



RESULTS OF THE 2015 FALL ASSESSMENT

# SCHOOL READINESS

in Alameda County

DISTRICT REPORT, HAYWARD UNIFIED

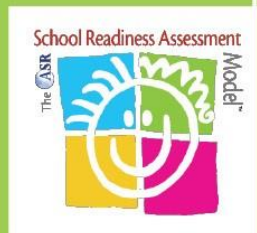
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Of course, this assessment would not be possible without the support of the 23 participating kindergarten teachers who generously gave their time and energy to help us better understand the skills of the children entering their classrooms. These teachers dedicated ample time to a training, student observations, and project management. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the teachers listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. **Participating Hayward Unified School District Schools and Teachers**

School	Teachers
Burbank Elementary	Alex Costa
	Linda Lanthier
	Maria Mendez
	Paula Lawrence
	Yesenia Garcia
Eden Gardens Elementary	Carolyn Barrientos
	Lesley Feikert
Harder Elementary	Ashley Frey
	Maria (Lupita) Guadalupe Estrada
	Samantha Richardson
Palma Ceia Elementary	Ben Hinchman
	Jeanne Vidal-Smith
	Marie (Toni) Echaves
Park Elementary	Argelia Ramos
	Kendra Capen
Schafer Park Elementary	Donna Nelson
	Monica Bocanegra
Southgate Elementary	Danni Lopez
	Hali DeMoss
	Maria Rosas Williams
	Marla DeChaine
Strobridge Elementary	Joan Tarle
	Melissa Estes

# Study Summary

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## Background

This report describes the state of school readiness and related findings for kindergarten students in eight out of 22 schools in Hayward Unified School District at the start of the 2015-16 school year. The study was funded by First 5 Alameda County and the Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council. It represents the sixth school readiness study conducted since 2008 and, like the study conducted in 2013, it drew participants from across the county.

The data presented in this report represent 438 students from 23 classrooms across the eight schools in Hayward Unified. This sample size was similar to that drawn in 2013, when 433 students in 17 classrooms in the district participated, but the students in the current year largely came from different schools than in 2013<sup>1</sup>.

As in prior years, the students’ readiness levels were recorded by teachers using the Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF), an assessment of 20 readiness skills. In addition, the students’ parents were asked to complete a survey called the Parent Information Form (PIF), which requested information about their child’s demographics, family background and child care experiences. The information presented in this report describes only those students and families assessed; the findings are not representative of the all schools and students in the district.

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<sup>1</sup> Only four schools—Harder, Palma Ceia, Park, and Strobridge—had participants in both readiness studies. Given the differences in samples, valid comparisons between 2013 and 2015 could not be made.

## Key Findings

Research Question	Findings	How to Interpret Findings
<p>1. How do HUSD readiness levels compare to levels county-wide?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 39% of Hayward students in the sample were <i>fully ready</i> for kindergarten. Across all students countywide, 44% were fully ready.</li> <li>– Likewise, the average score of the Hayward students was slightly lower (3.22 out of 4) than the students in the full Alameda County sample (3.31).</li> <li>– Hayward students' scores in <b>Self-Regulation</b> and <b>Social Expression</b> were similar to those of students from across the county.</li> <li>– Most of the difference between Hayward students and the county at large can attributed to a disparity in <b>Kindergarten Academic</b> skills: 53% of Hayward students were fully ready in this area, as compared to 64% countywide.</li> </ul>	<p>Children who are <i>fully ready</i> for school demonstrate proficiency or near proficiency in skills across all three primary domains of readiness: Self-Regulation (ability to regulate emotion and attention), Social Expression (ability to relate appropriately to peers and adults), and Kindergarten Academics (academic skills, such as counting, knowing letters, and rhyming).</p> <p>Some of the differences in readiness scores between Hayward students and the overall county are related to the demographic make-up of the Hayward sample. In particular, Hayward students were more likely than their peers county-wide to be English Learners and to come from low income families, both of which are significantly associated with lower school readiness scores.</p>
<p>2. What kinds of experiences did Hayward students and parents have that contribute to readiness?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 77% of students attended preschool or Transitional Kindergarten (TK)</li> <li>– 49% of children read with parents at least five times per week.</li> <li>– At least 60% of parents received some kind of information about helping their child prepare for school.</li> <li>– 65% of parents visited the school with their child.</li> <li>– 52% of parents tell stories and sing songs with their children at least five times per week.</li> </ul>	<p>The literature on school readiness considers not only the preparation of the child, but also that of the family for the child's entry into school. Parents and other caregivers play a critical role in helping the child successfully transition to school by offering quality early learning experiences. Some of the activities listed here, such as sending the child to preschool and reading with the children, have a direct, positive relationship with school readiness.</p> <p>Compared to families in the county overall, families in Hayward were slightly less likely to engage in school readiness activities with their children.</p>
<p>3. What characteristics and experiences were most strongly associated with being ready for school?</p>	<p>Each of the following were positively associated with readiness in Hayward USD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Family income</li> <li>– Mother's education</li> <li>– Child's age</li> <li>– Preschool attendance</li> <li>– English proficiency (not an English Learner)</li> <li>– Being a girl</li> <li>– Not coming to school tired or hungry</li> </ul>	<p>The factors listed here are found to influence school readiness in Alameda County and nationwide. In addition to the factors associated with readiness in Hayward specifically, county-wide analyses showed readiness to be associated with not having special needs and being regularly read to by a caregiver.</p> <p>Although some of the predictors are unmalleable traits (e.g., sex), they tell us who is in greatest need of support prior to kindergarten entry (e.g., boys, younger children, and English Learners), and what kinds of interventions (e.g., preschool) are necessary to address gaps in readiness.</p>

