School Readiness in San Leandro Unified School District

2013 Assessment — District Results

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Acknowledgements

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Figure 1. **Participating San Leandro Unified School District Schools and Teachers**

Schools	Teachers
Garfield Elementary	Neema McCockran
	Jacob Clark
Jefferson Elementary	Elaine Pepares
	Irene La
Monroe Elementary	Stacy Smitter
	Diane Marasigan
Roosevelt Elementary	Nancy Endicott
	Diedre Reed

Study Summary

Background

In 2013, First 5 Alameda County and ICPC commissioned an assessment of the school readiness levels of new kindergarten students for the fifth consecutive year. Participating districts in the 2013 assessment included Alameda County Office of Education, Alameda Unified, Dublin Unified, Emery Unified, Castro Valley Unified, Fremont Unified, Hayward Unified, Livermore Valley Joint Unified, New Haven Unified, Newark Unified, Oakland Unified, Pleasanton Unified, San Lorenzo Unified, and San Leandro Unified School Districts. Among the San Leandro Unified (SLUSD) participants, eight teachers from four different schools took part in the assessment.

The assessment included three measures completed by teachers and parents of entering kindergarten students. Teachers indicated each of their students' proficiency levels on 24 readiness skills. Parents completed one survey that asked them to provide information about children's family environments, as well as basic demographic and background information, and a brief second survey of the child's early care and education experiences. Please note that the information presented in this report describes the students and families assessed; techniques were used to make the sample representative of the District in terms of race/ethnicity, but because of sample limitations, the findings are not fully generalizable to the District.

Findings

| Research Question	Conclusion	Data Highlights
1. How do SLUSD readiness levels compare to levels county-wide?	*Lower* **Overall readiness score: 3.12**	For each individual readiness skill, children were scored on a scale from *Not Yet* (1) to *Proficient* (4). SLUSD students' overall readiness score (3.12) was lower than that of children in the County as a whole (3.24). Their readiness levels were highest in the *Self-Care & Motor Skills* domain and lowest in *Kindergarten Academics*.
2. What proportion of SLUSD students are strong on all domains of school readiness?	**33%**	Thirty-three percent of the assessed SLUSD students entered kindergarten classrooms at or near proficiency across all four *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness (*Self-Care & Motor Skills, Self-Regulation, Social Expression,* and *Kindergarten Academics*). About 45 percent of students across the County fit this readiness profile (i.e., strong across all domains).
3. What child and family characteristics are related to school readiness in the County?	• **Child health/well-being** • **Age** • **No special needs** • **Not an English Learner** • **Gender** (female) • **Race/ethnicity** (Asian) • **Preschool** • **Maternal education** • **Received info about readiness**	Analyses conducted at the county level reveal that several child and family characteristics significantly relate to school readiness. The strongest associations were between readiness and child health/well-being (being alert, well-fed, and healthy), age (being older), and not having any special needs.

Study Overview

Children's school readiness levels at kindergarten entry play an important role in children's later success in school. In Fall 2008, First 5 Alameda County (F5AC) commissioned ASR to conduct its first assessment of the school readiness levels of new kindergarten students in three school districts in Alameda County. Assessments were again conducted in 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2013, with the study expanding to additional schools and districts in each subsequent year. Participants in the 2013 assessment included students from 14 districts, producing a larger sample that improved its representativeness of the County as a whole. Participating kindergarten teachers were trained to assess their students' readiness skills and instructed to distribute surveys to the students' parents. The comprehensive readiness assessment involved the completion of the following forms:

- The *Kindergarten Observation Form,* which teachers use to assess children's readiness skills;

- A *Parent Information Form (PIF)*, which parents complete to provide information about children's family environments and basic demographic and socioeconomic information; and

- A *Preschool Experience Form (PEF),* which asks parents to indicate what preschool and child care experiences the child had in the year prior to kindergarten entry.

Additional data came from F5AC's services database to examine the participation of children in the assessment in F5AC programs and services.

Figure 2. **Sources of Information to Assess the Readiness of Incoming Kindergarten Students**
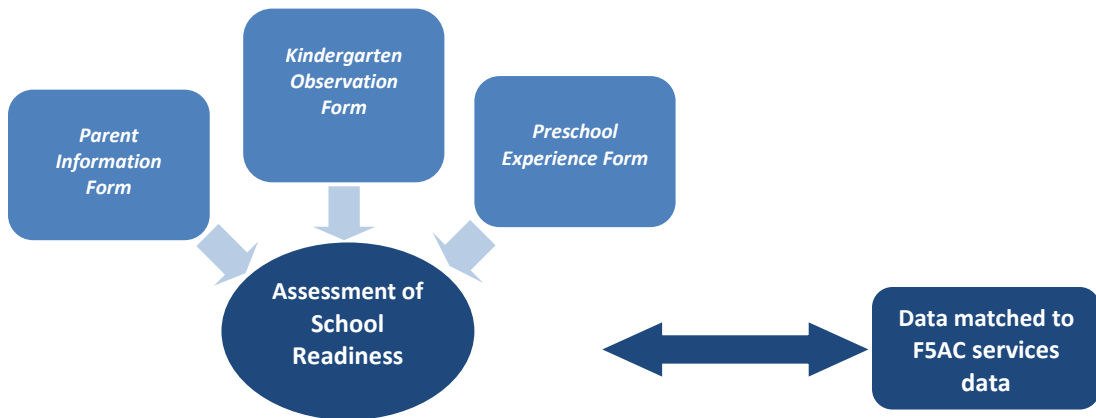
This short report summarizes key Fall 2013 findings for participating teachers, students, and families in the San Leandro Unified School District. Four out of the eight elementary schools in the District are represented here. Seventy-eight percent of parents agreed to have their child take part in the study, and of those, 98 percent also returned a parent survey. In all, San Leandro Unified students represented 119 of the 1,696 participants (7%) in the county-wide sample.

