



**Department of
Early Education and Care**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS



SHERRI KILLINS, COMMISSIONER

Date: March 16, 2009

To: Senate President Therese Murray
Speaker Robert DeLeo
Senator Robert O'Leary, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Education
Representative Martha Walz, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Education
Secretary Paul Reville, Executive Office of Education
Secretary Leslie Kirwan, Executive Office for Administration and Finance

From: Sharon Scott-Chandler, Chair, Board of Early Education and Care
Sherri Killins, Commissioner, Department of Early Education and Care

RE: FY2009 Comprehensive Annual Legislative Report

On behalf of the Board and Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), we respectfully submit to you our Annual Legislative Report. This comprehensive report was prepared to fulfill the reporting requirements outlined in MGL Ch. 15D, Sec. 3(g) and line-item 3000-1000 of the FY09 General Appropriation Act, which require that the Agency report on the status of, and progress made in, several key areas of the Agency's work. Rather than submit numerous reports separately, some with overlapping requirements, we have folded into this report all annual reporting requirements, including the following:

- **Five-Year Master Plan.** To meet this requirement, the Board submitted a Five Year Strategic Plan, which was the subject of an extensive and inclusive planning process. Note that the Department is developing a companion *Work Plan* that will outline the Agency actions that will be taken over the course of the next year to meet the goals for the Strategic Plan. This Work Plan will address specific "master plan" requirements outlined in legislation, and moving forward, will be included as part of our Annual Legislative Report.
- **Annual Report.** An "Annual Report" is referenced in both our enabling statute and the FY09 General Appropriations Act. This comprehensive Report outlining the accomplishments of the Agency meets both requirements.
- **Annual Workforce Report.** Each year, EEC has submitted this status report updating our progress in the early childhood Workforce area.

A detailed chart, outlining the legislative reporting requirements, as well as where they are addressed in this report, is also included. Please note that the *System Capacity Study*, a one-time report required by an outside section of the FY09 General Appropriations Act, is still under development. We anticipate submitting this by July 1, 2009.

The Annual Legislative Report is organized into two main sections:

1. Jan 2008-Jan 2009 Board/EEC Actions, Policy Decisions, and Accomplishments

This section highlights key actions taken, policy decisions made and accomplishments achieved by the Board/EEC. It is organized within the framework of the Board's Strategic Plan. Where relevant, public commentary heard by the Board relative to these items is noted. It is our hope that this section provides an informative overview and update of EEC's progress over the past year.

2. Progress Updates by Initiative

This section responds to specific reporting requirements on the status of the following EEC initiatives, as outlined in MGL Ch. 15D, Sec. 3(g) and in line-item 3000-1000 of the FY09 General Appropriation Act:

- a. Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)
- b. Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- c. Alignment of "Rates" and Quality Standards
- d. School Readiness Assessment/Child Outcomes
- e. Workforce and Professional Development (Core Competencies)
- f. Supporting National Accreditation
- g. Promoting Positive Behavioral and Mental Health in Early Education and Care

The Strategic Plan and Workforce Report are included as companion pieces.

As the Agency moves forward in its efforts to provide high quality early education and care to children and families, we would like to take this opportunity to communicate our **commitments and priorities** on several fronts as follows:

- **Mixed delivery system:** EEC is committed to a mixed delivery system, which includes public schools and supports alignment of curriculum for young children, to help ensure smooth transitions within our system and to the k-12 education system.
- **Prioritization of children and families most in need:** EEC will continue to prioritize and focus efforts on children and families with highest needs, using the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's designated "Commissioner's districts" as one construct for prioritization.
- **Balancing Access and Quality:** In these difficult economic times, EEC will continue efforts to balance access and quality, as both are important goals that must be pursued in tandem.
- **Partnership with the higher education system:** EEC is committed to working with the Commonwealth's system of higher education to ensure that early educators – who comprise a diverse and unique field – have access to the supports and resources necessary to successfully gain and apply additional skills in early childhood education.
- **Tracking outcomes:** EEC is committed to and fully intends to both define and track the impact of early education and care programs and services on our youngest citizens, starting at birth and continuing through elementary school and beyond.
- **Families as partners:** Through external communications and efforts to engage parents as partners, EEC will continue to communicate that we are focused on supporting and serving *all* families in the Commonwealth.
- **Accountability across the system:** EEC is committed to continuing efforts to further define accountability goals relative to early education and care access, quality, and affordability and to holding local, regional and state systems accountable for meeting those goals.
- **Interagency partnerships:** As part of the new Executive Secretariat, EEC fully intends to take full advantage of partnerships with each of the other Education Commissioners, the Executive Office of Education, and other state agencies that provide access to services that support the development of the whole child.

