

# **SA2020 Brainpower Initiative Task Force**

**Prepared for Mayor Julián Castro,  
Task Force Co-Chairs USAA CEO and Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Joe Robles and  
H-E-B Chairman and CEO Charles Butt and the Brainpower Task Force Members**

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## **Introduction**

In May 2011, Mayor Julián Castro assembled a committee of concerned business and education leaders to determine if a targeted, significant financial investment could fundamentally improve San Antonio's educational trajectory. The group, led by USAA CEO and Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Joe Robles and H-E-B Chairman and CEO Charles Butt, was evenly split between business leaders and education experts, including area school superintendents and college presidents. They examined three areas — very early childhood education, dropout prevention and college attainment.

After more than a year of studying best practices and evidence-based outcomes in other U.S. cities, the data was incontrovertible. When children enter kindergarten prepared to learn, they are more confident and apt to succeed throughout their academic career, while teachers and administrators are freed from the burden of teaching and crafting curriculum to students with varying levels of preparedness.

There are more than 20,000 four-year-olds in San Antonio today. Through circumstances that have nothing to do with their intelligence or capacity to learn, one in four of those children who are otherwise eligible for state and federally funded Pre-K either go unserved or receive just a half-day of early education. They are eligible because of their income, their home language, their parents' military participation or time spent in the foster care system. Not only do these children miss out on the full benefits of early childhood education, area school districts leave between \$10 million and \$11 million dollars in state funding — more than \$2,500 per child — on the table. Catching these students up is an additional drain on the system.

In order for San Antonio to build a globally competitive workforce that is prepared to take on the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Brainpower Committee determined that San Antonio could yield the most profound results across the education spectrum by starting early. A 1/8-cent sales tax, to be voted on by San Antonio voters on Nov. 6, 2012, will generate an estimated \$29 million annually and be eligible to draw down matching state funding of between \$10 million and \$11 million. The cost of this investment is estimated to be \$7.81 annually per median San Antonio household.

## Executive Summary

The Brainpower Initiative Task Force, envisioned by Mayor Julián Castro and co-chaired by USAA CEO and Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Joe Robles and H-E-B Chairman and CEO Charles Butt, will be recommending to the Mayor and City Council a ballot measure for the use of the 1/8-cent sales tax on November 6, 2012. The Brainpower Task Force has chosen Early Childhood Education across San Antonio as its area of focus. It is anticipated that this initiative will generate an estimated \$29 million annually. It will also be eligible to receive matching state Pre-K dollars estimated at between \$10 million and \$11 million annually.

***The measurable outcome for this initiative will be to dramatically and sustainably raise achievement for the children of San Antonio as measured by the third grade state tests in reading and mathematics.***

What differentiates this investment is that it will be in results for the children of San Antonio – not simply funding of more programs. There will be common milestones for clearly measuring progress each year so that everyone in the city knows what is being achieved. Providers who do not achieve results will be supported in course corrections and disinvested, if necessary.

The Task Force has determined that the best investment is in Pre-K education. There are about 20,000 4-year-olds in San Antonio, 16,000 of whom are eligible for half-day Pre-K under state and federal guidelines (factors include income, language, foster care settings, and military families). One-quarter of these eligible children are not currently being served in full-day kindergarten.

If approved, this initiative will invest in a three-part strategy to serve 4,500 annually, with a focus on those who are at risk of not being prepared to hit the ground running in kindergarten. It will serve an estimated 19,275 children over 5 years. The strategy includes:

1. Establish two world-class early learning centers that serve 700 children and model best practices. In subsequent years, develop additional exemplary centers to serve an additional 800 children. Participating students will be chosen through a lottery.
2. Raise student achievement in existing Pre-K classes through citywide capacity-building and support for all Pre-K teachers to create a highly capable Pre-K workforce that consistently demonstrates effective teaching of young children.
3. Serve an additional 3,300 4-year-olds who are eligible under state and federal guidelines but not currently enrolled in full-day Pre-K, and incentivize providers to serve an additional 500 children through a sliding scale. (800 of those 3,300 will be served in model centers in later years.)

The data is clear. The best investment in America to improve educational outcomes is Pre-K education. Research at the University of Wisconsin found that an average of \$6,730 invested in early education saved \$47,759 by eliminating or reducing expenses associated with remediation, unemployment and incarceration.

In *Dividends of Early Learning*, Arthur Reynolds shows that attendance in Pre-K leads to:

- 29% increase in graduation rate for at-risk children;
- 41% reduction in later placement rates in special education;
- 40% less likelihood of being retained in one or more grades.

# **THE BRAINPOWER INITIATIVE INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

## San Antonio Brainpower Initiative Pre-K Investment Strategy

This strategy will leverage state funding and existing Head Start models — and in doing so promote a more consistent, community-wide emphasis on outcomes for Pre-K in school districts, among independent providers and through Head Start. This initiative will supplement the state/federal funding that covers half-day Pre-K with the express purpose of providing high quality full-day Pre-K. In order to receive funding, districts and providers must commit to clear targets for achievement and reporting on how students do in relation to these targets. Students will focus on developmental milestones for reading (literacy) and math (numeracy) that put them on track for a high degree of academic success at annual intervals.