Figure 3.   Who Completed the Study?

Data	San Leandro Unified sample	Alameda County sample (14 districts)
Number of schools participating in 2013 school readiness assessment	4	64
Number of participating classrooms	8	90
Number of children in these classrooms	153	2,105
Number of KOFs returned	119	1,696
Parent consent rate	78%	81%
Number of PIFs that were matched to a KOF	117	1,586
Parent PIF response rate (# PIFs received/ # consents)	98%	94%
Parent PEFs that were matched to a KOF	97	1,524

The sections that follow summarize the demographics, early care experiences, family environments, and readiness levels the San Leandro Unified students participating in the assessment. This summary also includes information from the county-wide study describing the child and family factors that were found to have the strongest associations with high levels of readiness at kindergarten entry.

While reading through this summary, it is important to keep in mind that schools and teachers participated in the readiness study voluntarily, which means that the information presented in this report is based on the students and families assessed. Although techniques[1] were used to make the sample look similar to the San Leandro School District student population in terms of racial/ethnic background, the results are not fully generalizable to the District due to sample limitations.

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[1] The data were statistically weighted according to the racial/ethnic make-up of the District population.

Student Characteristics

The average age of students in the San Leandro Unified School District Fall 2013 readiness assessment sample[2] was 5.28 years old (about 5 years and 3 months). Twelve percent of students had been diagnosed with a special need, while another six percent of students were suspected to have a special need by their teacher or parent, but had not yet been formally diagnosed[3].

Figure 4.   Sampled Students' Sex, Age, and Special Needs

Student Characteristics	Percent of students in District sample	Percent of students in County sample
Sex		
Boys	50%	52%
Girls	50%	48%
Age at kindergarten entry		
Between 4 1/2 and less than 5	24%	15%
At least 5 and less than 5 1/2	51%	46%
At least 5 1/2 and less than 6	24%	36%
6 and older	1%	2%
Special needs status		
Has special needs	12%	5%
Teacher or parent suspects special need (not yet diagnosed)	6%	7%
Does not have special needs	82%	88%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Sample size=119. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Hispanic/Latino students comprised the largest racial/ethnic group in the San Leandro Unified student sample (44%). The next largest racial group was Asian (16%), followed by white (14%) and mixed race (13%). Smaller proportions of the students in the sample were Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and black, compared to students in the District overall (the District kindergarten population was 50% Hispanic/Latino, 17% Asian, and 11% black). On the other hand, a much larger proportion of the sample were identified as white and mixed race/ethnicity relative to the District population (11% of kindergartners in the District were white and 4% were mixed race/ethnicity).

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[2] Please note that although weights were applied to school readiness analyses to make the sample look similar to the SLUSD student population, demographic and family background data presented in this section of the report reflect the characteristics of students and families in the *sample*, not the District population.

[3] Parents were asked whether the child had a special need that had been diagnosed by a professional, while teachers were asked whether the child had an IEP or designated special need. If the child did not have a diagnosed special need or IEP, parents and teachers were asked to indicate whether they believed the child had a special need.

Figure 5.   Sampled Students' Race/Ethnicity
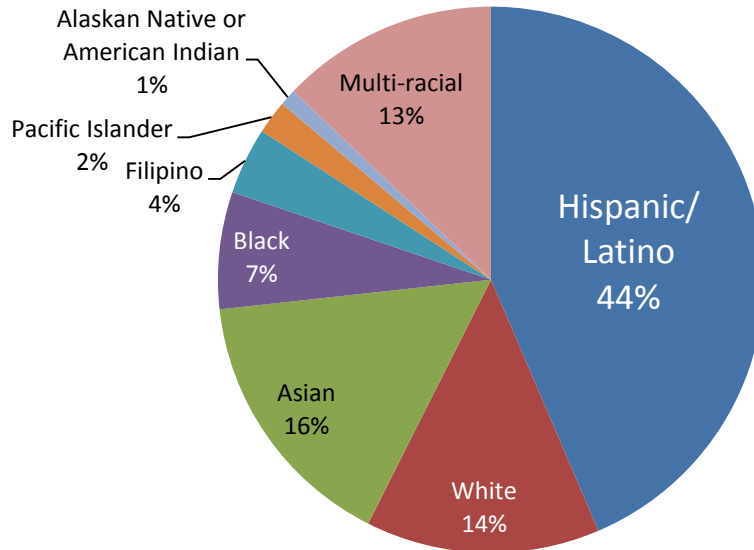
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Sample size=119. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

The ethnic/racial mix of the sampled students was fairly diverse across schools. Hispanic/Latino students formed the largest ethnic group at all schools, but the Hispanic/Latino population was particularly large at Jefferson (58%) and Garfield (47%). There were also large percentages of Asian students at both Garfield (20%) and Monroe (23%), and a large percentage of whites (26%) and students of mixed race (22%) at Roosevelt. Other racial/ethnic groups made up less than 20 percent of the students sampled at the San Leandro Unified schools in the study.

Figure 6.   Sampled Students' Race/Ethnicity, by School

Race/Ethnicity	School			
	Garfield	Jefferson	Monroe	Roosevelt
Hispanic/Latino	47%	58%	30%	35%
Asian	20%	8%	23%	13%
Caucasian/White	7%	11%	17%	26%
African American/Black	10%	8%	7%	0%
Multi-racial	7%	11%	13%	22%
Filipino	10%	3%	3%	0%
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	7%	0%
Alaskan Native or American Indian	0%	0%	0%	4%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Sample size=23-36. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Thirty-eight percent of San Leandro Unified students in the sample were English Learners (compared to 44% of students in the full District population). Garfield and Jefferson had the highest percentage of English Learners (57% and 44%, respectively). One-third of students were English Learners at Monroe, while only 13 percent were English Learners at Roosevelt.

