



**Camp Fire**

Light the fire within

# SCHOOL READINESS 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Evaluation Report

*Preparing children for kindergarten*



Prepared by: CNM and  
AWARE Research Solutions

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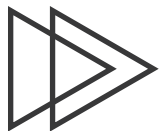
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# INTRODUCTION

The Camp Fire School Readiness Program (CFSRP) began in 2005 with the primary purpose of **preparing children for kindergarten.**

The CFSRP is a rigorous, comprehensive, research-based program designed to improve children's school readiness by improving the quality of child development centers in target neighborhoods that feed into Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) schools. They achieve this goal by providing a dual-focused program including 1) Child Care Center and teacher supports such as mentoring and professional development as well as 2) early childhood education for infants, toddlers,

preschoolers (3-year-olds), and pre-kindergarteners (4- and 5-year-olds) focused on improved language and social-emotional skills. The theory of change<sup>1</sup> below outlines the causal model for the program (Figure 1). The components of the program are outlined in detail in Appendix A.



<sup>1</sup> A theory of change provides an illustration of a program's impact pathway—the logical causal change that is expected to occur as a result of program activities.

## REPORT PURPOSE

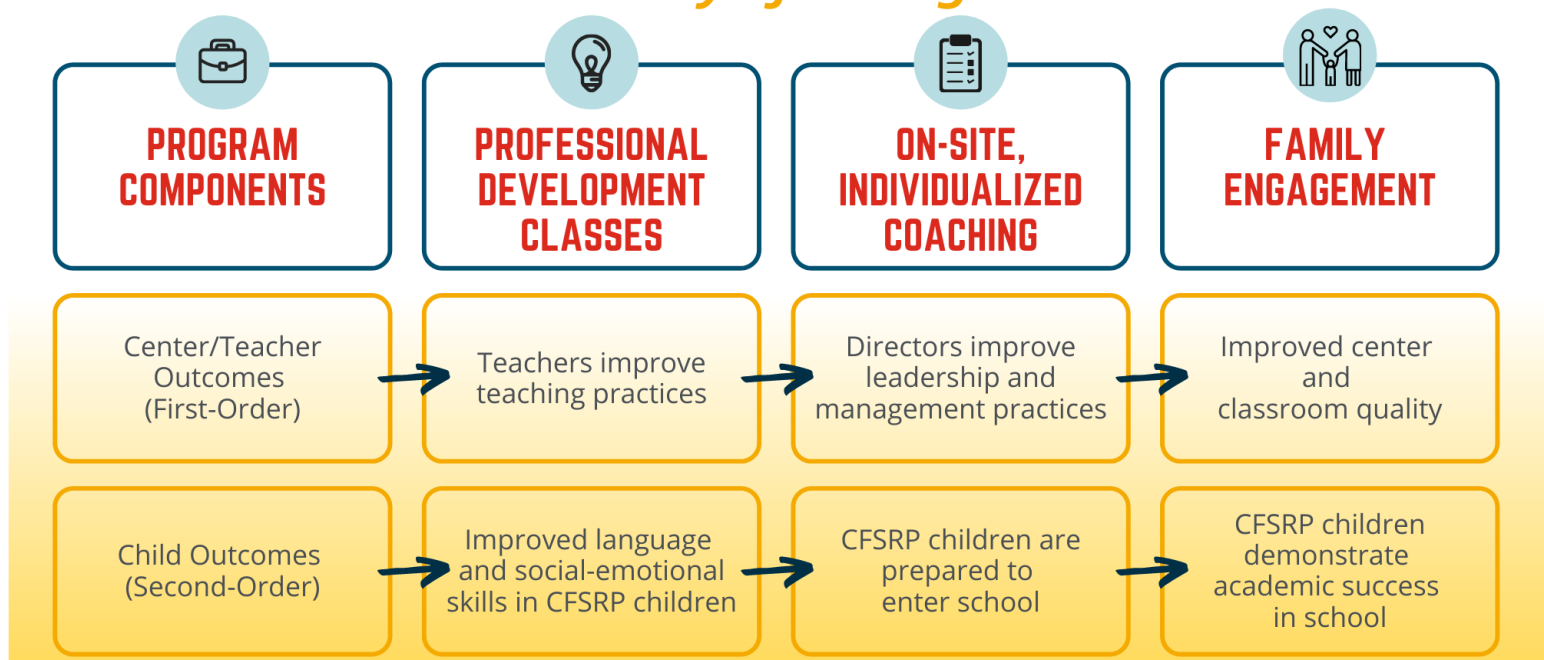
Historically, the CFSRP report has shown that children attending CFSRP Centers are developing appropriately for their age and are better prepared for kindergarten. The program does this by describing the results of pre and post assessments administered for both students and classrooms at the beginning and end of each school year as well as comparing CFSRP students to other FWISD students in kindergarten and beyond. *Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CFSRP and public school districts across the nation were unable to assess students at the end of the year. This creates a gap in the outcomes normally included in the CFSRP report. In response, the CFSRP has adapted this report to make it more targeted to the data that were available and more anecdotal in an attempt to tell the story of what happened to students, teachers, Centers, and the CFSRP has a result of COVID-19.*

To collect anecdotal data, the evaluation included a series of interviews with teachers (N=3), directors (N=3), and CFSRP mentors (N=2). Feedback from these interviews is interspersed throughout the report.

As in recent years, the current report also uses a process evaluation approach to describe the extent to which the CFSRP program is implementing the program activities as intended and whether those activities resulted in the expected program deliverables or products. The results of the process evaluation will aid Camp Fire in determining which aspects of the program are working as expected, and which processes require additional support and clarification in order to operate most effectively.

Figure 1: CFSRP Theory of Change

### CAMP FIRE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM *Theory of Change*



# KEY FINDINGS<sup>2</sup>

## PROCESS EVALUATION RESULTS

### Center Stability

Across the nation, businesses have been fighting to remain open and viable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Early Childhood Education Centers were no different. Before COVID-19 hit (October through December 2019 and January through March 2020), there were approximately 1,118 licensed/registered Early Childhood Education facilities (Center Based Care and Child Care Homes) open across Tarrant County. Towards the end of 2020 (October through December) and into early 2021 (January through early March), the number of facilities dropped to approximately 949.<sup>3</sup> We cannot say for certain that these closures were due to COVID-19; however, it does not seem a far leap to assume that at least some closures were due to the pandemic.

Of the 19 CFSRP Centers, all were able to remain in business. There were 12 Centers that remained opened, four closed for a short period, while three closed until the start of the new school year. But in the end, all were able to open their doors to children and families for the 2020-2021 school year.

### Teacher Retention Beginning of Year (BOY) to End of Year (EOY)

Research has consistently shown that teacher retention in early education and care facilities is associated with high quality care. The turnover rates of early childhood teachers at child development centers are

four times higher than the rates observed among elementary school teachers.<sup>4</sup> The annual retention rate for center-based child care professionals is estimated to be between 60% and 70%.<sup>5,6</sup> Of the 137 CFSRP teachers employed during the 2019-20 school year, 124 worked from BOY to EOY for a 91% retention rate (see Figure 2). Note, that because of government support, many teachers who were not actually present at the center remained on staff, in hiatus while the centers were negotiating COVID guidelines. This accounts for the high retention rate despite many programs having to serve far fewer children.



**91% teacher retention**

Compared to 79% last reporting year and 60-70% annual rate

A 2013 Texas Early Learning Council report found that child care professionals are paid wages lower than the national average and have few benefits, which has been directly associated with high staff turnover.<sup>7</sup> During the 2019-2020 program year, 87% of the Center teachers (119 out of 137) earned hourly wages of \$7.25 to \$13.00 per hour.<sup>8</sup> The remaining teachers were paid a salary (12%), or were volunteers (1%). Preliminary data suggests that CFSRP teacher retention has dropped during the 2020-2021 school year. This will be addressed in the report next year.

<sup>2</sup> A description of the methods used for this report are provided in Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> Data retrieved from: [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Search\\_Texas\\_Child\\_Care/default.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/default.asp).

<sup>4</sup> Whitebook, M. & Sakai, L. (2003). Turnover begets turnover: An examination of job and occupational instability among child care center staff. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18, 273-293.

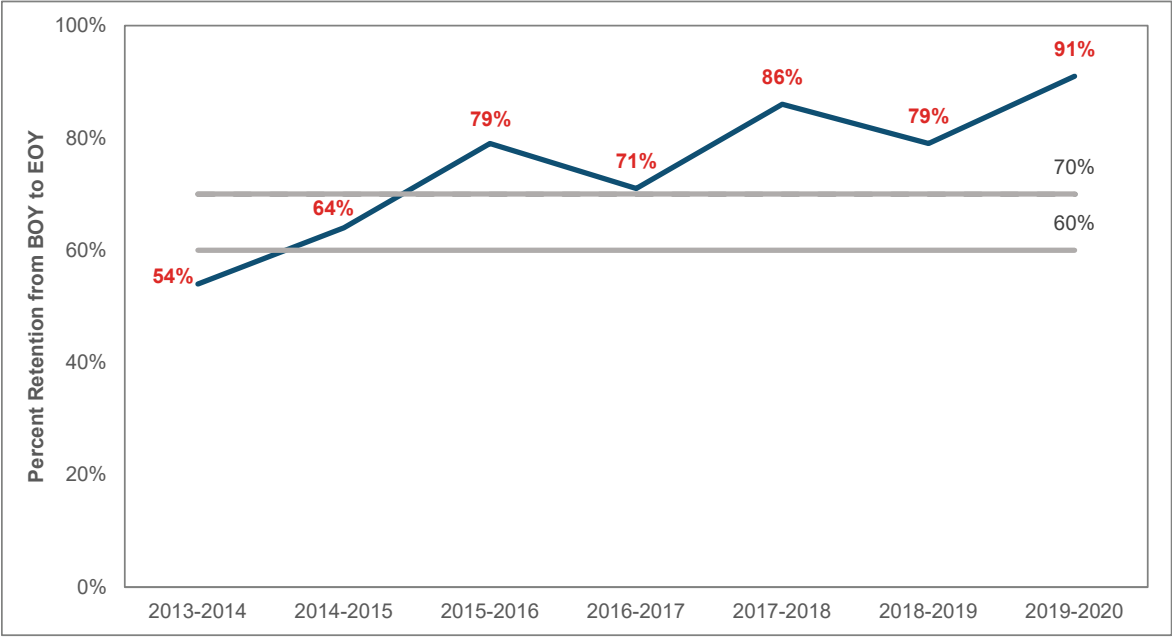
<sup>5</sup> Whitebook, M. & Sakai, L. (2003). Turnover begets turnover: An examination of job and occupational instability among child care center staff. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18, 273-293.

<sup>6</sup> Baumgartner, J.J., Carson, R.L., Apavaloaie, L., & Tsouloupas, C. (2009). Uncovering common stressful factors and coping strategies among child care providers. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 38, 239-251.

<sup>7</sup> Texas Early Learning Council. (2013). Texas Early Childhood Workforce Compensation Study. Retrieved from <https://www.earlylearningtexas.org/media/23683/texas%20early%20childhood%20workforce%20compensation%20study.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> The average wage for a childcare worker in Texas is around \$10.74 per hour. <https://www.careerexplorer.com/careers/childcare-worker/salary/texas/>.

