School Readiness in Hayward Unified School District

2010 Assessment — District Results

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Acknowledgements

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- Andrea Wilson, former Transition Coordinator for the district.

- First 5 staff members who helped with designing and implementing the 2010 Alameda County school readiness assessment project, including Melissa Luc, Chris Hwang, and Erin Hill Freschi.

Of course, this assessment would not be possible without the support of the participating kindergarten teachers who generously gave their time and energy to help us better understand the skills of the children entering their classrooms. These teachers dedicated ample time to a training, student observations, project management, and questionnaire completion. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the many individuals listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1.   Participating Hayward Unified School District Schools and Teachers

Schools	Teachers
Bidwell/Treeview	David Beaston
	Heather Thompson
	Jennifer Donovan
Burbank	Sandra Baerwald
	Carmen Guerrero
	Paula Lawrence
Cherryland	Marie Echaves
	Adriana Gonzalez
Faith Ringgold	Maranatha Shinoda
Glassbrook	Lorena Martin
Harder	Sarah Zegarra
Palma Ceia	Diane Crawford
Strobridge	Cynthia Shay
	Joan Tarle
Stonebrae	Christine Montenegro
Tyrrell	Irene Sanchez
	Torri Bryant

Study Summary

Background

In 2010, First 5 Alameda County commissioned an assessment of the school readiness levels of new kindergarten students for the third consecutive year. Participating districts in the 2010 assessment included Berkeley, Castro Valley, Emery, Hayward, Livermore Valley Joint, Oakland, Pleasanton, and San Lorenzo Unified School Districts. Among the Hayward Unified (HUSD) participants, 17 teachers from ten different schools took part in the assessment.

The assessment included four measurement instruments completed by teachers and parents of entering kindergarten students. Teachers indicated each of their students' proficiency levels on 24 readiness skills and they reported how smoothly students had transitioned into kindergarten. Parents completed a survey that asked them to provide information about children's early care and family environments, as well as basic demographic and background information. Finally, teachers completed a survey about their beliefs about the skills children need for school. Please note that the information presented in this report describes the students and families assessed; findings might not be the same for students in the district who were not part of this study.

Findings

Research Question	Conclusion	Data Highlights
1. Are HUSD children ready for school?	**In most areas.** **Overall readiness score: 3.22**	For each individual readiness skill, children were scored on a scale from *Not yet* (1) to *Proficient* (4). Average scores for each of 4 *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness range from 1 to 4. Scores were lowest in *Kindergarten Academics* (3.10) and highest in *Self-Care & Motor Skills* (3.45). HUSD students' scores were similar to those of students in the county-wide sample, except in *Kindergarten Academics*, where they were somewhat lower.
2. Are HUSD students meeting their teachers' expectations for readiness at kindergarten entry?	**Mostly.** **57% at/above expected levels of proficiency**	On their teacher survey, HUSD teachers indicated the level of proficiency they thought students should have to be "school ready" at kindergarten entry. Fifty-seven percent of the HUSD students were meeting or exceeding teachers' expected proficiency levels for overall readiness. The biggest gap between teacher expectations and student skill levels was in *Self-Regulation* where just under half (48%) of the students were meeting their teachers' expectations.
3. What skills do HUSD teachers think are: Most important for kindergarten entry? Easiest to impact? Most time-consuming?	**Most important:** Controlling impulses **Easiest to impact:** Writing own name **Spend the most time:** Recognizing letters	Teachers selected 5 readiness skills that they felt were: (1) most important to have at kindergarten entry; (2) easiest to impact during the school year; and (3) where they spent the most time during the school year. Teacher priorities for skills most important for kindergarten included *Self-Regulation* and *Self-Care & Motor Skills*. *Kindergarten Academics* skills were generally seen as the easiest to impact. These skills (along with *Self-Regulation* skills) were also those on which teachers spent the most time.

Study Overview

Children's school readiness levels at kindergarten entry have been increasingly recognized as playing an important role in children's later success in school. In late 2000, Applied Survey Research (ASR) was commissioned to develop research materials and a protocol to conduct assessments of Bay Area students' levels of readiness for school. The project resulted in the creation of a new tool to measure school readiness, which balanced and met two (sometimes competing) needs: (1) the need for a high-quality, valid, and reliable instrument to measure readiness levels; and (2) the need for a tool that was simultaneously "teacher-friendly" and sensitive to the measurement challenges inherent in a typical kindergarten classroom setting.

The *Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF)* was first implemented in San Mateo County in 2001, and since that initial assessment, readiness assessments have also been conducted in Santa Clara County, Lake County (Illinois), San Francisco County, Marin County, Santa Cruz County, and throughout the network of providers in the Los Angeles Unified Preschool (LAUP). To date, approximately 30,000 students have been measured using the *KOF.*

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 a small set of three school districts in Alameda County. Assessments were again conducted in 2009 and 2010, with additional school and districts taking part in each subsequent study.[1] Participants in the 2010 assessment included students from eight districts: Berkeley, Castro Valley, Emery, Hayward, Livermore Valley Joint, Oakland, Pleasanton, and San Lorenzo Unified School Districts. Participating kindergarten teachers were trained to conduct the readiness assessment, which included completion of the following forms:

- The *Kindergarten Observation Form (I and II),* in which teachers assess children's readiness skills and the smoothness of their transition to kindergarten, respectively;

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

- The *Teacher Survey on Importance of Readiness Skills,* which measures teachers' beliefs about readiness and the skills required for successful transition to kindergarten.