Figure 7.   Sampled Students' English Learner Status, by School

	District	Garfield	Jefferson	Monroe	Roosevelt
		School			
English Learner	**38%**	57%	44%	30%	13%
Not English Learner	**62%**	43%	56%	70%	87%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Sample size=23-36. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

English was the preferred language of 55 percent of the students, while Spanish was the preferred language for 17 percent of the sample. Another 18 percent spoke more than one language at home.

Figure 8.   Sampled Students' Preferred Language
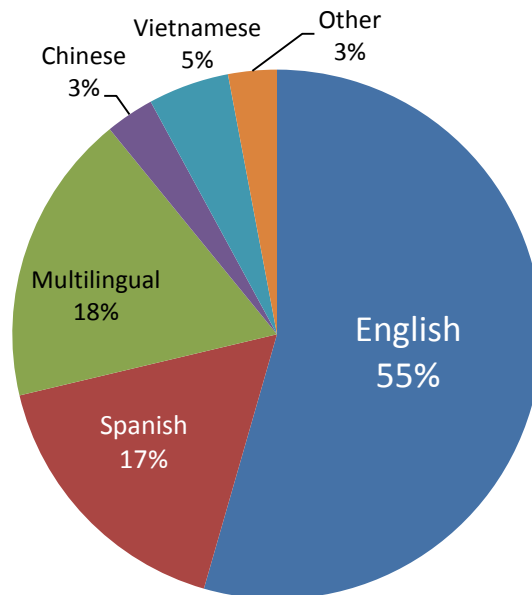
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Sample size=119.

Children in the District had spent time in a range of early care settings in the year prior to starting kindergarten. Sixty-eight percent of students were cared for by a parent (either alone or in combination with other child care sources). Half of the students had attended a licensed child care center or preschool. Informal care (e.g., by a relative or babysitter) and licensed home care were less common forms of care in the District (utilized by 30% and 4% of the sample, respectively)[4].

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[4] Teachers were also asked about whether child participated in Transitional kindergarten (TK), but because of inconsistent responses to this item, data for TK are not reported.

Figure 9.   **Sampled Students' Early Care Experiences**

Type of Child Care Arrangements	Percent of students
Parent provided usual child care	68%
Relative, neighbor, babysitter, or nanny	30%
Licensed care in someone's home (teacher or parent report)	4%
Licensed preschool or childcare center (e.g., Head Start, State Preschool, private – teacher or parent report)	50%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013), Parent Information Form (2013), Preschool Experience Form (2013).

Note: Sample sizes (from top to bottom)= 118, 118, 119, 119. Percentages sum to more than 100 because more than one source of care could be selected.

As the following figure shows, approximately half of the students in San Leandro Unified sample came from families making under $35,000, and just under half of the students' mothers had no more than a high school diploma. Nine percent of mothers held an associate's degree, while 18 percent held a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Figure 10.   **Mother's Education and Family Income of Sampled Families**

Mother's Educational Attainment	Percent
Less than high school	13%
High school diploma	33%
Some college	27%
Associate's degree	9%
Bachelor's degree	14%
Advanced degree	4%
Family Income	**Percent**
Under $15,000	20%
$15,000-$34,999	30%
$35,000-$49,999	20%
$50,000-$74,999	14%
$75,000-$99,999	5%
$100,000 or more	13%

Source: Parent Information Form (2013).

Note: Sample sizes (from top to bottom)=115, 112. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

School Readiness of San Leandro Unified Students

This section describes the readiness skills that students in the district possessed as they entered kindergarten in Fall 2013. Kindergarten teachers rated students on 24 skills using a four-point scale that ranged from *Not Yet* (child does not yet demonstrate the skill, knowledge, or behavior; cannot perform without assistance) to *Proficient* (child demonstrates skill, knowledge, behavior consistently and competently; performs independently). As mentioned previously, the data presented in this section were adjusted so that the assessment sample reflected the District population in terms of racial/ethnic background.

Domains of Readiness

The 24 readiness skills can be grouped according to different categories of readiness. Two of the ways that readiness dimensions have been described are presented here: (1) five developmental domains identified by the *National Education Goals Panel*; and (2) a sorting of readiness skills into four *Basic Building Blocks*, which overlap with, but are distinct from the *NEGP* domains.

NEGP Domains

San Leandro Unified students' readiness scores are displayed below according to five *NEGP* categories[5]:

- *Physical Well-Being & Motor Development* (e.g., physical coordination, fine motor skills)

- *Social & Emotional Development* (e.g., controlling impulses, working and playing cooperatively with peers)

- *Approaches Toward Learning* (e.g., attention, attitude toward learning, participation in class)

- *Communication & Language Usage* (e.g., verbal expression, letter recognition)

- *Cognition & General Knowledge* (e.g., counting, recognizing colors and shapes)

As the following figure shows, San Leandro Unified students were particularly strong in the *Cognition & General Knowledge* domain, but demonstrated some needs in their *Communication & Language Usage* skills.

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[5] See Appendix 1 for crosswalk of *KOF* items with *NEGP* domains.