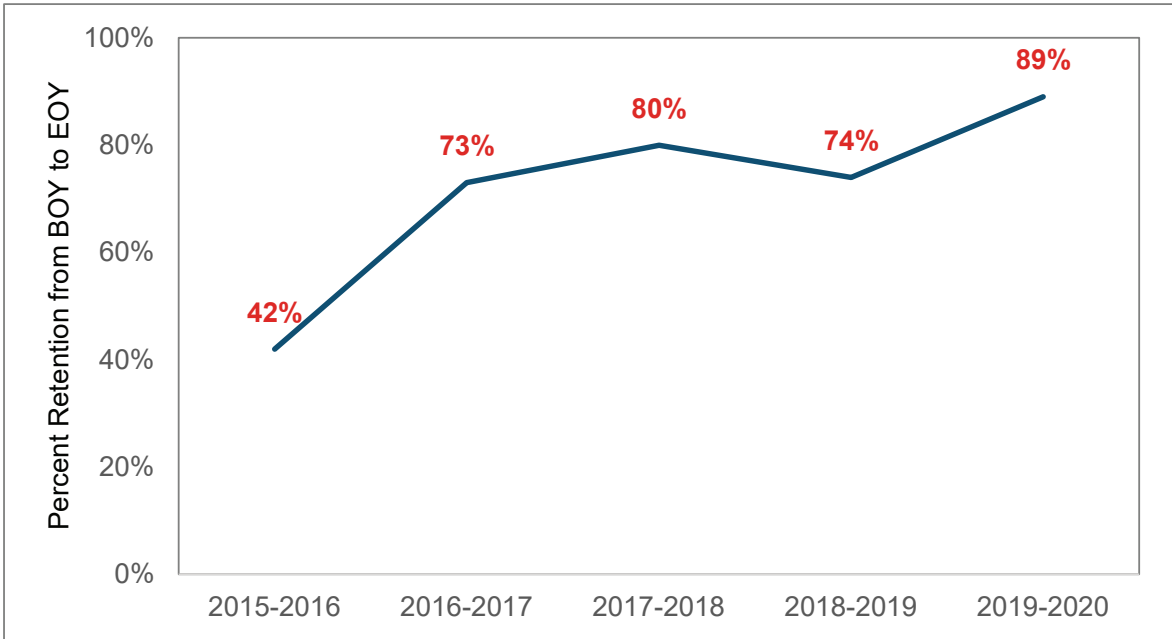
Figure 2: Teacher Retention Rates from BOY to EOY



Student Retention (BOY to EOY)

Student retention provides valuable information about the stability of the class, another indicator of a quality childcare environment. In addition, Camp Fire measures developmental change from beginning of year to end of year; thus, a stable class presence is imperative to better understanding the outcomes of the program. During the 2019-2020 school year, Camp Fire was particularly interested in the impact of COVID-19 on student retention. CFSRP Centers retained 89% (834 of 937) of their students from BOY to EOY (see Figure 3). This retention rate seems high. When Centers were open to only essential workers, there was naturally lower student enrollment; however, students enrolled in the Centers did not have to withdraw even if they were not attending. With this in mind, children who left because of COVID restrictions were counted as retained if they returned anytime during the Spring 2020 or at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.<sup>9</sup>

Figure 3: Student Retention Rates from BOY to EOY



<sup>9</sup> The CFSRP determined which students remained with the Centers by asking Center directors to report which students had not returned at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. If a student returned, then they were considered “retained” in 2019-2020 regardless of whether they were actually able to attend. This is not a perfect method for ascertaining retention, but it was the best information the CFSRP could collect at the time of this report.

*"We were closed for two months*

*and to have families trust us enough to bring their kids back, that was a really big thing to us."*  
- CFSRP director

## Professional Development Participation

Camp Fire was able to provide professional development opportunities for the first half of the 2019-2020 school year, but had to discontinue the second half of the year due to COVID-19. Professional development classes took place from August 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020. All 137 teachers were eligible to participate in the Early Education Institute (EEI). Of those, 90 teachers participated for a 66% participation rate. There were 30 Directors and Assistant Directors eligible to participate in the Directors Institute (DI), of those 18 attended for a 60% participation rate. The CFSRP was able to begin offering virtual professional development options in the Fall of 2020.

## Stipend Participation

The CFSRP awarded stipends for the Fall 2019 semester based on attendance and assessment requirements, but did not provide stipends for Spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 shutdown and the cancellation of professional development sessions. CFSRP data indicate that 38 teachers out of the 90 teachers participating in professional development (about 42%) received a stipend for Fall 2019 and no directors received a stipend.

## One-on-One Mentor Activity

Due to COVID-19, mentoring was discontinued in March 2020 but was provided through February 2020. Table 1 provides a list of the types of mentoring activities and the number of visits focused on each activity. Of note is the low percentage of time spent on "Help with Child Assessments." Based on results from the prior year evaluation, CFSRP staff determined that less mentoring time should be spent on child assessments and more should be spent on direct teacher support. For that reason, they provided more training on child assessment for teachers and emphasized the expectation that teachers were to assess students and utilize mentors for professional growth. As a result, mentors spent more time developing teachers and less time in 2019-2020 helping teachers with child assessments (about 16% in 2018-2019 to 5% in 2019-2020) (see Table 1).

*"Right now, we are doing EEI. I live far from work and those classes were far from me. The fact that the classes are online is a blessing. Before I would either get home really late or couldn't participate. I tried to go to two, but it wasn't working for me. With online, they give us the information, we do homework and we talk about our homework and [instructors] double check that we are doing what we are supposed to. We can talk to classmates [online] and send email if we need help and they are there right away. And since they provided us an iPad we can FaceTime them as well."*

- CFSRP Teacher



Table 1: Mentor Activities, 2019-2020

Type of Visit Activity	Number of Visit Activities	Percent of Visit Activities
Observing	119	28.95%
Reflective Follow Up	95	23.11%
Modeling	65	16.79%
Side-by-Side Coaching	37	9.00%
Instructional Planning	36	8.76%
Physical Classroom Environment	21	5.11%
Help with Child Assessments	19	4.62%
Total	392	100.00%

*"[Camp Fire Mentors] have been helpful in comforting me.*

*I need to be the rock in my own building, but I'm just as nervous and need someone to talk to too. Our mentors call and check in on us. I feel like that is over and beyond for them to check in on me and see if I'm okay." - CFSRP director*



## CHILD OUTCOMES<sup>10</sup>

Because of COVID-19, the CFSRP was unable to assess students at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. As a result, there are no quantitative student outcome results for this section.

Some anecdotal evidence from interviews with Center teachers suggests that students may have struggled with reading development as a result of COVID-19 safety standards.

*"We used to give [the children] books, but we can't let them borrow the books anymore. We have one book for all of us and they cannot have it for themselves. I've noticed that they have a harder time with some of the concepts because they haven't gotten a chance to really hold and see the book." - CFSRP Teacher*

When asked how the COVID-19 pandemic might be affecting the social-emotional development of students, teachers remained optimistic and reported that their students were showing many signs of resiliency. They also seemed to think that in some cases the smaller class sizes were a greater positive influence than the social distancing and safety measures were as a negative influence when looking at the social-emotional well-being of their students. Because the COVID guidelines required a consistent drop-off routine, this transition process became more consistent for many students. Consistent transitions help children know what to expect, and help them feel safe.

*"We have a child that is really shy. And now that we have only 12 kids he is talking way more. Whenever we used to dance, he would stay in the corner, but now he is living his best life because I have more time to encourage him to talk and participate. The kids used to not play with him, but now they are inviting him to play. Part of it is because we have fewer kids and we can spend more time with him and the other kids notice him more because there are fewer kids to choose from. There is a big difference between helping 12 kids versus 22 kids." - CFSRP Teacher*

When students did come back at the end of the 2019-2020 year, the CFSRP decided (because teachers and directors were overwhelmed and emotionally taxed) to reduce emphasis on assessments and increase emphasis on safety and emotional well-being. However, when asked about the effect of COVID-19 on academic progress, some teachers who had assessed their students in the Fall of 2020 were able to report on the academic progress of their students in the current school year.

*"When I did the CPALLS [Fall 2020 assessment] I did notice that some of them knew more sounds and recognized more letters. I think that is because I ha[d] more time to dedicate to kids that [were] behind. They enjoy that there is a small group." - CFSRP Teacher*

<sup>10</sup> A description of CFSRP assessments is provided in Appendix C.

# CENTER OUTCOMES

## Improved Quality in Classroom Environment and Management

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™)<sup>11</sup> assessment was administered at the beginning and end of the program.<sup>12</sup> The CLASS™ is conducted by Certified CLASS Observers and focuses primarily on the quality of teacher-child interactions in the classroom. In infant classrooms, it is used to measure responsive caregiving (i.e., their ability to respond to and interact with infants during play, routine care and other activities). In toddler classrooms, it measures teachers' ability to promote intentional, prosocial interactions that encourage children's capacity for self-regulation and social skills (Emotional-Behavioral Support) and teachers' ability to promote emerging, expressive language skills in children (Engaged Support for Learning).

The CLASS™ assessment was administered in three- and four-year-old classrooms to measure three domains. The first domain focuses on teachers' ability to foster positive relationships and respond to children's emotions or interests (Emotional Support). The second domain focuses on teachers' ability to set clear behavioral guidelines and maintain a classroom that supports children's interactions with teachers and peers through the effective management of children's time, behavior, and attention (Classroom Organization). The third domain focuses on teachers' ability to help children learn to solve problems, develop more complex language skills, and use feedback to deepen children's skills and knowledge (Instructional Support).

Empirical studies have shown positive child outcomes for children in classrooms with high ratings on the CLASS™ assessment.<sup>13, 14</sup> Studies have also provided evidence of a threshold effect indicating a minimal level at which classroom quality in preschool classrooms is met to achieve positive student outcomes.<sup>15, 16</sup>

### CLASS™ Results

The CFSRP expected an overall increase from beginning to end of year in each of the CLASS™ domains for infant, toddler and preschool classrooms. The CFSRP either maintained or improved CLASS scores across all age groups and domains, with the exception of a small decrease in Emotional and Behavioral Support in toddler classrooms. **The quality threshold for preschool classrooms was met across all domains at the end of the year (see Figure 4).**



<sup>11</sup> The Center on Research and Evaluation (CORE) administered the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and submitted the final data to the CNM evaluation team to analyze.

<sup>12</sup> There were 79 classrooms assessed in CLASS™ and 52 that match BOY to EOY. This equals to a 66% assessment fidelity rate.

<sup>13</sup> Carr, R., Mokrova, I., Vernon-Feagans, Burchinal, M. (2019). Cumulative classroom quality during pre-kindergarten and kindergarten and children's language, literacy, and mathematics skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 47, 218-228.

<sup>14</sup> Vitiello, V. E., Bassok, D., Hamre, B. K., Player, D., & Williford, A. P. (2018). Measuring the quality of teacher-child interactions at scale: Comparing research-based and state observation approaches. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 161-169.

<sup>15</sup> Burchinal, M., Vandergrift, N., Pianta, R., & Mashburn, A. (2010). Threshold analysis of association between child care quality and child outcomes for low-income children in pre-kindergarten programs. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25, 166-176.

<sup>16</sup> For Pre-K CLASS™, the quality threshold is set at 5 for the Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains, and at 3.25 for the Instructional Support domain. For infants and toddlers, scores of 3 to 5 indicate a mix of effective teacher-child interactions, while scores of 6 to 7 indicate consistently effective teacher-child interactions.

