

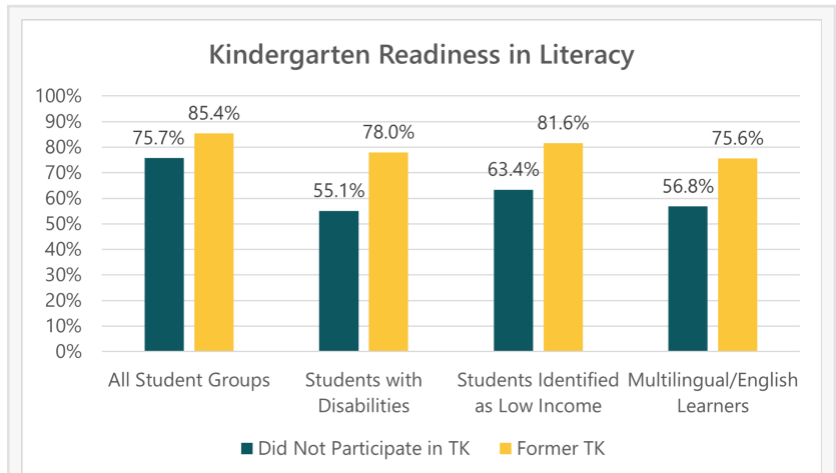
# New Data Show Transitional Kindergarten Programs Close Opportunity Gaps

*Data released today show the state's program to support our youngest learners' transition to kindergarten is making a difference in kindergarten readiness.*

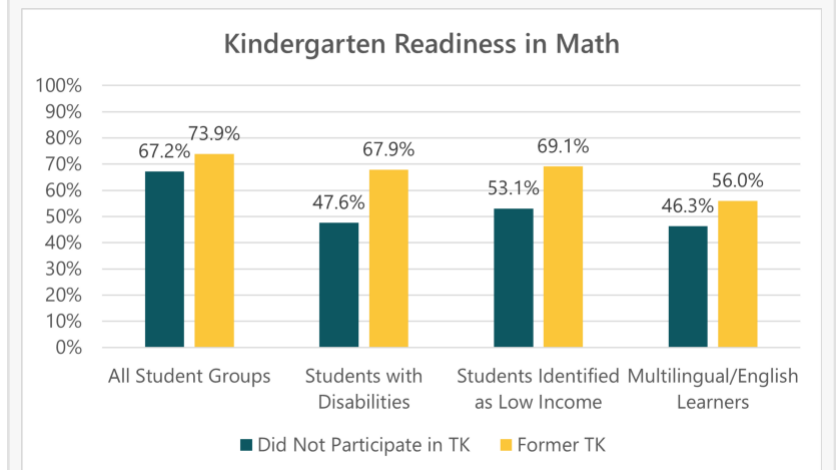
OLYMPIA, WA, USA, February 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- According to data released today by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), students who participate in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) outperform their peers in the state's kindergarten readiness assessment, with the largest differences being in literacy and math.

TK is a kindergarten program for children, aged 5 who missed the cutoff for kindergarten or are turning 5 before the next school year, who are in need of additional preparation before starting school. TK programs are provided at no cost to families, are staffed by certificated educators, and are fully integrated in their schools with access to meals, transportation, and recess. The program is currently being offered by 101 school districts across Washington and is serving over 3,000 students.

In Washington, all kindergarteners are evaluated at the beginning of the school year through the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) process. In this process, teachers observe their students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in six domains: Cognitive, Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical, and Social-Emotional.



Kindergarten Readiness in Literacy



Kindergarten Readiness in Math

In an analysis of WaKIDS data from fall 2022, OSPI found that students who participated in TK outperformed their peers in all six domains. The gains were even more pronounced for some student groups.

“These data confirm what we’ve been hearing from school district superintendents across the state,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal. “The jump start that transitional kindergarten provides for our students makes a real difference, and it’s closing opportunity gaps.”

The data show that, compared to their peers who did not participate in TK, kindergarteners who had a TK experience are 13% more likely to meet the kindergarten readiness standard in Literacy. Students with disabilities with a TK experience are 42% more likely to be kindergarten-ready in Literacy, multilingual/English learners are 33% more likely, and students identified as low-income are 29% more likely.

Further, the percentage of students identified as low-income who did not participate in TK and met standard in 5 of the 6 or all 6 WaKIDS domains was 50.6%. For their peers who had a TK experience, that climbed to 65%. The difference in meeting 5 or 6 of the domains was even larger for students with disabilities: of the students with disabilities who did not participate in TK, 33.9% met standard in 5 or all 6 domains compared to 52.4% of their peers who participated in TK.

Kindergarten readiness is a strong predictor of whether students will meet standard on the third-grade statewide assessments in math and English language arts (ELA). A recent OSPI study found that students who were kindergarten-ready in Literacy and in Math were more than 1.5 times as likely to meet the proficiency standards on the third grade ELA and math assessments.

Last year, OSPI initiated rulemaking to define the purpose, eligibility requirements, and quality standards more clearly for our state’s TK programs. Those revisions are still in progress and have not yet been finalized.

For More Information

[Transitional Kindergarten: A Proven Strategy for Closing Opportunity Gaps](#) (Handout)

[OSPI Explains: What is Transitional Kindergarten, and How Does it Work?](#) (Blog Post)

[Transitional Kindergarten Overview](#) (Video)

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