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[1] For a comprehensive description of the 2010 School Readiness Assessment method and results, please see the forthcoming report "School Readiness in Alameda County: Results of the Fall 2010 Assessment."

Figure 2.   Sources of Information to Assess the Readiness of Incoming Kindergarten Students
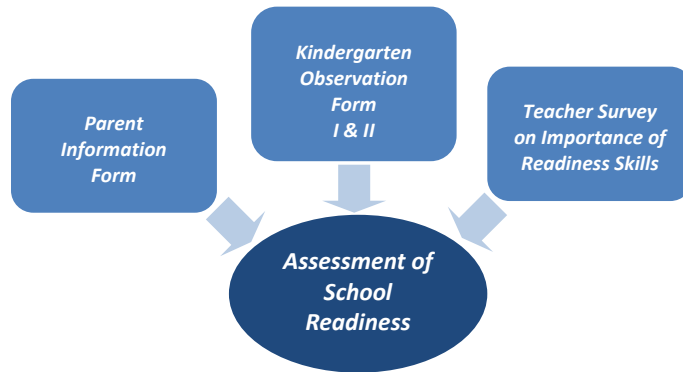
This short report summarizes key Fall 2010 findings for participating teachers, students, and families in the Hayward Unified School District. A summary of the completion metrics for the district follows. Sixty-eight percent of parents agreed to have their child take part in the study, and of those, 94% also returned a parent survey. In all, Hayward Unified students represented 297 of the 1,394 participants (21%) in the county-wide sample.

Figure 3.   Completion Metrics – Alameda County School Readiness Assessment

Data	Hayward Unified sample	Alameda County sample (8 districts)
Total number of elementary schools with kindergarten students in district	22	143
Number of schools participating in 2010 school readiness assessment	10	43
Number of participating classrooms	17	81
Number of children in these classrooms	434	1,838
Number of KOFs returned	297	1,394
Parent consent rate	68%	76%
Number of PIFs that were matched to a KOF	278	1,264
Parent PIF response rate (# PIFs received/ # consents)	94%	91%

The sections that follow include a brief summary of who the Hayward Unified students participating in the assessment were, what their school readiness levels were found to be, and what the participating teachers believed about school readiness. 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 describes only the students and families assessed. **As a result, although the data may hint at the broader picture of readiness district-wide, the findings cannot be extrapolated to the district-level population as a whole.**

Student Characteristics

Forty-five percent of participants in the Hayward Unified School District Fall 2010 readiness assessment were boys and 55 percent were girls. The average age of students was 5.30 years old (just under 5 years and 4 months). Hispanic/Latino students were the largest racial/ethnic group in the sample, comprising 74 percent of students. Seven percent of students were identified as having special needs; another five percent of students were suspected to have a special need by their teacher or parent, but had not been formally diagnosed as having special needs.

Figure 4.   Students' Sex, Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Special Needs

Student Characteristics	Percent of students
Sex	
Boys	45%
Girls	55%
Age at kindergarten entry	
Between 4 1/2 and less than 5	26%
At least 5 and less than 5 1/2	46%
At least 5 1/2 and less than 6	27%
6 and older	< 1%
Race/ethnicity	
Hispanic/Latino	74%
Asian	2%
African American	6%
Caucasian	7%
Pacific Islander	3%
Multi-racial	5%
Other	3%
Special needs status	
Has special needs	7%
Teacher or parent suspects a special need (not [yet] identified by a professional)	5%
Does not have special needs	88%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample size =297,293, 288, 296 respectively. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

When looking at the ethnicity/race of students by school in the Hayward Unified sample, the main ethnic group in seven out of the ten schools is Hispanic/Latino (ranging from 64% to 100%). For the other three schools, Hispanic/Latino students comprise half of the student population for two of the schools with Caucasian and multi-racial being the second most represented ethnic group, whereas the third school has a relatively even distribution of ethnic groupings, with a slightly higher proportion of Hispanic/Latino and Pacific Islander students.