Figure 4: Classroom Environment and Management at BOY and EOY, 2019-2020

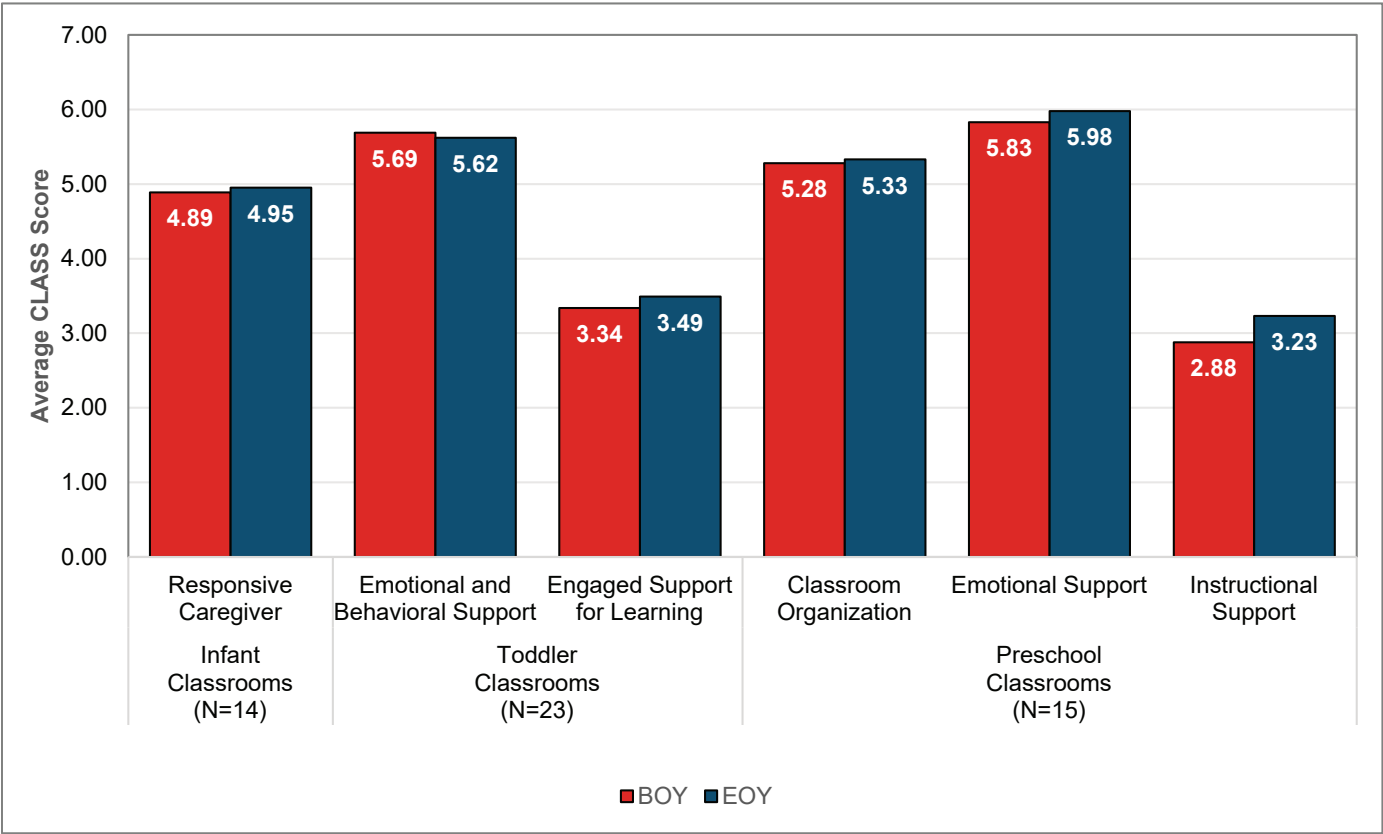
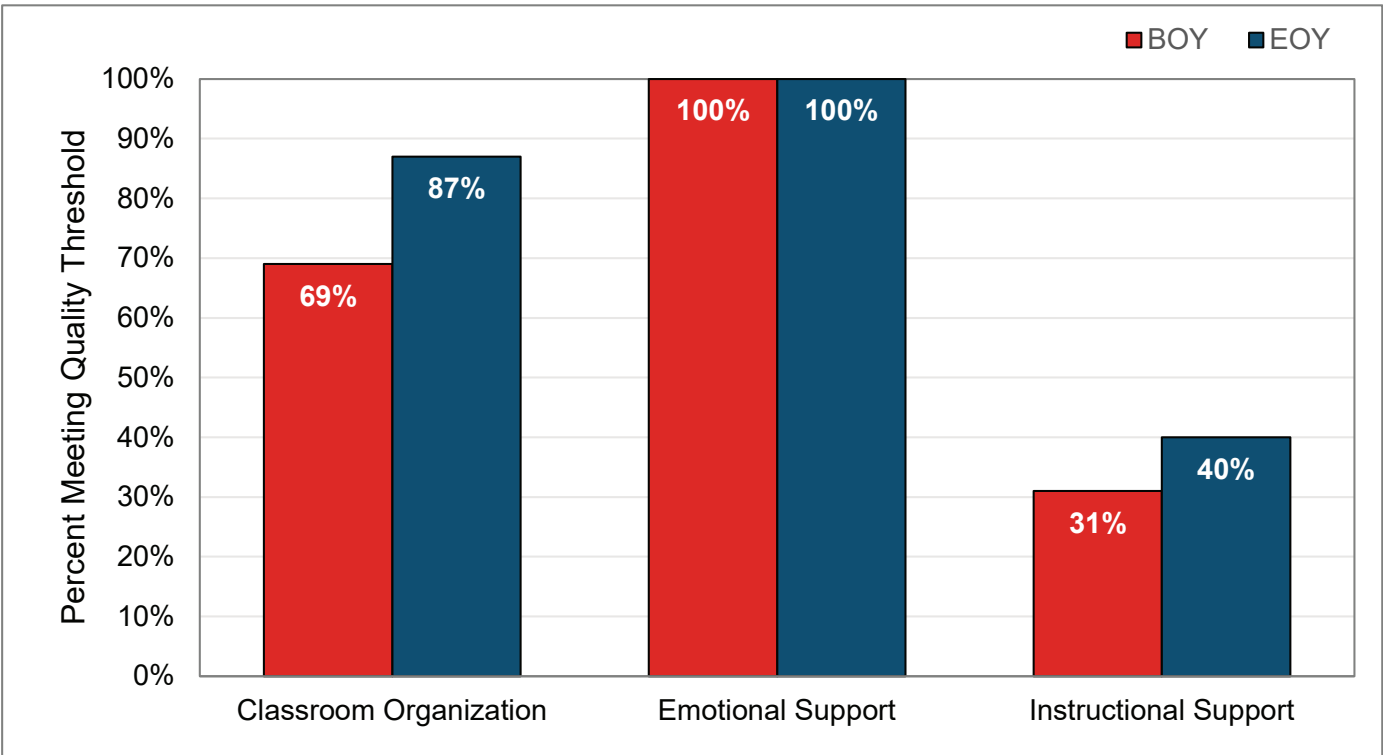


Figure 5 shows the percentage of preschool classrooms at or above the quality threshold for each domain. **CFSRP classrooms have mastered the Emotional Support domain** and showed great improvement in the Classroom Organization domain. There is still room for improvement in the area of Instructional Support.

Figure 5: Percentage of Preschool Classrooms at or Above the Preschool Quality Threshold, 2019-2020



## **CFSRP TEACHER, DIRECTOR, AND MENTOR EXPERIENCES**

CNM conducted interviews with a group of teachers, directors, and mentors to learn about their experiences during COVID-19 pandemic. The section below describes the findings from those interviews.

### **Impact on Teachers**

When asked how the COVID-19 pandemic was impacting them as a teacher, teachers reported that it was hard to be away from their students when the Centers were closed. They reported that they were scared of getting sick or that they would bring home the virus and give it to their families. They also reported that they were anxious about the well-being of their students. Overall, they indicated that big changes were needed in order to protect students, families, and staff such as social distancing, hand washing, and sanitizing. But once they had adapted, they were able to continue with instruction.

Teachers reported that the biggest changes to their classrooms included spacing out the kids, making sure they were washing their hands the correct way, and ensuring all surfaces were kept clean. All teachers noted that parents were no longer allowed in the buildings, and that students were dropped off at the front entrance. This limited teachers' ability to communicate with parents, but they reported addressing this challenge by sending messages to parents with updates and information about their children. Once they became comfortable with the new health and safety guidelines, the teachers reported that they were able to resume instruction for the most part. A couple of teachers mentioned that they thought having to wear a mask could delay language development for infants and toddlers because the children could not see the teachers' mouths moving or their full facial expressions. They cautioned that since students were no longer allowed to sit in their laps or hold the books, they felt reading progress was impeded. On the other hand, progress in math continued since students were able to count on their fingers and fewer supplies were necessary. All teachers reported that their students were resilient and felt that their social-emotional development would not suffer. Some teachers did report that students were confused about the new guidelines at first and that they needed additional support, but the students adapting over time.

All teachers interviewed reported that the CFSRP provided all of the necessary resources that they needed and that they felt supported.

### **Impact on Directors**

Directors were primarily concerned with enrollment numbers in addition to protecting the health and safety of their staff and students. Directors reported that teachers were nervous about coming to school and that they spent time addressing those concerns. The directors stressed the importance of consistency and stability for the well-being of students.

The directors also talked about the importance of keeping parents informed about changes to guidelines and changes in procedures in the Center and with their students. Since parents were no longer allowed in the Centers, communication took place through emails, letters, and flyers posted on bulletin boards outside the Centers. Directors reported that from their perspective, students seemed to be developing and adapting to the changing environment. Directors reported that CFSRP staff were always available to help and provided the resources they needed during the pandemic. One director reported that having CFSRP staff to talk to was important because they needed to be a source of support for their teachers, but that they needed support and comforting as well.

## Impact on Mentors

CFSRP mentors were furloughed from April through June of 2020. Before the furlough, CFSRP staff were tasked with contacting child care centers to determine if they were open and if they had space for new students. This work contributed to the new “FindChildCare” tool that now links to the statewide child care search database. Tarrant County Child Care Associates led the effort, working together with Camp Fire First Texas, and Educational First Steps to gather the data. This project was a part of the Tarrant County COVID Emergency Response Child Care Team created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before the furlough, mentors made great efforts to stay in touch with teachers and directors and provide support where they could. Mentors reported that it was very stressful to see teachers being furloughed and directors struggling to keep students enrolled and remain open. While providing support to Centers, the mentors report that the CFSRP was providing great support to them. One mentor noted that they thought the CFSRP was a stronger team as a result of working so hard to support one another.



## CFSRP CONTRIBUTES TO SCHOOL READINESS

The ultimate goal of the CFSRP is for children to be “ready to learn” when they enter school and to experience continued academic success as they progress through school. To determine the extent to which the program accomplished this goal, the evaluation used results from assessments already in place in FWISD to follow CFSRP students as they entered school in either pre-kindergarten or kindergarten and progress to the 3rd grade.

FWISD assesses pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students at the beginning of each year to identify specific skills that they have (or have not) developed and to plan instruction accordingly. The Circle Progress Monitoring Tool (CIRCLE)<sup>17</sup> is used to assess pre-kindergarten students and the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA)<sup>18</sup> is used for kindergarten students. Beginning in the current (2020-2021) school year, MAP® Reading Fluency<sup>TM19</sup> and Growth<sup>TM20</sup> Assessments are also administered to kindergarten students at the beginning, middle and end of year. See Appendix D for a more detailed description of the assessments.

For each grade level, the CFSRP evaluation compares the results of these assessments for the students who attended a CFSRP Center in an earlier year and a demographically similar group of children who did not. Appendix D also provides more detail about the comparison method. Appendix E shows the demographic characteristics of the CFSRP students and their comparison groups at each grade level. In each of the graphs presented below, the shaded columns indicate statistically significant differences between the two groups. Appendix E provides more detail about the assessments and the analyses.

Prior to reviewing the results of these analyses, it is important to note some COVID-related challenges to the administration of the FWISD assessments, and to the interpretation of the results. First, prior evaluations included analyses of end-of -year kindergarten, first and second grade Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) data, and third grade State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)<sup>21</sup> data from the Spring of the prior school year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting halt to in-person school attendance, the Spring 2020 assessments were not administered. Accordingly, the current evaluation is necessarily limited to the Fall 2020 prekindergarten and kindergarten assessments described above and does not follow earlier of cohorts of CFSRP children as they progress from one grade to another.

With the COVID-related interruptions and changes in the learning environment, even the results of the literacy assessments should be interpreted with caution, for several reasons. In particular, the CFSRP children as well as the comparison group children had interrupted learning time in the Spring 2020 and, in Fall 2020, the students were in various learning modes (in-person, virtual, hybrid). It is reasonable to expect that these factors, and others related to COVID, could have impacted the children’s performance. These cautions are supported by communication from the Texas Education Agency recommending that school districts “exercise caution when using assessment outcomes for evaluation or planning purposes.”<sup>22</sup> With these caveats in mind, the results of the Fall 2020 FWISD are presented to provide a framework for continued discussion about the contributions of the CFSRP to children’s school readiness.

### Pre-Kindergarten Early Literacy Skills

As shown in Figure 6, children who attended one of the CFSRP Centers in the prior year (2019-2020) entered pre-kindergarten in Fall 2020 with higher ratings than their counterparts on the six targeted early literacy skills as measured by the CIRCLE assessment. The differences were statistically significant for two of the skills, Letter Naming and Rhyming. In prior years, the evaluation revealed similar results, suggesting that the CFSRP contributes positively to children’s early literacy skills (see Appendix F).