### Specific Areas for Investment Include:

1. Establish two world-class early learning centers that serve 700 children and model best practices. In subsequent years, develop additional exemplary centers that serve an additional 800 children. Total number of children served expected to climb to 4,500 between these model centers and other partners by 2015. Over the five year course of the sales tax, the initiative is estimated to serve 19,275 4-year-olds in Pre-K education.
  - Highly qualified and innovative leaders will be recruited to design and lead the model centers. These leaders will bring the innovative and entrepreneurial outlook needed to take these schools to the top of the nation's premiere Pre-K education settings.
  - In Years 3-5, other centers throughout the city that have demonstrated success through the initial investment and a commitment and capacity for high achievement will be eligible for additional investment to become model centers themselves.
  - Teachers for the model centers will be recruited and trained through a highly rigorous process. Teachers and leaders will receive an additional stipend for leading the professional development of other teachers who will take best practices back to their home school districts.
  - Investment at the model centers will be \$6,500 per child and include additional family support services. Total per child funding, in conjunction with state investment, will be approximately \$9,200 per child.
  - Investment in Years 3-5 for centers who commit to replicating key elements of the model centers will be at \$5,000 per child and in conjunction with state funding will total \$7,700 per child.

<b>Pre- Kindergarten Expansion Schedule</b>				
Year	# of Students in Model Centers	# of Students in Added Slots	# of Students for Sliding Scale	# of Students per Year
2013	700	500	75	1,275
2014	700	3,300	500	4,500
2015-2017	1,500	2,500	500	4,500
Five Years Total	5,900	11,300	2,075	19,275

2. Raise student achievement in existing Pre-K classes by creating a highly capable Pre-K workforce that consistently demonstrates effective teaching.
  - The two model centers will serve as learning labs for ongoing professional development for teachers throughout the city. The initiative further leverages the high quality classrooms and teachers by providing training and development through exemplary models and master teaching.
  - Citywide training for all existing Pre-K teachers with a focus on creating classrooms defined by strong reading (literacy) and math (numeracy) learning and development of lifelong learning skills.
  - Institute a common citywide assessment that provides teachers and families the information needed to provide quality learning experiences and course correct the teaching and learning process.
  
3. Serve the remaining eligible children with high-quality, full-day Pre-K, and incentivize providers to serve an additional 500 children through a sliding scale.
  - Children who are eligible for state Pre-K or Head Start will be the primary focus of this investment. This is the area of greatest need and it allows for state and federal funding to be leveraged.
  - All districts and vetted partner-providers will be eligible for supplemental investments to match state-sponsored Pre-K funds in order to provide full-day Pre-K. Investments may not be used by districts as a substitute for existing funding (however they will be eligible for expanding half-day to full-day).
  - Sliding scale options will be incentivized so that parents who might not be able to access full-day accredited Pre-K will now be able to do so. Providers will receive some funding support to do so and those providers who make sliding scale space available will receive extra consideration for funding.
  - Investment at traditional centers and schools will be at \$4,000 per child for the first year (includes classroom set-up costs) and at \$3,500 for subsequent years. In conjunction with the state funding this will result in approximately \$6,700 per child for the first year to include start-up costs and drop to \$6,200 for subsequent years.

4. A rigorous program evaluation that shares data and results in an accessible and transparent way with the citizens.
  - A consistent assessment will be used citywide that requires Pre-K providers to commit to tracking and reporting results for students through third grade in order to measure impact.
  - Independent project evaluation to determine — both at milestones and conclusion — whether investments have been successful and to what degree.

Phased Implementation of Core Investment Elements:

- Year One: Recruit and hire leadership team for overall initiative.
  - Awareness and outreach campaign as well as development of parent support systems to raise student participation and attendance.
  - Open model centers' slots for 700 children.
  - Solicit RFIs for approximately 500 new slots and provide technical support to districts and Head Start providers on key components for effective implementation for new slots (both from new providers and those moving from half- to full-day). Mentoring and professional development for all Pre-K teachers.
  - Alignment of teacher/leader recruitment and training with best practices of exceptionally successful Pre-K programs. Establishment of key model center partners.
  - Physical infrastructure and classroom set-up for two model centers – with professional development labs for use by Pre-K teachers citywide.
  - Open full-day slots (traditional center or school-based) for 500 children and up to 75 slots at sliding scale level of investment.
  - Provide ongoing citywide professional development at the model centers.
  - Begin evaluation research.
  - Recruit teachers and establish strategic plan to build out quality early education workforce.
  - Implement common assessment for all Pre-K children citywide that includes training, support, and data collection support.
  - Institute data-sharing among districts, city, and providers.
- Year Two:
    - Solicit RFIs to serve 2,800 new children and provide technical support to districts and Head Start providers on key components for effective implementation for new slots (from new providers and those moving from half- to full-day).

- Serve 2,800 new children and an additional 425 children with a sliding scale, bringing total children served to 3,800, of which 500 are sliding scale.
  - Continued investment in model centers for 700 children.
  - Ongoing outreach and support for parents to emphasize importance of Pre-K and increase participation and attendance.
  - Mentoring and ongoing professional development for all Pre-K teachers and leaders that is focused on raising student achievement at model centers
  - Ongoing classroom materials and supplies.
  - Ongoing investment in common assessment for all Pre-K children citywide that includes training, support, and data collection.
- Years Three to Five:
    - Investment in additional high-performing centers who replicate model-center approach for up to 800 children of the 3,800 children currently funded (with option for up to 120 of the 500 at sliding scale children to participate).
    - Technical support to districts and Head Start providers willing to implement high-quality model-centers model.
    - Ongoing outreach and support for parents to emphasize importance of Pre-K and increase participation and attendance.
    - Technical support to districts and Head Start providers on effective early education implementation strategy.
    - Mentoring and ongoing professional development for all Pre-K teachers and leaders that is focused on raising student achievement.
    - Ongoing classroom materials and supplies.
    - Continued investment for up to 3,300 children in full-day Pre-K, including up to 500 children at sliding scale level of investment.
    - Continued investment in model centers for 700 children.
    - Ongoing citywide professional development at the model centers.
    - Ongoing investment in common assessment for all Pre-K children citywide that includes training, support, and data collection.

