

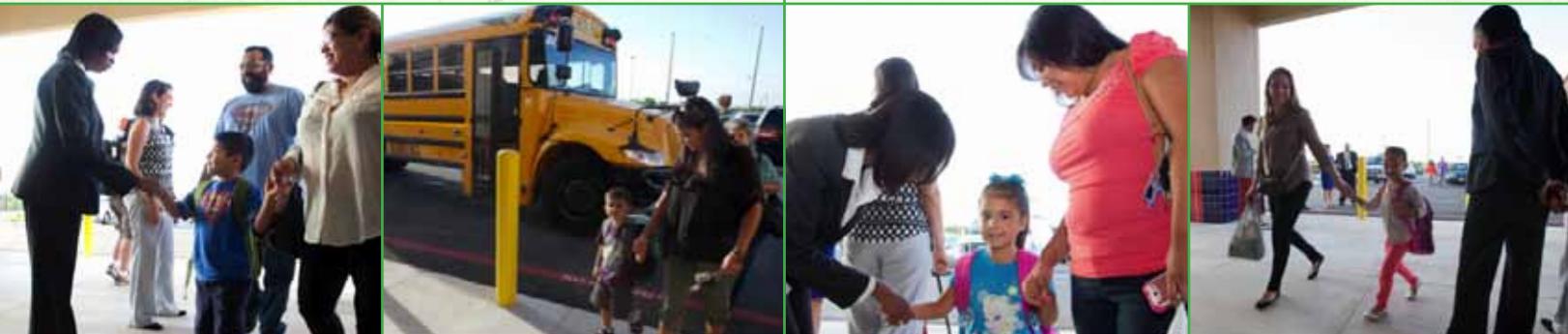
**Education4SA** WINTER NEWSLETTER

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# ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL START!

Pre-K 4 SA had a very successful start to the 2014-2015 school year. Teachers welcomed new students and their families to the Centers with fun and educational activities and new families were introduced to each Center with Meet the Teacher night and orientation sessions at the start of the year. Mayor Taylor was even present at the West Education Center to welcome students for their first day. Since the first day of school, many other exciting things have taken place at the Centers. U.S. Representative Lloyd Doggett and Deputy Assistant Secretary Dr. Libby Doggett visited the East Education Center to tour the facility, meet with faculty and visit with families

of students. The second annual P16 Attendance Rally also took place at the East Education Center in September. Attendees included State Representative Mike Villareal, Councilman Keith Toney, Southwest ISD Superintendent Dr. Lloyd Verstuyft and P16 Plus Executive Director Judy McCormick. At the start of the year, each Center hosted "Grandparents Week" events and the North Education Center recently hosted a Produce Market provided by meal service provider Selrico Services Inc. Pre-K 4 SA will continue to open its doors for collaborative opportunities with its families and the community throughout the school year.

