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English learner (EL) students at Austin Independent School District (AISD) are eligible to attend a month-long, state-required summer school program, before entering kindergarten and 1st grade. The EL summer school program is designed to prepare students for future success. In March, pre-kindergartners and kindergartners register to be enrolled in the EL summer school program, which takes place in June each year. In 2019, the EL summer school program was offered 5 days a week, beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 1:30 p.m., with transportation provided to and from school. Six different AISD elementary schools hosted an EL summer school program: Blanton, Pillow, Walnut Creek, Galindo, Travis Heights and Uphaus Early Childhood Center.

This report explores the impact of attending the EL summer school program on kindergartners' and 1st graders' fall academic performance. Students who attended the EL summer school program were compared with similar ELs who did not attend summer school, in terms of their beginning-of-year (BOY) early reading performance. Additionally, students who attended both kindergarten (in 2018) and 1st grade summer school (in 2019) programs were compared with students who only attended 1st grade summer school, in terms of their 1st grade BOY performance. Students entering kindergarten were assessed with the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA), which is composed of several subtests designed to gauge students' readiness for kindergarten. Students entering 1st grade were assessed with the iStation Indicators of Progress (ISIP), which include five domains of early reading ability.

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A total of 1,243 students attended the 2019 EL summer school program. Of those, 650 students were entering kindergarten, 589 students were entering 1st grade, and four had no grade data. After summer school, 509 students enrolled in AISD kindergarten in the fall of 2019. Of the remaining students set to enroll in kindergarten, 123 did not enroll and 18 withdrew at some point in the fall semester. There were 512 summer school students who enrolled in 1st grade in the fall of 2019. The remaining students included 58 who did not enroll and 19 who withdrew at some point in the fall semester. The resulting retention rate (i.e., percentage of enrolled students) was 82% of all summer school attendees.

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Kindergartners enrolled in AISD were administered the TX-KEA to assess their academic performance, at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. For more information on the TX-KEA test, please see the sidebar. Students who attended the summer school program

TX-KEA

The TX-KEA is administered to AISD kindergartners in the fall and is used to screen students' school readiness upon entry to kindergarten. The University of Texas Health Science Center's Children's Learning Institute, the Texas Education Agency, and the U.S. Department of Education collaborated in the development of the TX-KEA.

The TX-KEA is a criterion-referenced test designed to assist

and development levels. The test assesses kindergarten readiness across six domains: language, literacy, math and science, executive functioning, social emotional skills, and academic motor skills. Test results are used to guide instruction and help teachers identify students in need of further diagnostic assessment and intervention.

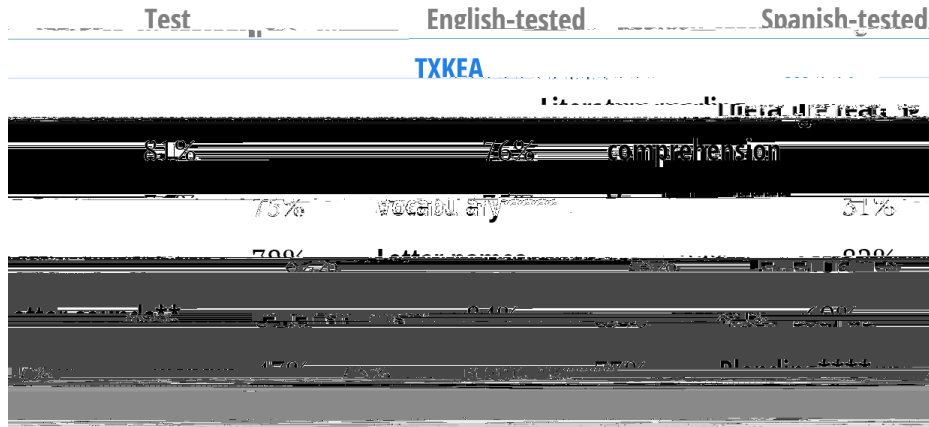
The test is available in both English and Spanish. The results presented in this report represent the best performance for a student in either language. Thus, if a student took the test in both English and Spanish, the higher

be the data included in the analysis. For more information on the TX-KEA, see <https://>

and blending on the TXKEA in kindergarten than were other ELs (Table 1). Conversely, non-Spanish-speaking ELs scored more on grade level than did Spanish speakers on letter sounds and math. For the 1st grade ISIP test, Spanish-speaking ELs outperformed other ELs on the vocabulary and overall domains.

Table 1.

mer School Students' TXKEA and ISIP Scores, BOY 2019



Source. AISD student ISIP records

Note

$p < .05$ level.

p

$p < .001$,

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BOY performance test results show that participation in the EL summer school program was positively associated with better kindergarten and 1st grade academic performance for ELs. Positive impacts were especially apparent for kindergartners and 1st graders who attended both years of EL summer school (kindergarten in 2018 and 1st grade in 2019). These trends were similar to those found in last year's report on EL summer school (Jensen, 2019). However, it is a new finding that attending the EL summer school for 2 consecutive years appears to be more beneficial for 1st graders than was only attending summer school once prior to the start of 1st grade.

Several factors may be related to the discrepancy between kindergartners' and 1st graders' on track performance levels. First, the makeup of the different tests administered in kindergarten and 1st grade could affect the outcomes. While the TX-KEA was created to capture many areas of academic performance to create an overall picture of kindergarten readiness, the ISIP was primarily created to measure reading skills. Second, the teaching materials covered in the EL summer school programs differed by grade.

It is difficult to determine why 1st graders who attended the EL summer school for 2 consecutive years fared better in their BOY performance than did 1st graders who only attended the prior summer school session. On one hand, it may

be that earlier intervention is more impactful than later intervention. Thus, those who received summer school instruction earlier, prior to kindergarten, had an advantage over those who only attended prior to 1st grade.

In addition, or alternatively, the compounded, consecutive summer school instruction, that students who attended both years received, might have been the key to higher performance levels in 1st grade. Since not enough students in the sample only attended the kindergarten summer school program for ELs, we cannot compare them with those who received both years or only the last year to understand how these three groups may differ in terms of outcome.

Interestingly, for the kindergarten TX-KEA test, there were two test domains in which Spanish-speaking ELs fared better than did other foreign-language-speaking ELs and two in which they fared worse. In 1st grade, differences were

Helen Poulsen, Ph.D.

Department of Research and Evaluation

4000 IH 35 Frontage Road | Austin, TX 78704
512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707

[@AISD_DRE](#)

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