

For immediate release:  
January 24, 2017

## Students Who Attend City Schools Pre-k Better Prepared for Kindergarten

*Latest results confirm importance of high-quality early learning on children's readiness for later school success*

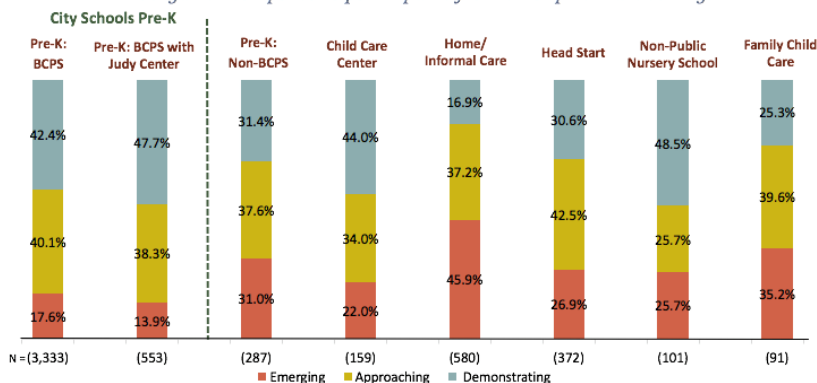
(Baltimore, MD)—In September 2016, Baltimore City Public Schools kindergarten students took the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), a statewide assessment aligned to the Maryland College and Career-ready Standards, to determine how ready they are for kindergarten.

Results released today by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) show that of the 5,998 City Schools students who completed all four domains of the KRA, 38 percent demonstrated readiness to learn, compared to 43 percent of kindergarten students statewide. But those students who attended a City Schools pre-k program prior to entering kindergarten outpaced peers who attended a public pre-k across the state.

Students enter City Schools kindergarten from many different settings, including child care, home care, Head Start, City Schools' pre-k, and the district's Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care Centers ("Judy Centers"). More than half of students who entered City Schools kindergarten classrooms this school year (55.6 percent, or 3,333 students) came from a City Schools pre-k; of these students, 42.4 percent (1,853 students) were fully ready to learn. Additionally, of the 553 students who came from a district Judy Center, 47.7 percent (264 students) were ready for kindergarten. Statewide, 40 percent of students who attended a public pre-k were ready to learn.

### Percent of Students Demonstrating Readiness by Predominant Prior Care Setting

*Pre-K programs and non-public nurseries prepare more of their participants for kindergarten compared to participants from other prior care settings*



“These data affirm that high-quality, full-day pre-k is an essential investment in our youngest learners,” said Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises, the district’s chief executive officer. “When students start strong, they are more likely to be successful as they move up through the grades. City Schools remains committed to providing as many quality pre-k seats as possible, even in the face of limited funding for pre-k programs. For the coming year, we will be working hard both to improve the quality of our programs and raise the readiness of all students, and to educate families about the importance of pre-k in preparing students for school success.”

This year, MSDE allowed school districts to administer the KRA to all kindergarten students or to a random sample. Unique among the state’s large school districts, City Schools chose for all students to participate. Doing so gave teachers valuable information for every student in four domains of learning—social foundations, physical well-being and motor development, language and literacy, and

mathematics—enabling them to provide individualized instruction and appropriate supports. The availability of rich, comprehensive data allowed the district to reduce time for other tests at the beginning of the school year, thereby reducing overall time spent by kindergarten students on assessments and increasing time to focus on instruction.

At the district level, data were used to inform professional development and program development. “After seeing the student-level KRA data last May, we prioritized math in our professional development for pre-k teachers, and then adjusted that further based on the data we received a few weeks ago,” said Chief Academic Officer Sean Conley. “We will continue to look at the data to inform decision making about curriculum and instruction in early learning programs at both pre-k and kindergarten.”

Registration for pre-k and kindergarten for the 2017-18 school year will open in April. Information and forms will be available at all elementary and elementary/middle schools, and can be found on the district website at [www.baltimorecityschools.org/earlylearning](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/earlylearning).