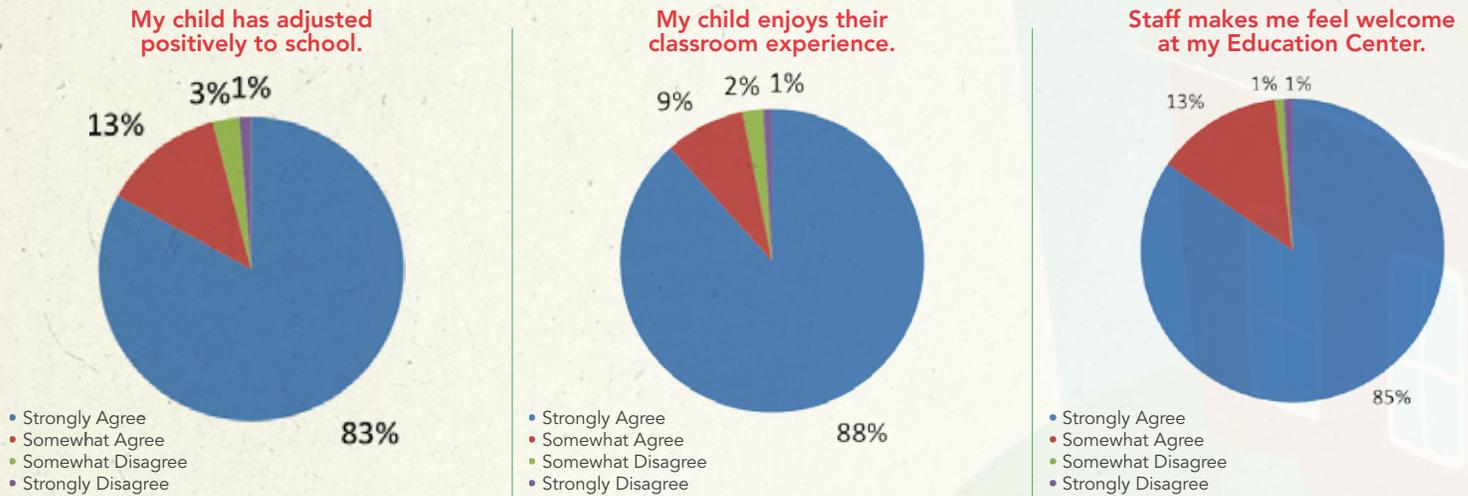


## PRE-K 4 SA UPDATES

Pre-K 4 SA continues to work with its seven partner school districts: Edgewood, Harlandale, North East, Northside, San Antonio, Southside, and Southwest Independent School Districts. Tuition students also attend the four Centers.

In the classroom, teachers and staff have focused on supporting the students' transition into school. Students are establishing routines and daily schedules and are learning the conflict resolution strategy to solve problems. They work with different medias such as manipulative materials, music, and outdoor equipment and are being introduced to mathematic concepts by exploring with measurements and weights.

Pre-K 4 SA reached out to families for feedback on their first month in the program. Of 336 responses, the majority of family members responded that their children have adapted well and are enjoying their experience. Staff looks forward to continuing to provide innovative educational opportunities for students and families throughout the year. Nearly 60% of families surveyed reported that if their child was not in Pre-K 4 SA, they would instead be home with a relative or registered for a daycare program.



## FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES

Pre-K 4 SA encourages family and friends to be active in their child's education and provides a variety of programs to support parent and student development.

### READY ROSIE

Pre-K 4 SA is excited to start ReadyRosie, a new program that gives parents/care-givers the power to be their child's first and most effective teacher! ReadyRosie is an online resource that emails daily activities for adults to do with their children ages 3-5. The activities are simple, prepare children for future stages of their education, and take no more than two minutes each day!

### PRECIOUS MINDS NEW CONNECTIONS PARENTING COURSES

Precious Minds New Connections (PMNC) classes from BCFS help new and established families develop, communicate, mitigate conflict and grow closer. This workshop is an eight week course provided to parents, guardians, and care-givers. Each week, families receive a children's book and upon graduation, families receive a zoo pass and a certificate of completion.

### H-E-B READ 3

H-E-B Read 3 is a partnership between Pre-K 4 SA, UTSA and H-E-B. The program includes informational sessions for families while UTSA students conduct lessons with children. Throughout the six week program, families learn how to introduce literacy and nutrition concepts at home for their pre-kinder students while children are introduced to basic literacy concepts. Families receive the tools and resources necessary to help their little learners grow.

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

# FAMILY SPECIALISTS

Each Pre-K 4 SA Center has two Family Specialists to advocate for families and act as a bridge from school to home. They provide one-on-one support, counseling, and home visits to learn about children's human development, academic progress, and family needs. Family Specialists assist in offering community referrals for resources and services, and collaborate with community agencies in order to provide greater access to the City's resources. They conduct sessions on various early education topics to encourage parent learning and engagement.



**Iveth Pacheco** is a North Center Family Specialist who has a Masters Degree in Mental Health Counseling and is a certified Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Iveth describes, "I believe in the importance of helping children and their caregivers meet their personal needs first, in order for them reach self efficacy. My career has allowed me the opportunity to exercise the two things I value the most: being a child's advocate and my passion for education." Outside of Pre-K 4 SA, Iveth enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, watching movies, and listening to music.



