



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**21-1118

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**Agenda Item Number:** 6.

**Agenda Date:** 1/26/2021

**In Control:** Early Childhood Education Municipal Development Corporation Board of Directors

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**DEPARTMENT:** Pre-K 4 SA

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Sarah Baray, Ph.D.

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Toyota Grant

**SUMMARY:**

This item request board action to accept funds from Toyota in an amount of \$25,000.00 for implementation of the Children Designing the Future curricular innovation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In addition to serving 2,000 children each year, Pre-K 4 SA's four Education Centers serve as incubators of innovation. Drawing from research, Pre-K 4 SA faculty develop specialized programs to advance children's learning. Known as curriculum innovations, these programs are created, piloted, and tested in Pre-K 4 SA's own classrooms before being codified and shared with early learning programs across San Antonio. To date, Pre-K 4 SA has developed four curriculum innovations that are being used in early learning classrooms throughout the city: 1) civic engagement; 2) arts integration; 3) outdoor learning; and 4) garden to table.

In November 2020, Pre-K 4 SA was invited by Toyota to apply for a \$25,000.00 grant to support STEM initiatives. With the support of a grant from Toyota, Pre-K 4 SA will develop its next curricular innovation: Children Designing the Future.

Building upon the Design Thinking (DT) approach developed at the Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford (d.school), Children Designing the Future will help young children develop strong foundations in scientific and mathematical thinking by using math, science, art, and design concepts to solve authentic

problems that affect human needs. While DT is typically utilized in upper elementary and secondary classrooms, Pre-K 4 SA believes that introducing DT in prekindergarten will lead to stronger math and science performance in later grades. Our belief is rooted in the fact that over 90% of human brain development occurs in the first five years of life, and what happens in the early learning classroom affects a child's brain architecture. Introducing DT in prekindergarten will help children develop strong neural pathways that serve as the foundation for learning complex subject matter in later grades.

Through the Children Designing the Future project, Pre-K 4 SA will train teachers in the use of Design Thinking, develop a curriculum module for use in Pre-K and K classrooms, and purchase materials to support implementation of the curriculum.

#### **ISSUE:**

This item request board action to accept funds from Toyota in an amount of \$25,000.00 for implementation of the Children Designing the Future curricular innovation.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

If the Board does not accept the funds, Pre-K 4 SA will be unable to develop and implement the Children Designing the Future curricular innovation.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This item authorizes Pre-K 4 SA to accept and appropriate funds in an amount of \$25,000.00 for implementation of the Children Designing the Future curricular innovation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Pre-K 4 SA staff recommends Board approval to accept funds from Toyota in an amount of \$25,000.00 for implementation of the Children Designing the Future curricular innovation.