FIRST 5 SOLANO
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

CHILDREN ARE OUR BOTTOM LINE

2013 Pre-Kindergarten Academies Report

Introduction

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Academies provide quality early childhood education for children entering Kindergarten. In prior years, First 5 Solano funded Pre-K Academies through its School Readiness initiative at four established school readiness sites throughout the county. In 2011/12, First 5 California matching funds for this initiative ended; the First 5 Solano Commission retained the Pre-K Academy component of its local School Readiness initiative for their FY2012-2015 funding cycle.

For 2012/13, First 5 Solano solicited applications for Pre-K Academy Services for Summer 2013 from qualified applicants earlier in the fiscal year, in order to provide applicants with sufficient time to hire staff and conduct more extensive outreach and parent engagement activities prior the start of the Academies.

As a result of increased funding and support, demand for the services was higher, and the Commission ultimately funded additional slots, allowing the program to expand to over double the capacity of the previous year. 9 providers served 426 children in 20 sites.

Organizations that received funds agreed to conduct the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile (KSEP)[1] to all children attending academies, and provide the results to First 5 Solano. KSEP findings for key milestones measuring Kindergarten Readiness, and demographic information related to children attending the academy are presented in this report.

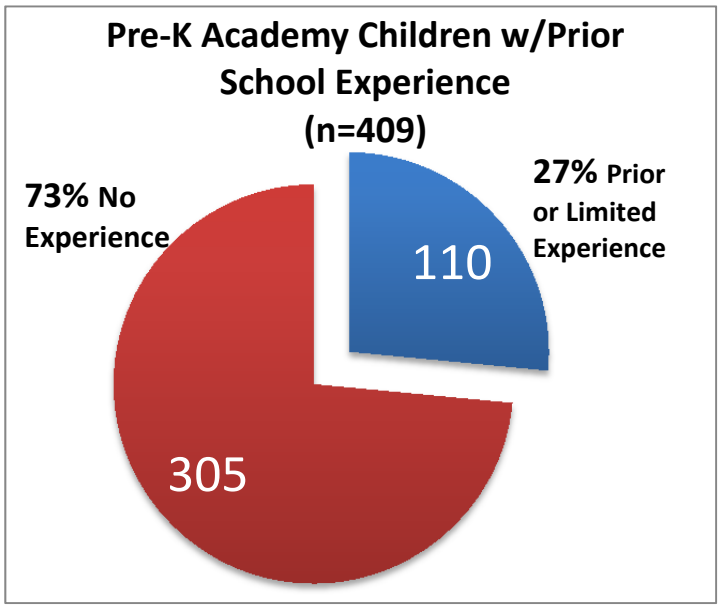
Overall, the results of the 2013 Pre-Kindergarten Academies are positive. Sites were successful in recruiting a high percentage of children (73%) with no prior pre-school experience and the increased outreach allowed all sites to maintain at least a 78% attendance rate, while most maintained over 90%. Several sites reported success with using the lunch program and the "backpack" program, which provided a backpack full of supplies at the end of the academy, to help ensure that children attended regularly.

The data also show that overall, children attending Pre-K Academies showed gains in all components of the Social/Emotional and Cognitive scales of the KSEP. This outcome supports that children are able to benefit from short, targeted programs to help them become ready for school in the fall.

[1] The KSEP is a teacher observation and assessment tools that helps gauge school readiness based on children's capacities on 22 items in 3 primary competency areas – social/emotional, physical and cognitive. The tool is used as children begin the program, and again as children complete the program. Of the 414 children attending Pre-K Academies, 409 children had consent and both pre- and post-assessments were completed and included in the study. **Note** that the KSEP results offer a snapshot into the school readiness of children who attended the program and that this only one evaluation tool that can be used to determine the effectiveness and importance of Pre-K Academies and school readiness activities.

