



# Building Bright Beginnings with TeachTown’s Launch for PreK:

## YES Prep Public Schools’ Firsthand Story

### YES PREP AT A GLANCE

Greater Houston, TX

20,000 YES Prep Students || 528 PreK Learners || 4 GLOW Classrooms || 12 GLOW Students

### ONE MISSION

Empower all Houston students to succeed in college and to pursue lives of opportunity.

# High Expectations and an Inclusive Community for All

In the heart of Houston, YES Prep Public Schools is known for pushing the boundaries of what's possible in public education. With nearly 20,000 students across its campuses, the charter school network is no stranger to innovation and **high expectations for students** in underserved communities, and that includes their approach to early childhood special education.

YES Prep delivers a full continuum of services for students with disabilities. For PreK students who have significant cognitive or physical disabilities, YES Prep offers self-contained PreK classrooms, known as GLOW classrooms, across multiple elementary campuses.



## Before Launch for PreK: A Curriculum Gap

The path to kindergarten for students in GLOW classrooms hasn't always been clear. Prior to partnering with TeachTown, teachers in these specialized classrooms were using a curriculum designed for the general education setting that offered few opportunities for differentiated instruction. It simply wasn't designed with their students' unique learning and behavioral needs in mind. This mismatch created instructional gaps, inconsistent support, and barriers to student engagement.

### A Teacher's Challenges

Armida Tecson, a GLOW teacher, noted several challenges she and other educators experienced prior to implementing Launch for PreK:

- Ensuring alignment with PreK standards
- Differentiating instruction for diverse learners
- Tracking data for progress monitoring and IEP goals
- Inconsistent instruction across classrooms, depending on available resources
- Student engagement and implementation fidelity challenges



## An Administrator's Challenges

Antoinette Martin, Elementary Special Education Program Specialist, noted how YES Prep administrators had to “depend on the general education PreK teachers to support and coach self-contained teachers on the curriculum. As a result, the training and guidance provided were not as comprehensive as needed, which impacted the self-contained teachers’ ability to implement the curriculum effectively in their classrooms.” In short, they lacked the professional development and the curricula needed to effectively serve students in the GLOW classrooms.

But that all changed when YES Prep partnered with TeachTown to implement Launch for PreK, a comprehensive, inclusive early childhood curriculum designed for all students ages 3 - 5.

## A Strategic Shift: Why YES Prep Chose Launch for PreK

YES Prep was already successfully using TeachTown’s enCORE and Social Skills curricula across its elementary campuses and loved the structure and the instructional flow. So when Launch for PreK became available, it felt like a natural next step!

As an administrator, Martin noted how the user-friendly platform and consistency across program components supported a smooth adoption for teachers. While the **play-focused curriculum is very hands-on for active and curious little learners, the online platform is a one-stop shop for everything a teacher needs** – data collection and reporting, technology-based lessons, book read-aloud videos in English and Spanish, assessments, and so much more.

Another GLOW teacher, Zaria Dickson, noted the importance of equity and inclusion when choosing to move forward with Launch for PreK:

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*“YES Prep is deeply committed to inclusion, and Launch for PreK aligns with that mission by providing resources and structures that help ensure all students receive equitable, high-quality instruction tailored to their needs.”*



In fact, **Launch for PreK was designed to equitably serve all early childhood students.** The two-year differentiated curriculum supports learners across the developmental continuum, from birth through age 5+. Level P1 supports students who need the greatest support, and Level P3 is designed for those learners who are ready for greater independence. Because **every** single activity-based lesson plan is fully differentiated across these three levels, **every** lesson plan and **every** activity is accessible to **every** learner.

At YES Prep, the implementation process began with a comprehensive professional development session led by TeachTown subject matter experts before the school year began, with ongoing check-ins that followed throughout the school year. The early foundation helped ease the transition for teachers and build confidence in using the new platform.

## Driving Student Outcomes with Intentional Instruction

Today, Launch for PreK is deeply embedded in YES Prep's GLOW classrooms – and the results speak for themselves. Teachers are using multiple assessment opportunities within Launch for PreK to gauge student learning and progress and adjust instruction accordingly. GLOW teachers are actively using Benchmark Assessments, Observational Assessments, teacher-led technology lessons, and paper-based data collection for in-class activities. Data is everywhere!



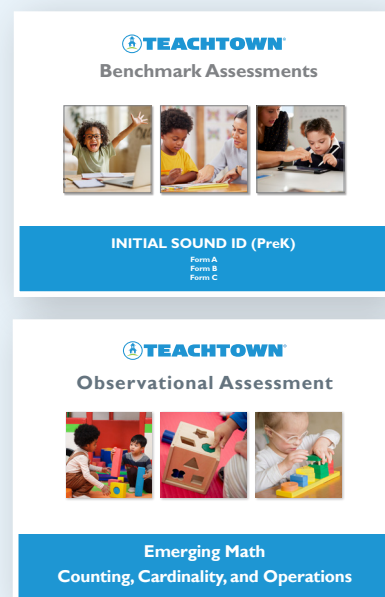
**Benchmark & Observational Assessments** provide clear insight into student growth over time and support progress monitoring and the development of IEP goals.



