

early matters

A Historic Coalition on Early Education

The Early Matters Coalition

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Malini Rajput, JP Morgan Chase & Co
Leslie Sweet, H-E-B
Mark Williams, ACC District Board of Trustees
Ali Khataw, Encotech Engineering / Asian Chamber of Commerce
Jesús Garza, Seton Healthcare Family
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Susan Landry, Children's Learning Institute
Stephen Klineberg, Kinder Institute for Urban Research

Early Matter's objective is to get children reading at grade level by 3rd grade; Pre-K is instrumental to this goal

3rd Grade Reading

3rd grade reading is a key transition point in which a student switches from "learning to read" to "reading to learn". This point is a critical indicator of future success both inside and outside of a classroom.



Pre-K Enrollment

Many studies highlight the importance of early learning during young ages while children's brains are developing at a rapid rate¹. Early education has been demonstrated to result in significant long term benefits and increased future academic performance.



3rd grade reading comprehension is directly linked to future success

3rd Grade Reading

Data shows that disparities in literacy during the early grades are linked to persistent achievement gaps. If children are behind by third grade, they generally stay behind throughout school.¹

- Reading at grade level is one of the strongest predictors of later success in school. Students at or above grade level reading in earlier grades graduate from high school and attend college at higher rates than peers reading below grade level²
- ~75% of students who were poor readers in 3rd grade will remain poor readers in high school³

Students with low literary achievement tend to have more behavioral and social problems in subsequent grades⁴

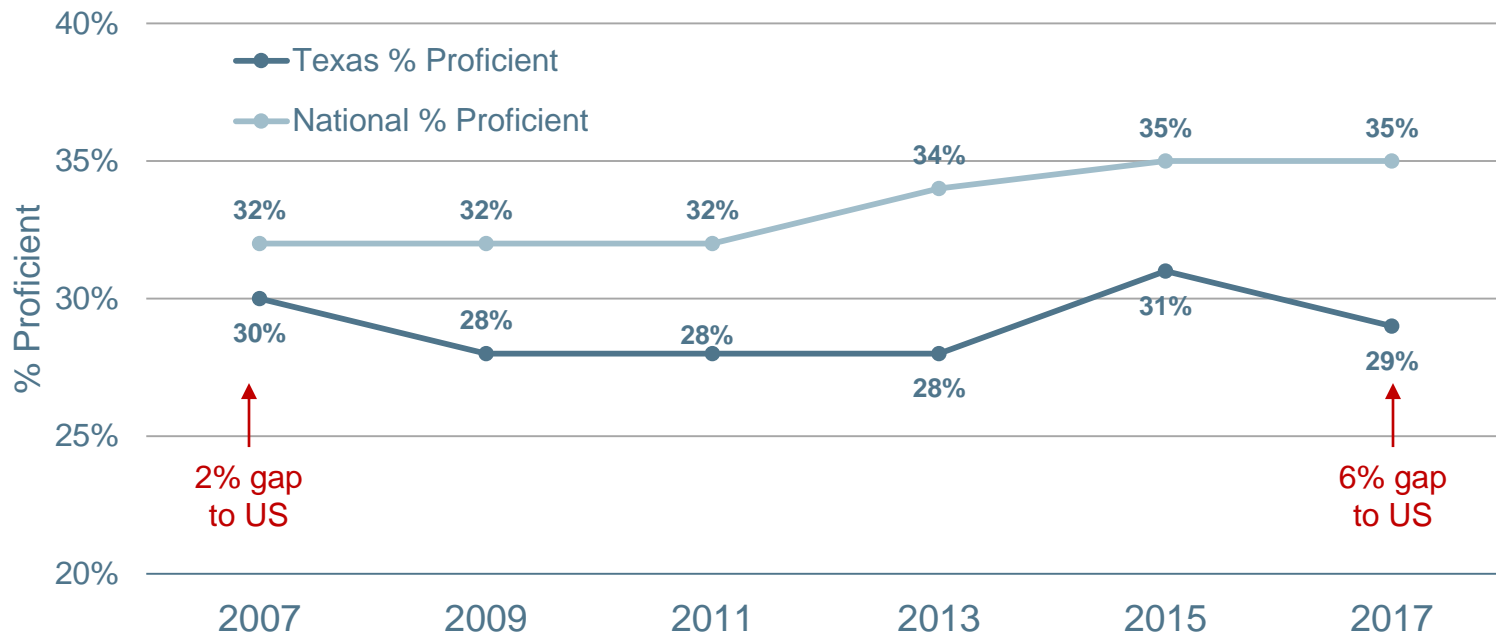
Additionally, Longitudinal studies find that students who do not read at grade level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers⁵

- Students who fail to graduate in have a plethora of future problems from high rates of incarceration to lower earning potential⁶

Texas lags behind the nation in early literacy, and the gap is growing

3rd Grade Reading

% Proficient in 4th Grade Reading per National Report Card (“NAEP”)

