

School Readiness in Oakland Unified School District

2010 Assessment — District Results



RESEARCH STUDY FUNDED BY:



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Table of Contents

Table of Figures3

Acknowledgements4

Study Summary5

Study Overview6

Student Characteristics.....8

School Readiness of Oakland Unified Students11

An Overview of Oakland Unified School District Teacher Beliefs19

Conclusions and Recommendations22

Appendix 1: Crosswalking Readiness Items from *NEGP* to *Basic Building Blocks*24

Table of Figures

Figure 1.	Participating Oakland Unified School District Schools and Teachers.....	4
Figure 2.	Sources of Information to Assess the Readiness of Incoming Kindergarten Students	7
Figure 3.	Completion Metrics – Alameda County School Readiness Assessment	7
Figure 4.	Students’ Sex, Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Special Needs	8
Figure 5.	Students’ Race/Ethnicity by School.....	9
Figure 6.	Student Language Variables	9
Figure 7.	English Learner Status by School.....	10
Figure 8.	Students’ Early Care Experiences	10
Figure 9.	Students’ Proficiency Levels Across 24 School Readiness Skills	12
Figure 10.	Students’ Top Five Readiness Strengths.....	13
Figure 11.	Students’ Top Five Readiness Challenges.....	13
Figure 12.	Students’ Proficiency across the Five <i>NEGP</i> Readiness Dimensions	14
Figure 13.	Students’ Proficiency across Four <i>Basic Building Blocks</i> of Readiness.....	15
Figure 14.	Percentage of Children Meeting or Exceeding the Readiness Levels Teachers Felt They Needed for a Successful Transition	16
Figure 15.	Four Readiness Portraits	17
Figure 16.	Prevalence of Four Portraits of Students’ Readiness	18
Figure 17.	Teachers’ Desired Levels of Proficiency on the <i>Basic Building Blocks</i> of Readiness	19
Figure 18.	Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five Most Important for Kindergarten Entry	20
Figure 19.	Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five Easiest to Impact	20
Figure 20.	Skills Most Often Selected by Teachers as One of Five on Which They Spend the Most Time	21

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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 Oakland Unified School District Schools and Teachers

Schools	Teachers
International Community School	Cristina Rojas
	Elena Vargas
	Deveny Dawson
Reach Academy	Paul Smith
Lakeview	Tavia Anderson
Lafayette	Carmen Hendon
Sobrante Park	Sophia Kinsley
Markham	Patricia Nunley
Brookfield Village	Nuria Martinez
	Linda Walton
	Luz Zurita
Laurel	Grace Tse

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 Oakland Unified (OUSD) participants, 12 teachers from eight 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 OUSD children ready for school?	<p>In some areas.</p> <p>Overall readiness score: 3.17</p>	<p>For each individual readiness skill, children were scored on a scale from <i>Not yet</i> (1) to <i>Proficient</i> (4). Average scores for each of 4 <i>Basic Building Blocks</i> of readiness range from 1 to 4.</p> <p>For OUSD students, scores for <i>Social Expression</i> were close to those of other students in the county; their scores for <i>Self-Regulation</i> and <i>Kindergarten Academics</i> were lower than those of other county students.</p>
2. Are OUSD students meeting their teachers' expectations for readiness at kindergarten entry?	<p>Mostly.</p> <p>63% at/above expected levels of proficiency</p>	<p>On their teacher survey, OUSD teachers indicated the level of proficiency they thought students should have to be "school ready" at kindergarten entry.</p> <p>Sixty-three percent were meeting or exceeding teachers' expected proficiency levels for overall readiness. The largest percentage of students was meeting teachers' expectations in <i>Self-Care & Motor Skills</i> (72%). The largest gap between teachers' expectations and students' skills was in <i>Self-Regulation</i> skills (54% of students were meeting expectations).</p>
<p>3. What skills do OUSD teachers think are:</p> <p>Most important for kindergarten entry?</p> <p>Easiest to impact?</p> <p>Most time-consuming?</p>	<p>Most important: Ability to stay focused</p> <p>Easiest to impact: Recognizes shapes</p> <p>Spend the most time: Recognizes letters</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The ability to stay focused on a task was chosen by teachers as the most important skill for kindergarten. Skills related to <i>Kindergarten Academics</i> were generally selected as being the easiest to impact. Along with recognizing letters, several <i>Self-Regulation</i> skills were selected as requiring the most time during the kindergarten school year.</p>