Figure 5.   Students' Race/Ethnicity by School

	School									
Ethnicity	Tyrrell	Palma Ceia	Cherry-land	Glass-brook	Burbank	Bidwell/ Treeview	Faith Ringgold	Strobridge	Harder	Stone-brae
Hispanic/Latino	92%	35%	90%	100%	69%	55%	50%	64%	100%	69%
Asian	0%	12%	0%	--	8%	0%	0%	5%	--	0%
African American	3%	12%	2%	--	8%	7%	6%	13%	--	9%
Caucasian	3%	12%	0%	--	13%	28%	6%	5%	--	6%
Pacific Islander	0%	24%	6%	--	0%	0%	0%	3%	--	0%
Multi-racial	3%	6%	2%	--	3%	7%	25%	10%	--	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%	--	0%	3%	13%	0%	--	16%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample sizes for schools are 38,17,49,21,39,29,16,39,8,32. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Sixty-eight percent of Hayward Unified students are English Learners. As Figure 6 shows, the most common primary language among students was Spanish (66%). English was the second most commonly spoken language (27%).

Figure 6.   Student Language Variables

Children's Language	Percent
English Learners	68%
Not English Learner	32%
Primary language	
English	27%
Spanish	66%
English and Spanish	<1%
Chinese/ Mandarin/ Cantonese	<1%
Punjabi or Hindi	2%
Filipino or Tagalog	2%
Farsi or Dari	1%
Other language	2%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample size = 297. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

When broken down by school, Glassbrook and Tyrrell have the highest percentage of English Learners (94% and 90%, respectively) in the Hayward Unified School District.

Figure 7.   English Learner Status by School

Ethnicity	School									
	Tyrrell	Palma Ceia	Cherry-land	Glass-brook	Burbank	Bidwell/ Treeview	Faith Ringgold	Strobridge	Harder	Stone-brae
English Learner	90%	53%	74%	94%	53%	49%	44%	62%	88%	77%
Not English Learner	10%	47%	27%	6%	47%	52%	56%	39%	13%	23%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Sample sizes for schools are 39, 17, 49, 18, 40, 33, 16, 39, 8, 31.

Children in the district had spent time in a range of early care settings in the year prior to starting kindergarten. Parents were one of the main sources of child care for 71% of students. In this sample, a small percentage of students (38%) were reported to have attended a licensed child care center or preschool, including Head Start, state-funded, private, or other licensed program.

Figure 8.   Students' Early Care Experiences

Type of Child Care Arrangements	Percent of students
Parent provided usual child care	71%
Relative or neighbor	23%
Babysitter or nanny	5%
Licensed care in someone's home (teacher or parent report)	9%
Licensed preschool or childcare center (e.g., Head Start, State Preschool, private – teacher or parent report)	38%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I and Parent Information Form (2010).

Note: Percentages are based on the following sample sizes: 244, 244, 244, 170, 283. Percentages sum to more than 100 because more than one source of care could be selected.

School Readiness of Hayward Unified Students

This section describes the readiness skills that students in Hayward Unified School District possessed as they entered kindergarten in Fall 2010. Students' skills are presented for each of the 24 readiness skills and according to two approaches that classify the skills into broader readiness dimensions, as follows[2]:

> (1) skill groupings that align with the *National Education Goals Panel (NEGP)*, which has defined five dimensions of development and skills that are critical to a child's readiness for school: *Physical Well-Being & Motor Development, Social & Emotional Development, Approaches Toward Learning, Communication and Language Usage,* and *Cognition & General Knowledge.* In different communities throughout the country, these *NEGP* dimensions of readiness have become the foundation for the development of school readiness measurement tools attempting to quantify children's school readiness.

> (2) skill groupings that correspond to four skill dimensions called the *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness, which have been defined by patterns of associations between skills that have been consistently observed across administrations of the *Kindergarten Observation Form*.

In addition, students' skills are presented in the context of what readiness levels teachers believe are necessary for successful transition into kindergarten. Finally, recognizing that there are identifiable readiness patterns of strengths and needs among entering kindergarten students, four "readiness portraits" are described.

Students' scores on the 24 readiness skills are shown in Figure 9 that follows.

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[2]   A "crosswalk" of how the 24 skills map onto each of the two readiness classifications is included as Appendix 1.

Figure 9.   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	22%	32%	46%
General coordination on the playground	12%	43%	45%
Performs self-help/self-care		13%	85%

Self-Regulation Skills

Skill	Not Yet + Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Comforts self	14%	34%	52%
Pays attention	24%	30%	46%
Controls impulses	25%	29%	46%
Follows directions	22%	30%	48%
Negotiates with peers	20%	38%	42%
Plays cooperatively	17%	31%	52%
Participates in circle time	23%	31%	47%
Handles frustration well	22%	27%	51%

Social Expression Skills

Skill	Not Yet + Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Relates appropriately to adults	16%	24%	60%
Appropriately expresses needs	14%	22%	64%
Expresses empathy	19%	29%	52%
Has expressive abilities	23%	31%	46%
Expresses curiosity for learning	20%	27%	53%
Engages in symbolic play	16%	27%	58%

Kindergarten Academics Skills

Skill	Not Yet + Beginning	In Progress	Proficient
Engages with books	22%	30%	50%
Writes own first name	22%	30%	47%
Can recognize rhyming words	77%	14%	9%
Can count 10 objects	21%	15%	64%
Recognizes letters of alphabet	42%	33%	26%
Recognizes basic colors	7%	15%	78%
Recognizes primary shapes	15%	6%	79%

Axis: 0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Percentages are based on 233-293 students. Don't know/ Not observed responses are not included. Percentages less than 5% are not labeled. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Students' top five readiness strengths and challenges are presented below. Hayward Unified students came into school strongest on self-help/self-care tasks and skills related to knowing colors and shapes. They were also well-prepared in some *Social Expression* skills. The skills they were still developing included recognizing rhyming words and letters of the alphabet, and some work was still needed on some *Self-Regulation* skills.

