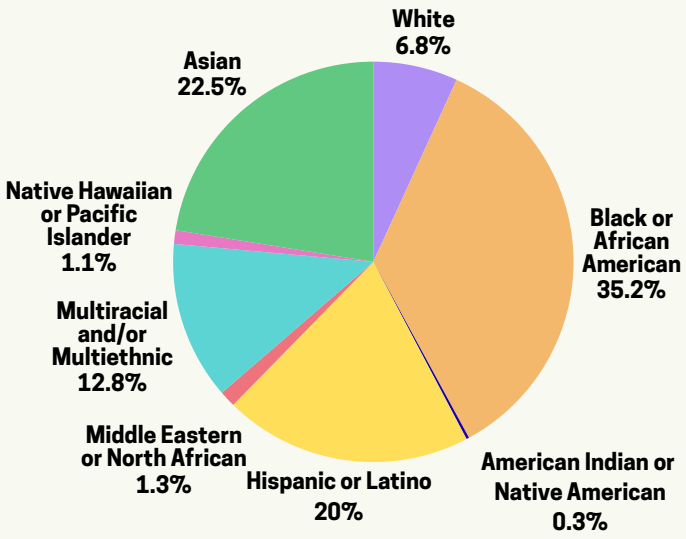
In 4 out of the 5 developmental domains, 89% or more of our EHS children met or exceeded in those domains!