We are pleased with the many accomplishments of this still relatively new agency. It is our hope that this report provides a helpful update on our work. As you know, EEC has experienced a number of key transitions over the past year and we appreciate your patience as we strive to keep the agency moving forward and to meet our legislative mandates.

Thank you for your continued support of our efforts. We look forward to working together in the months and years ahead.

MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE
FY2009 ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

SUBMITTED MARCH 18, 2009

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CONTEXT FOR THIS REPORT

EEC Board's Strategic Plan, the framework for this report

This Report is presented within the framework of the EEC Board's Strategic Plan. In December, 2007, with a legislative mandate to develop a multiyear plan to achieve a well-coordinated system of high achievement in early education and care in the Commonwealth, the Board undertook a strategic planning process. The methodology used was inclusive and participatory and built on the successes and assets of EEC's ongoing work and expertise and wisdom provided by a broad range of planning participants. The Board's strategic plan outlines a mission, a practical vision, strategic directions, and indicators of success. EEC is developing an Agency companion Work Plan to identify activities and goals that will help meet the success indicators.

The 5 Strategic Directions identified by the Board- which will serve as the Framework for this report- are as follows:

1. **Quality-** Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide.
2. **Family Support, Access, and Affordability-** Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.
3. **Workforce-** Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.
4. **Communications-** Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public.
5. **Infrastructure-** Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

The "Board/EEC Actions and Accomplishments" Section of this report highlights key decisions and actions taken this past year within each of the 5 Strategic Directions.

Landmark Early Education and Care Bill Signed into Law

On Thursday, July 31st 2008, Governor Patrick signed into law "*An Act Relative to Early Education and Care*," a major milestone in the effort to build a truly comprehensive and coordinated system that meets the needs of families and children. This bill codifies in state law, and helps shape future directions for, a broad range of programs and initiatives that EEC has been developing and implementing for the last 3 years.

New Executive Office of Education

In January, 2008, legislation passed creating an Executive Office of Education (EOE) to oversee the Commonwealth's three Education Agencies (Department of Early Education and Care, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Department of Higher Education). Governor Deval Patrick proposed this Secretariat to encourage the seamless delivery of education from birth through higher education and beyond. EEC is now a family's first point of entry to the Commonwealth's education system and an integral part of the overall continuum, providing the foundation for children's healthy development and learning.

EEC Board Changes

In the Spring, Governor Patrick appointed three new members to EEC's Board: Lynson Moore Beaulieu, Director of Programs and Strategic Leadership at the Schott Foundation for Public Education; Orlando Isaza, Senior Program Officer and Manager for Grant Making Initiatives at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts; and Mary Pat Messmer, Executive Director of the Cape Cod Child Development Program.

9C Budget Reductions in EEC's FY2009

On October 15, 2008, Governor Deval Patrick announced that state revenues for the first quarter of FY2009 were reported well below benchmark and he revealed an estimated \$1.4B budget gap. The reduction to EEC's budget as part of this plan totaled \$14.1M, or approximately 2.4% of EEC's final FY2009 budget, which meant significant adjustments for many and real hardship for some, including those who directly provide education and care every day to children across the state. It is important to recognize that the measures required to implement these cuts, as painful as they were, had minimal impact on access to child care for families currently enrolled.

On January 28, the Governor announced a second round of 9C reductions to the Fiscal Year 2009 budget. These reductions presumed as a base the FY09 funding level of \$559,237,397 (which is inclusive of the first round of 9C cuts) and further reduces EEC's budget by \$3,342,579 or 0.6%. As with the previous round of 9C reductions, EEC's guiding principle has been to continue to prioritize access to child care for all families currently enrolled, particularly in light of the severe pressure on the Income Eligible Account that required us to limit access in early November. Although these additional reductions impacted or slowed down several key agency priorities, for the most part they focus on projected surpluses, savings realized through proactive agency action, and/or expansion funding not yet awarded.