**Teacher-led technology lessons** boost student engagement and provide teachers with additional data collection. These lessons are used to reinforce skills taught during Hello Circle, Story Time, Emerging Literacy, Emerging Math, and other lesson activities.



**Hands-on, activity-based lessons** include paper-based tracking sheets, which teachers find particularly useful to monitor student progress while students are actively learning in centers and in small groups. This supports accountability and further streamlines IEP documentation.



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*“We’re seeing real progress. The assessments help us identify starting points and track how far students have come,” said Tecson. “And the daily observational data helps us make smart, responsive decisions.”*

When it comes to Kindergarten readiness, the curriculum truly shines. Lessons build foundational skills, like sequencing events, identifying rhyming words, and understanding story structure, while reinforcing classroom routines and expectations.

*“The Launch for PreK curriculum is designed with kindergarten standards in mind, helping ensure that students are exposed to the types of skills, routines, and expectations they will encounter as they transition into elementary school,” shares Tecson.*

*“We especially appreciate how Launch for PreK integrates literacy, math, science, and social skills into daily learning through interactive lessons, hands-on activities, and guided teacher instruction. It reinforces routines like whole group, small group, centers, and independent work time, which mirrors the structure of a typical Kindergarten classroom – giving our students a head start in adjusting to school life.”*

## A Win for Teachers, Students, and Families

The structure and built-in scaffolds in Launch for PreK have been especially impactful for educators. “Having tools for students at Levels 1 to 3 streamlines planning and ensures students are met where they are,” said Tecson.

**Families are also noticing the difference.** Weekly theme letters help parents stay involved and reinforce learning at home. “My parents love getting the updates!” said Dickson. Launch for PreK includes weekly theme letters for each of the 72 themes across the two years of instruction. These letters are available in English and Spanish, and come in two versions – a communication focus as well as an emerging academics focus – and always include suggestions for how to continue learning at home. Teachers can tailor the communication sent home to the needs of the students in their class, supporting and strengthening the home-to-school partnership.





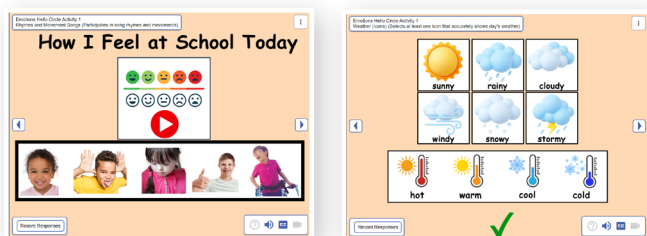
# What Students Love Most

Ask the students, and they'll tell you or they'll show you just how much they love story time! Whether it's listening to an engaging read aloud on the carpet, or interacting with the tech-based lessons that follow the stories, they're all in!



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“They love dragging characters around, sequencing events, and retelling stories,” said Dickson. “It makes learning active and fun.”



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“Over the course of the school year, the implementation of **the TeachTown curriculum has significantly contributed to the progress of my students toward their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.**

Most of my Level 1 students began the year with goals focused on foundational academic skills such as alphabet recognition and basic counting. TeachTown’s structured and repetitive lessons in early literacy and math, particularly its emphasis on one-to-one correspondence, have supported these students in making consistent gains. Through engaging and interactive content, students were able to build recognition of letters and numbers in a way that matched their individual learning pace.

For my Level 2 students, IEP goals often focused on vocabulary building and answering WH- questions (who, what, where, etc.). The story-based format in TeachTown offered consistent exposure to language-rich content. Through listening to the stories and engaging in follow-up comprehension activities, students began to respond more accurately to WH- questions and expand their use of vocabulary.

These stories not only reinforced content but also supported listening comprehension and expressive communication—areas that are often challenging for students with developmental delays or language impairments.”

**YES Prep GLOW Teacher**

# Advice for Fellow Charter Networks and PreK Program Directors

Martin offers tried-and-true advice for any district getting up and running with Launch for PreK. She notes, **“Plan ahead.** Review lessons at least two weeks in advance so you have time to gather any needed materials.” (We agree!)

It takes time, and a commitment from administrators and teachers together, to fully adopt a new curriculum. Pair those with TeachTown’s world-class instructional coaching and professional development, and your PreK program is sure to succeed.”

## Looking Ahead

YES Prep sees Launch for PreK playing a growing role in shaping its early childhood special education programs. With strong alignment to early childhood standards and kindergarten readiness skills, plus built-in supports for **all** learners, the district is confident that it is laying a strong foundation for every student’s success.







## Did You Know?

*As a comprehensive, inclusive early childhood curriculum that is fully differentiated, Launch for PreK is appropriate for all PreK settings. Whether your classrooms serve students with complex needs or a wide range of learning profiles, Launch for PreK is designed to meet them where they are. Learn how your early childhood program can build a stronger foundation for every learner with Launch for PreK, just like YES Prep is experiencing!*



[www.TeachTown.com](http://www.TeachTown.com)