

# EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR *PRESCHOOL FOR ALL* PARTICIPANTS IN REDWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT – UPDATE

A study by the John W. Gardner Center For Youth and Their  
Communities at Stanford University

Contact: Monika Sanchez ([monikas1@stanford.edu](mailto:monikas1@stanford.edu))

Presenters: Jenifer Clark, Diana Harlick, Jeanie McLoughlin, and  
Monika Sanchez



Presentation for First 5 San Mateo County Commission  
February 25, 2013

# Agenda

- Preschool For All San Mateo County Overview
- Results of the Gardner Center Study
- Local Policy Implications

# Preschool for All Goals

- Improve the quality of early childhood services for three- and four-year olds.
- Increase access to the number of high quality preschool spaces in the county
- Improve the professional development opportunities and attainment of early childhood educators

# Timeline - Preschool for All in SMC

## 2002-2004

- Planning Process
- Invitation to Negotiate

## 2005-2006

- PoP Demonstration Grant
- **720 children served**

## 2007-2008

- State Preschool expansion
- F5 SMC strategic planning
- **867 children served**

## 2004-2005

- Lead Agency / 8 Partners
- Early Implementation Grant
- **228 children served**

## 2006-2007

- Proposition 82
- AB 172/CPKP
- F5 SMC System of Care
- **803 children served**

## 2008-09

- F5 SMC future investments
- PFA spaces end 6/30/09
- **750 children served**

# 5-year Overview

- **3,036 children served**
- **130 total “new” spaces created over the life of the project**
- **638 ‘upgraded’ spaces operated in FY 08-09 across 32 sessions at 12 different sites (5 contracted agencies)**
- **Mix of new classrooms, and enhanced Head Start, State funded, full- and part-day programs**



# PFA Model Focused on Continuous Quality Improvement

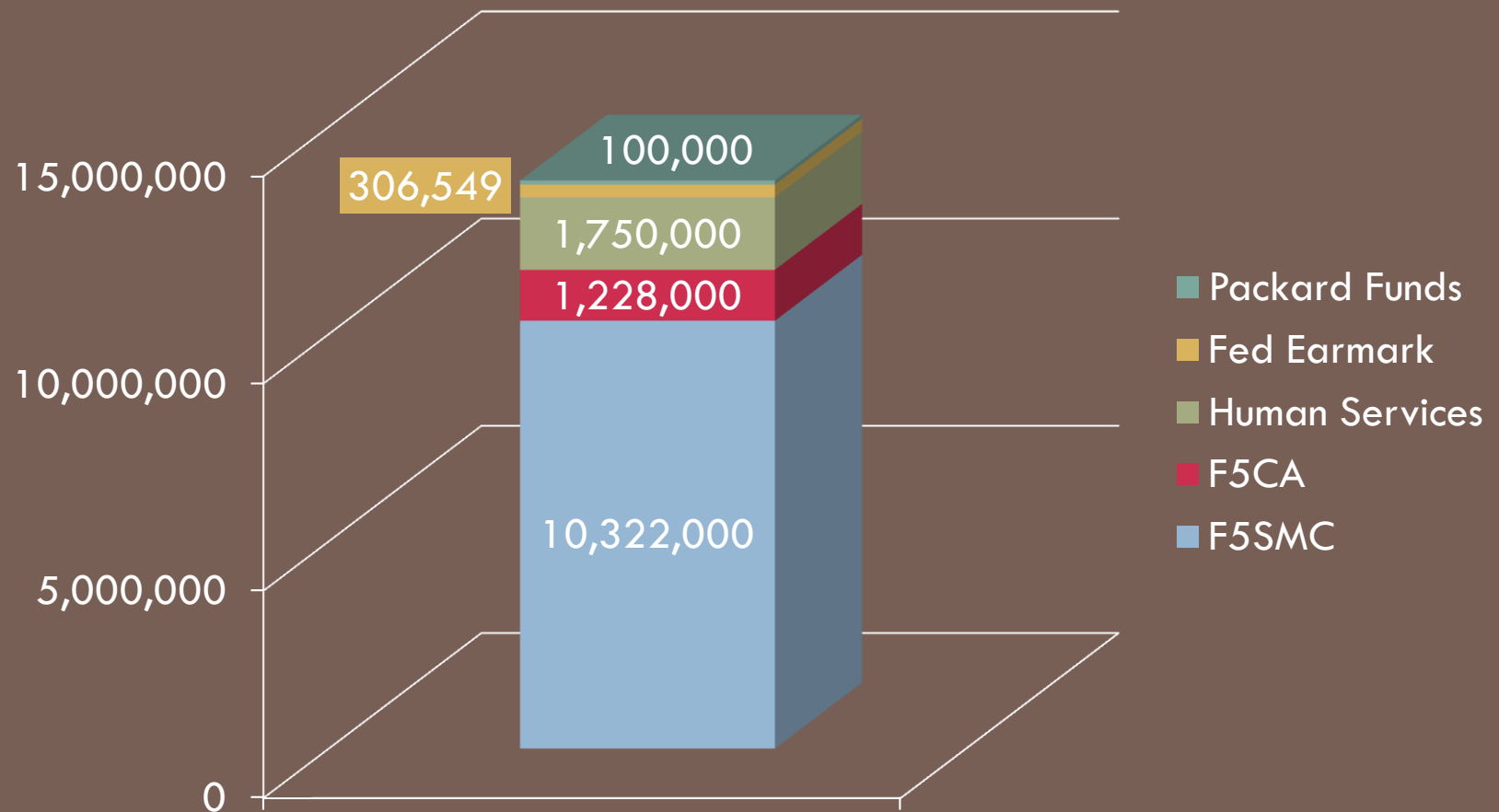
- All classrooms required to meet **quality standards** in 12 performance areas
- **Extensive training, technical assistance and professional development** provided
  - *Over 1,882 hours of individualized technical assistance provided*
- **ECERS assessments and quality improvement plans** provided frameworks for classrooms