Study Overview

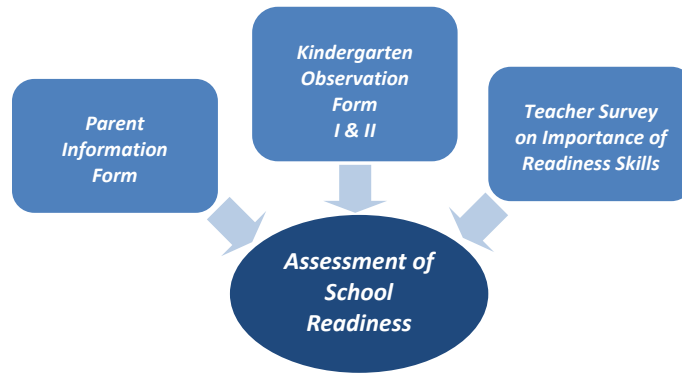
Children's school readiness levels at kindergarten entry have been increasingly recognized as playing an important role in children's later success in school. In late 2000, Applied Survey Research (ASR) was commissioned to develop research materials and a protocol to conduct assessments of Bay Area students' 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.

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 Oakland Unified School District. A summary of the completion metrics for the district follows. Seventy-nine percent of parents agreed to have their child take part in the study, and of those, 87 percent also returned a parent survey. In all, Oakland Unified students represented 194 of the 1,394 participants (14%) in the county-wide sample.

Figure 3. Completion Metrics – Alameda County School Readiness Assessment

Data	Oakland Unified sample	Alameda County sample (8 districts)
Total number of elementary schools with kindergarten students in district	62	143
Number of schools participating in 2010 school readiness assessment	8	43
Number of participating classrooms	12	81
Number of children in these classrooms	245	1,838
Number of KOFs returned	194	1,394
Parent consent rate	79%	76%
Number of PIFs that were matched to a KOF	168	1,264
Parent PIF response rate (# PIFs received/ # consents)	87%	91%

The sections that follow include a brief summary of who the Oakland 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-four percent of participants in the Oakland Unified School District Fall 2010 readiness assessment were boys and 56 percent were girls. The average age of students was 5.3 years old (just under 5 years and 4 months). Hispanic/Latino students were the largest racial/ethnic group in the sample, comprising 60 percent of students. Nine percent of students were identified as having special needs; another 5 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	44%
Girls	56%
Age at kindergarten entry	
Between 4 1/2 and less than 5	24%
At least 5 and less than 5 1/2	43%
At least 5 1/2 and less than 6	32%
6 and older	1%
Race/ethnicity	
Hispanic/Latino	60%
Asian	6%
African American	25%
Caucasian	3%
Pacific Islander	4%
Multi-racial	3%
Other	0%
Special needs status	
Has special needs	9%
Teacher or parent suspects a special need (not [yet] identified by a professional)	5%
Does not have special needs	87%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample size = 194, 192, 192, 192 respectively. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Eight schools were represented in the Oakland Unified sample. Of these, the International Community School and Brookfield Elementary had the highest percentage of any one ethnicity, with Hispanic/Latino students representing 82 and 84 percent (respectively) of the school population.