## **Predictive Success Factors and Indicators**

Rather than design a set of activities and best practices, it's important to know what factors will predict success for this investment — and to tie the investment to these predictive factors. The research converges on four core areas that predict success in kindergarten readiness and sustained success through elementary school:

- An academic/cognitive approach with a specific focus on literacy (reading) and numeracy (math).
- Rigorous expectations for staff around professional development.

- Clear data use for informing decision-making and course correction.
- Parent/Primary caregiver involvement and support for learning.

Academic: These are the key areas that most impact student achievement and when they are effectively dealt with early lay the groundwork for later success in school. They most connect to what students will need in the future when entering the workforce. Emphasis on these areas also differentiates Pre-K from daycare. Key to the approach here is what is developmentally appropriate for learning versus a checklist of isolated skills.

- Core literacy and numeracy standards for learning that will match what students need to be kindergarten ready at a high level of competency (equivalent of “commended” level).
- Pre-K students will spend their classroom time engaged in activities that develop core literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pre-K students will develop skills that focus on application of knowledge.
- Students need the key habits and emotional capacity (such as persistence and the ability to regroup) that are tied to long-term success in school.

Expectations for Staff: Understanding the key developmental curricular issues. What to teach and how to teach it requires a massive training undertaking that requires ongoing support. This requires teachers and school leaders getting on the same track for an effective Pre-K teaching approach. The emphasis needs to be on what’s critical, not on being comprehensive.

- Capacity to teach and facilitate literacy- and numeracy-based activities and the development of a print- and language-rich learning environment.
- Capacity to administer, analyze and use formal and informal assessment protocols that are tied to literacy and numeracy. All teachers will use the information to inform instruction and move children along the continuum of learning.
- Foster children’s emotional well-being with regard to the link between this and learning for 4 year-olds.
- Create enriched learning environments where children apply concepts and skills in a variety of contexts.

Clear Data Use: The distinction here is around purpose. Effective data use isn’t about evaluation of a program but rather the information that teachers get that enables them to plan for learning and course correct along the way. Assessments that provide checkpoints for developmental milestones and understanding give teachers the information they need to improve student performance.

- Teachers and leaders will use a common assessment citywide to track individual and cohort data in ways that inform how they adapt and course correct the teaching and learning process at regular intervals.
- All participating Pre-K students will take a common citywide assessment that assesses high-level skills and is used to benchmark progress.

- All kindergarten students citywide will take the common assessment.
- Continued tracking of students in all participating institutions/ISDs.

Parent Engagement: Attendance and participation in Pre-K programs relies more heavily on the comfort-level of parents and ease of access than K-12. Parents who fully understand the importance of Pre-K learning to their child's later success in life are much more likely to reduce absenteeism, invest in transition to kindergarten, and support child learning at home.

- Enrollment of 4-year old children in Pre-K.
- Full-day, on-time attendance.
- Family engagement that is tied to supporting attendance and learning.
- Family reading with children for 20 minutes every day.

## **Governance and Leadership**

### Enabling Legislation

*NOTE: In the language of the enabling legislation, “corporation” refers to the organization that will be created to lead the Brainpower Initiative. “Governing municipality” refers to the City of San Antonio government – specifically The Office of the Mayor, The City Manager and the City Council.*

The governing municipality will create the corporation. The initial bylaws and any subsequent bylaw amendments must be approved by the governing body of the municipality. Additionally, the enabling legislation is clear that the board members must be appointed by the City Council and no board members may be an employee of the city. The board must undergo a performance review every five years but submit an annual report each year specifically on results achieved. The budget for the corporation must be presented to the governing body.

### Board Composition

The City Council will appoint board members. The recommendation to the City Council will be that some members of the Brainpower Initiative Task Force be considered as founding board members. This will provide continuity during the time of transition from strategy to execution. The board members who are recommended to the City Council for appointment will need to consider strong city-wide geographic representation.

### Organizational Leadership

For the initial operationalization of the strategy will need a strong interim leader. This will need to be someone with a strong results focus who understand the tenets of the strategy and has the execution skills necessary to both develop the clear tactics, protocols, tools, and organizational systems that will bring this initiative to life – and clarify for the public via the campaign what it will actually look like.

A search must be conducted for someone who has the skill-set and energy to lead this initiative. Someone with a track record of entrepreneurship and innovation will be critical. In addition, with the city’s move toward a collective impact approach this leader will need to have the ability to create a common agenda for a number of different partners.

### Model Centers: Governance and Leadership

These centers need to be the beacons of possibility and opportunity for the City of San Antonio when it comes to children embarking on an exemplary education. As such, they should not be attached to any one entity but rather remain as a clear part of the Brainpower Initiative.