# Partner Support Services for every classroom

- Early Childhood Language Development Institute
- Raising a Reader book bag program
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Child developmental screening & assessment
- Facility improvement grants
  - And, access to supports for teacher certificate and degree completion through SMCCCD and SFSU

# 2005-2009 Investments

**Total \$13,706,549\*** - plus \$ 7.8 mil leveraged infrastructure



\* approximate final FY0809 amounts available



# PFA served primarily at-risk children\*

- **85.5%** of children were **Hispanic/Latino**.
- **75%** were **English Language Learners** with the majority of these Spanish speakers.
- **81%** of parents/caregivers had a high school degree or less.
- On average, **8%** of children served in PFA classrooms already had **diagnosed special needs**.
- An additional **7.6%** of children (approximately) per year were **referred for evaluation of possible special needs**.



\* based on all participants, not just RCSD

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# Acknowledgements – Gardner Center Study

- This research was funded through support from First 5 San Mateo County and the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities at Stanford University
- Data contributors: San Mateo County Office of Education and Redwood City School District



# Background

- Large body of research: children who attend preschool are better prepared for kindergarten
- Longitudinal studies: benefits of preschool continue into adulthood, providing long-term gains to children and communities
- More recent studies: early childhood interventions for underserved children are economically preferable to remedial programs for teenagers and young adults

# Data and Methods

- Followed 876 San Mateo County PFA students into K, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades in Redwood City School District and asked:
  1. How does the performance of PFA participants compare to other RCSD students on early elementary school outcomes?
  2. Which RCSD supports are associated with stronger in-school outcomes for PFA participants?
- Used individual-level, early elementary outcomes from report cards and standardized tests.