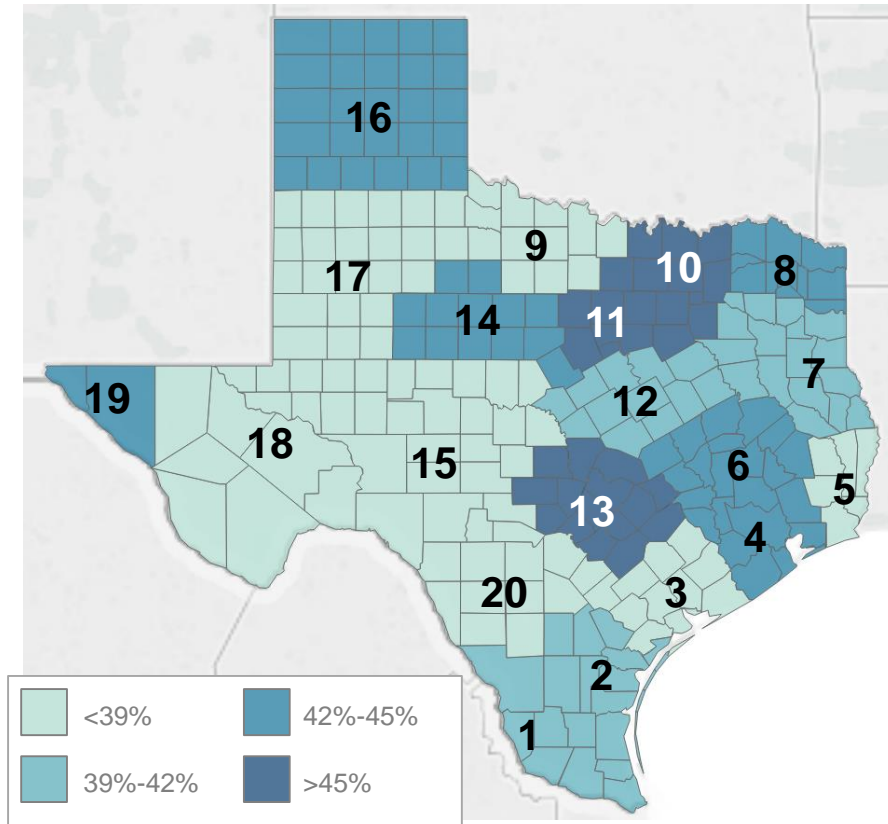


Texas has fallen to 46th for early literacy, down from 40th in 2015

According to STAAR, only 44% of all Texas 3rd graders are reading at or above grade level

3rd Grade Reading

2017 STAAR 3rd Grade Reading “Meets Grade Level” Rates by ESC Region

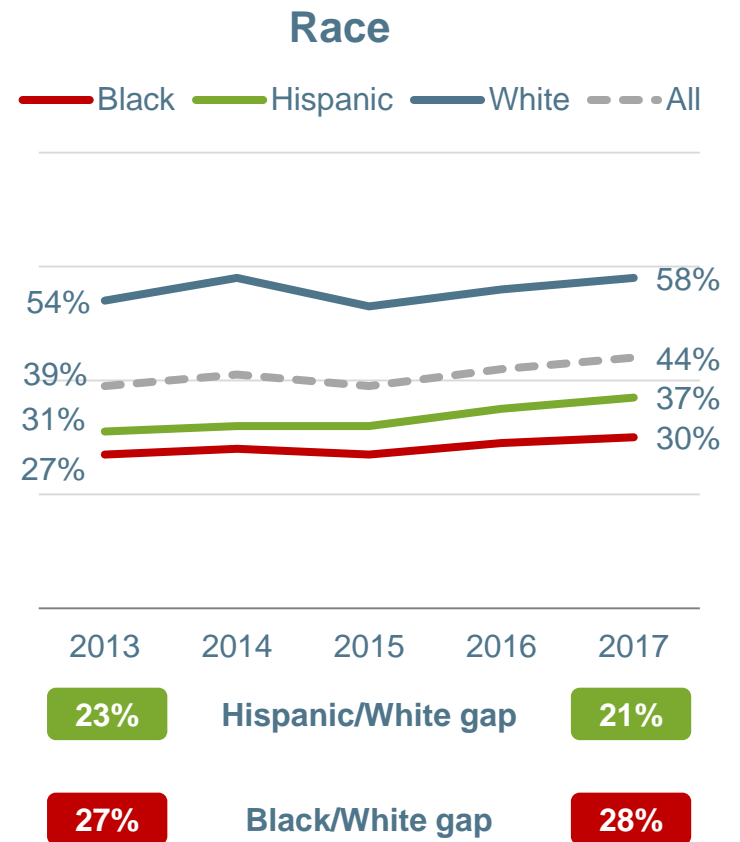
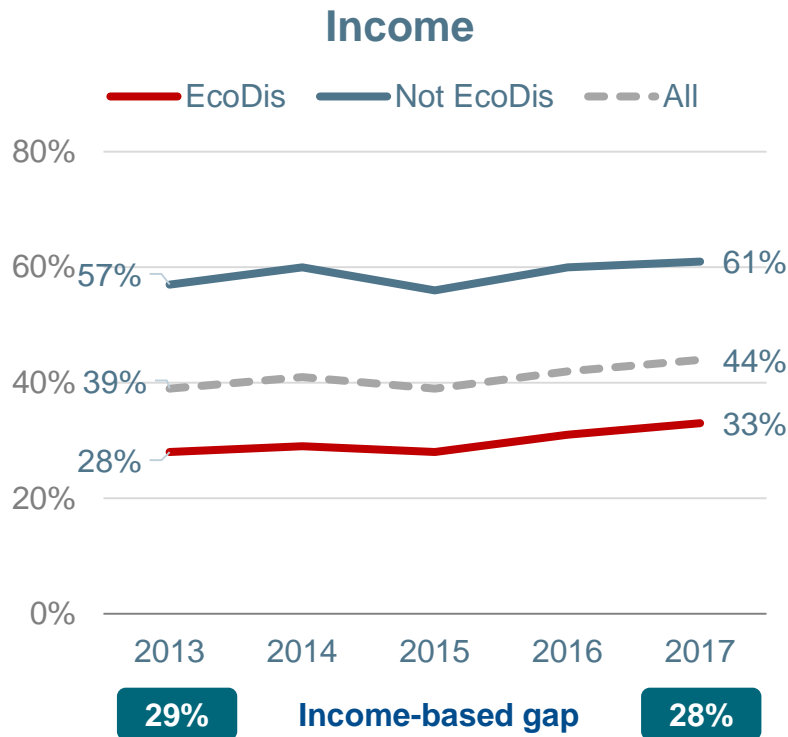


