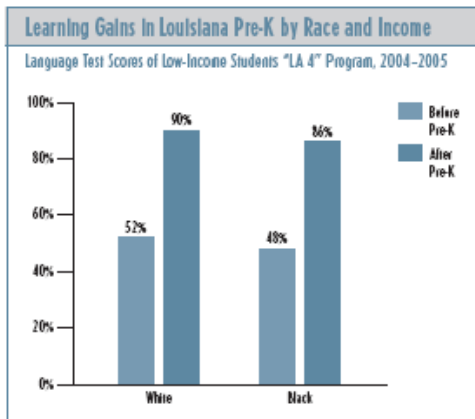


pre-k initiatives



Source: "LA 4 & Starting Points Prekindergarten Program Evaluation, 2004-2005"

Louisiana Pre-K: A Great Education and Economic Investment

A recent study suggests that for every \$1 invested in Louisiana's high-quality Pre-K, the state will receive in return \$2.25 in future savings and increased taxes. A study commissioned by the Entergy Corporation found a benefit-cost ratio of \$8 for every \$1 spent. Other studies, including some by the Federal Reserve Bank, estimate economic returns of \$6 to \$8 in savings and extra tax revenue for every \$1 spent on high-quality Pre-K. This much is certain: by every measure, Pre-K is a key investment for closing the achievement gap and improving the standard of living for all of Louisiana.

Louisiana Pre-K Programs

The State of Louisiana supports four major pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) initiatives that serve over 12,000 students, which is less than one-fifth of all four-year-olds and less than half of all four-year-olds from low-income families in the state. Existing programs target lower-income children and those at risk of being "insufficiently ready for school." Approximately 1,500 Louisiana Pre-K students receive tuition assistance to attend state-approved, private preschools.

According to recent, independent evaluations, two of the state's larger Pre-K programs evidence both high standards of quality and an effective early childhood education curriculum. While levels of parental involvement vary, Louisiana Pre-K students demonstrate age-appropriate skills at or above the national norms in communications and math. In addition, these studies show that students from low-income Black families in Louisiana have improved their learning dramatically – starting at 48 percent correct answers and moving to 86 percent – after a year in Pre-K. In addition, scores for low-income White students also increased from 52 percent to 90 percent.

In other words, in at least two of its Pre-K programs, Louisiana is narrowing the gap in school readiness and helping to shrink the achievement gap which appears in the earliest grades of the state's K-12 education system.