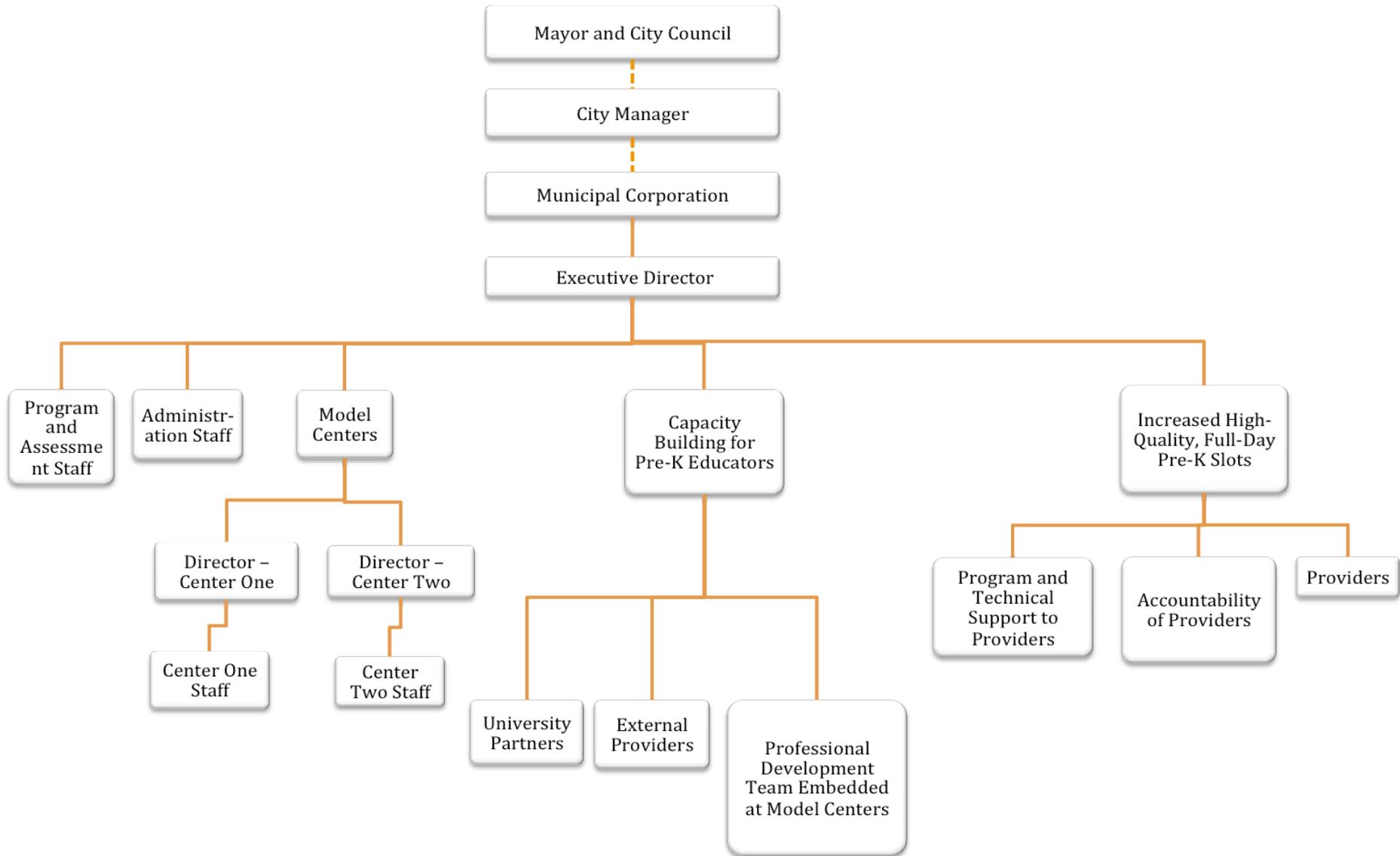
The two model centers must be supported fully by many partners in the city in order to reach world-class status – and they must also be able to operate autonomously and free from the traditional restrictions of regulations for schools.

The leader of the organization will recruit and hire highly qualified and innovative leaders to design and lead the model centers. These leaders will bring the innovative and

entrepreneurial outlook needed to take these schools to the top of the nation's premiere Pre-K education settings.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be crafted with the 15 San Antonio school districts which will take into consideration the varying levels of state per-pupil funding and varying teacher salaries across the districts so that all public school district students and teachers can participate at an equal level.

# BRAINPOWER INITIATIVE – DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## Budget Outline for Major Investment Components

YEAR ONE	
Awareness and Outreach Campaign – including recruitment of students	\$1,500,000
Model Centers – Development and Set-Up	\$2,000,000
Model Centers – 700 slots @ \$6.5k/child	\$4,550,000
New Slots (provider-based, full support) – 500 slots @ \$4k/child	\$2,000,000
Sliding Scale Slots – up to 75 slots @ average \$2k/child	\$150,000
Educator Recruitment, Training, Development	\$5,000,000
Common City-wide Assessment and Data Use	\$4,500,000
Initiative Leadership and Administration	\$1,000,000
Research and Evaluation	\$500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,200,000</b>

YEAR TWO	
Ongoing Awareness and Outreach Campaign	\$1,000,000
Model Centers – 700 slots @ \$6.5k/child	\$4,550,000
Model Centers – Continuous Support	\$1,000,000
New Slots (provider-based, full support) – 2,800 slots @ \$4k/child	\$11,200,000
Ongoing Slots (provider-based, full support) – 500 slots @ \$3.5k/child	\$1,750,000
Sliding Scale Slots – up to 500 slots @ average \$2k/child	\$1,000,000
Educator Training and Development	\$4,700,000
Common City-wide Assessment and Data Use	\$4,000,000
Technical Assistance to Providers	\$600,000
Initiative Leadership and Administration	\$1,000,000
Research and Evaluation	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,800,000</b>

