

## E3: Kindergarten Readiness

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### What We Studied

As part of the region’s Blueprint for Educational Change™, Central Texas school districts, community early childhood education providers, community organizations, regional experts, and local workforce boards committed to meeting the goal: All Children Enter Kindergarten School Ready. An E3 Alliance led coalition collaborated almost two years to develop a guide to school readiness, *Ready, Set, K!* This guide provides specific instructional practices and developmental interventions for Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers, and serves to measure school readiness for Central Texas Kindergarteners.

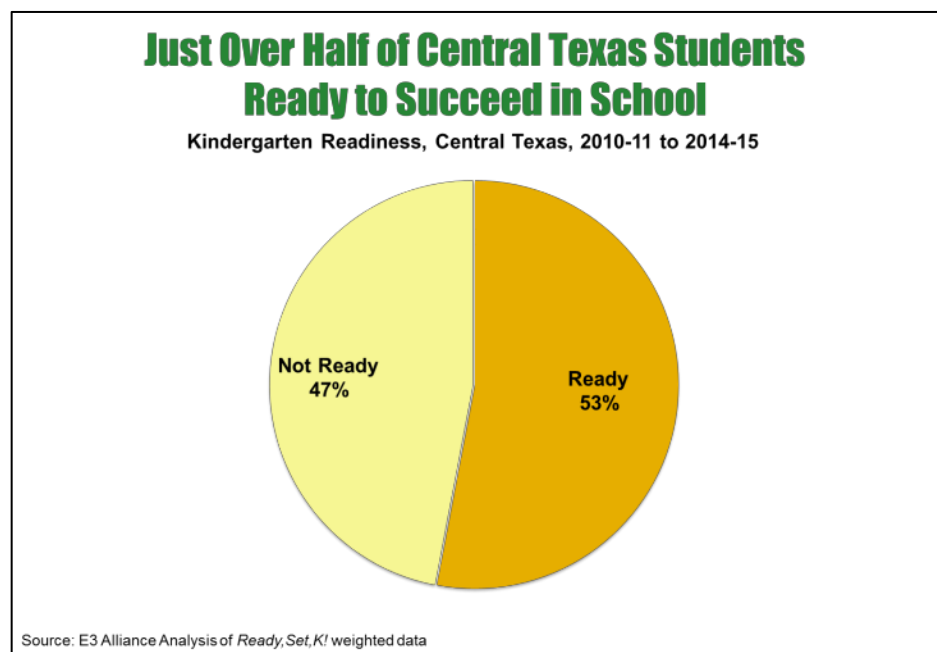
### How We Analyzed the Data

Since 2010, E3 Alliance has annually conducted the most comprehensive multi-component, student-centered assessment of Kindergarten Readiness ever in the state. Five years of data clearly show that almost half of Central Texas children are not ready for Kindergarten based on the *Ready, Set, K!* assessment that includes three components validated by factor analysis: Social Emotional skills, Language and Communication, and Emerging Literacy and Numeracy.