Figure 11.   Students' Proficiency across the Five *NEGP* Readiness Dimensions
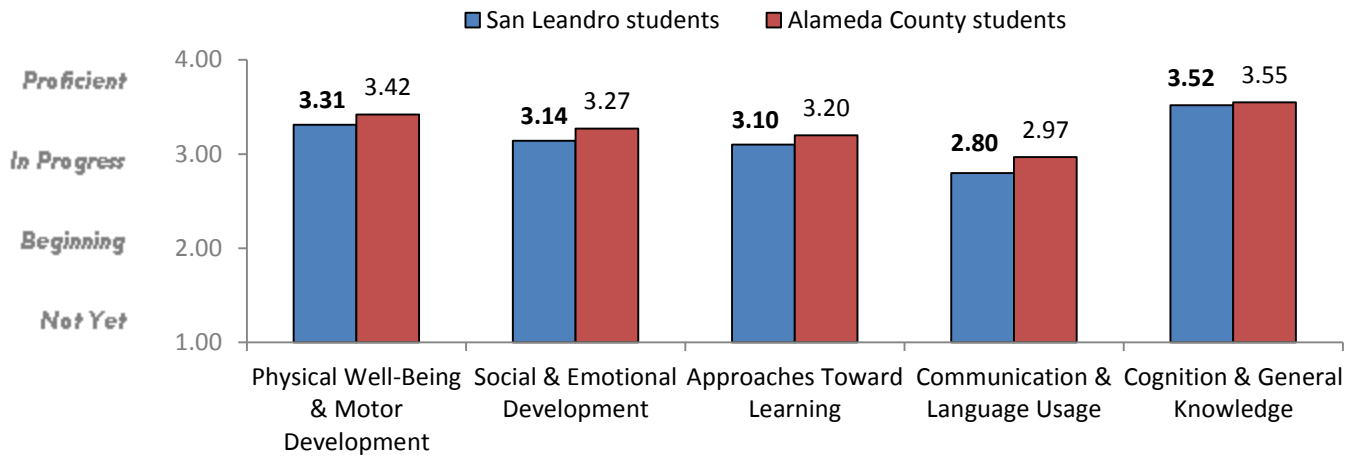
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Scores are based on 119 San Leandro Unified students and 1,673-1,694 county-wide students.

Basic Building Blocks

Statistical exploration of children's performance across 24 readiness skills revealed that skills reliably sorted into a readiness skills framework, which has been labeled the four *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness[6]:

- *Self-Care & Motor Skills* (skills needed for taking care of one's basic needs or skills showing fine/gross motor coordination)

- *Social Expression* (skills related to interacting with adults and other children)

- *Self-Regulation* (basic emotion regulation and self-control skills needed to be able to perform well in the classroom)

- *Kindergarten Academics* (skills that are more academic in nature, such as writing, counting, and identifying shapes and colors)[7]

Readiness levels among San Leandro Unified students were highest in *Self-Care & Motor Skills* and they were lowest in *Social Expression* and *Self-Regulation*. Across domains, readiness levels were slightly lower in San Leandro than in the County as a whole.

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[6] A procedure called factor analysis is used to determine what readiness dimensions are represented by the data.
[7] Longitudinal research has shown that entering kindergartners who had a combination of high scores in both *Kindergarten Academics* and *Self-Regulation* were particularly likely to be performing at grade level on their ELA and Math third grade CSTs three and a half years later.

Figure 12.   **Students' Proficiency across Four *Basic Building Blocks* of Readiness**
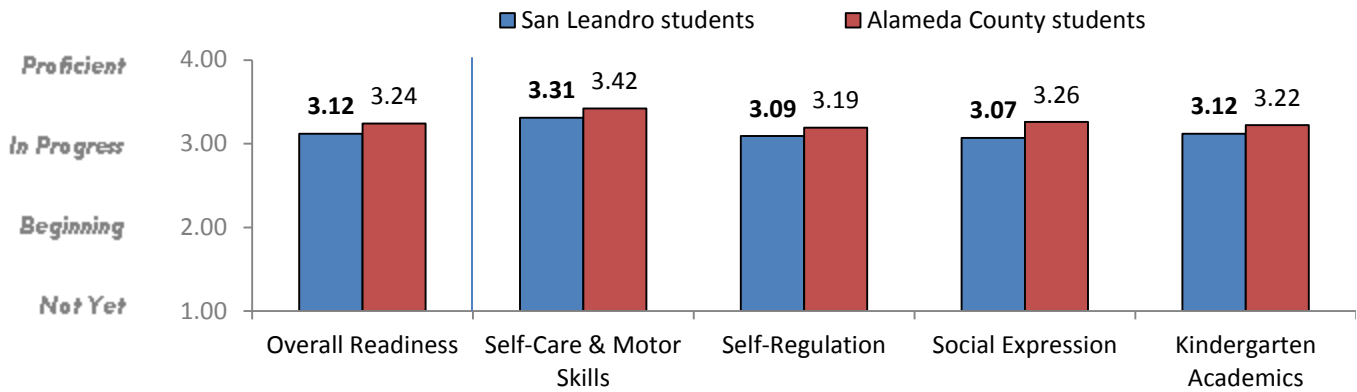
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013). Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Scores are based on 119 San Leandro Unified students and 1,673-1,694 county-wide students.

Student Performance on Each Readiness Skill

The proportion of students in the district receiving each rating for the 24 readiness skills is shown in the figure on the following page. The figure also illustrates how readiness skills sorted into the *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness. A high proportion of students were proficient on self-help and self-care skills, recognizing basic colors, and recognizing primary shapes. In contrast, relatively few children were proficient at recognizing rhymes and negotiating with peers.

Figure 13. **San Leandro Unified Students' Proficiency Levels Across 24 School Readiness Skills**

Legend: ■ Not Yet ■ Beginning ■ In Progress ■ Proficient

SELF-CARE & MOTOR SKILLS

Skill	Not Yet	Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Uses small manipulatives	5%	19%	44%	33%
Coordination on playground		9%	60%	31%
Performs basic self-care/self-help tasks	6%	22%		72%

SELF-REGULATION

Skill	Not Yet	Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Comforts self		15%	56%	29%
Stays focused	6%	13%	43%	37%
Controls impulses/self regulates	5%	14%	47%	34%
Follows directions**		9%	46%	42%
Negotiates with peers	7%	20%	50%	22%
Works/plays cooperatively		16%	46%	37%
Participates succ. in circle time	5%	16%	38%	41%
Handles frustration well	6%	19%	49%	26%