YEARS THREE THROUGH FIVE	
Ongoing Awareness and Outreach Campaign	\$250,000
Model Centers – 700 slots @ \$6.5k/child	\$4,500,000
Model Centers – Continuous Support	\$500,000
Model Center Replication – 800 slots @ \$5k/child	\$4,000,000
Ongoing Slots (provider-based, full support) – 2,300 slots @ \$3.5k/child	\$8,750,000
Sliding Scale Slots – up to 500 slots @ average \$2k/child	\$1,000,000
Educator Training and Development	\$4,700,000
Common City-wide Assessment and Data Use	\$4,000,000
Technical Assistance to Providers	\$500,000
Initiative Leadership and Administration	\$1,000,000
Research and Evaluation	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,200,000</b>

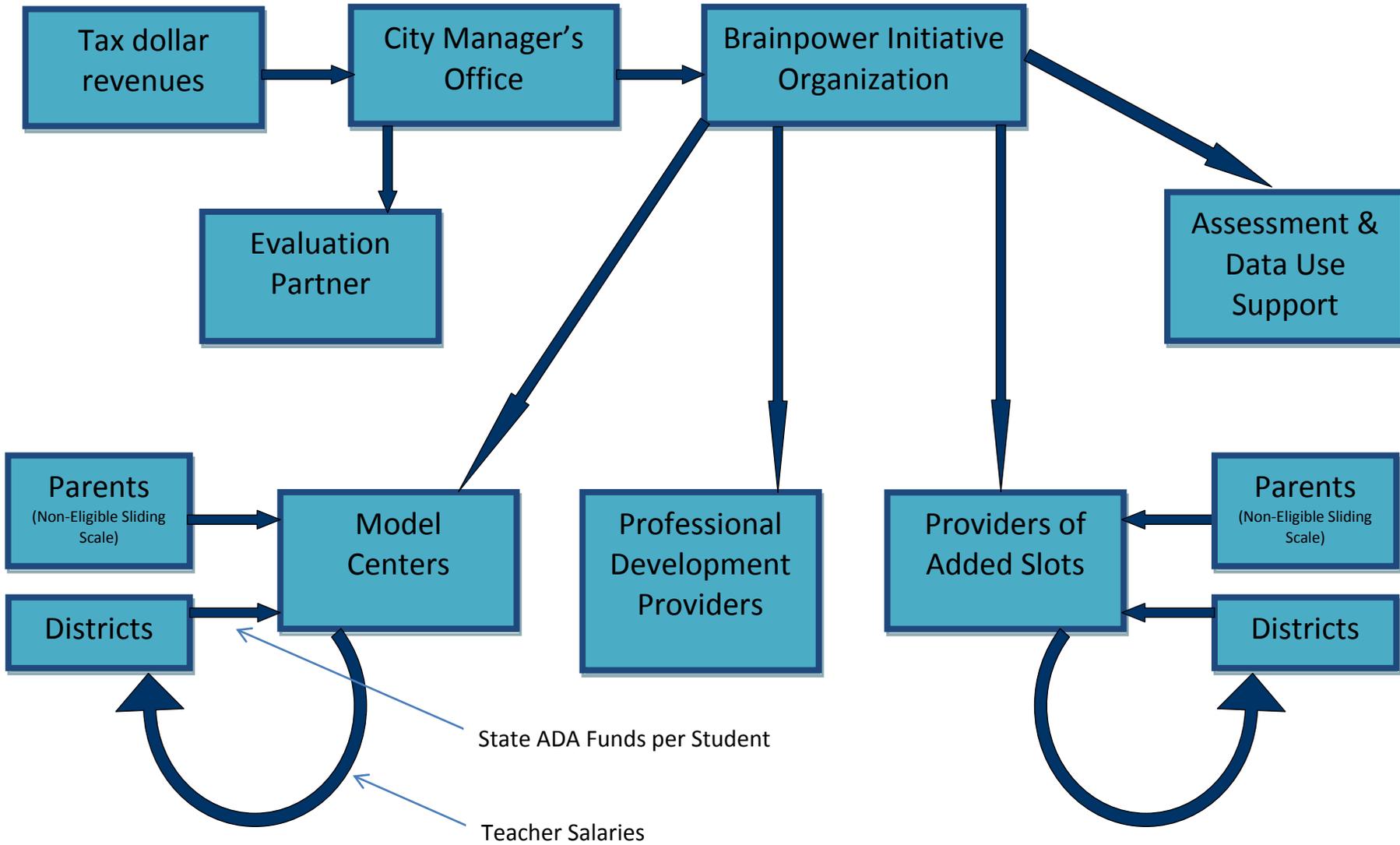
**TOTAL OVER FIVE YEARS: \$139,600,000**

## Sales Tax Projections

The sales tax revenues are projected at \$146.6 million over the course of the five years of the sales tax. In order to be appropriately conservative – and to account for some additional costs that have not yet been fully totaled (such as transportation for the model centers), the budget is for \$139.6 million. This provides a buffer of \$5 million.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount (\$ in Millions)</b>
<b>April 2013 to March 2014</b>	<b>\$ 27.5</b>
<b>April 2014 to March 2015</b>	<b>\$ 28.4</b>
<b>April 2015 to March 2016</b>	<b>\$ 29.3</b>
<b>April 2016 to March 2017</b>	<b>\$ 30.2</b>
<b>April 2017 to March 2018</b>	<b>\$ 31.1</b>
<b>Total Five-Year Investment</b>	<b>\$146.5</b>

# Brainpower Initiative – Funds Flow Analysis



## **Assessment of Applicants and Investees**

### Key Questions to Determine Qualifications of Potential Providers

1. Do key people have the attributes and capabilities that predict success?
2. Is prior achievement strong in most relevant work of the provider?
3. Is the provider clear in terms of needed intensity/duration to make a difference in their approach/services?
4. Is “cost for human gain” strong compared to similar approaches/providers?
5. Has the provider clearly tracked data to show success? And better still, used it to make changes?
6. Are there strong project level impact potentials beyond specific results?
7. Are there reasonable impact possibilities or replication that goes beyond the project?