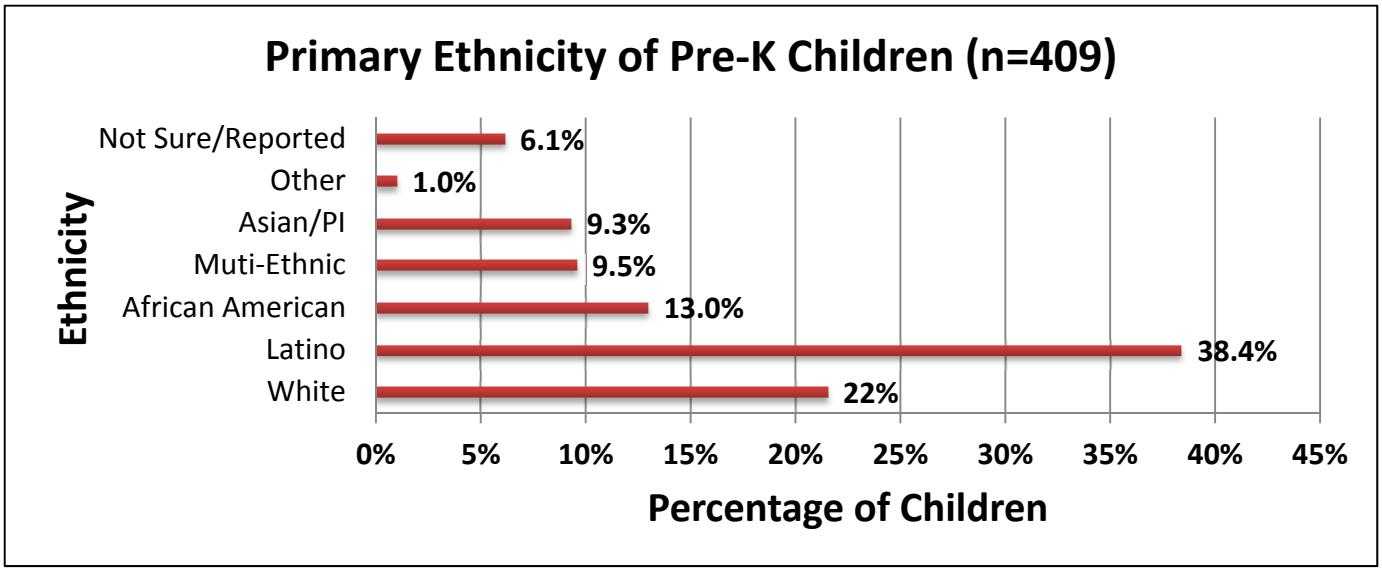
Outreach Priorities

First 5 Solano specifically sought to support children who had not participated in any prior pre-school activities by performing specific outreach to this population of children. Of the children attending 2013 Academies, 73% had no prior experience and 27% had some preschool experience, but were challenged also as English Language Learners or were considered "high-risk" due to factors such as poverty, remoteness, substance abuse, family violence, child abuse and neglect and special needs.



