EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT INFO SHEET

OAKLAND LITERACY COALITION

WHAT IS THE EDI?

The EDI is an internationally recognized tool that provides a holistic, community level snapshot of kindergarten children's health and well being in five domains: **Language & Cognitive Development; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Communication Skills; and Physical Health.** It is administered every three years by the Oakland Unified District and Oakland Starting Smart and Strong starting in 2017. In January of 2020, 93% of OUSD Kinder students were assessed.

The EDI data is provided at the neighborhood level in 15 zones of 150-200 students each. It is not available at student level.

WHAT DOES THE DATA GIVE US?

→ A **common framework and language** for understanding children's need and a starting point for effective collaboration that builds upon our communal efforts.

→ A **neighborhood level measurement** of student skills including important demographic details that can help guide resource allocation.

→ **Which academic and social emotional skill areas** to prioritize in our programming content.

→ **A rallying point** for communities to advocate for increased resources and policy change.

NEW RESULTS FOR 2020

The EDI tracks changes from 2017-2020

Wide disparities by neighborhood persist with an overall decrease:

Overall fewer students were considered "on track" in 2020. There were wide disparities by neighborhood, with anywhere from a **1 percentage point** increase to **18 percentage point** decrease depending on zone.

Some improvement in social emotional skills:

Skills in social competence and emotional maturity domains showed a small increase of **1 percentage point** (**77%** and **76%** respectively).

Significant decline in literacy skills for all students, with a widening gap for English learners:

Non-native English Learners saw the greatest decline from **64%** to **50%** whereas English Only students saw a smaller decline from **78%** to **75%**.

Newcomers and other English learners saw comparable declines.

Spanish and Arabic native speakers experienced comparable declines.

Note: As a measure of English literacy, the EDI leaves out dual language learners' home language ability.

See the EDI Dashboard for more details.

CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe in the power of leveraging data to inform and guide effective and impactful programming. The 2020 EDI clearly highlights the need for increased resources for our English learners. We also recognize that data points alone can paint an incomplete picture—often lacking complexity and nuance and masking and undervaluing the unique assets and strengths of children and their communities. As practitioners on the ground, our unique understanding of students' skills can supplement EDI data points and lead to more effective interventions.

TOWARDS A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

Deficit labeling has profound negative consequences for children. Responsible use of data requires us to highlight and build upon students' strengths while addressing gaps.

SUPPLEMENTING THE DATA

→ **The EDI cannot provide a root cause analysis** for why literacy rates have declined so dramatically for Spanish and Arabic speakers.
  - To effectively guide programming, more information is needed about what factors may be driving this change.
    Ex. How has access to quality child care increased/decreased for this population?

→ **The focus on English literacy** ignores significant socio-cognitive benefits of dual language learning.
  - Supporting literacy must also include recognizing and lifting up home languages.
    Ex. How can home languages be included in literacy assessments?

→ **Teachers are human and may have implicit biases** that affect how they see and evaluate their students. Furthermore social emotional skills like "social competence" are inherently more subjective and open to interpretation.
  - Attention to childrens' social emotional skills and implicit bias training for teachers and service providers foster growth and promote equity.