**Laura Brown** is a North Center Family Specialist who has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Masters Degree in Healthy Psychology and Counseling. Laura describes, "I enjoy building collaborative relationships with families and staff members to positively impact and empower children." After work, she enjoys spending time with family, being outdoors, traveling, and photography.



**Rosanna Godrey** is a South Center Family Specialist who has a Bachelor of Music in Music Therapy. Rosanna describes, "When I am able to get into the halls and interact with the children is probably the most enjoyable part of my days. I love singing with the kids in line and being able to play with them to support the learning being done in the classrooms." Rosanna enjoys visiting parks with her family and her dog Sprite.



**Maria Vela-Gude (Luti)** is a South Center Family Specialist who holds a Bachelors of Music Education and a Masters Degree in Counseling. She describes, "Here at Pre-K 4 SA, I advocate for the children and their families, make home visits which is one of my favorite activities, and work hard to ensure the families feel at ease and are invited to the welcome table of education." Luti is a person of many varied interests ranging from running and walking long distances and choreographing to writing and directing choirs."



**Cristina Villegas-Hernandez** is a West Center Family Specialist who has a Bachelors Degree in Sociology and a Masters Degree in Social Work. Cristina says, "My favorite thing about working for Pre-K 4 SA is spending time with the students. I enjoy the energy, playfulness, and individuality they bring to the West Education Center. When she's not at Pre-K 4 SA, she enjoys photography and painting. She finds that her 3 dogs and 3 cats (most of which are rescues) are often the perfect subjects for her projects."



**Vanessa Guerra-Lazaga** is a West Center Family Specialist who has a Masters Degree in Community Counseling. She describes, "My favorite thing about working at Pre-K 4 SA is the opportunity to work closely with families and staff members to ensure that our students achieve their maximum potential." During her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two children, Cassie and Christian.



**Terri Kurpgeweit** is an East Center Family Specialist who has a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and a Masters Degree in Counseling. When working with families, Terri describes, "I converse with them and get to know them and the style of their family unit in order to have a good rapport. In turn, they feel comfortable with me for if or when they need anything or event to just talk." Outside of Pre-K 4 SA, she enjoys road trips, crafting, and football.



**Vanessa M. Perez** is an East Education Center Family Specialist who has a Masters Degree in Community Counseling. She describes, "It is exciting to be a part of building a community at the Pre-K 4 SA East Center where teachers, staff, and the families work together to support the academic and social-emotional growth of the children." Outside of working at the East Center, she enjoys hiking, reading, spending time with friends, and playing with her two pet guinea pigs that she rescued.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Storyteller Sue Kuentz has been enticing people with stories since she was a little girl. Through Pre-K 4 SA's professional development opportunities, she is teaching others her art!

Sue has been an educator for over 30 years and has used that time to share her stories and storytelling techniques with children and adults. Through storytelling, Sue has been able to provide children with deeper connections to both core content and their community.

Sue Kuentz has received numerous awards as a teacher and a storyteller such as North East I.S.D. Overall Teacher of the Year, H-E-B Lifetime Achievement Excellence in Education Winner, and a featured Texas Teller at the Tejas Storytelling and Texas Folklife Festivals. Recently, Sue has been named to the Texas Commission on the Arts roster for 2014-16.

Sue is shining the spotlight on storytelling by collaborating with Pre-K 4 SA. She will be providing workshops to educators that will focus on how to craft stories and how to weave storytelling into all

areas of the curriculum. Sue is currently working with Pre-K 4 SA Professional Development Coaches at Tuscany Heights Elementary in North East I.S.D., where she has created an afterschool storytelling club for second through fifth grade students. These students will learn about the art of storytelling and how to develop their own style of telling stories.

For more information on the Professional Development partnership with Sue, please visit this website: [SanAntonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/SummerAcademies.aspx](http://SanAntonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio/SummerAcademies.aspx)



In the few short months since we started school, I am awed at the growth and progress our students have made, the talent, enthusiasm, and dedication of our staff, and the overwhelming support and active involvement of our parents in their children's education! Together we will ensure that all of our children are equipped with all of the skills they need to be successful in Kindergarten and throughout their school career. Way to go, Team!

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### GENERAL

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