17 CLI Engage (2017). CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System. <https://cliengage.org/public/tools/assessment/circle-progress-monitoring/>

18 Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA). <https://www.texaskea.org/>

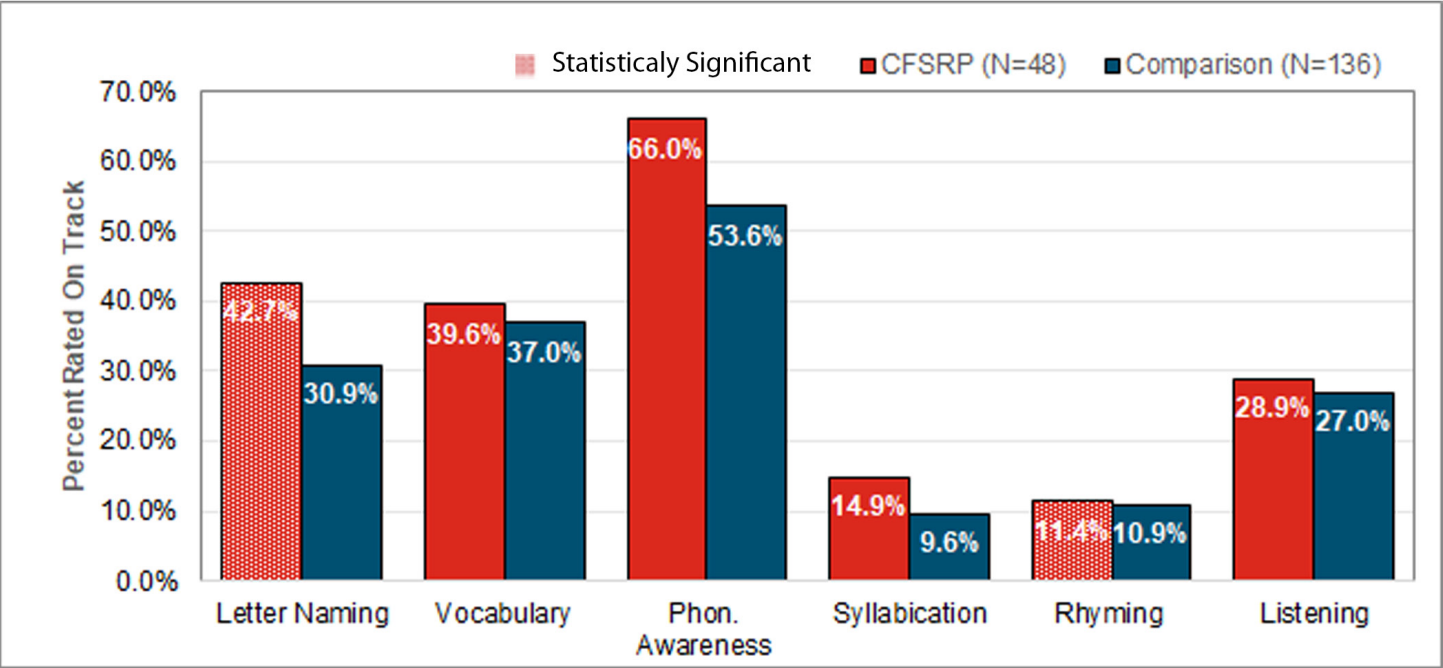
19 <https://www.nwea.org/map-reading-fluency/>

20 <https://www.nwea.org/map-growth/>

21 Texas Education Agency (2018). The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). <https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/staar/>

22 S. Arispe (personal communication, March 24, 2021)

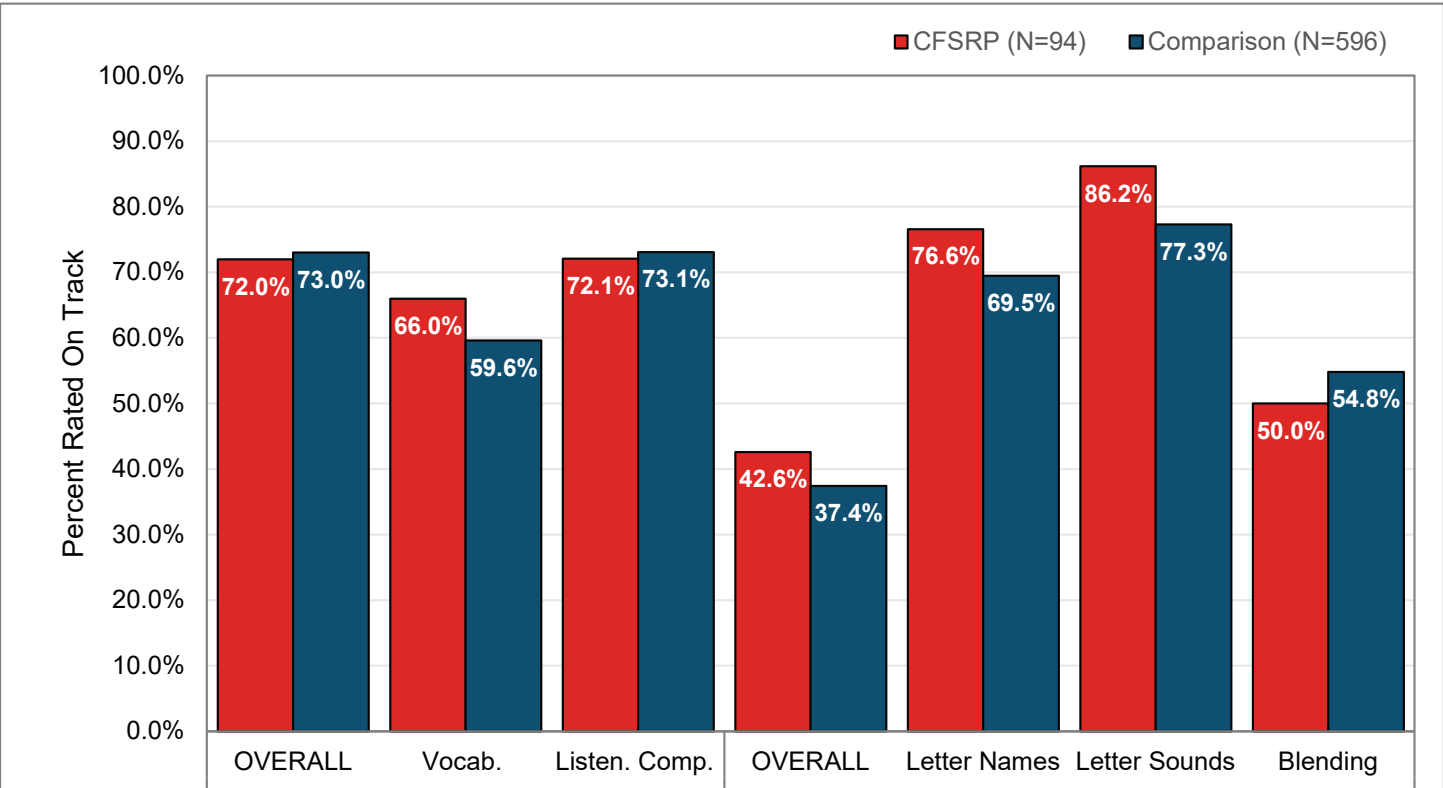
Figure 6: Fall 2020 Comparisons of Pre-Kindergarten<sup>23</sup> Literacy Ratings (CIRCLE Assessment)



Kindergarten Readiness

As shown in Figure 7, the percentage of FWISD kindergarten students who were on track in language and literacy skills was higher for the CFSRP group than the comparison group on four of the seven measures of the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment. Results across the years can be found in the appendix (see Appendix G).

Figure 7: Fall 2020 Comparisons of Kindergarten<sup>24</sup> Language and Literacy Ratings (TX-KEA)

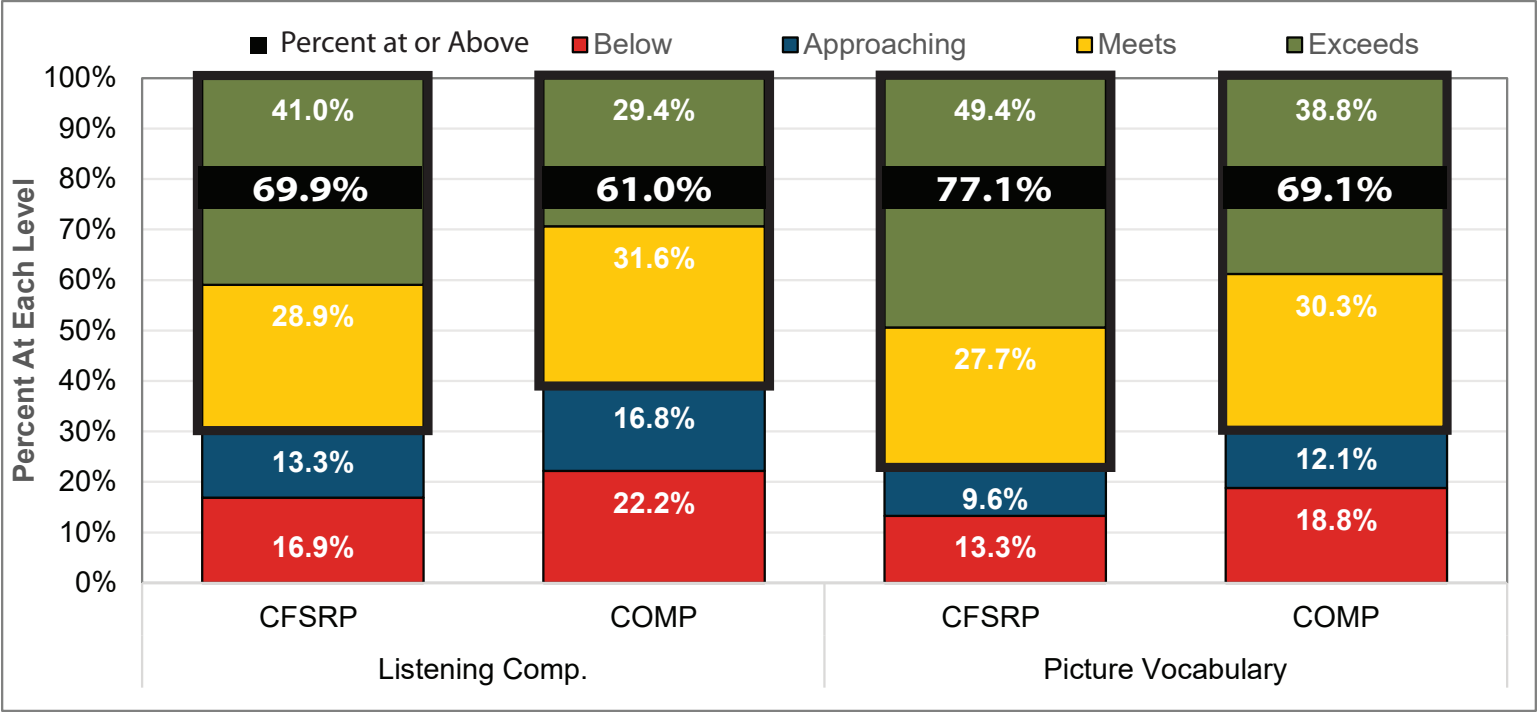


<sup>23</sup> The number of pre-kindergarten students in Fall 2020 is considerably lower than in prior years (e.g., in 2019 N=93 for CFSRP). Overall pre-kindergarten enrollment in FWISD was also lower in 2020, likely due to COVID-19.  
<sup>24</sup> Of the 94 CFSRP students in FWISD kindergarten in Fall 2020, 70 had also been in FWISD pre-kindergarten the prior year (Fall 2019) and attended a CFSRP center in the 2018-19 school year.

## MAP® Reading Fluency™ and Growth™ Assessments

Beginning in Fall 2020, FWISD also administers the MAP Reading Fluency and MAP Growth assessments to kindergarten<sup>25</sup> students at the beginning, middle and end of year. The primary purpose of the MAP® assessments is for teachers to identify and support what children are ready to learn and to identify and address potential learning gaps. The assessments are also used as a progress monitoring tool. The MAP® Growth™ assessment also provides a standardized equal-interval scale, continuous across grades to measure individual student growth over time. As shown in Figures 8 and 9, higher percentages of CFSRP kindergarten students are at or above grade level on each of the MAP® Reading Fluency™ measures than their comparison group counterparts. Of note is the higher percentage of CFSRP students above grade level on each of these measures.

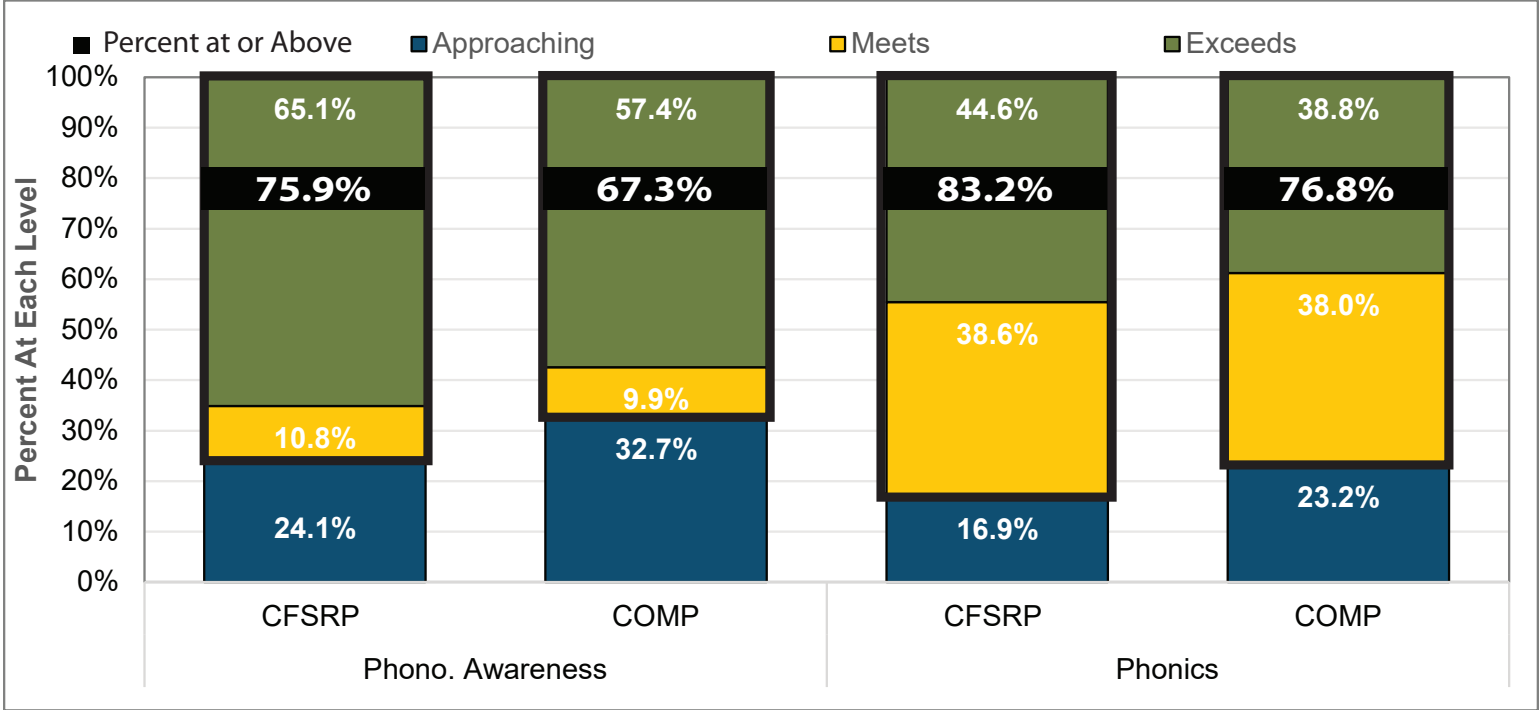
Figure 8: Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP® Reading Fluency™ (Language Skills)<sup>26</sup>



<sup>25</sup> The MAP® Fluency assessment is also administered to 1st and 2nd grade students and the MAP Reading Growth assessment is also administered to 1st-8th grade students.