EEC Board FY2010 Budget Recommendations

In November, the Board approved a 2-part recommendation of spending priorities for FY10. Due to the national economic downturn that has significantly impacted state revenues, the Board was first charged with presenting an FY2010 proposal that incorporated a 4% cut to current FY09 funding levels. The Board focused on balancing the potential impacts on key areas of the system; preserving the capacity of the agency to be responsible fiscal stewards; ensuring the health and safety of children; and continuing forward progress on policy innovations. Secondly, the Board was charged with recommending priority areas for increased investment, in the event that additional funding becomes available. This expansion proposal focused on increasing access to financial assistance for the Commonwealth's most vulnerable children and families; ensuring that providers of early education and care receive an increase in rates for serving these families; and continuing growth in the UPK program. As much as possible given the challenging environment, the Board's recommendation maintained essential supports for children and families and balanced the important system needs of access and quality.

Education Secretary Appoints Sherri Killins as New EEC Commissioner

On December 22nd, Education Secretary Paul Reville appointed Dr. Sherri Killins, most recently Vice President for Human Development and Operations at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, as the Commissioner of Early Education and Care. The EEC Board recommended Dr. Killins to the Secretary after an extensive search and interview process that began over the summer. Dr. Killins assumed the post on February 2, 2009.

SECTION 1: 2008-2009 BOARD/EEC ACTIONS, POLICY DECISIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section highlights key decisions and actions taken this past year, organized within each of the five Strategic Directions. It is designed to respond, in part, to legislative language asking for an annual update on “progress made in achieving goals and implementing programs.” Where relevant, a brief summary of public commentary received on these actions and decisions is noted.

Strategic Direction 1- Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide.

- **Board Decides to Update EEC Licensing Regulations**

The Board voted to move forward on the development of new licensing regulations that align EEC regulations for family child care homes, group child care centers, and school age child care programs. The Board also voted to move forward with the public hearing process; EEC held 12 well-attended public hearings across the state in February, and gathered significant amounts of public input that were used to help craft the licensing updates.

- **Board Approves UPK Expansion Plan and Policy Changes**

In September, the Board approved a plan for FY09 UPK program expansion and eligibility that included several policy changes, including:

1. Prioritizing expansion funds for programs located within high-risk priority districts (in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) and/or serving a high proportion of subsidized children (50% or greater);
2. Expanding eligibility for new UPK family child care providers with national accreditation or a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential **or higher** versus the previous requirement of national accreditation or a CDA, which inadvertently limited some highly qualified family child care providers from participating in UPK. This shift was reflected in FY09 budget line-item language; and
3. Expanding allowable quality expenditures to include family engagement and transition to kindergarten activities.

- **Public commentary.** Public commentary prior to the vote was supportive of EEC’s proposal and appreciated that it reflected input from the field and from EEC’s Advisory Team and UPK Working Group. Public commentary- and subsequent Board discussion- reiterated the importance of prioritizing funds in high-risk priority districts, as is reflected in the policy changes outlined above, and discussions highlighted the importance of funding programs at varying levels of quality.

- **Universal Pre-K Pilot Implementation Evaluation Released**

The findings of the FY08 UPK Pilot Program Evaluation were released in September. The evaluation focused on the implementation design and early outcomes of the UPK program, and showed that the UPK program is being implemented effectively and, as it was designed, with a deliberate focus on support for high-quality programs. Grantees are spending UPK funds as expected, on activities that produce the highest quality preschool programs, and as the research shows, are most likely to produce positive educational outcomes for children.

- **Board Approves Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Funding**

In November, the Board voted to expend up to \$250,000 (for six month grants) for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Services through a competitive Request for Responses (RFR) to expand capacity among EEC’s current mental health programs, and that remaining funds be used for one-time activities to strengthen mental health services such as technical assistance, resource development, and training, professional development, strengthening partnerships, and developing resources for trauma response. *(Although 9C reductions eliminated this expansion, the Governor’s FY10 budget recommendation included it.)*

- **Public commentary:** The public commentary received by the Board was very supportive of EEC's proposal, which reflected feedback received from the field that new funding be used to expand and enhance the current Mental Health Consultation Services grant program through a new, competitively-issued RFR.