### What We Discovered

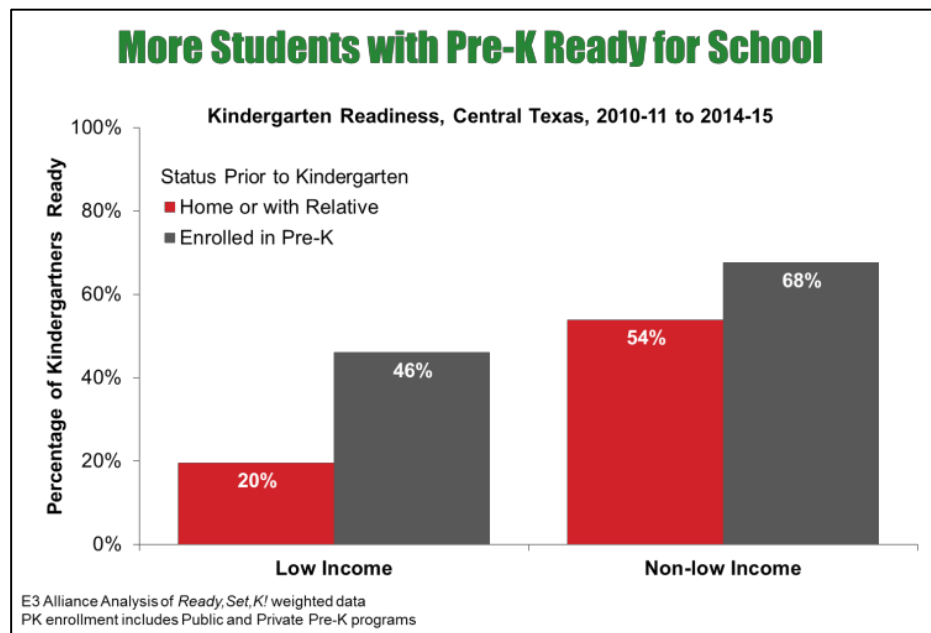
#### Child Outcomes Related to Income

The Kindergarten **Readiness study indicated that family income level is a strong predictor of readiness**; with children in low-income homes less likely to be ready for Kindergarten. When adjusting for income level, boys were less likely to be ready than girls, and Hispanic and Black children were less likely to be ready than White or Asian children. When adjusting for income level, overall readiness does not differ by language spoken at home, but English Language Learners are less ready in the language and communication readiness component.



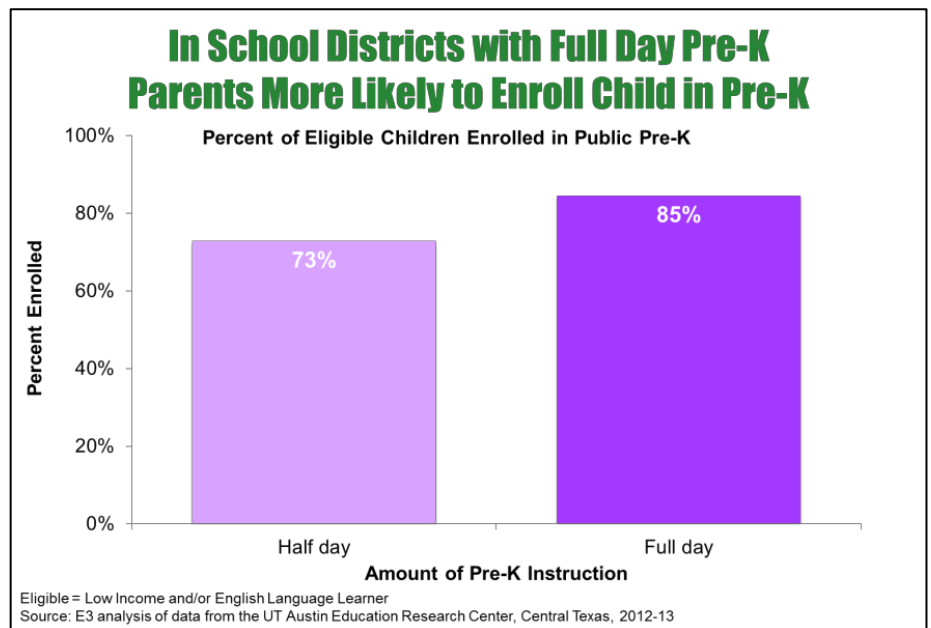
## Prior to Kindergarten

Both low income and Non-low income children who attend public or private Pre-K are significantly more likely to be ready for school when they enter Kindergarten than children who stayed at home or with a relative. In fact, when accounting for income and gender in a logistic regression analysis, **Kindergarten students who attended Pre-K were nearly four times more likely to be ready for school.** This presents a dual agenda for the region: the need to support Pre-K, especially for our poorest students, and the need to improve the quality and consistency of Pre-K instructional practice of public and private providers to ensure all children get the most out of this critical system.