Figure 5. Students' Race/Ethnicity by School

Ethnicity	School							
	Int. Comm. School	Reach Academy	Lakeview	Lafayette	Laurel	Sobrante Park	Markham	Brookfield
Hispanic/Latino	82%	50%	7%	36%	27%	20%	41%	84%
Asian	8%	0%	0%	0%	46%	7%	0%	2%
African American	5%	40%	60%	57%	18%	53%	47%	10%
Caucasian	2%	0%	20%	7%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Pacific Islander	2%	10%	7%	0%	0%	13%	6%	2%
Multi-racial	2%	0%	7%	0%	0%	7%	6%	2%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample sizes =60,10,15,14,11,15,17,50. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Fifty-seven percent of Oakland Unified students are English Learners. As Figure 6 shows, the most commonly spoken primary language was Spanish (51% of students), followed by English (41%).

Figure 6. Student Language Variables

Children's Language	Percent
English Learner	57%
Not an English Learner	43%
Primary language	
English	41%
Spanish	51%
English and Spanish	1%
Chinese/ Mandarin/ Cantonese	3%
Filipino or Tagalog	1%
Farsi or Dari	1%
Vietnamese	1%
Other language	2%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample size =193 and 186. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

When broken down by school, the International Community school had the highest percentage of English Learners at 88 percent. At six percent, Markham Elementary had the lowest percentage of English Learners.

Figure 7. English Learner Status by School

	School							
	Int. Comm. School	Reach Academy	Lakeview	Lafayette	Laurel	Sobrante Park	Markham	Brookfield
English Learner	88%	30%	13%	63%	64%	20%	6%	63%
Not English Learner	12%	70%	87%	38%	36%	80%	94%	37%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Sample sizes =60,10,15,16,11,15,17,49. 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. Two-thirds of students (67%) had received their usual child care from a parent (alone or in combination with other sources). Fourteen percent had been cared for by a relative or neighbor. Fifty-seven percent of Oakland Unified students attended a licensed preschool or childcare center.

Figure 8. Students' Early Care Experiences

Type of Child Care Arrangements	Percent of students
Parent provided usual child care	67%
Relative or neighbor	14%
Babysitter or nanny	7%
Licensed care in someone's home (teacher or parent report)	11%
Licensed preschool or childcare center (e.g., Head Start, State Preschool, private – teacher or parent report)	57%

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

Note: Percentages are based on the following sample sizes: 148,148,148,168,188. Percentages sum to more than 100 because more than one source of care could be selected.

School Readiness of Oakland Unified Students

This section describes the readiness skills that students in Oakland 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 follows²:

(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.