Region	% of Students	Region Name	3R "Meets"
1	8%	Edinburg	42%
2	2%	Corp. Christi	41%
3	1%	Victoria	37%
4	23%	Houston	45%
5	2%	Beaumont	39%
6	4%	Huntsville	45%
7	3%	Kilgore	41%
8	1%	Mt. Pleasant	43%
9	1%	Wichita Falls	39%
10	16%	Richardson	46%
11	11%	Fort Worth	47%
12	3%	Waco	41%
13	7%	Austin	50%
14	1%	Abilene	43%
15	1%	San Angelo	37%
16	2%	Amarillo	42%
17	2%	Lubbock	38%
18	2%	Midland	36%
19	3%	El Paso	44%
20	9%	San Antonio	39%
Total	100%	Texas	44%

Notable 3rd grade reading proficiency gaps exist based on income and race

3rd Grade Reading

2017 3rd Grade Reading “Meets Grade Level” Rates by Income and Race



Pre-K is linked to increased Kindergarten readiness, which impacts 3rd grade reading proficiency

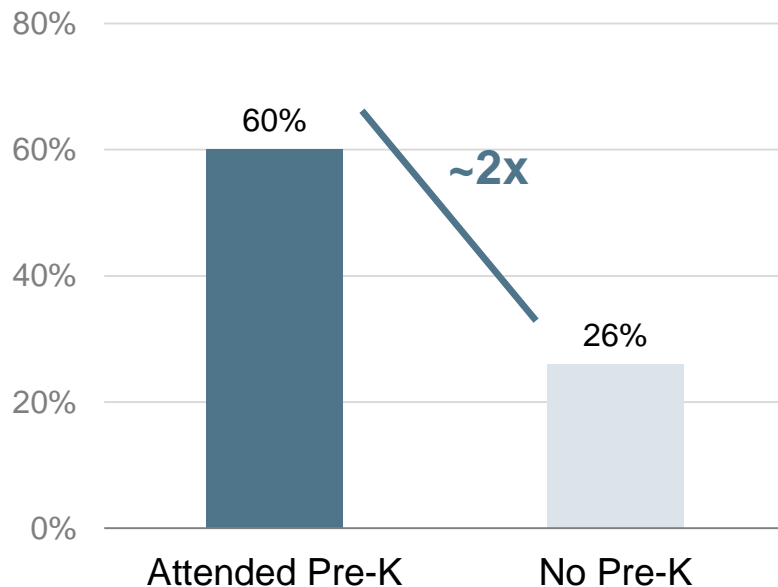
Case study at a Dallas ISD

Pre-K Enrollment

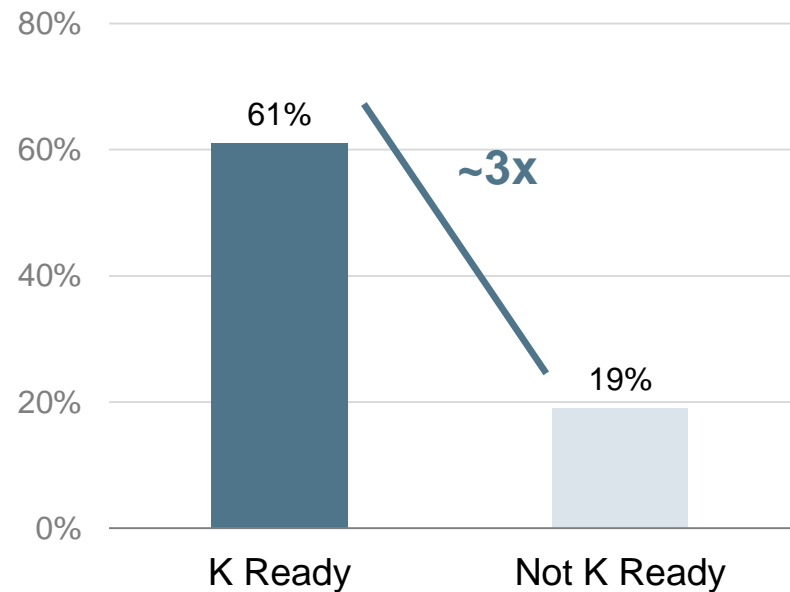
Pre-K: Students who attended Pre-K were **2x more likely to be Kindergarten Ready**