# Student Characteristics

## Sample Description

The assessment data presented in this report were drawn from a non-representative sample of Hayward USD kindergarteners. As a result, we cannot draw inferences from the findings that apply to the district as a whole. Nevertheless, the results do provide key insights about the kindergarten students enrolled across this particular eight-school subset of the district.

The Hayward school readiness assessment sample included 438 kindergarteners across eight schools. Based on the 2014-15 enrollment counts reported by the California Department of Education (official enrollment counts for 2015-16 are not yet available), the sample represented 22 percent of all kindergarten students in the district. When compared to 2014-15 enrollment data, the 2015 school readiness sample included a slightly larger proportion of English Learners and slightly smaller proportions of Latino/Hispanic and African American students than the district at large. The district also had a higher proportion of English Learners and of Latino/Hispanic children than the overall county-wide school readiness study sample.

Figure 2. **How SRA Sample Demographics Compare to District At Large**

Student Characteristics		2014-15 HUSD Enrollment (n=1,970)	Hayward SRA Sample (n=438)	Alameda County SRA Sample (n=1 530)
English Learners		45%	<b>50%</b>	40%
Race/Ethnicity	Latino/Hispanic (of any race)	66%	<b>63%</b>	43%
	Black/African American	9%	<b>5%</b>	8%
	Asian/Pac. Islander	12%	<b>10%</b>	23%
	White	5%	<b>5%</b>	12%
	Filipino	5%	<b>8%</b>	4%
	Multiple Race/Ethnicity	4%	<b>16%</b>	17%

Source: CDE Dataquest (<http://data.l.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>); 2015 KOF and PIF. Note: Latino/Hispanic students may be represented within the other racial categories, thus the percentages sum to more than 100%.

The average age of the 438 students in the sample was **5.5 years old**. Eight percent of students had been diagnosed with a special need by a professional.<sup>2</sup> The age, gender, and special needs status of children in Hayward were similar to those of children in the full county sample.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

Figure 3. **Sampled Students' Sex, Age, and Special Needs Status**

Student Characteristics	Hayward	Alameda County
Boys	48%	50%
Girls	52%	50%
Age at kindergarten entry (Avg = 5.5 years)		
Under 5 years	2%	1%
Between 5.0 and 5.5 years	47%	46%
Older than 5.5 years	51%	53%
Has diagnosed special need(s)	8%	8%
Does not have special needs	92%	92%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015). Note: Sample size=438 (Hayward); 1530 (Alameda County). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Just over half of the students in the sample (53%) preferred to speak English as their primary language, though an additional 12 percent preferred both English and Spanish. For 28 percent of students, Spanish was their preferred language.

Figure 4. **Sampled Students' Preferred Languages**

Preferred Language	Hayward	Alameda County
English <i>only</i>	53%	58%
Spanish <i>only</i>	28%	19%
English <i>and</i> Spanish	12%	9%
English <i>and</i> Another Language	3%	7%
Farsi/Dari	2%	<1%
Filipino/Tagalog	0%	<1%
Vietnamese	1%	1%
Punjabi/Hindi	1%	1%
Other	1%	3%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015).

Note: Sample size=438 (Hayward); 1499 (Alameda County). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Children in the district had spent time in a range of early care settings in the year prior to starting kindergarten. Approximately three quarters of students had some sort of formal early learning experience such as a licensed preschool or child care center (67%) or Transitional Kindergarten (16%). Just four percent of students attended a licensed family child care home rather than a center-based preschool. Seventeen percent did not attend any type of licensed preschool, child care, or Transitional Kindergarten. These proportions were similar to the county-wide sample.



Figure 5. **Sampled Students' Early Care Experiences**

Type of Child Care Arrangements Before Kindergarten	Hayward	Alameda County
Licensed preschool or childcare center (e.g., Head Start, State Preschool, private – teacher or parent report)	67%	66%
Transitional Kindergarten (TK)	16%	22%
<b>Attended either Preschool or TK</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>81%</b>
Licensed care in someone's home (teacher or parent report)	4%	5%
No TK, preschool, or licensed child care outside of home	17%	16%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015), Parent Information Form (2015).

