



FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Thursday, April 16, 2026
TIME: 1:00 PM
PLACE: 4000 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose CA 95117

Notice to the Public Regarding Meeting Procedures

The Commission may take other actions relating to the issues as may be determined following consideration of the matter and discussion of the recommended actions.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Ralph M. Brown Act, those requiring reasonable ADA accommodation for this meeting should notify FIRST 5 Santa Clara County 24 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 260-3700 or commission@first5kids.org.

REGULAR MEETING

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**
2. **Public Comment**

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Commission on any matter not on the agenda. All statements that request a response may, at the Commission's discretion, be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Commission or referred to staff for response. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3. **Consent Calendar**

There is no separate discussion of Consent Calendar items, and the recommended actions are voted on in one motion. If an item is approved on the consent vote, the specific action recommended by staff is adopted. Members of the public who wish to comment on Consent Calendar items should comment under this Item 3. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

- 3.1 **Consider Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes**

Attachment: 3.1A Commission Meeting Minutes: March 19, 2026

Recommended Action: Approve Commission Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2026.

3.2 **Consider Approval of revision to Defined Contribution Plans Committee (DCPC) Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter**

Attachment: 3.2A DCPC Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter with redlines

Recommended Action: Approve the DCPC Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter as revised.

End of Consent Calendar

4. **Welcome incoming Commissioner Alma Burrell**

5. **Receive Report on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)** (Nathan Thomas, Claire Miller – Applied Survey Research)

Attachment: 5A KRA Report

6. **Receive Presentation on Managed Care Plan MOU** (Kelsey, Bhatnagar, Nishma Samat-Singh)

Attachment: 6A PowerPoint Presentation

7. **Receive Update on Strategic Plan** (Jennifer Cloyd)

8. **Receive Report on Single Audit** (Maureen Shilling)

9. **Receive Staff Reports**

9.1 Finance and Operations (Maureen Shilling)

9.2 Human Resources (Edgar Gil)

10. **Receive Executive Director Report** (Jennifer Cloyd)

11. **Receive Committee Reports**

11.1 Receive Report from Defined Contributions Plan Committee (DCP)

Attachment: 11.1A DCP Committee Special meeting agenda: April 1, 2026

11.2 Receive Report from Program & Evaluation Committee (P&E)

Attachment: 11.2A P&E Committee meeting agenda: April 13, 2026

11.3 Receive Report from Issues: Review & Development Committee (IRD)

Attachment: 11.3A Issues: Review and Development Committee meeting agenda: April 15, 2026

11.4 Receive Report from Personnel and Finance Committee (P&F)

There is no report from Personnel and Finance Committee.

12. **Announcements**

13. **Adjourn**

Next Special Commission Meeting: May 27, 2026

Next Regular Commission Meeting: June 18, 2026



FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Thursday, March 19, 2026
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REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairperson Daniel Little called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. with Commissioners Cathy Boettcher, Antonia Charles, Susan Ellenberg, Leticia Pelayo, Rachel Samoff, Anne Souza, and Breenu Sra present. Vice Chairperson Kathleen King was absent. A quorum was present.

2. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

3. Consent Calendar

3.1 Consider Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes

Recommended Action: Approve Commission Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2026.

3.2 Consider approval and adoption of amended FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee Bylaws

Recommended Action: Approve and adopt the Amended FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee Bylaws.

3.3 Consider delegation of authority to Executive Director to negotiate, execute, and amend agreements of up to \$110,000 per agreement to resolve existing or potential litigation, following approval by the Chairperson of the Commission and approval by legal counsel as to form and legality. Delegation of authority will expire on March 27, 2026.

Recommended Action: Approve delegation of authority to Executive Director to negotiate, execute, and amend agreements of up to \$110,000 per agreement to resolve existing or potential litigation, following approval by the Chairperson of the Commission and approval by legal counsel as to form and legality. Delegation of authority will expire on March 27, 2026.

The Commission approved the Consent Calendar as submitted.

Motion: Ellenberg

Second: Charles

Approved 8-0

4. **Election of Commission Vice-Chair for calendar year 2026** (Nominating Committee)

Chairperson Little advised that the Committee nominated Commissioner Sra to serve as FIRST 5 Vice Chairperson for Calendar Year 2026.

On motion of Chairperson Little, seconded by Commissioner Charles, the Commission unanimously elected Commissioner Sra to serve as Vice Chairperson for Calendar Year 2026.

5. **Convene a Public Hearing on the First 5 California 2024-2025 Annual Report** (Commission Chair)

Recommended Action: Accept the First 5 California 2024-2025 Annual Report.

Chairperson Little opened the public hearing. No public testimony was received. Chairperson Little closed the public hearing.

Jennifer Cloyd, Chief Executive Officer, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County (FIRST 5), advised that the Annual Report is a requirement of FIRST 5 California that summarizes activities for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Motion: Samoff

Second: Charles

Accepted 8-0

6. **Receive Presentation on Farm to ECE** (Eula Idemoto)

Eula Idemoto, Director, Early Learning and Care, FIRST 5, provided the Farm to Home Program presentation, outlining the project timeline, outcomes, participant feedback, and the partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank.

Discussion ensued relating to engagements at Veggielution and methods to select providers.

7. **Receive Report on Financial Sustainability** (Jennifer Cloyd)

Ms. Cloyd provided a presentation highlighting the four focus areas relating to FIRST 5 financial sustainability, including obtaining long-term funding sources, reduced spending, identifying alternative funding for partners, and supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout all FIRST 5 investments.

Discussion ensued relating to wrap reinvestment fund qualifications and home visiting program outreach efforts. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Boettcher, Ms. Cloyd and Trena Hudson-Davis, Executive, Early Learning and Care, FIRST 5, described Building Equitable Early Learning Systems goals within the FIRST 5 California Strategic Plan.

Ms. Cloyd noted funding uncertainty and associated proactive measures by FIRST 5 to ensure the long-term ability to provide services to children and families.

8. **Receive Report on First 5 Association Policy Priorities** (Jennifer Cloyd)

Ms. Cloyd provided a presentation relating to the FIRST 5 2026 policy priorities and highlighted advocacy and legislative efforts.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Ellenberg, Ms. Cloyd described FIRST 5 Association and FIRST 5 California partnership efforts with childcare advocates to seek funding in unison.

9. **Receive Staff Reports**

9.1 Human Resources (Edgar Gil)

Edgar Gil, Director, People and Culture, FIRST 5, advised of anticipated open positions for early learning program officers in the next few weeks. He stated that he will clarify the associated job titles at a subsequent meeting.

10. **Receive Executive Director Report** (Jennifer Cloyd)

Ms. Cloyd announced the completion of roof and thermostat repairs, and noted that staff returned to the office on Moorpark Avenue in San Jose on Monday, March 16, 2026.

Ms. Cloyd further highlighted the Family Child Care Leadership Conference at the Mexican Heritage Plaza on Saturday, March 7, 2026, and advised that applications are open for the Standing Firm for Families grant.

Ms. Cloyd stated that she will report to the Committee on date uncertain relating to the pending compensation study.

11. **Receive Committee Reports**

11.1 Receive Report from Defined Contributions Plan Committee (Maureen Shilling)

Ms. Cloyd noted efforts of the Committee to transition Defined Contribution Plan accounts to Empower and update the Investment Policy Statement to permit catch-up contributions through Roth individual retirement accounts.

12. **Announcements**

Commissioner Boettcher announced the Early Learning Professionals Symposium at the Santa Clara County Office of Education in San Jose on May 2, 2026.

Commissioner Ellenberg announced a press conference on March 20, 2026 in partnership with Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens relating to childcare facility investments and State-funded childcare vouchers.

13. **Adjourn**

Chairperson Little adjourned the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colin Kutch
Deputy Clerk



**FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
Defined Contribution Plans
Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter**

I. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter (“Charter”) is to guide **FIRST 5 Santa Clara County** (the “Plan Sponsor” or “FIRST 5”) in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities with respect to the following two governmental defined contribution plans (the “Plans”):

Plan Name	Type
First 5 Santa Clara County Retirement Plan	Governmental 401(a)
First 5 Santa Clara County Deferred Compensation Plan	Governmental 457(b)

The Plan Sponsor acts through its governing board, which is known as the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission (the “Commission”). It is the intent and purpose of this Charter that the Plan Sponsor, acting through the Commission, establish the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee (the “Committee”) and delegate to the Committee certain rights, powers, and duties with respect to the Plans.

II. Establishment of the Committee, Delegation of Fiduciary Responsibility, and Indemnification

The Commission hereby establishes the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee for the purpose of overseeing the governance and operation of the Plans. The Commission expects and intends that the Committee will make discretionary decisions with respect to the Plans, and for that reason the Commission delegates certain functional fiduciary responsibilities to the Committee, as set forth in this Charter.

III. Delegation of Fiduciary Responsibility to Committee; Indemnification

- a. *Plan Sponsor’s Fiduciary Responsibilities.* Consistent with applicable law, the Plan Sponsor’s objectives as they relate to fiduciary responsibility and maintenance and operation of the Plans include the following:
 - 1. Maintain the Plans for the exclusive benefit of participants while avoiding any prohibited transactions and/or conflicts of interest;
 - 2. Exercise prudence in all respects while executing fiduciary responsibilities;
 - 3. Diversify designated investment alternatives available to participants under the Plans; and,
 - 4. Ensure conformity of each Plan’s operations to the Plan document provisions and applicable law.
- b. *Committee Must Act to Carry Out Plan Sponsor’s Fiduciary Responsibilities.* The Committee shall at all times act for the purpose of carrying out these fiduciary responsibilities, and shall at all times do so in a manner consistent with applicable law, the governing documents of the Plans, this Charter, and such bylaws as the Committee may adopt. **Therefore, it is the intent and purpose of this Charter that the Committee, and each member of the Committee, be a fiduciary with respect to the Plans.**

- c. *Designation of Fiduciaries.* The Commission and the Committee and the persons they designate to carry out or help carry out their duties or responsibilities are fiduciaries under the Plans. Each fiduciary has only those duties or responsibilities specifically assigned to them under the Plans or delegated to them by another fiduciary. Each fiduciary may assume that any direction, information, or action of another fiduciary is proper and need not inquire into the propriety of any such action, direction, or information, unless a reasonable fiduciary with specialized knowledge or training would believe a further inquiry is needed. Except as provided by law or as set out in this Charter, no fiduciary will be responsible for the malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of any other fiduciary.
- d. *Fiduciary Standards.*
 - 1. All fiduciaries (including the Committee and its members) shall discharge their duties with respect to the Plans solely in the interests of the participants and beneficiaries of the Plans and consistent with law. Such duties shall be discharged for the exclusive purpose of providing benefits to the participants and beneficiaries and to protect assets of the Plans.
 - 2. All fiduciaries (including the Committee and its members) shall discharge their duties with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with like aims, and as defined by applicable law.
- e. *Indemnification.* Fiduciaries who fail to meet their responsibilities may be personally liable for breach of fiduciary duty. For the public purpose of ensuring the availability and willingness of competent and well-qualified individuals to serve on the Committee, discharge their rights, powers, and duties as members of the Committee, and act with appropriate care, skill, prudence, and diligence with respect to the Plans, the Plan Sponsor shall and hereby does indemnify and hold harmless the Committee and each member of the Committee from any claims and liabilities based on an alleged breach of fiduciary duty, except that the Plan Sponsor shall not indemnify or hold harmless the Committee or any member of the Committee from claims or liabilities arising solely from the Committee's or a Committee member's gross negligence or willful misconduct or alleged gross negligence or willful misconduct.

IV. Plan Sponsor's Reservation of Fiduciary Authority and Responsibilities Under the Plans

The Plan Sponsor, acting through the Commission, shall retain decision rights regarding any substantive changes to the Plans that may impact Plan costs, including changes to eligibility for benefits and/or changes in employer contributions. Nothing in this Charter is intended or shall be construed to remove or limit the authority or discretion of the Plan Sponsor with respect to the Plans.

V. Committee Membership, Structure, and Governance

- a. *Membership.*
 - 1. The Committee shall be composed of the following four members, who shall each be a member of the Committee ex officio based on their position of employment with FIRST 5:
 - i. The FIRST 5 Executive Director;
 - ii. The FIRST 5 Executive of Finance and Operations;
 - iii. The FIRST 5 Executive of People & Culture; or, in the case of a vacancy in that position, the FIRST 5 Director of Human Resources; and
 - iv. The FIRST 5 Controller.

2. The Commission strongly discourages any member listed above from appointing a designee to serve on the Committee, but any member described in subparagraphs V(a)(1)(ii) through (iv) may designate another person to serve on the Committee in their stead, subject to prior written approval by the Executive Director and the Chairperson of the Commission and approval by counsel as to form and legality.
 3. During any vacancy of a position described in subparagraphs V(a)(1)(ii) through (iv), the Executive Director shall have the authority to appoint as a temporary member of the Committee any person who is an employee of FIRST 5 or a participant in at least one of the Plans. Such person shall be a member of the Committee only during the vacancy, and the Executive Director shall retain authority to replace that temporary member by appointing another temporary member under this subparagraph V(a)(3).
 4. Reference to each of the positions of employment identified in subparagraph V(a)(1) shall be construed to include any successor to that position, as confirmed by the Committee.
 5. *Authority to Clarify Committee Membership.* To the extent of any uncertainty or lack of clarity regarding the membership of the Committee arising out of ambiguity in this Charter, the Executive Director shall have the authority to resolve the ambiguity in the manner the Executive Director determines best implements the intent and purpose of the Charter and is in the best interests of the Plans' participants and beneficiaries. Examples of uncertainty or lack of clarity for purposes of this subparagraph V(a)(5) include (but are not limited to) instances where more than one person holds a position listed in subparagraph V(a)(1) or where FIRST 5 has changed the titles and/or responsibilities of a position listed in subparagraph V(a)(1).
- b. *Conflicts of Interest.* The Committee and its members shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local conflict of interests laws and regulations, including, without limitation, California Government Code section 1090 *et seq.*; the California Political Reform Act (California Government Code § 87100 *et seq.*) and the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission concerning disclosure and disqualification (2 Cal. Code Regs. § 18700 *et seq.*); and California Government Code section 1125 *et seq.* A member of the Committee shall be disqualified from voting on any matter relating to a transaction in which they have a financial interest, as required by law or applicable policy.
 - c. *Officers.* The Committee shall by majority vote select a Chairperson and a Secretary from among the members of the Committee. The term of office of the Chairperson and Secretary shall each be one year and expire on January 1 of each year. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Chairperson or as Secretary. The Chairperson and the Secretary shall not be the same person. In the absence of a selection by the Committee, the Executive Director shall serve as the Chairperson and the FIRST 5 Executive of Finance and Operations shall serve as the Secretary.
 - d. *Bylaws.* Subject to the limitations of the Plans, applicable law, and this Charter, the Committee shall adopt and may from time to time amend bylaws, which shall serve as the rules for the administration of the Committee and the transaction of its business, including the times and places for holding meetings, the notices to be given with respect for such meetings, and procedures for addressing conflicts of interest, including abstention, recusal, and other matters. The bylaws shall not take effect except upon review and approval by counsel as to form and legality and review and approval of the Commission.
 - e. *Public Meetings.* The Committee shall conduct its business in a manner consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code § 54950 *et seq.*).
 - f. *Frequency and Location of Meetings.* Regular meetings of the Committee shall take place at such times and with such frequency as the Committee determines to be appropriate and as the Commission may

otherwise direct; *provided, however*, that the Committee shall meet least twice per year, including at least once between January 1 and June 30 and once between July 1 and December 31. Except as the Commission may otherwise determine or exigencies may otherwise require, meetings of the Committee shall take place at the office of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County. The Chairperson may call additional meetings at their discretion and must call additional meetings upon the request of three or more members of the Committee.

- g. *Conduct of the Meeting.* The Chairperson shall be responsible for the preparation of the meeting agenda and materials and for conducting the meeting.
- h. *Quorum and Voting.* A quorum is required to conduct business at any meeting of the Committee. A quorum shall be three, which is the smallest number of Committee members that is greater than fifty percent of the total number of all Committee membership seats, whether filled or vacant. No action shall be taken or approved except upon the affirmative vote of a majority of all members present and qualified to vote on the matter (i.e., not recused from consideration of the matter), and upon the affirmative vote of at least two members of the committee.
- i. *Delegation to Act on Behalf of Committee.* The Committee may delegate to one or more of its members authority to act on its behalf, to give notice in writing of any action taken by the Committee, and to contract for legal, recordkeeping, accounting, clerical, and other services to carry out the purposes of the Plans. The Committee may appoint such officers and/or subcommittees (the members of which need not be members of the Committee) with such powers as the Committee shall determine and may authorize to execute or deliver on behalf of the Plans.
- j. *Reports to the Commission.* No less than once per calendar year, and at such additional times as the Commission may direct or the Committee may determine, the Committee shall provide to the Commission a report that includes a summary of the activities of the Committee respecting the status of the administrative and investment activities of the Plans and such other information as the Committee or the Commission deems advisable.

VI. Plan Administrative Responsibilities

The Commission hereby delegates certain administrative responsibilities to the Committee with respect to the Plans. To the extent consistent with applicable law and the Plan documents for each Plan, the administrative responsibilities of the Committee shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following with respect to each Plan:

- a. Require any person to furnish information for the proper administration of the Plan as a condition to receiving benefits.
- b. Make and enforce rules and prescribe procedures for efficient Plan administration.
- c. Maintain all records necessary for Plan administration, other than those maintained by the recordkeeper.
- d. Interpret and construe the Plan and their related documents.
- e. Determine guidelines for benefits payable and claims for benefits under the Plan.
- f. Designate persons to carry out any fiduciary responsibilities of the Plan Administrator for the Plan.
- g. Execute amendments to Plan documents and/or policies as may be required by changes in applicable law and/or regulation.

- h. Execute amendments to Plan documents as the Committee determines are advisable; *provided, however*, that any plan document amendment impacting the operational cost of the Plan beyond a de minimis amount shall first be approved by the Commission.
- i. Communicate the Plan's provisions to participants as required by applicable law and oversee information provided to participants on the nature and characteristics of the investment alternatives available in the Plan to assist participants with making prudent asset allocation decisions and provide such additional information to participants, including pursuant to the provisions of subsections 404(c) and 404(a)(5) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) to the extent applicable.
- j. Determine employee eligibility to participate in the Plan in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- k. Enroll participants in the Plan in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- l. Ensure the timely deposit of participant salary deferrals to the participants' separate accounts under the Plan.
- m. Approve and administer participant loans and distributions in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- n. Prepare and review consolidated financial reporting for the Plan, including governmental reporting.
- o. Provide general oversight of the Plan's compliance with applicable laws and/or regulations.
- p. Retain recordkeepers/administrators, consultants, attorneys, auditors and other advisers to the plan as appropriate to assist with the aforementioned responsibilities.
- q. Monitor and evaluate the recordkeeper/administrator and other parties hired to perform delegated responsibilities to ensure reasonability of fees and appropriate execution of delegated responsibilities.
- r. Establish policies and procedures to allocate reasonable expenses incurred by the Plan.

VII. Plan Investment Responsibilities

The Commission hereby delegates certain investment related responsibilities to the Committee with respect to the Plans. To the extent consistent with applicable law and the Plan documents for each Plan, the Committee's investment related responsibilities shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following with respect to each Plan:

- a. *Investment Adviser.* The Committee may retain investment adviser(s) to serve in a non-discretionary capacity (as a fiduciary described in subsection 3(21) of ERISA) or in a discretionary capacity (as a fiduciary described in subsection 3(38) of ERISA). In the event the Committee retains a 3(38) discretionary adviser, the following responsibilities will be performed by the investment adviser, but the Committee retains the responsibility to monitor the investment adviser.
- b. *Investment Policy.* Develop investment objectives, guidelines and performance measurement standards consistent with the needs of the investments of the Plan as documented in an Investment Policy Statement.
- c. *Selection of Investment Managers.* Select investment funds for the Plan, ensuring their proper diversification, and monitoring their performance against appropriate benchmarks.

- d. *Selection of Default Investment Alternative.* Determine the default investment to be used if a participant does not make an investment election.
- e. *Monitoring Investments.* Provide on-going monitoring with respect to the investments of the Plan in the context of established standards of performance and taking whatever corrective action is deemed prudent and appropriate if objectives are not being met or if policies and guidelines are not being followed.
- f. *Monitoring Fees and Expenses.* Monitor the reasonableness of investment costs passed to Plan participants.

The Committee may take such other and further actions with respect to the investments of the Plan as are consistent with this Charter or as are set forth in the documents of the Plan or their related trusts or contracts, or which the Committee determines in its discretion are in the best interests of the Plan and participants.

VIII. Authority to Direct and Make Contributions on Behalf of Plan Sponsor

The Committee shall be, and hereby is, delegated the authority to direct and make employer contributions to the Plans, and/or to the accounts of any one or more individual participants in the Plans, on behalf of the Plan Sponsor that the Committee determines in a written and signed document to be appropriate and reasonably necessary for the proper fulfillment of fiduciary duties with respect to the Plans; *provided*, however, that (a) this delegation shall expire on December 31, 2026, (b) such delegated authority shall not exceed \$100,000 in the aggregate and \$15,000 with respect to any one individual participant, and (c) no exercise of this delegated authority shall be valid except upon the prior written approval of the Chairperson of the Commission and upon the prior written approval by counsel as to form and legality.

IX. Construction

This Charter is not intended, and shall not be interpreted, to limit the discretion of the Plan Sponsor. The Plan Sponsor, by the Commission, reserves the discretion to amend this Charter or make exceptions to this Charter as it may determine to be appropriate.

As used herein, the term “participants” shall be deemed to include participants and their beneficiaries, as appropriate.

X. Charter Review and Amendment

This Charter shall be reviewed periodically by the Commission, which may amend the Charter as it may determine to be appropriate, including, by way of example and not limitation, to reflect any relevant changes in a Plan’s operations, philosophy and/or objectives, as well as any relevant changes to applicable law.

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XI. Plan Document Coordination

In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this Charter, or any delegation of authority made pursuant to this Charter, and the provisions of the Plan document for each of the Plans, the terms of the Plan document shall govern.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission on April 16, 2026 by the following vote:

AYES: Cathy Boettcher, Antonia Charles, Susan Ellenberg, Kathleen King, Dan Little, Leticia Pelayo, Rachel Samoff, Anne Souza, Breenu Sra

NOES: —

ABSENT: —

ABSTAIN: —

DAN LITTLE
Chairperson
FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission

Approved as to Form and Legality:

RAVI RAJENDRA
Deputy County Counsel

DRAFT 3/13/2026



The First 5 years.
Make them count.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County

Defined Contribution Plans

Fiduciary Responsibility Delegation Charter

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 4. Ensure conformity of each Plan’s operations to the Plan document provisions and applicable law.
- b. *Committee Must Act to Carry Out Plan Sponsor’s Fiduciary Responsibilities.* The Committee shall at all times act for the purpose of carrying out these fiduciary responsibilities, and shall at all times do so in a manner consistent with applicable law, the governing documents of the Plans, this Charter, and such

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V. Committee Membership, Structure, and Governance

- a. *Membership.*
 1. The Committee shall be composed of the following four members, who shall each be a member of the Committee ex officio based on their position of employment with FIRST 5:
 - i. The FIRST 5 Executive Director;
 - ii. The FIRST 5 Executive of Finance and Operations;

iii. The FIRST 5 Executive of People & Culture; or, in the case of a vacancy in that position, the FIRST 5 Director of Human Resources; and

iv. The FIRST 5 Controller.

2. The Commission strongly discourages any member listed above from appointing a designee to serve on the Committee, but any member described in subparagraphs V(a)(1)(ii) through (iv) may designate another person to serve on the Committee in their stead, subject to prior written approval by the Executive Director and the Chairperson of the Commission and approval by counsel as to form and legality.

3. During any vacancy of a position described in subparagraphs V(a)(1)(ii) through (iv), the Executive Director shall have the authority to appoint as a temporary member of the Committee any person who is an employee of FIRST 5 or a participant in at least one of the Plans. Such person shall be a member of the Committee only during the vacancy, and the Executive Director shall retain authority to replace that temporary member by appointing another temporary member under this subparagraph V(a)(3).

4. Reference to each of the positions of employment identified in subparagraph V(a)(1) shall be construed to include any successor to that position, as confirmed by the Committee.

4.5. Authority to Clarify Committee Membership. To the extent of any uncertainty or lack of clarity regarding the membership of the Committee arising out of ambiguity in this Charter, the Executive Director shall have the authority to resolve the ambiguity in the manner the Executive Director determines best implements the intent and purpose of the Charter and is in the best interests of the Plans' participants and beneficiaries. Examples of uncertainty or lack of clarity for purposes of this subparagraph V(a)(5) include (but are not limited to) instances where more than one person holds a position listed in subparagraph V(a)(1) or where FIRST 5 has changed the titles and/or responsibilities of a position listed in subparagraph V(a)(1).

b. *Conflicts of Interest.* The Committee and its members shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local conflict of interests laws and regulations, including, without limitation, California Government Code section 1090 *et seq.*; the California Political Reform Act (California Government Code § 87100 *et seq.*) and the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission concerning disclosure and disqualification (2 Cal. Code Regs. § 18700 *et seq.*); and California Government Code section 1125 *et seq.* A member of the Committee shall be disqualified from voting on any matter relating to a transaction in which they have a financial interest, as required by law or applicable policy.

c. *Officers.* The Committee shall by majority vote select a Chairperson and a Secretary from among the members of the Committee. The term of office of the Chairperson and Secretary shall each be one year and expire on January 1 of each year. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Chairperson or as Secretary. The Chairperson and the Secretary shall not be the same person. In the absence of a selection by the Committee, the Executive Director shall serve as the Chairperson and the FIRST 5 Executive of Finance and Operations shall serve as the Secretary.

d. *Bylaws.* Subject to the limitations of the Plans, applicable law, and this Charter, the Committee shall adopt and may from time to time amend bylaws, which shall serve as the rules for the administration of the Committee and the transaction of its business, including the times and places for holding meetings, the notices to be given with respect for such meetings, and procedures for addressing conflicts of interest, including abstention, recusal, and other matters. The bylaws shall not take effect except upon review and approval by counsel as to form and legality and review and approval of the Commission.

- e. *Public Meetings.* The Committee shall conduct its business in a manner consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code § 54950 *et seq.*).
- f. *Frequency and Location of Meetings.* Regular meetings of the Committee shall take place at such times and with such frequency as the Committee determines to be appropriate and as the Commission may otherwise direct; *provided, however,* that the Committee shall meet least twice per year, including at least once between January 1 and June 30 and once between July 1 and December 31. Except as the Commission may otherwise determine or exigencies may otherwise require, meetings of the Committee shall take place at the office of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County. The Chairperson may call additional meetings at their discretion and must call additional meetings upon the request of three or more members of the Committee.
- g. *Conduct of the Meeting.* The Chairperson shall be responsible for the preparation of the meeting agenda and materials and for conducting the meeting.
- h. *Quorum and Voting.* A quorum is required to conduct business at any meeting of the Committee. A quorum shall be three, which is the smallest number of Committee members that is greater than fifty percent of the total number of all Committee membership seats, whether filled or vacant. No action shall be taken or approved except upon the affirmative vote of a majority of all members present and qualified to vote on the matter (i.e., not recused from consideration of the matter), and upon the affirmative vote of at least two members of the committee.
- i. *Delegation to Act on Behalf of Committee.* The Committee may delegate to one or more of its members authority to act on its behalf, to give notice in writing of any action taken by the Committee, and to contract for legal, recordkeeping, accounting, clerical, and other services to carry out the purposes of the Plans. The Committee may appoint such officers and/or subcommittees (the members of which need not be members of the Committee) with such powers as the Committee shall determine and may authorize to execute or deliver on behalf of the Plans.
- j. *Reports to the Commission.* No less than once per calendar year, and at such additional times as the Commission may direct or the Committee may determine, the Committee shall provide to the Commission a report that includes a summary of the activities of the Committee respecting the status of the administrative and investment activities of the Plans and such other information as the Committee or the Commission deems advisable.

VI. Plan Administrative Responsibilities

The Commission hereby delegates certain administrative responsibilities to the Committee with respect to the Plans. To the extent consistent with applicable law and the Plan documents for each Plan, the administrative responsibilities of the Committee shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following with respect to each Plan:

- a. Require any person to furnish information for the proper administration of the Plan as a condition to receiving benefits.
- b. Make and enforce rules and prescribe procedures for efficient Plan administration.
- c. Maintain all records necessary for Plan administration, other than those maintained by the recordkeeper.
- d. Interpret and construe the Plan and their related documents.
- e. Determine guidelines for benefits payable and claims for benefits under the Plan.

- f. Designate persons to carry out any fiduciary responsibilities of the Plan Administrator for the Plan.
- g. Execute amendments to Plan documents and/or policies as may be required by changes in applicable law and/or regulation.
- h. Execute amendments to Plan documents as the Committee determines are advisable; provided, however, that may be required by operational decisions resulting from the Plan Sponsor's changed objectives. ~~Any~~ plan document amendments impacting the operational cost of the Plan beyond a de minimis amount shall first be approved by the Commission.
- i. Communicate the Plan's provisions to participants as required by applicable law and oversee information provided to participants on the nature and characteristics of the investment alternatives available in the Plan to assist participants with making prudent asset allocation decisions and provide such additional information to participants, including pursuant to the provisions of subsections 404(c) and 404(a)(5) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) to the extent applicable.
- j. Determine employee eligibility to participate in the Plan in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- k. Enroll participants in the Plan in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- l. Ensure the timely deposit of participant salary deferrals to the participants' separate accounts under the Plan.
- m. Approve and administer participant loans and distributions in accordance with applicable Plan document provisions.
- n. Prepare and review consolidated financial reporting for the Plan, including governmental reporting.
- o. Provide general oversight of the Plan's compliance with applicable laws and/or regulations.
- p. Retain recordkeepers/administrators, consultants, attorneys, auditors and other advisers to the plan as appropriate to assist with the aforementioned responsibilities.
- q. Monitor and evaluate the recordkeeper/administrator and other parties hired to perform delegated responsibilities to ensure reasonability of fees and appropriate execution of delegated responsibilities.
- r. Establish policies and procedures to allocate reasonable expenses incurred by the Plan.

VII. Plan Investment Responsibilities

The Commission hereby delegates certain investment related responsibilities to the Committee with respect to the Plans. To the extent consistent with applicable law and the Plan documents for each Plan, the Committee's investment related responsibilities shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following with respect to each Plan:

- a. *Investment Adviser.* The Committee may retain investment adviser(s) to serve in a non-discretionary capacity (as a fiduciary described in subsection 3(21) of ERISA) or in a discretionary capacity (as a fiduciary described in subsection 3(38) of ERISA). In the event the Committee retains a 3(38) discretionary adviser, the following responsibilities will be performed by the investment adviser, but the Committee retains the responsibility to monitor the investment adviser.

- b. *Investment Policy.* Develop investment objectives, guidelines and performance measurement standards consistent with the needs of the investments of the Plan as documented in an Investment Policy Statement.
- c. *Selection of Investment Managers.* Select investment funds for the Plan, ensuring their proper diversification, and monitoring their performance against appropriate benchmarks.
- d. *Selection of Default Investment Alternative.* Determine the default investment to be used if a participant does not make an investment election.
- e. *Monitoring Investments.* Provide on-going monitoring with respect to the investments of the Plan in the context of established standards of performance and taking whatever corrective action is deemed prudent and appropriate if objectives are not being met or if policies and guidelines are not being followed.
- f. *Monitoring Fees and Expenses.* Monitor the reasonableness of investment costs passed to Plan participants.

The Committee may take such other and further actions with respect to the investments of the Plan as are consistent with this Charter or as are set forth in the documents of the Plan or their related trusts or contracts, or which the Committee determines in its discretion are in the best interests of the Plan and participants.