Figure 10.   Students' Top Five Readiness Strengths

| Top five strengths	Basic Building Blocks	Students' average score (out of four possible)
1. Performs basic self-help/self-care tasks	Self-Care & Motor Skills	3.82
2. Recognizes basic colors	Kindergarten Academics	3.68
3. Recognizes primary shapes	Kindergarten Academics	3.58
4. Appropriately expresses needs and wants	Social Expression	3.45
5. Engages in symbolic/imaginative play	Social Expression	3.39

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 270-295 students.

Figure 11.   Students' Top Five Readiness Challenges

Top five challenges	Basic Building Blocks	Students' average score (out of four possible)
1. Can recognize rhyming words	Kindergarten Academics	1.70
2. Recognizes letters of the alphabet	Kindergarten Academics	2.75
3. Controls impulses and self-regulates	Self-Regulation	3.06
4. Stays focused/pays attention during activities	Self-Regulation	3.10
5. Negotiates with peers to resolve social conflicts	Self-Regulation	3.13

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 233-291 students.

The 24 readiness skills can be further grouped according to different categories of readiness. Two of the ways that readiness dimensions have been described are presented here, including: (1) five developmental domains identified by the *NEGP*; and (2) a data-driven sorting of readiness skills, called the *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness.

In Figure 12, Hayward Unified students' readiness scores are displayed according to five *NEGP* categories, with an additional category (not part of the *NEGP*) comprising a "coping skills" dimension. As the figure shows, Hayward Unified students had readiness levels that were slightly lower than those of the county-wide sample of students.

Figure 12.   Students' Proficiency across the Five *NEGP* Readiness Dimensions
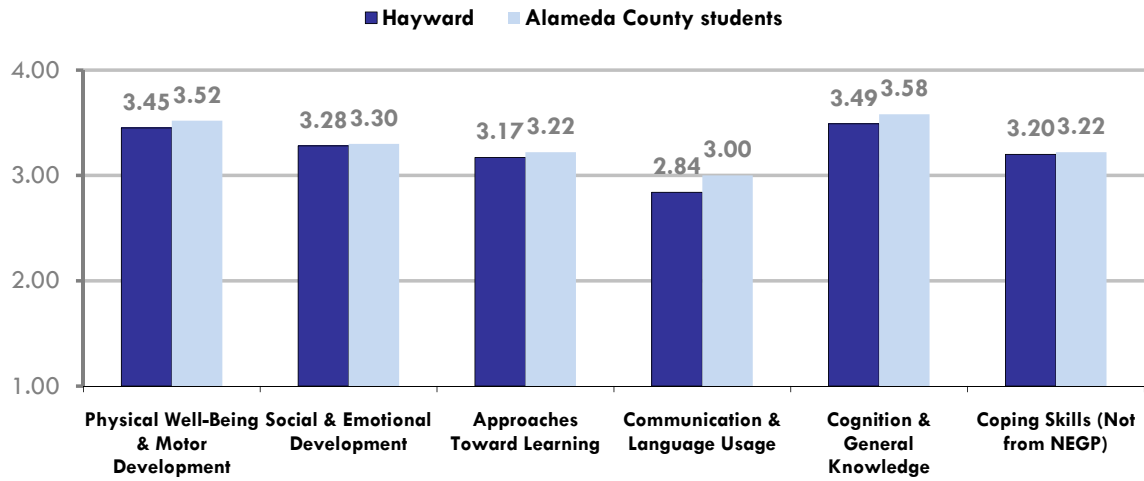
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 291-295 Hayward students and 1,350-1,379 county-wide students.

Statistical exploration of children's performance across 24 readiness skills revealed that skills reliably sorted into an alternate readiness skills framework, which has been labeled the four *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness:[3]

- *Self-Care & Motor Skills*
- *Social Expression*
- *Self-Regulation*
- *Kindergarten Academics*

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[3]   A procedure called factor analysis is used to determine what readiness dimensions are represented by the data.

Figure 13 that follows shows students' readiness according to the four *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness. Readiness levels were highest in *Self-Care & Motor Skills*, and they were lowest in *Kindergarten Academics.* Again, the data show that readiness was somewhat lower in Hayward Unified than across the full sample, particularly in students' skills related to *Kindergarten Academics*.