Note: Sample sizes (from top to bottom): 382-418 (Hayward); 1405-1483 (Alameda County). Percentages sum to more than 100 because more than one source of care could be selected.

Of the 364 children (83% of the Hayward sample) whose parents who completed the Parent Information Form, a slight majority (52%) came from families making under \$35,000, and more than half of children's mothers had attended at least some college (Figure 6). As shown in the table below, families in Hayward had lower maternal educational attainment and incomes compared to families in the full county-wide sample.

Figure 6. **Mother's Education and Family Income of Sampled Families**

Mother's Educational Attainment	Hayward	Alameda County
Less than high school	20%	15%
High school diploma	23%	16%
Some college	29%	21%
Associate's degree	10%	9%
Bachelor's degree	14%	22%
Advanced degree	4%	17%
Family Income	Hayward	Alameda County
Under \$15,000	18%	15%
\$15,000-\$34,999	35%	23%
\$35,000-\$49,999	20%	12%
\$50,000-\$74,999	15%	12%
\$75,000-\$99,999	6%	8%
\$100,000 or more	7%	30%

Source: Parent Information Form (2015).

Note: N=364 (Hayward); 1309 (Alameda County). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

# School Readiness of Hayward Students & Families

This section describes the readiness skills that students in the district possessed as they entered kindergarten in Fall 2015, as well as certain indicators of family support and engagement reported by parents. Kindergarten teachers rated students on 20 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).

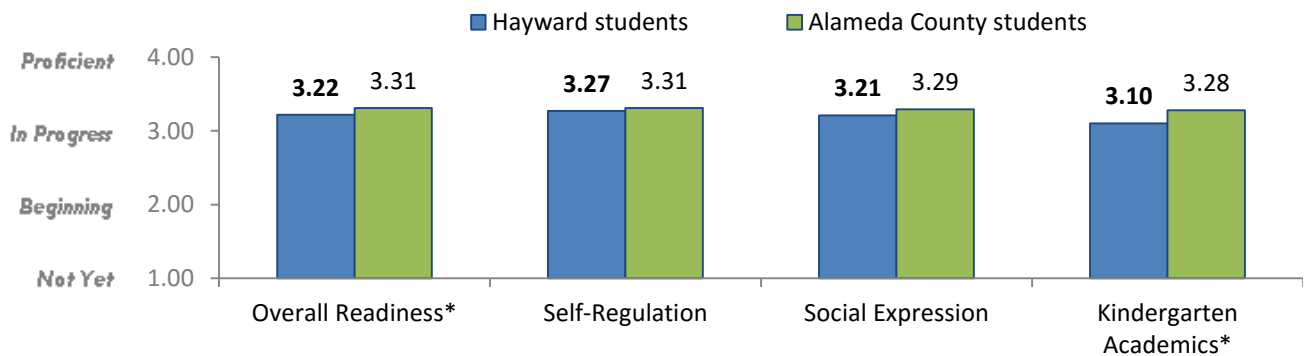
## Basic Building Blocks of Readiness

Eighteen of the 20 readiness skills can be grouped according to three different categories of readiness, known as the *Basic Building Blocks*. The remaining two skills relate to fine and gross motor skills, which are key foundational skills and are included in a student’s average overall readiness score, yet are not averaged as a separate building block.<sup>3</sup>

- *Self-Regulation* (basic emotion regulation and self-control skills needed in the classroom)
- *Social Expression* (skills related to interacting with adults and other children)
- *Kindergarten Academics* (skills such as writing, counting, and identifying shapes and colors)

Figure 7 (below) presents the average overall readiness score and average scores for the *Self-Regulation*, *Social Expression* and *Kindergarten Academics* Building Blocks in the district. Students’ scores on the two *Motor Skills* items are presented in a following section. Overall, Hayward students’ readiness levels were slightly lower than those of the rest of the county (3.22 in Hayward, 3.31 countywide weighted average). The overall score difference is due primarily to lower *Kindergarten Academics* in Hayward compared to the rest of the county. The differences within *Self-Regulation* and *Social Expression* were not statistically significant.

Figure 7. **Students’ Proficiency across Three Building Blocks of Readiness**



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015).

Note: Hayward N=438. Alameda County N=1,460, weighted by district and English Learner rates. \*p<.05.

<sup>3</sup> Based on an internal review, ASR determined that a building block average score based on two items is too few to represent a valid motor skills construct. Though these skills are important, they are best represented within the overall readiness score, and not as a separate building block score. Furthermore, scores on these items have not been found to predict future academic achievement. Consequently, they were not considered in determining which children were “fully ready”. Internal research indicated that the percent of students considered “fully ready” changes very little with or without motor skills.