K-Ready: Students who were K-Ready were **3x more likely to be reading at grade level in 3rd grade four years later**

Kindergarten Readiness, 2015

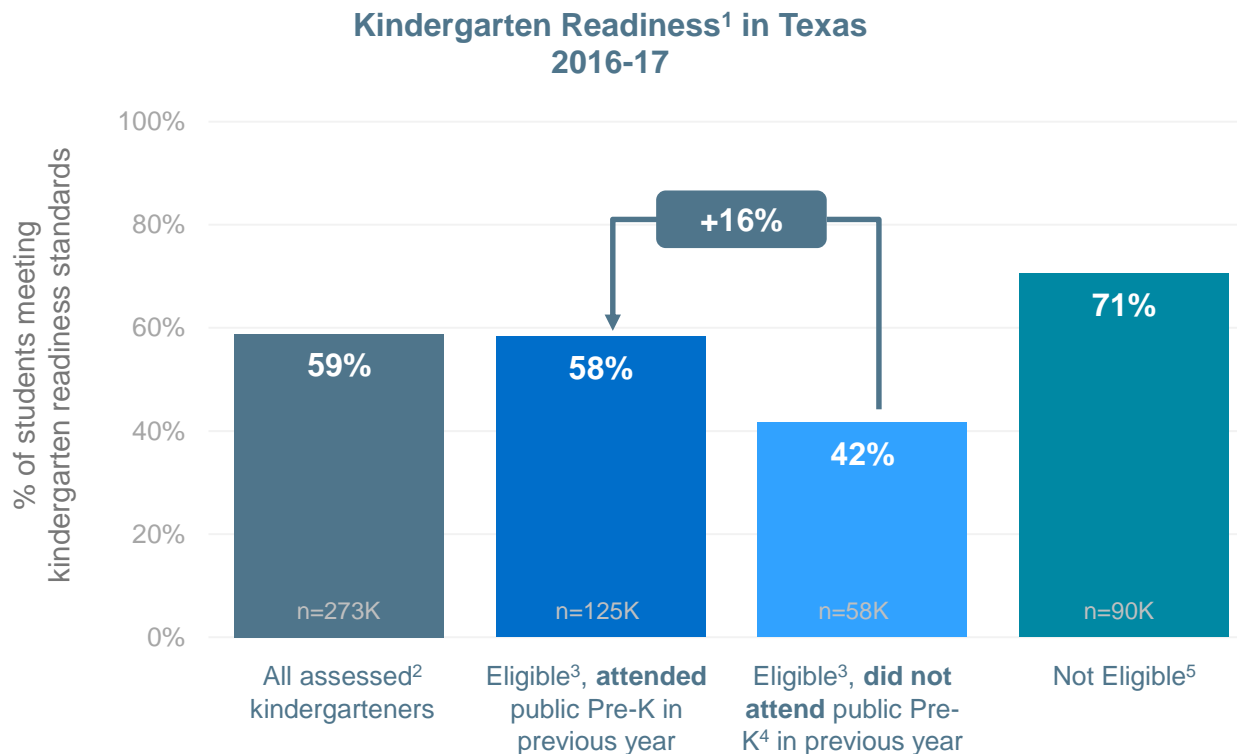


3rd Grade Reading "Meets," 2015



Pre-K attendance increases kindergarten readiness of eligible students across the state

Pre-K Enrollment



¹ Kindergarten readiness rates reflect the percentage of students who met or exceeded the cut-off score for a particular assessment out of all students who were assessed.

² Assessed using an assessment on the Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments.

³ To be eligible to attend a state funded prekindergarten program, the child must meet one of the following prekindergarten eligibility criteria:

- is unable to speak and comprehend the English language;
- is educationally disadvantaged, which means a student eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program;
- is homeless;
- is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States;
- is the child of a member of the armed forces who was injured or killed while on active duty;
- is the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical first responder; or
- is or ever has been in foster care.

⁴ Students in this group may have attended private prekindergarten.