<sup>26</sup> For the analyses of the MAP Reading Fluency data, N=83 for the CFSRP group and N=454 for the comparison group.

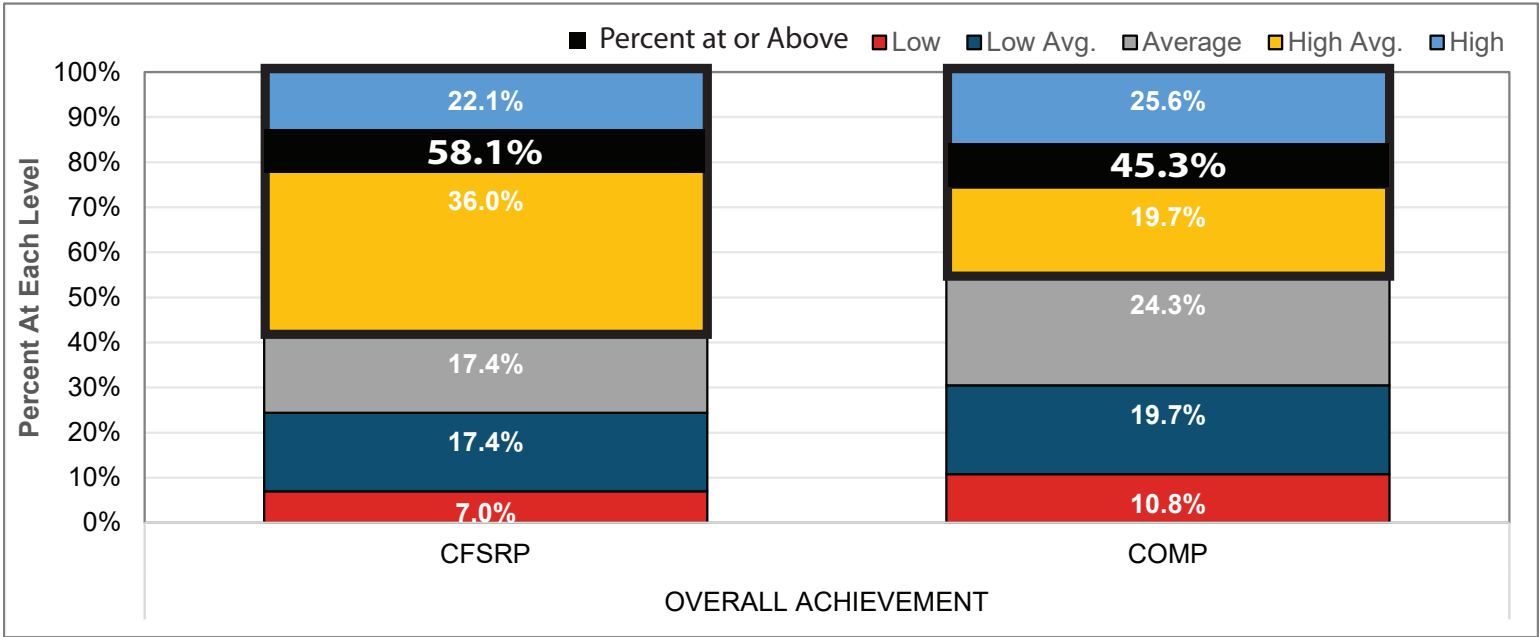
Figure 9: Fall 2020 MAP® Reading Fluency™ (Decoding Skills)



The MAP® Reading Growth™ Assessment provides an overall score as well as measures of foundational reading skills and literal comprehension skills. For kindergarten students, the beginning of year assessment is the first time the children are assessed. As such, the results shown below can be considered baseline, or starting points from which to measure growth. Subsequent assessments at the middle and end of the kindergarten year and in subsequent grades will include true growth measures to show how the children have progressed.

As shown in Figures 10, 11 and 12, higher percentages of CFSRP kindergarten students scored at or above the average standardized score than the comparison group in overall achievement as well as in the areas of Reading/Writing, Analyzing Text, and Composition. Higher percentages of the comparison group were at or above average on the vocabulary assessment.

Figure 10: Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP® Reading Growth™ (Overall Achievement)<sup>27</sup>



<sup>27</sup> For the analyses of the MAP Reading Growth data, N=86 for the CFSRP group and N=438 for the comparison group.

Figure 11: Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP® Reading Growth™ (Foundational Skills)

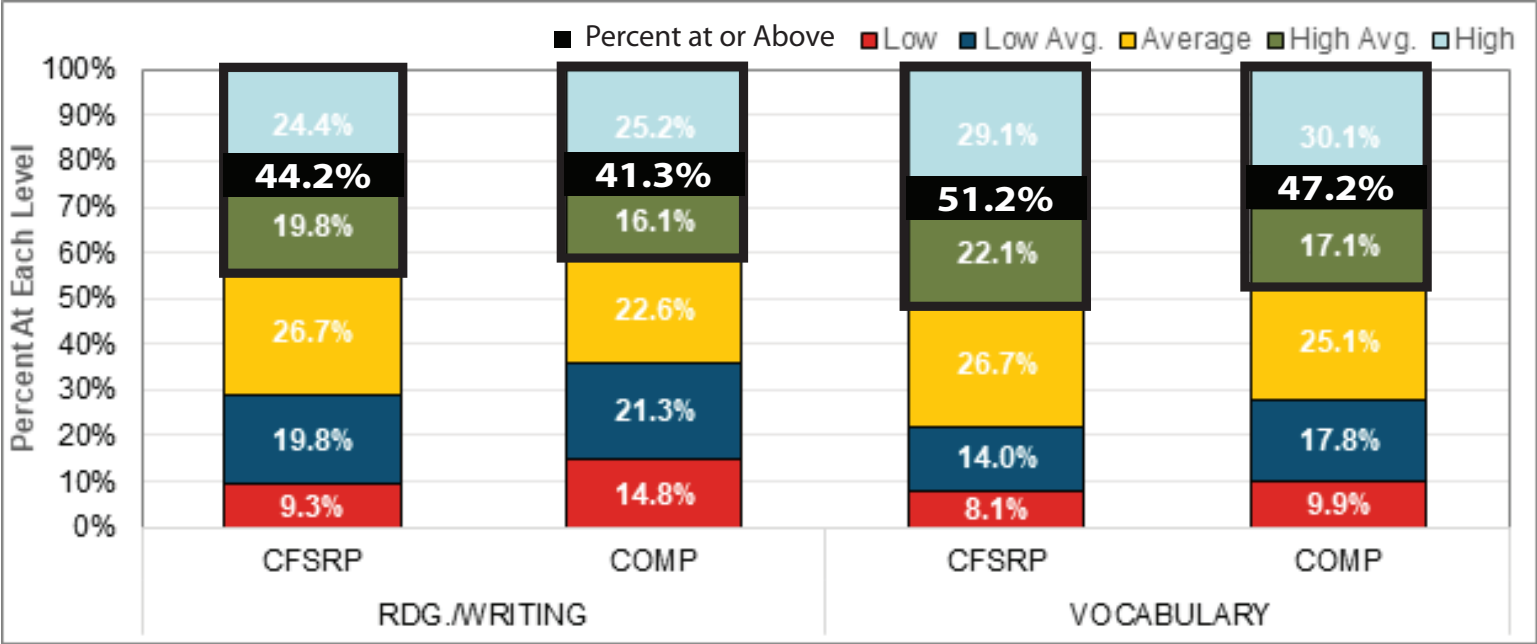
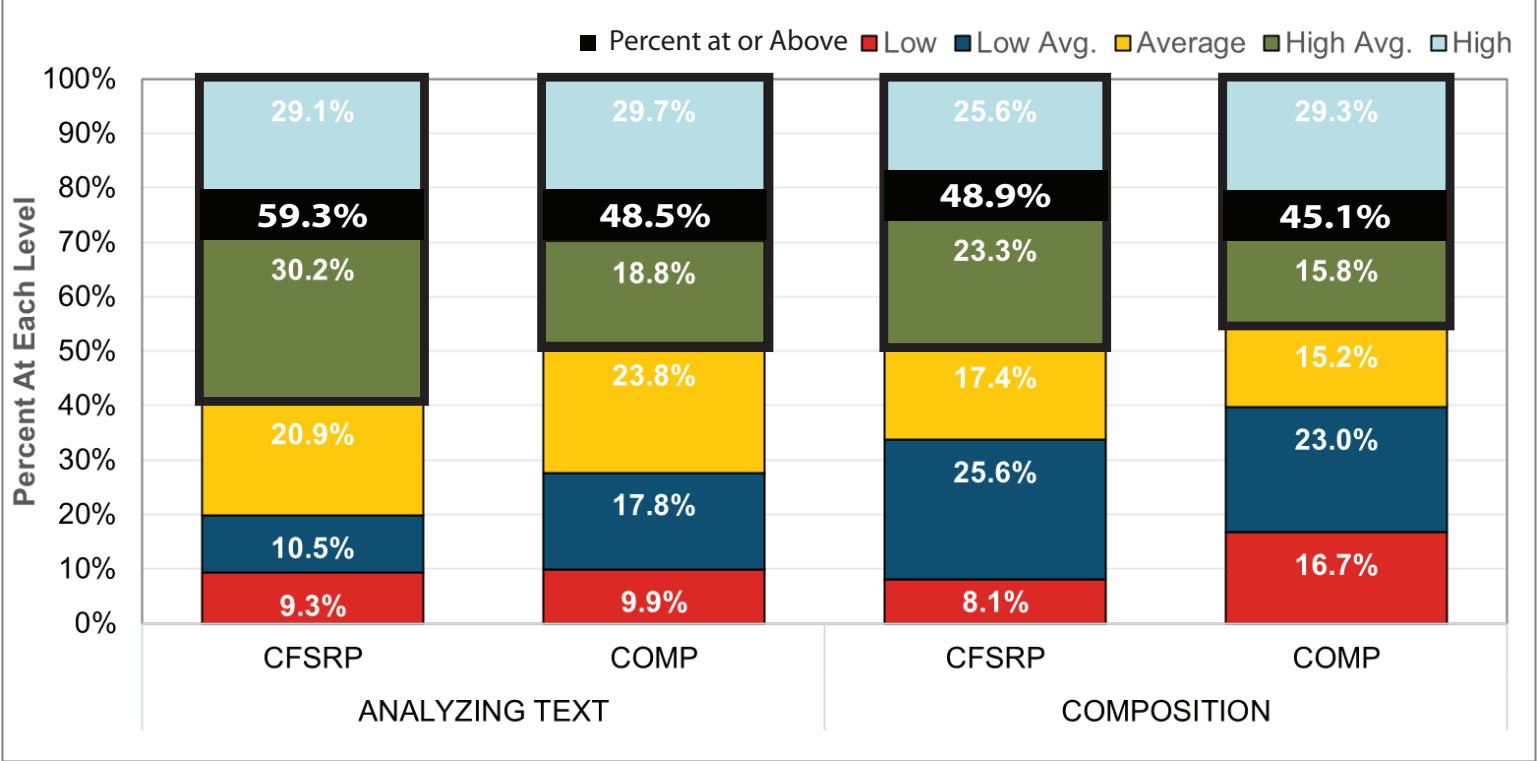


Figure 12: Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP® Reading Growth™ (Literal Comprehension)



# CFSRP CHARACTERISTICS

## CENTER CHARACTERISTICS\*

Table 2 shows the number of Centers, Center classrooms, staff, and students the CFSRP served from 2009 to 2019. In Table 2, the number of classrooms is highlighted below because it is the best indicator of the level of investment each program year in terms of both time and money. Mentor capacity and impact on teacher development is influenced by the number of classrooms on their caseload. During the 2019-2020 program year, 19 child development centers participated in the program. Of the 19 child development centers, 5 were Level 2 centers, 10 were Level 3 centers, and 4 were Level 4 centers (see Table 3).