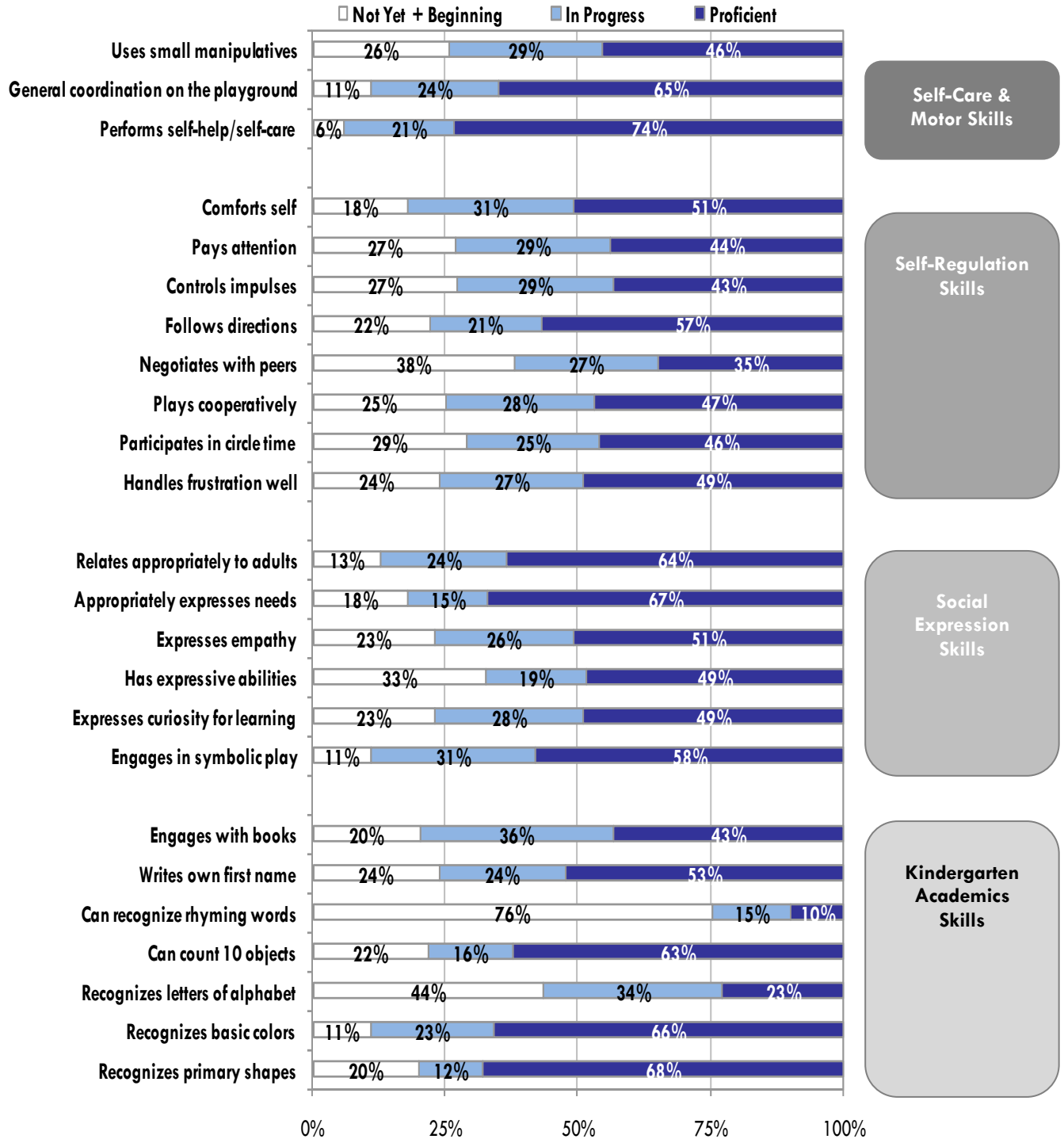
(2) skill groupings that correspond to four skill dimensions called the *Basic Building Blocks* of readiness, which have been defined by patterns of associations between skills that have been consistently observed across administrations of the *Kindergarten Observation Form*.

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.

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



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

Note: Percentages are based on 179-194 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. Oakland Unified students came into school strongest on abilities related to *Self-Care & Motor Skills* and recognizing basic colors. The skills they were still developing were also related to *Kindergarten Academics*, including recognizing rhyming words and letters of the alphabet. Developing skills also included negotiating with peers, controlling impulses, and expressive abilities.

Figure 10. Students' Top Five Readiness Strengths

Top five strengths	Basic Building Block	Students' average score (out of four possible)
1. Performs basic self-help/self-care tasks	Self-Care & Motor Skills	3.68
2. Recognizes basic colors	Kindergarten Academics	3.53
3. Has general coordination on the playground	Self-Care & Motor Skills	3.52
4. Relates appropriately to adults other than parent/primary caregiver	Social Expression	3.47
5. Engages in symbolic/imaginative play	Social Expression	3.46

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 190-194 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	1.76
2. Recognizes letters of the alphabet	Kindergarten Academics	2.64
3. Negotiates with peers to resolve social conflicts	Self-Regulation	2.83
4. Controls impulses and self-regulates	Self-Regulation	3.04
5. Has expressive abilities	Social Expression	3.05

