



**For Immediate Release:**

September 13, 2016

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**Pre-K 4 SA closing the gap on kindergarten readiness**

**Independent study shows positive and significant improvement in skills of 4-year-olds enrolled in Pre-K 4 SA**

SAN ANTONIO (September 13, 2016) -- An independent study using the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment shows Pre-K 4 SA students who trailed the national norm at the beginning of the school year exceeded the national norm in cognitive, literary and mathematics at the end of the school year.

"Pre-K 4 SA set out to deliver a more accessible, high quality early childhood education to San Antonio families, in particular to those who may not have had options previously. In three years, results have shown continued improvement in both classroom quality and children's achievement," said Pre-K 4 SA Board Chair Elaine Mendoza. "We are encouraged by the results and, at the same time, are committed to continually improving our program. Ongoing measurement and optimization of instructional quality and student achievement will remain priorities as we work alongside our district partners to provide best-in-class learning to San Antonio's four-year-olds."

Testing was conducted during the 2015-2016 school year. Results showed positive student achievement using a nationally recognized testing instrument, Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment, which assesses developmental skills in the following areas: Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Oral Language, Physical Skills, and Social-Emotional. This snapshot report shows the percentage of children at a particular level for each area of development.

In its third year measuring the effectiveness of Pre-K 4 SA, Edvance Research Inc. conducted the planned study, one of eight independent annual evaluations, in conjunction with National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) and Rutgers University in New Jersey.

"The study shines light on the success of our children," said Pre-K 4 SA CEO Sarah Baray. "We are using a national benchmark to showcase how a community's investment in high-quality early childhood education can improve and change education opportunities for our kids. The research provides a solid platform for continued growth. "

Baray was named CEO in June, and brings with her 25 years of experience, the last ten serving as professor of education at Texas State University.

Pre-K 4 SA teachers use the assessment, conducted in the fall, winter and spring of each year, to continually improve curriculum and classroom strategies.

The full report may be found on the Pre-K 4 SA website:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/prek4sa>

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#### **About Pre-K 4 SA:**

*Pre-K 4 SA is a full-day pre-kindergarten program 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 8 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Before- and after-school care is also available at no additional charge from 7:15 to 8 a.m., and from 3 to 6 p.m. 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 Pre-K 4 SA Professional Development program provides early childhood educators in San Antonio with complementary best teaching skills and practices in pre-kindergarten through third grade in order to exceed state-mandated student learning outcomes while focusing on the whole child. Visit [www.prek4sa.com](http://www.prek4sa.com) for more information.*

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*Diverse, internationally connected and globally competitive, San Antonio has a vibrant culture and economy and is consistently ranked among the fastest-growing cities in the United States. America's seventh-largest city offers opportunities in industries ranging from bioscience, financial services, aerospace, cybersecurity, energy and transportation manufacturing to healthcare. We are "Military City USA," home to crucial military commands supported by a patriotic citizenry. We welcome 31 million visitors annually who inject \$13.4 billion annually into our economy, and UNESCO recently designated the city's Spanish colonial missions as a World Heritage Site. Celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2018, San Antonio is a city with a storied past and an even brighter future. For more information, visit [www.sanantonio.gov](http://www.sanantonio.gov).*