*Table 2: Number of Centers, Classrooms, Staff, and Children served by the Camp Fire School Readiness Program, 2009-2019*

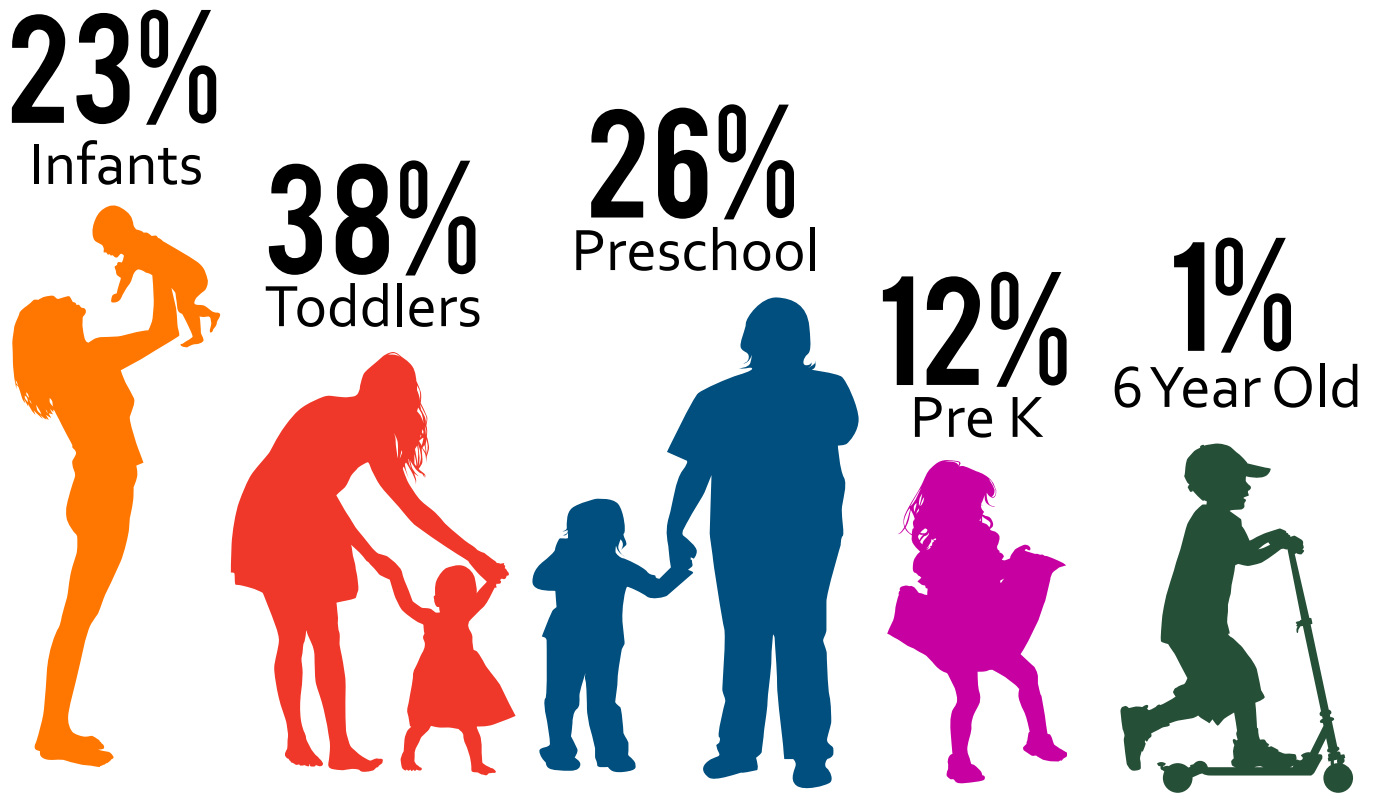
Number Served	Pilot 2009- 2010	Year 1: 2011- 2012	Year 2: 2012- 2013	Year 3: 2013- 2014	Year 4: 2014- 2015	Year 5: 2015- 2016	Year 6: 2016- 2017	Year 7: 2017- 2018	Year 8: 2018- 2019	Year 9: 2019- 2020
Number of Classrooms	39	69	80	102	100	106	124	86	87	86
Child Development Centers	6	13	24	28	26	23	25	21	19	19
Family Child Care Homes	15	13	8	8	6	3	0	0	0	0
Teachers and Directors	38	119	171	263	285	302	238	209	201	167
Children	307	307	675	967	1,158	1,458	1,338	1,100	1,177	937

*Table 3: List of Centers, 2019-2020*

Center Names	Zip Code	Center Level	TRS Level	Total Students
1. All Stars Early Learning Center	76120	Level 3: Intense	Pursuing	60
2. Allstars Learning Center	76119	Level 3: Intense	Not Participating	13
3. Amaka YMCA	76102	Level 4: Sustaining	4 Star	96
4. Childrens Early Development	76111	Level 4: Sustaining	Not Participating	18
5. Childtime Learning Center: Morrison	76112	Level 3: Intense	3 Star	55
6. Childtime Learning Center: Meadowbrook	76120	Level 3: Intense	3 Star	83
7. Ella McFadden YMCA	76102	Level 4: Sustaining	4 Star	78
8. Faith Academy Learning Center	76103	Level 2: Basic	Pursuing	13
9. Fortress Youth Development	76104	Level 3: Intense	Not Eligible	56
10. Good Shepherd Christian Academy	76119	Level 3: Intense	4 Star	77
11. Joy Learning Palace	76103	Level 3: Intense	4 Star	47
12. Kiddyland Childcare	76133	Level 3: Intense	3 Star	32
13. Like My Own	76104	Level 4: Sustaining	3 Star	23
14. Little Tyke Creative Childcare	76112	Level 3: Intense	3 Star	62
15. Mother Goose	76164	Level 3: Intense	4 Star	22
16. One Safe Place	76104	Level 2: Basic	3 Star	52
17. Poly-Wog	76119	Level 2: Basic	4 Star	16
18. Ready Set Jump Learning Center	76102	Level 2: Basic	2 Star	44
19. Temple Days	76120	Level 2: Basic	Pursuing	90

\* Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

## STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS\*



937 students

### **Age Group:**

23% infants, 38% toddlers, 26% preschool (3 year olds), 12% prekindergarten (4 and 5 year olds), 1% were six years old.

### **Race/Ethnicity:**

59% African American, 1% Asian, 17% Caucasian, 15% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Other, 7% Multi-Racial

### **Gender:**

50% female, 50% male

### **Classroom Level:**

Of the 86 classrooms in 2019-20, 81% were single-age classrooms.

Classroom level was divided into Level 2: Basic (26%), Level 3: Intense (52%), and Level 4: Sustaining (22%).

*\* Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.*

## TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS\*

137 teachers

### Education:

71% High School Diploma or GED; 19% Some College; 10% Associate's or Bachelor's Degree; 1% Not Reported

### Gender:

99% female, 1% male

### Race/Ethnicity:

63% African American, 19% Caucasian, 17% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Asian American, 1% Multi-Racial

### Center Level:

26% Level 2: Basic, 52% Level 3: Intense, 22% Level 4: Sustaining

### Length of Employment:

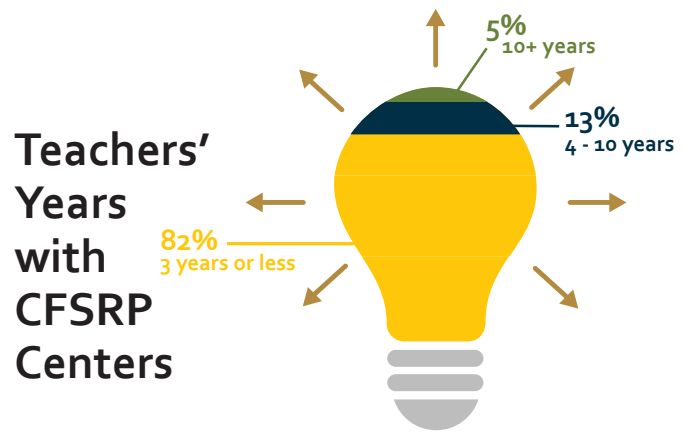
Average length of employment was just over 3 years.

### Years with CFSRP:

82% of teachers having three years of experience or less at an SRP Center, 13% 4-10+ years, 5% have over 10 years of experience.

### Years of Child Care Experience:

21% Less than 1 Year, 36% 1-3 Years, 10% 4-6 Years, 7% 7-10 Years, 25% Over 10 Years



## MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS\*

7 mentors

### Gender:

100% female

### Race/Ethnicity:

71% African American/Black, 29% Caucasian

### Education:

57% Bachelor's Degree, 43% Master's Degree

### Years of Child Care Experience:

2 out of 7 had 7-10 years, 5 out of 7 had over 10 years of childcare experience.

### Years of CFSRP Experience:

1 out of 7 had less than one year, 3 out of 7 had one to three years, and 3 out of 7 had four to six years.

\* Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSION

The Camp Fire School Readiness Program (CFSRP) prepares children for school by providing professional development and mentoring support to early childhood education center directors and teachers which leads to improved outcomes for infants, toddlers, preschoolers (3-year-olds), and pre-kindergarteners (4- and 5-year-olds) in areas such as language and social emotional skills.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CFSRP had to discontinue professional development classes and mentoring sessions in Spring 2020. In addition, CFSRP Centers were not required to complete end-of-year assessments. As a result, this report focuses primarily on process evaluation measures, Center outcomes, and qualitative feedback collected from a group of teachers, directors, and mentors about experiences during the 2019-2020 school year.

## PROCESS EVALUATION

Though some CFSRP Centers had to close temporarily in Spring 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all Centers were able to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year.

Teacher and student retention from beginning of year to end of year was high (91% and 89%, respectively). The CFSRP believes that this retention rate is actually a bit inflated, as evidenced by a drop in retention in the 2020-2021 school year. CFSRP will continue to monitor retention for both students and teachers in the current school year.

Professional Development sessions occurred in the Fall of 2019 and continued through February 2020 before having to stop due to the pandemic. Professional Development participation was moderate with 66% of eligible teachers and 60% of directors participating. Stipend allotments were lower with 29 teachers receiving a stipend and no directors indicating teachers and directors were not participating at the desired levels.

Mentoring activities became much more focused in the 2019-2020 school year with mentors spending the majority of their time on observing, providing reflective follow up, and modeling. Based on the finding from 2018-2019 that mentors spent more time than expected helping teachers complete assessments; the CFSRP strengthened the 2019-2020 teacher training to focus more on how to complete student assessments. **This change meant that mentors could spend more time making sure that teachers were developing effective teaching strategies.**

## CHILD OUTCOMES

Because of COVID-19, there were no end-of-year assessments available for students to evaluate growth. Some anecdotal evidence suggested that teachers were optimistic about the academic and social-emotional development of their children. Some teachers were concerned about reading growth because students were not able to handle the books the way they had in the past. **But teachers also felt that smaller class sizes could have attenuated any developmental delays.**

## CENTER OUTCOMES

The end-of-year CLASS™ assessments were administered just before the Centers were temporarily shut down due to COVID-19 in March 2020. The results were positive with Center classrooms either maintaining or improving CLASS scores across all age groups and domains, with the exception of a small decrease in Emotional and Behavioral Support in toddler classrooms. On average, **the quality threshold score for preschool classrooms was met across all domains at the end of the year.** When considering the percentage of preschool classrooms that met the quality thresholds, results were more mixed. A large majority of classrooms met the quality threshold for Classroom Organization and Emotional Support at the end of the year (87% and 100%, respectively) but a smaller percentage of classrooms met the Instructional Support quality threshold (40%).

*I think the changes are a positive because we have gotten so many new resources. We got online services and more opportunities for kids to learn at home. One of the things you see are kids playing with their parents phones, but now they are playing educational games or reading books online. It has changed what they are doing online. It also seems like parents better understand the importance of early childhood education. - CFSRP Director*

## CFSRP TEACHER, DIRECTOR AND MENTOR EXPERIENCES

While the teachers who participated in interviews were obviously concerned or fearful about the COVID-19 pandemic, they all expressed optimism about their ability to continue helping their students achieve academic and social-emotional milestones. Teachers reported that getting used to the new guidelines for social distancing, hand washing, and sanitizing was difficult, but that once they had established a routine and were able to remain consistent, both teachers and students were able to adapt.