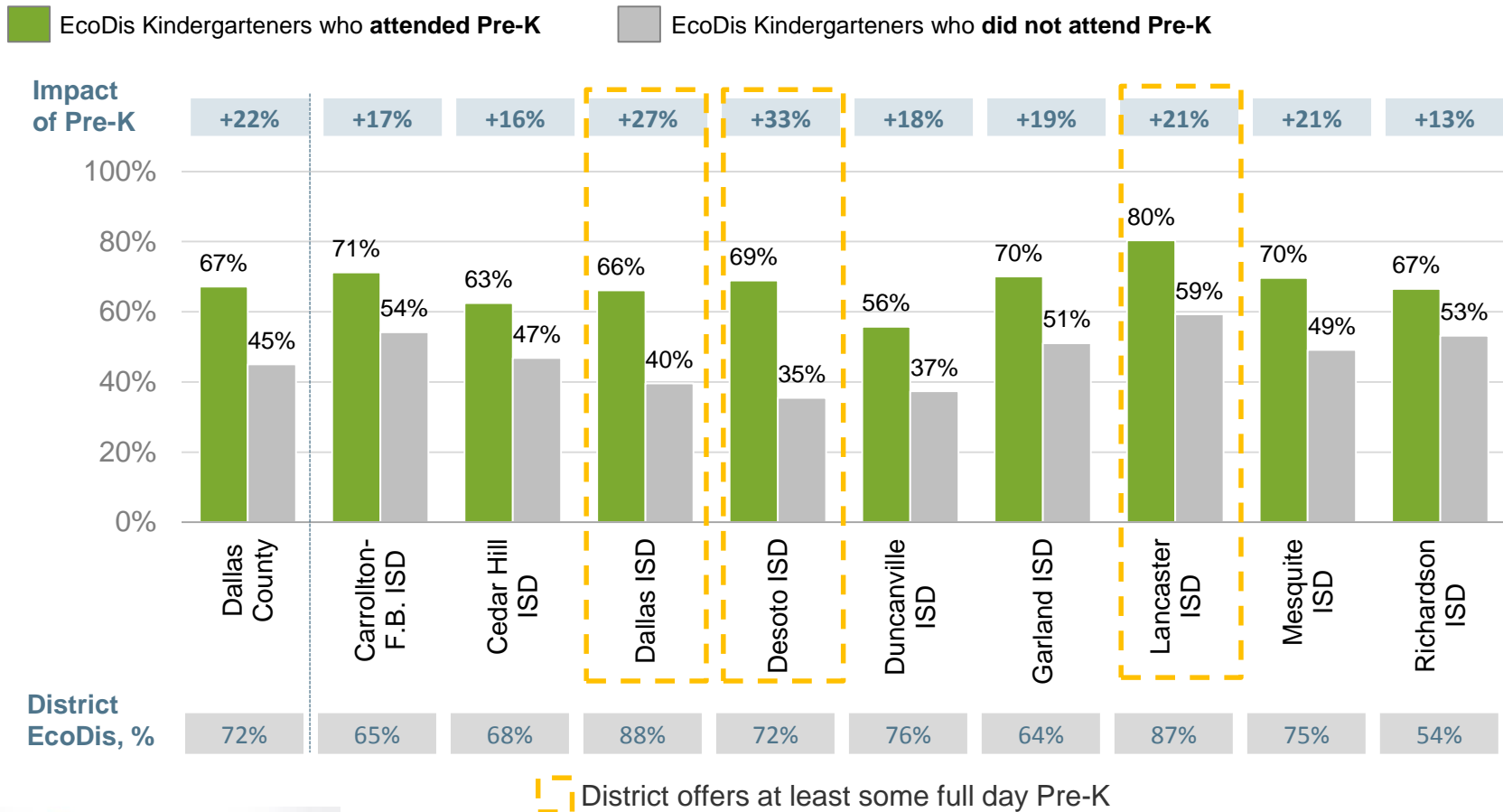
⁵ Students in this group may have attended private prekindergarten, may have attended public prekindergarten, or may not have attended prekindergarten.