SOCIAL EXPRESSION

Skill	Not Yet	Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Relates appropriately to adults**		19%	38%	42%
Expresses needs/wants verbally**		13%	53%	33%
Expresses empathy		16%	39%	42%
Has expressive abilities**	6%	30%	38%	26%
Expresses eagerness for learning**		27%	40%	30%
Engages in imaginative play		12%	54%	33%

KINDERGARTEN ACADEMICS

Skill	Not Yet	Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Engages with books		15%	52%	30%
Writes own first name	13%	11%	28%	49%
Recognizes rhyming words**	39%	38%	7%	16%
Counts 10 objects **		13%	15%	70%
Recognizes letters of the alphabet**	7%	26%	35%	32%
Recognizes basic colors**		21%		75%
Recognizes primary shapes**	7%	11%		78%

Source: *Kindergarten Observation Form* (2013). Sample size=109-119. Note: Scores range from 1 (Not yet) to 4 (Proficient). Proportions of less than 5% are not labeled. ** Language-dependent item: Scores were omitted for students for whom language barriers were a concern.

Students' average readiness levels are presented below. San Leandro Unified students entered kindergarten strongest on recognizing basic colors (*Kindergarten Academics*) and performing basic self-care tasks (*Self-Care & Motor Skills*). The skills they were still developing included recognizing rhyming words (*Kindergarten Academics*) and expressing themselves clearly (*Social Expression*).
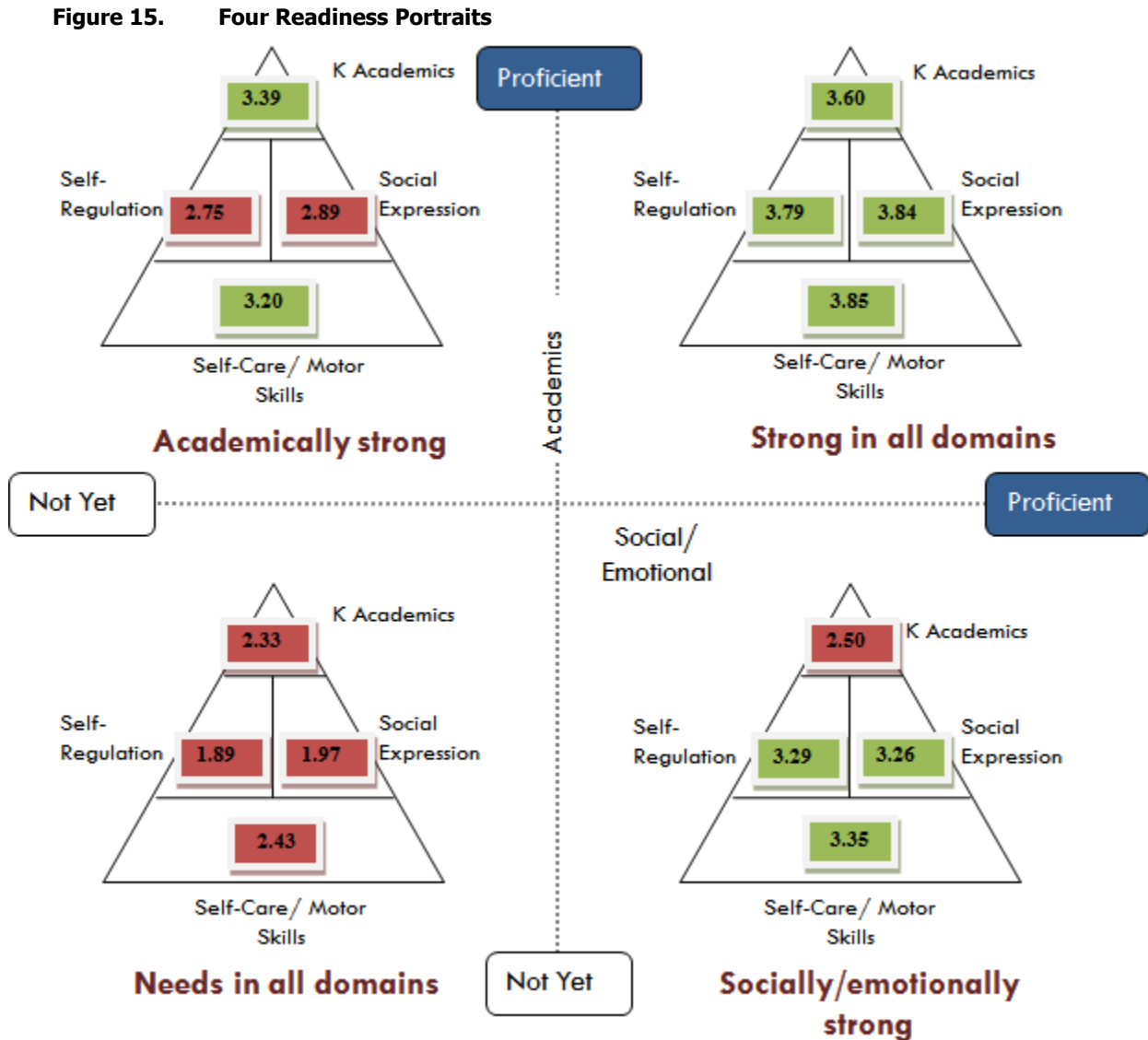
Figure 14.   San Leandro Unified Students' Average Readiness Levels

Skill	Score
Recognizes basic colors**	3.70
Performs basic self-care/self-help tasks	3.66
Recognizes primary shapes**	3.62
Counts 10 objects **	3.54
Follows directions**	3.40
Relates appropriately to adults**	3.23
Coordination on playground	3.23
Expresses empathy	3.18
Works/plays cooperatively	3.17
Engages in imaginative play	3.17
Expresses needs/wants verbally**	3.16
Participates succ. in circle time	3.15
Writes own first name	3.12
Comforts self	3.12
Stays focused	3.11
Engages with books	3.11
Controls impulses/self regulates	3.11
Uses small manipulatives	3.04
Expresses eagerness for learning**	3.10
Handles frustration well	2.96
Recognizes letters of the alphabet**	2.92
Negotiates with peers	2.88
Has expressive abilities**	2.85
Recognizes rhyming words**	2.01