WHO WE SERVED ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS

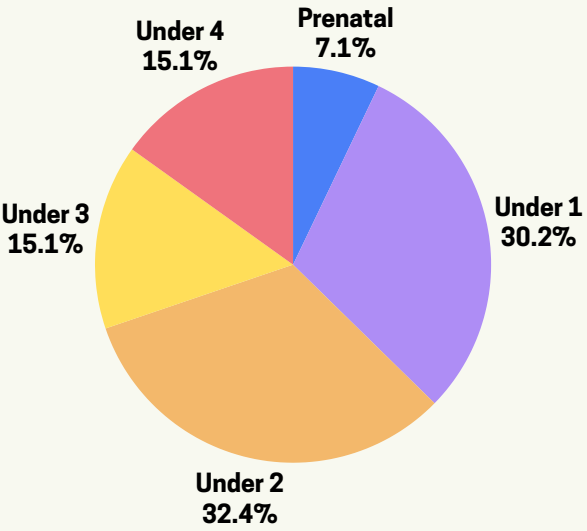
1,276 children under the age of five

2,779 children and caregivers

Race



Class Age



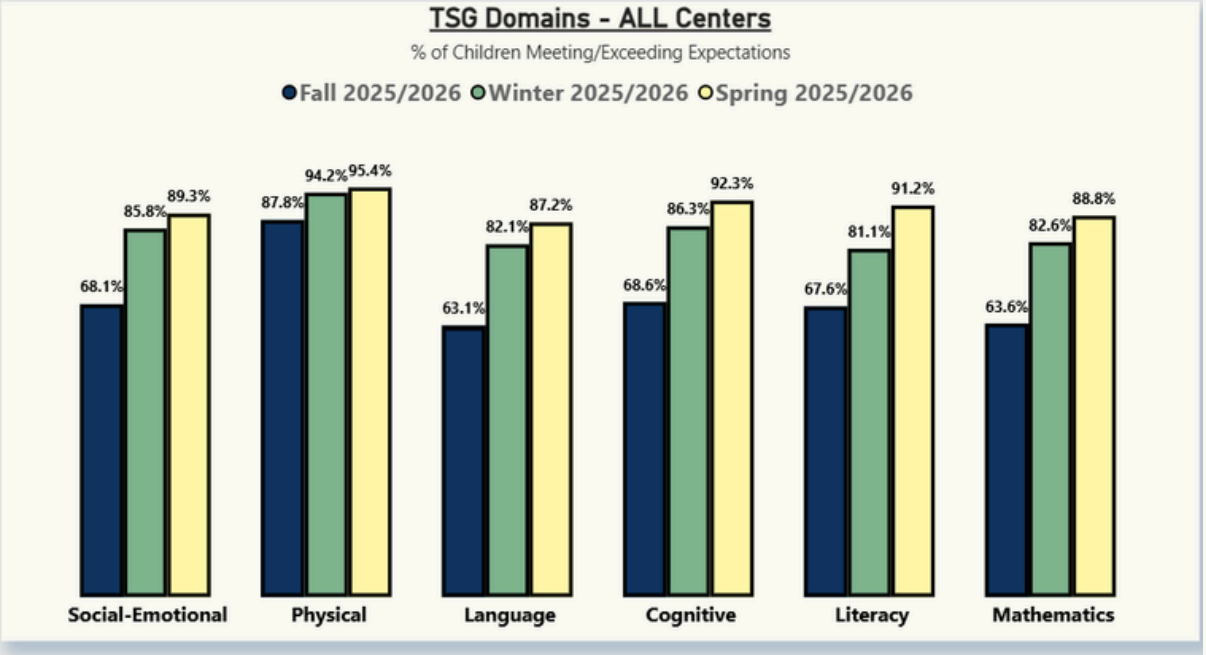
ENSURING READINESS

Our education centers predominantly serve immigrant and refugee families with children ages three to five, while our Magnuson and Yesler locations also serve infants and toddlers. Many of our families earn less than $33,000 a year for a family of 4, the 2026 Federal Poverty Guideline used to determine Head Start eligibility. Children in foster care, families experiencing homelessness, and children with disabilities are given priority in enrollment.

In the 2025-2026 program year, across our 3 education centers, we served 285 children!

- **94%** of enrolled Head Start children received Developmental, Behavioral, Hearing, and Vision screenings within 45 days of enrollment.
- **73%** of children were up-to-date on Well-Child Exams (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT)).
- **95%** of children received oral health preventative care.
- **10** children were referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the program year.

Our goal is for all DLEC children to be ready for school. Our school readiness goals are tailored to each program and are designed to ensure student success. Each school readiness goal was created using information from caregivers, teachers, education partners, and data collected through assessment and observation tools. We measure school readiness three times a year using the Teaching Strategies GOLD® (TSG) Assessment.



- During the 2025-2026 program year, our goal was that 85% of our preschoolers would meet or exceed in each of our kindergarten readiness domains by Spring 2026.
- The percentage of children meeting or exceeding in every domain increased at each check point.
- **In all 6 domains, at least 87% of children met kindergarten readiness goals by Spring 2026!**

ENGAGING OUR FAMILIES

Caregiver Involvement
We value and encourage caregiver involvement through various initiatives. Program caregivers make up our Policy Council, and they play a vital part in approving organization policies, budgets, and staffing decisions. In addition, we host monthly caregiver committees, open to all program caregivers, where they give feedback on class policies and activities.

We offer monthly trainings on topics our caregivers selected to address their needs. Through caregiver-teacher conferences and home visits, caregivers and teachers can discuss each child's progress. We believe caregivers are important teachers in their child's life so we encourage them to support their children's learning and share feedback.

Mobility Mentoring
Mobility Mentoring® is a family engagement cirriculum that our Family Services team uses to learn about each family's strengths and needs, and assist families in meeting their personalized goals. By offering culturally competent individualized support, we meet families where they are, follow their lead, and collaborate along the way to self-sufficiency.

Caregiver Training Topics in 2025-2026

Nutrition & Picky Eating	Support for Children with Disabilities
Health Orientation	Summer Safety, Summer Learning
Dental Oral Health	Health Insurance
Conscious Discipline for Children	Kindergarten Registration & Readiness
Home Buying 101	Finding & Applying for Community Resources

We also regularly connected families to vital services to address additional needs.

233 families connected to education on preventative medical and oral health
222 families connected to research-based parenting curriculum
181 families connected to emergency/crisis intervention
228 families connected to education on nutrition
34 families connected to asset building services

KALEIDOSCOPE PLAY & LEARN

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn (KPL) is a free and inclusive program that serves children 0 to 5 years old and their caregivers in 90-minute sessions that take place weekly at Seattle Public Library (SPL) branches. It focuses on early childhood development and creates a community space where children gain school readiness skills.