- **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Moves Forward**

Early this year, the Board heard a presentation on QRIS including recommendations for its development and implementation, and EEC began to chart a course forward for EEC's goal of implementing such a system in Massachusetts. A workgroup of 22 external stakeholders worked hard throughout the spring at the first phase of QRIS design, which has moved into the Public Input Phase.

- **Massachusetts Selected as one of Four States to Receive Technical Assistance to Develop an Early Childhood Accountability System**

Massachusetts was selected to participate in a national project on designing and implementing early childhood accountability systems, in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). This strong interagency relationship and EEC's innovative approach to UPK were identified as key factors leading to the selection of Massachusetts.

Strategic Direction 2- Family Support, Access, and Affordability- Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.

- **Homeless Families Gain Immediate Access to Financial Assistance**

EEC's newly developed and streamlined procedure for homeless families went into effect on December 3, 2007. Families who are placed in shelters through the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) now have immediate access to child care as part of EEC and DTA's ongoing work to improve the experience of parents and children in our financial assistance system.

- **Board Approves COLA Adjustment for Financial Assistance**

In June, the Board voted to update the State Median Income (SMI) level used to determine eligibility for EEC financial assistance in FY2009, representing a 5% shift in income eligibility and recognizing small increases in a family's cost of living. The Board also acted to authorize EEC to annually update to the current SMI hereafter.

- **Public commentary:** Public comments and the EEC Advisory Team expressed strong support for this policy change. Prior to the vote, the Board discussed the fact that a small number of new families would have to wait longer for financial assistance because other families would be staying in care longer as a result of this policy change.

- **Progress made in family support programming for infants and toddlers, despite 9C reductions.** EEC's two primary programs for infant and toddlers- the Massachusetts Family Network (MFN) and Parent Child Home Program (PCHP)- have continued to provide much-needed services to infants and toddlers and their families.

1. MFN is comprised of strength based, high quality, local networks of early education and family support for parents of young children birth to three. In FY '08, MFN served approximately 28,000 families with 29,000 children (0-3) directly through Network activities. MFN programs offered child development information and support through over 100 play-to-learn groups per week, often with community partners, including Early Intervention and public libraries. 6,800 parents participated in education and support activities, and over 4,000 parents participated in adult education and family literacy activities. MFNs responded to more than 57,000 requests for services directly or made referrals to other supportive services and collaborating partners. In October 2009 the MFN Program was reduced by \$1.1million as part of the 9C budget reductions, necessitating staff and program reductions. In response to the cuts, many parent leaders emerged, volunteering their time and talents to keep many vital MFN programs and services available to the community.

2. PCHP is a home-based early literacy, parenting and school readiness program designed to help strengthen verbal interaction and educational play between parents and their young children (18-30 months old). PCHP supports and strengthens parents' skills in enhancing their children's cognitive development and school readiness. PCHP serves families challenged by poverty, limited education, language barriers, and other obstacles to educational success. In 2007, EEC expanded PCHP through the Joint Family Support Program (JFSP), a hybrid model of PCHP combined with MFN programming. Through this model, EEC-funded family support programs are explicitly linked to provide services that are responsive to the needs of PCHP eligible families. There are 25 PCHP and 11 JFSP grants that provide PCHP programming in 62 communities. In FY '08, the program served 1,318 children. Of those children, 639 lived in single parent homes, 68 were children of teen parents and 150 were experiencing homelessness, living in shelter. Also, in FY '08, 32 family child care providers were served through the PCHP program.

- **Massachusetts Becomes a "Strengthening Families" State**

EEC has become an Affiliate State of the national *Strengthening Families Network*, a collection of early education and care programs, state agencies, advocates, and other organizations across the country that give families the tools they need to be strong. A key strategy is to build on the natural relationship between early education and care programs and parents to: help parents connect with each other, give parents information they need to be successful parents and provide access to needed community services. EEC is involved on several fronts to infuse this approach in the field:

- EEC's Income-eligible Reprocarement will ask programs to describe their policies and practices around family engagement and support, and how they assess their impact. Primary areas of focus were derived from the Strengthening Families self-assessment tool for early education and care programs.
- In developing QRIS, EEC has suggested the Strengthening Families self-assessment tool as an excellent mechanism for programs to measure their effectiveness in the areas of family engagement and support.
- EEC has recently applied for a Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) training and technical assistance opportunity. The National Association for the Education of Young Children identifies CSEFEL as an important training resource to support early childhood educators in their implementation of key family strengthening strategies. CSEFEL training would provide an excellent opportunity to link our involvement in Strengthening Families to our commitment to NAEYC standards.