Source: TEA data and Independent district reporting

Pre-K trends hold across the state: Dallas County

Pre-K Enrollment

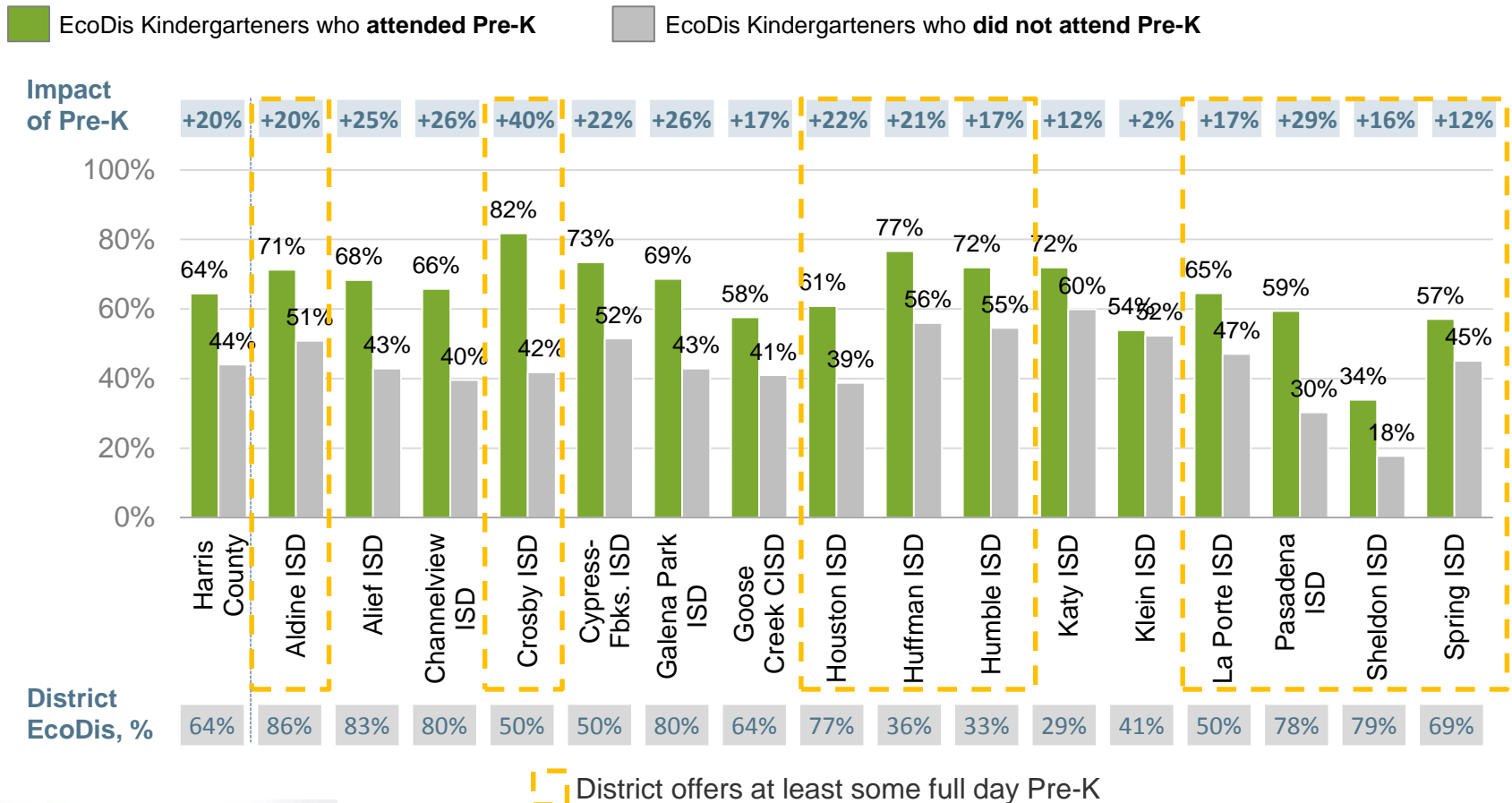
Kindergarten Readiness of Dallas County districts' Economically Disadvantaged students who attended Pre-K vs. those who did not attend Pre-K, 2016-2017



Pre-K trends hold across the state: Harris County

Pre-K Enrollment

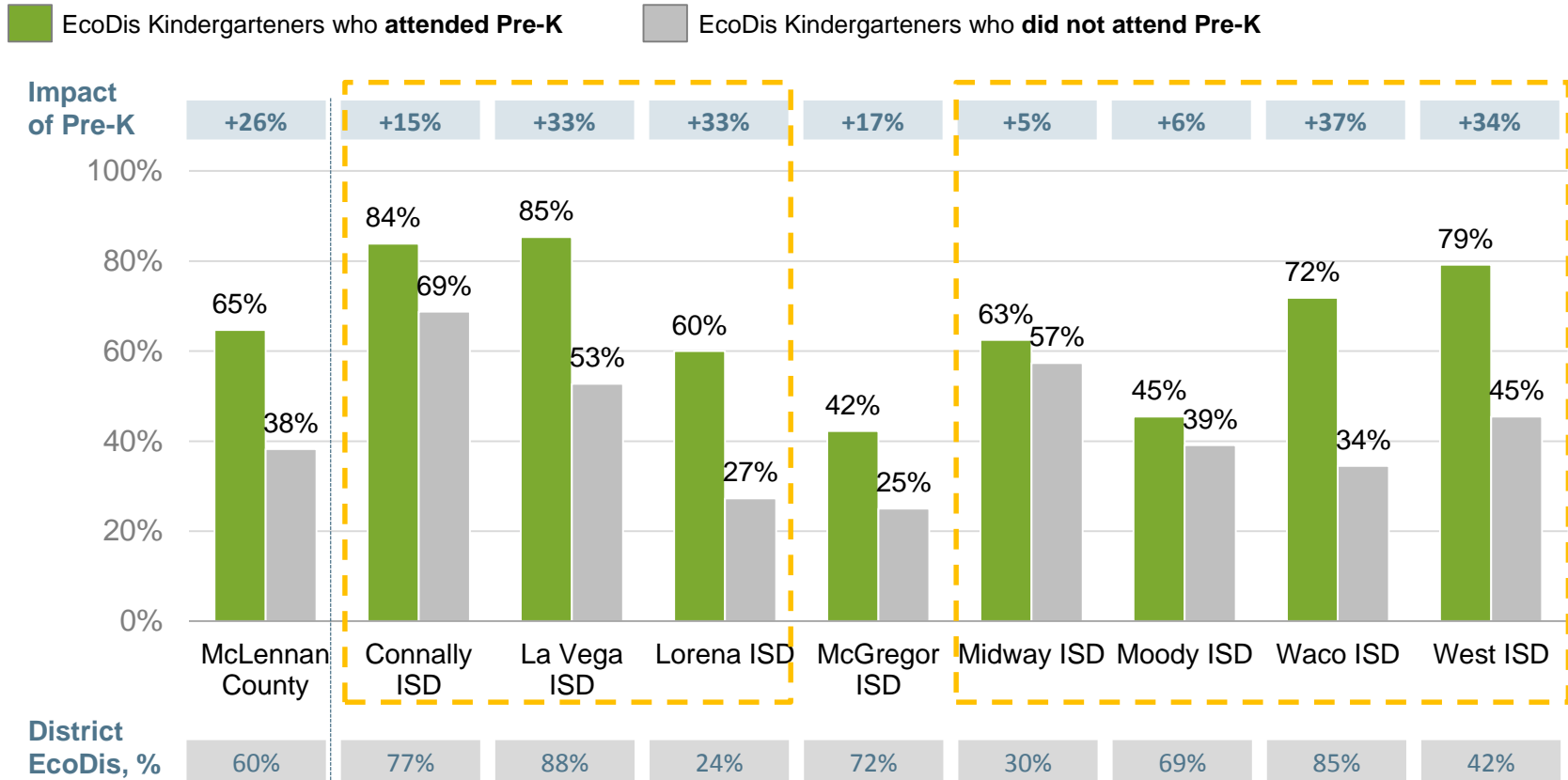
Kindergarten Readiness of Harris County districts' Economically Disadvantaged students who attended Pre-K vs. those who did not attend Pre-K, 2016-2017