Figure 13.   Students' Proficiency across Four *Basic Building Blocks* of Readiness
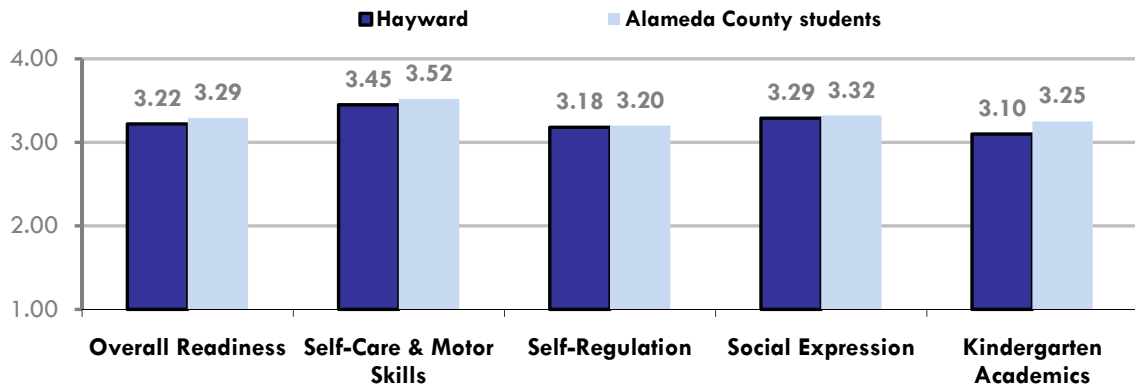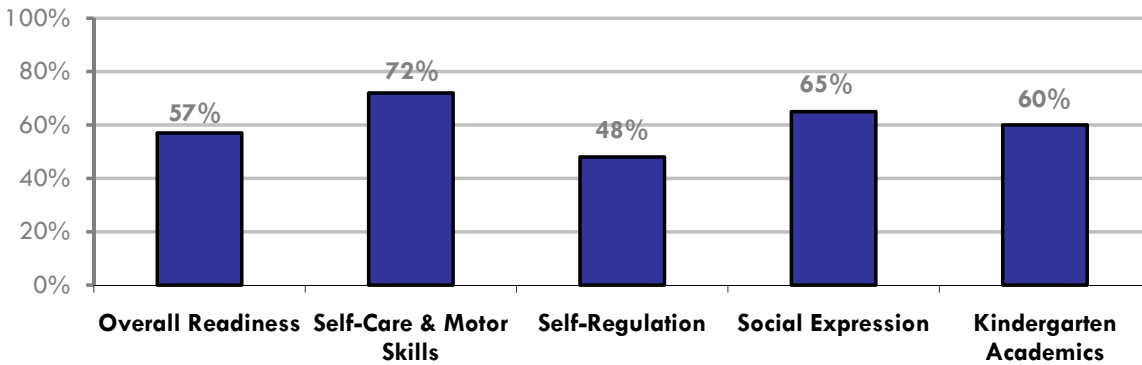

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 291-295 Hayward students and 1,373-1,379 county-wide students.

Although knowing these readiness levels is instructive for understanding relative strengths and needs of students – as well as how Hayward Unified students compare with other students in the county – they do not address the question of how ready is "ready enough" for school. To provide some context for understanding students' readiness levels, as part of the teacher survey they completed, participating Hayward Unified teachers were asked to indicate the level of proficiency that they believed children <u>should</u> have on each of the 24 assessed skills in order to be school-ready. (More information on the results of those surveys can be found in the section that follows.) These ratings were compiled for the four *Basic Building Blocks* readiness dimensions and the percentage of children who met or exceeded those levels of proficiency was computed. The figure that follows presents the percentage of students who met or exceeded the average levels of readiness that Hayward Unified teachers believed they should have to be ready for school.

Overall, more than half of the students (57%) assessed in the Hayward Unified classrooms were at or above the readiness levels their teachers thought they should have at kindergarten entry. The largest percentage of students were prepared (according to teachers' standards) on *Self-Care & Motor Skills* (72%). The largest gap in actual versus desired levels of readiness occurred in *Self-Regulation* skills; only 48 percent of students were meeting the average skill levels that their teachers felt was necessary for a successful kindergarten transition.

Figure 14. **Percentage of Children Meeting or Exceeding the Readiness Levels Teachers Felt They Needed for a Successful Transition**

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010)

Note: Percentages are based on 291-295 Hayward students. Percentages are based on students meeting the average expectations of all Hayward teachers, rather than each student's own teacher.

Children also exhibited different patterns of readiness strengths and challenges. For a more detailed look at different patterns of readiness, children were sorted into one of four *Readiness Portraits* based on their pattern of proficiency across the readiness skills.[4] The dark shading in Figure 15 shows where children in each of the four portraits are at or near proficiency on the associated skills.