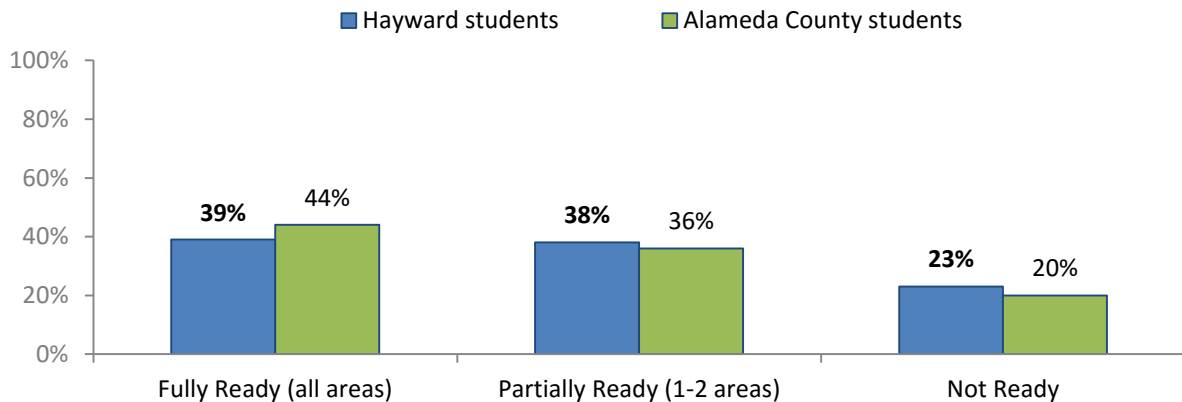
## Percent of Students Ready for School

Students were also sorted into three categories—Fully Ready, Partially Ready, or Not Ready—depending on their readiness scores in each Building Block.

- **FULLY READY:** Students who are socially and academically well prepared for school. Their average scores within three Building Blocks—*Kindergarten Academics*, *Self-Regulation*, and *Social Expression*—were between 3.25 and 4.00 (on a scale of 1-4).
- **PARTIALLY READY:** Students who had an average Building Block score of 3.25 or higher in one or two blocks, but not all three. Students in this group tend to have a wide variety of skill combinations. For example, a student may be proficient in academics and self-regulation but lacks social expression skills.
- **NOT READY:** Students who are not well prepared for school in any of the three areas. Their average scores within each of the *Kindergarten Academics*, *Self-Regulation*, and *Social Expression* domains were below 3.25.

Figure 8 (below) displays the percentage of students from Hayward and Alameda County that were classified into each of the three categories. The percentage of Hayward students fully ready in all domains was five percentage points lower than in the county overall (39% vs. 44%).

Figure 8. **Percentage of Students Fully Ready, Partially Ready and Not Ready for School**



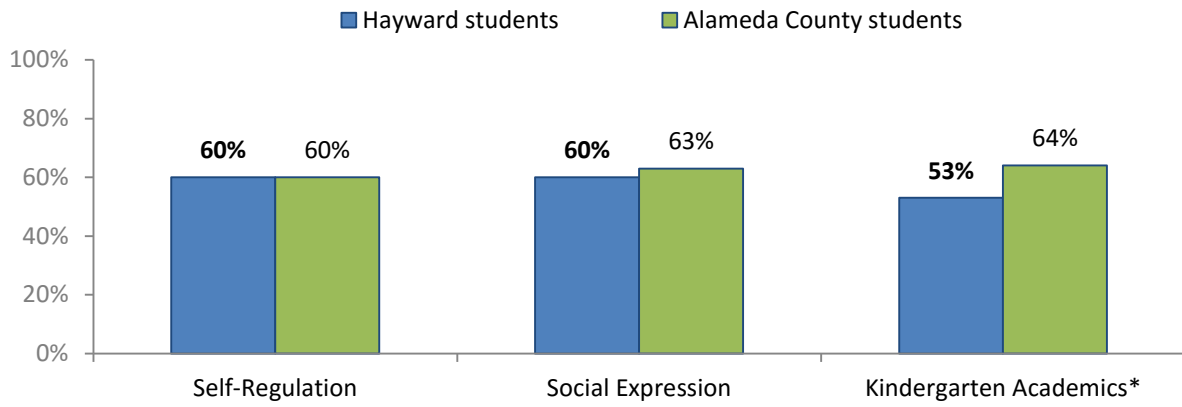
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015).

Note: Scores are based on 438 Hayward Unified students and 1,460 county-wide students weighted by district and EL status. The differences are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) based on a chi-square test.