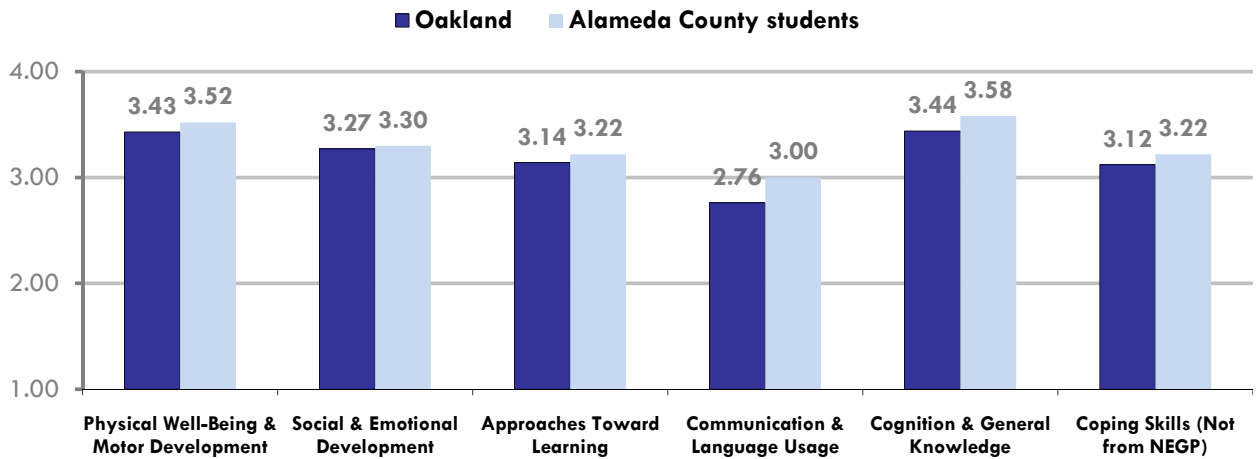
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 189-194 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, Oakland 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. Oakland Unified students' skills were strongest in *Cognition & General Knowledge* and *Physical Well-Being & Motor Development*, and they had the greatest needs in development of skills in *Communication & Language Usage*.

Figure 12. Students' Proficiency across the Five *NEGP* Readiness Dimensions



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

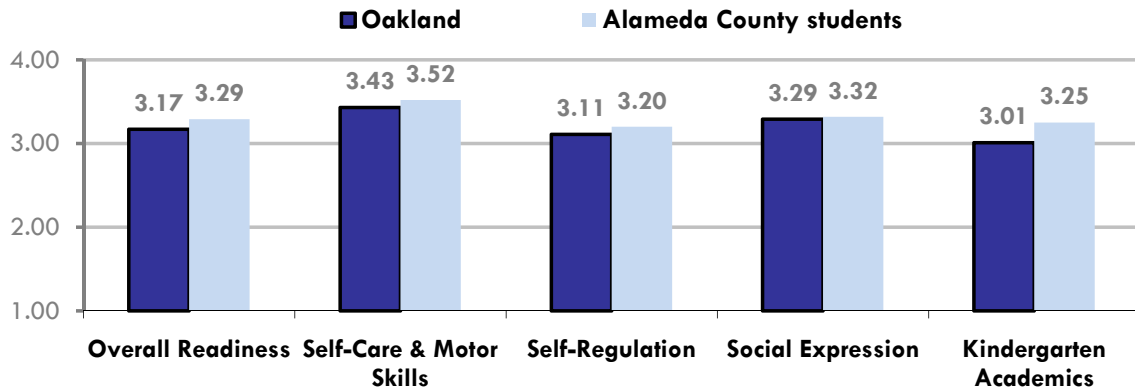
Note: Means can range from 1 to 4. Scale points are as follows: 1=not yet, 2=beginning, 3=in progress, 4=proficient. Scores are based on 191-194 Oakland Unified students and 1,350-1,379 county-wide students.

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*

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* (3.43). Scores were lowest in *Kindergarten Academics* (3.01).

