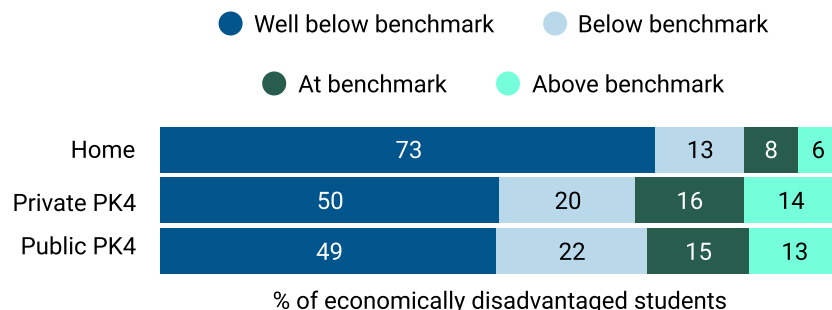


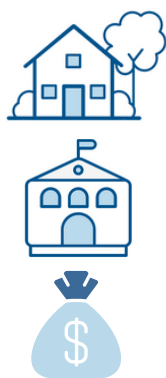
Key Findings

- **Economically disadvantaged students who attend pre-K at age 4 (PK4) are twice as likely to meet the literacy benchmark at kindergarten entry, compared to students who stay home.**
- **Still, half of these students who attended PK4 are well below benchmark on kindergarten-entry reading skills.**



Kindergarten Cohort, Academic Year 2023-24

Why This Matters



- **Many children miss out on PK4 altogether.**
 - 24% of Louisiana's economically disadvantaged children are at home during their PK4 year.
- **Access to public PK4 is essential for economically disadvantaged families.**
 - Economically disadvantaged families are unlikely to report enrolling in a private PK4 school or childcare center, instead relying heavily on publicly funded programs.
- **State funding for PK4 is insufficient to cover all economically disadvantaged children.**
 - Districts and charter schools request PK4 seats from the state every year, and some requests go unfulfilled.

Policy Recommendations

- **Increase funding for and access to public PK4.** These findings are descriptive, and we can't conclude that PK4 caused children's literacy scores to improve, but the sizeable difference in scores indicates that PK4 could improve literacy at kindergarten entry.
- **Invest in high-quality PK4 instruction,** using strong curricula and teacher training to ensure students build early literacy skills before kindergarten.



Bottom Line

Increasing access to PK4 may improve kindergarten readiness, but it's not a guarantee that students will be on track for reading. Many children arrive at kindergarten still struggling, even after attending PK4. **To give every child a strong start, we must expand access to and improve the quality of early learning experiences.**