## Percent Ready by Building Block

To illustrate the relative strengths of children in the Hayward sample, Figure 9 displays the percentage of students whose average scores were at least 3.25 within each Building Block, in comparison with the countywide percentages. Children in Hayward were ready in *Self-Regulation* and *Social Expression* at a rate similar to the countywide sample, but a significantly smaller proportion of students in the district were ready on *Kindergarten Academics*.

Figure 9. **Percentage of Students Ready for School, by *Building Block***



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015).

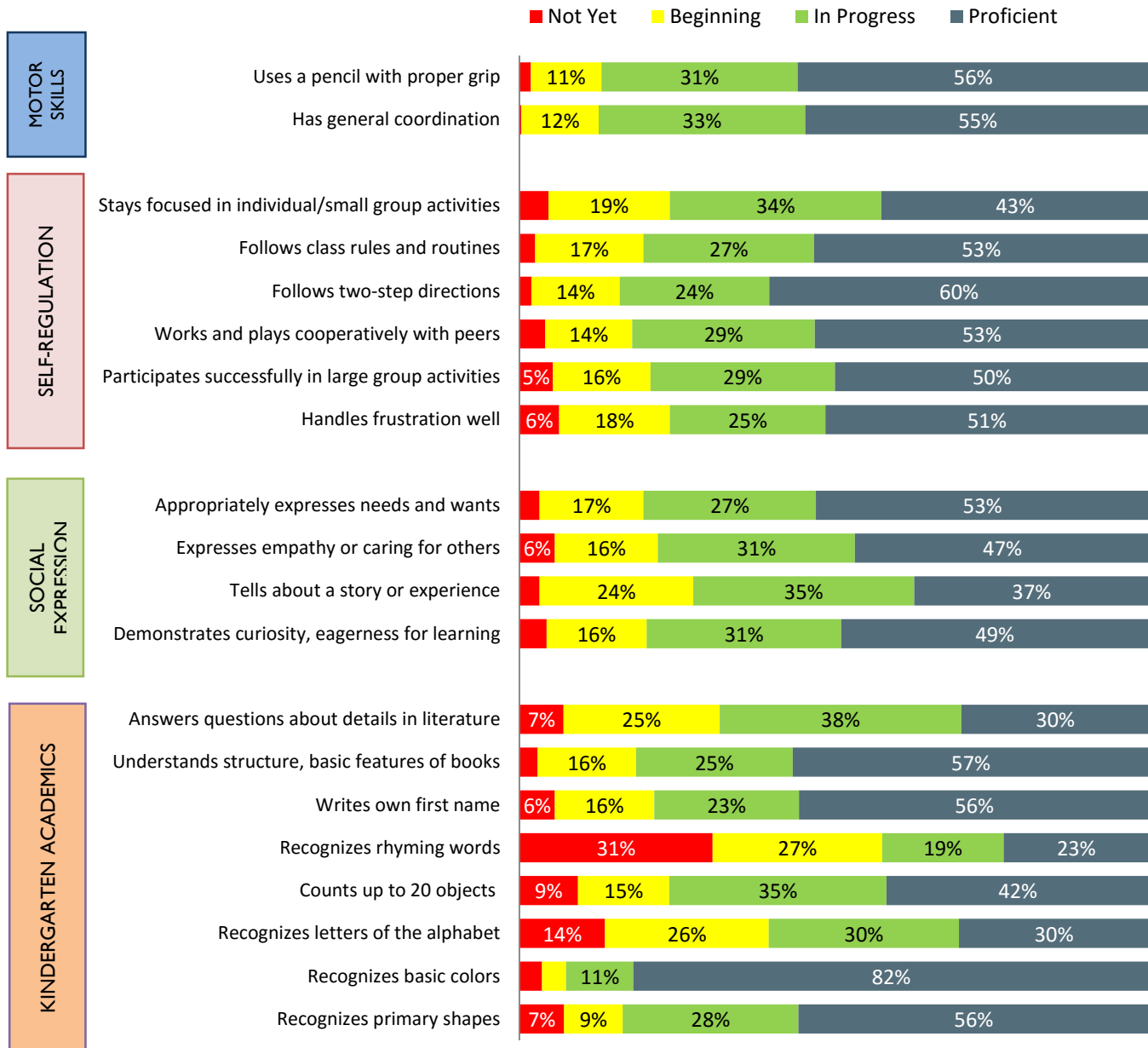
Note: Scores are based on 438 Hayward Unified students and 1,460 county-wide students weighted by district and EL status.

\*Statistically significant difference,  $p < .05$

## Student Performance on Each Readiness Skill

The proportion of students in the district receiving each rating for the 20 readiness skills is shown below. A high proportion of students were proficient in recognizing basic colors (82% proficient), while students appeared to have the least proficiency in recognizing rhyming words (23% proficient) and answering questions about details in literature (30% proficient).

