



For Immediate Release

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Pre-K 4 SA Generates Greater Benefits Than Expected

San Antonio gets \$156 in community benefits for every \$100 invested in Pre-K 4 SA

SAN ANTONIO — A 2019 evaluation of the costs, benefits and returns on investments associated with the Pre-K 4 SA program found the city to receive a return of \$56,000,000 on the voter-approved initiative in its first eight years.

Previous national studies have shown that high-quality early childhood generates \$7-10 for every \$100 of investment. According to the study conducted by Westat, University of Pennsylvania, and Teachers College at Columbia University, Pre-K 4 SA generates even greater benefits. The benefit-cost ratio of Pre-K 4 SA was approximately 1.56, which means that every dollar invested in Pre-K 4 SA generated, on average, \$1.56 of benefits to society.

"We knew we were seeing improvements in the children year over year in successfully preparing them for kindergarten and beyond," Pre-K 4 SA CEO Sarah Baray said. "This study also shows that the benefits are not only to the children, but also to the families and community, and the lasting societal benefits are even more than anticipated."

The evaluation weighed the promising results against the program's costs using a benefit-cost framework and examined whether, and to what extent, the program's benefits to City of San Antonio outweigh its costs. San Antonio sees \$156 in benefits for every \$100 invested in Pre-K 4 SA. With all costs accounted for, for each child served through Pre-K 4 SA, in one of its four centers or through the competitive grants program, the city gets back what they spent and an additional \$3,790 per child — an additional \$7.36 million dollars per year. This suggests that after subtracting the costs of the program, Pre-K 4 SA will have returned over \$56 million in benefits to the San Antonio community in its first eight years.

"The Board of Directors is enthused these results indicate we are delivering on our promise to San Antonio," Pre-K 4 SA Board Chair Elaine Mendoza said. "Not only are we seeing the long-term positive impact in the educational trajectory of Pre-K 4 SA students, we are seeing lasting results for our families and our city."

This study builds on the findings of the community impact study released in 2019 by the Urban Education Institute at The University of Texas at San Antonio that evaluated the impact of Pre-K 4 SA on social and academic outcomes over time. The study found that Pre-K 4 SA produced positive academic outcomes for students enrolled in the first year of the program (2013-2014 Cohort). On average, students enrolled in Pre-K 4 SA's initial class had stronger STAAR exam scores on third grade reading and math, better attendance, and less need for special education services than students who did not participate in public prekindergarten. This research study also found increased employment and wage earnings for families enrolled in the Pre-K 4 SA extended day program.

Pre-K 4 SA provided records, reports, and data as requested by the research team. This study examined the costs and benefits associated with children and families served during the 2018-19 school year, the most recent year for which all data were available.

About Pre-K 4 SA:

Pre-K 4 SA is a comprehensive early childhood initiative aimed at changing the education and workforce trajectory of San Antonio in one generation. Pre-K 4 SA offers full-day pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds living in the City of San Antonio. Pre-K 4 SA is free for qualifying students and also accepts tuition-paying students. The school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Extended hours are available at no additional charge from 7:15 to 8 a.m., and from 3 to 6 p.m. for working families. Breakfast, lunch and two snacks are included and free transportation is available to all students. Pre-K 4 SA has four Education Centers located throughout the city: North Education Center, 3635 Medical Dr.; South Education Center, 7031 S. New Braunfels Ave.; East Education Center, 5230 Eisenhower Rd.; and West Education Center, 1235 Enrique M. Barrera Memorial Parkway. The Gardendale Early Learning Program powered by Pre-K 4 SA is the first replication site and was made possible through a partnership with Edgewood Independent School District. This program creates greater capacity for high-quality early education with both pre-k and kindergarten classrooms. The Pre-K 4 SA Professional Learning program provides pre-kindergarten through third grade educators in San Antonio with complementary continuing education to support best practice instruction to help every child in San Antonio excel. The Pre-K 4 SA Competitive Grants program provides more than \$4 million in funding annually to increase quality and access in early childhood programs throughout San Antonio. Visit www.prek4sa.com for more information.

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