Directors reported stress related to maintaining enrollment in the Centers while providing a safe and healthy environment for staff and students. Directors indicated that communication with parents had to change because parents were no longer allowed in the buildings. In response to this change, the Directors reported various methods such as emails, letters, and flyers posted on outdoor bulletin boards as effective methods of communication. They were pleased when students were able to return because they felt that showed a level of trust from the parents of their communities that the Center would be able to keep their children safe.

CFSRP mentors were furloughed from April through June of 2020. Before the furlough, they were actively engaging with Center teachers and directors to check in and to see what resources or supports they might need. In addition, the CFSRP participated in the effort to collect information about which early childhood education centers were open during the pandemic and accepting students in order to help find childcare for essential workers. This effort became the new “FindChildCare” tool that now links to the statewide tool.

Teachers, directors, and mentors all reported that CFSRP staff were available to them, providing resources and support throughout the pandemic.

## SCHOOL READINESS

When considering the results of the analyses of the Fall 2020 FWISD pre-kindergarten and kindergarten assessment data, it is important to note the COVID-related challenges to the administration of the assessments. In particular, some students attended school in person and others attended “virtually” in an online environment. The assessment environment (home or school) would, of course, been different for these students and may have impacted their performance in different ways. With that in mind, the results provide a framework for discussing how the CFSRP is positively contributing to children’s school readiness in early literacy. **On entry into pre-kindergarten in Fall 2020, CFSRP students had higher ratings than the matched comparison group in all the early literacy skills assessed.** The kindergarten students who had attended a CFSRP center had higher ratings than their counterparts in four of the six literacy skills assessed. Though the differences are not as strong in the current year, they are consistent with results for the past 7 years and strengthen the conclusions about the impact of the CFSRP.

*The results from the newly administered MAP® Reading Fluency™ and Growth™ Assessments further strengthen the positive contribution of the CFSRP to children’s kindergarten readiness. With their language and decoding skills, foundations of reading and writing, comprehension and composition skills, as well as overall achievement, the CFSRP students entered kindergarten at higher levels of readiness to learn. The comparison group children had higher levels of vocabulary skills, highlighting an area for additional focus for the CFSRP program as they continue to support and prepare children for kindergarten.*



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the results outlined in this report.

01

The CFSRP should closely follow student and teacher retention for the 2020-2021 school year.

02

The CFSRP should continue to build out Professional Development and evaluate different methods to encourage teacher and director participation.

This could include continuing to offer virtual EEI and DI session options as well as virtual mentoring and classroom observations.

03

The CFSRP should continue to evaluate the value of a stipend as an effective way to encourage participation.

04

The CFSRP should continue to work with teachers through EEI on Instructional Support which includes concept development, quality of feedback, language modeling, and literacy focus.

05

Given the high social-emotional ratings, the CFSRP should continue to use their research-based practices to promote children's social development. Staff could also consider research-based practices to promote young children's executive functioning and include these in future professional development for the CFRSP teachers.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: CFSRP PROGRAM COMPONENTS

### Levels of Support

The CFSRP supports 87 classrooms in 19 licensed, non-residential child development centers that provide care services and early education. The CFSRP engages participating child development centers at four levels of professional development intensity. A child development center’s movement from a lower intensity level (Level 1: Initial Relationship Building) to a higher intensity level (Level 4: Sustainability) is determined by factors such as length of participation in the program, class participation requirements, and center performance and capacity. The table below shows the four professional development levels, three of which include professional development support.

*Description of CFSRP Professional Development Levels*

Professional Development Level	Number of Centers (Classrooms)	Description
Level 1	0 (0)	Relationship building between CFSRP and the center (does not include professional development).
Level 2	5 (25)	Basic (Center participates for one year)
Level 3	10 (45)	Intense (Center participates for three years)
Level 4	4 (17)	Sustainability (Center participation begins after the third, intensity-level year and continues as long as the center remains in the program)

### Professional Development (PD) and Stipends

Professional development is offered to teachers through Foundational PD and the Early Education Institute (EEI). Both are designed to increase knowledge and skills in techniques that promote child development and classroom management. In addition, the EEI specifically addresses 5 components of reading science cited as critical for effective early literacy instruction.<sup>28</sup> Directors attend many teacher sessions, and also participate in the Director’s Institute (DI). The DI is designed to increase knowledge of child development and center business management and leadership practices.

In an effort to promote teacher retention and engagement, full-time teachers who have completed Foundational PD and directors are eligible for a stipend based on attendance and demonstrated competency. The incentive pay is distributed at the conclusion of the EEI at the end of the program year. Teacher and director fulfillment of the requirements is reviewed prior to payment distribution.

## Mentoring

On-site individualized coaching is provided by CFSRP mentors<sup>29</sup> who hold Bachelor's or Master's degrees in child development or early childhood education, have three to five years of experience coaching, mentoring and/or working in early childhood settings, and hold certifications in child development assessments. CFSRP mentors provide coaching visits to Centers based on Center level with Level 2 and 3 Centers receiving more visits than Level 4 Centers. The practice-based coaching sessions with teachers consist of creating Teacher Action Plans with SMART (Specific-Measurable-Attainable-Realistic-Timely) goals based on needs identified from assessments (e.g., using teaching best practices, improving classroom management) and supporting the attainment of the identified goals. The coaching sessions with directors also consist of setting SMART goals based on needs identified from assessments related to center business management and leadership practices and supporting the attainment of the identified goals.

## Family Engagement

The CFSRP family engagement component is an ongoing collaboration between directors and center staff, which consists of a focus on reciprocal communication between families and center staff, as well as family support and involvement-- a range of activities that allows a child care center to be responsive to family needs, including Parent Cafés<sup>30</sup> and Playgroups.



<sup>29</sup> The CFSRP established a Mentor Professional Pathway framework which categorizes mentors into four levels based on their existing level of training and experience. For example, Level 1 (Beginning) mentors may need support with close guidance, Level 2 (Developing) mentors may need support with increasing independence, Level 3 (Proficient) mentors may need limited support and can independently enhance the knowledge and skills of others in the profession, and Level 4 (Exemplary) mentors can develop program policies and practices and enhance the knowledge and skills of others in the profession. The CFSRP Director uses the Mentor Professional Pathway framework to monitor mentor needs and promote professional development opportunities. There were 5 mentors during the 2018-2019 school year: one at Level 1, one at Level 2, and 3 at Level 3.

<sup>30</sup> Parent Cafés are a type of family meeting/support group that CFSRP has supported partner centers in offering to their parents. Parent Cafés are carefully designed, structured discussions that use the principles of adult learning and family support to help participants explore their strengths, learn about Protective Factors, and create strategies to help strengthen their families. CFSRP has also encouraged the use of play groups as a family support. Play groups provide opportunities for parents and their children to interact together in a planned 'play activity' that aligns learning opportunities between school and home. The play groups promote social-emotional development, support parent/child relationships, and encourage parents to interact with other parents in the group. CFSRP also provides information and presentations about community resources to center directors who can then use this information to refer families to supportive services regarding family issues, which is another form of family engagement. The CFSRP uses the Family Engagement Measure from the Program Administration Scale (PAS) to set programmatic goals in this area.

## APPENDIX B: METHODS<sup>31</sup>

The CFSRP evaluation consists of both a process and outcome evaluation. The process evaluation component provides a clearer picture of how the CFSRP was being implemented in practice and determine to what extent the program was operating as designed in the theory of change. This included a specific focus on professional development participation, stipend allocation, and mentor activities. Mentoring activity stopped in March 2020 due to COVID-19, but was tracked up until this point. Stipends were only provided in Fall 2019.

In response to the lack of end-of-year data to measure child outcomes, CFSRP worked with CNM to arrange interviews with three Center teachers and three directors, two CFSRP mentors, and two CFSRP leadership staff. The interviews took place between January 11, 2021 and February 5, 2021. The interviews focused on how COVID-19 impacted students, teachers, and directors; how they adapted their work; and whether they received the level of support they needed from CFSRP leadership staff.

<sup>31</sup> Assessment tools and data analysis procedures are described in Appendix C and D.

Assessment	Area Assessed	Data Analysis
<b>Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Version 3 (ASQ-3)</b> A standardized, screening tool designed to identify infants and young children who are and are not displaying typical age-appropriate development. CFSRP recommends that children ages three years and five months or younger receive the ASQ-3 assessment.	Cognitive and Physical Development  Language and Literacy Development	The evaluation team calculated the percentage of children meeting the cut-off for developmental skills in five domains at the beginning and end of the year. The results were disaggregated by age group.  The percentage of children demonstrating improvement in developmental skills from the beginning to the end of the year was also calculated.
<b>Circle Phonological Awareness, Language and Literacy Screener plus Math (CPALLS+)</b> A standardized, criterion-referenced assessment designed to measure children's literacy and language skills. CPALLS+ recommends that children ages three years and six months or older receive the CPALLS+ assessment.	Language and Literacy Development  Cognitive Development (Math)	The evaluation team calculated the percentage of children meeting the cut-off for language and literacy skills at the beginning and end of the year. Separate analyses were conducted for three-year-old children (MOY-EOY comparisons) and four- and five-year-old children (BOY-EOY). The results were disaggregated by age group.  The percentage of four- and five-year old children demonstrating improvement in developmental skills from the beginning to the end of the year was also calculated.
<b>Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)</b> A strengths-based, standardized assessment and planning system that supports educators in promoting children's social and emotional development, thus promoting resilience.	Social-Emotional Development	The evaluation team calculated the percentage of children who scored in the Typical or Strength category in social-emotional/resilience at the beginning and the end of the year. The percentage of children demonstrating improvement in their scores was also calculated.

Assessment	Area Assessed	Data Analysis
<p><b>Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™)</b></p> <p>A standardized, observation-based assessment designed to assess classroom management and quality on a 7-point scale. The Infant CLASS™ measures the quality of responsive caregiving in infant classrooms. The Toddler CLASS™ measures the quality of emotional and behavioral support and engaged support for learning in toddler classrooms. The Pre-K CLASS™ measures the quality of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. For Pre-K CLASS™, the quality threshold is set at 5 for the Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains, and at 3.25 for the Instructional Support domain.</p>	Classroom Management and Quality	The evaluation team included only teachers with matched pre- and post-assessment scores in the analysis. The average CLASS™ pre- and post-assessment scores were compared.
<p><b>Best Practices Observation Tool (BPOT)</b></p> <p>A research-based observational checklist that measures the presence or absence of research-based teaching practices that align with CFSRP professional development curriculum. This tool is intended for professional development purposes. Teachers in infant classrooms are rated on 105 best-practice teaching strategies, and teachers in toddler classrooms are rated on 110 best-practice teaching strategies. The BPOT for three-year-old classrooms and four-year-old classrooms includes 110 and 120 best-practice teaching strategies, respectively</p>	Quality in Teaching Practices	<p>Based on the design of the BPOT assessments, the evaluation team calculated the total observations and created a weighted system that categorized scores as 'needs support', 'emerging', and 'consistently meets'. The results were disaggregated by domain.</p> <p>This assessment is used internally to assist mentors with identifying target areas for teacher development.</p>
<p><b>Program Administration Scale (PAS)</b></p> <p>A 25-item research-based instrument that measures the quality of leadership and management practices of early childhood programs. PAS measures quality on a 7-point scale (1 = inadequate, 3 = minimal, 5 = good, 7 = excellent).</p>	Center Leadership and Management Quality	The evaluation team used each center's individual score to calculate an overall average for each of the 10 domains.

The outcome evaluation in previous years included a focus on child outcomes (developmental, academic, and social-

emotional) and Center outcomes (classroom environment and management, Center leadership and management). Because there were no end-of-year student assessments conducted in CFSPR Centers, this component of the evaluation could not be included this year. The CLASS™ assessment was completed in CFSPR classrooms, and so, those results are available.

The CFSPR outcome evaluation also includes a comparative analysis of outcomes for CFSPR children and demographically similar groups non-CFSPR children enrolled in Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD). This part of the evaluation uses assessments already in place in to compare the performance of the CFSPR children and the comparison groups when they enter pre-kindergarten and at the end of their kindergarten through third grade years. Because of COVID-19, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessments were not conducted.

## Evaluation Questions

To what extent did the CFSPR:

1. Improve the percentage of children demonstrating age-appropriate developmental, early literacy, and social-emotional skills during the 2019-2020 program year?
2. Impact children's growth in developmental, early literacy, and social-emotional skills during the 2019-2020 program year?
3. Enhance the quality of teaching, classroom management, and centers' family engagement practices during the 2019-2020 program year?
4. Impact CFSPR children's school readiness as they enter pre-kindergarten and kindergarten?
5. Impact CFSPR children's academic achievement as they continue through school?
6. Implement professional development, stipend allocation, and mentorship activities as intended?