### Key Questions for Those Requesting Investment

#### ***To learn what the result is projected to be:***

1. Define the mix of children with whom you will work in terms of degree of difficulty in getting to school readiness and third grade school achievement.
2. Of the four-year-olds with whom you will work, how many will arrive at kindergarten ready to learn as measured by the citywide assessment?
3. Given the specific population with which you propose to work, how many children do you project would arrive ready without your program versus with it?
4. Of the four-year-olds you look to serve how many will you be willing to bet on reaching grade level in third grade literacy and numeracy?

#### ***To determine chances the result will be achieved:***

1. What is the level of past success of the applying group in achieving results in this area?
2. What are the most critical points of approach or any other factor you see as critical in your program to achieve results?
3. Who are the key people who will lead your program and interact with children to achieve results
4. How will you know whether you are on track to deliver the results to which you are committed?

### Key Questions for Interim Reports

1. Are you serving the same mix of children with regard to degree of difficulty in getting to school readiness and third grade achievement as you defined in your plan? If not, how has that mix changed?
2. Are you on track to achieve stated results with the time and money remaining?
3. If not, please tell us how far off course you are regarding time and/or money?
4. If you are off course please state the reasons and tell us what you are doing to get back on course.

## Tracking Provider Progress with Benchmarks and Milestones

### Overall Benchmarks for Participating Children and Programs

- Benchmark 1: 90% of children are kindergarten-ready as evidenced by citywide assessment results.
- Benchmark 2: Participating children show gains of 15% over non-participating children at the end of kindergarten.
- Benchmark 3: Participating children show an increase of 10% over non-participating children on the third grade STAAR assessment.

### Academic Indicators with Milestones

- Milestone: 90% of children who received two or more assessments will meet the development and learning expectations for their age range on the designated assessment.
- Milestone: Children will spend 80% of their time in school engaged in literacy and numeracy activities – particularly those where they apply knowledge in various contexts (including alternate times such as lunch, art, etc).
- Milestone: 100% of classrooms will provide explicit support and instruction for the core habits and emotional capacity that is tied to long-term success in school.

### Assessment and Data Use Indicators with Milestones

- Milestone: 100% of teachers and leaders will effectively support the implementation of the citywide direct assessment at 2-3 intervals annually and use the data to inform teaching and learning decisions
- Milestone: 100% of teachers will effectively implement the citywide weekly student observation assessment – and use it to course correct where students fall short on expected quarterly milestones
- Milestone: 100% of program classrooms will participate in an initial program assessment each year. Program classrooms who received a score less than exemplary will engage in a second program assessment that year.
- Milestone: 100% of all teachers and leaders attend the citywide training on assessment administration and data use and achieve a level of competency in understanding how to interpret and use data to make changes in the classroom.
- Milestone: All leaders/directors/principals will implement a clear system to use the information from assessments to inform and adapt instruction and increase student learning.
- Milestone: 100% of providers will track children in accordance with the citywide data-sharing plan

### Teacher/Leader Quality Indicators with Milestones

- Milestone: 100% of all Pre-K teachers and leaders will participate in the professional development provided citywide on the core skills around teaching literacy and numeracy and applied learning as well as on supporting key habits such as persistence and perseverance that are linked to long-term success in school.

- Milestone: 100% of leaders will provide feedback weekly to each teacher specifically on the effectiveness of literacy and numeracy learning in the classroom. All feedback will be constructive and useful for teacher growth.
- Milestone: 100% of teachers will actively participate in 8 hours of coaching or support per month on literacy/numeracy teaching and learning strategies by a mentor or the citywide professional development at the model centers.
- Milestone: 100% of providers will support teachers through mentoring and professional learning communities
- Milestone: 100% of teachers will provide kindergarten transition information on each child for the receiving kindergarten school.
- Milestone: 100% of programs will have a clear kindergarten transition support plan for students and families that involves Pre-K and K teachers.

#### Family/Caregiver Indicators with Milestones

- Milestone: 90% of total slots will be enrolled by October 1
- Milestone: 90% attendance for first quarter; 95% for subsequent quarters
- Milestone: Intervention and development of an attendance plan for family behavior change with 100% of non-compliant families
- Milestone: 95% of parents will attend initial sessions and receive clear expectations and training around attendance and reading at home.
- Milestone: The teacher (or outreach worker/designee) will meet with 100% children's parents or guardians at least two times annually to discuss the child's development and jointly plan school and home strategies to support the child's success. She/he will also keep parents up to date on assessment results and any special needs issues that arise from additional assessment.
- Milestone: School/agency will identify children with learning, mental/physical health and other developmental challenges and develop and implement an intervention plan in collaboration with the child's family.
- Milestone: 90% performance with documenting/reporting at-home reading.
- Milestone: 100% of students will be registered on time for kindergarten

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Model Centers

The key to effective model centers is that the right leaders be established for each of them. These leaders will need to bring qualities that reach beyond those of leaders who lead strong, established schools. They will need to bring the innovative and entrepreneurial outlook needed to take these schools to the top of the nation's premiere Pre-K education settings. A host of resources and expertise from San Antonio and around the country will be assembled for these leaders to draw on for the range of critical areas – from curriculum model to recruitment of master teachers to facilities. One such expert, Dr. Ellen Frede was called upon to delineate the key program elements of effective Pre-K that need to be considered and then examined and elevated to exemplary level.