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013). Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Scores are based on 108-119 students. ** Language-dependent item: Scores were omitted for students for whom language barriers were a concern

Readiness Portraits

For a more detailed look at different patterns of readiness, children were sorted into one of four Readiness Portraits based on their relative strengths and needs on the four domains of readiness (e.g., some children were strong academically, but had needs in the social-emotional domains, while others exhibited the opposite pattern).[8] The green shading in the following figure shows where children in each of the four portraits are at or near proficiency on the associated skills. Within the green and red boxes are the average domain scores for students in the County in each portrait.

Figure 15.   **Four Readiness Portraits**

The next figure shows the percentage of San Leandro Unified students who sorted into each of the four *Readiness Portraits*.

- *Strong in all domains:* Thirty-three percent of the assessed San Leandro Unified students entered kindergarten classrooms at or near proficiency across all four *Basic Building Blocks*

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[8] Children were sorted into one of the four *Readiness Portraits* via a data-driven technique called cluster analysis.

of readiness (corresponding to the pattern of readiness displayed in the upper right quadrant of the illustration above).

- *Needs in all domains:* Thirteen percent of students had significant readiness needs across all four skill domains. These students had not yet developed – or were just beginning to develop – almost all of the 24 readiness skills (lower left quadrant of the illustration).

- *Academically strong:* Just over one-third (34%) of San Leandro Unified students entering kindergarten had strong skills in early academics (and *Self-Care & Motor Skills*) but demonstrated some challenges in the social-emotional areas of readiness, especially skills within the *Self-Regulation* dimension (upper left quadrant of the illustration).

- *Socially/emotionally strong:* The remaining 20 percent of San Leandro Unified students were well-equipped on the social-emotional dimensions of readiness, but they had needs in the realm of *Kindergarten Academics* – learning their letters, numbers, shapes, and colors (lower right quadrant of the illustration).

As can be seen in the charts below, the proportion of students in San Leandro demonstrating strengths in all domains was lower than the proportion of students with this profile in county-wide. On the other hand, a larger percentage of San Leandro students were *Academically strong* and *Socially/emotionally strong* compared to students in other areas of the County. Approximately the same proportion of students in San Leandro and county-wide demonstrated *Needs in all domains* (13%).

Figure 16. **Prevalence of Four Portraits of Students' Readiness**

San Leandro Unified   **Alameda County**
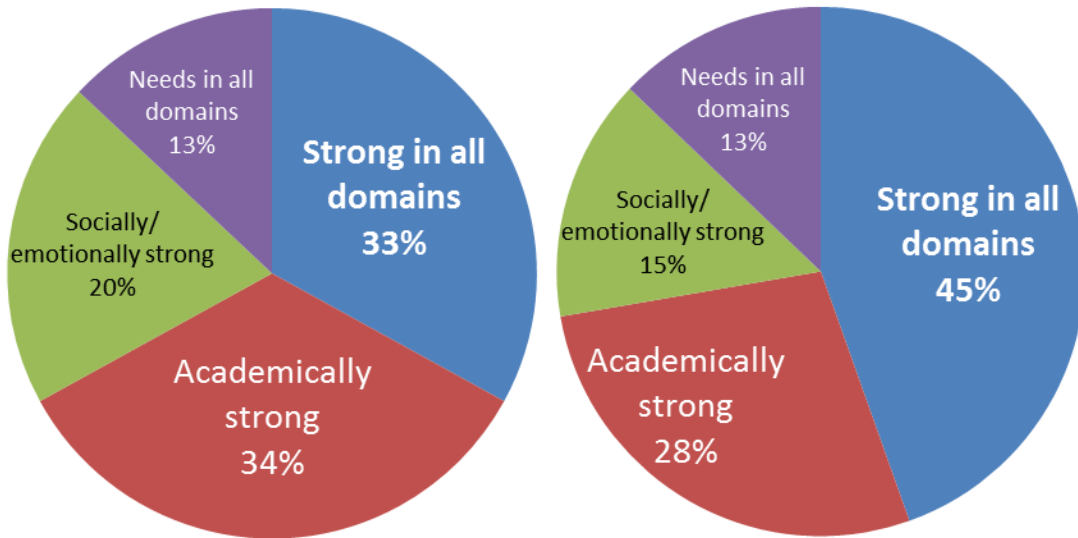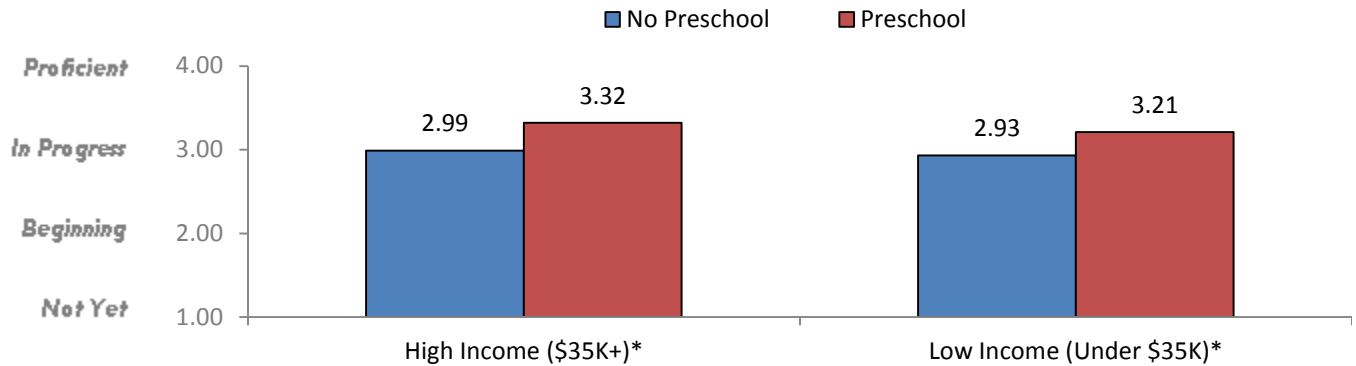

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013).