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

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

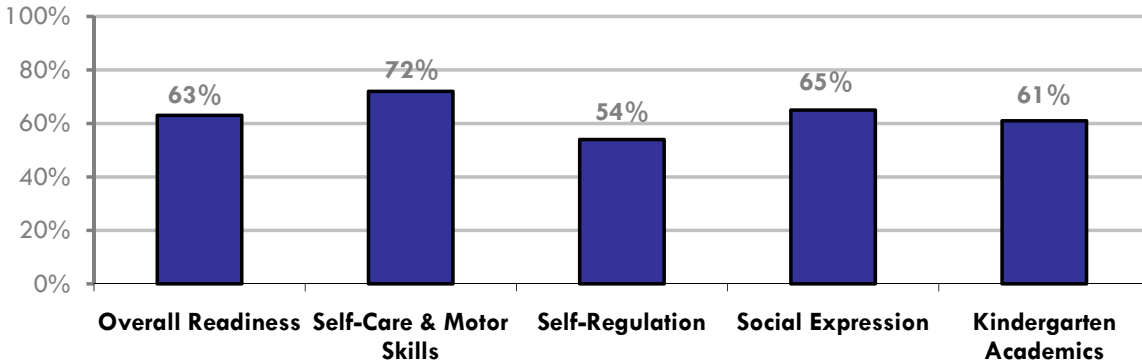
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

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 191-194 Oakland Unified 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 Oakland 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 Oakland Unified teachers were asked to indicate the level of proficiency that they believed children should 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 Oakland Unified teachers believed they should have to be ready for school.

Overall, 63 percent of the students assessed in the Oakland Unified classrooms were at or above the readiness levels their teachers thought they should have at kindergarten entry. The largest percentage of students were most prepared on *Self-Care & Motor Skills* (72%); the largest gap in actual versus desired levels of readiness occurred in *Self-Regulation* skills (54%).

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 191-194 Oakland Unified students. Percentages are based on students meeting the average expectations of all Oakland Unified 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.