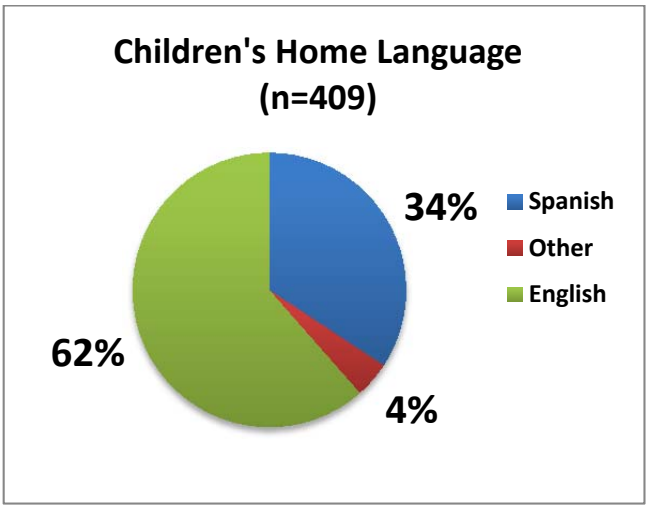
Ethnicity

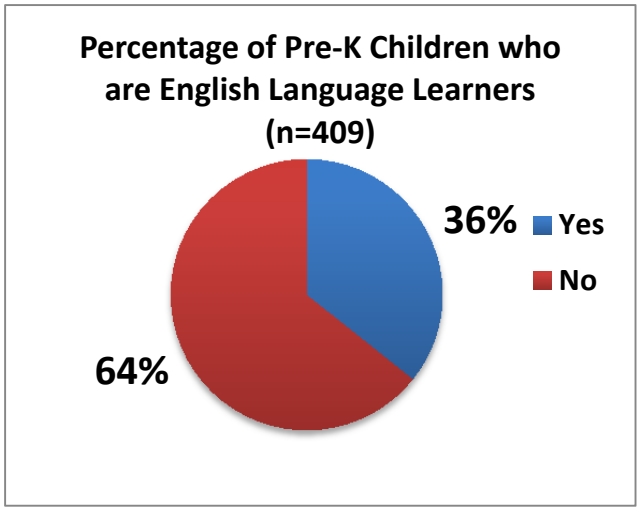
The primary ethnicity of children attending Pre-K Academies (self-identified) was Latino (39%) followed by White (22%).



Language

The number of English Language learners was down10% from the previous year. This may be attributed to the fact that this year was the first year that the Pre-Kindergarten Academies were made available in all parts of the county, not just in school readiness catchment areas, which were in neighborhoods with low-performing schools as measured by the Academic Performance Index (API). This would also account for "Children's "Home Language" figures showing that the number of children with Spanish as their home language also dropped by 7% from the previous year.