VIII. Authority to Direct and Make Contributions on Behalf of Plan Sponsor

The Committee shall be, and hereby is, delegated the authority to direct and make employer contributions to the Plans, and/or to the accounts of any one or more individual participants in the Plans, on behalf of the Plan Sponsor that the Committee determines in a written and signed document to be appropriate and reasonably necessary for the proper fulfillment of fiduciary duties with respect to the Plans; *provided*, however, that (a) this delegation shall expire on December 31, 2026, (b) such delegated authority shall not exceed \$100,000 in the aggregate and \$15,000 with respect to any one individual participant, and (c) no exercise of this delegated authority shall be valid except upon the prior written approval of the Chairperson of the Commission and upon the prior written approval by counsel as to form and legality.

IX. Construction

This Charter is not intended, and shall not be interpreted, to limit the discretion of the Plan Sponsor. The Plan Sponsor, by the Commission, reserves the discretion to amend this Charter or make exceptions to this Charter as it may determine to be appropriate.

As used herein, the term “participants” shall be deemed to include participants and their beneficiaries, as appropriate.

X. Charter Review and Amendment

This Charter shall be reviewed periodically by the Commission, which may amend the Charter as it may determine to be appropriate, including, by way of example and not limitation, to reflect any relevant changes in a Plan’s operations, philosophy and/or objectives, as well as any relevant changes to applicable law.

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XI. Plan Document Coordination

In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this Charter, or any delegation of authority made pursuant to this Charter, and the provisions of the Plan document for each of the Plans, the terms of the Plan document shall govern.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission on April 16, 2026 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

DAN LITTLE
Chairperson
FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission

Approved as to Form and Legality:

RAVI RAJENDRA
Deputy County Counsel

2025 SANTA CLARA COUNTY KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED BY



2025 Santa Clara County School Readiness Assessment

SPONSORED BY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Applied Survey Research (ASR) acknowledges the following individuals for their support and assistance in the planning and implementation of the 2025 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in Santa Clara County: Jennifer Kelleher-Cloyd, Trena Hudson, Nathan Thomas, Ali Kagawa, and Shannon Aivazian of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County; Joy Murrieta of Kids in Common; Matthew Tinsley of Santa Clara County Office of Education. ASR would also like to express appreciation to FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, Kids in Common, the Early Childhood Initiatives Strategy of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and the Morgan Family Foundation for sponsoring this study.

This assessment would not have been possible without the support of the participating kindergarten teachers who generously gave their time and energy to help deepen understanding of students' skills and experiences as they entered school. ASR gratefully acknowledges the many individuals listed in the following table for their contributions:

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

School	Teacher
Alexander Rose Elementary	Lucille Lai
	Xanthiol Tran
Aptitud Community Academy at Goss	Jill McKie
Argonaut Elementary	Ailish Johnson
Booksin Elementary	Erin Hannon
	Rocio Kappenman
Bracher Elementary	Alison Inouye
	Anna Metichecchia
Cadwallader Elementary	Tala Navarro
Capri Elementary	Mika Yanai
	Kylie Ziolkowski
Captain Jason M. Dahl Elementary	Lisa Hubrig
	Edgar Quiroz Medrano
Carolyn A. Clark Elementary	Karen Acosta
	Susan Noda
Castlemont Elementary	Alicia Stapes
	Victoria Urzi
Franklin Elementary	Carlos Marquez
Hubbard Media Arts Academy	Jane De Jesus
	Lisa Dries
Joseph Weller Elementary	Kristi Mastrome
	Melanie McLaughlin
Learning in an Urban Community with High Achievement (L.U.C.H.A.)	Kimi Hiroshima
Montague Elementary	Karyn Howl
	Lisa Stuart
Nordstrom Elementary	Jennifer Clifford
Oak Ridge Elementary	Holly Carlson
	Stacy Dolan
Paradise Valley Engineering Academy	Heather Belanger
Santa Rita Elementary	Tarang Gupta
Santee Elementary	Kimberly Leonhardt
	Rodger Mao
Silver Oak Elementary	Tara Ferguson
Washington Elementary	Rosalia Canela
Westwood Elementary	Elena Dritsas
	Carlos Marquez

INTRODUCTION

Children’s readiness for kindergarten lays the foundation for future academic success, including third-grade proficiency and high school graduation.^{i,ii,iii} These early readiness skills develop within the context of children’s everyday environments, and a smooth transition into kindergarten depends not only on individual preparedness but also on how well schools support their social, emotional, and developmental needs. Children are more likely to thrive when they grow up in stable households, have access to enriching early experiences, and enter schools that are prepared to support their development.

The **2025 Santa Clara County Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)** offers a comprehensive look at how children, families, schools, and communities are working together to support school readiness. As in previous years, the study includes both teacher-administered assessments alongside caregiver perspectives gathered through the **Parent Information Form (PIF)**.

This Executive Summary highlights key findings related to children’s readiness for kindergarten, the family and community conditions that support early learning, and the role schools play in supporting a smooth transition into kindergarten.



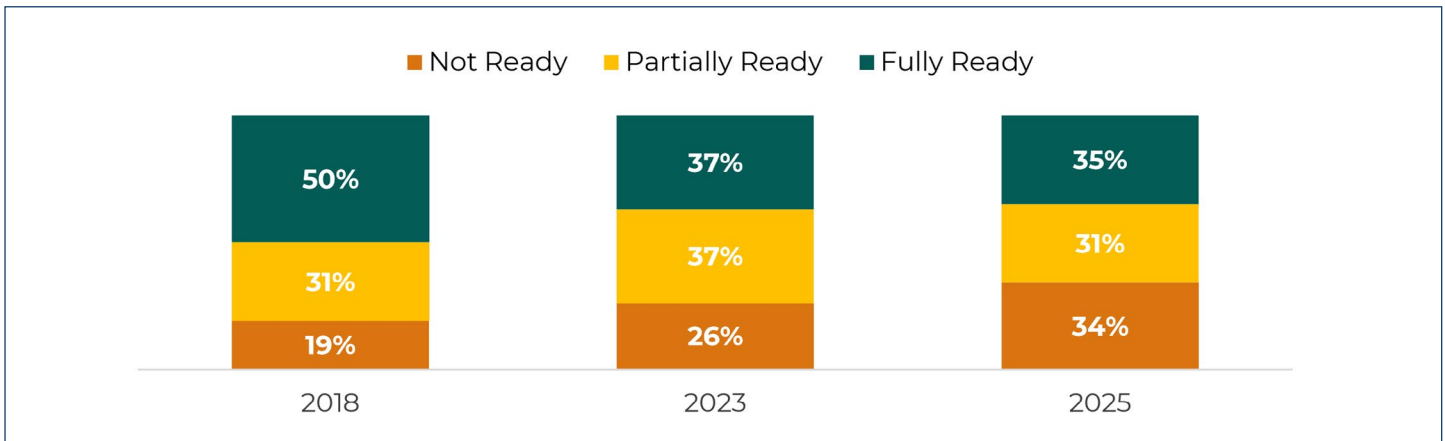
KEY FINDINGS

HOW READY FOR SCHOOL WERE CHILDREN ASSESSED IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY?

In 2025, one in three children entered kindergarten *Fully Ready*, demonstrating proficiency across *Self-Regulation*, *Social Expression*, and *Kindergarten Academics*. Compared to earlier years, readiness levels declined: the percentage of children classified as *Fully Ready* decreased from 50% in 2018 to 35% in 2025, while the share of children classified as *Not Ready* increased from 19% to 34%. The proportion of children who were *Partially Ready* remained relatively stable over time.

35%
Fully Ready for kindergarten

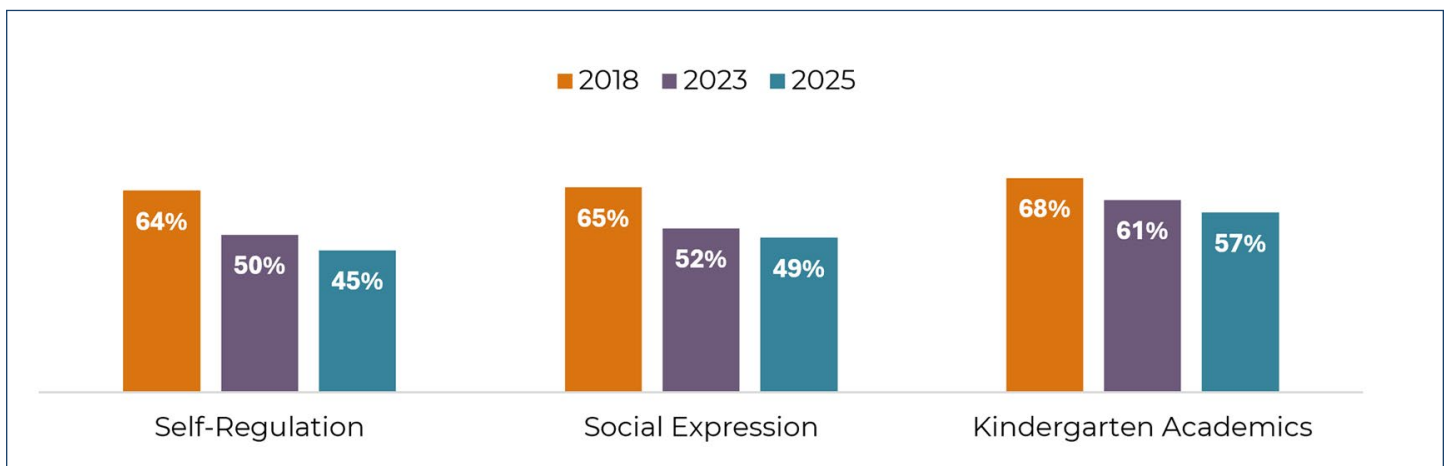
Exhibit 1. Trends in Kindergarten Readiness, KRA 2018–2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 705. 2023 N = 918. 2018 N = 1,184. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

Early academic skills were the strongest area of readiness, with many children showing confidence in recognizing numbers and shapes, writing their names, and using classroom tools. At the same time, fewer children met readiness benchmarks compared to prior years, particularly in self-regulation and language-based skills such as maintaining focus, understanding and retelling stories, and emotional expression.

Exhibit 2. Percentage of Children *Fully Ready* by Domain, KRA 2018–2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 704-705. 2023 N = 917 - 951. 2018 N = 1,186-1,249. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

WHAT CHILD AND FAMILY FACTORS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH SCHOOL READINESS?

Children's readiness was closely linked to a set of *malleable assets*—experiences and conditions that families, schools, and communities can support. The strongest predictors of readiness included stable basic needs and daily routines, participation in formal early learning, and caregiver engagement in learning and kindergarten transitions. Children with access to a greater number of these supports were significantly more likely to be *Fully Ready* for kindergarten.

Children were significantly more likely to be *Fully Ready* when they experienced:

WELL-BEING & DAILY ROUTINES

- Sufficient sleep
- Reliable access to food
- Limited weekday screen time

EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Participation in a formal early learning program (e.g., preschool or center-based care, licensed family child care, Transitional Kindergarten, Head Start).

CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING & TRANSITIONS

- Higher caregiver education attainment
- Daily shared reading at home
- School-based kindergarten transition orientation
- Learning about kindergarten expectations

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population. The model controlled for age and special need designation. The overall model accounted for 39% of the variance in school readiness scores ($R^2 = 0.39$), and the predictors were associated with readiness at the $p < .05$ level.

HOW READY WERE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN?

Families demonstrated strong engagement in their children's early learning. Most caregivers reported regular participation in home learning activities such as reading, playing, singing, and educational routines. Caregivers also expressed generally positive perceptions of their children's readiness, with more than three in four reporting that their child often or consistently demonstrated readiness skills across developmental domains.

Access to early learning opportunities continued to expand in 2025. More than eight in ten children attended a formal early learning program prior to kindergarten, and participation in Transitional Kindergarten increased significantly compared to previous years. Families reported navigating a range of pathways into kindergarten, reflecting differences in availability, affordability, and fit.

Health access and preventive care remained strong. Nearly all children had health insurance, a regular medical provider, and received routine checkups. Follow-up care after screenings was commonly recommended for dental and vision needs, and most families were able to access the services their child needed.

Many families reported rising stress related to food access, housing stability, child care affordability, and emotional well-being. These pressures can directly affect children's readiness by limiting families' capacity to maintain consistent routines, engage in early learning, and navigate school transitions. This underscores the importance of coordinated supports that address both learning and basic needs.

HOW READY WERE SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN?

Schools played a key role in supporting kindergarten transitions. More than nine in ten caregivers received helpful information about enrollment, readiness skills, and how to support learning at home.

Participation in transition activities rebounded in 2025. Families showed more engagement in school visits, meetings with teachers, and other educator-connected experiences. These patterns suggest renewed connections between families and schools and a growing emphasis on early engagement to support children's successful entry into kindergarten.

BUILDING ON THIS FOUNDATION

Findings from the 2025 KRA, together with input from families and educators, point to several areas where continued investment and alignment can strengthen school readiness across Santa Clara County. While many families reported strong engagement, access to early learning, and stable healthcare, readiness outcomes remained uneven, underscoring the need to build on existing resources while addressing persistent gaps. The recommendations below highlight opportunities to strengthen early learning quality, child development and well-being, family engagement, and school readiness systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To support more children in entering school ready to succeed, Santa Clara County can consider the following actions:

Expand access to high-quality early learning

Research consistently shows that participation in high-quality, early care and education is associated with stronger cognitive, social-emotional, and self-regulation skills at kindergarten entry, particularly for children from historically underserved communities.^{iv} Continue to invest in preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and child care options that are affordable, culturally responsive, inclusive of children with disabilities, and aligned with school readiness goals, building on existing quality improvement and universal pre-kindergarten efforts.

Support stable home routines that promote health and learning

Children's readiness for kindergarten is closely linked to stable home routines and access to basic needs such as food security, housing stability, adequate sleep, and preventive healthcare. Strengthen programs that address basic needs such as food security, housing stability, and access to preventive healthcare to reduce family stress and support children's daily readiness for learning.

Invest in family engagement and education

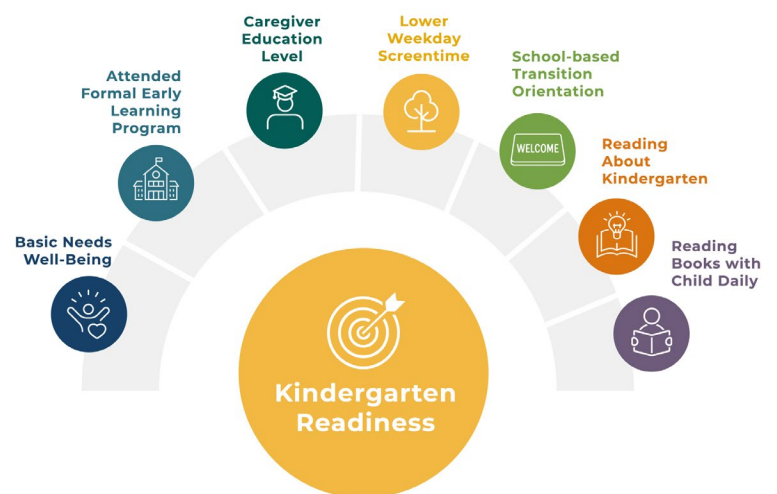
Expand home visiting, parenting supports, and kindergarten transition activities that empower caregivers as children's first teachers and foster strong, trusting family-school relationships.

Increase school readiness outreach in trusted community spaces

Leverage libraries, family resource centers, clinics, and community-based organizations to ensure all families—especially those facing barriers—have timely access to enrollment assistance, developmental screenings, and early intervention services.

Target investments in communities with fewer malleable assets

Use local data to identify ZIP codes where children and families may benefit from additional supports, and apply targeted, community-informed strategies to reduce disparities and promote equitable readiness outcomes countywide.



CONCLUSION

Continued investment in high-quality early learning, family engagement and education, health and basic needs supports, and targeted, community-based strategies will be essential to ensuring that more children across Santa Clara County enter kindergarten ready to learn, grow, and thrive.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by creating meaningful evaluative and assessment data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm has more than 40 years of experience working with public and private agencies, health and human service organizations, city and county offices, school districts, institutions of higher learning, and charitable foundations. Through community assessments, program evaluations, and related studies, ASR provides the information communities need for effective strategic planning and community interventions.

For questions about this report, please contact:

Applied Survey Research

Claire Miller, Ph.D., Project Manager
Lisa Colvig-Niclai, M.A., Vice President of Planning and Evaluation

Email

SRA@appliedsurveyresearch.org

www.AppliedSurveyResearch.org

END NOTES

ⁱ Duncan, G. J., Dowsett, C. J., Claessens, A., Magnuson, K., Huston, A. C., Klebanov, P., Pagani, L.S., Feinstein, L., Engel, M., Brooks-Gunn, J., Sexton, H., Duckworth, K., & Japel, C. (2007). *School readiness and later achievement. Developmental Psychology, 43*(6), 1428–1446.

ⁱⁱ Bettencourt, A. F., Gross, D., Ho, G., & Perrin, N. (2018). The costly consequences of not being socially and behaviorally ready to learn by kindergarten in Baltimore City. *Journal of Urban Health, 95*(1), 36–50.

ⁱⁱⁱ Fitzpatrick, C., Boers, E., & Pagani, L. S. (2020). Kindergarten readiness, later health, and social costs. *Pediatrics, 146*(6).

^{iv} So, M., Woodward, K. P., Shlafer, R. J., Testa, A., Davis, L., & Jackson, D. B. (2023). Positive early childhood experiences and school readiness among US preschoolers. *The Journal of Pediatrics, 262*, 113637.





Santa Clara County

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Fall 2025 Findings

Lisa Colvig-Niclai, M.A.

Senior Vice President of Planning and Evaluation

Claire Miller, Ph.D.

Project Manager

Prepared by
Applied Survey Research



Why do we Measure School Readiness?

- Linked to long-term educational, health, and social outcomes
- Informs interventions and local strategies to support readiness in Santa Clara County
- Helps schools prepare to support children entering kindergarten
- Builds bridges between early childhood (ages 0–5) and K–12 systems
- Brings together partners across the county around a shared goal:

Every child comes to school ready to learn!

20+ Years of KOF Implementation and Impact

2004 – 2008

SANTA CLARA COUNTY LAUNCHES THE KOF!

Expands to Santa Clara County, establishing a shared, **countywide standard for measuring school readiness.**

2010 – 2012

FOCUS ON PRIORITY COMMUNITIES

Prioritized **Migrant Ed, San Jose,** and districts including **Gilroy, Santee, and Cesar Chavez** to understand needs and guide targeted supports.

2018 & 2020

EXPANDING ACCESS

Universal Access pilots in Alum Rock and Franklin-McKinley to explore strategies to expand early learning access and improve readiness outcomes.

2001 – 2023

DEVELOPMENT & VALIDATION

The KOF is developed from research and local input; **pilot and validation as a reliable measure.**

2009

LONGITUDINAL STUDY & TARGETED PROGRAMS

Launches K–3 study; add targeted efforts in **SCC Head Start and Smart Start.**

2013 – 2018

PREK–3 ALIGNMENT & CONTINUED USE

Ongoing countywide assessments continue, alongside **Pre-K to 3 alignment efforts in Alum Rock.**

2021 – 2025

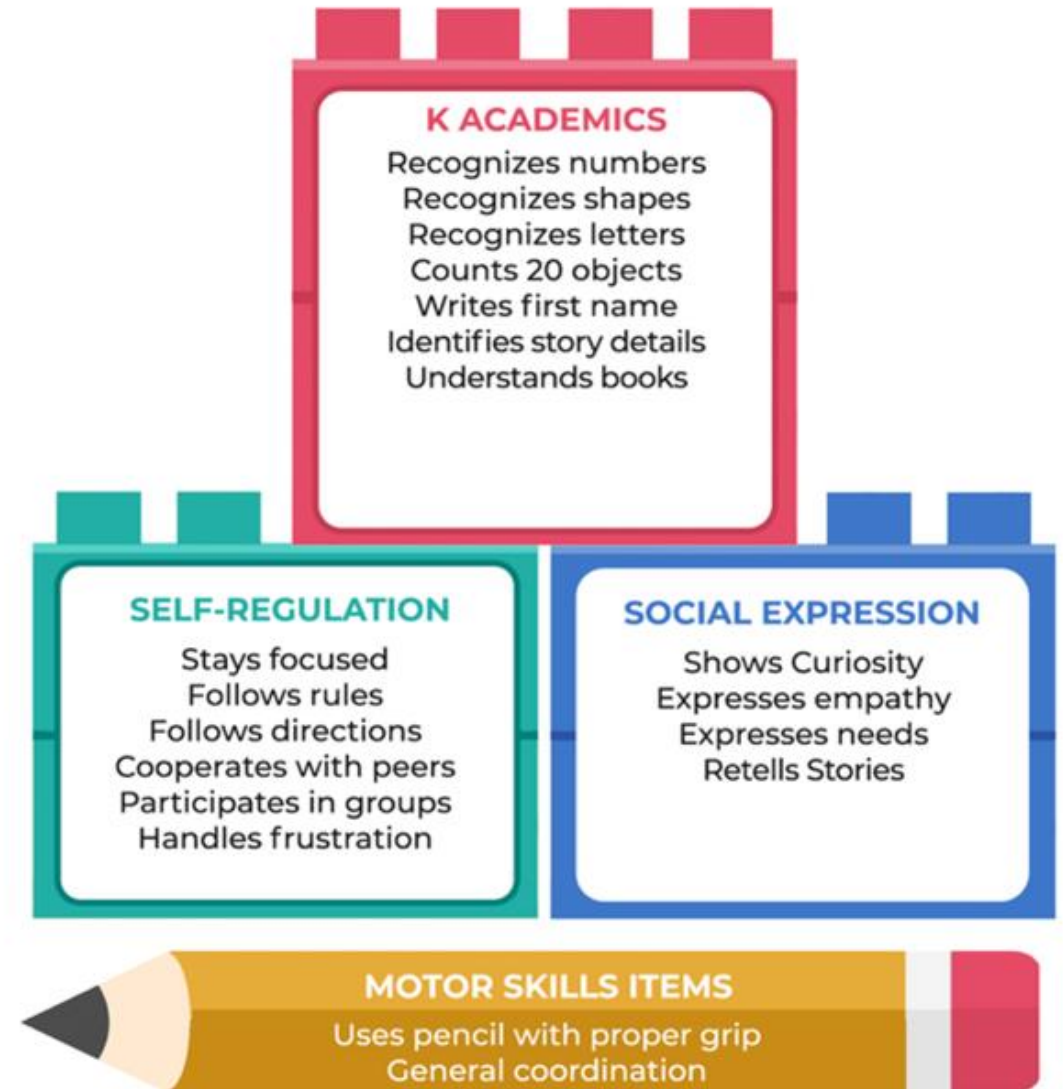
BIANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION

Assessments continue every two years across Santa Clara County, providing actionable data to guide decisions and investments.

SRA Model & Measures

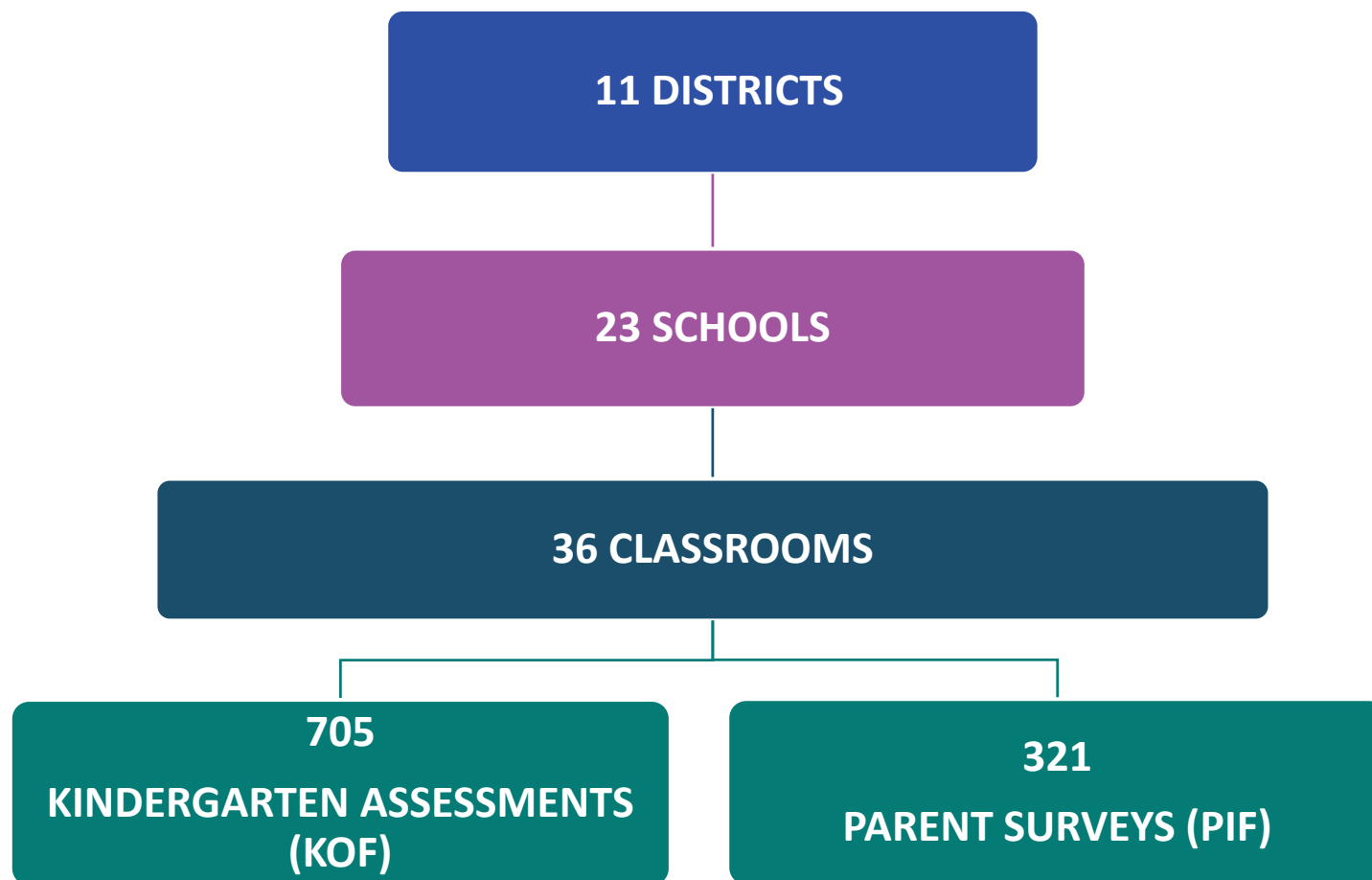
To develop a holistic picture of readiness, we use multiple sources of information:

- **KINDERGARTEN OBSERVATION FORM (KOF)**
19 research-based items administered by teacher
 - 5 direct test items
 - 14 observational items
- **PARENT INFORMATION FORM (PIF)**
Confidential survey for caregivers
 - Measures: Child health; Early learning; Participation in programs and services



2025 Santa Clara County Sample

County Sample



For reference...

- About 14k kindergarten students in Santa Clara County
- 2025 sample was large enough to produce statistically valid results
 - 3.7% margin of error, which allows us to confidently interpret these findings as representative of the County overall.
- 2025 sample was representative of the County in terms of race/ethnicity but differed from the overall county at the district level.

Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores by Domain

■ 2018 ■ 2023 ■ 2025



Kindergarten Readiness on the KOF in 2025

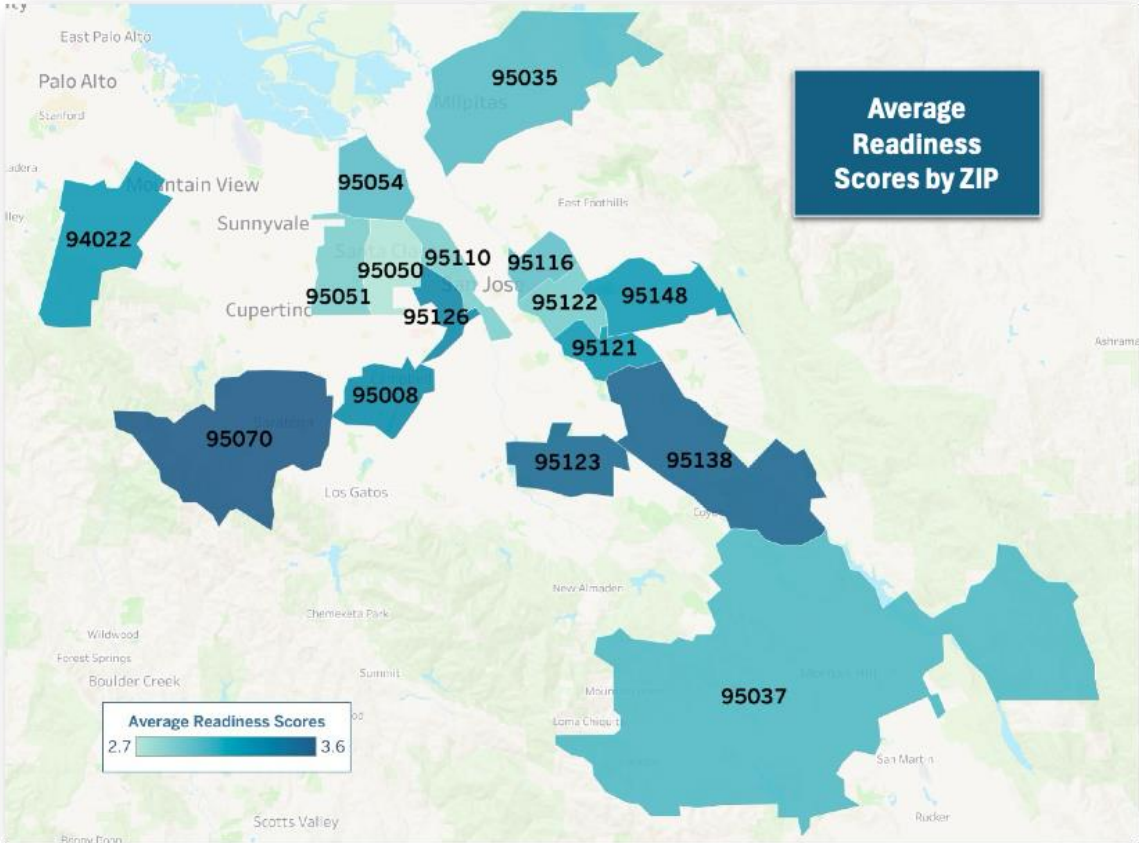
Average readiness score that predicts third grade proficiency (out of 4 possible):

3.25

31%
Partially Ready

35%
Fully Ready

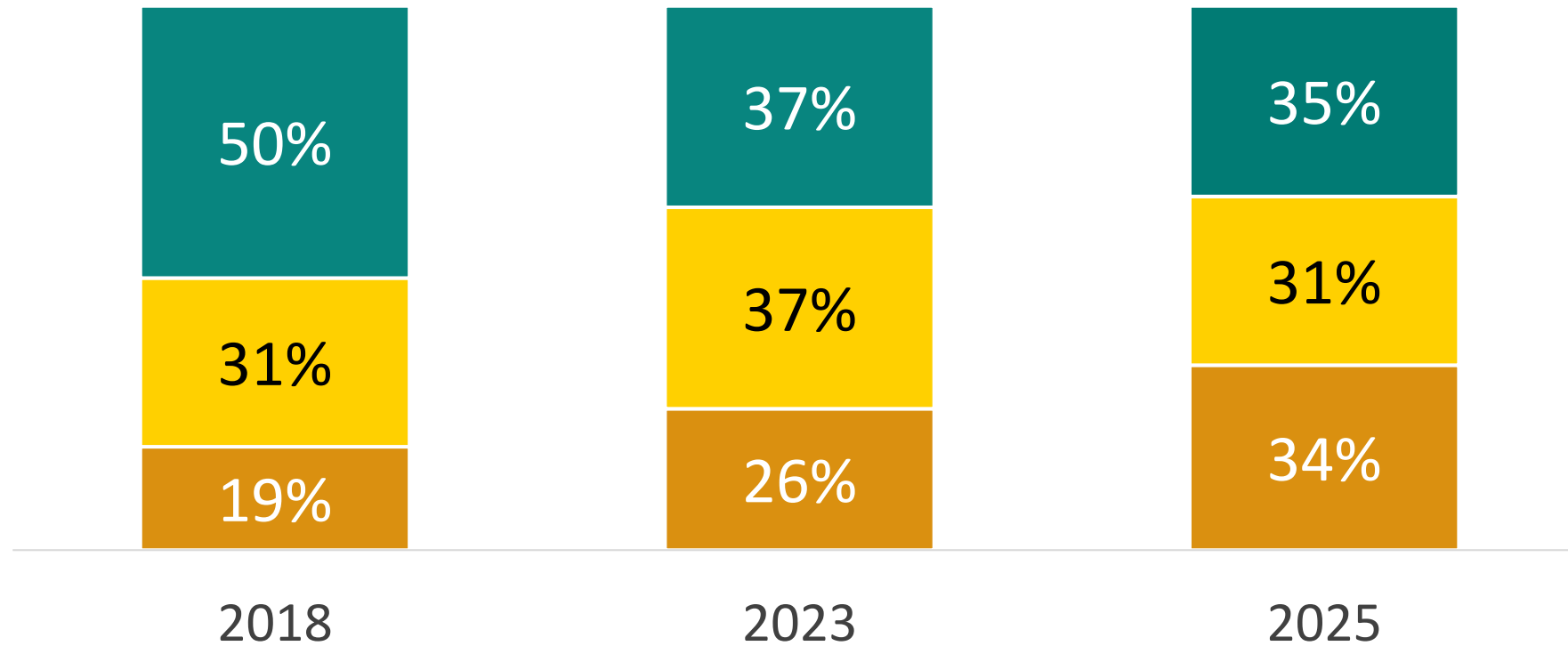
34%
Not Ready



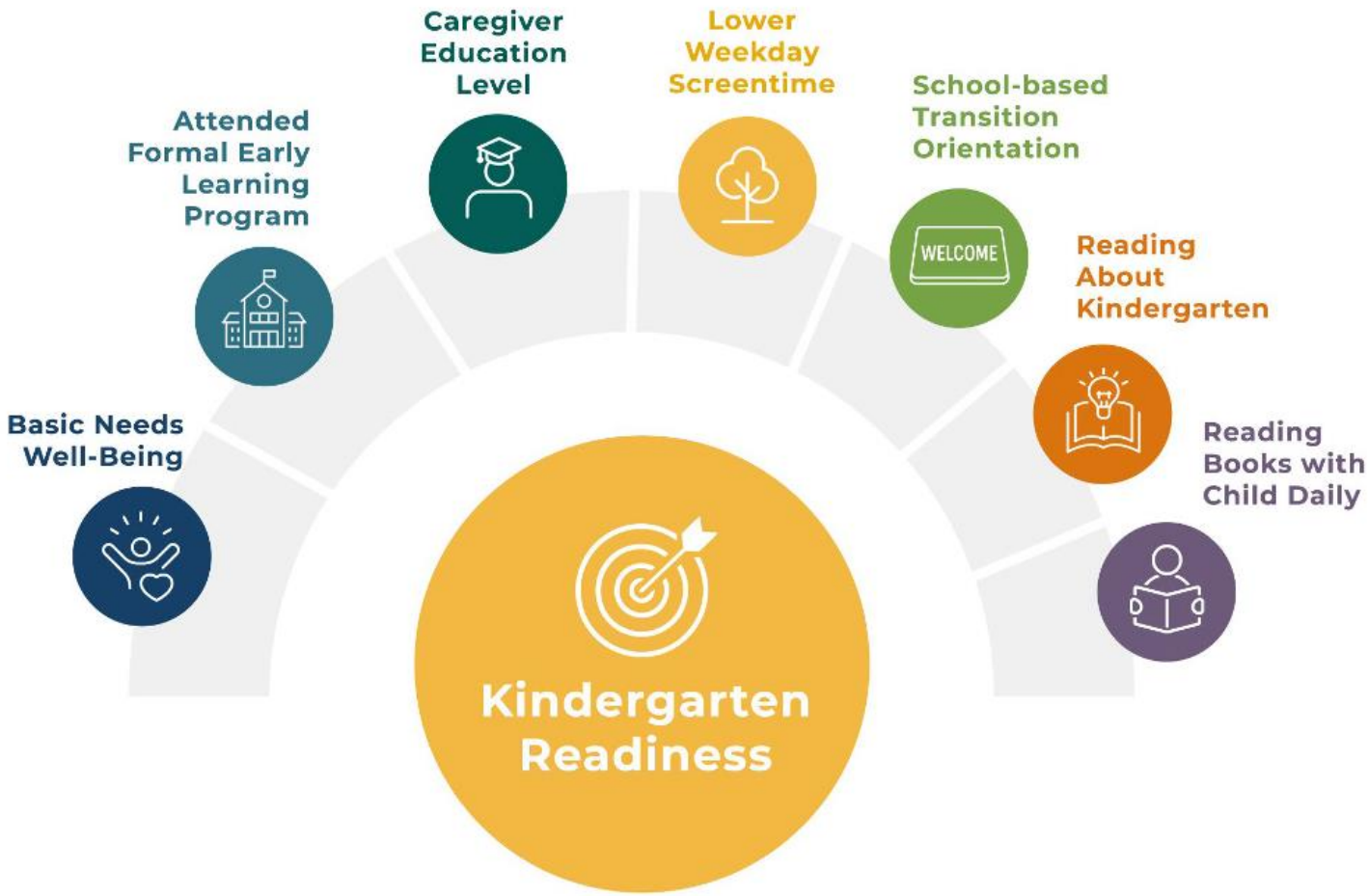
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 705. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County Kindergarten population.
Fully Ready: Mean score of 3.25 or higher in all three domains: Self-Regulation, Social Expression and K. Academics.
Partially Ready: Mean score of 3.25 or higher in one or two domains.
Not Ready: Mean score below 3.25 in all three domains.

Trends over time

■ Not Ready ■ Partially Ready ■ Fully Ready



Factors Strongly Associated with Readiness



2025 KRA Significant Predictors

In order of strength of connection to readiness

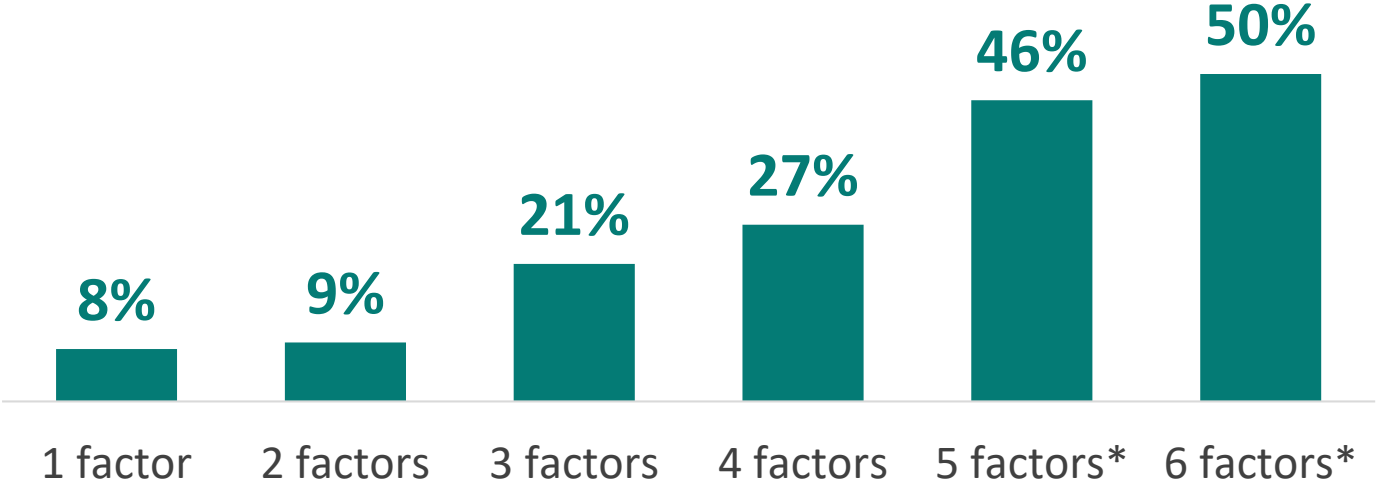
- Children who appeared well-rested and well-fed in class[^]
- Children who attended a formal early learning program (e.g., preschool, TK)
- Caregiver had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher
- Lower weekday screen time (≤ 1 hour)
- Participation in a school-based orientation about kindergarten transition
- Caregivers reading about kindergarten (e.g., books or articles)
- Children who read books with a caregiver daily (6+ days per week)

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County Kindergarten population. The model controlled for age and special need designation. The overall model accounted for 39% of the variance in school readiness scores ($R^2 = 0.39$), and the predictors were associated with readiness at the $p < .05$ level.

[^]According to child's teacher. All other factors reported by child's caregiver.

Percent Fully Ready by Number of Factors

Children who had 5 to 6 factors were significantly more likely to be ready for school.



Factors schools, families, and communities can support!

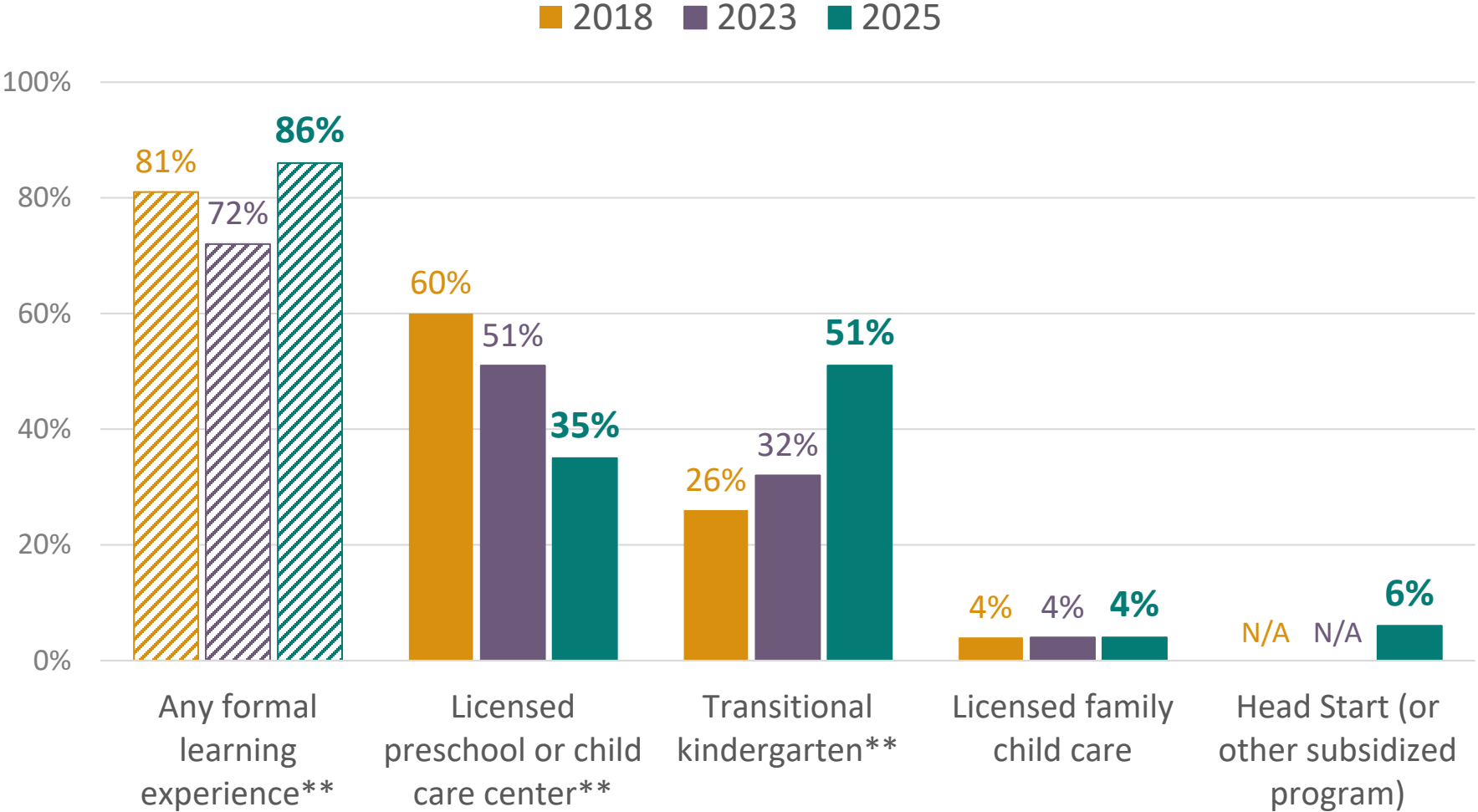
- Basic needs well-being[^] (well-rested and well-fed)
- Formal learning experience
- Lower weekday screen time
- School-based transition orientation
- Reading about kindergarten
- Reading books with child daily

[^]According to child’s teacher. All other factors reported by child’s caregiver.

Percent of Children *Fully Ready* with Factor

	% Ready	% Not Ready
Basic needs well-being (well-rested and well-fed)	95%	78%
Attended formal learning program	88%	63%
Caregiver Bachelor's degree or higher	67%	59%
Limited weekday screentime (≤ 1 hour)	57%	43%
School-based transition orientation	54%	33%
Reading about kindergarten	51%	33%
Reading books with child daily	45%	27%

Early Care and Education Experience

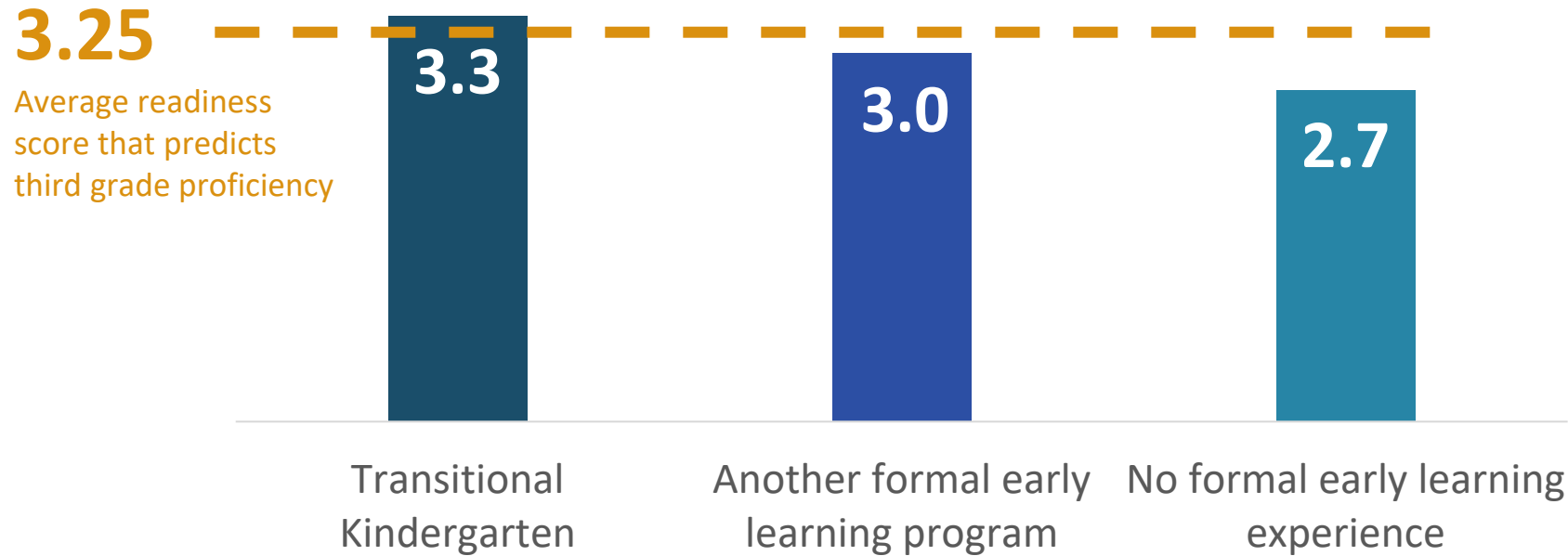


↑

86%
of children attended a formal early learning program
KRA 2025

Early Care and Education Experience

Transitional Kindergarten



3.25

Average readiness score that predicts third grade proficiency

3.3

3.0

2.7

Transitional Kindergarten

Another formal early learning program

No formal early learning experience



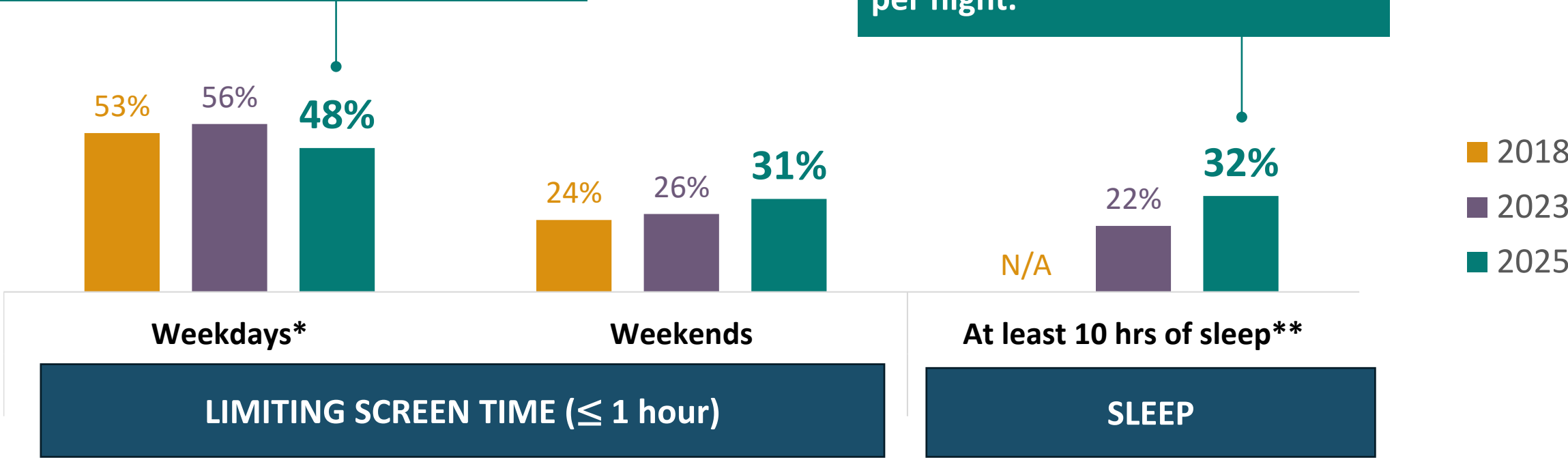
Children who attended Transitional Kindergarten had **significantly higher readiness scores**

KRA 2025

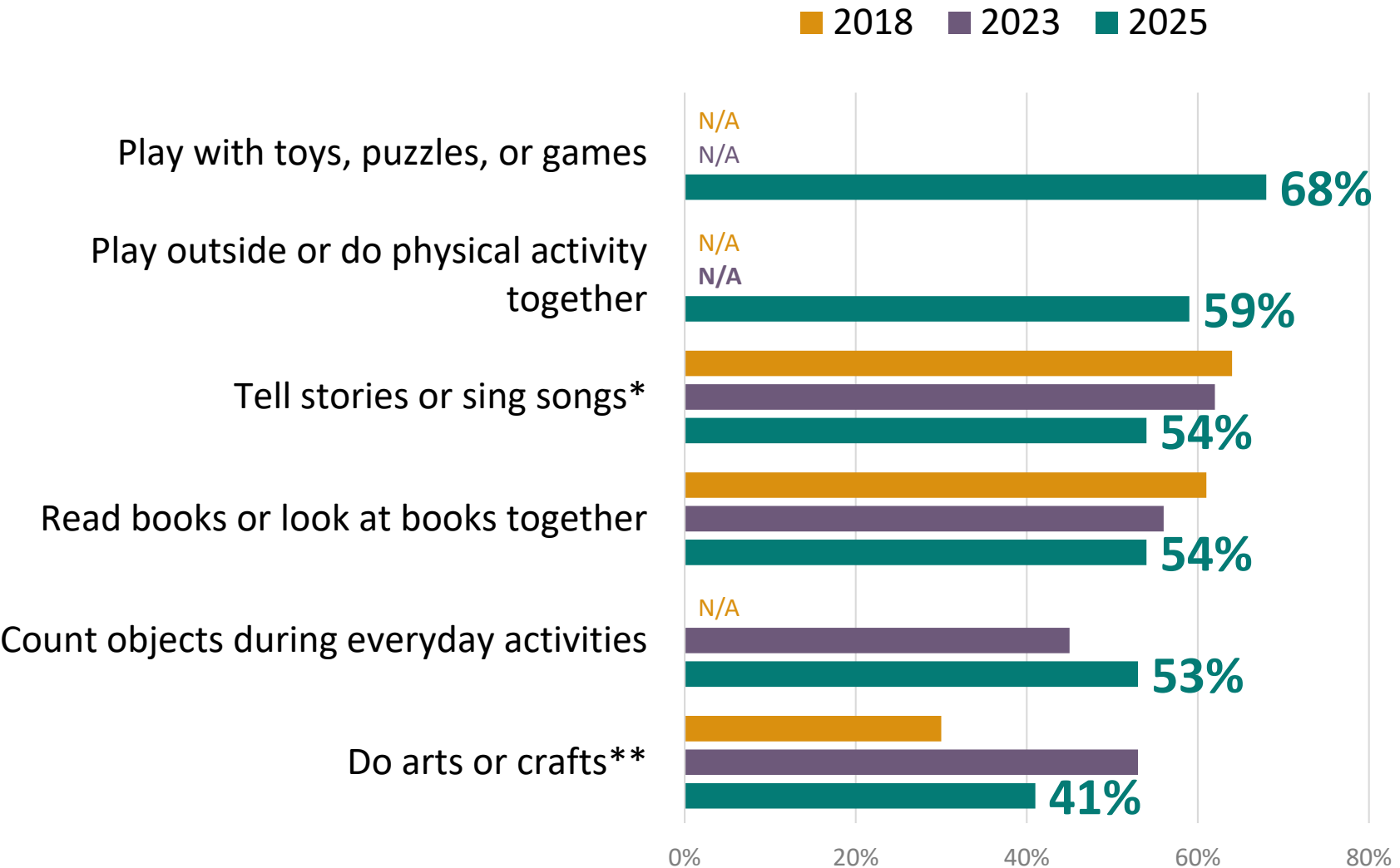
Home Routines: Screen Time and Bedtimes

8% decrease
in families limiting screen time.

10% increase
in recommended hours of sleep per night.



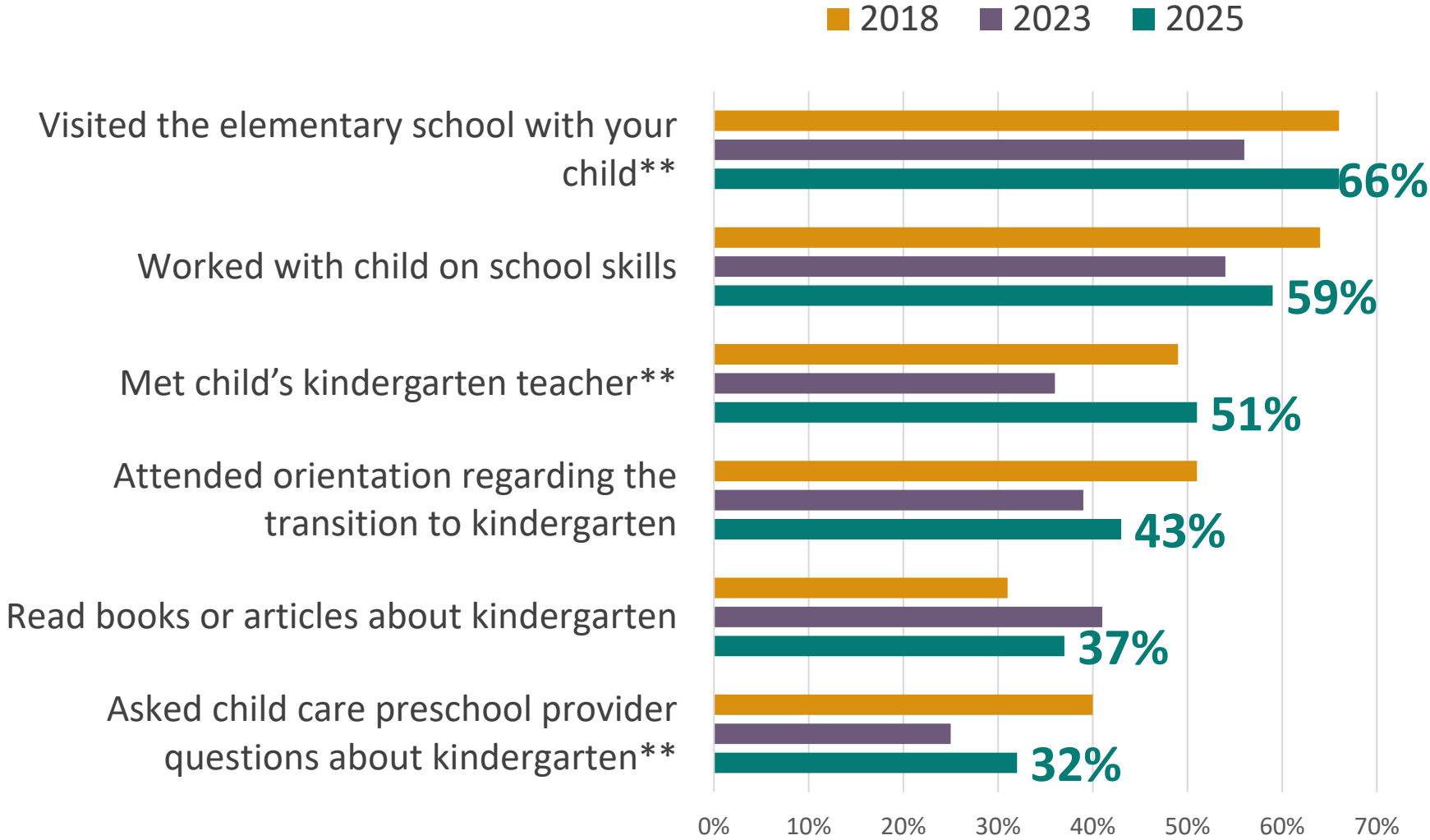
Family Use of Home Enrichment Activities



↑
Most families reported spending time each week engaging their children in enriching learning activities.

↓
Fewer families reported doing crafts, reading together, or storytelling.

Kindergarten Transition Activities



↑
Families are re-engaging in kindergarten transition activities, with participation rebounding to or exceeding pre-pandemic levels in 2025.

Conclusion: Building a Stronger Foundation for Readiness

- **Build on What's Working & Advance Equity**
 - ✓ Expand access to **high-quality preschool and TK**, including full-day options and dual-language programs
 - ✓ Invest in **targeted outreach, enrollment navigation, and subsidy supports** in underserved communities
 - ✓ Sustain **kindergarten transition activities** (school visits, family orientations, teacher meetings)
- **Strengthen Healthy Daily Routines**
 - ✓ Deliver **parent coaching and public health messaging** on sleep routines and screen limits
 - ✓ Partner with **pediatricians and early learning providers** to reinforce routines
 - ✓ Expand **home visiting programs** that support daily structure and routines
- **Reinforce Family Engagement at Home**
 - ✓ Distribute **books and learning materials** through libraries and early learning programs
 - ✓ Expand **parent education and home visiting programs** that model interactive learning activities

2025 SANTA CLARA COUNTY KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT



PREPARED BY



SPONSORED BY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Applied Survey Research (ASR) acknowledges the following individuals for their support and assistance in the planning and implementation of the 2025 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in Santa Clara County: Jennifer Kelleher-Cloyd, Trena Hudson, Nathan Thomas, Ali Kagawa, and Shannon Aivazian of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County; Joy Murrieta of Kids in Common; Matthew Tinsley of Santa Clara County Office of Education. ASR would also like to express appreciation to FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, Kids in Common, the Early Childhood Initiatives Strategy of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and the Morgan Family Foundation for sponsoring this study.

This assessment would not have been possible without the support of the participating kindergarten teachers who generously gave their time and energy to help deepen understanding of students' skills and experiences as they entered school. ASR gratefully acknowledges the many individuals listed in the following table for their contributions:

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

School	Teacher
Alexander Rose Elementary	Lucille Lai
	Xanthiol Tran
Aptitud Community Academy at Goss	Jill McKie
Argonaut Elementary	Ailish Johnson
Booksin Elementary	Erin Hannon
	Rocio Kappenman
Bracher Elementary	Alison Inouye
	Anna Metichecchia
Cadwallader Elementary	Tala Navarro
Capri Elementary	Mika Yanai
	Kylie Ziolkowski
Captain Jason M. Dahl Elementary	Lisa Hubrig
	Edgar Quiroz Medrano
Carolyn A. Clark Elementary	Karen Acosta
	Susan Noda
Castlemont Elementary	Alicia Stapes
	Victoria Urzi
Franklin Elementary	Carlos Marquez
Hubbard Media Arts Academy	Jane De Jesus
	Lisa Dries
Joseph Weller Elementary	Kristi Mastrome
	Melanie McLaughlin
Learning in an Urban Community with High Achievement (L.U.C.H.A.)	Kimi Hiroshima
Montague Elementary	Karyn Howl
	Lisa Stuart
Nordstrom Elementary	Jennifer Clifford
Oak Ridge Elementary	Holly Carlson
	Stacy Dolan
Paradise Valley Engineering Academy	Heather Belanger
Santa Rita Elementary	Tarang Gupta
Santee Elementary	Kimberly Leonhardt
	Rodger Mao
Silver Oak Elementary	Tara Ferguson
Washington Elementary	Rosalia Canela
Westwood Elementary	Elena Dritsas
	Carlos Marquez

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INTRODUCTION

Children’s readiness for kindergarten lays the foundation for future academic success, including third-grade proficiency and high school graduation.^{i,ii,iii} These early readiness skills develop within the context of children’s everyday environments, and a smooth transition into kindergarten depends not only on individual preparedness but also on how well schools support their social, emotional, and developmental needs. Children are more likely to thrive when they grow up in stable households, have access to enriching early experiences, and enter schools that are prepared to support their development.

The **2025 Santa Clara County Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)** offers a comprehensive look at how children, families, schools, and communities are working together to support school readiness. As in previous years, the study includes both teacher-administered assessments alongside caregiver perspectives gathered through the **Parent Information Form (PIF)**.

This year’s Santa Clara County KRA report includes:

- A comparison of 2025 findings with results from 2023, and
- Selected comparisons to 2018 to highlight long-term trends.