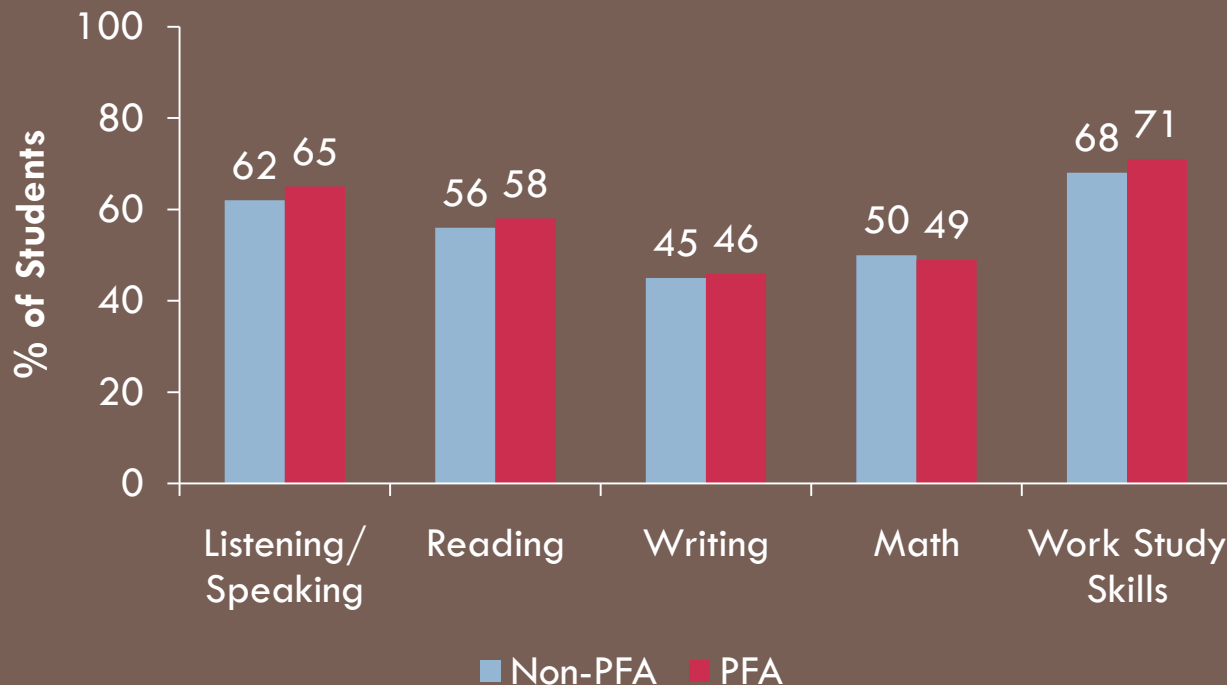
# Student Demographics

	<b>Attended PFA (n=876)</b>	<b>Did Not Attend PFA (n=2,609)</b>
Female	51%	49%
English Learner	<b>82%</b>	51%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	<b>68%</b>	44%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Latino	<b>92%</b>	59%
White	5%	30%
Other	3%	11%
<b>Parent Education</b>		
Some College	8%	24%
High School Graduate	40%	34%
Not a High School Graduate	<b>49%</b>	29%

# Key Findings

- PFA participants were moving toward performing on par with their non-PFA peers on report cards.