- **Board Approves Income Eligible Reprocarement**

In January 2009, the EEC Board approved the agency's recommendation for the re-bidding of Income Eligible contracts, which provide child care financial assistance to more than 12,000 children through 220 providers statewide. The plan will support EEC's ongoing efforts to promote quality programming by prioritizing providers based on quality criteria and phasing in an accreditation requirement over the life of the contract. The Board also approved the department's plan to align, over time, contract requirements with the forthcoming Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), and a modest demonstration project to contract with both independent family child care providers and public schools in communities with limited current capacity.

- **Public commentary:** The Board heard a great deal of public commentary in opposition to the Reprocarement criteria as proposed because they allowed public schools- that are license-exempt and do not provide full-day full-year care- to be eligible for contracts. In response to the overwhelming opposition to this aspect of the proposed re-procurement, the Board voted to accept EEC's proposed criteria with the following two revisions: 1) require license-exempt programs to meet licensing standards; and 2) expect providers to offer continuing service at the same site for the same hours for the full school year. As proposed by EEC, this will be a limited demonstration project in areas with access challenges.

- **Deficiency Leads to New Limits on Access for EEC Financial Assistance**

Due to growing demand over the past several years, EEC has experienced increased pressure in the *Income Eligible* account (3000-4060), which provides child care financial assistance in the form of vouchers, contracts and grants to approximately 31,000 children enrolled in early education and care and after-school programs across the state. Due primarily to the current economic downturn, EEC has experienced a growing and unsustainable rise in the number of families given “priority” or immediate access under current policy and experienced a significant funding deficiency. In order to manage this, EEC took the unfortunate necessary action of limiting access to financial assistance for any new families beginning November 3, 2008, including a three month eligibility period for families in shelter who were not working. At the end of three months, families must be participating in the DTA employment services program or an EEC approved activity (employment, job training, education) to retain their eligibility for child care. Access for all families currently enrolled was not affected. New policies focused on maintaining access for children currently enrolled in programs, but several continuity of care categories, including access for siblings of children already enrolled, have been affected.

- **9C Reductions Expedite Implementation of New Policies Relative to Subsidy Management and Rates Paid to Providers**

EEC has been working over the past several years to create greater efficiency and consistency in policies and practices across our financial assistance programs, including subsidy management and the variation of rates paid to providers. The dire fiscal situation and related 9C reductions expedited several policy decisions including:

1. **Community Partnership Councils (CPC) Subsidy Management Transition-** EEC has been working with local CPC lead agencies to transition “subsidy” management from CPCs to either local EEC Income Eligible contracted providers or to the regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency.
 2. **Standard State Rate for All Children Receiving Financial Assistance through CPCs-** Effective January 1, 2009, all CPC providers serving EEC children will receive the standard state rate for children in their care, to create greater consistency in policies and practices across EEC financial assistance programs.
 3. **Grandfathered Rates-** A key part of the 9C cost savings was to expedite implementation of single payment/rate structure for all providers of subsidized early education and care. One element of this plan is to reduce the “Grandfathered” rates to the regional state rate paid to all other providers.
- **Public commentary:** The Board heard public commentary on the effect of 9C reductions, particularly the impact of lower rates on CPC’s ability to deliver quality services and the opposition of some CPCs to the transition of subsidy management to automated systems through the contracted providers and the CCR&Rs.

Strategic Direction 3- Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.

- **Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force Submits Recommendations**

In July 2007, EEC, partnering with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and the Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education, convened The Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out Of School Time Workforce Development Task Force charged with developing initial recommendations to advance the development of an effective workforce development plan. In July 2008, the Workforce Task Force concluded a year-long process and submitted its recommendations to EEC. Key recommendations and strategies follow:

1. Establish core competencies for all early education and care and out-of-school time professionals;
2. Create a well-designed orientation for all members of the field to clarify roles and expectations;

3. Delineate a clear and motivating career path with achievement-based compensation;
4. Ensure consistency in state policies to encourage higher education

The full report, "Steps Forward: Recommendations of the 2007-2008 Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Report," can be found at <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/EEC%20OST%20WDTaskForceFINAL.pdf>.