We have been holding sessions at the Rainier Beach, Columbia City, and Lake City libraries, and in response to growing demand for high-quality, accessible early childhood programming, Denise Louie Education Center successfully secured the Best Start for Kids (BSK) Community-Based Parenting Supports Grant in 2025.

Funding from BSK enabled the launch of a fourth KPL group at Northgate SPL Branch in January 2026. The grant has also strengthened programming at the Columbia City SPL Branch by supporting an additional facilitator at a consistently high-demand location. The BSK grant funding is secured for 2026 and 2027, providing a strong foundation for continued growth and sustained community impact.

Between July 2025 and June 2026, DLEC facilitated 147 Play & Learn sessions, registering a total of 838 unique children and 808 caregivers.

The Seattle Public Library

Thank you to our Community Partners and Funders for supporting our Play & Learn team!

King County Best Starts for KIDS

brightspark

Attendance increased 22% when including the new Northgate group. The attendance at the original groups alone increased by 7.2%. The total attendees that joined KPL across the 4 groups, including returning participants, is 4,316.

PROGRAM BUDGET

Our Program Budget covers our organization's revenue and expenses for the fiscal year. Program expenses include teacher salaries, classroom supplies, student meals, family engagement, and kindergarten transition support. Management expenses cover staff salaries, benefits, professional development, and rent.

FY25-26 Unaudited Revenue	
Federal Funding	$4,958,219
Other Govt Funding	$2,437,605
Tuition and Fees	$1,021,732
Fundraising & Other	$1,055,309
Total	**$9,472,865**

FY26-27 Budgeted Revenue	
Federal Funding	$5,008,219
Other Govt Funding	$2,393,549
Tuition and Fees	$973,911
Fundraising & Other	$854,066
Total	**$9,229,745**

FY25-26 Unaudited Expenses	
Program Services	$7,932,299
Management & General	$1,361,241
Fundraising	$309,627
Total	**$9,603,167**

FY26-27 Budgeted Expenses	
Program Services	$7,712,299
Management & General	$1,251,803
Fundraising	$318,915
Total	**$9,283,017**

*Due to the federal shutdown earlier this year, DLEC's expenses exceed revenue by approximately $130,000.

Donor Testimonial

"Making contributions from my tax-deferred account is a 'win win' situation for everyone. I save a great deal in income taxes because the funds are going directly to a non-profit, and I'm not responsible for paying the deferred income taxes. I always consider these tax savings as more funds for the non-profit organization. I'm thrilled to make a contribution to the work of Denise Louie Education Center."

- Therese Coad

YEAR UPDATES

Panda Readers Program

In 2025, we launched our Panda Readers program for all students in our centers and home visiting program. Each week, children received a tote bag with multicultural books to read with a caring adult at home. Families rotated new titles at center pick-ups or home visits, tracked progress, and earned small incentives. Thank you to our sponsors, the Koh-Lee Foundation, the Red String Foundation, and The Stocker Foundation! We look forward to continuing this program again in the '26-'27 school year.

2026 Dinner & Auction

Thank you to everyone who made our 2026 Dinner and Auction a success! With your support, over $343,000 was raised for our early education programs and family support services! We are thrilled to have met our fundraising goal, and with your continued support, we hope to deepen our impact on providing high-quality services for our families!

Nutrition Program

Our home-based families and families at Yesler Terrace education center received food bags every other week with an assortment of seasonal produce, culturally relevant recipes, and nutrition education, all at no cost to them. We partnered with Tilth Alliance to deliver fresh, organic fruits and vegetables from locally grown farms to make sure hunger is never the reason a child cannot show up ready to learn. Thank you to The Peg & Rick Young Foundation for helping support this program and helping us provide over 2,800 food bags to our families!