Pre-K trends hold across the state: McLennan County

Pre-K Enrollment

Kindergarten Readiness of McLennan County districts' Economically Disadvantaged students who attended Pre-K vs. those who did not attend Pre-K, 2016-2017



 District offers at least some full day Pre-K

Pre-K benefits extend beyond helping students become kindergarten ready and reading at grade level by 3rd grade

Pre-K Enrollment

Quality preschool programs have been found to reduce acting out and aggressive behaviors in elementary school¹.

Research studies² have observed that students participating in preschool have

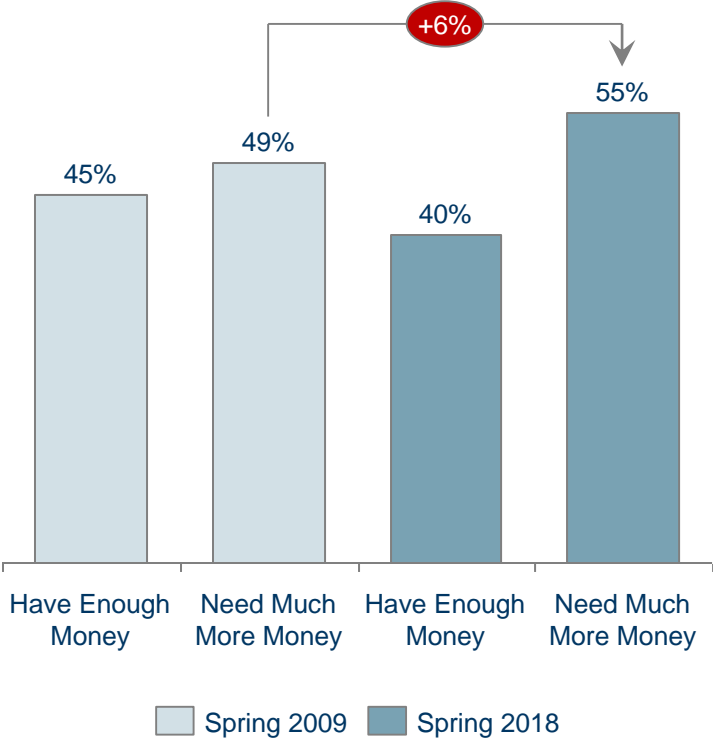
- Reduced prevalence of juvenile and adult crime
- Increased high school graduation rate and college attendance
- Reduced joblessness
- Reduced chances of teen pregnancy

Houston survey indicates population is in favor of more school funding, specifically in Pre-K

Pre-K Enrollment

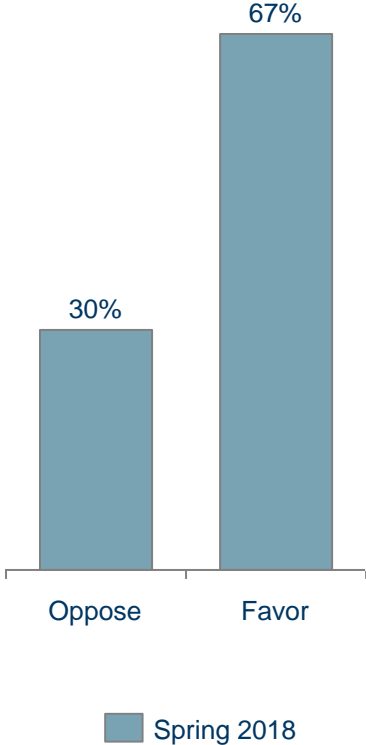
Schools need more funding

"The schools have enough money, if used wisely, to provide a quality education" – or – "In order to provide a quality education, significantly more money will be needed"