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

Figure 15. Four Readiness Portraits

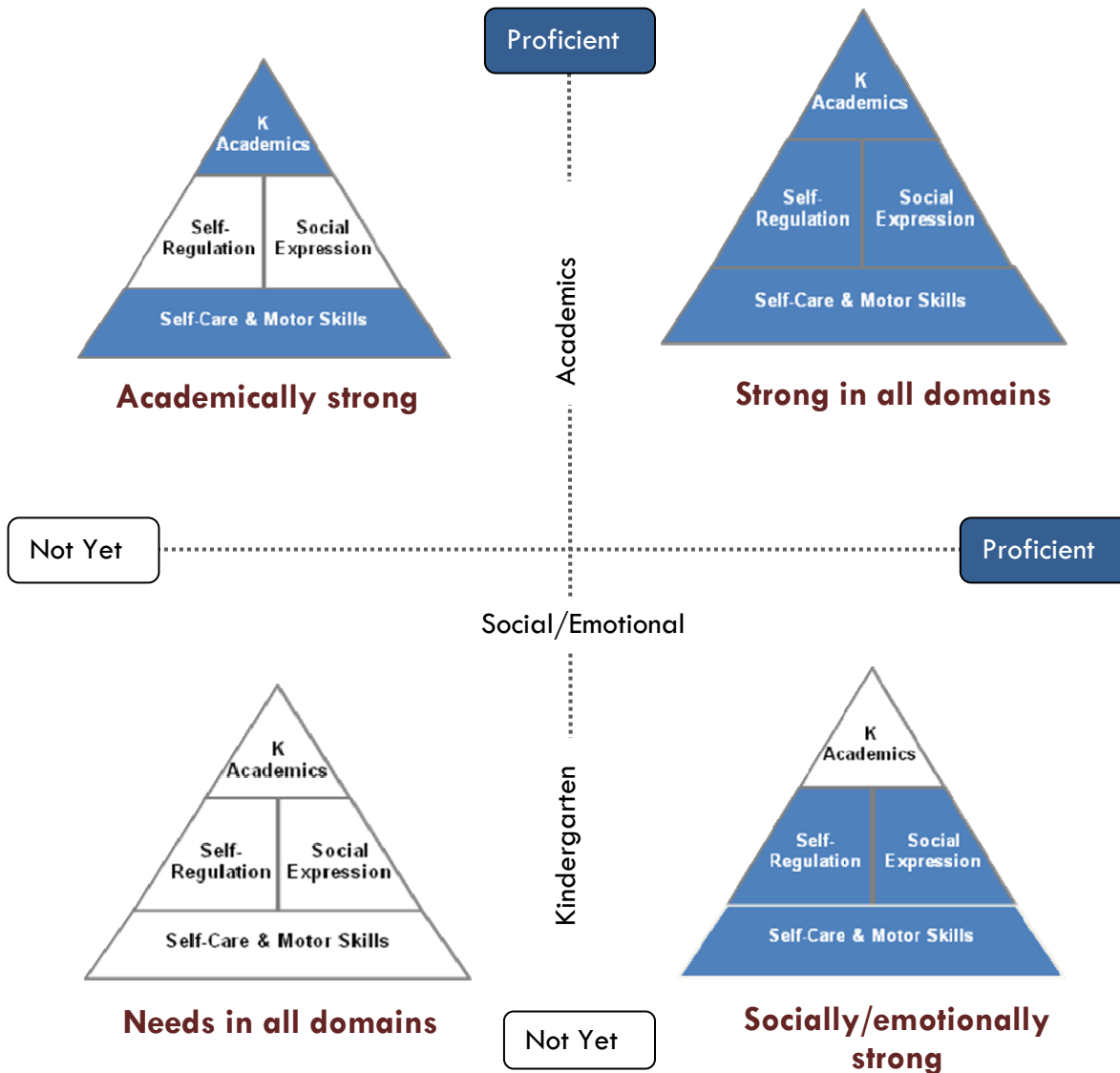


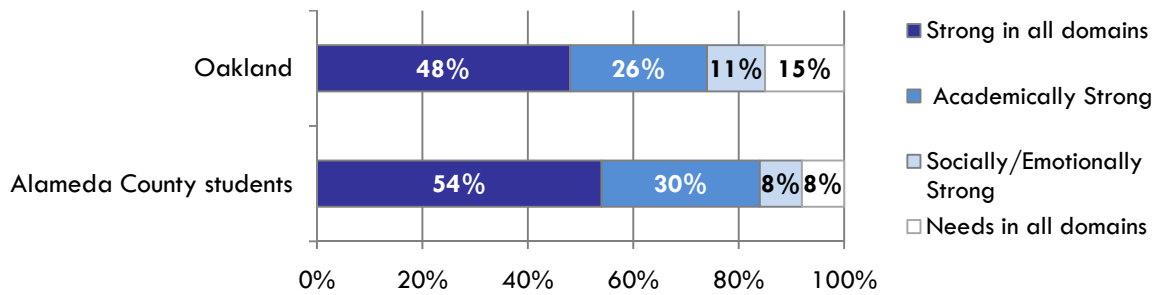
Figure 16 on the following page shows the percentage of Oakland Unified and county-wide students who sorted into each of the four *Readiness Portraits*.

- **Strong in all domains:** Just under half (48%) of assessed Oakland 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:** Fifteen 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, 26 percent of Oakland 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 Oakland 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 Oakland Unified students in this sample were slightly less likely to have a readiness profile that showed strengths across all readiness dimensions, and they were nearly twice as likely to have significant readiness needs across all readiness dimensions.

Figure 16. Prevalence of Four Portraits of Students' Readiness



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form I (2010).

