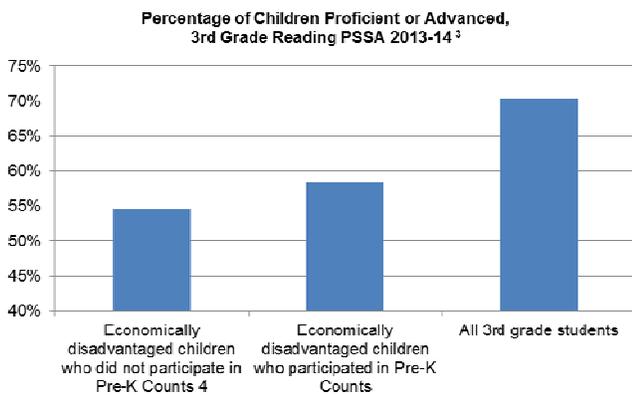


Quality early education helps close the achievement gap

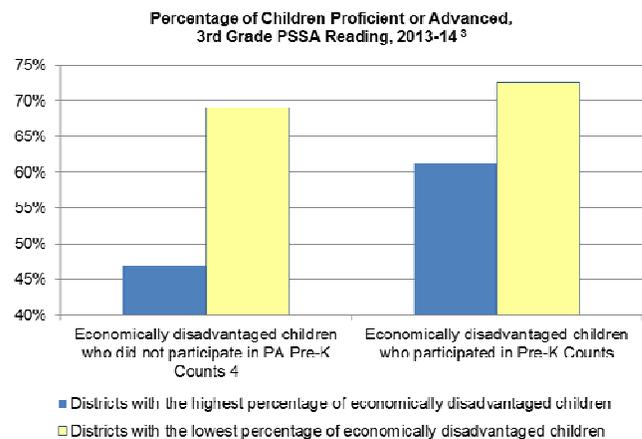


Studies show that the gap in vocabularies of children from different socioeconomic backgrounds emerges as early as 18 months of age. Research also shows that quality early education can help close the achievement gap for at-risk children¹. High-quality early education, full-day kindergarten, and quality, aligned educational programming through third grade are critical tools to closing the achievement gap and improving student achievement.² Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts provides high quality pre-kindergarten for at-risk children living in families earning up to 300 percent of the poverty level.

A higher percentage of children who participated in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts were proficient or advanced on their 3rd grade PSSA Reading than their peers who are also economically disadvantaged, closing the gap between their peers from higher income families.^{3 4}



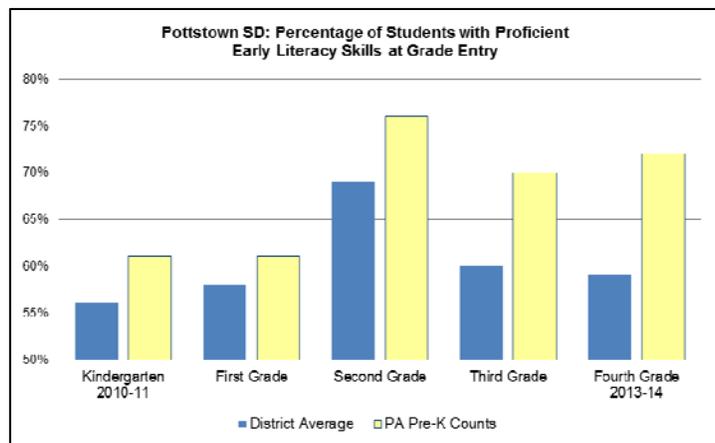
In school districts with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged children, greater progress was made on closing the gap.^{3 4}



In districts with strong alignment, children can continue the gains made in early education through third grade.

Children who attended Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts and entered kindergarten in 2010 in the Pottstown School District continue to perform as well as or better than their peers through fourth grade.

Based on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment of early literacy skills. Nearly half (42 percent) of children in Pottstown SD live in economically disadvantaged families earning up to 300 percent of poverty.



¹ Duncan and Magnuson 2013

² Quality Pre-K: Starting Early To Close Achievement Gaps And Boost Student Achievement, by Sara Mead, A White Paper from Stand for Children Leadership Center, June 2012, <https://standleadershipcenter.org/sites/standleadershipcenter.org/files/media/WWSF-PreKindergarten.pdf>

³ Only includes children who participated in state-funded pre-kindergarten programs the year preceding entry into kindergarten (2009-2010).

⁴ Includes children who participated in Federal Head Start and other OCDEL Early Childhood Education programs.