### Program Elements

*(developed for Brainpower Initiative by Dr. Ellen Frede, May 2012)*

In most early learning initiatives program standards are defined as those static program features that are necessary but not sufficient to ensure high quality practice, such as class size, length of day, curriculum and assessment tool adoption, or teacher qualifications, as opposed to dynamic aspects of quality such as teacher-child interaction, how well the curriculum model is implemented or relationships with parents.

- b) Organization and size: Keep class size as close to 15 as possible given resources. Incorporate methods for adjusting the techniques used in the model classrooms for less ideal circumstances into the professional development plan for external programs.
- c) Facility: Organize classrooms in a “pod structure” of 4-5 pods of five classrooms each. Ideally, in the facility design and footprint, each of the pods would have a separate playground and indoor gross motor area. There should not be a cafeteria in the facility, as Head Start regulations and best practice require in-classroom “family style” meals which facilitate teaching self-help skills, social skills and reinforcing learning through informal conversation. Incorporate child bathrooms and storage closets shared between two classrooms.
- d) Staffing: Each classroom should be staffed with one teacher certified to teach Pre-K and one assistant teacher with an AA in early childhood education, both should be bilingual. Among the teachers, shared expertise can raise the level of education in each domain, thus, at least one teacher should have an interest in each of the following: drama, mathematics learning, dance, science education, the visual arts, the environment, parental engagement, children's literature, and music.
- e) Curriculum: Implement a different curriculum model in each Pre-K model center. Professional development will be easier but at the same time collaborating programs have at least two models from which to choose.

- f) Inclusion practices: Place children with disabilities in the regular classroom with appropriate supports and modifications. As much as possible ensure that the proportion of children on IEPs in an individual classroom mirrors the proportion in the population (i.e. If 10% of the Pre-K population served has an IEP then no more than 10% of the children in an individual classroom should be on an IEP.) Ensure that all staff members have appropriate training, demonstrated capacity, and support to meet all children's needs.
- g) Scheduling options: Provide extended-day and extended-year services and access child care subsidy dollars. Staff extended-day as a child care center with staff meeting only those qualifications required by child care licensing. In the summer, operate at least one pod for at least one month to allow for these classrooms to be used as practice sites for summer in-service for collaborating programs.
- h) Establishing Pre-K advisory councils: Form a Pre-K advisory council for each model center to enhance community partnerships.

## **APPENDIX B: Assessment Strategy**

Teachers and leaders will use a common assessment citywide to track individual and cohort data in ways that inform how they adapt and course correct the teaching and learning process at regular intervals. A common measure allows for consistent professional development and technical assistance for educators; ability to evaluate effectiveness of initiative and is most cost-efficient.

For the Brainpower Initiative the assessment strategy will:

- Purchase Pre-K-2 assessment that requires multiple data points. This will entail both direct assessment at 2-3 intervals as well as observation and checklist formative assessment.
- Provide additional support for administration, observation, scoring and analysis. This support will entail trained people who will undertake administration of actual direct assessments with children. Additionally, the scoring and initial analysis will also be handled as part of the support provided.

As part of this strategy:

- All participating Pre-K students will take a common citywide assessment that assesses high-level skills and is used to benchmark progress
- All participating teachers will track student progress with ongoing assessments and course-correct based on what the data shows
- All kindergarten students citywide will take the common assessment
- Assessments will be provided in English and Spanish
- Program assessment in addition to child assessment (with the concept that the program/classroom predicts student learning and should be considered in conjunction with individual student assessment)

### **Types of Pre-K Assessments**

**Direct Assessment:** a norm or criterion referenced assessment that is given at a specific time and in specific ways. They may be administered 1-3 times per year. This provides strong comparative data and allows teachers to get a lot of information.

**Observational Assessment:** teachers use checklists and observational protocols for watching children conduct authentic work in the classroom. These are used frequently and over time with information being collected in a variety of reporting tools.

**Program Assessment:** measure the educational experiences that the programs and classrooms that children attend are providing. There are classroom factors that predict students' engagement and learning.

## APPENDIX C: Texas High Stakes Testing Implications

- In spring 2012 Texas will move from TAKS to STAAR and in 2013 STAAR will be used for national accountability measures. This will be a more rigorous test that shifts the focus to college and career readiness and backs performance standards down to third grade. The new test will be longer and will be timed. STAAR intends to have content and performance standards that are an aligned system from grade 3 to college and career readiness to prepare all students for postsecondary opportunities. Starr uses performance standards that are not set in isolation but informed by data from research studies that include comparisons with national and international assessments
- Commended performance on TAKS has been seen for several years now as a better way to compare Texas to other states as well as to look at student readiness for the workforce and college. Looking at it now is a good way to prepare for the increased rigor of STAAR.