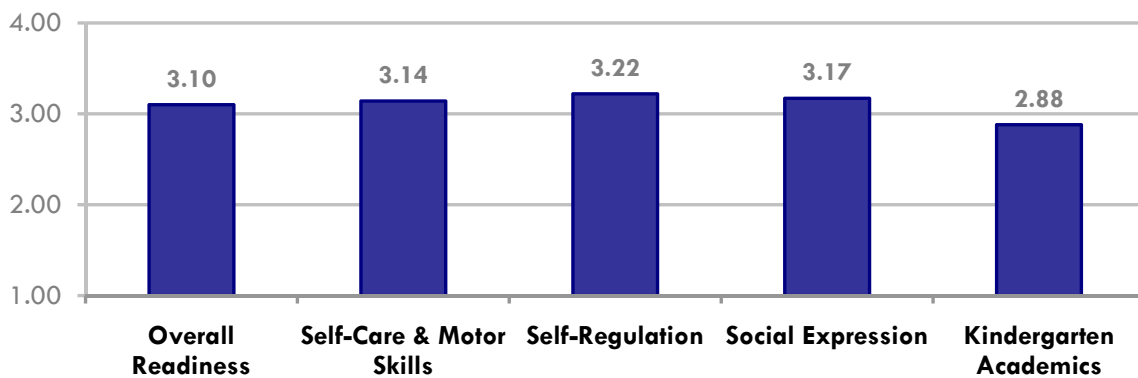
Note: This chart is based on 189 Oakland Unified students and 1369 county-wide students.

An Overview of Oakland 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 Oakland Unified kindergarten teachers thought their students should have when they enter school. As Figure 14 in the previous section showed, 63 percent of Oakland Unified students were above these levels on all of the four *Basic Building Blocks* dimensions. The Oakland Unified teachers expected the highest proficiency on *Self-Regulation* and the least proficiency on *Kindergarten Academics*.

Figure 17. Teachers' Desired 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 12 Oakland Unified teachers.

When Oakland Unified teachers were asked to choose only five skills that they believed were most 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 8 of the 12 teachers – was children's ability to stay focused and pay attention during activities.

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
Stays focused/pays attention during activities	Self-Regulation	8
Uses small manipulatives	Self-Care & Motor Skills	5
Performs basic self-help/self-care skills	Self-Care & Motor Skills	5
Controls impulses and self-regulates	Self-Regulation	5
Recognizes letters of the alphabet	Kindergarten Academics	5

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

Note: Scores are based on 12 Oakland Unified teachers.

Teachers 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, such as recognizing primary shapes and colors.

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
Recognizes primary shapes	Kindergarten Academics	6
Recognizes basic colors	Kindergarten Academics	6
Follows one- to two- step directions	Self-Regulation	5
Engages with books	Kindergarten Academics	5
Writes own first name	Kindergarten Academics	5

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

Note: Scores are based on 12 Oakland Unified teachers.

Finally, teachers in Oakland 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/paying attention during activities (*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	9
Controls impulses and self-regulates	Self-Regulation	6
Participates successfully in circle time	Self-Regulation	6
Recognizes rhyming words	Kindergarten Academics	4
Works and plays cooperatively with peers	Self-Regulation	4
Counts 10 objects correctly	Kindergarten Academics	4

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

Note: Scores are based on 12 Oakland Unified teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There are some positive messages about readiness levels in Oakland Unified. Almost half of the students have readiness strengths across the full spectrum of readiness skills, and 63 percent are meeting the average readiness levels that their teachers feel are needed for success in kindergarten. However, a number of students in this study were also struggling; fifteen percent had readiness needs across all skill domains, and in particular, average scores were somewhat lower than those of students county-wide in *Kindergarten Academics* and *Self-Regulation*.

Although preschool attendance rates were not as low as in other regions of the county, 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. Preschool experience has been particularly strongly linked to improvements in the types of *Kindergarten Academics* skills on which some Oakland Unified students have needs.

In addition, according to teachers, Oakland Unified students have the greatest needs in developing skills that relate to *Self-Regulation*; this domain has the greatest percentage of students who are not meeting teachers' expected proficiency levels. 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