



For Immediate Release

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Contacts: Jill Byrd, Creative Noggin
Jill@creativenoggin.com | 210.501.4288

Children are Citizens Too in Year-Long Pre-K Civic Engagement Curriculum

Pre-K 4 SA's Gracias San Antonio encourages children to express their opinions and be involved as young citizens of San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO — [Pre-K 4 SA's Gracias San Antonio: Children Are Citizens Project](#) is grounded in the belief that children are not just future citizens but are active citizens today. Even at 4-years-old, children have the right to express their opinions and participate in the civic and cultural life of San Antonio.

[Gracias San Antonio](#) begins each November with the children's participation in a program-wide election to vote for a local non-profit to support for the year. This year's charities include the [Hearts Need Art](#), [Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas](#), and [the THRUproject](#). Children and their families are encouraged to create "campaign signs" for their favorite charity to be displayed at the Pre-K 4 SA education centers polling sites during early voting. The campaign volunteering and voting activity encourages at-home discussion related to civic engagement and participation leading up to the election.

"There is no time better than the present to teach our children how to become active contributors in making their city a better place to work, live and play," Pre-K 4 SA Sarah Baray said. "This program incorporates several of our strategic and engaging curricular innovations and runs throughout the entire school year. We incorporate civic engagement, art infusion and outdoor learning by encouraging participation of Pre-K 4 SA children and their families. The family engagement piece helps builds generational understandings of how everyone can make a difference in their city by learning what is important to them, and how to be a voice of change."

In-person voting for staff and children at the Pre-K 4 SA Education Centers will take place on Election Day, Nov. 2. Social distancing and electronic ballot device sanitizing between each voter will be enforced. Election results at Pre-K 4 SA will be announced on the afternoon of November 2.

Activities continue throughout the year as children and families engage in City Explorations with their teachers to visit different various San Antonio venues with cultural, political, historical or recreational value. Examples include San Pedro Park, San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio Missions, Phil Hardberger Park, Sicloviva, Japanese Tea Garden, San Antonio Botanical Garden, The Riverwalk and others.

Local artists join children in the classroom to create authentic art pieces using a variety of artistic mediums to express the children's perspective of their city and the places they visited. More than 100 pieces will be created and displayed at an art exhibit and auction in the Spring. Money raised from the art auction will be donated to the chosen nonprofit organization.

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For Media Purposes:

Pre-K 4 SA students, teachers and staff will participate in a mock-vote to choose their charity for the 2021-2022 Gracias program. The results of the election will be announced in the afternoon. Media are invited to join us for the 2021 Election at our Mock Polling Site complete with polling booths and electronic ballots.

WHEN: **Voting Polls:** **Election Results:**
Tuesday, Nov. 2 **Tuesday, Nov 2** (also on Facebook Live)
10-11 a.m. **2 p.m.**

WHERE: **Pre-K 4 SA West Education Center - Parent Café**
1235 Enrique M. Barrera Memorial Pkwy
San Antonio, TX 78227

AUDIO / Interviews with Pre-K 4 SA CEO, Sarah Baray

VISUALS: Pre-K 4 SA Students

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.