Together, these data illuminate how children and their communities are growing, adapting, and preparing for success in school and beyond.¹

FOUR COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL READINESS



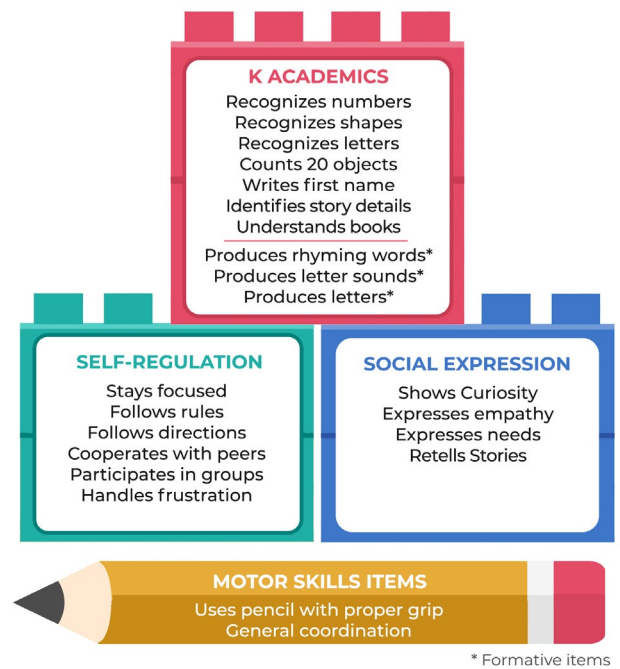
¹ Due to COVID-19 disruptions, only a parent survey was conducted in 2020, and a limited number of classrooms participated in 2021. These years are not included in the analyses.

METHODOLOGY

Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF)

Kindergarten readiness was assessed by classroom teachers during the first few weeks of the school year using the **Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF)**, a validated assessment tool shown to predict academic outcomes such as third grade achievement.^{iv} Teachers rate each child's readiness skills on a four-point scale, from 1 = *Not Yet* demonstrating the skill to 4 = *Proficient* or consistently shows the skill.

The KOF focuses on three core **Building Blocks of Readiness** – *Self-Regulation*, *Social Expression*, and *Kindergarten Academics*. A fourth area includes two additional items related to fine and gross motor skills, which provide foundational support for the other domains.



Before administering the assessment, all participating teachers attended a 90-minute training session led by ASR staff. The training provided step-by-step guidance on how to implement each observational and interactive item on the assessment. Teachers reviewed the scoring guide, examined detailed definitions for each skill at every proficiency level, and practiced assigning ratings using sample scenarios and images. Both the training and the scoring materials were designed to ensure consistency across classrooms and to minimize potential bias in how readiness skills were rated.

Parent Information Form (PIF)

To better understand the experiences that shape children's readiness for kindergarten, caregivers were invited to complete the **Parent Information Form (PIF)**. This survey gathered information about each child's background, early learning experiences, kindergarten-related skills, and overall well-being. Caregivers also shared how they support their child's learning at home, their use of community resources, access to healthcare and screenings, and connections to systems of support.

Surveys were offered in English and Spanish at a sixth grade reading level. As part of the study, all families enrolled in a participating classroom received a children's book, regardless of survey completion.



SAMPLE

The 2025 KRA included **705 kindergarten students across 36 classrooms, representing 23 schools in 11 districts** throughout Santa Clara County. The table below shows the number of classrooms and study participants represented by each school. The sample represents 5% of the 2024 countywide kindergarten enrollment of 14,182 students.^v While the sample is sufficiently large to support statistically valid and reliable analysis at the county level (confidence level of $\pm 3.7\%$), readers should refer to “A Note about How to Interpret the Data in This Report” for important context regarding generalizability.

To ensure a statistically valid county-level sample, a higher number of schools were selected from certain districts, while fewer schools were included from others. This approach supports reliable countywide analysis; however, results are not representative at the individual district level. A full breakdown of the sample and population percentages by district is provided in [Appendix A](#).

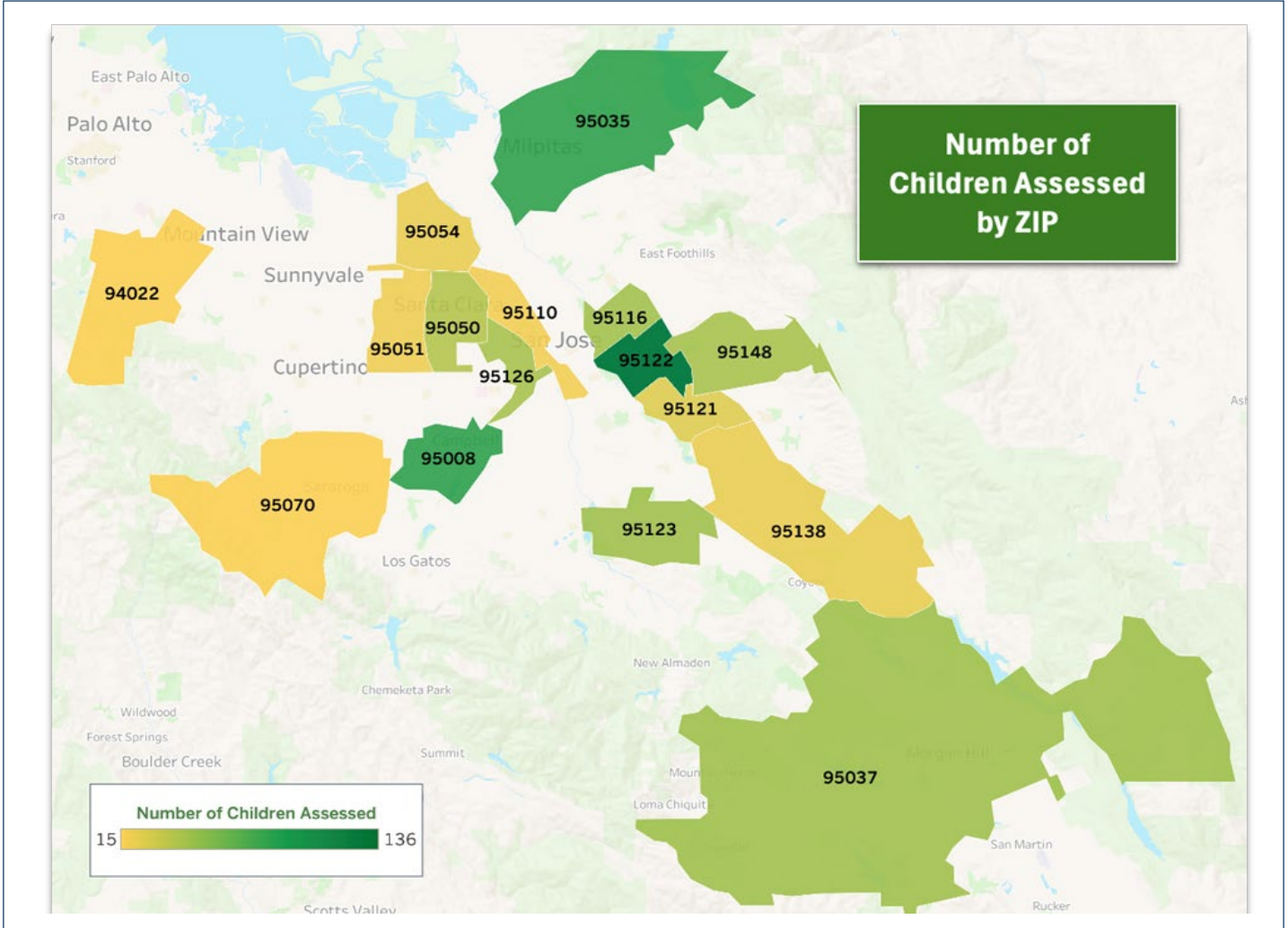
Exhibit 1. An Overview of Participation in the 2025 KRA, by School

District	School	# of Classrooms	# of Students
Alum Rock Union Elementary	Aptitud Community Academy at Goss	1	22
	Hubbard Media Arts Academy	2	20
	L.U.C.H.A.	1	23
Campbell Union	Capri Elementary	2	46
	Castlemont Elementary	2	41
Evergreen Elementary	Cadwallader Elementary	1	25
	Carolyn A. Clark Elementary	2	43
	Silver Oak Elementary	1	21
Franklin-McKinley Elementary	Captain Jason M. Dahl Elementary	2	36
	Franklin Elementary	1	21
	Santee Elementary	2	41
Los Altos Elementary	Santa Rita Elementary	1	15
Milpitas Unified	Alexander Rose Elementary	2	43
	Joseph Weller Elementary	2	43
Morgan Hill Unified	Nordstrom Elementary	1	22
	Paradise Valley Engineering Academy	1	24
Oak Grove Elementary	Oak Ridge Elementary	2	46
San Jose Unified	Booksin Elementary	2	43
	Washington Elementary	1	18
Santa Clara Unified	Bracher Elementary	2	19
	Montague Elementary	2	21
	Westwood Elementary	2	39
Saratoga Union Elementary	Argonaut Elementary	1	15
		36	705

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025.

The map below shows the distribution of children assessed in the 2025 Santa Clara County KRA by the ZIP Code of their school. Participation was highest in larger-population areas of the county, particularly East San Jose (95122), Campbell (95008), and Milpitas (95035). Several smaller areas also contributed to the sample, helping ensure broad geographic representation across Santa Clara County.

Exhibit 2. An Overview of Participation in the 2025 KRA, by ZIP Code of Assessed Children’s School

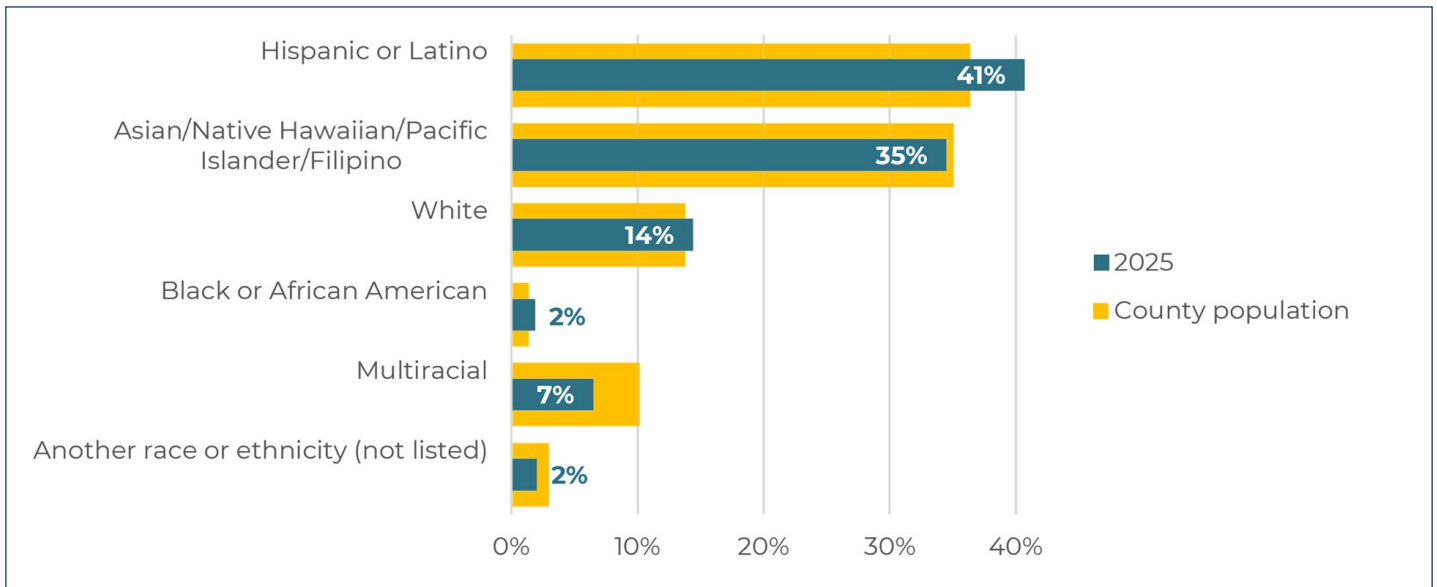


Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 705. The map uses a color gradient ranging from dark green to light green to yellow, representing areas with higher to lower numbers of children assessed, respectively.

In the 2025 Santa Clara County KRA, 99% of surveys were completed by biological parents, and 1% by guardians. At the time of the assessment, children were 5.5 years old on average. Just over half of participating children were identified by their caregivers as boys (52%), and 48% as girls.

Families identified their child’s race or ethnicity, with 10% selecting more than one race. The most commonly reported groups were Hispanic or Latino (36%), Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino (35%), and White (14%). Additional responses included Multiracial (10%), Black or African American (1%), and another race or ethnicity not listed (3%). The overall racial and ethnic distribution of the sample closely aligns with Santa Clara County’s kindergarten population. There was a slightly higher proportion of multiracial children in the sample and a slightly lower representation of children identified as Black or White compared to countywide estimates.

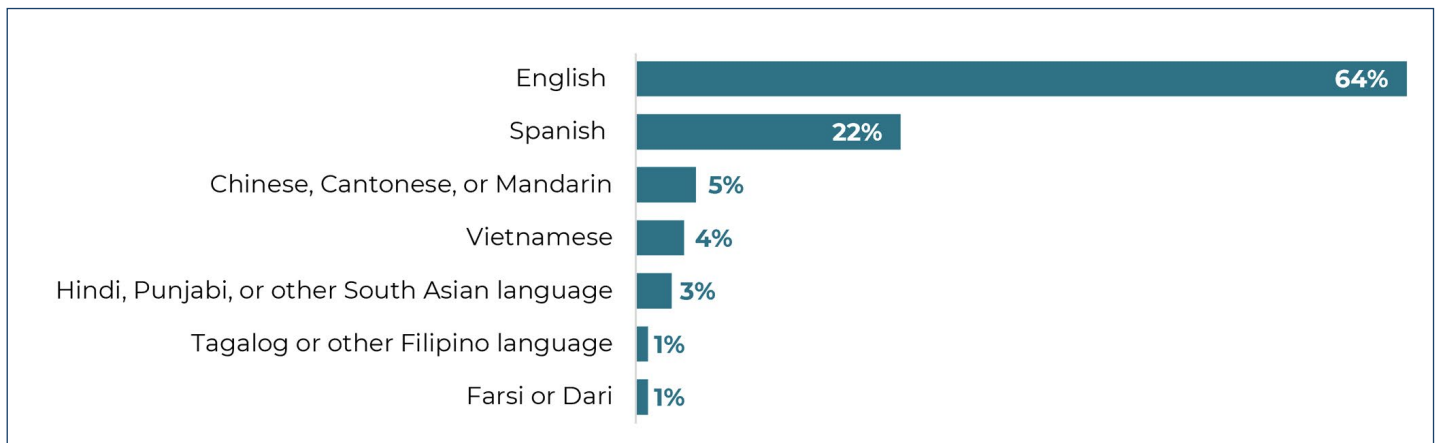
Exhibit 3. Racial and Ethnic Composition, KRA 2025 and Santa Clara Kindergarten County Population



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 705. California Department of Education (2024-25), N = 14,182. Another race or ethnicity includes American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern, North African, and Indian. Proportions of 5% or less are not labeled.

Caregivers were asked to report the language they most often use with their child at home. The most common home language was English (64%), followed by Spanish (22%), and Chinese, Cantonese or Mandarin at 5%. Other languages included Vietnamese (4%), Punjabi or Hindi (3%), Farsi or Dari (1%), and Tagalog or another Filipino language (1%). Forty-two percent of children were identified as emergent bilingual learners.

Exhibit 4. Primary Language Used by Families at Home, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form 2025. Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 691. Note: When a PIF was not available, teachers provided the child's primary language based on classroom knowledge, ensuring more complete representation in the data.

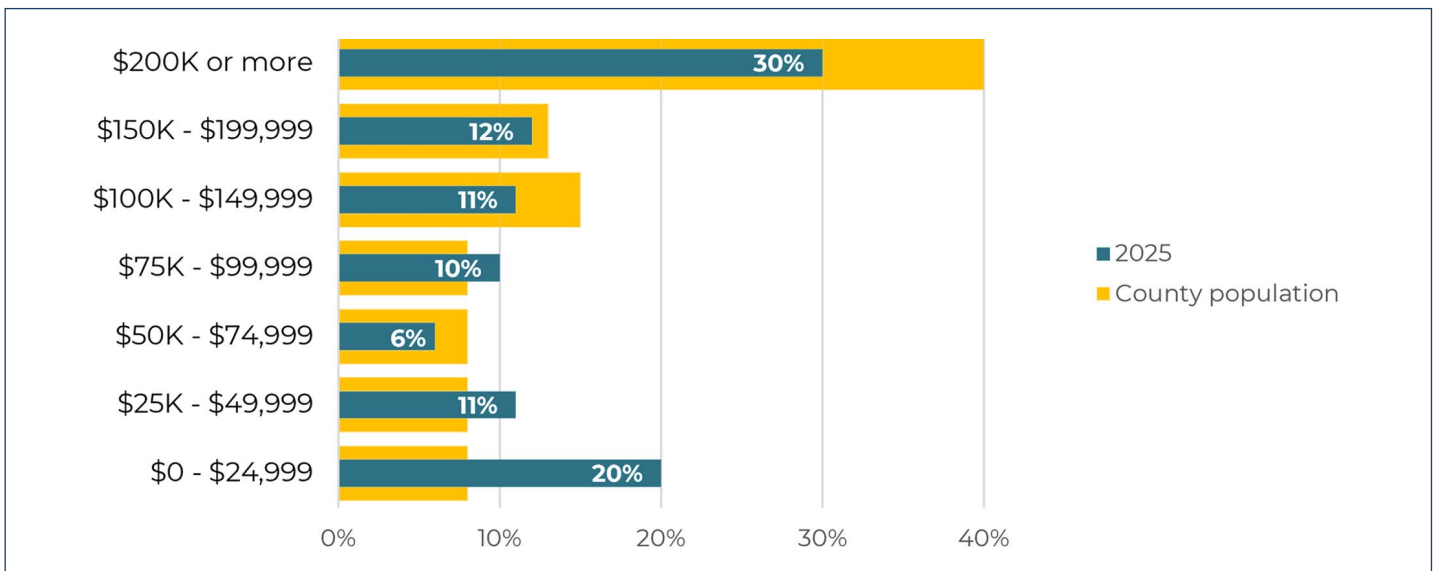


Families reported a broad range of annual household incomes. While 30% of participating households reported annual incomes of \$200,000 or more, many families are raising young children on more modest incomes, with 20% reporting incomes under \$25,000. By comparison, U.S. Census American Community Survey^{vi} data show that 40% of all Santa Clara County households earn \$200,000 or more annually, and 8% earn less than \$25,000. It is important to note that county-level Census data reflects all households, not just those with children entering kindergarten. Given that families with young children often have fewer earners or are earlier in their careers, some variation in income distribution is expected.



Household sizes ranged from 2–10 people, with an average of four.

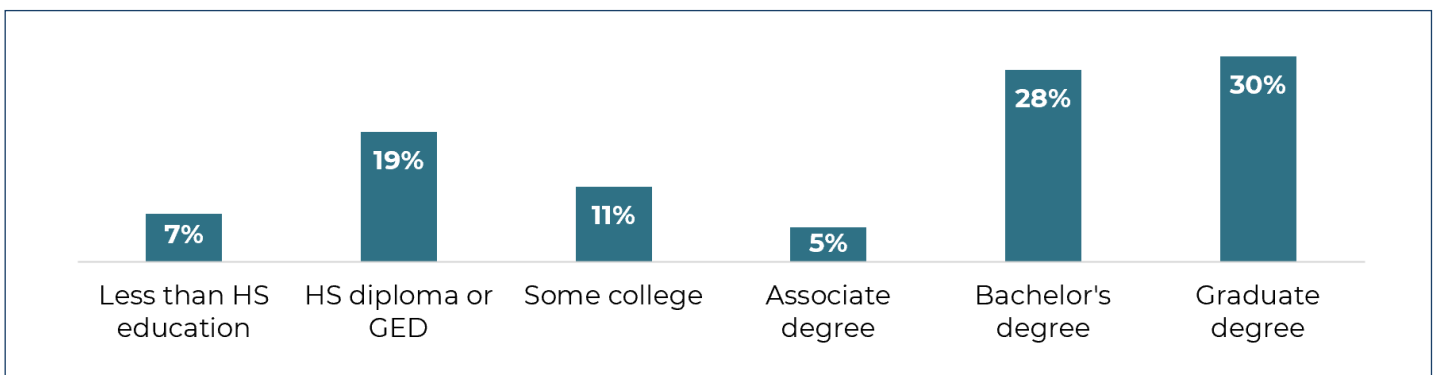
Exhibit 5. Annual Household Income, KRA 2025 and Santa Clara County Households



Source: Parent Information Form 2025, N = 272. U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03, Santa Clara County N = 654,467.

Caregiver education levels varied across the 2025 KRA sample. Nearly three in five (58%) caregivers held a Bachelor’s degree or higher, while others reported completing an Associate degree, some college, a high school diploma or GED, or less than high school education.

Exhibit 6. Highest Level of Education Among Caregivers, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form 2025. Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 265.

A NOTE ABOUT HOW TO INTERPRET THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

The 2025 KRA sample was sufficiently large and statistically representative of the County in terms of racial and ethnic composition. A chi-square goodness-of-fit test confirmed that no significant differences existed between the sample and the countywide kindergarten population on this dimension, and data weighting was applied to ensure precise alignment. However, the sample may differ from the broader county population on other demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic characteristics. Additionally, participation in the study was voluntary for both teachers and caregivers. This means that those who participated may differ in important ways from families and students who did not participate. It is also important to interpret findings within the context of the data collection methods used. Teacher ratings on the KOF, while guided by standardized training, may still be influenced by implicit bias or variation in interpretation. Parent and caregiver responses on the parent survey may be affected by social desirability bias (responding in a way that feels socially acceptable) or reference bias (shaped by personal context and expectations). Given these limitations, the findings presented in this report provide valuable insights into trends at the county level, but generalizations to the full population should be made with appropriate caution.



SANTA CLARA COUNTY 2025

READINESS OF CHILDREN



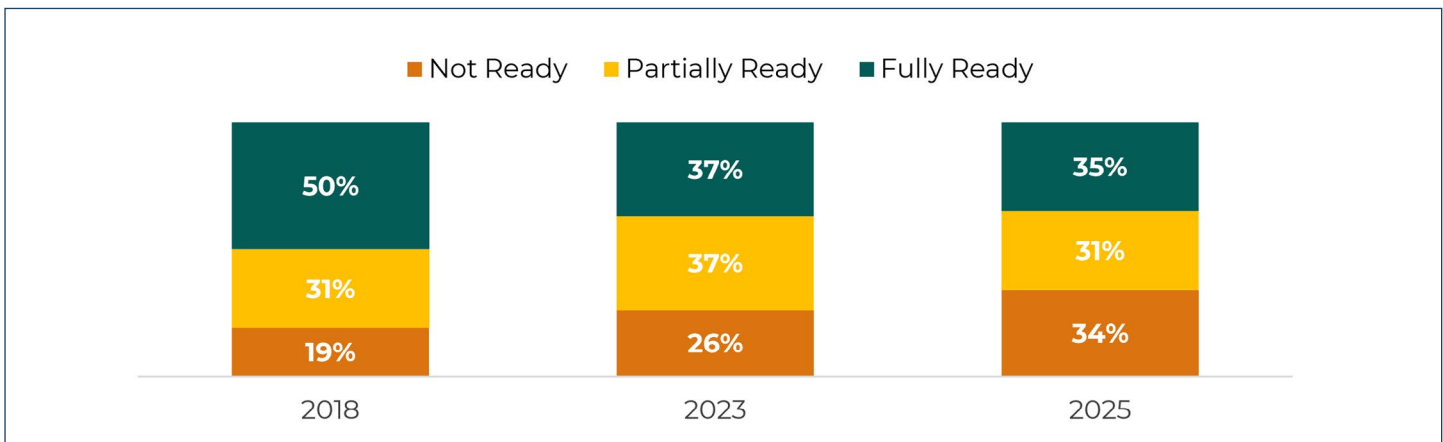
KINDERGARTEN READINESS

The KOF measured children's readiness skills across three core domains: *Self-Regulation*, *Social Expression*, and *Kindergarten Academics*. Scores ranged from 1 = *Not Yet* to 4 = *Proficient*. Children who scored 3.25 or higher in all three domains were considered *Fully Ready* for kindergarten, reflecting a validated readiness benchmark linked to later academic achievement.² Those who scored below 3.25 in all domains were classified as *Not Ready*, while those who met the benchmark in one or two domains were considered *Partially Ready*. In 2025, 35% of children were *Fully Ready*, showing proficiency across all key domains, while 31% were *Partially Ready* and 34% were *Not Ready*.

35%
Fully Ready for kindergarten

Between 2018 and 2025, the percentage of children classified as *Fully Ready* decreased from 50% to 35%, while the proportion of children classified as *Not Ready* increased from 19% to 34%. The percentage of children who were *Partially Ready* remained relatively stable, ranging from 31% to 37% over the three assessment years.

Exhibit 7. Trends in Kindergarten Readiness, KRA 2018–2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 705. 2023 N = 918. 2018 N = 1,184. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

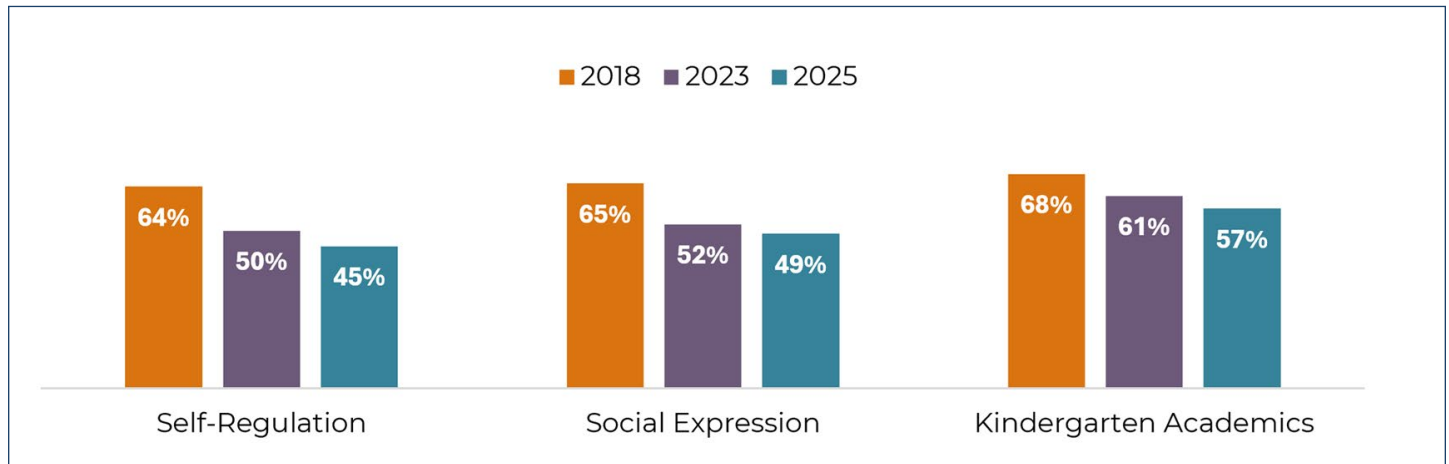
INTERPRETING READINESS TRENDS OVER TIME

When interpreting changes in kindergarten readiness over time, it is important to consider both cohort differences and the scope of the assessment. The share of children identified as *Fully Ready* declined from 2018 to 2023 and remained relatively stable in 2025 compared to 2023. Children entering kindergarten in 2023 and 2025 were born closer to or during the COVID-19 pandemic and experienced early childhood during a period of widespread disruption to early learning, healthcare access, developmental supports, and social interaction. As a result, lower readiness levels in 2023 and 2025 likely reflect the lasting effects of pandemic-era disruptions rather than a decline in family engagement or system effort.

² The 3.25 cutoff score is a validated longitudinal benchmark on the Kindergarten Observation Form and has been shown in prior research to be associated with later school achievement, including outcomes beyond kindergarten.

The percentage of children ready in each domain ranged from 45% to 57%, and readiness was highest in the *Kindergarten Academics* domain. Across all three domains, readiness levels declined slightly compared to previous years.

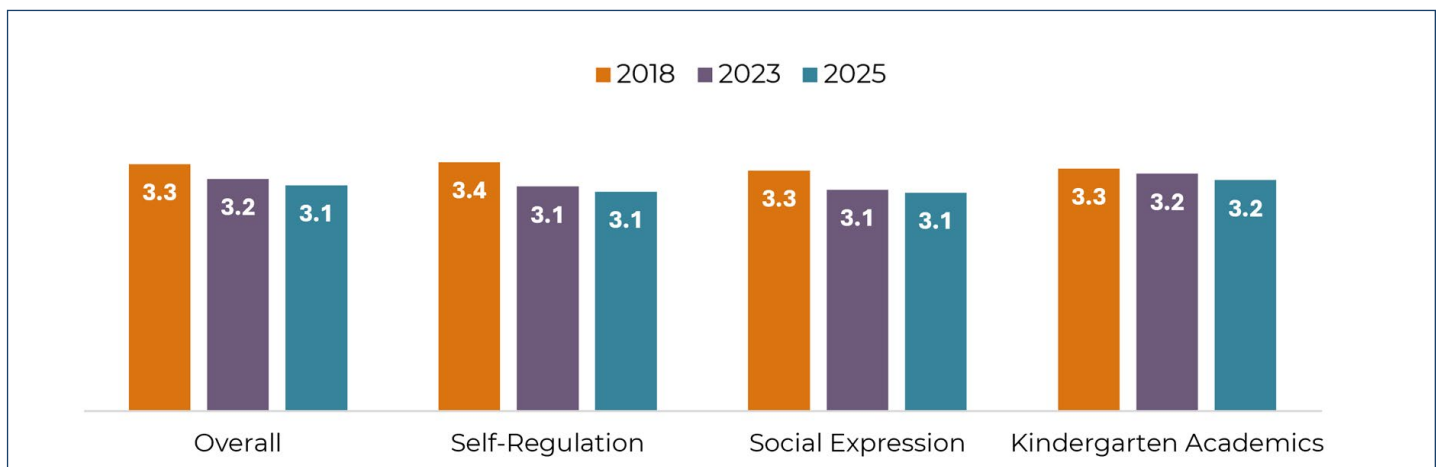
Exhibit 8. Percentage of Children Fully Ready for Kindergarten by Domain, KRA 2018–2025



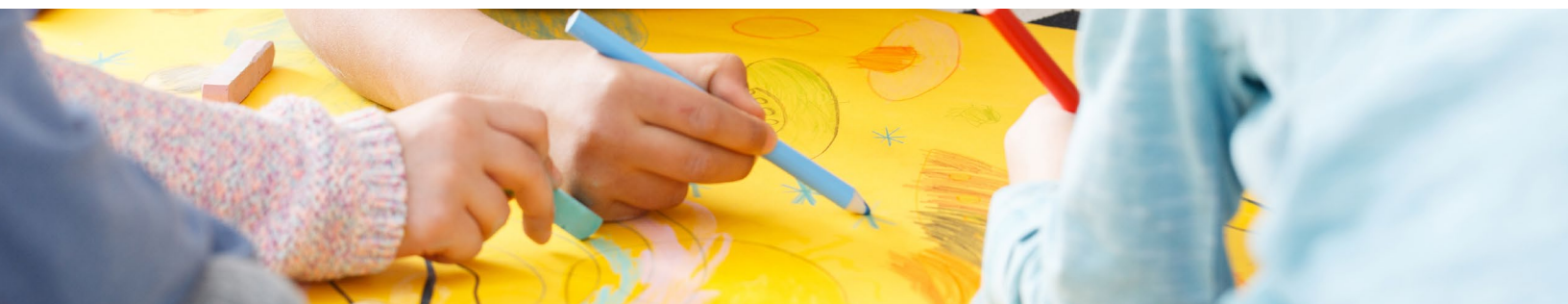
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 704-705. 2023 N = 917 - 951. 2018 N = 1,186-1,249. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

In 2025, children’s average scores on the KOF ranged from 3.06 to 3.18 across the three readiness domains, with the highest average score in the *Kindergarten Academics* domain (3.2). The overall readiness score was 3.1. Since 2018, average scores have shown a gradual decline across all domains and overall. The largest change over time was observed in *Self-Regulation*, which decreased from 3.35 in 2018 to 3.07 in 2025.