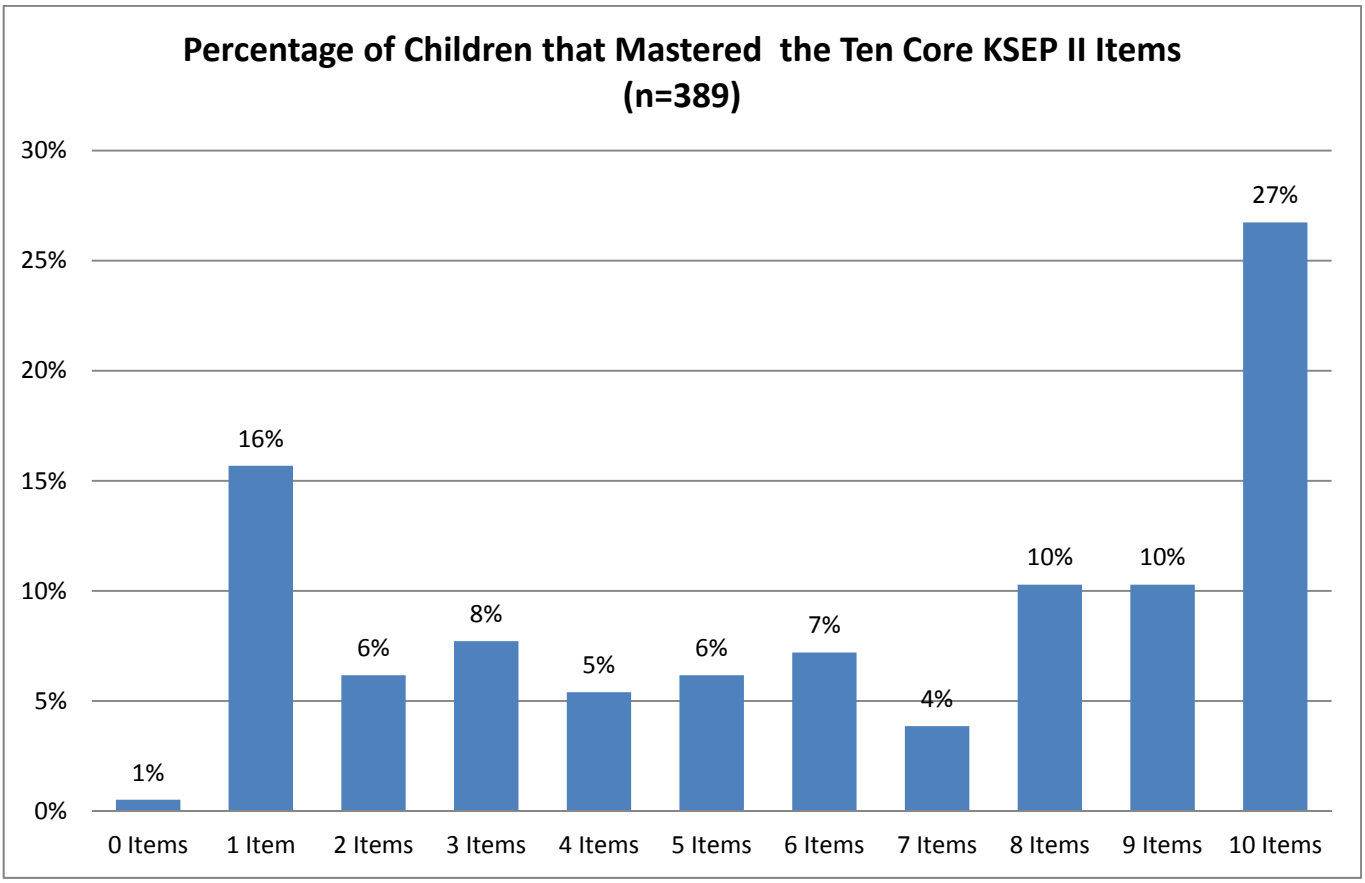
Language

Unlike in prior years, English Language Learners made larger gains than their English speaking counterparts. In addition, the gains made by English Language Learners are much higher than in past years and there has been a slight decrease English speaking student gains, this resulted in both groups of having the same percentage of student exhibiting improved mastery in the Social/Emotional Domain, and almost the same level of increased mastery in the Cognitive domain.

Percentage of Students that Demonstrated Mastery by Language Spoken				
Domain	Spanish Speaking Students (n=130)		English Speaking Students (n=234)	
	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit
Social/Emotional	57%	82%	62%	82%
Cognitive	53%	83%	68%	85%