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[4] Children were sorted into one of the four *Readiness Portraits* via a data-driven technique called cluster analysis.
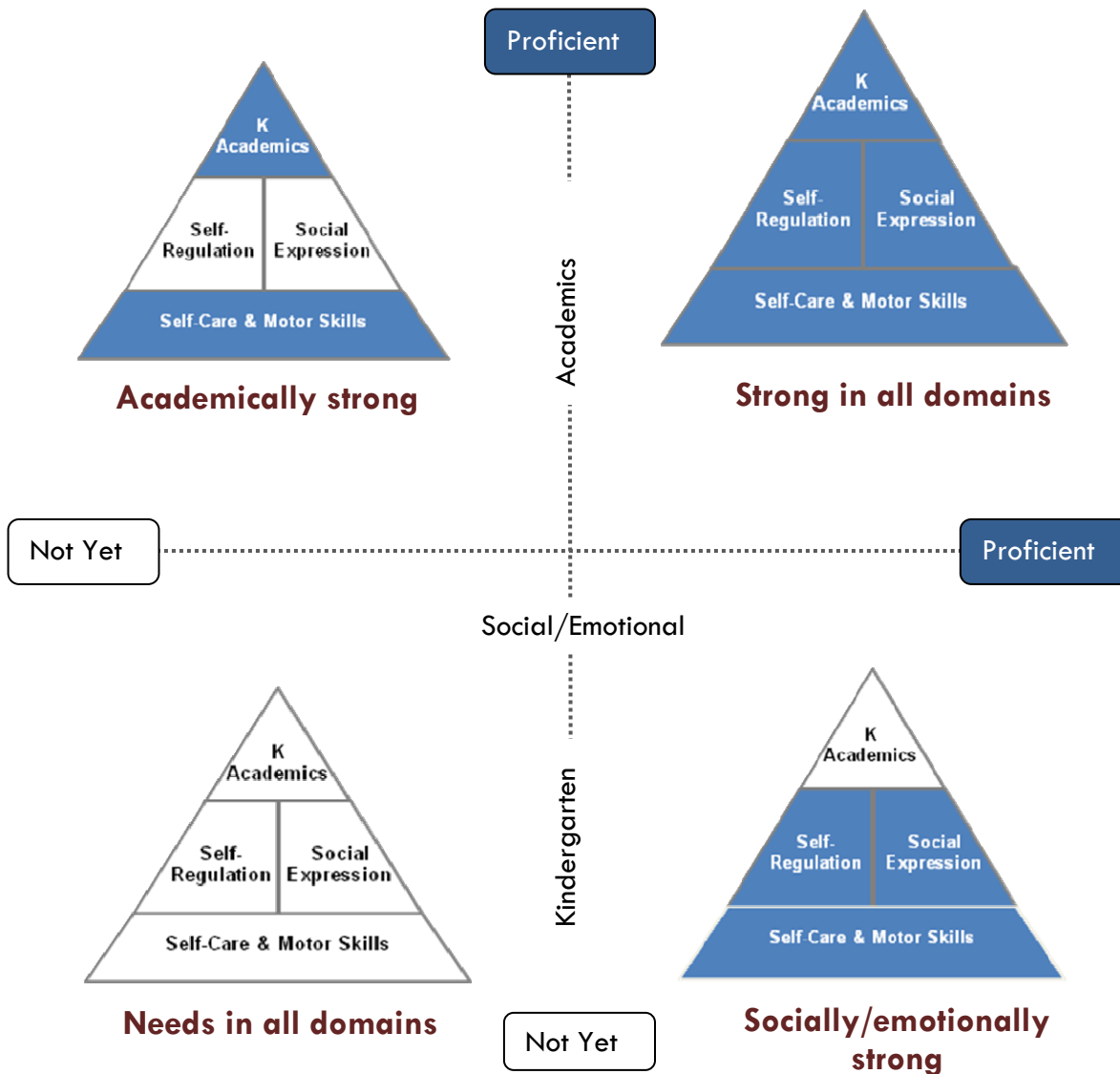
Figure 15.   Four Readiness Portraits

Figure 16 on the following page shows the percentage of Hayward Unified and county-wide students who sorted into each of the four *Readiness Portraits*.

- *Strong in all domains:* Approximately one half (52%) of assessed Hayward Unified students entered kindergarten classrooms at or near proficiency across all four *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness (corresponding to the pattern of readiness displayed in the upper right quadrant of Figure 15).

- *Needs in all domains:* About ten percent of students had significant readiness needs across all four skill domains. These students had not yet learned – or were just beginning to learn – almost all of the 24 readiness skills (lower left quadrant of Figure 15).

- *Academically strong:* Consistent with the readiness pattern shown in the upper left of Figure 15, one in four Hayward Unified students entering kindergarten had strong skills in their 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.

- *Socially/emotionally strong :* Eleven percent of Hayward 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 Figure 15).

Comparisons with the full sample of students assessed county-wide show that Hayward Unified students in this sample were equally likely to be ready for school across all readiness dimensions. However, relative to students county-wide, the patterns of Hayward Unified students suggest that they tended to have greater strengths in social and emotional readiness skills than in academic domains.