Exhibit 9. Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores by Domain, KRA 2018–2025

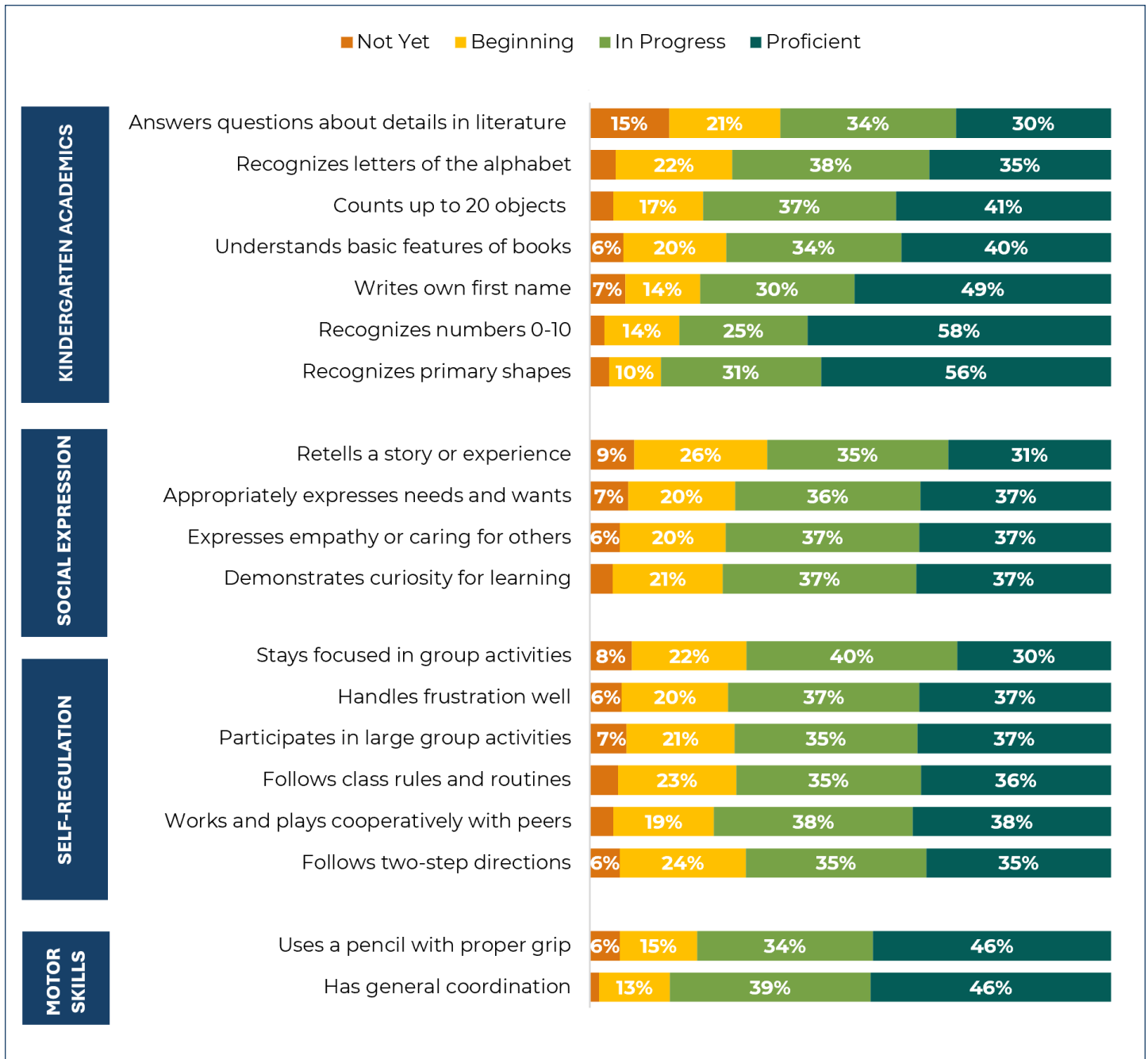


Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 704-705. 2023 N = 917 - 951. 2018 N = 1,186-1,249. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.



The exhibit below shows the distribution of scores across the 19 items on the KOF. Children in the sample entered kindergarten most proficient in skills such as recognizing numbers and shapes, writing their first name, using a pencil with proper grip, and showing general coordination. Foundational literacy, comprehension, and self-regulation skills—such as answering questions about a story, retelling a story or experience, and staying focused in group activities—were more often still developing.

Exhibit 10. Distribution of Proficiency Levels Across School Readiness Skills, KRA 2025



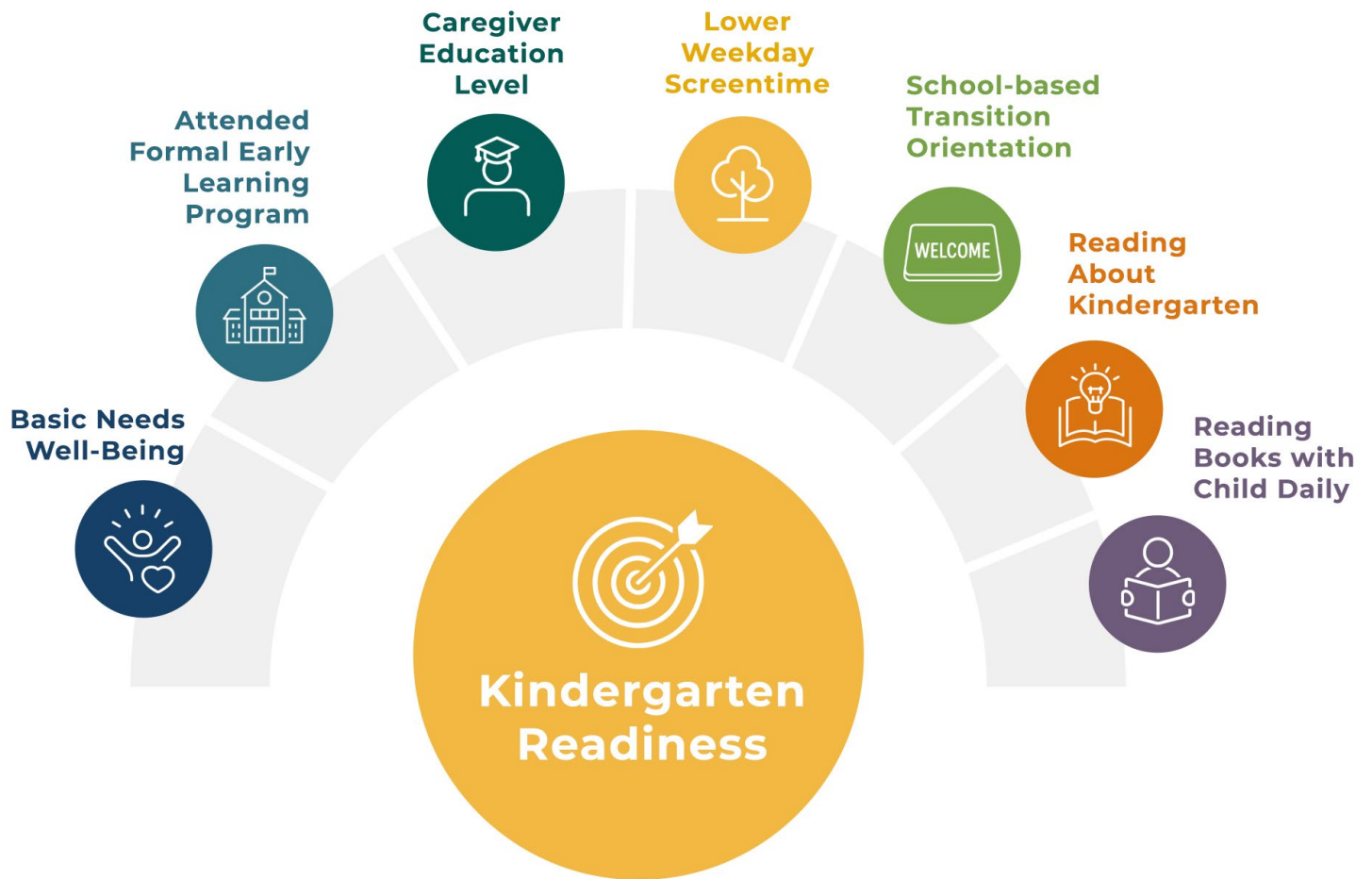
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 649 - 705. Proportions of 5% or less are not labeled.

MALLEABLE ASSETS ASSOCIATED WITH OVERALL READINESS

To better understand which factors are most closely associated with children’s overall readiness for kindergarten, a multilevel regression analysis was used to examine patterns in the data while accounting for classroom-level differences and demographic factors. The goal was to identify *malleable assets*—factors that families, schools, and communities can support—that were most strongly linked with higher readiness scores in the 2025 KRA sample.³

Many of the experiences and conditions associated with higher readiness were areas that could be supported through early learning systems, community engagement, and family resources. These included having basic needs met, attending formal early learning program, caregiver education, low weekday screentime, and engaging in kindergarten transition activities.

Exhibit 11. Key Predictors of Overall School Readiness (in Order of Strength), KRA 2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321. Weighting was applied to align the sample’s racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County Kindergarten population. The model controlled for age and special need designation. The overall model accounted for 39% of the variance in school readiness scores ($R^2 = 0.39$), and the predictors were associated with readiness at the $p < .05$ level.

³ It is important to note that these analyses are correlational, not causal. The findings reflect associations observed within the 2025 sample and cannot determine cause and effect. In addition, there are likely other factors that influence readiness that were not included in this assessment.

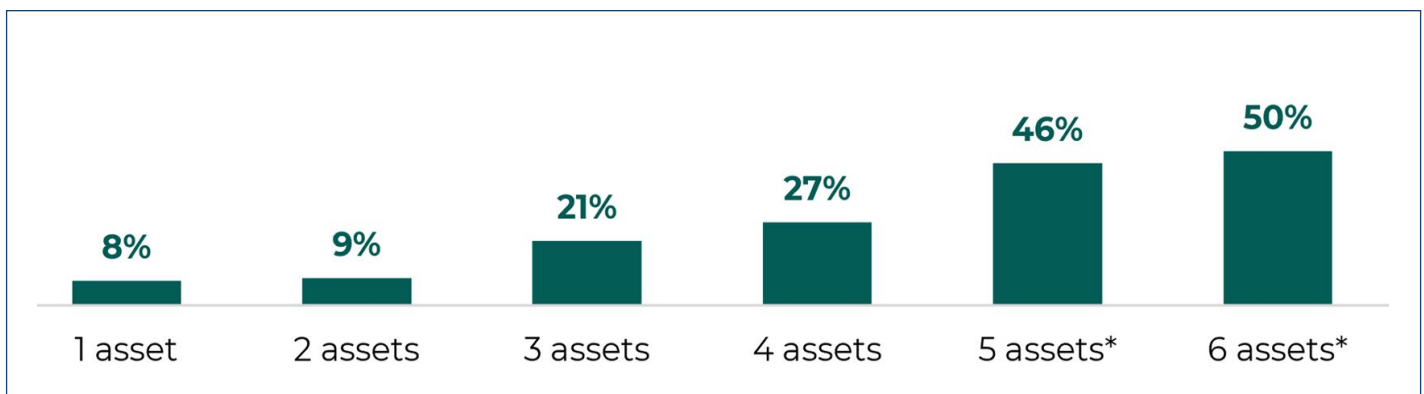
The factors most strongly associated with readiness outcomes were (in order of strength):

BASIC NEEDS WELL-BEING⁴	Children who appeared well-rested and well-fed in class demonstrated the highest readiness scores, underscoring the importance of consistent sleep, nutrition, and routines.
FORMAL EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM	Children who attended a formal early learning program (e.g., preschool or center, family child care home, Transitional Kindergarten, Head Start) demonstrated higher readiness scores, highlighting the potential value of structured early learning experiences.
CAREGIVER EDUCATION LEVEL	Readiness scores were higher among children whose caregiver had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher , pointing to the broader influence of caregiver education on early development.
LOWER WEEKDAY SCREENTIME	Children with less weekday screen time were more likely to demonstrate higher readiness, suggesting that reduced screen use may support more active and enriching daily routines.
SCHOOL-BASED TRANSITION ORIENTATION	Participation in a school-based orientation about kindergarten transitions was positively associated with readiness, pointing to the potential value of early engagement with kindergarten expectations.
READING ABOUT KINDERGARTEN	Caregivers' engagement in reading about kindergarten (e.g., books or articles) was associated with higher readiness scores, reflecting the possible benefits of learning what to expect and how to prepare.
READING BOOKS WITH CHILD DAILY	Children who read books with a caregiver daily (6-7 days per week) also tended to score higher, reinforcing the value of frequent shared reading as a home-based learning activity.

CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF MALLEABLE ASSETS

Children in the 2025 sample who had access to more readiness-related supports, or malleable assets, tended to demonstrate higher overall readiness. Among those with only one to two malleable assets, fewer than 10% were *Fully Ready*. Among children with **five or six malleable assets, the proportion who were *Fully Ready* increased significantly.**

Exhibit 12. Percentage Fully Ready by Number of Malleable Assets, KRA 2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population. Differences in percent Fully Ready are statistically significant at * $p < .05$.

⁴ According to child's teacher. All other factors reported by child's caregiver.

GEOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN READINESS

The maps below show variation in average kindergarten readiness across different school ZIP Codes in Santa Clara County, alongside the average number of malleable assets reported by families in each area. In areas where families reported more of these assets, children tended to have higher average readiness scores. While these patterns do not explain all differences, they highlight how community context and access to resources may play a role in shaping early learning experiences.

Exhibit 13. Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores and Number of Assets, by School ZIP Code, KRA 2025



Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 321.

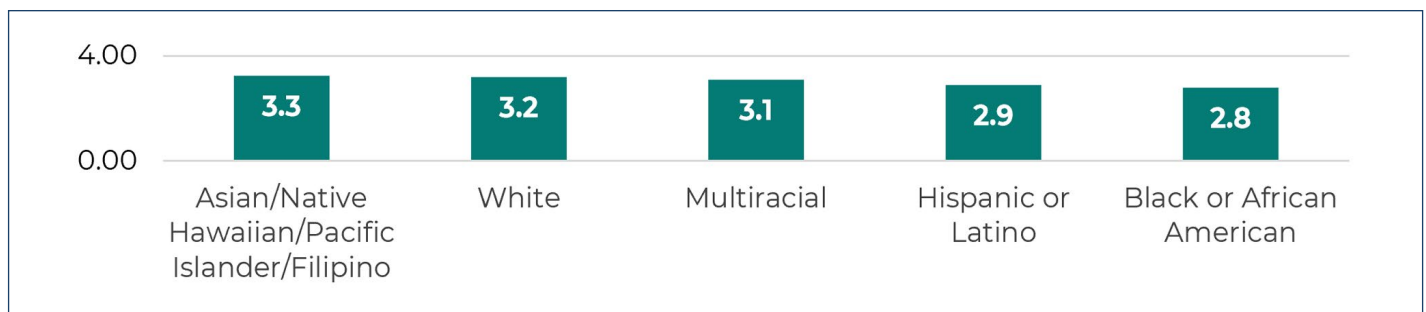
DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN READINESS

This section examines patterns in kindergarten readiness across key demographic groups, including race and ethnicity, English proficiency, and disability status. The findings describe how readiness varies across groups within the 2025 sample.

Race and Ethnic Differences

Average readiness scores varied somewhat across racial and ethnic groups, though the overall size of these differences was relatively small. Children identified as Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino had the highest average readiness score, followed by White and Multiracial children. Hispanic or Latino children had lower average scores, and Black or African American children had the lowest average. The number of Black or African American children in the sample was relatively small, and these results should be interpreted with caution.

Exhibit 14. Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores by Racial and Ethnic Composition, KRA 2025



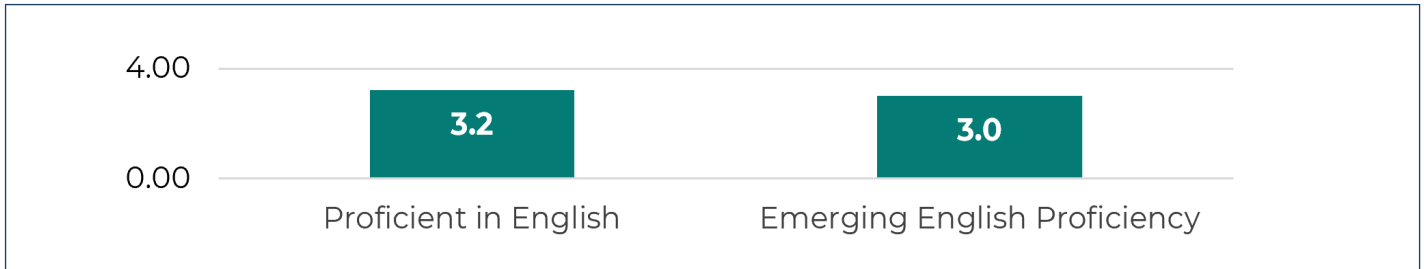
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form. 2025 N = 682.



Children with Emerging English Proficiency

Children with emerging English proficiency—defined based on home language and observed communication in the classroom—had slightly lower average readiness scores than children who were proficient in English.

Exhibit 15. Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores by English Proficiency, KRA 2025

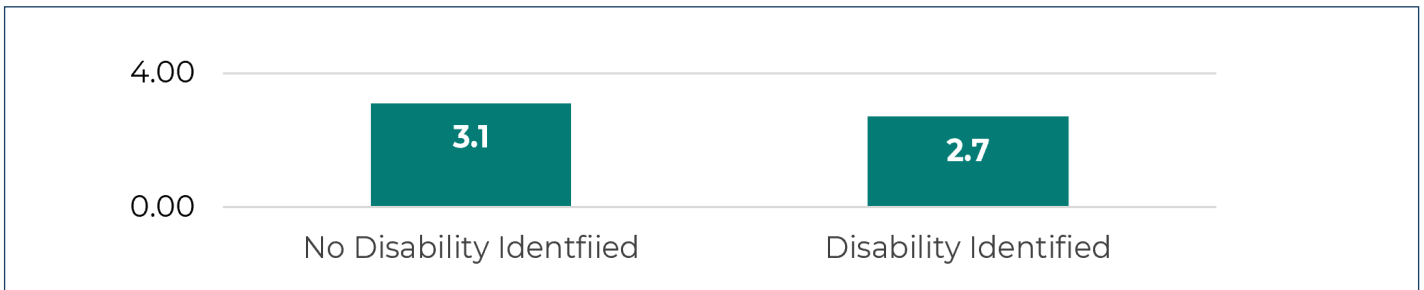


Source: Parent Information Form 2025. Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 691. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

Children with Disabilities

In 2025, approximately **10% of children in the sample were identified as having a disability**. On average, children with identified disabilities had lower readiness scores than children without identified disabilities.

Exhibit 16. Average Kindergarten Readiness Scores by Disability Status, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form 2025. Kindergarten Observation Form 2025, N = 705. Weighting was applied to align the sample's racial and ethnic distribution with the Santa Clara County kindergarten population.

INTERPRETING DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN READINESS

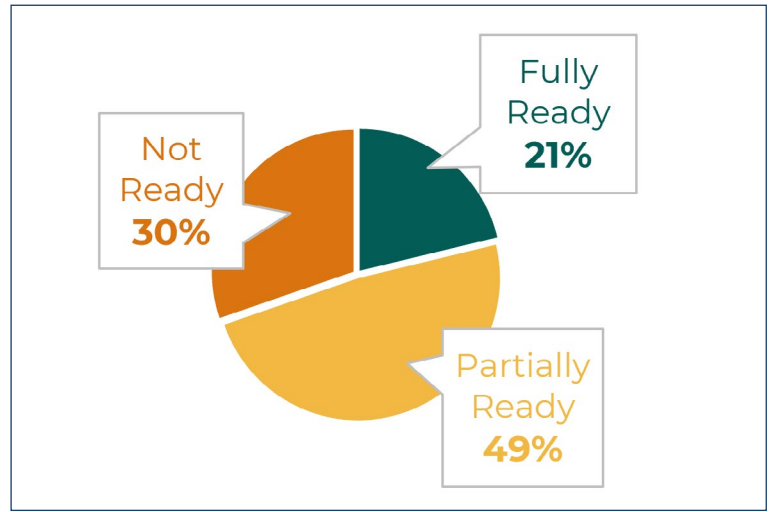
Differences in readiness across demographic groups should be interpreted with care. This analysis describes patterns within the sample and does not examine the underlying factors that may contribute to these differences. Results should not be interpreted as reflecting inherent differences between groups. Findings elsewhere in this report highlight the importance of factors such as access to early learning experiences, family supports, and stable environments in shaping children's readiness for kindergarten.

CAREGIVER PERCEPTIONS OF KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Across the three core domains (*Self-Regulation*, *Social Expression*, and *Kindergarten Academics*), 21% of children were rated by their caregiver as *Fully Ready* for kindergarten, meaning they “consistently show” skills in all areas of development.

Caregiver perceptions reflected patterns similar to teacher assessments. Teachers identified 35% of children as *Fully Ready* and 34% as *Not Ready*, while caregivers reported 21% and 30%, respectively. Although caregivers were somewhat more likely to describe children as *Partially Ready*, the overall patterns were consistent, suggesting that families have a strong understanding of their child’s readiness as they enter kindergarten.

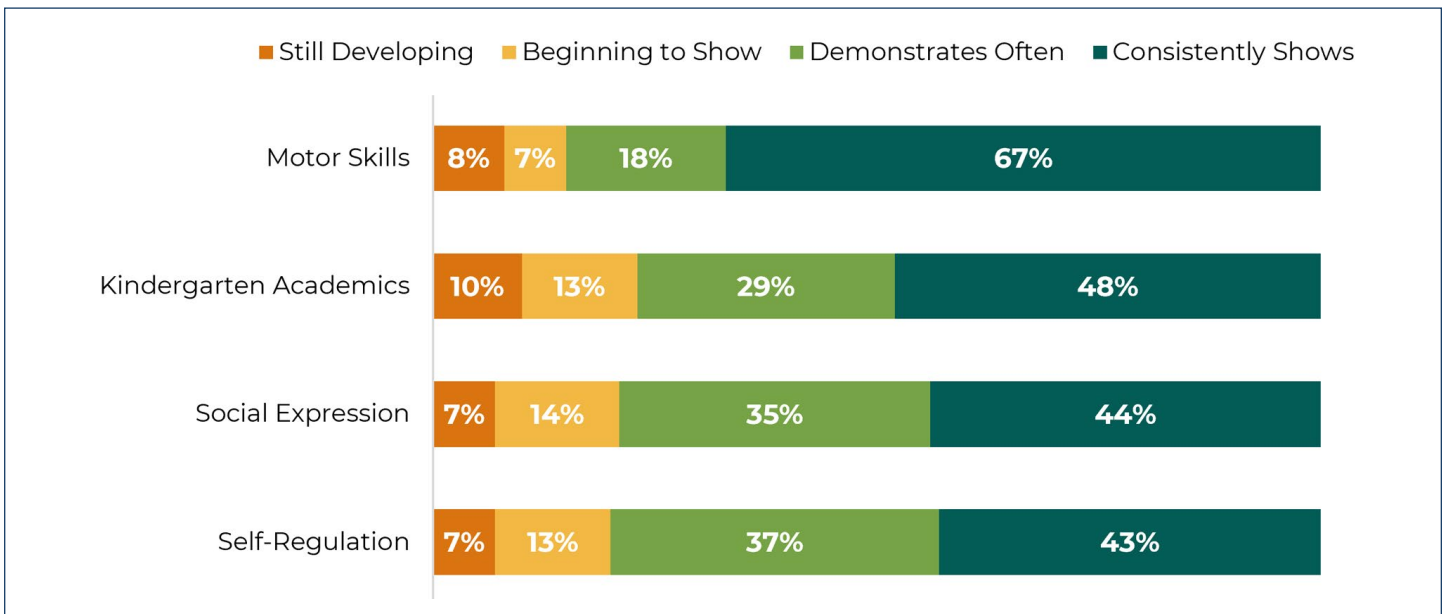
Exhibit 17. Caregiver Perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321.

Caregivers in Santa Clara County reported that children are entering school with a strong foundation across key areas of development. *Motor Skills* was the most commonly endorsed strength, with 67% of caregivers saying their child “consistently shows” these skills, indicating strong perceived physical readiness. Across all four developmental areas, at least three in four caregivers reported their children were either “demonstrating often” or “consistently” showing the readiness skills—reflecting a broad and encouraging perception of readiness as children begin school.

Exhibit 18. Caregiver Perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness by Domain, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321.



SECTION SUMMARY: READINESS OF CHILDREN

- **Most children entered kindergarten with meaningful strengths.** In 2025, two-thirds of children were *Fully* or *Partially Ready*, demonstrating foundational skills in one or more key readiness domains.
- **Early academic skills were the strongest area of readiness,** with many children proficient in recognizing numbers and shapes, using a pencil with proper grip, and writing their first name.
- **Self-regulation emerged as a key priority growth area.** Many children were still developing skills related to focus, sustained attention, and engagement in group activities. This domain represents a high-impact opportunity for early learning, family, and school-based supports.
- **Several family, school, and community experiences were closely linked to higher readiness,** including having basic needs met, attending a formal early learning program, and higher caregiver education levels. Daily shared reading, limited weekday screen time, and participation in kindergarten transition activities were also positively associated with readiness.
- **Community context was associated with readiness.** Geographic patterns showed that access to resources and supports aligns with higher readiness, pointing to opportunities for targeted, place-based strategies.
- **Caregivers generally shared positive perceptions of their children’s readiness by domain,** with more than three in four indicating that their child often or consistently demonstrated skills in each area of development.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY 2025

READINESS OF FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES



EARLY LEARNING ACCESS

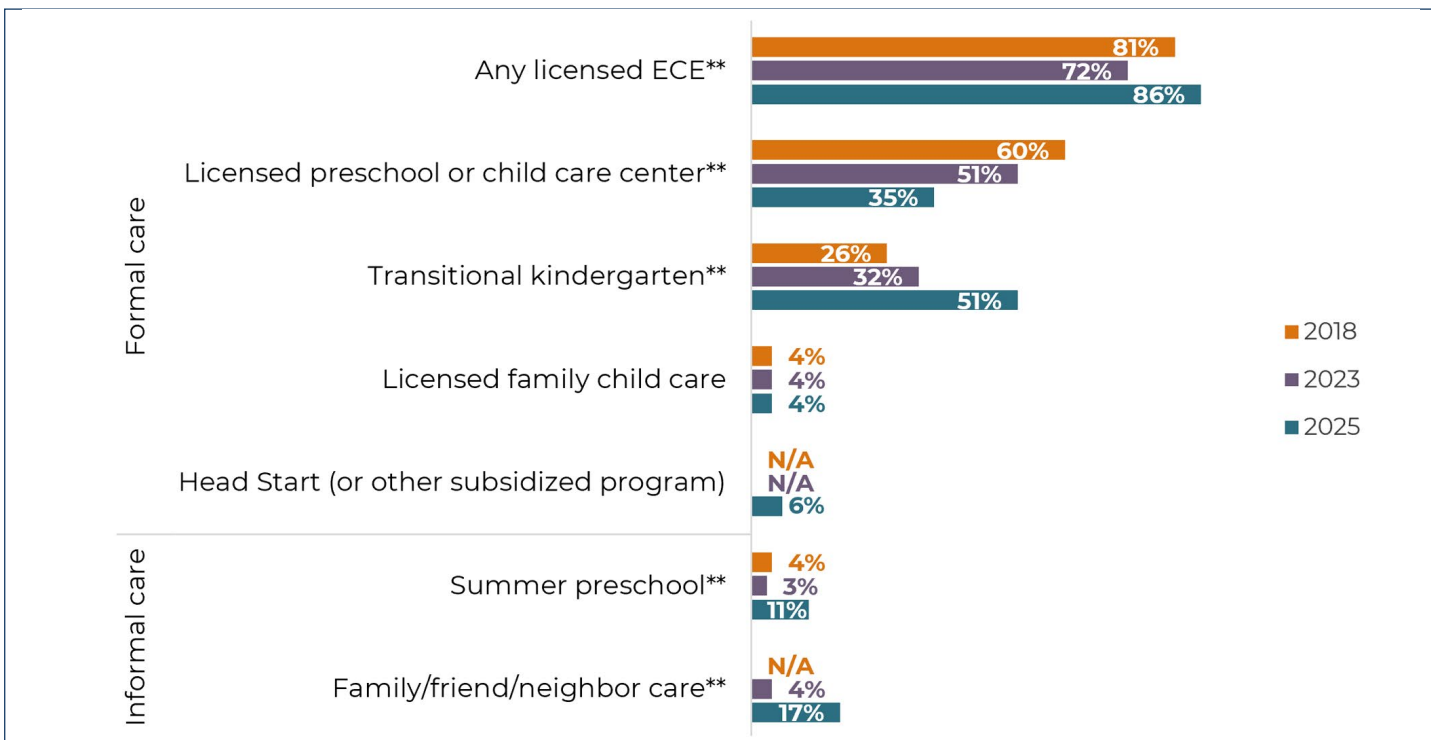
Access to quality early care and education (ECE) remains one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of kindergarten readiness. In 2025, 86% of children in the sample had attended a formal early learning program—higher than in previous years.

More than half of participating families indicated their child attended transitional kindergarten (TK) in the year before kindergarten. At the same time, fewer families reported enrolling their child in a licensed preschool or center-based care, with a noticeable shift toward summer programs and care by family, friends, or neighbors. These patterns suggest families are navigating multiple pathways into kindergarten, depending on what is available and accessible to them.

86%
of children
attended a
formal early
learning program

Between 2023 and 2025, there was a statistically significant 19% increase in TK participation and a 16% decrease in licensed preschool attendance. These shifts occurred alongside the continued expansion of transitional kindergarten (TK) across Santa Clara County and the state, which has broadened access to early learning opportunities for more families.

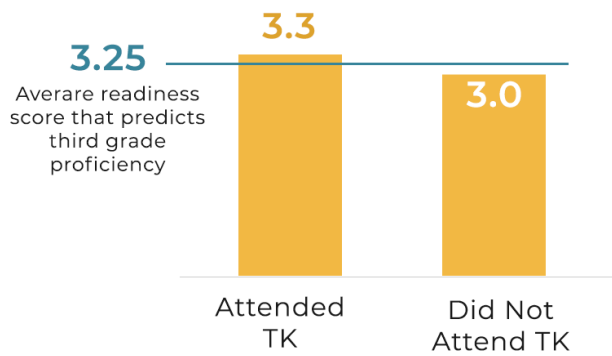
Exhibit 19. Participation in Early Learning Experiences Prior to Kindergarten, KRA 2018-2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 674. 2018 N = 941-1,183. N/A indicates that the item was not included in the survey for that year. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01.



TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN SUPPORTS READINESS

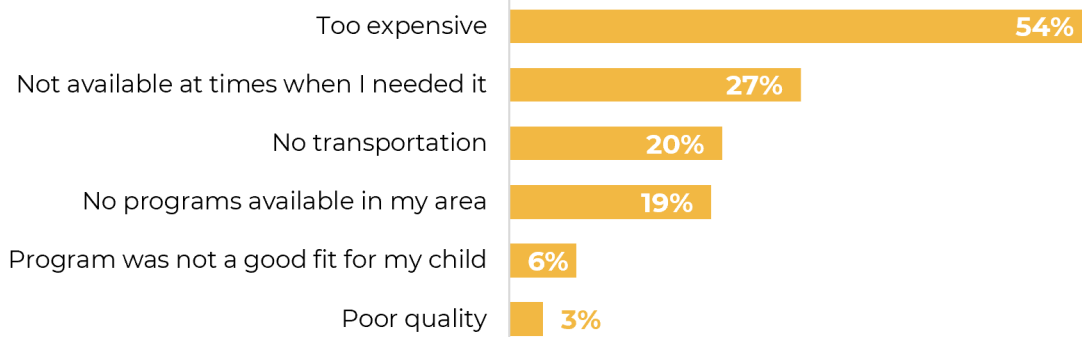


Children who attended Transitional Kindergarten entered kindergarten with **significantly higher readiness** scores, reinforcing the value of expanded access to formal early learning opportunities.