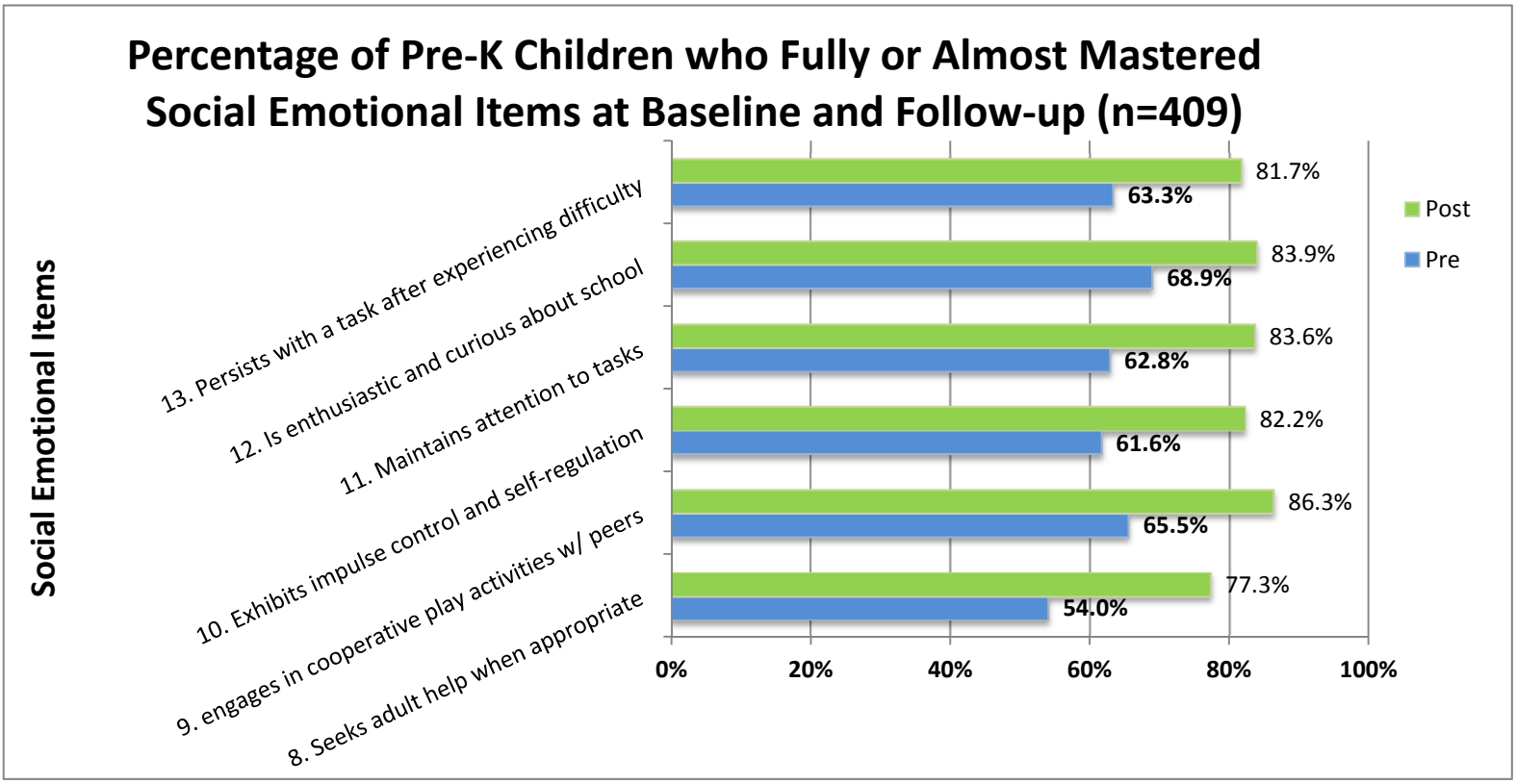
Mastery of Core KSEP Items

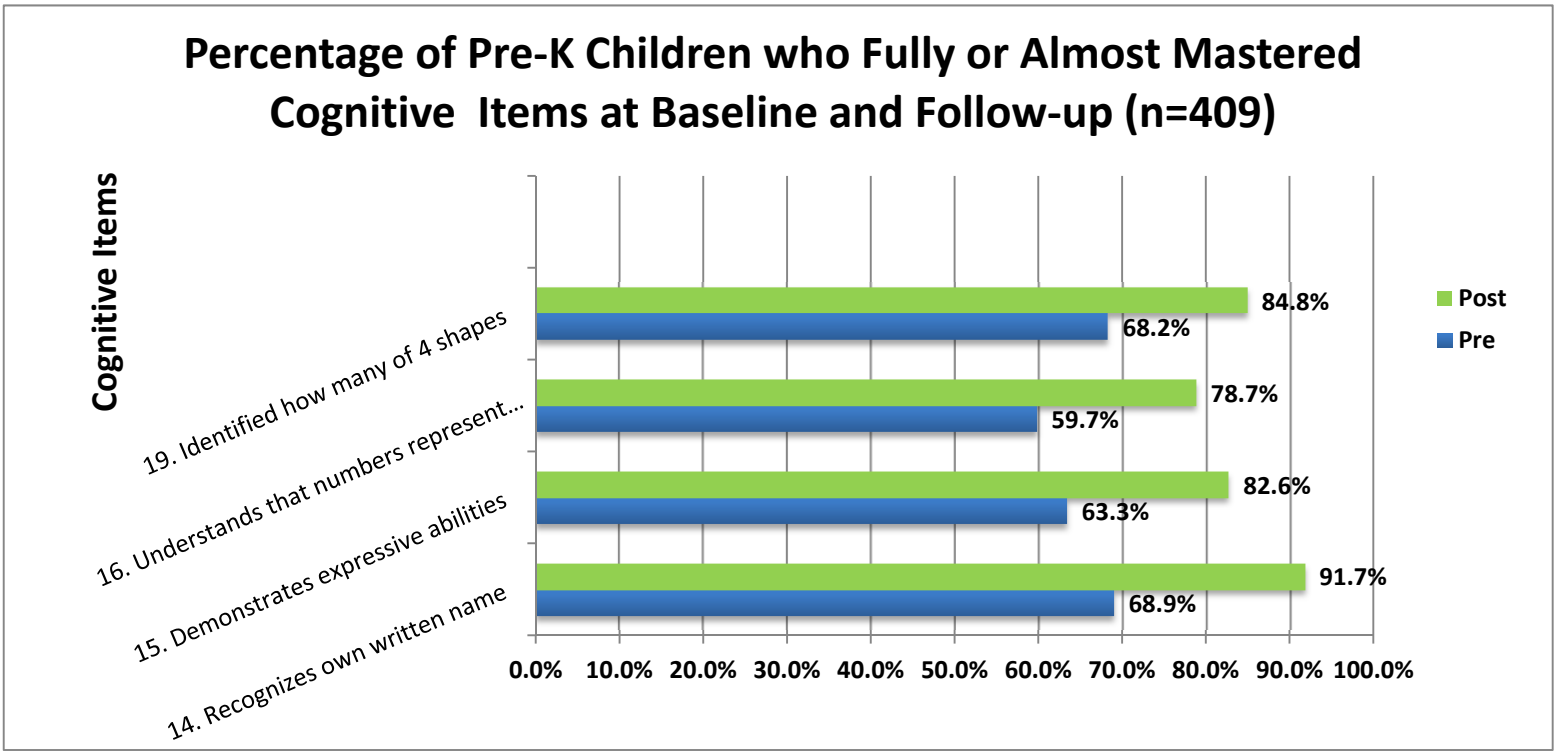
According to UCSB, the KSEP II designer, longitudinal studies, only children who master 7 of the 10 core KSEP II items at the end of Pre-Kindergarten Academies or the beginning of Kindergarten, perform at or above reading levels in the 2nd grade. As shown in the chart below, 51% of children assessed in a Pre-Kindergarten Academy would meet this standard.