Figure 10. **Hayward Unified Students' Proficiency Levels Across 20 School Readiness Skills**



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form (2015). Sample size=438. Note: Scores range from 1 (Not yet) to 4 (Proficient). Proportions of less than 5% are not labeled.

## Family Support and Engagement Indicators

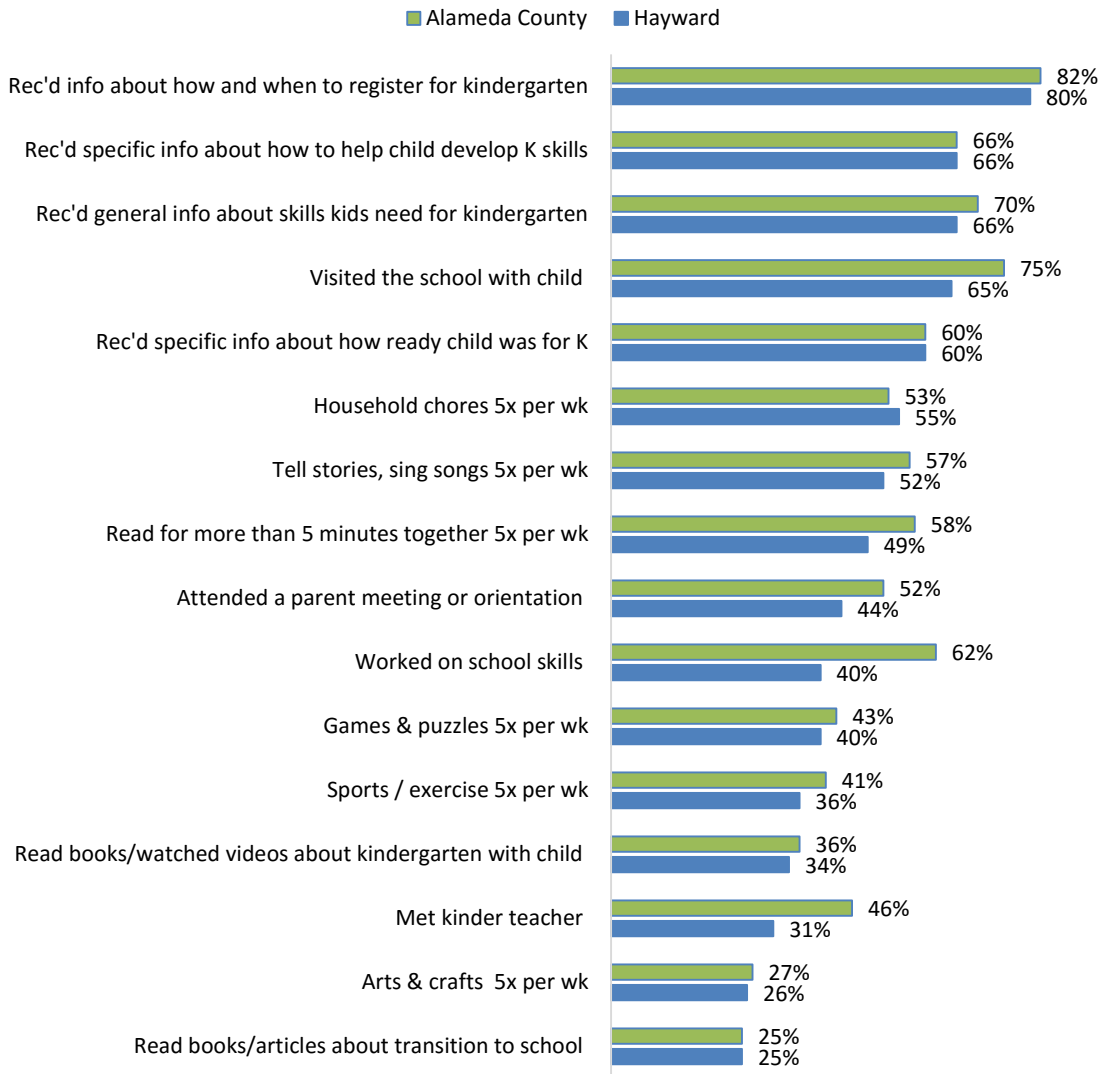
An abundance of research indicates that the family is the primary force in preparing children for school and life. The quality and degree of their interactions, and specific actions taken to nurture and prepare children for school, play a crucial role in any child's development. Some have been found to have a direct correlation with school readiness, as well, including reading and singing songs or telling stories with the child, and working on school skills.

To gain an understanding of the myriad ways that families may have been engaged in specific activities support their children's readiness for school, this school readiness assessment included a survey of parents conducted during the first month of school. The survey included items such as reading or telling stories with their children, visiting the school before the school year begins, and receiving general information about kindergarten.