## Public Pre-K Enrollment

E3 Alliance examined the relationship between districts having full or half day Pre-K and their Pre-K enrollment rates. The analysis included where students were in the year before Kindergarten as a function of whether their district offers full day or half day Pre-K. Districts with full day Pre-K programs had significantly higher rates of enrollment for eligible children (85%) as compared to districts with half day Pre-K programs (73%). Students in some of the districts with half day Pre-K were also provided wrap-around services that provide a seamless full day of services for a sub-population of students (children receiving Head Start or child care subsidy for example). Even knowing that some students received these wrap-around services, there is still a 12 percentage point gap between full and half day Pre-K enrollment rates, suggesting families are more likely to choose to utilize Pre-K if it is for the full school day.



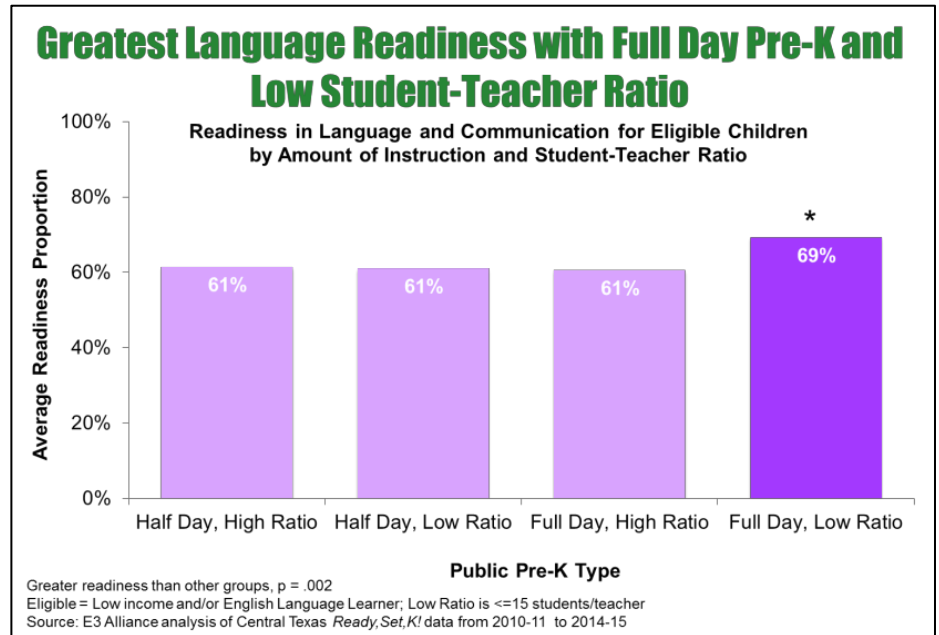
## Policy Recommendations

### Public Pre-K Practices Correlated with Higher Readiness

E3 Alliance also examined the relationship between full or half day Pre-K and subsequent Kindergarten readiness. Kindergartners in this analysis were assessed by *Ready, Set, K!* from 2010 to 2014 as part of E3 Alliance's Kindergarten Readiness Study. They were eligible for Pre-K and had been enrolled in Pre-K the prior year.

Because our previous findings had suggested that districts had made budget trade-offs between full day Pre-K and low student-teacher ratios, we included both full or half day Pre-K and student teacher ratio in this analysis. Low student-teacher ratio is defined as a district policy of 15 or fewer students per teacher and high ratio as a district policy of more than 15 students per teacher. We found that for overall readiness and for the domains of language & communication and emerging literacy & numeracy, eligible students who had full day Pre-K and a low student-teacher ratio showed greater Kindergarten readiness than those who had half-day Pre-K, a high student-teacher ratio, or both.

Notably, having either half day Pre-K or a high student teacher ratio did not yield greater readiness than having *both* half day Pre-K and a high student-teacher ratio. It took the combination of full day Pre-K and low student-teacher ratios to see greater Kindergarten readiness.




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