Social Emotional & Cognitive Items

Overall, children attending Pre-K Academies showed improvement in post-assessments (KSEP) in all Social/Emotional and Cognitive areas, indicating that the Pre-kindergarten Academies better position young children to enter school ready to learn.





Social/Emotional and Cognitive Items by Site

Listed below is the summary data for social/emotional items identified by site. These data can be influenced by the type of curriculum used in the Pre-Kindergarten Academy, as well as the teaching style and the environment in which the assessment is administered (classroom vs. family childcare). These data will be shared with each site to make adjustments as necessary with future classes. It should be noted that the assessment sample for 2013 is significantly higher than in years past and more extensive training in the assessment tool was provided to teachers.

Social/Emotional Item	Percentage of Pre-K Children who Fully or Almost Mastered Social Emotional Items at Entry and Exit by Site															
	Loma Vista		Building Blocks		Monts Family		Loving Care		Foundation Home		Semple		Circle of Friends		DH White	
	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex
Seeks adult help when appropriate	83%	100%	100%	100%	86%	100%	71%	71%	100%	100%	58%	88%	100%	100%	72%	86%
Engages in cooperative play activities with peers	91%	100%	100%	100%	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	83%	100%	100%	76%	86%
Exhibits impulse control and self regulation	80%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	57%	86%	100%	100%	75%	83%	100%	100%	86%	86%
Maintains attention to tasks	91%	98%	0%	100%	57%	86%	57%	86%	100%	100%	83%	83%	100%	100%	79%	83%
Is enthusiastic and curious about school	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	88%	95%	95%	79%	83%
Persists with a task after experiencing difficulty	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%	86%	71%	100%	100%	100%	96%	96%	95%	100%	76%	83%
Social Emotional Domain Averages	***90%***	***99%***	***83%***	***100%***	***88%***	***93%***	***76%***	***90%***	***100%***	***100%***	***77%***	***87%***	***98%***	***99%***	***78%***	***84%***