Providing Universal Preschool

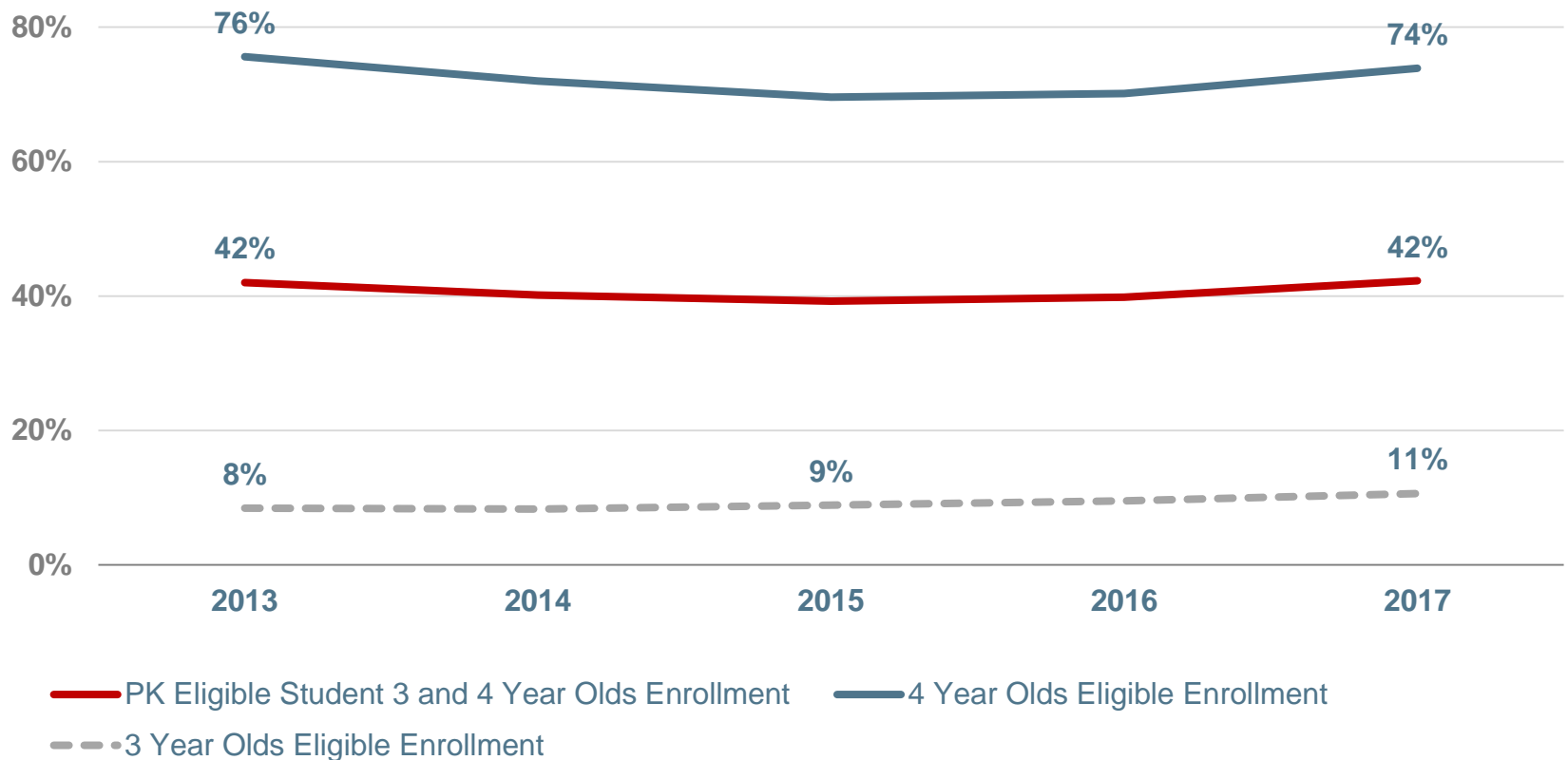
"What about increasing local taxes in order to provide universal preschool education for all children in Houston?"



Despite strong evidence of its benefit, Pre-K enrollment of eligible students is flat

Pre-K Enrollment

% of Eligible Three and Four Year Olds Enrolled in Pre-K Across Texas Since 2013



Key Takeaways

3rd grade reading proficiency is a key turning point in childhood education

- Yet, Texas is falling further behind compared to the rest of the US
- Gaps in 3rd grade reading are most stark for students of color and economically disadvantaged students

Quality Pre-K is a great opportunity to positively impact rates of 3rd grade reading proficiency and other student success factors

- Pre-K leads to significantly increased Kindergarten readiness and increased 3rd grade reading proficiency for the students that have the largest achievement gaps
- Pre-K has significant other benefits related to future success and increased social emotional skills
- There is public will to increase some funding and support for Pre-K

Policy Recommendations

- 1 Support full day ADA. Studies are clear on the benefits of full day Pre-K, especially for economically disadvantaged students and students of color.
- 2 Provide resources to support and incentivize district efforts to increase the number of students that meet 3rd grade reading standards
 - Create incentives for districts to hire and keep effective teachers in Pre-K through 2nd grade vs. placing them in tested grades
 - Focus early literacy support on populations that are most likely to benefit (i.e., economically disadvantaged students and students of color)
- 3 Provide districts full day ADA credit for full day Pre-K for the purposes of recapture in order to further incentivize use of full-day Pre-K