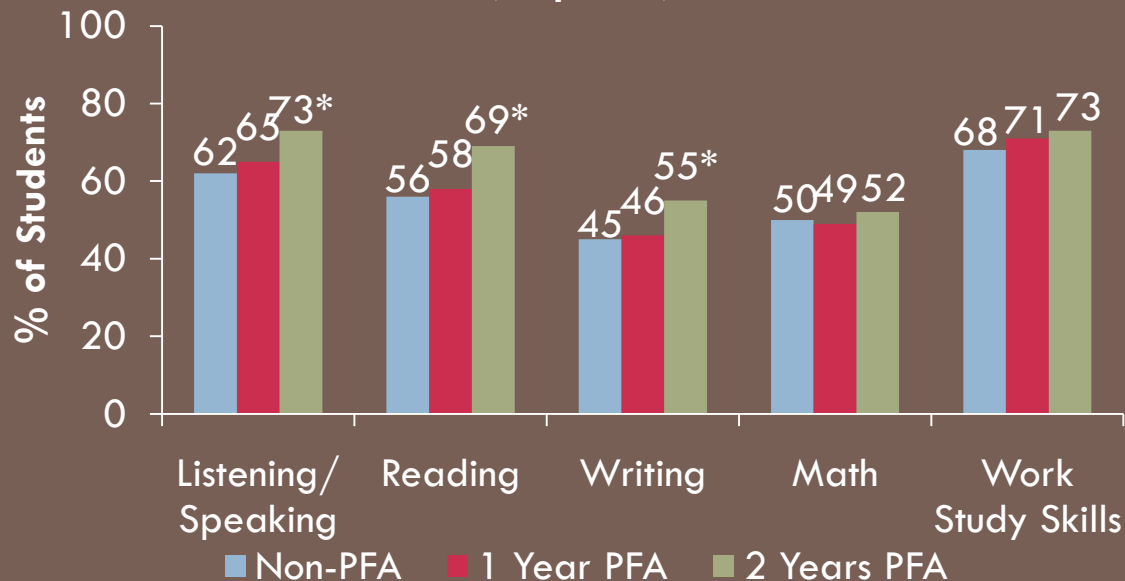
**First Grade Proficiency Rates for PFA Participants and Non-Participants (Adjusted)**



# Key Findings

- In some subjects, two-year PFA participants performed better than children who only attended PFA for one year and students who did not attend PFA at all.