DLEC Graduates

Congratulations to our newest graduates! Some of the schools they are attending this year include: Beacon Hill Elementary, Kimball Elementary, Dearborn Park International Elementary School, Sand Point Elementary, View Ridge Elementary, Bailey Gatzert Elementary, and more! They will do great things in the future and we are so excited to tell you all about it!

YEAR UPDATES

2026 Scholarship Winners

The Denise Louie Alumni Scholarship honors former students who carry that early spark forward - lifelong learners who are growing into extraordinary people and giving back to the communities that raised them. DLEC is honored to present the 2026 recipients of this scholarship, Carol Zeng and Chris Yan!

Carol attended our Beacon Hill site and is now pursuing a Master of Architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design and is cross-registered at Brown University. Chris attended our International District site and is currently a senior in high school attending Seattle Central College's Running Start program.

Day Of Play

With the help of the Smith-Njigba Family Foundation and the Seattle Seahawks, we held our first annual Day Of Play for our families! Children and caregivers had fun with carnival games, a story time session with Jaxon Smith-Njigba, and a visit from the Seahawks mascot, Blitz. It was an unforgettable day for our families and staff!

Parent Testimonial

Whitney A. is the EHS *Policy Council representative and wanted to share that "my time at Denise Louie has been perfect since I started with my son when he was 6-7 months. [DLEC has] helped me drastically improve my parenting and my relationship with my son... [I find] Policy Council helpful because I have a say in what's going on with my son, I get to vote and get a breakdown of how the organization runs."

*Policy Council (PC) comprises parent representatives elected by Denise Louie families to engage in assessing, planning, and decision-making. Parents and guardians meet monthly to approve budgets, policies, and employment decisions. The Policy Council possesses legal and fiscal responsibility while working in tandem with the Board.

OUR DONORS

Thank you to all of our 2025-2026 donors! Your generous support made a difference in the lives of our families.

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Zhen W.

We have included all donors who made financial contributions between September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026. If you gave anonymously, your name was omitted. To protect the privacy of our donors, we are not disclosing last names. If you'd like your last name shown or if your name has been left out or misspelled, please contact us at development@deniselouie.org.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We greatly appreciate all the volunteers that helped make this year successful! The service provided in our classrooms, office, and events made an unforgettable impact on the families we serve. Thank you for the continued support of Denise Louie's mission!

Aimee T.
Alex N.
Alexandra B.
Aliraze H.
Alvin T. 🍎
Amanda S. 🍎
Amanda C.
Amber G.
Andrew B.
Angela R.
Angeli B.
Antara T.
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Zoe B.

We had more than 90 volunteers donate over 7,130 hours from September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026.

🍎 Volunteered over 150 hours ⭐ Volunteered over 500 hours ⭐ Volunteered over 1,500 hours

OUR MISSION
Denise Louie Education Center promotes school and life readiness by providing multicultural early learning services to children and families, especially those who need our services the most. We will respect and preserve each child and family's individuality, cultural heritage, and home language. We will promote personal and social responsibility with integrity and love in an environment defined by social justice and peace.

OUR VISION
Denise Louie Education Center's vision is to educate and empower children and families to reach their full potential so they can advocate for themselves, our community, and the world.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Xiu Wen Li, President
2022 - Present
Senior Talent Manager, Microsoft
DLEC Alumna

Sinan Li, Vice President
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2019 - 2025
Program Analyst Manager, Evergreen Goodwill

DLEC's leadership is committed to the work that we do. We had 100% board participation this last year.

EMERITUS BOARD

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Our Locations

Early Head Start & Administration Office
6363 7th Ave S.
Suite 222 & 240
Seattle, WA 98108
Tel (206) 347-3017

Beacon Hill
3327 Beacon Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98144
Tel (206) 725-9740

Mercy Magnuson Place
7101 62nd Ave. N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115
Tel (206) 767-8223

Yesler Terrace
1225 E Fir St
Seattle, WA 98122
Tel (206) 806-7395

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Contact our development office at (206) 806-7389 or development@deniselouie.org