PRE-K: SETTING KIDS UP FOR SUCCESS

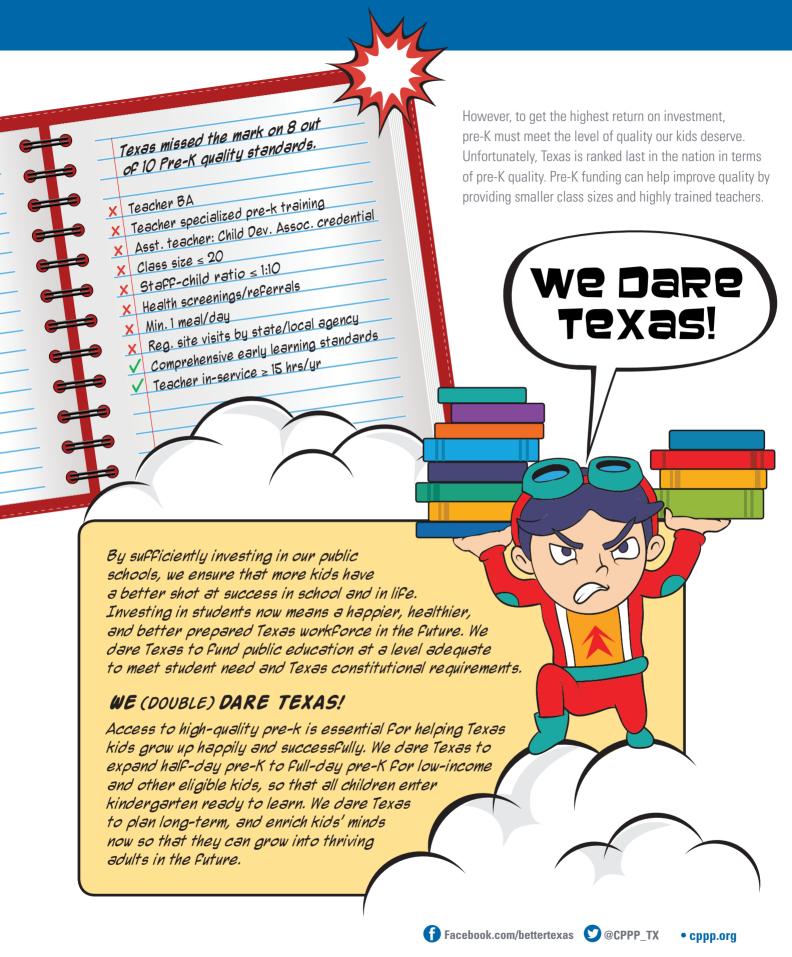
The relationship between school success and economic status is present as early as kindergarten, and unfortunately, kids who start behind tend to stay behind. Low-income kids consistently lag behind their non-low income peers in the four areas of child development (social-emotional, language and communication, early literacy, and mathematics) that define kindergarten school readiness. Well-funded, high-quality pre-kindergarten programs have been shown to substantially shrink the school readiness gap, giving our most vulnerable kids a greater chance to succeed.

Currently, Texas school districts offer half-day, voluntary pre-K for four-year-olds who are low income, have limited English proficiency, are in foster care, or meet other measures of need. Studies show that kids who attend high quality pre-K have higher high school graduation rates, lower rates of teen pregnancy, and fewer run-ins with juvenile justice. They also routinely do better on standardized reading and math tests. Benefits of pre-K also extend well into adulthood—adults who attended pre-K earn more, are less likely to be arrested for violent crimes, and have higher rates of employment.

Investing in pre-K benefits kids, and it financially benefits the state in the long run. A recent study shows that for every dollar invested in high-quality pre-K, \$3.50 is saved by the state of Texas, while another study indicated a 7 to 10 percent annual return on investment in pre-K. These returns are linked, in part, to kids who are better prepared for their K-12 education (e.g. lower retention rates), a lower crime rate, and decreases in participation in public programs.







At the Center for Public Policy Priorities, we believe in a Texas that offers everyone the chance to compete and succeed in life. We envision a Texas where everyone is healthy, well-educated, and financially secure. CPPP is an independent public policy

organization that uses data and analysis to advocate for solutions that enable Texans of all backgrounds to reach their full potential. We dare Texas to be the best state for hard-working people and their families.