Family-Reported Challenges Accessing Early Learning

In 2025, families were asked for the first time about challenges they may have faced in accessing child care or preschool. While many families reported having no difficulty (45%) or not needing care (25%), others described barriers that made access harder. **Cost was the most common challenge**, followed by limited availability during needed hours and transportation issues. Some families also shared that there were no programs available in their area or that the programs they found weren't a good fit for their child. A small number expressed concerns about quality.

Exhibit 20. Barriers to Accessing Child Care or Preschool, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 97. Percentages include only the sample of caregivers reporting at least one challenge.

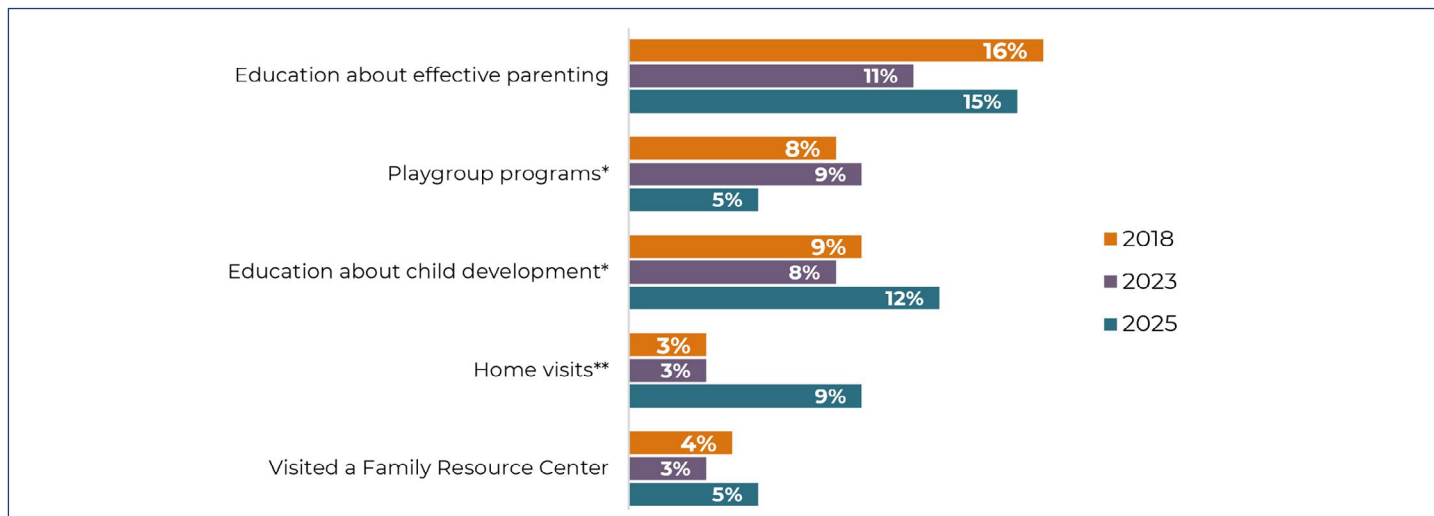


COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Use of Parenting Programs, Services, and Supports

In 2025, one in four families reported using at least one parenting-related program, service, or support. The most commonly used resources included education about effective parenting and child development. More families also reported receiving home visits than in past years, while fewer participated in playgroups. These shifts show greater engagement with individualized and informational supports, alongside reduced participation in group-based activities.

Exhibit 21. Families' Use of Parenting Programs, Services, and Supports, KRA 2018-2025

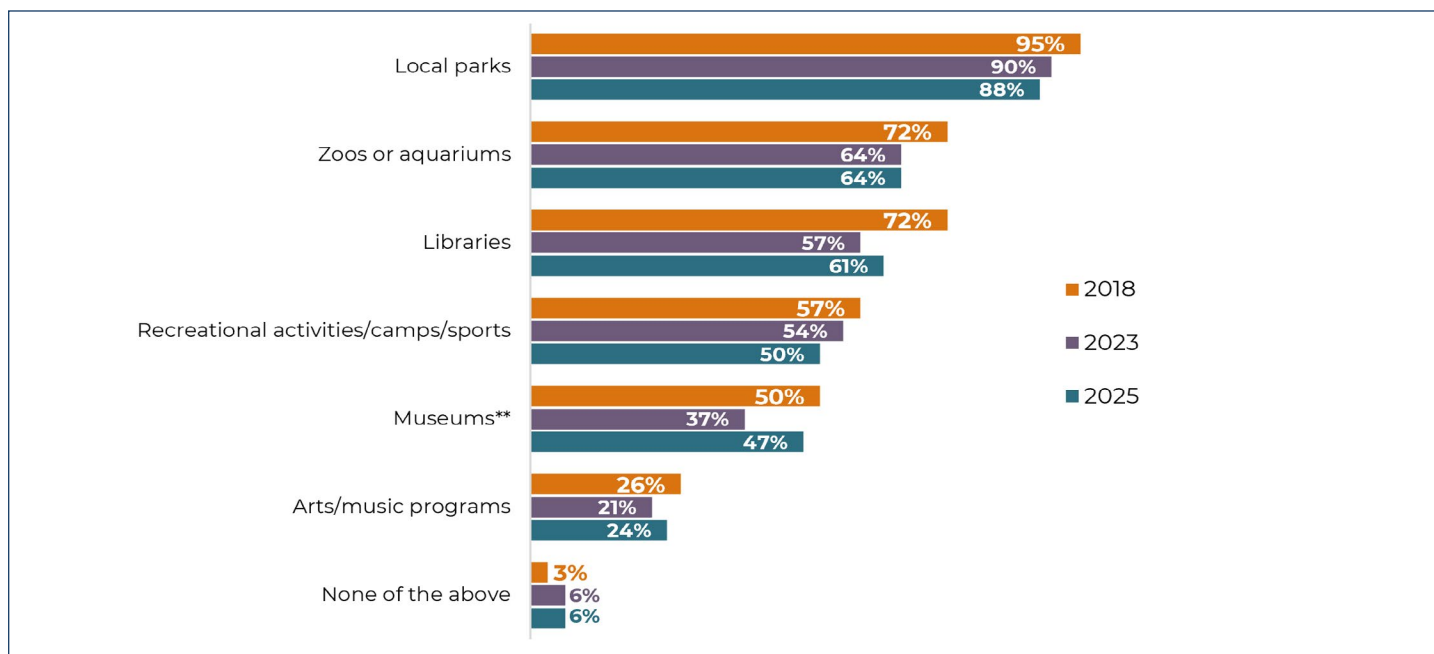


Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 280. 2023 N = 664. 2018 N = 890. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01 and * p < .05.

Families' Use of Local Community Resources

In 2025, more than four in five families reported using at least one local resource. The most commonly accessed places included local parks, libraries, and cultural institutions like zoos, aquariums, and museums. While engagement with many of these resources remained strong, overall participation was lower than in 2018. Fewer families reported visiting local parks and recreational programs, camps, or participating in sports. Access to museums, which had declined in 2023, showed a small rebound in 2025.

Exhibit 22. Families' Use of Local Resources, KRA 2018-2025

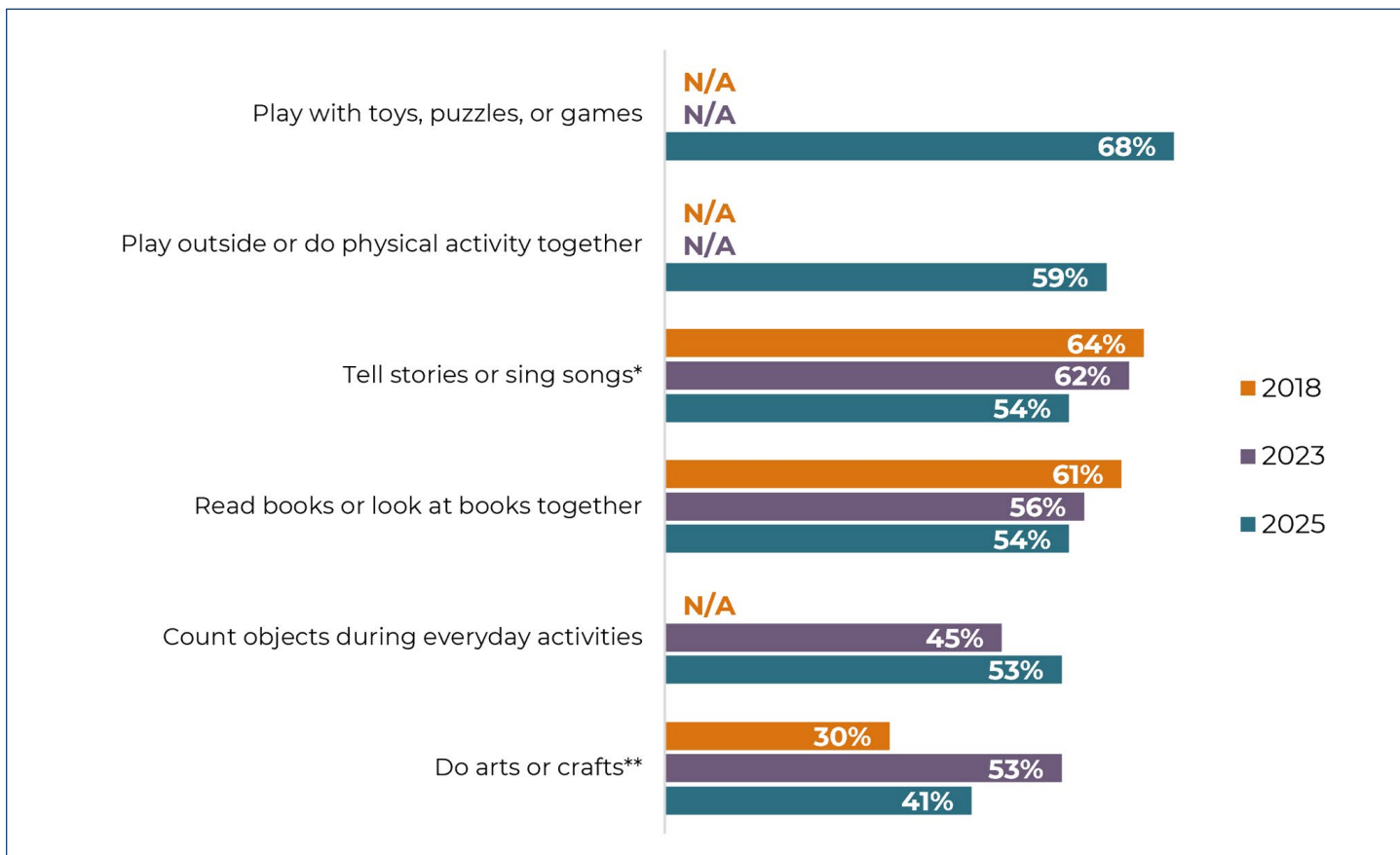


Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 280. 2023 N = 691. 2018 N = 947. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Families play a vital role in supporting early learning at home. In 2025, most caregivers reported spending time each week engaging their children in enriching learning activities such as reading, singing, playing, and exploring math and movement through everyday routines. Fewer families reported doing crafts or storytelling compared to the 2023 sample of caregivers. Book reading remained steady across years, continuing to be a consistent part of many families' weekly routines.

Exhibit 23. Frequency of Home Learning Activities At Least Four Days per Week, KRA 2018-2025



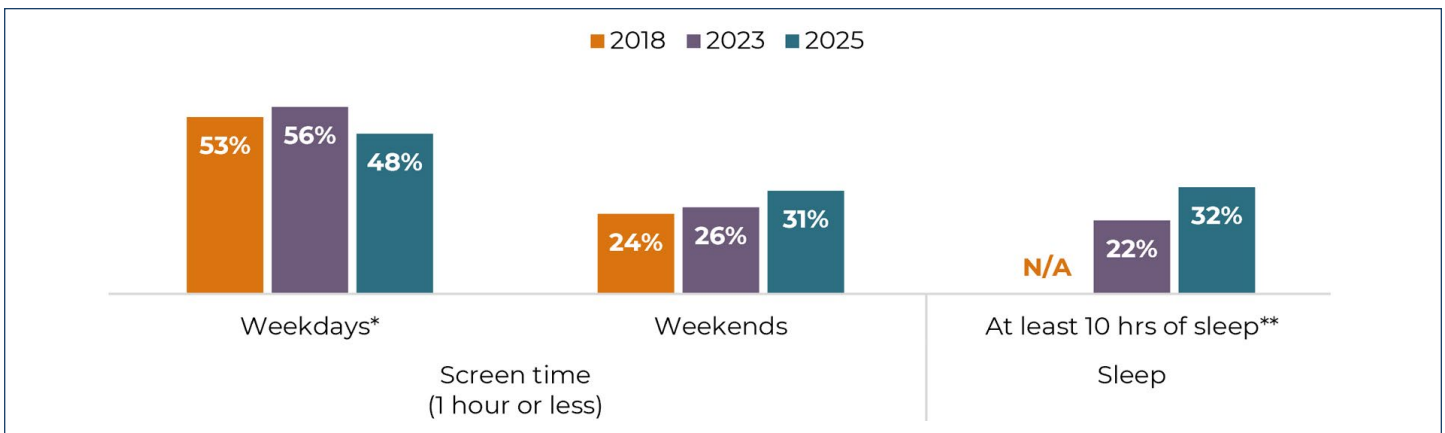
Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 679-688. 2018 N = 871-915. N/A indicates that the item was not included in the survey for that year. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01 and *p < .05.

FAMILY ROUTINES

Regular routines like sleep and screen time are foundational to a child’s well-being and school readiness. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages two to five get at least 10 hours of sleep each night and no more than one hour of screen time per day, including television, videos, and digital games.^{vii, viii}

In 2025, more families reported that their children were getting the recommended amount of sleep each night, showing a meaningful improvement from the previous study cycle. Screen time, however, continues to be an area of attention. Fewer families reported limiting weekday screen time to an hour or less compared to prior years, and weekend screen use has continued to rise gradually over time. As families navigate busy schedules and increasing access to digital devices, these patterns reinforce the importance of community supports that help promote healthy habits at home.

Exhibit 24. Trends in Screen Time and Sleep Habits, KRA 2018-2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 670-703. 2018 N = 931. N/A indicates that the item was not included in the survey for that year. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at ** $p < .01$ and * $p < .05$. Note: The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends children 3-5 sleep 10-13 hours per night.

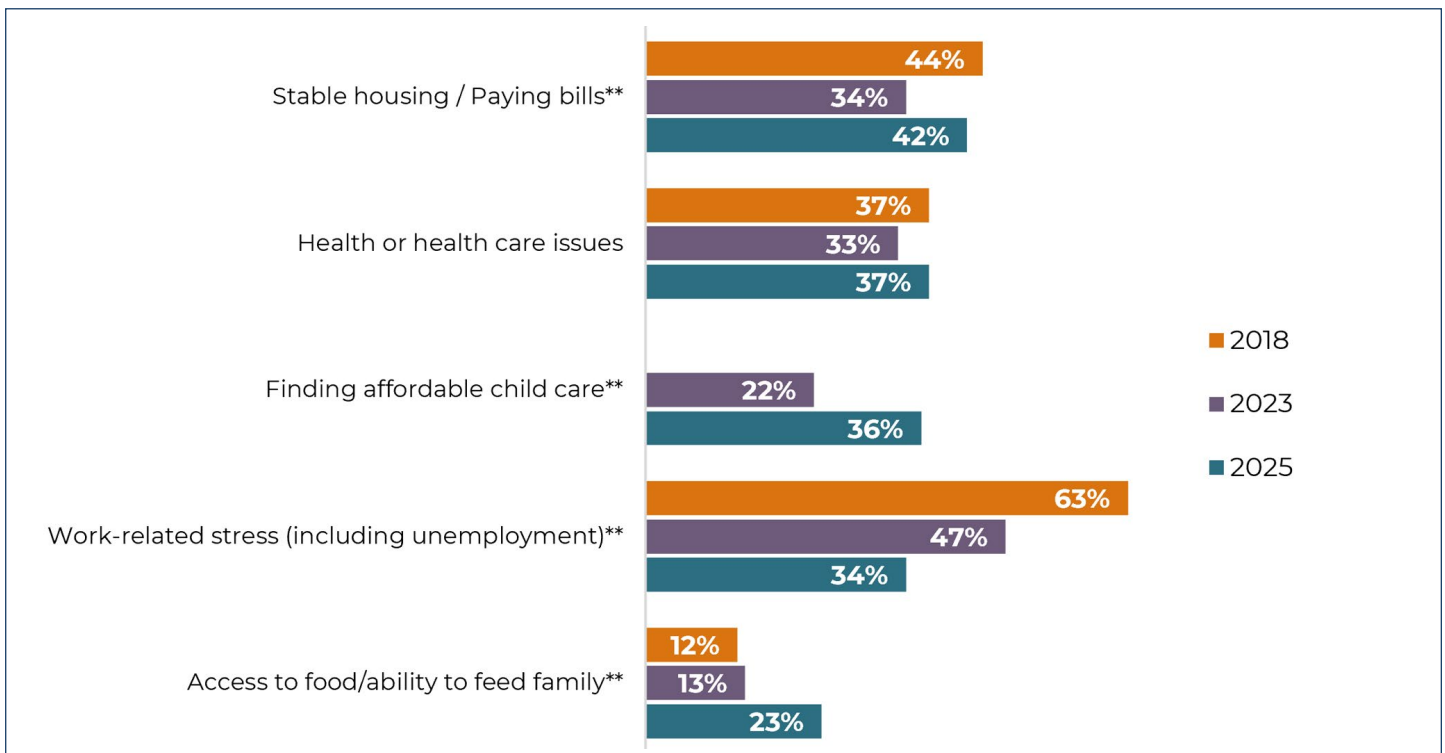
FAMILY STRESSORS AND WELL-BEING

Caregiver Concerns and Daily Challenges

Families were asked how concerned they had been in the past month about a range of common stressors, including housing, food, employment, and caregiving. In 2025, many caregivers reported navigating ongoing economic and caregiving-related pressures.

Compared to 2023, more families reported concerns about access to food and finding affordable child care. Concerns about housing stability also increased. At the same time, fewer families reported being concerned about work-related stress than in earlier years, continuing a downward trend from 2018.

Exhibit 25. Common Family Concerns Reported by Caregivers, KRA 2018-2025



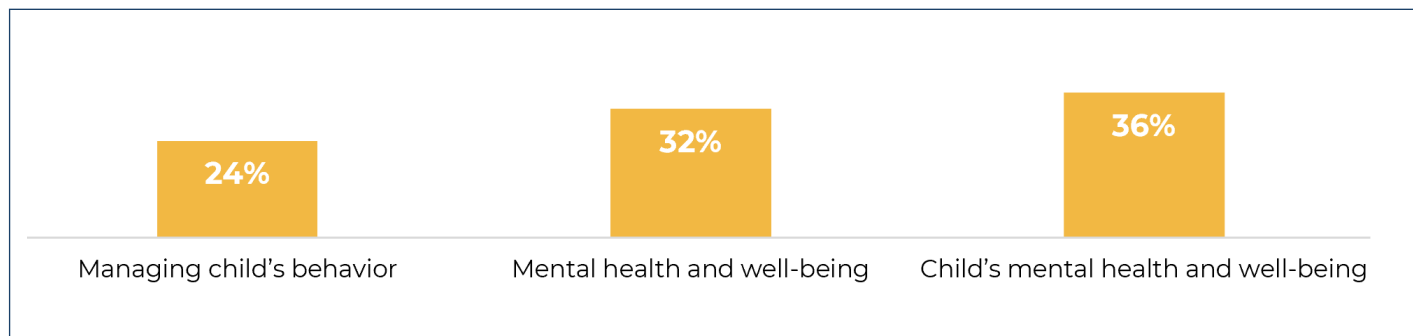
Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 683-690. 2018 N = 916-927. Numbers reflect the percentage of respondents who marked “a little,” “moderately,” or “very” concerned. N/A indicates that the item was not included in the survey for that year. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at ** $p < .01$.

Emotional Well-Being And Child Behavior

In 2025, new questions were added to better understand how families are navigating emotional and behavioral health in early childhood. Caregivers were asked whether they had concerns related to their own mental health and well-being, their child’s mental health and well-being, or managing their child’s behavior.

Many families expressed some level of concern in these areas. Over one-third reported being concerned about their child’s mental health, while nearly one in four had concerns about managing their child’s behavior. Caregivers also noted their own mental health as an area of concern. These findings highlight how emotional well-being is an important part of the overall landscape of early childhood and family life.

Exhibit 26. Caregiver Concerns About Mental Health and Behavior, KRA 2025



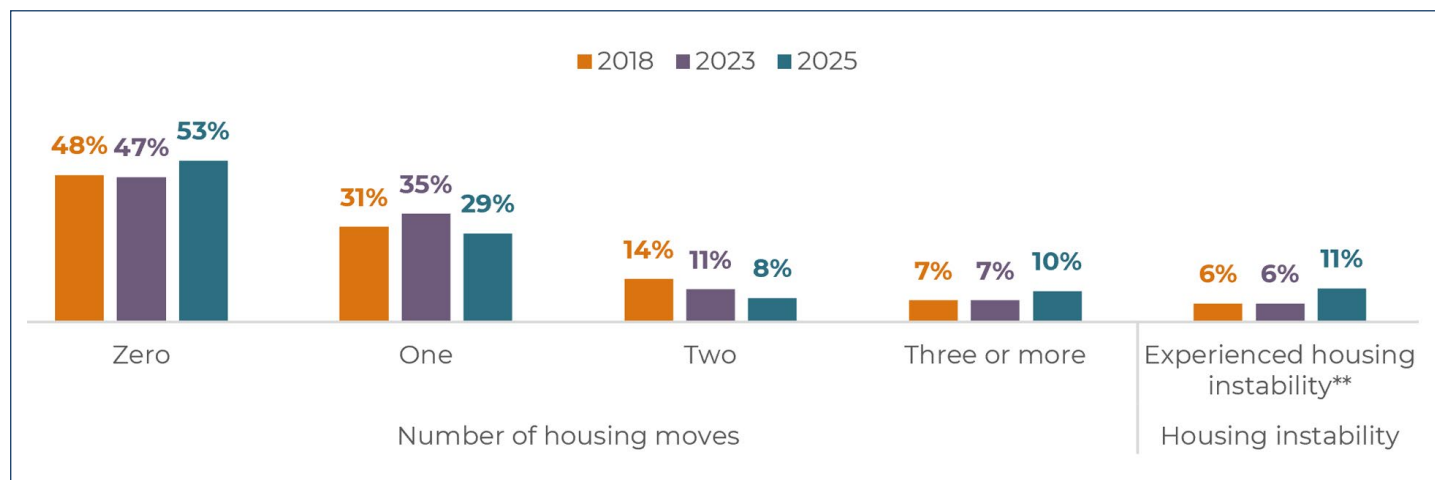
Source: Parent Information Form 2025. N = 321. Numbers reflect the percentage of respondents who marked “a little,” “moderately,” or “very” concerned.

Housing Stability

Stable housing is a cornerstone of early development, supporting children’s health, behavior, and readiness for school.^{ix} In 2025, just over half of families reported that they had not moved since their child was born—an encouraging sign of stability for many households.

However, housing challenges remain a concern for others. A growing number of families reported experiencing homelessness at some point in their child’s life, highlighting ongoing disparities in access to secure housing.

Exhibit 27. Housing Stability in Child’s Lifetime, KRA 2018-2025



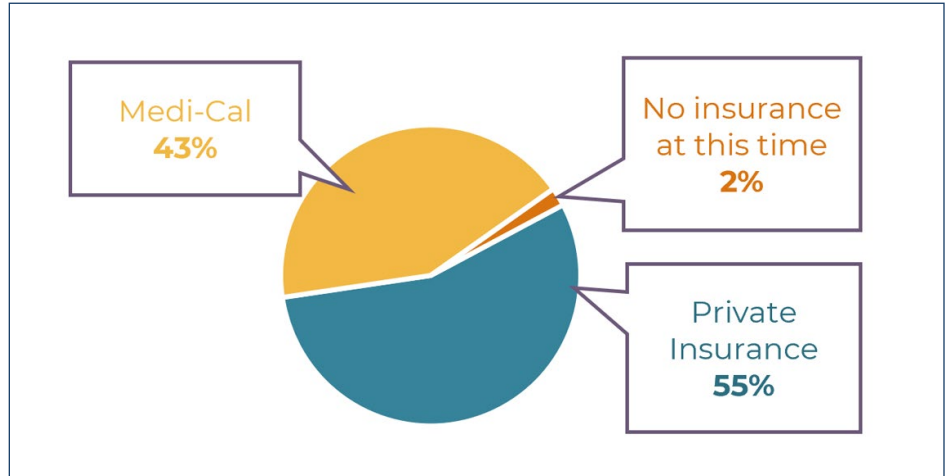
Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 679- 689. 2018 N = 945. Housing instability included staying in a public place, shelter, hotel, or with friends or family due to economic hardship. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01.ⁱ

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND RESOURCES

Health Insurance

Nearly all families in the 2025 KRA sample reported that their child had health insurance. Just over half were covered by private insurance, and 43% were enrolled in Medi-Cal, Covered California, or Kaiser.

Exhibit 28. Type of Health Insurance Reported by Families, KRA 2025



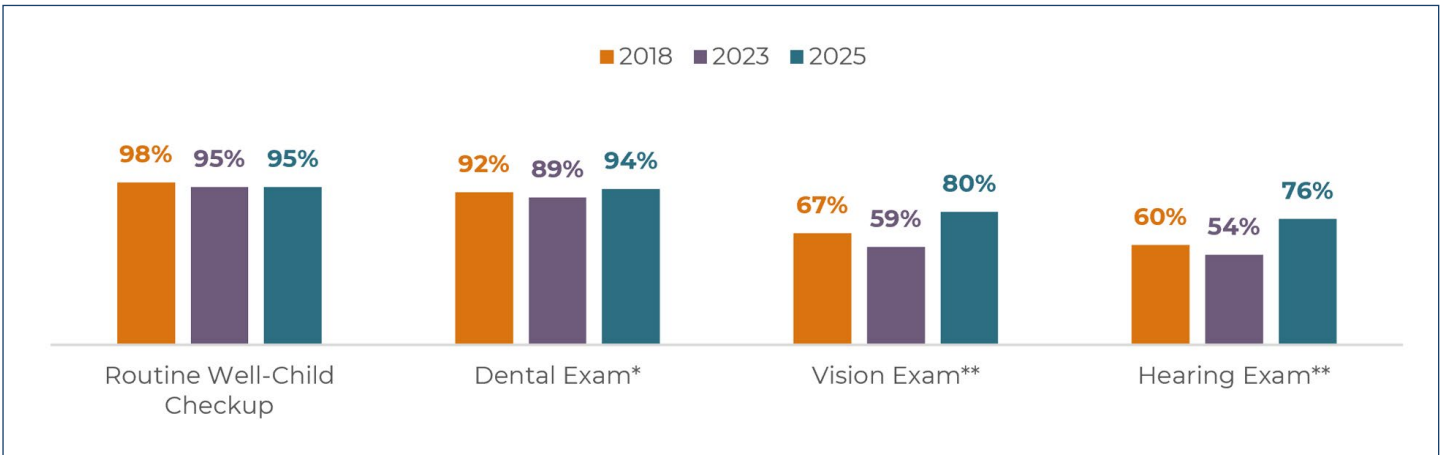
Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 301.

Child Health Screenings and Preventive Care

Families were asked whether their child received common preventive health services in the past year, including checkups, dental visits, and hearing or vision screenings.

Most children in the 2025 sample received a routine well-child checkup, continuing a strong trend from prior years. Compared to 2023, more children received dental exams, and there were clear increases in both vision and hearing screenings.

Exhibit 29. Accessed Preventive Health Services in the Past Year, KRA 2018-2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 686. 2018 N = 894-983. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at **p < .01 and *p < .05.

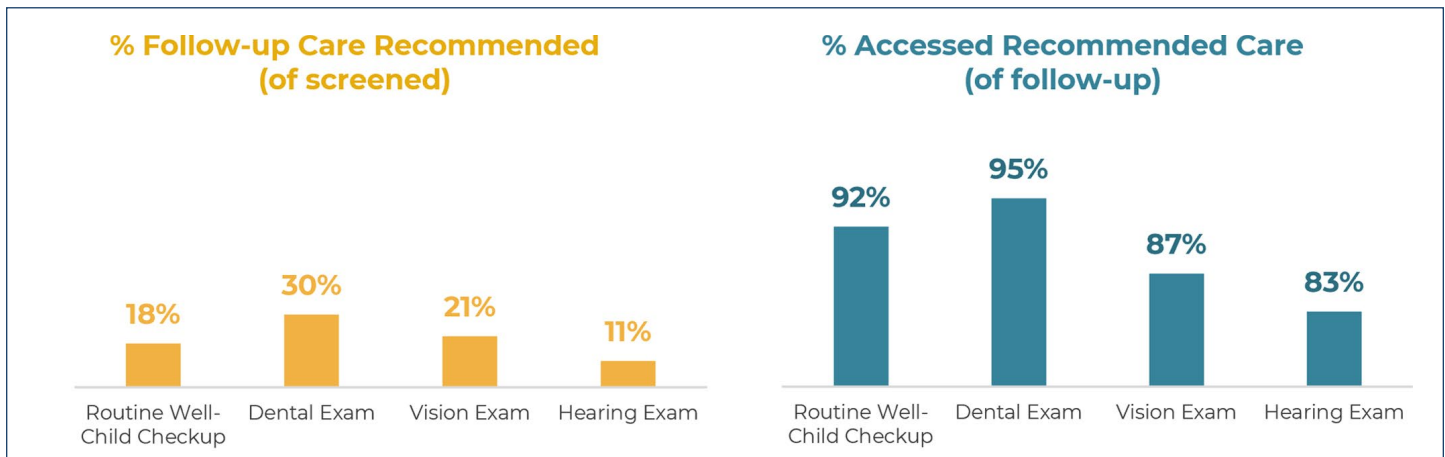


ACCESS TO RECOMMENDED SERVICES

In 2025, new questions were added to better understand what happens after a child receives a health screening. Specifically, caregivers were asked whether any follow-up care was recommended, and if so, whether they were able to access the recommended services or supports.

Follow-up care was most commonly recommended after dental and vision exams. Among those referred for additional care, most families reported being able to access the services their child needed. Access was especially strong for dental and well-child referrals.

Exhibit 30. Follow-up Recommendations and Access to Care, KRA 2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 279. Percentages are conditional and reflect only those who received the screening (see Exhibit 29) and received a follow-up recommendation.