**First Grade Proficiency Rates for One- and Two-Year PFA Participants and Non-Participants (Adjusted)**

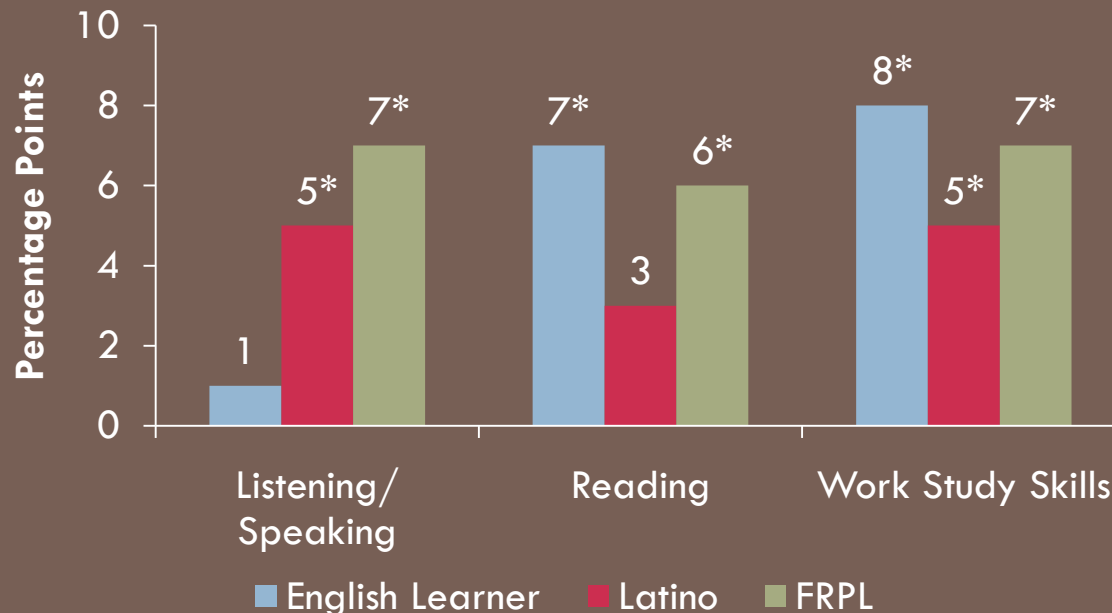




# Key Findings

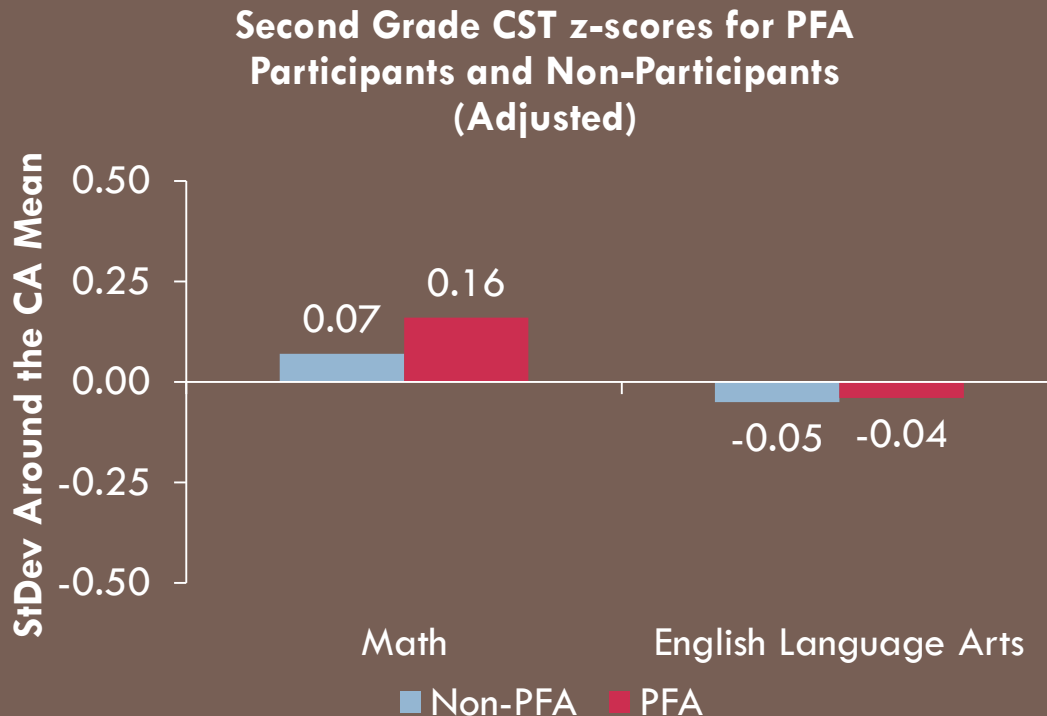
- PFA participants in certain subgroups were moving toward closing the gap with their non-PFA peers.

Percentage Point Difference in First Grade Proficiency Between PFA Participants and Non-Participants for Select Subgroups (Adjusted)



# Key Findings

- PFA participants were moving toward performing on par with their non-PFA peers on standardized tests.



# Next Steps for this Study

- Including additional years of longitudinal data will strengthen the findings and allow the study's results to more directly inform the PreK-Third approach.
  - Following students as they progress through elementary school provides the ability to determine whether trends fade or are maintained over time.
- Knowing how different subgroups of PFA students fare in later grades allows for better targeted interventions.

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# Current Policy Landscape

- Reductions in state funding have made it even more difficult for the neediest children to receive a high-quality preschool experience.
- The PreK-Third (or Birth to 8) approach is gaining momentum as a way to enhance and maintain the benefits of quality preschool programs.
- State efforts to support high-quality preschool:
  - California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan
  - “Race to the Top” Early Learning Challenge Grant
  - First 5 California’s Child Signature Program

# Policy Implications

- Increased access to high quality preschool programs would improve the K-2 academic performance of children at risk for poor school outcomes.
- Two years of high quality preschool for children at risk for poor outcomes may eliminate the “achievement gap” during the early elementary years.

# Policy Implications

- The benefits of preschool for children and families at risk of poor academic outcomes are dependent on a broad conception of “quality.” Programs should include the following components:
  - Parent support & engagement
  - Health & developmental screenings and referrals
  - Support for dual language families
  - A holistic approach to each child that fosters healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development

# Policy Implications

- Parents should be informed of the benefits of two years of preschool prior to kindergarten entry
- The Early Care & Education system requires support and investment to increase available supply and program quality
- Preschool alone *cannot* solve the interrelated concerns of the School Readiness Gap and low rates of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency



# Discussion

- Comments? Questions?