Figure 16. Prevalence of Four Portraits of Students' Readiness
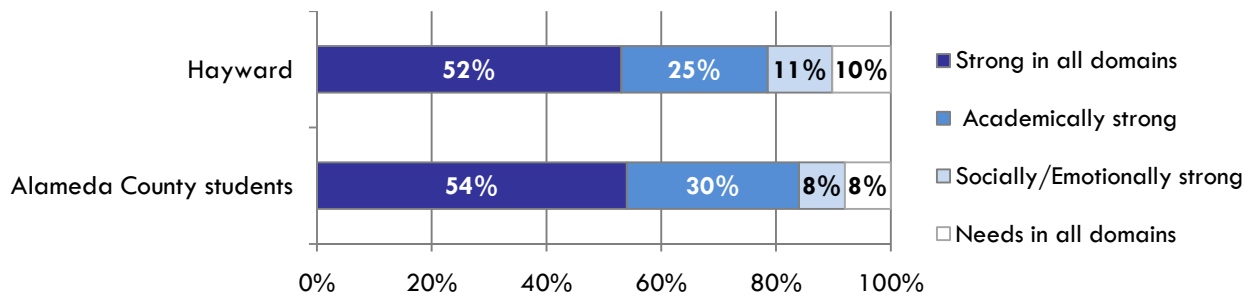
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: This chart is based on 291 Hayward students and 1369 county-wide students. Percentages less than 5% are not labeled.

An Overview of Hayward Unified School District Teacher Beliefs

The *Teacher Survey on Importance of Readiness Skills* included a number of questions asking teachers to provide their opinions about students' readiness for school – including what proficiency levels they think are required for success in school (briefly described in the previous section), as well as the skills that they think are most important for school entry, the skills they believe are easiest to impact, and on which skills they spend the most time.

Figure 17 shows the average levels of proficiency that the participating Hayward Unified kindergarten teachers thought their students should have when they enter school. As Figure 14 in the previous section showed, the biggest gap between Hayward Unified students' skill levels and their teachers' expectations was in the *Self-Regulation* domain. Interestingly, this domain is where teachers expected the highest proficiency levels. Teachers had the lowest expected proficiency levels on skills related to *Kindergarten Academics*.

Figure 17.   Teachers' <u>Desired</u> Levels of Proficiency on the *Basic Building Blocks* of Readiness
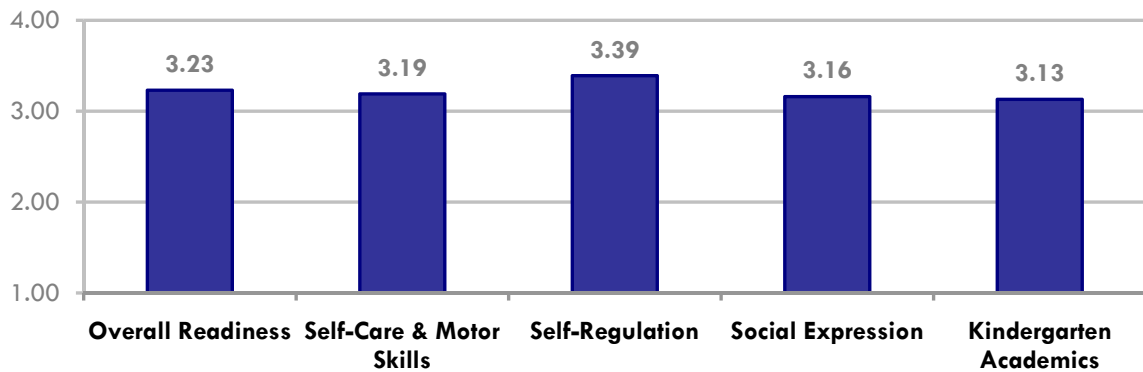
Source: Teacher Survey of the Importance of Readiness Skills (2010).

Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Means are based on 16 Hayward teachers.

When Hayward Unified teachers were asked to choose only five skills that they believed were <u>most</u> important for entry into kindergarten, skills from the *Self-Regulation* and *Self-Care & Motor Skills* dimensions of readiness emerged as the most crucial for children to possess. The most important skill – selected by 11 of 16 teachers – was children's ability to control impulses and stay regulated.

Figure 18. Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five Most Important for Kindergarten Entry

School Readiness Skills	Basic Building Blocks	Number of teachers selecting
Controls impulses and stay regulated	Self-Regulation	11
Performs basic self-help/self-care skills	Self-Care & Motor Skills	10
Stays focused/pays attention during activities	Self-Regulation	9
Participates successfully in circle time	Self-Regulation	7
Uses small manipulatives	Self-Care & Motor Skills	6

Source: Teacher Survey on Importance of Readiness Skills (2010).

Note: Scores are based on 16 Hayward teachers.

Teachers also chose five skills that they believed to be the easiest for them to impact during the kindergarten year. The most commonly selected skills were from the *Kindergarten Academics* dimension.

Figure 19. Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five Easiest to Impact

School Readiness Skills	Basic Building Blocks	Number of teachers selecting
Writes own name	Kindergarten Academics	10
Recognizes primary shapes	Kindergarten Academics	8
Counts 10 objects correctly	Kindergarten Academics	7
Recognizes basic colors	Kindergarten Academics	7
Engages with books	Kindergarten Academics	6
Follows one to two step directions	Self-Regulation	6

Source: Teacher Survey on Importance of Readiness Skills (2010).