Social/ Emotional Item	Percentage of Pre-K Children who Fully or Almost Mastered Social Emotional Items at Entry and Exit by Site																	
	Center		Padan		Hemlock		Anna Kyle		L.Creek		Sheldon		D. Weir		Oakbrook		World Changers	
	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex
Seeks adult help when appropriate	72%	89%	48%	74%	27%	92%	47%	69%	0%	20%	72%	83%	5%	67%	44%	62%	47%	93%
Engages in cooperative play activities with peers	86%	93%	85%	100%	35%	100%	56%	82%	0%	30%	76%	86%	24%	95%	74%	85%	60%	93%
Exhibits impulse control and self-regulation	89%	96%	74%	85%	35%	92%	47%	73%	0%	38%	79%	93%	38%	100%	53%	56%	53%	87%
Maintains attention to tasks	68%	96%	67%	89%	35%	96%	47%	67%	0%	40%	83%	93%	67%	95%	62%	79%	73%	100%
Is enthusiastic and curious about school	86%	100%	74%	85%	38%	96%	58%	78%	0%	28%	76%	83%	57%	86%	76%	88%	80%	93%
Persists with a task after experiencing difficulty	93%	100%	59%	100%	35%	96%	38%	56%	0%	28%	76%	86%	57%	95%	65%	76%	60%	93%
Social Emotional Domain Averages	***82%***	***96%***	***68%***	***89%***	***34%***	***96%***	***49%***	***71%***	***0%***	***30%***	***77%***	***87%***	***41%***	***90%***	***62%***	***75%***	***62%***	***93%***

Cognitive Item	Percentage of Pre-K Children who Fully or Almost Mastered Cognitive Items at Entry and Exit by Site															
	Loma Vista		Building Blocks		Monts Family		Loving Care		Foundation Home		Semple		Circle of Friends		DH White	
	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex
Recognizes own written name	72%	100%	100%	100%	57%	100 %	86%	100%	100%	100%	96%	100%	95%	100%	86%	90%
Demonstrates expressive abilities (verbal expression)	83%	100%	100%	100%	71%	100 %	71%	100%	100%	100%	67%	88%	95%	100%	69%	76%
Understands that numbers represent quantity (number/ object correspondence)	57%	78%	100%	100%	29%	43%	43%	86%	71%	100%	79%	96%	90%	100%	83%	90%
Recognizes colors	65%	70%	100%	100%	71%	71%	86%	100%	100%	57%	83%	79%	14%	100%	93%	100%
Recognizes primary shapes	46%	63%	100%	100%	57%	100 %	100%	100%	57%	43%	75%	75%	81%	100%	79%	86%
Cognitive Domain Averages	**64%**	**82%**	**100%**	**100%**	**57%**	**83%**	**77%**	**97%**	**86%**	**80%**	**80%**	**88%**	**75%**	**100%**	**82%**	**88%**

Cognitive Item	Percentage of Pre-K Children who Fully or Almost Mastered Cognitive Items at Entry and Exit by Site																	
	Center		Padan		Hemlock		Anna Kyle		L.Creek		Sheldon		D. Weir		Oakbrook		World Changers	
	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex	Ent	Ex
Recognizes own written name	89%	100%	33%	96%	100%	100%	67%	96%	0%	58%	79%	83%	57%	95%	79%	91%	60%	87%
Demonstrates expressive abilities (verbal expression)	93%	96%	59%	74%	50%	96%	62%	82%	0%	18%	83%	86%	29%	90%	71%	88%	53%	93%
Understands that numbers represent quantity (number/ object correspondence)	96%	100%	67%	100%	73%	100%	40%	64%	0%	18%	83%	83%	14%	38%	79%	97%	47%	100%
Recognizes colors	93%	96%	81%	81%	92%	96%	64%	89%	95%	100%	86%	86%	62%	86%	88%	100%	47%	100%
Recognizes primary shapes	79%	96%	67%	81%	81%	96%	56%	64%	80%	98%	69%	76%	67%	81%	71%	85%	40%	93%
Cognitive Domain Averages	**90%**	**98%**	**61%**	**87%**	**79%**	**98%**	**58%**	**79%**	**35%**	**58%**	**80%**	**83%**	**46%**	**78%**	**78%**	**92%**	**49%**	**95%**

Conclusion and Recommendations

The data show that Pre-K Academies have a positive impact on children who will be entering Kindergarten. Based on the successes and lessons learned of the 2013 Pre-K Academies and the results of the evaluation, staff recommend that:

- Outreach continue to be a primary focus of Pre-K Academy service sites.
- Sites continue to provide bilingual staff on location
- Sites utilize federal lunch programs in their district and backpack programs as possible ways to maintain/attract parents to ensure that their children participate