The chart below lists the percentage of parents that reported receiving readiness information and engaging in specific activities to support their children's readiness for school (Figure 11). At least 60 percent of parents reported receiving information about preparing for kindergarten, the most common of which was information about how and when to register for school (80%).

In terms of actions parents took to help their child prepare for the beginning of school, the most common activity was visiting the school with their child before the school year began (65%). In contrast, less than half reported working on school skills with their child, attending a parent meeting or orientation, meeting the kindergarten teacher, or other activities to help their child get ready for school. Approximately one-half (49%) of parents reported reading with their child at least five times per week. Several activities were somewhat less common among families in Hayward compared to families in Alameda County overall. These included visiting the school with the child, meeting the kindergarten teacher, working on school skills, and reading together.

Figure 11. **Family Support and Engagement Indicators**



Source: Parent Information Form (2015). N=333-383 (Hayward); 1214-1369 (Alameda County).

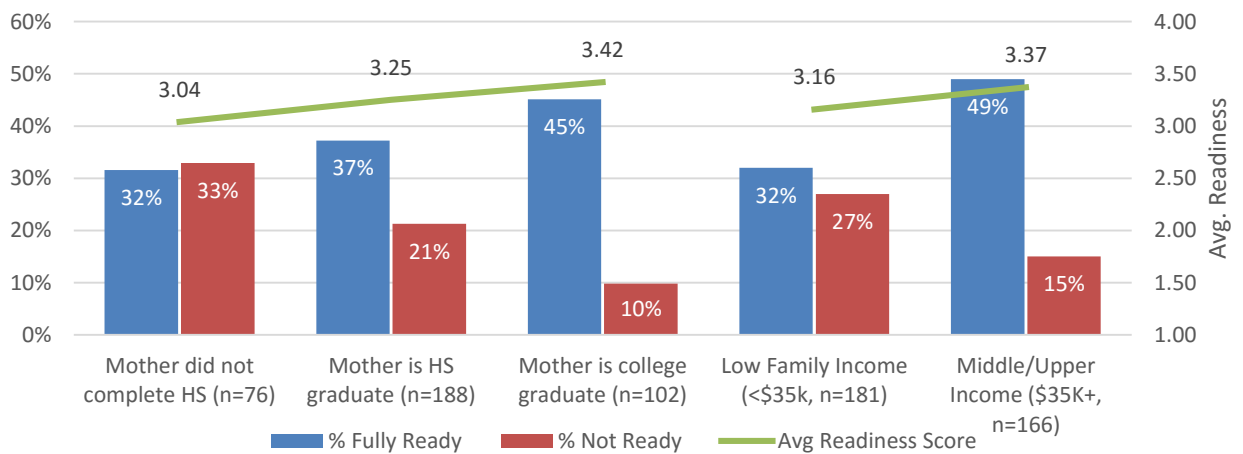
## Readiness Levels by Child and Family Background and Experiences

In 2015, several child and family traits and experiences strongly predicted higher readiness scores or being Fully Ready in Alameda County overall<sup>4</sup>:

- Coming from a higher SES family (mother has more than a high school education and/or family earns at least \$35,000 per year)
- Being a girl
- Being older
- Being proficient in English
- Not coming to school hungry or tired
- Not having a special need
- Attending licensed preschool or TK in the prior year
- Being read to at least 5 times per week

Many of these factors were also predictive of readiness in the Hayward Unified sample specifically. The charts below illustrate how differences in Hayward children’s socioeconomic backgrounds and family experiences were associated with differences in readiness. The blue bars indicate the percentage of students within each category who were fully ready across all areas of readiness; the red bars indicate the percentage of students not ready in any of the three areas; and the green line represents the average readiness score on the 1-4 scale.<sup>5</sup> As Figure 12 shows, children whose mothers had more education and whose families had relatively higher incomes were more ready for school than children whose families were less advantaged.

Figure 12. **Readiness by Family Income and Mother’s Education**



Source: KOF (2015), PIF (2015).

Note: Mean differences were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) based on mother’s education and family income.

<sup>4</sup> These findings are based on multiple regression models controlling for age, gender, having a special need, being an English Learner, family income, mother’s education, race/ethnicity, preschool attendance, teacher’s rating of child’s hunger/tiredness, and parent’s reported frequency of reading to their child. See the county-wide report for more details.

<sup>5</sup> Percentages and means in figures 12-14 are “raw” figures (i.e., they do not control for other factors).



Figure 13 displays three other attributes commonly associated with readiness. As is the case with most studies of school readiness, girls were slightly more ready than boys, older children more ready than younger children, and English-proficient children were more ready than English Learners.