## Terms

- BOY: The abbreviation BOY refers to the beginning-of-the-year assessment scores which are usually obtained between October and November.
- MOY: The abbreviation MOY refers to the middle-of-the-year assessment scores which are usually obtained between January and February.
- EOY: The abbreviation EOY refers to the end-of-the-year assessment scores which are usually obtained between April and June.
- Assessment Fidelity: Measures the extent to which an assessment was implemented as intended. The CFSPR and CNM created inclusion criteria, whether or not a child's assessment scores would be included in the evaluation, that included 1) which assessment should be given for a specific child based on their age, and 2) if the child had both BOY and EOY scores for the selected age-appropriate assessment.

# APPENDIX C: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND CENTER QUALITY: ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The CFSRP contracts with CNM to provide program evaluation consulting services and CNM pact outcomes services. Program data collection activities occurred at the beginning of the school year (October 2019 to November 2019) but assessments were not administered at the end of the school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the exception of the CLASS™ assessment which was administered before the State mandated shut down. CNM created secure, web-based online data entry spreadsheets for each CFSRP child development center. Directors at CFSRP-supported child development centers entered student and teacher enrollment information, classroom information, and assessment data. The Center on Research and Evaluation (CORE) administered the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and submitted the final data to the CNM evaluation team to analyze. Other assessment data were provided by the CFSRP Director. Prior to data analysis, CFSRP staff reviewed and cleaned final data. The table below presents each assessment and its associated assessment areas.



## APPENDIX D: DATA ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Camp Fire partners with FWISD to gain access to data from student assessments being used in the school district. Through this partnership, the CFSRP evaluation team has been able to assess the impact of the program for seven years with analyses of the children's assessment scores not only as they enter school but also through their kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade years. Camp Fire contracted with Aware Research Solutions to provide evaluation and data analysis services.

Each year, using a modified propensity matching process, the evaluation team compares the assessment scores of children who attended a CFSRP-supported center in one of the prior six years and children in -demographically similar comparison groups who did not attend one of the centers. This technique allows the evaluation team to create a random, non-biased sample of children who are similar to the sample of CFSRP children and, in turn, make valid comparisons between the two groups. Any statistically significant differences identified in the results provide evidence that the differences between CFSRP children's scores and the comparison group's scores can be attributed, in part, to the CFSRP program rather than to random chance.

The groups were matched on the following characteristics:

- School location
- Grade level
- Ethnicity
- Free/Reduced Lunch Status
- Gender

In order to get the best possible match, the comparison groups are necessarily larger than the CFSRP groups. Students with Special Education designation are not included in the analyses (see Appendix E for the demographic descriptions of the CFSRP and comparison groups). Depending on the grade level for each set of comparison groups, the analyses were conducted with the FWISD assessment data described in the table on the next page, "FWISD Assessments Used in the Evaluation." Because very few CFSRP children were assessed in Spanish only the English versions of each assessment were included in the analyses. For the same reason, students with LEP status were not included in the analyses.

## APPENDIX D (Continued)

### FWISD Assessments Used in the Evaluation

Grade Level	Assessment Description
<b>Pre-Kindergarten Readiness</b>	Circle Progress Monitoring Tool (CIRCLE) <sup>32</sup> CIRCLE is similar to the CPALLS+ assessment used in the CFSRP three and four-year old classrooms. It is a criterion-referenced assessment based on the Texas Education Agency (TEA) pre-kindergarten guidelines for literacy, math and social skills. Teachers use CIRCLE at the beginning of the school year to help identify children who meet or do not meet developmental benchmarks so they can plan individualized instruction.
<b>Kindergarten Readiness</b>	<p>Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA)<sup>33</sup> TX-KEA is a screening tool designed to assess kindergarten children's skills in six areas of school readiness. As with the CIRCLE assessment, the primary purpose of the TX-KEA is to identify children who may need additional support and to help teachers plan individualized instruction.</p> <p>Texas school districts and charter schools are required to administer a Kindergarten assessment instrument for all children enrolled in Kindergarten. The TX-KEA is on the 2017-2021 Commissioner's Approved List of Kindergarten Assessment Instruments for meeting this requirement. The 2018-19 school year is the second year FWISD administered the TX-KEA. The tool assesses several skills not assessed in prior years. Appendix K provides description of the measures used in the analyses for this evaluation.</p>
<b>MAP® Reading Fluency™<sup>34</sup></b>	MAP® Reading Fluency™ is an online screening and progress monitoring tool The assessment establishes a benchmark oral reading fluency level for students, and depending on the level, assesses foundational or advanced reading skills. For kindergarten students, MAP® Reading Fluency™ assesses Language Skills (Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary) and Decoding Skills (Phonological Awareness & Phonics). For each skill, students are rated at below, approaching, meets or exceeds grade level.
<b>MAP® Reading Growth™<sup>35</sup></b>	The MAP® Reading Growth™ assessment provides categorical (quintiles) and continuous scale (RIT) scores designed to measure achievement at a given point in time as well as growth over the school year and from one year another. The quintile scores identify students as low, low average, average, high average, or high. For Kindergarten students at the beginning of the year, MAP® Growth™ provides baseline (or starting point) achievement measures for overall reading achievement, foundational skills (Reading/ Writing & Vocabulary) and Literal Comprehension skills (Analyzing Text & Composition). Teachers use these results to start individualized instruction at each student's particular skill level.

<sup>32</sup> CLI Engage (2017). CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System. <https://cliengage.org/public/tools/assessment/circle-progress-monitoring/>

<sup>33</sup> Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA). <https://www.texaskea.org/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.nwea.org/map-reading-fluency/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.nwea.org/map-growth/>

## APPENDIX E: CFSRP AND COMPARISON GROUP DEMOGRAPHICS (FWISD, FALL 2020)

DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION		GROUP	ASSESSMENT AND GRADE LEVEL			
			Fall 2020 Pre- Kindergarten	Fall 2020 Kindergarten KEA	Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP FLUENCY	Fall 2020 Kindergarten MAP GROWTH
ETHNICITY	Black	CFSRP	64.60%	61%	57.90%	62.50%
		COMP	66.90%	60.10%	49.40%	60.30%
	Hispanic	CFSRP	31.30%	24.40%	31.80%	22.50%
		COMP	28.80%	27%	25%	24.90%
	White	CFSRP	4.20%	6.10%	9.20%	7.50%
		COMP	4.30%	7%	11.60%	7.60%
	Other	CFSRP	0.00%	8.60%	7.90%	7.60%
		COMP	0.00%	5.80%	7.20%	7.20%
SOCIO-ECON. STATUS	Economic Disadvantage	CFSRP	68.70%	78%	84.80%	86.70%
		COMP	64.70%	77.40%	86.90%	88.70%
	Not Economic Disadvantage	CFSRP	31.30%	12%	15.20%	13.30%
		COMP	35.30%	12.60%	13.90%	11.30%
GENDER	Male	CFSRP	45.80%	52.8%	4.60%	48.20%
		COMP	44.60%	52.40%	49.40%	58.6%
	Female	CFSRP	54.20%	47.20%	53.20%	51.80%
		COMP	55.40%	47.60%	50.60%	51.40%

## APPENDIX F:

# YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISONS OF PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN BEGINNING OF YEAR ASSESSMENT RESULTS

FWISD Pre-Kindergarten CIRCLE Assessment Ratings: CFSRP Students and Comparison Group  
(Fall 2017 - Fall 2020)<sup>36</sup>

PRE-KINDERGARTEN CIRCLE SKILL		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020	
		CFSRP (n=88)	Comp. (n=414)	CFSRP (n=115)	Comp. (n=452)	CFSRP (n=92)	Comp. (n=456)	CFSRP (n=48)	Comp. (n=136)
EARLY LITERACY	<i>Letter Naming</i>	39%	14%	42%	26%	46%	32%	42.70%	30.90%
	<i>Vocabulary</i>	44%	32%	48%	49%	54%	48%	39.60%	37.00%
	<i>Phon. Awareness</i>	78%	66%	64%	63%	61%	59%	66.00%	53.60%
	Alliteration	6%	4%	5%	4%	4%	2%	4.20%	2.10%
	<i>Syllabication</i>	22%	8%	16%	12%	15%	10%	14.90%	9.60%
	Onset Rime	21%	13%	13%	14%	13%	12%	23.40%	22.50%
	Rhyming I	18%	10%	11%	9%	8%	9%	17.00%	16.40%
	<i>Rhyming II</i>	20%	9%	12%	8%	14%	5%	11.40%	10.90%
	<i>Listening</i>	37%	28%	32%	31%	30%	24%	28.90%	27.00%
	Words	14%	12%	16%	8%	20%	13%	15.90%	11.80%
	Book Print	87%	81%	77%	77%	79%	68%	66.70%	61.90%
	Early Writing			94%	94%	100%	91%	NA	NA

Note: Green cells highlight average ratings that are 5 or more points higher for one group than the other.  
Patterned cells indicate statistically significant differences.

<sup>36</sup> Green cells highlight average ratings that are 5 or more higher for one group than the other. Patterned cells indicate statistically significant differences).

## APPENDIX G:

### FWISD KINDERGARTEN KEA ASSESSMENT RATINGS CFSRP STUDENTS AND COMPARISON GROUPS (FALL 2018 - FALL 2020)

KEA ASSESSMENT ITEM		Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020	
		CFSRP	Comp.	CFSRP	Comp.	CFSRP	Comp.
Language	OVERALL	76.0%	71.1%	80.0%	65.3%	72.0%	73.0%
	Vocabulary	78.8%	74.6%	65.6%	60.2%	66.0%	59.6%
	Listening Comp.	73.2%	71.9%	72.6%	63.0%	72.2%	73.1%
Literacy	OVERALL	82.0%	69.1%	75.3%	62.3%	42.6%	37.4%
	Letter Names	83.3%	73.0%	81.4%	67.1%	76.6%	69.5%
	Letter Sounds	82.5%	68.3%	71.6%	58.5%	86.2%	77.3%
	Blending	67.3%	66.1%	33.7%	32.5%	50.0%	54.8%
	Spelling	96.3%	91.3%	79.3%	63.6%	60.0%	52.8%
Executive Function	Working Memory	66.3%	68.5%	56.5%	61.6%	62.0%	62.4%
	Inhibition	55.9%	62.0%	63.7%	60.0%	57.7%	67.4%
	Attention	72.0%	66.2%	74.4%	63.6%	63.2%	52.7%
Social Emotional	Social Emotional	82.0%	84.1%	82.4%	77.9%	85.7%	83.0%
	Emotional Management	78.7%	74.2%	68.5%	77.4%	81.2%	81.4%
Other	Math	73.8%	68.5%	60.2%	42.4%	43.6%	38.9%
	Science	74.8%	69.1%	49.0%	45.7%	51.7%	57.1%
	Academic Motor	90.0%	83.0%	90.8%	81.7%	38.8%	30.8%

Note: Green cells highlight average ratings that are 5 or more points higher for one group than the other. Patterned cells indicate statistically significant differences.

# APPENDIX H: DESCRIPTION OF TEXAS KINDERGARTEN ENTRY ASSESSMENT MEASURES<sup>37</sup>

## LANGUAGE DOMAIN

**Vocabulary** is a foundational language skill that supports learning in all content domains. Knowing a student's vocabulary abilities helps teachers adjust their own vocabulary usage during instruction to levels that are most beneficial for individual students.

**Listening comprehension** is a foundational language skill that supports learning in all content areas. TX-KEA assesses the student's ability to understand verbal information and follow directions. Knowing your student's receptive language abilities will allow you to adjust the complexity of your own language during instruction.

## LITERACY DOMAIN

The **Letter Names** subtest assesses students' knowledge of the names associated with various letters of the alphabet. Letter names is one component of letter knowledge which is an excellent predictor of reading achievement.

The **Letter Sounds** subtest assesses students' knowledge of letter sounds. Letter knowledge at kindergarten entry is a strong predictor of literacy achievement.

The **Blending Sounds** subtest assesses students' phonological awareness, or sensitivity to the sound structure of oral language. Phonological awareness is necessary for learning to read and write and is predictive of literacy achievement.

The **Spelling** subtest assesses students' early spelling abilities, which is the ability to use sound-symbol relationships to write words. TX-KEA assesses spelling because it is highly related to later literacy achievement. Attempting to spell words requires students to apply multiple literacy skills simultaneously, such as alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness.



<sup>37</sup> This description is taken from the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment User Guide at: [https://cliengage.org/user-guides/User\\_Guide\\_TX-KEA\\_8.13.2018.pdf](https://cliengage.org/user-guides/User_Guide_TX-KEA_8.13.2018.pdf)