SECTION SUMMARY: READINESS OF FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

- More than eight in ten children accessed formal early learning programs**, reflecting broad engagement with early care and education and continued expansion of TK.
- Cost and availability of child care or preschool remained key access challenges for some families.** While many families reported no difficulty accessing early learning, others identified cost, limited hours, transportation, and program fit as barriers.
- Families were actively engaged in supporting learning at home.** Most caregivers reported regularly reading, playing, and engaging their children in learning activities during the week.
- Use of parenting programs and supports showed changing patterns.** More families reported receiving individualized services, like home visits and parenting education, while group-based playgroup participation declined.
- Family routines showed areas of strength and opportunity.** More children were getting recommended amounts of sleep compared to prior years, while screen time continued to be an area for additional support and guidance.
- Families faced growing stressors related to basic needs and caregiving.** Concerns about food access, housing stability, and affordable child care increased since 2023. Emotional well-being also emerged as a common challenge for both children and caregivers.
- Access to health care and preventive services was strong.** Nearly all children had health insurance and received routine well-child checkups, with increases in dental, vision, and hearing screenings since 2023. Among families referred for follow-up care, most reported successfully accessing recommended services.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY 2025

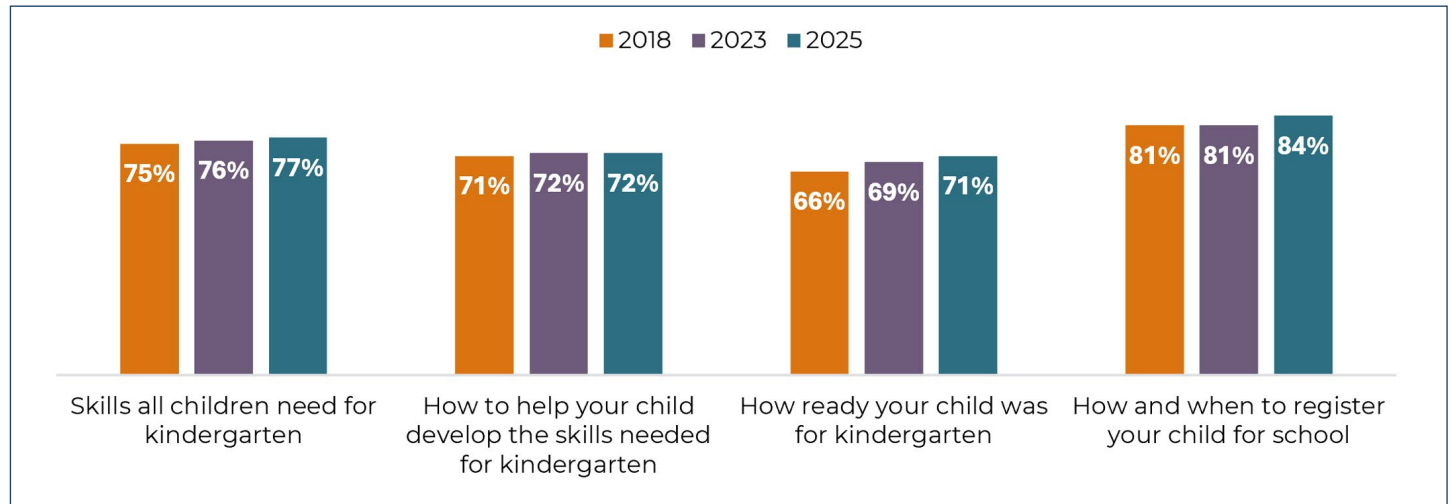
READINESS OF SCHOOLS

SUPPORTING THE KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION

Access to Kindergarten Preparation Information

More than nine in ten families in the 2025 assessment shared that they received helpful information to support their child’s transition into kindergarten. Caregivers were most likely to receive guidance on how and when to register, along with information about the skills children need for kindergarten and how to help build those skills at home. Many also reported receiving feedback about how ready their child was for school. These types of support have remained consistent across recent years.

Exhibit 31. Caregiver Access to Kindergarten Transition Information, KRA 2018-2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321. 2023 N = 587-685. 2018 N = 960-967.

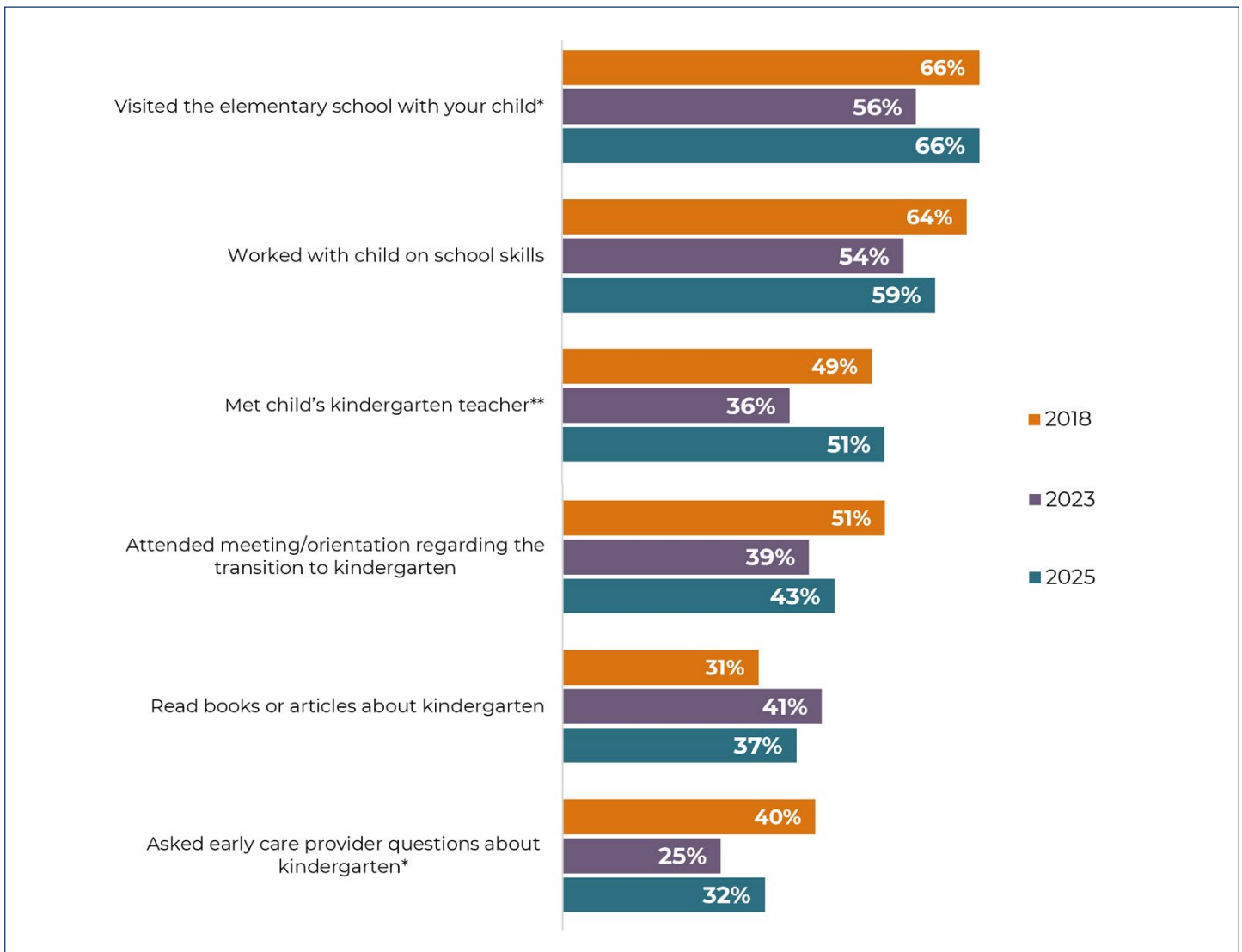
Family Participation in Kindergarten Transition Activities

Caregivers were also asked about the kindergarten transition activities they engaged in prior to the start of school. Across the three study years, the most common activities were visiting the elementary school and working with their child on school skills. While participation in most activities dropped in 2023, likely due to pandemic impacts, 2025 showed a clear rebound, with many families returning to or even exceeding pre-pandemic levels of engagement.

Specifically, educator-connected transition activities—such as visiting the school, meeting the kindergarten teacher, and asking preschool providers about kindergarten—showed meaningful increases between 2023 and 2025. These patterns suggest families are reconnecting with schools and getting more involved in their children’s transition to kindergarten.



Exhibit 32. Families Engaging in Transition Activities, KRA 2018-2025



Source: Parent Information Form. 2025 N = 321, 2023 N = 694, 2018 N = 969. Differences between 2023 and 2025 were significant at ** $p < .01$ and * $p < .05$.

SECTION SUMMARY: READINESS OF SCHOOLS

- **Schools were effectively supporting families during the kindergarten transition.** More than nine in ten families reported receiving helpful information to support their child's transition into kindergarten, reflecting strong and consistent school-family communication.
- **Families were well-informed about kindergarten expectations.** Caregivers most often received guidance on registration, kindergarten readiness skills, and ways to support learning at home.
- **Connections between families and educators strengthened,** with more families visiting schools, meeting teachers, and asking preschool providers about kindergarten.
- **Working on school skills at home remained a common activity,** reflecting families' continued investment in preparing their children for school.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

HOW READY WERE CHILDREN, FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, & COMMUNITIES IN 2025?

The 2025 Santa Clara County Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) provides an encouraging and multifaceted picture of how children, families, schools, and community systems are working together to support a strong start to school. The findings reflect not only children's developing skills, but also the collective impact of early learning opportunities, family engagement, health supports, and coordinated countywide investments designed to promote readiness from birth through age five.

Across domains, the results indicate that Santa Clara County's early childhood system, including early care and education providers, family-serving organizations, health systems, and schools, is working toward shared readiness goals. Although fewer children were identified as *Fully Ready* in 2025 compared to earlier years, the findings point to consistent strengths in early learning participation, family engagement, access to health care, and kindergarten transition supports that research shows are critical for promoting readiness over time.

When interpreting changes in kindergarten readiness over time, it is important to consider both differences between cohorts and the broader developmental context. The proportion of children identified as *Fully Ready* declined between 2018 and 2023 and remained relatively stable in 2025. Children entering kindergarten in the most recent cohorts were born shortly before or during the COVID-19 pandemic and spent their earliest years amid significant disruptions to early learning, health care, developmental services, and opportunities for social interaction. These conditions likely had lasting effects on early development. As such, the readiness patterns observed in 2023 and 2025 are best understood in the context of pandemic-era experiences rather than diminished family engagement or reduced commitment across early childhood systems.

With this broader context in mind, the findings that follow highlight both the strengths children bring to kindergarten and the systems, families, and communities that continue to support early learning and successful transitions to school.



Highlights from the 2025 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Children are showing early academic strengths and entering school with foundational skills. One in three children were *Fully Ready* for kindergarten, and many demonstrated proficiency in academic areas such as recognizing numbers, writing their name, and using a pencil. These skills reflect the impact of early learning experiences and supportive home environments.

Families are laying strong foundations at home. Most caregivers reported engaging their children in reading, play, and learning routines each week. Shared reading and educational play were among the most common activities, and caregivers shared generally positive perceptions of their children's readiness across developmental domains.

Kindergarten transition supports are reaching more families. More than nine in ten caregivers received helpful information about how to prepare for kindergarten, and many participated in school-related transition activities like visiting classrooms and meeting teachers. These patterns show how schools and families are connecting early and often to support a smooth transition.



Access to early learning continues to grow and evolve. More than eight in ten children in the sample attended a formal early care or education program prior to kindergarten, and participation in Transitional Kindergarten increased significantly. Families reported navigating multiple pathways into kindergarten, finding the options that best fit their needs.

Families are resourceful and connected. Most families accessed local community resources such as libraries, parks, museums, and other cultural institutions. More than one in four engaged in parenting programs or services, including education and home visiting supports.

Health access is strong in many households, while stability varies across families. Nearly all children had health insurance and received routine preventive care, with many accessing recommended follow-up services after screenings. At the same time, while many families reported stable housing since their child's birth, housing instability remained a concern for a subset of households.



BUILDING ON THIS FOUNDATION

Findings from the 2025 KRA, together with input from families and educators, point to several areas where continued investment and alignment can strengthen school readiness across Santa Clara County. While many families reported strong engagement, access to early learning, and stable health care, readiness outcomes remained uneven, underscoring the need to build on existing resources while addressing persistent gaps. The recommendations below highlight opportunities to strengthen early learning quality, child development and well-being, family engagement, and school readiness systems. A list of available community-based supports and county initiatives is outlined in [Appendix B](#).

Recommendations

To support more children in entering school ready to succeed, Santa Clara County can consider the following actions:

Expand access to high-quality early learning

Research consistently shows that participation in high-quality, early care and education is associated with stronger cognitive, social-emotional, and self-regulation skills at kindergarten entry, particularly for children from historically underserved communities.^x Continue to invest in preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and child care options that are affordable, culturally responsive, inclusive of children with disabilities, and aligned with school readiness goals, building on existing quality improvement and universal pre-kindergarten efforts.

Support stable home routines that promote health and learning

Children's readiness for kindergarten is closely linked to stable home routines and access to basic needs such as food security, housing stability, adequate sleep, and preventive healthcare. Strengthen programs that address basic needs such as food security, housing stability, and access to preventive healthcare to reduce family stress and support children's daily readiness for learning.

Invest in family engagement and education

Expand home visiting, parenting supports, and kindergarten transition activities that empower caregivers as children's first teachers and foster strong, trusting family-school relationships.

Increase school readiness outreach in trusted community spaces

Leverage libraries, family resource centers, clinics, and community-based organizations to ensure all families—especially those facing barriers—have timely access to enrollment assistance, developmental screenings, and early intervention services.

Target investments in communities with fewer malleable assets

Use local data to identify ZIP Codes where children and families may benefit from additional supports, and apply targeted, community-informed strategies to reduce disparities and promote equitable readiness outcomes countywide.

CONCLUSION

Continued investment in high-quality early learning, family engagement and education, health and basic needs supports, and targeted, community-based strategies will be essential to ensuring that more children across Santa Clara County enter kindergarten ready to learn, grow, and thrive.

APPENDIX A

STUDY SAMPLE AND KINDERGARTEN POPULATION, BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District	% of Sample	% of County K Population
Alum Rock Union Elementary	11.8%	8.6%
Campbell Union	12.3%	10.1%
Evergreen Elementary	12.6%	7.7%
Franklin-McKinley Elementary	13.9%	9.5%
Los Altos Elementary	2.1%	8.7%
Milpitas Unified	12.2%	6.2%
Morgan Hill Unified	6.5%	6.6%
Oak Grove Elementary	6.5%	9.3%
San Jose Unified	8.7%	5.9%
Santa Clara Unified	11.2%	7.3%
Saratoga Union Elementary	2.1%	7.1%

Source: Kindergarten Observation Form 2025. California Department of Education (2024-25).

APPENDIX B

SANTA CLARA COUNTY RESOURCE LIST

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

[FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Early Learning and Care Program](#) strives to increase families' access to quality early learning and childcare. Our early educator workforce development initiatives aim to strengthen both center-based and home-based learning and care settings through innovative strategies that serve to recruit and retain a qualified, compassionate, and skilled workforce that promotes healthy child development and prepares children to succeed in school and in life.

[QUALITY MATTERS...a STRONG START for Kids](#) increases the quality of early learning programs in the county with professional development and resources for providers. It is an initiative of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE).

[San José Public Library's Family, Friend, and Neighbor \(FFN\) Caregiver Support Network](#) connects FFN caregivers to resources as well as professional development and peer support opportunities. Caregivers can call 408-808-2617 or email EarlyEducation@sjlibrary.org for more information.

[Santa Clara County Office of Education](#) provides a range of services to children, families, ECE sites, and school districts throughout the county, including health and wellness services, trainings to improve the climate of schools, and direct services for young children through Special Education, Head Start, State Preschool, and Migrant Education.

[SCCOE Resource and Referral Program](#) connects families to child care that meets their needs via an online [Childcare Portal](#). They can also be reached at 669-212-5437 or childcarescc@sccoe.org.

[SCCOE Universal Prekindergarten Initiative](#) builds the capacity of school districts and community agencies to expand access to equitable, high-quality learning opportunities and supports for young children.

[SCCOE Steps to Success](#) provides resources for families and school leaders to facilitate enrollment in early learning programs.

FAMILY AND PARENTING SUPPORT

[2-1-1](#) connects families to various health, education, and wellness services and supports throughout the county. Families can call 2-1-1 to get support.

[Community-based prevention services](#) operate through the Prevention Bureau within the Department of Family and Children's Services to support strong and healthy communities and to avoid, when possible, entry into the child welfare and foster care systems. The Prevention Bureau works with community partners to provide programs and services that educate and coach parents and caregivers while supporting children, youths, and families. Available programs include parenting classes, services targeting at-risk and gang-impacted youth, their families and communities, and case management services for families experiencing crisis.

[FindHelp](#) maintains an online database of service providers to connect families to a variety of services and supports.

[FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Family Strengthening and Support Program](#) helps families by promoting access to basic needs, safety, and child development knowledge, increasing referrals to critical health and social services, and collaborating with families and community partners to create culturally responsive, trauma-informed systems of care in which children and families can thrive.

HEALTHCARE AND PERINATAL SERVICES

[Black Infant Health Program](#) honors the unique history of Black women and supports Black women to have healthy babies with educational group sessions, individualized case management, home visits and referrals. Women can enroll by calling 408-937-2270.

[Children's Health Initiative](#) connects families to free and low-cost health insurance for their children. Parents/caregivers can call 888-244-5222 for more information.

[FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Child Health and Wellness Program](#) promotes equitable access to critical health needs, behavioral supports, and prevention and intervention efforts that ensure young children, prenatal through five years, receive the medical, dental, behavioral, and developmental supports they need to grow and thrive. In addition, FIRST 5 supports home visitation services through its collaborative of community-based organizations and providers who promote healthy parenting strategies and provide in-home support for vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, in our county.

[FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Home Visiting Collaborative](#) connects home visiting providers to increase access to resources and improve cross-system service coordination.

[FIRST 5 Santa Clara County FIRST 5 Home Visiting Program](#) provides helpful home visiting resources for families with young children and/or pregnant individuals—all designed to support you and your child's healthy start.

[Healthier Kids Foundation](#) provides health screenings to low-income children, connects children to health coverage, and provides nutrition and health education to parents/caregivers. They can be contacted at 408-564-5114 or info@hkidsf.org.

[Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program \(MCAH\)](#) oversees the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program to provide pregnant people care coordination, referrals, screenings, assessments, education, and other services that promote their health and well-being. They can be reached by calling 800-310-2332.

[Public Health Nursing Home Visitation Programs](#) provide monthly home visits to families with infants up to age 6 months, developmental screenings, postpartum health assessments, and pregnancy and health education. From ages 6 months to 6 years, the program supports families with bimonthly visits. Families can call 408-937-2231 to enroll.

[Public Health Oral Health Program](#) links children and families to oral health screenings, education, health coverage, and a dental home. Their phone number is 408-793-2700.

[Public Health Perinatal Equity Initiative](#) aims to eliminate disparities in Black infant mortality with evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions throughout the county. For more information, call 669-263-2828 or email PerinatalEquity@phd.sccgov.org.

HOUSING AND FOOD

[Santa Clara County Homelessness Prevention System](#) assists low-income families at risk of losing their housing with case management, legal support, and temporary financial assistance. Families can call 408-926-8885 or email info@preventhomeslessness.org for more information.

[Second Harvest of Silicon Valley](#) operates a network of food distribution programs, provides cooking demonstrations and food safety presentations, and partners with schools to ensure students and families have year-round access to healthy food. Families can call 800-984-3663 for assistance.

[SNAP/CalFresh](#) provides benefits to purchase food for families earning up to 185% of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL). Families can call 408-758-3800 to enroll.

[Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#) provides benefits to purchase healthy food as well as nutrition education and breastfeeding support to women who are pregnant, postpartum, or breastfeeding, and children 0-5. Women can call 408-792-5101 or text 888-413-2698 to see if they qualify.

INCLUSION AND EQUITY

[The Innovations Collaborative of SCCOE](#) believes every individual, with their unique strengths and experiences, has the right to high quality learning and community environments. The [WarmLine](#) offers support, information, and referrals to families and providers of children with disabilities. They can be contacted at 408-453-6651 and Inclusionwarmline@sccoe.org.

[Parents Helping Parents](#) supports families raising children with disabilities with an electronic learning library, webinars, and support groups. Families can call 408-727-5775 for one-on-one support.

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ Duncan, G. J., Dowsett, C. J., Claessens, A., Magnuson, K., Huston, A. C., Klebanov, P., Pagani, L.S., Feinstein, L., Engel, M., Brooks-Gunn, J., Sexton, H., Duckworth, K., & Japel, C. (2007). School readiness and later achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(6), 1428–1446.
- ⁱⁱ Bettencourt, A. F., Gross, D., Ho, G., & Perrin, N. (2018). The costly consequences of not being socially and behaviorally ready to learn by kindergarten in Baltimore City. *Journal of Urban Health*, 95(1), 36–50.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Fitzpatrick, C., Boers, E., & Pagani, L. S. (2020). Kindergarten readiness, later health, and social costs. *Pediatrics*, 146(6).
- ^{iv} Applied Survey Research. (n.d.) Psychometric properties of the *Kindergarten Observation Form*. San Jose, CA: Author.
- ^v California Department of Education. (2024). *DataQuest*. <https://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>
- ^{vi} U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). Selected economic characteristics: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Table DP03). U.S. Department of Commerce.
- ^{vii} American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). (2023). Study: Sleeping 10 hours per night linked to better kindergarten readiness. *AAP News*. <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/20727/>
- ^{viii} American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016). Media and young minds. *Pediatrics*, 138(5), e20162591.
- ^{ix} Ghandour, R. M., Hirai, A. H., Moore, K. A., Paschall, K., LaForett, D. R., Reddington, E., & Kogan, M. D. (2024). School readiness among United States children: results from the 2022 National Survey of Children's Health. *Academic Pediatrics*, 24(7), 1049-1061.
- ^x So, M., Woodward, K. P., Schlafer, R. J., Testa, A., Davis, L., & Jackson, D. B. (2023). Positive early childhood experiences and school readiness among US preschoolers. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 262, 113637.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a non-profit social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by creating meaningful evaluative and assessment data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm has more than 40 years of experience working with public and private agencies, health and human service organizations, city and county offices, school districts, institutions of higher learning, and charitable foundations. Through community assessments, program evaluations, and related studies, ASR provides the information communities need for effective strategic planning and community interventions.

For questions about this report, please contact:

Applied Survey Research

Claire Miller, Ph.D., Project Manager

Lisa Colvig-Niclai, M.A., Senior Vice President of Planning and Evaluation

Email

SRA@appliedsurveyresearch.org

www.AppliedSurveyResearch.org



Helping People
Build Better Communities





Collaboration with Managed Care Plans

April 16, 2026



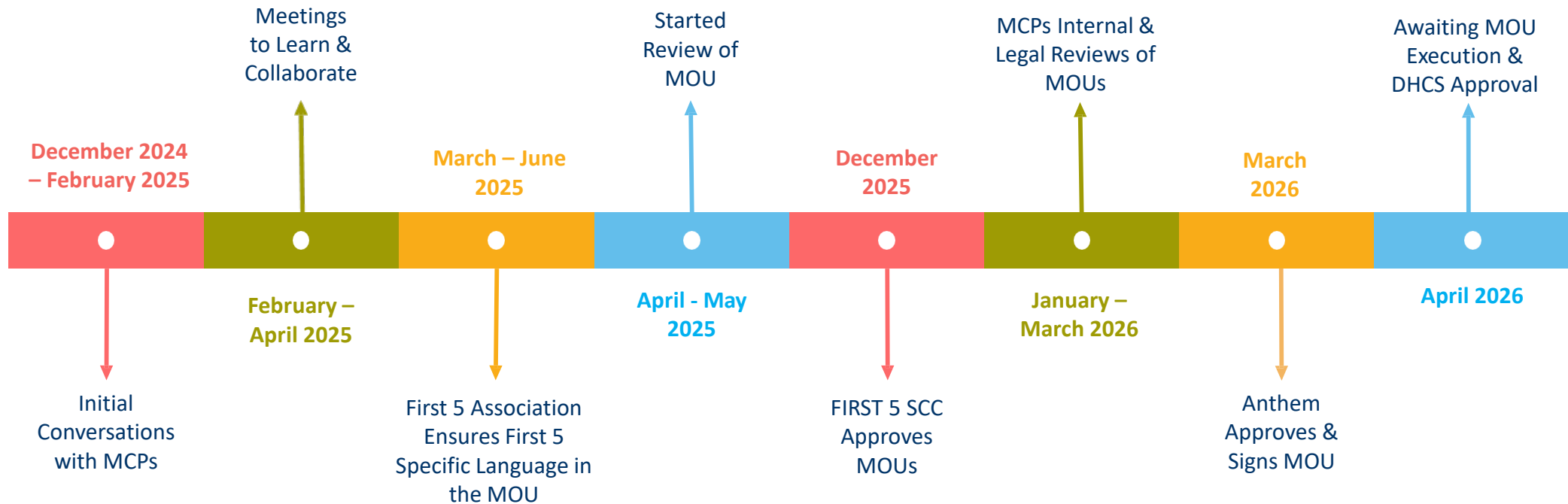
Background of the DHCS MOU



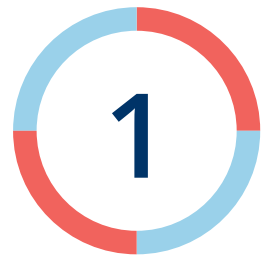
Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) requires all Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs) to establish Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with key community partners, including First 5 county commissions, to ensure coordinated, whole-person care and stronger access to local resources for Medi-Cal members.



MOU Process and Timeline



FIRST 5 - MCP Collaboration



Collaborating to improve health outcome metrics (e.g., well-child visits, immunization rates)



Enhance referral pathways for improved care coordination efforts



Expand access to services for families with young children



Data sharing to strengthen impact in the community



Strengthens alignment with CalAIM efforts



Improve system navigation

Partner Learning Exchange



The Partner Learning Exchange creates a shared space for cross-agency training, connections, and collective learning. It helps partners build a common understanding of systems that families rely on, strengthen referral pathways and cross-sector alignment, and build strong relationships with MCPs.

Partners across initiatives can learn together and from one another.

Medi-Cal Series



Session 1: April 6, 2026

- Medi-Cal Enrollment and Federal Impacts (SSA)
- Medi-Cal Covered Services (MCPs)

Planned Topics:

- CalAIM Benefits and Referral Pathways
- Leveraging CalAIM for Sustainability
- Referrals for Behavioral Health Services

Topics will continue to evolve as we receive partner feedback through ongoing evaluation and conversations.

Next Steps



- Develop MOU Operating Guidelines / Policies and Procedures
- Continue Medi-Cal Series through the Partner Learning Exchange Forums





THANK YOU!



FIRST 5
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Federal Awards Reports in Accordance
with the Uniform Guidance
June 30, 2025

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County

Independent Auditor’s Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*..... 1

Independent Auditor’s Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program; Report on Internal Control over Compliance; and Report on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Required by the Uniform Guidance..... 3

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Independent Auditor’s Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*

To the Board of Commissioners
FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
Santa Clara, California

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, (*Government Auditing Standards*) the financial statements of the governmental activities and the general fund of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Children and Families Commission (FIRST 5 Santa Clara County or the Commission), a component unit of the County of Santa Clara, California, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Commission’s basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated October 30, 2025. Our report included an emphasis of matter regarding the adoption of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences*, effective July 1, 2024.

Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. *A material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that have not been identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eide Bailly LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sacramento, California
October 30, 2025



Independent Auditor’s Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program; Report on Internal Control over Compliance; and Report on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Required by the Uniform Guidance

To the Board of Commissioners
FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
Santa Clara, California

Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program

Opinion on the Major Federal Program

We have audited FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s compliance with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the OMB *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2025. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s major federal program is identified in the summary of auditor’s results section of the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs.

In our opinion, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County complied, in all material respects, with the compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on its major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2025.

Basis for Opinion on the Major Federal Program

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS); the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (*Government Auditing Standards*); and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Our responsibilities under those standards and the Uniform Guidance are further described in the Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section of our report.

We are required to be independent of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion on compliance for the major federal program. Our audit does not provide a legal determination of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements referred to above and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective internal control over compliance with the requirements of laws, statutes, regulations, rules and provisions of contracts or grant agreements applicable to FIRST 5 Santa Clara County’s federal programs.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above occurred, whether due to fraud or error, and express an opinion on FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's compliance based on our audit. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance will always detect material noncompliance when it exists. The risk of not detecting material noncompliance resulting from fraud is higher than for that resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above is considered material, if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, it would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user of the report on compliance about FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's compliance with the requirements of the major federal program as a whole.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.
- Obtain an understanding of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over compliance that we identified during the audit.

Report on Internal Control over Compliance

A deficiency in internal control over compliance exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. *A material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance may exist that were not identified.

Our audit was not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

Report on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Required by the Uniform Guidance

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities and the major fund of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's basic financial statements. We issued our report thereon dated October 30, 2025, which contained unmodified opinions on those financial statements. Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the basic financial statements. The accompanying schedule of expenditures of federal awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by the Uniform Guidance and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the schedule of expenditures of federal awards is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.



Sacramento, California
March 27, 2026

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
Year Ended June 30, 2025

Federal Grantor/Pass-Through Grantor/Program or Cluster Title	Federal Financial Assistance Number	Pass-through Entity Identifying Number	Expenditures	Amounts Passed- Through to Subrecipients
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Cluster: Passed through California Department of Social Services Quality Counts California (QCC) Quality Rating and Improvement System Block Grant	93.575	24130/24092	\$ 1,193,159	\$ 979,925
Total Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Cluster			<u>1,193,159</u>	<u>979,925</u>
Total - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services			<u>1,193,159</u>	<u>979,925</u>
U.S. Department of the Treasury Passed through County of Santa Clara COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds - Apprenticeship Expansion	21.027	4300021877	757,934	431,824
COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds - Shared Services	21.027	4300021877	437,388	262,084
COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds - TK Equity	21.027	4300021877	<u>138,673</u>	<u>127,446</u>
Total COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds			<u>1,333,995</u>	<u>821,354</u>
Total U.S. Department of the Treasury			<u>1,333,995</u>	<u>821,354</u>
Total Federal Financial Assistance			<u>\$ 2,527,154</u>	<u>\$ 1,801,279</u>

Note 1 - Basis of Presentation

The accompanying schedule of expenditures of federal awards (Schedule) includes the federal award activity of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2025. The information in this Schedule is presented in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Because the Schedule presents only a selected portion of the operations of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, it is not intended to and does not present the financial position or changes in net position or fund balance of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County.

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Expenditures reported on the Schedule are reported on the modified accrual basis of accounting, except for subrecipient expenditures, which are reported on the cash basis. When applicable, such expenditures are recognized following the cost principles contained in the Uniform Guidance, wherein certain types of expenditures are not allowable or are limited as to reimbursement.

Note 3 - Federal Financial Assistance Listing Numbers (ALN)

The Federal Financial Assistance Listing numbers included in the accompanying Schedule were determined based on the program name, review of grant contract information, and the Office of Management and Budget's Assistance Listing numbers.

Note 4 - Indirect Cost Rate

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has not elected to use the de minimis indirect cost rate of up to 15%.

Section I – Summary of Auditor’s Results

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Type of auditor's report issued	Unmodified
Internal control over financial reporting:	
Material weaknesses identified	No
Significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weaknesses	None Reported
Noncompliance material to financial statements noted?	No

FEDERAL AWARDS

Internal control over major program:	
Material weaknesses identified	No
Significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weaknesses	None Reported
Type of auditor's report issued on compliance for major programs:	Unmodified
Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.516(a):	No

Identification of major programs:

Name of Federal Program	Federal Financial Assistance Number
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Cluster	93.575
Dollar threshold used to distinguish between type A and type B programs:	\$750,000
Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee?	No

Section II – Financial Statement Findings

None reported.

Section III – Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

None reported.