Figure 13. **Readiness by Sex, Age, and EL Status**

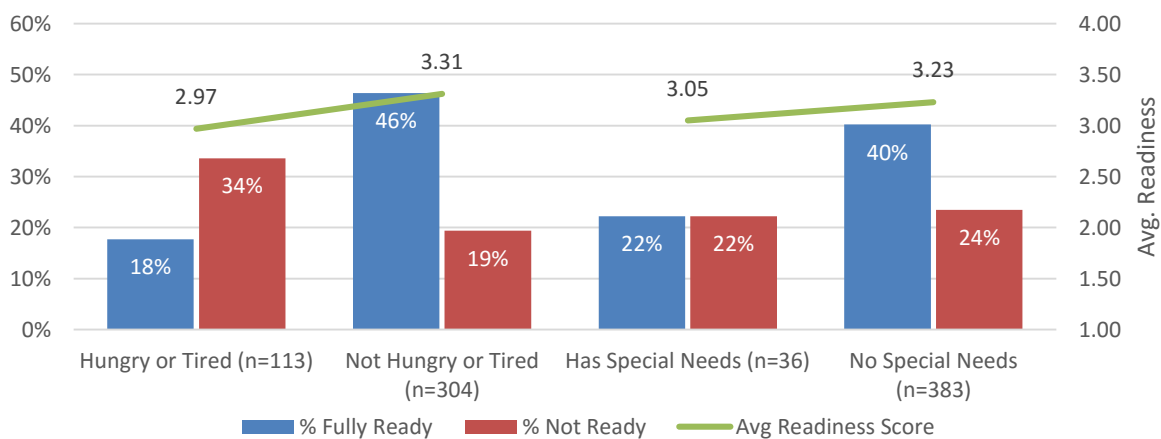


Source: KOF (2015), PIF (2015).

Note: Mean differences were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) based on sex, age, and EL status.

Children who came to school hungry or tired at least occasionally were significantly less likely to be ready for school than those who did not. In Hayward, children with special needs had slightly lower readiness scores than those who did not, but the difference did not rise to the level of statistical significance, perhaps due to the very small number of children with special needs in the district sample (38). As mentioned above, children with special needs had significantly lower readiness levels in the county overall.

Figure 14. **Readiness by Hunger/Tiredness and Special Needs**

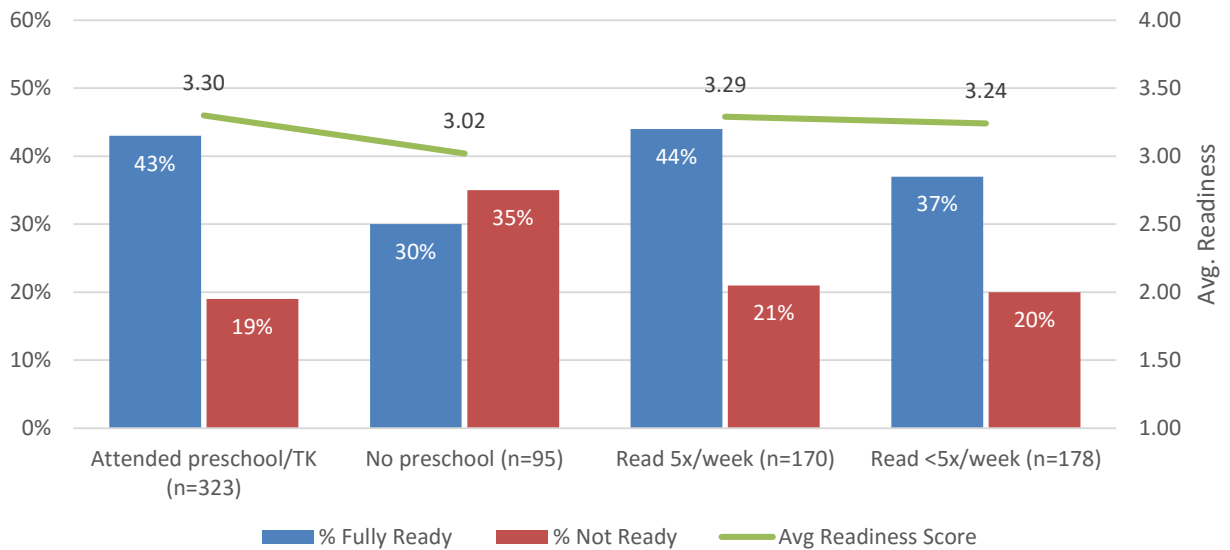


Source: KOF (2015), PIF (2015).

Note: Mean differences were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) based on hungry/tired, but not for special needs.

As Figure 15 shows, children who attended preschool (or TK) were more ready for school than other children. There were no meaningful differences in readiness with respect to the time spent reading to children in this Hayward sample. However, reading has been found in other studies to be significantly predictive of readiness and was positively related to readiness in the overall county-wide sample.

Figure 15. **Readiness by Preschool Experience and Family Reading**



Source: KOF (2015), PIF (2015).

Note: Mean differences were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) based on preschool experience, but not for reading.