Note: Proportions are based on 119 San Leandro students and 1,690 county-wide students. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Average Readiness Scores by Preschool Experience in the District

The association between preschool experience and overall readiness scores among children in the San Leandro sample was examined next. These analyses were conducted on low-income and high-income children separately to examine the relationship of preschool attendance and readiness apart from the influence of socioeconomic status. The overall readiness scores of children attending licensed, center-based preschool were compared to the overall scores of children who did not. In both income groups, higher readiness scores were significantly associated with preschool attendance in San Leandro. As will be discussed in the next section, we also found preschool attendance to be related to higher readiness levels at the county level.

Figure 17. **Readiness Score by Pre-K Experience and Income**

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013), Parent Information Form (2013), Preschool Experience Form (2013). Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Sample sizes=59 (Low-Income); 53 (High-Income). ***Significant at p<.001; **Significant at p<.01; *Significant at p<.05

Readiness Scores across Years

The table below details the readiness scores of students in 2013 San Leandro Unified readiness assessment and the performance of San Leandro students in the previous assessment year. However, it should be noted that the schools and classes that participated differed from year to year and the number of students in each sample also differed. Therefore, any comparisons should be made with the understanding that the students observed each year may have differed in many other ways beyond their readiness skills (e.g., race/ethnicity, family background, or early educational environment).

Overall readiness scores were higher in the District 2011. Across both years, children were strongest in *Self-Care & Motor Skills* and tended to have challenges in *Self-Regulation.*

Figure 18. **Average Readiness Scores across Assessments**

Assessment Year	Overall Readiness	Self-Care & Motor Skills	Self-Regulation	Social Expression	Kindergarten Academics
2011	3.40	3.53	3.20	3.48	3.36
2013	3.12	3.31	3.09	3.07	3.12

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013). Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Scores are based on 119 students in 2013 and 177 students in 2011.

Factors Related to Alameda County Students' Readiness

In addition to examining average readiness levels and student profiles, it is useful to understand the various child and family backgrounds and experiences that are related to stronger readiness skills at kindergarten entry[9]. The figure on the following page shows the factors that have a unique and significant contribution to readiness county-wide even after holding constant various other important child and family factors. (It is important to keep in mind that these results represent findings for all students throughout the 14 districts who participated in the study and are not specific to San Leandro Unified students.)

■ The strongest predictor of readiness was students' **age**. Older students were more likely to be prepared for school than their younger peers, after controlling for other child and family characteristics.

■ The next strongest predictor of readiness was **child well-being**. Although there were relatively few children who had such issues, those who were perceived by their teachers to be frequently hungry, tired, or ill, had readiness levels that were much lower than their peers without well-being concerns.

■ As might be expected, children with **special needs** scored lower than children without any developmental concerns.

■ Likewise, children entering school as **English Learners** were behind their English-speaking peers in readiness.

■ **Girls** tended to be more ready for school than boys.

■ **Asian** children were moderately more prepared than Hispanic/Latino children (children of other racial/ethnic backgrounds had approximately the same readiness levels as Hispanic/Latino children).

■ Children whose mothers had more than a high school **education** performed better than children whose mothers had only a high school diploma or less.

■ Children who attended licensed, center-based **preschool** had higher scores than children who did not.

■ Readiness scores were higher among children whose parents reported **receiving information** about how prepared their child was for school and among children whose parents received information about how to help their child develop readiness skills for kindergarten.

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[9] The following variables were examined in this analysis: age at enrollment; gender; special needs status; race/ethnicity; English Learner status; child well-being (being hungry, tired, or ill); child absences or tardies; low birth weight; family income; maternal education; parents' attitudes about caring for their child; licensed, center-based preschool attendance; whether parents received information about readiness (e.g., how to help prepare their child for kindergarten); school API; instruction days at time of assessment.

Figure 19.   **Key Factors that Predict Overall School Readiness (in order of strength)**
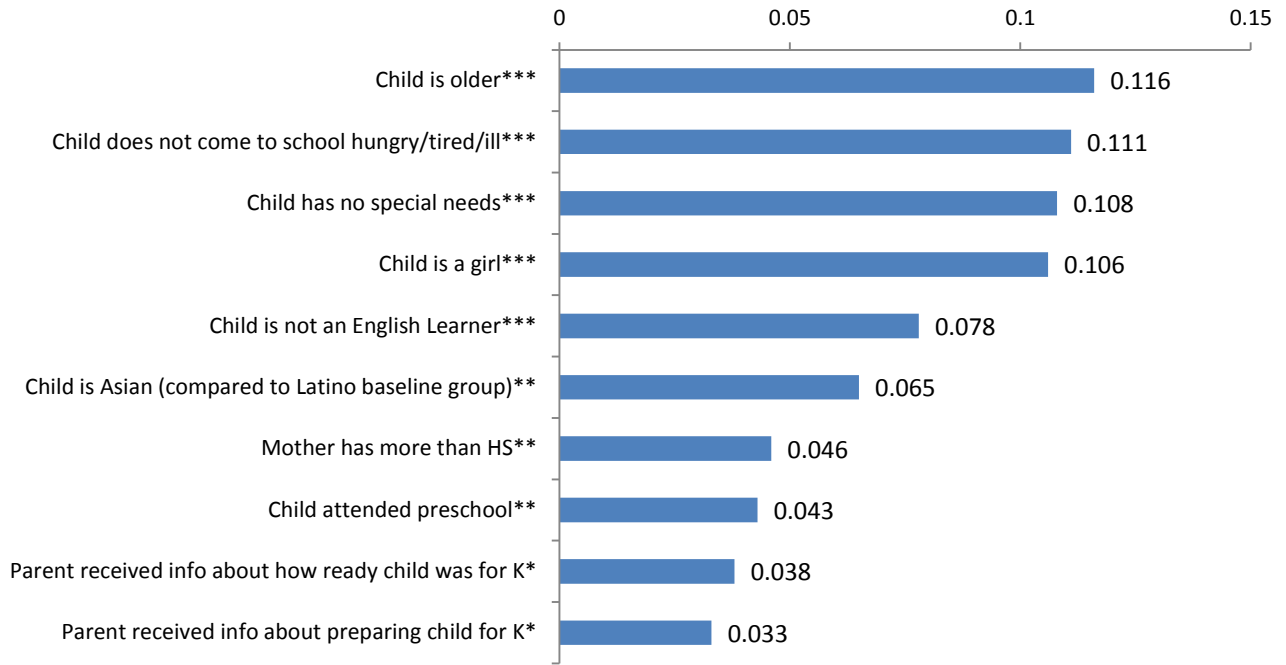
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2013), Parent Information Form (2013), Preschool Experience Form (2013)