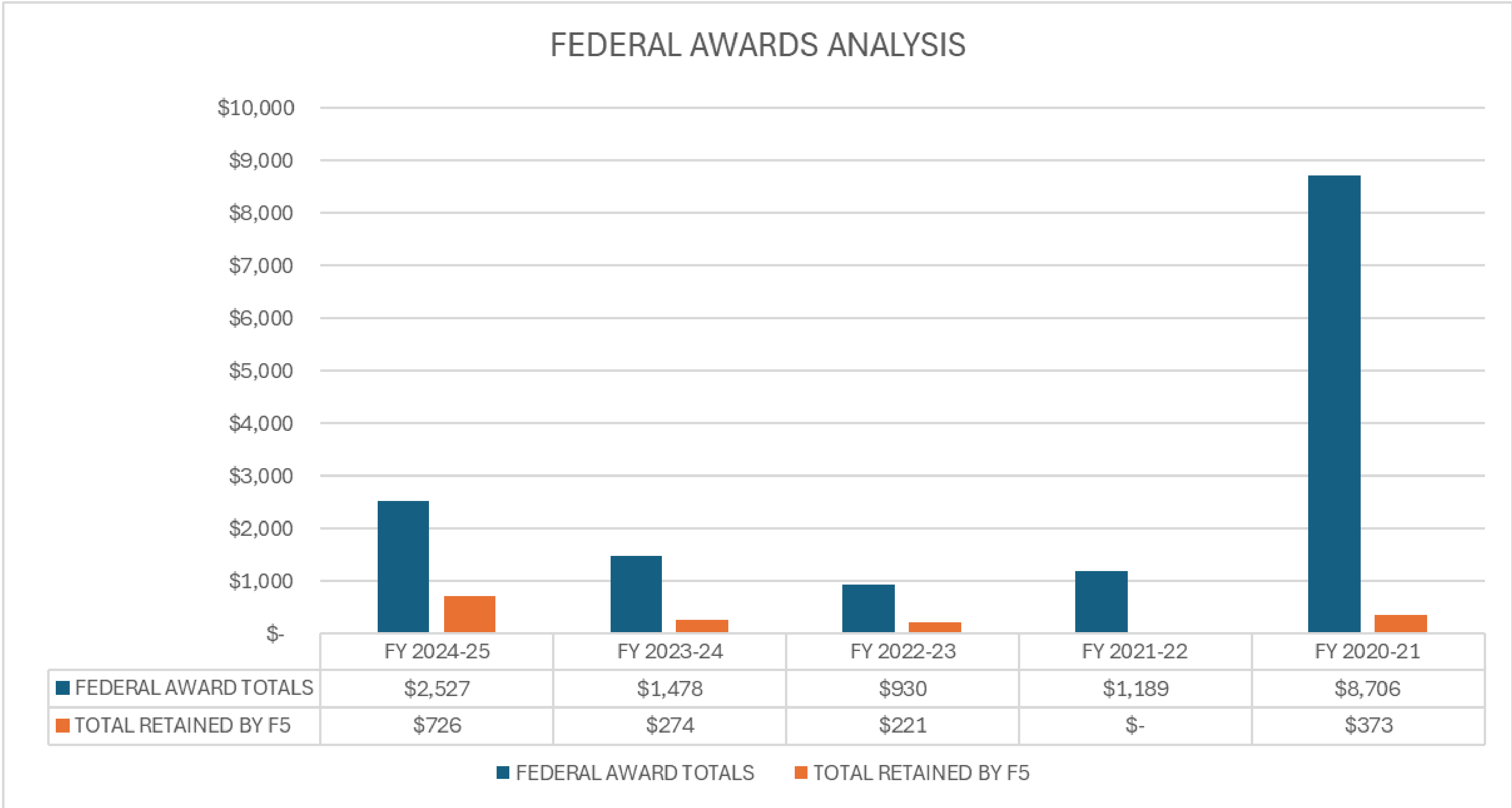
FEDERAL FUNDS ANALYSIS



	FY 2024-25		FY 2023-24		FY 2022-23		FY 2021-22		FY 2020-21	
FEDERAL AWARD TOTALS	\$	2,527	\$	1,478	\$	930	\$	1,189	\$	8,706
TOTAL RETAINED BY F5	\$	726	\$	274	\$	221	\$	-	\$	373

	FY 2024-25	FY 2023-24	FY 2022-23	FY 2021-22	FY 2020-21
Percentage of grants allowing indirect or salaries	53%	62%	100%	0%	30%

FEDERAL FUNDS ANALYSIS





Executive Director Report

Commission Meeting
April 16, 2026





POTTER THE OTTER DAY

Saturday, April 25, 2026

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Children's Discovery Museum

Learn more at:

PotterTheOtter.org





Advocacy Day

Recap

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Attendees:

- 8 staff
- 1 provider
- 1 Commissioner: Anne Souza

Attended on behalf of FIRST 5 SCC





Met with the offices of:

- Assemblymember Ahrens
- Assemblymember Lee
- Assemblymember Kalra
- Assemblymember Pellerin
- Assemblymember Berman
- Senator Cortese
- Senator Becker

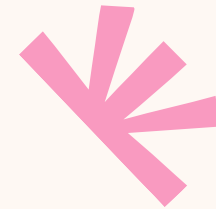






Proclamation for Month of the Young Child

Council Member Pamela Campos





Birth to Five:



Strengthening Judicial Impact Through Early Childhood Understanding

Tuesday, April 14

Yadira Oseguera, Program Officer



Identifying early childhood needs

Available services and resources

Making child-centered judicial
decisions

Supporting families through
judicial leadership



Early Childhood Funders Meeting

Washington, DC

April 29 - April 30, 2026

Meeting with Offices of:

- Senator Schiff
- Senator Padilla





Thank you!



FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLANS COMMITTEE (SPECIAL MEETING)

DATE: Wednesday, April 1, 2026
TIME: 2:30 PM
PLACE: 4000 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose CA 95117

Notice to the Public Regarding Meeting Procedures

The Committee may take other actions relating to the issues as may be determined following consideration of the matter and discussion of the recommended actions.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Ralph M. Brown Act, those requiring reasonable ADA accommodation for this meeting should notify FIRST 5 Santa Clara County 24 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 260-3700 or commission@first5kids.org.

SPECIAL MEETING

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**
2. **Public Comment**

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on any matter not on the agenda. All statements that request a response may, at the Committee's discretion, be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Committee or referred to staff for response. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3. **Consent Calendar**

There is no separate discussion of Consent Calendar items, and the recommended actions are voted on in one motion. If an item is approved on the consent vote, the specific action recommended by staff is adopted. Members of the public who wish to comment on Consent Calendar items should comment under this Item 3. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3.1 **Consider Approval of Minutes of Meetings of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee**

Attachments:

3.1A Defined Contribution Plans Committee Meeting Summary Notes: March 4, 2026.

Recommended Action: Approve FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Defined Contribution Plans Committee Meeting Summary Notes: March 4, 2026.

End of Consent Calendar

4. **Consider Adoption of Resolution No. 2026-01 Regarding One-Time Special Employer Contributions to 401(a) Plan and Related Plan Amendment**

Attachments:

4A Resolution 2026-01 Special Contribution to 401(a) Plan

4B Ex A to Resolution 2026-01 – Amendment to Retirement Plan

Recommended Action: Approve and adopt Resolution No. 2026-01 Regarding one-time Special Employer Contributions to the 401(a) Plan.

5. **Consider Adoption of Plan Changes**

Attachment: 5A Summary of Plan Document Changes for Restatement to Empower

Recommended Action: Adopt proposed changes to the 457(b) and 401(a) Plans.

6. **Announcements**

7. **Adjourn**

Next Regular Committee Meeting: June 1, 2026



PROGRAM AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Monday, April 13, 2026
TIME: 12:00 PM
PLACE: 4000 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose, CA 95117

Notice to the Public Regarding Meeting Procedures

The Commission may take other actions relating to the issues as may be determined following consideration of the matter and discussion of the recommended actions.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Ralph M. Brown Act, those requiring reasonable ADA accommodation for this meeting should notify FIRST 5 Santa Clara County 24 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 260-3700 or commission@first5kids.org.

REGULAR MEETING

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**
2. **Public Comment**

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on any matter not on the agenda. All statements that request a response may, at the Committee's discretion, be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Committee or referred to staff for response. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3. **Consent Calendar**

There is no separate discussion of Consent Calendar items, and the recommended actions are voted on in one motion. If an item is approved on the consent vote, the specific action recommended by staff is adopted. Members of the public who wish to comment on Consent Calendar items should comment under this Item 3. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

- 3.1 **Consider Approval of Program and Evaluation Summary Notes**

Attachment: 3.1A Program and Evaluation Committee Summary Notes:
January 20, 2026

Recommended Action: Approve Program and Evaluation Committee
Summary Notes of January 20, 2026

End of Consent Calendar

4. **Considering election of a Committee Chairperson for 2026**

Recommended Action: Select a chairperson of the Issues: Review and Development Committee to serve a one-year term in accordance with the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission Bylaws.

5. **Consider Adopting a meeting schedule for Calendar year 2026** (Committee Chair)

Attachment: 5A Proposed meeting calendar for 2026

6. **Receive Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Report** (Nathan Thomas, Claire Miller – Applied Survey Research)

Attachments: 6A KRA Report

7. **Announcements**

8. **Adjourn**

Next Regular Meeting: June 11, 2026



ISSUES: REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, April 15, 2026
TIME: 1:00 PM
PLACE: 4000 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose, CA 95117

Notice to the Public Regarding Meeting Procedures

The Commission may take other actions relating to the issues as may be determined following consideration of the matter and discussion of the recommended actions.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Ralph M. Brown Act, those requiring reasonable ADA accommodation for this meeting should notify FIRST 5 Santa Clara County 24 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 260-3700 or commission@first5kids.org.

REGULAR MEETING

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

2. **Public Comment**

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on any matter not on the agenda. All statements that request a response may, at the Committee's discretion, be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Committee or referred to staff for response. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3. **Consent Calendar**

There is no separate discussion of Consent Calendar items, and the recommended actions are voted on in one motion. If an item is approved on the consent vote, the specific action recommended by staff is adopted. Members of the public who wish to comment on Consent Calendar items should comment under this Item 3. Speakers are limited to three minutes except as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

3.1 **Consider Approval of Issues: Review and Development Committee
Summary Notes**

Attachment: 3.1A Issues: Review and Development Committee Summary
Notes: November 13, 2024

Recommended Action: Approve Issues: Review and Development
Committee Summary Notes of November 13, 2024.

End of Consent Calendar

4. **Consider the Selection of the Committee Chair**
Recommended Action: Select a chairperson of the Issues: Review and
Development Committee to serve a one-year term in accordance with the FIRST 5
Santa Clara County Commission Bylaws.
5. **Consider adoption of a Committee Meeting Schedule**
Attachment: 5A Committee Meeting Schedule for calendar year 2026
Recommended Action: Adopt a meeting schedule for the Issues: Review and
Development Committee in accordance with the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
Commission Bylaws.
6. **Receive DEIB Visioning Report** (Xochilt Borja, Charlotte Caudle)
Attachment: 6A PowerPoint
7. **Receive New Ways of Being update** (Trena Hudson, Minerva Sarellano, Kelsey
Bhatnagar)
Attachment: 7A PowerPoint
8. **Strategic Plan update** (Jennifer Cloyd)
9. **Announcements**
10. **Adjourn**

Next Regular Committee Meeting: August 18, 2026

Please note: A majority of the Commission may be present at this meeting.



The First 5 Years. Let's Make Them Count.

Who We Are

The first five years of life are the most critical for brain development. During this time, children build the foundation for lifelong health, learning, and well-being. When families have access to resources and support early on, children are more likely to succeed in school and in life.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County is a public agency dedicated to ensuring that all children prenatal through age five and their families have the support they need to thrive. We invest in programs, partnerships, and systems that strengthen families, promote healthy development, and build a more equitable future for our community.

Last Year We Served ...



102,406
CHILDREN



96,190
PARENTS



9,841
PROVIDERS

What We Do

We focus on three key areas to support children and families:

Family Strengthening

We connect families to essential resources like diapers, food, parenting support, and Family Resource Centers across the county.

Child Development

We improve the quality of early learning by supporting educators, child care providers, and systems that prepare children for kindergarten and beyond.

Child Health

We promote physical and mental health through programs like home visiting, developmental screenings, and partnerships with healthcare providers.

How We Invest In Community

FIRST 5 invests millions of Proposition 10 tobacco tax dollars each year towards effective programs in early education, health, and family support. FIRST 5 is committed to achieving sustainable results toward the successful future of young children, prenatal through age 5, and their families.

We invest in neighborhoods where children are exposed to the greatest risk for poor developmental outcomes. Our system of care enables us to provide tailored services to young children, prenatal through age five, and families experiencing the highest level of need. We also work toward shifting community norms and systems that affect the health and well-being of all young children in Santa Clara County.



Home of Potter the Otter: Ambassador of Children's Health

Potter the Otter inspires young children to build healthy habits that last a lifetime. From choosing water over sugary drinks to staying active and trying nutritious foods, Potter makes wellness fun, simple, and accessible for families. His impact is real—research from Stanford University found that Potter books focused on drinking water helped families increase healthy beverage choices. Through engaging stories, songs, and free resources, Potter empowers children and caregivers to make small choices that lead to lifelong health.



Learn more and find resources at FIRST5kids.org.



Standing Firm For Families

Our \$1 Million Commitment to Kids

Overview

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County is proud to announce a \$1 million investment to launch the Standing Firm for Families initiative, a bold, comprehensive strategy created to support young children and their families in the face of today's most pressing challenges.

Originally designed to address the urgent impacts on the immigrant community, the initiative has taken on even greater importance as recent federal reductions to critical safety net programs like Medicaid and SNAP have further intensified the needs of families with children ages 0–5.

Funding will be awarded to local organizations through a thoughtful and streamlined application process. By investing in trusted organizations with the infrastructure and expertise to deliver services, we ensure young children and their families get the right help at the right time while strengthening the long-term capacity of the community.

Learn more at FIRST5kids.org/StandingFirm

Focus Areas



Workforce Wellness

Supporting frontline staff strengthens the heroes who make a lasting difference for children and families.



Family Preparedness

Strengthen family stability and resilience, empowering families to stay united and create secure, thriving environments for kids.



Emergency Funds

Act as a lifeline for families in crisis by providing rapid financial support that stabilizes households and protects children.



Diaper Kit Program

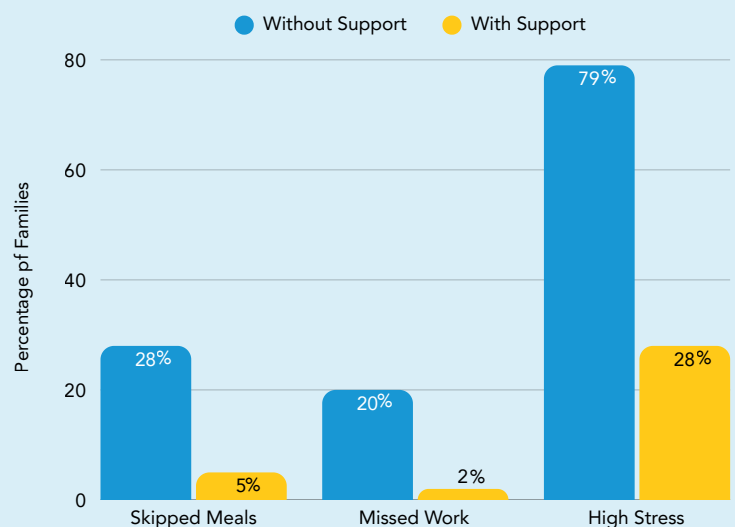
The Diaper Crisis

In Santa Clara County, **nearly 1 in 2 families with young children struggle to afford diapers**—a basic necessity that public assistance programs do not cover. This is not a failure of effort; it is a failure of access. In one of the most prosperous regions in the world, parents are being forced into an impossible choice: go to work or keep their baby clean, healthy, and safe.

The consequences are immediate and far-reaching. When families lack diapers, the entire household is pushed into survival mode, halting any path toward stability. Parents are turned away from childcare without an adequate supply, causing them to miss an average of 5.1 workdays each month—lost income that makes it even harder to afford rent, food, and basic needs. At home, 28% of families report skipping meals so their child can have clean diapers. What begins as a shortage quickly becomes a cycle—one that traps families in crisis and keeps them from moving forward.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Diaper Kit Program is a simple, proven solution to this complex problem. By providing consistent access to diapers, the program removes a critical barrier to employment and childcare. The impact is immediate: parents can return to work, children stay healthier, and families begin to regain stability. **For every \$1 invested, families can earn up to \$11 in wages**—making diaper assistance not just compassionate, but economically smart.

Impact of Diaper Assistance on Family Stability



Diaper Kit Distribution

Through its trusted network of Family Resource Centers and key health partners across Santa Clara County, FIRST 5 delivers consistent, reliable support to families who need it most. Each month, vulnerable families with young children receive essential diaper kits—providing up to 160 diapers and four packs of baby wipes per kit, with the ability to receive two kits monthly. This steady, dignified support ensures that parents can care for their children’s most basic needs while staying connected to the services and opportunities that help their families thrive.

In 2025, the Diaper Kit Program:

5,374 Kids Served

29,812 Diaper Kits Distributed



Scan the QR code to see the map of our Diaper Kit distribution sites!

Our Impact

Last year, families described the program as tremendously helpful in reducing financial and emotional stress.

- Families saved an average of \$112/month
- Not buying diapers allows families to redirect money to food, rent, bills, school supplies, and clothes.
- Provides a sense of relief and independence.
- Some said diapers last \approx 2 weeks per kit.
- Families expressed deep gratitude for the savings and support.

“This is help you can’t even begin to imagine. When you’re caring for a big family and two little ones are in diapers, you’re already doing everything you can just to get by. They’re working hard—but here, it’s still not enough to keep up with the cost of living. Programs like this, especially the diaper program... they make all the difference.” - Grandma to two babies

Learn more about our work at FIRST5kids.org.

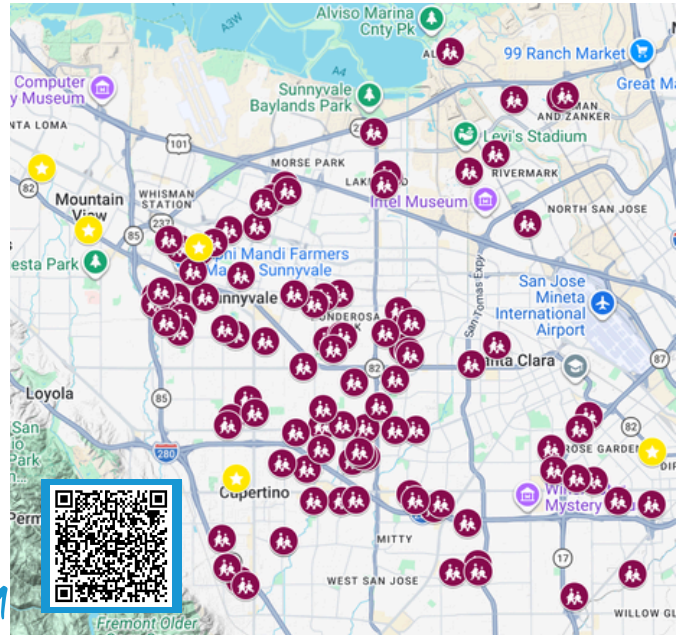


District 26

Our Providers In Your Area



FIRST 5 Santa Clara County delivers critical, upstream support to families through our **19 Family Resource Centers** and our **QUALITY MATTERS** network of more than **450 family child care homes**, ensuring children ages 0–5 have access to the care, services, and early education they need to succeed. By investing in these coordinated systems, we strengthen school readiness, stabilize families, and build healthier, more resilient communities from the very start.



Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 26, we serve:

2 Family Resource Centers

- Northwest YMCA
- Pacific Clinics - Vargas

102 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.” ~ Ashley, Mom of two

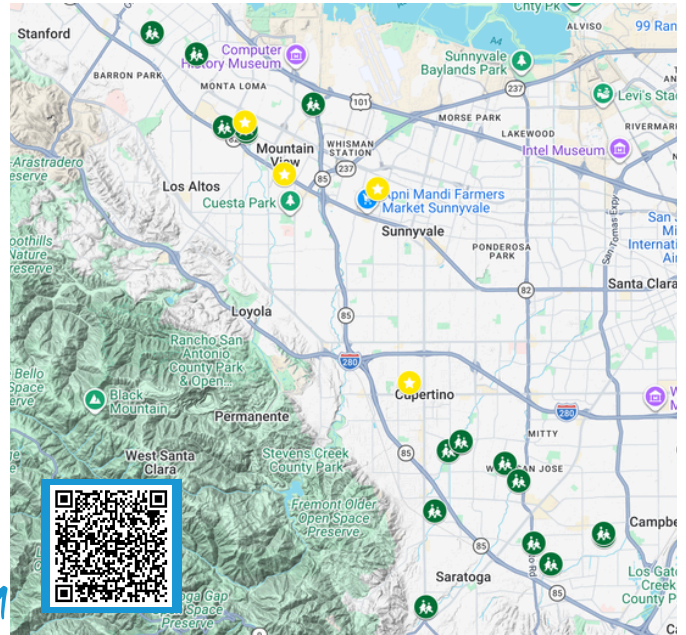
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District 23

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In District 23, we serve:

2

Family Resource Centers

- Pacific Clinics - Escuela
- Pacific Clinics - Mountain View

19

Family Child Care Homes



“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.”

~ Ashley, Mom of two

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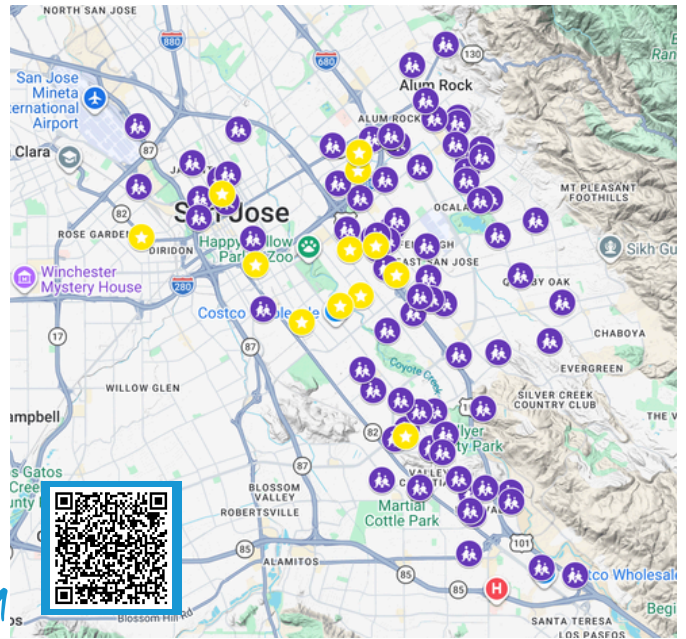


District 25

Our Providers In Your Area



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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 25, we serve:

11 Family Resource Centers

88 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.” ~ Ashley, Mom of two

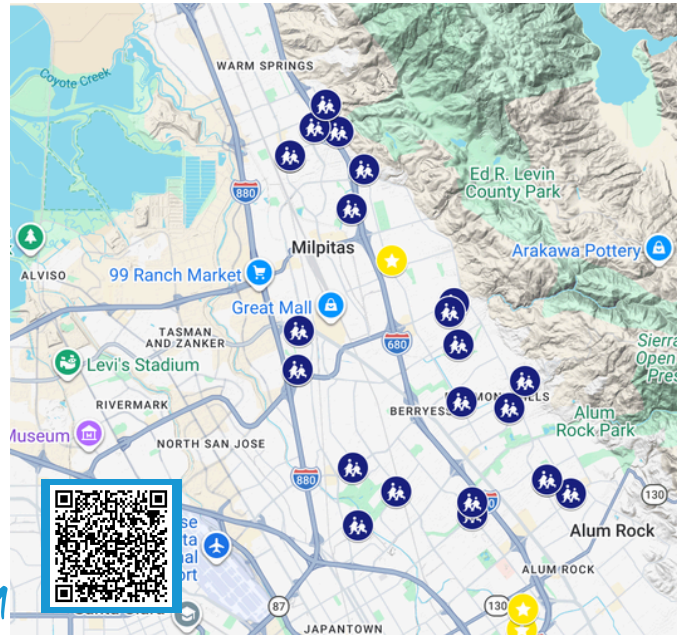
Learn more about our work at FIRST5kids.org.



District 24

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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 24, we serve:

1 Family Resource Centers

- Catholic Charities:
Josephine Guerrero

27 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.” ~ Ashley, Mom of two

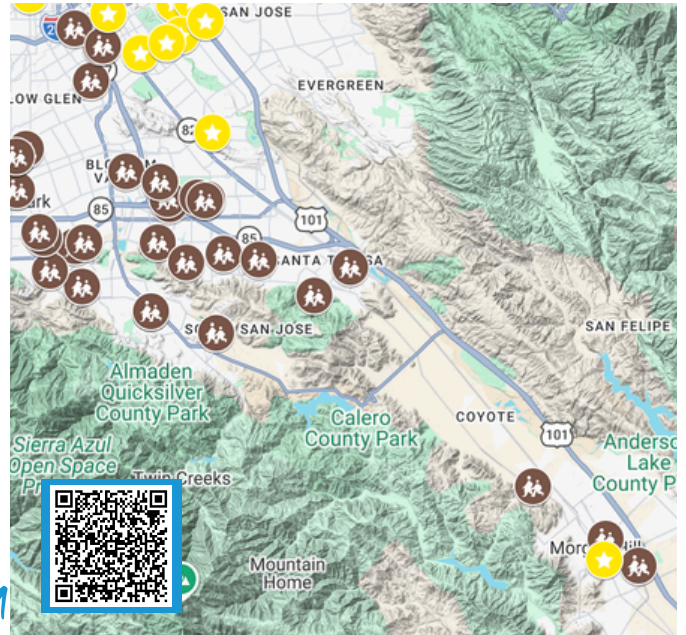
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District 28

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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 28, we serve:

2

Family Resource Centers

- Pacific Clinics - Morgan Hill
- Catholic Charities - Seven Trees

36

Family Child Care Homes



“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.”
~ Ashley, Mom of two

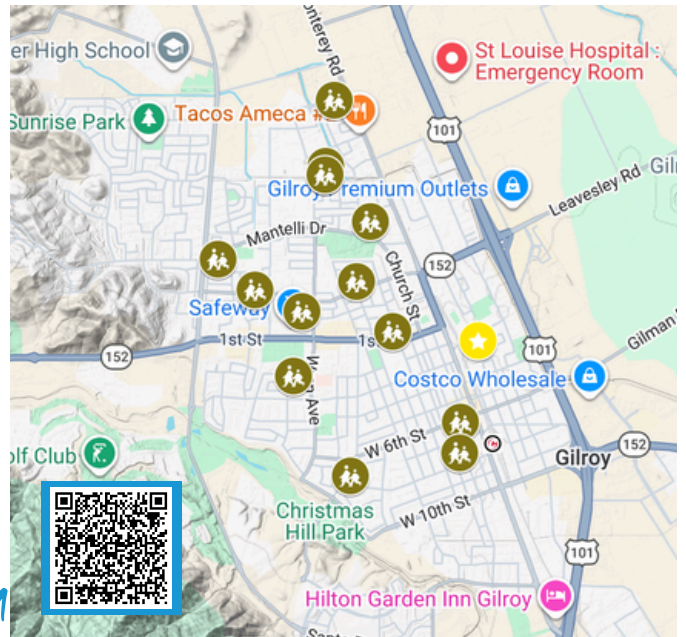
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District 29

Our Providers In Your Area

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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 29, we serve:

1 Family Resource Centers
• Rebekah Children's Services

14 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn't know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.”
~ Ashley, Mom of two

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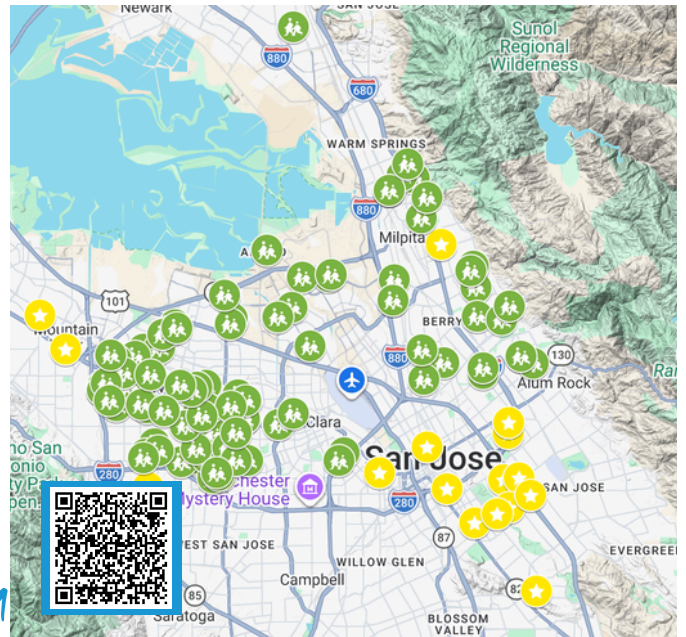


Senate District 10

Our Providers In Your Area



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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 10, we serve:

2 Family Resource Centers

102 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.” ~ Ashley, Mom of two

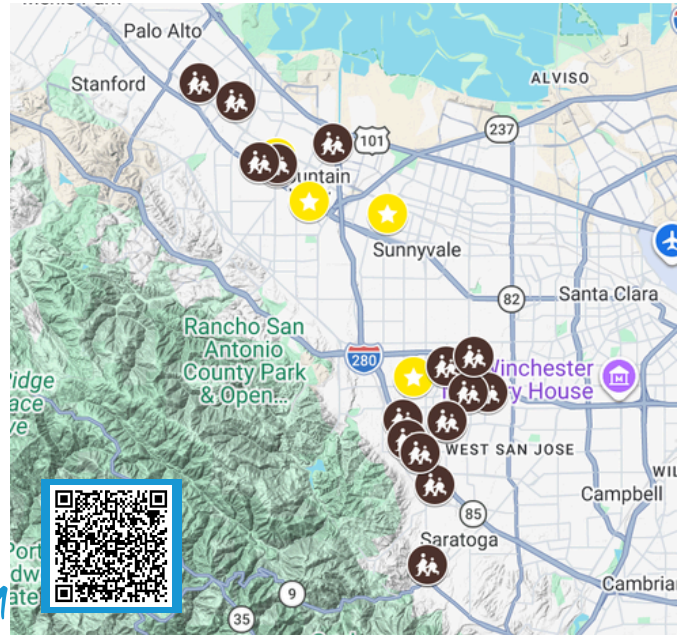
Learn more about our work at FIRST5kids.org.



Senate District 13

Our Providers In Your Area

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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 13, we serve:

3 Family Resource Centers

21 Family Child Care Homes

“There were nights I didn’t know how I was going to take care of my child, and felt like I was failing them. The Family Resource Center helped us through our hardest moments, and now I can finally see my child smiling, learning, and growing into a strong kid ready to take on the world.” ~ Ashley, Mom of two

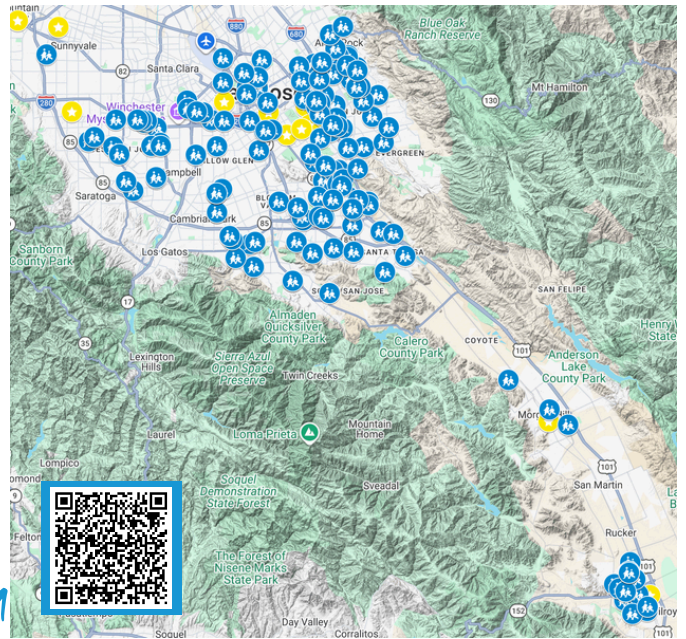
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Senate District 15

Our Providers In Your Area

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Scan the QR code to see the interactive map!

In District 15, we serve:

14 Family Resource Centers

165 Family Child Care Homes

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Learn more about our work at FIRST5kids.org.