Note: Scores are based on 15 Hayward teachers.

Finally, teachers in Hayward Unified prioritized the five skills on which they spent the most class time. The top two skills on which the majority of the teachers agreed they spent most of their time were letter recognition (*Kindergarten Academics*) and staying focused during an activity (*Self-Regulation*).

Figure 20.   Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five on Which They Spend the Most Time

School Readiness Skills	Basic Building Blocks	Number of teachers selecting
Recognizes letters of the alphabet	Kindergarten Academics	10
Stays focused/pays attention during activities	Self-Regulation	7
Uses small manipulatives	Self-Care & Motor Skills	6
Works and plays cooperatively with peers	Self-Regulation	6
Recognizes rhyming words	Kindergarten Academics	6

Source: Teacher Survey on Importance of Readiness Skills (2010).

Note: Scores are based on 15 Hayward teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Preschool experience is a consistently strong predictor of readiness levels among entering kindergarteners. Among the sampled Hayward Unified students, preschool attendance rates are fairly low, which likely has contributed to the somewhat lower readiness levels of students in this region – particularly in *Kindergarten Academics* – as compared with students in the larger county-wide sample. The district and its community partners should continue to promote the availability of high-quality early education experiences for local children – and to look for new opportunities to reach out to those children who are not currently exposed to quality preschool programs prior to starting kindergarten. One example is the First 5 Summer Pre-K Program, which offers quality early childhood experience to children with no preschool or licensed childcare experience.

There are some mixed messages about readiness levels in Hayward Unified. Many students in Hayward Unified School District are entering kindergarten ready for school. More than half are meeting their teachers' expectations and demonstrate strong readiness levels across all domains of readiness. However, these students' *Kindergarten Academics* levels are lower than those of other students in the county.

And, according to teachers, Hayward Unified students have the greatest needs in developing skills that relate to *Self-Regulation*; this domain has the greatest number of students who are not meeting teachers' expected proficiency levels. Information about students' patterns of readiness also suggests that one in four students are strong on academic skills, but are less prepared in social-emotional domains. To help address this:

- Prior to kindergarten, parents and early care and education providers can work on developing children's skills related to emotional regulation and self-control.

- In kindergarten, teachers and district staff can develop strategies and ensure that curricula are addressing entering students' developmental needs related to self-regulation.

The collection of school readiness assessment data can help inform and guide school and district initiatives to support children's development. Some recent examples of school readiness data informing school and community action include the following:

- In San Lorenzo Unified School District, data from the 2008 and 2009 school readiness assessments have provided important evidence to support increasing the district's funding of summer pre-K programs and access to year-long preschool programs. With these data, they could justify the attention, cost, and resources for supporting preschool experiences for their underserved families.

- Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District has used data from recent readiness studies to support their applications for federal and city grants, and they intend to use the data to encourage the district to continue supporting preschool for their students.

- In Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties, county-wide readiness assessments conducted every 2-3 years have helped to track population-level trends in entering kindergarten students over time, in order to monitor changes in important predictors of readiness (such as preschool attendance rates) as well as student readiness levels. For Santa

Clara County in particular, this has allowed them to demonstrate that focused intervention and support for low-income families have been related to readiness improvements in this population.

- Both Santa Clara and San Mateo counties have used data they have collected on the readiness of kindergarten students to show that readiness levels – particularly in the *Kindergarten Academics* and *Self-Regulation Basic Building Blocks* – strongly predict performance on third grade standardized tests, thus further supporting the need for strong interventions that begin even before a child begins kindergarten.

- Several Bay Area school districts have used the *Kindergarten Observation Form* and a parallel preschool version of the form (the *Pre-Kindergarten Observation Form* [*P-KOF*]) to build connections between their pre-K and K-12 education systems and the providers in each. When preschool providers have used the *P-KOF* alongside kindergarten teachers using the *KOF*, this facilitates the development of a common language and set of expectations for discussing children's readiness and how providers in both systems can support it.

- One local, recently-developed, short-term pre-K program has also used findings from their student P-KOF assessments to shape their curriculum to better support the needs of their students, and they have used it as a reflective practice tool for their providers.

- Importantly, several Northern California regions have used their readiness data to develop resources for parents who have a child who will soon enter (or has recently entered) kindergarten. These resources include high-quality, easy-to-read parent handbooks organized around the four *Basic Building Blocks*. The handbooks provide information about the types of readiness skills children need and how to promote children's development of those skills at home. In addition, in response to findings that showed that families who used more local community resources had children with better readiness outcomes, one local First 5 has partnered with other organizations in their community to provide parents with passes to enrichment activities, such as the zoo, to support children's learning.

Individual districts, schools, teachers, and communities are encouraged to reflect on their own readiness findings and discuss ways that this data can help guide and inform action in their own schools and communities.

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 primary 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