<b>2010-11 District Performance at Standard vs Commended (sum of all grades)</b>				
<b>District</b>	<b>RDG: Overall at Standard</b>	<b>RDG: Overall Commended</b>	<b>MATH: Overall at Standard</b>	<b>MATH: Overall Commended</b>
STATE	90%	33%	84%	29%
REGION 20	89%	31%	82%	25%
Alamo Heights ISD	95%	50%	91%	42%
East Central ISD	88%	27%	79%	20%
Edgewood ISD	79%	19%	71%	16%
Fort Sam Houston ISD	93%	40%	83%	24%
Harlandale ISD	88%	23%	81%	20%
Judson ISD	88%	26%	79%	20%
North East ISD	92%	39%	87%	33%
Northside ISD	93%	37%	87%	30%
San Antonio ISD	83%	22%	73%	16%
South San Antonio ISD	81%	20%	74%	16%
Southside ISD	87%	23%	78%	18%
Southwest ISD	87%	22%	77%	19%

### What Can Pre-K Mean to Commended TAKS Performance?

During the 2009-2010 school year, students who attended SSAISD Pre-K (at Armstrong, Athens, Kindred, Madla, and Palo Alto) were **61.3%** more likely to achieve Commended Performance on the 3rd Grade Reading TAKS test than students who were not in SSAISD Pre-K at those same campuses, for a full year. During the 2010-2011 school year, students who attended SSAISD Pre-K (all campuses) were **66.3%** more likely to achieve Commended Performance on the 3rd Grade Reading TAKS test than students who were not in SSAISD Pre-K for a full year.

## **APPENDIX D: Brainpower Timeline Overview – Key Events/Milestones**

### **April**

- Determine assessment strategy with Superintendents
- Identify research/evaluation options
- Identify potential facilities options
- Preliminary stakeholder meetings

### **May**

- Bond Election
- Determine concepts for centers of excellence
- Brainpower Task Force Meeting: Finalize investment package
- Select/confirm facilities options for centers of excellence
- Develop initial budget draft with City Manager's Office
- Finalize list of key stakeholders
- Establish key marketing timeline
- Look at space considerations for two centers and compile potential options

### **June**

- Develop business plan for the model
- Final Report Released to City Council June 20
- First round of stakeholder meetings
- Naming of Co-chairs, campaign committee and campaign launch
- Development of the four key areas (Academic, Assessment, Teacher/Leader Quality, and Parent Engagement) of the initiative into actionable and detailed timelines
- Establish job description for CEO/ED for initiative
- Finalize list of key potential providers and partners

### **July**

- Interim CEO for initiative
- Commence search process for CEO/ED
- Second round of stakeholder meetings
- Request for Investment and Request for Results guidelines and packages created
- Establish review process for Request For Results and Request For Investment
- First poll
- Determine research/evaluation partner
- Establish strategy for data warehousing and analysis with small advisory group

### **August**

- City Council calls election, names 11-member Board of Directors
- Community meetings that explain the initiative and what differentiates it
- Initial development of contracts (templates) for providers
- Series of Brainpower 101 Workshops to educate potential providers/partners
- Develop data sharing agreements and plan for districts, providers, city

## **September**

- CONTINUED: Series of Brainpower 101 Workshops are held to educate potential providers/partners
- Establish team of reviewers for Request for Results and Investment responses
- Detailed budget finalized

## **October**

- Finalize selection of CEO/ED
- Final campaign push

## **November**

- Nov. 6, 2012 – actual election
- Official establishment of the Municipal Corporation and Governing Board
- Official hiring of CEO/ED
- Release of Requests for Results immediately following election
- 11/30 - Requests for Results due

## **December**

- Site work for centers of excellence
- Review of Requests for Results and determination of eligible providers
- Release of Requests for Investment package
- Beginning of outreach campaign around Pre-K

## **January 2013**

- 1/31 – Requests for Investment due

## **February 2012**

- Review of Requests for Investment
- 2/28 – Release of names of investment recipients

## **April 2013**

- Lottery for centers of excellence
- Pre-K and leadership training to start
- First disbursement of sales tax dollars

## APPENDIX E: Initial Messages to Potential Investees

The following are what differentiates this from other opportunities for potential grantees.

1. We are an investor in your results – not a funder of your programs.
2. We will use a shared outcome framework with a common set of yardsticks and milestones for measuring progress. This is the only way we can add up individual projects to citywide impact.
3. We will not be asking for or grading standard proposals. We seek to answer three questions with information you provide:
  - What are we investing in – meaning direct gains toward school readiness for how many children?
  - What are chances you will be successful in delivering that result?
  - Compared to other opportunities before us, is this the best use of our investment capital?
4. While the approach is multi-year, investments in year two and beyond are based on success in hitting milestones and early targets for readiness. Each successive year is an active investment decision.
5. We reward impact. While we focus on kids who are most at risk for low achievement, we focus on programs that have a clear path to student success.

The following “givens” not negotiable and provide clear direction for investments.

1. School readiness lies in a broader context of third grade academic achievement. This is the result sought as well as the affirmation that children are indeed ready to learn when they arrive for kindergarten.
2. We will focus on four year olds, where there is a hand-off to established K-12 schooling. This is not to negate the critical development in earlier years but rather to say that with limited funds this is where we will concentrate.
3. We advance four predictive success factors which will guide both program design and the articulation of milestones to show progress:
  - Academic/Cognitive approach with a focus on literacy and numeracy
  - Rigorous expectations for teachers and leaders
  - Clear data use for informing decision-making and course correction
  - Parent engagement for initial and continued student success
4. Investments will be in full-day programs that leverage state, federal or other sustainable funds to cover half of the day. For this reason we anticipate partnerships between providers and districts and Head Start centers.
5. We will support programs with incentives (not direct slots) that offer a sliding scale for families that are not eligible for the state and Head Start match.
5. Capability and past success of program leaders is a critical factor in investment. The right persons need to be present – not just the right model.
6. A common and rigorous assessment will be introduced and all groups receiving our investment must use it. The assessment, training and administration support for teachers and leaders will be provided for all grantees.
7. We will track students for five years—from age 4 through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Grantees agree to assist in the data-collection and reporting for this. Virtually all reports and conversations will begin with data and how it informs course corrections.