Note: ***Significant at p<.001; **Significant at p<.01; *Significant at p<.05. For a full listing of all variables entered into the model, see text. The overall regression model was significant (p<.001), explaining 25% of the variance in kindergarten readiness (R^2 = .25).

Conclusions and Discussion Questions

Outlined below are the main findings from the San Leandro Unified School District readiness assessment:

- **One-third of students** in San Leandro Unified School District are entering kindergarten ready for school on all domains. A larger proportion of students county-wide (45%) were *Strong in all domains*.

- The strongest readiness levels were in the *Self-Care & Motor Skills* domain and the lowest readiness levels were in the *Self-Regulation* and *Social Expression* domains.

- Overall students in the District demonstrated lower readiness levels than their peers in other regions of the County. However, students in the District showed particular strengths on several *Kindergarten Academics* skills, such as counting and recognizing shapes and colors.

- Findings from the county-wide study of readiness suggest that districts should be aware of and monitor factors such as student and family well-being and pursue early identification and support for students with special needs, as these factors are strongly associated with readiness levels.

- Districts should also be aware of those factors they cannot impact, but that nonetheless help them understand the readiness levels of their current and future kindergarteners, such as children's age and English Learner status.

- As in previous years, the current study found a strong link between preschool attendance and kindergarten readiness. However, the impact of preschool on readiness can vary depending on features like quality and duration of participation. Districts should advocate for preschool access and quality to ensure their entering kindergartners are prepared to succeed academically and socially.

Discussion Questions

Finally, we include questions prompted by the study findings to stimulate discussion around efforts to support student readiness in the District:

- Across several years of readiness assessments, we consistently find that readiness levels among entering kindergartners are lowest in the self-regulation and kindergarten academics domains. How might this finding inform classroom approaches in the first weeks of school?

- Some of the new Common Core skills are captured in this readiness assessment, such as rhyming words and identifying letters of the alphabet, but others will require new assessments. What other Common Core skills should be measured at kindergarten entry?

- Older children and children who have attended preschool tend to have higher readiness skills than their peers. How might we use these findings to support interventions for younger children prior to or at kindergarten entry?

- When parents received information about improving school readiness, their children demonstrated higher readiness scores. What kinds of resources might be provided to parents who have a child who will soon enter (or has recently entered) kindergarten to help them support their child's readiness skills?

Appendix 1: Crosswalking Readiness Items from *NEGP* to *Basic Building Blocks*

Skill Items	NEGP Dimensions	Basic Building Blocks
Uses small manipulatives	Phys Well-Being/Motor Dev	Self-Care & Motor Skills
Has general coordination on the playground	Phys Well-Being/Motor Dev	Self-Care & Motor Skills
Performs self-help/self-care tasks	Phys Well-Being/Motor Dev	Self-Care & Motor Skills
Relates appropriately to adults other than parent / primary caregiver	Social & Emotional Dev	Social Expression
Appropriately expresses needs and wants verbally in primary language	Social & Emotional Dev	Social Expression
Works and plays cooperatively with peers	Social & Emotional Del	Self-Regulation
Controls impulses and self-regulates	Social & Emotional Dev	Self-Regulation
Expresses curiosity and eagerness for learning	Approaches to Learning	Social Expression
Stays focused / pays attention during activities	Approaches to Learning	Self-Regulation
Follows one- to two-step directions	Approaches to Learning	Self-Regulation
Participates successfully in circle time	Approaches to Learning	Self-Regulation
Has expressive abilities	Communication & Lang	Social Expression
Recognizes the letters of the alphabet	Communication & Lang	Kindergarten Academics
Writes own name	Communication & Lang	Kindergarten Academics
Can recognize rhyming words	Communication & Lang	Kindergarten Academics
Engages with books	Communication & Lang	Kindergarten Academics
Engages in symbolic/imaginative play	Cognition & Gen'l Knowledge	Social Expression
Can count 10 objects correctly	Cognition & Gen'l Knowledge	Kindergarten Academics
Recognizes basic colors	Cognition & Gen'l Knowledge	Kindergarten Academics
Recognizes primary shapes	Cognition & Gen'l Knowledge	Kindergarten Academics
Comforts self with adult guidance	N/A	Self-Regulation
Negotiates with peers to resolve social conflicts with adult guidance	N/A	Self-Regulation
Expresses empathy or caring for others	N/A	Social Expression
Handles frustration well	N/A	Self-Regulation