- **Board Approves New Guidelines for Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship Program**

In April, the Board voted to approve updated FY 2009 Eligibility Guidelines for the ECE Scholarship Program which would: prioritize scholarship assistance based on financial need; require a minimum number of hours working in a program; further define the types of degrees that individuals may pursue; increase academic accountability for current scholarship recipients; and expand eligibility to individuals with a bachelor's degree in an unrelated field seeking "specialized coursework" in early education and care. These changes could not be presented to the Board of Higher Education in time for them to be implemented for the 2009 school year. Both agencies have decided to delay implementation of the proposed changes until 2010 and have revised the 2009 application to gather specific data about the proposed changes to more accurately predict their impact when implemented.

- **Note:** In approving these changes, the Board clarified that EEC worked closely with the Department of Higher Education (DHE) in their development. The former Commissioner of DHE originally shared scholarship eligibility concerns, which created the impetus for revisiting these policies.

- **New Professional Development Calendar Launched**

In July, EEC added a professional development calendar to its website which allows Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) and Community Partnership Councils (CPCs) to display professional development opportunities in a coordinated way. This new function replaces dozens of individual training calendars and will enable providers across the state to view all EEC-funded professional development opportunities at a single glance.

Strategic Direction 4- Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public.

- **New Family Guide, "Learn and Grow Together" Released**

This Guide provides easy-to-understand information on the key stages of child development, and suggests age-appropriate family activities that are fun and low-cost, and is available initially in three languages: English, Spanish and Portuguese.

- **Progress on translation of EEC materials/resources**

In 2008, EEC began a translation initiative to reduce duplicative efforts and cost associated with translating written materials. EEC prioritized approximately 60 documents to be translated into 6 languages, chosen through a comprehensive and inclusive process- Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Traditional Chinese, and Vietnamese. With funding constraints, the first phase prioritized forms that families need to understand and that require their signature; on the provider front EEC focused on Family Child Care information. Documents are in the last level of review and will be released soon. EEC will add contact information for the "Commissioner's Mailbox" on the documents so users may share their questions and concerns about the forms. EEC also piloted a call-in service through the CCR&Rs and is expanding its use to EEC regional office staff. Finally, through the "Qwest" phone service, EEC provides third party interpretation services for non-English speakers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in 150 languages and various dialects. In 2009, EEC's continued translation efforts prioritize information for child care providers and families. Also in 2009, EEC's new website will launch and will include an "Español" button with access to a wide range of resources/ information in Spanish.

- **Enhanced Child Care Search on Website Launched**

On January 8th, EEC launched a new and significantly improved Child Care Search function on its website. The search, available in English and Spanish, provides detailed information on early education and care and other programs, and makes available for the first time on the web important licensing information. This “soft launch” is the first phase of planned enhancements.

EEC is eliciting feedback from the field and will work to address the current limitations of the Search, including the inclusion of school-based opportunities.

Strategic Direction 5- Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

- **Upgraded and Unified IT System Under Development**

EEC undertook the process of developing a comprehensive IT system to provide up-to-date information on EEC options and services, make it easier for providers to do business with us, and produce a real-time picture of funding allocations to inform policymakers and the public. Funded by the state’s Information Technology Division (ITD), this groundbreaking project will have a major impact on automating and improving the work that EEC does and will allow the agency to move forward in building a system of care that is responsive to the needs of families, providers and policy makers. In August, \$9.5M from the general government bond bill was allocated to design/ develop this system.

- **EEC Single Sign-On for Web Applications Launched**

In February, EEC unveiled a new streamlined sign-on process for users of multiple EEC web applications. Users who had numerous logins and passwords can now register for a single sign-on user account. This enhancement provides better security against unauthorized access.

- **Web-Based Improvements to Background Record Check (BRC) Processing Developed**

In an on-going effort to improve the timeliness of the Background Record Check (BRC) process for EEC programs, EEC has developed a new web-based method for submitting BRC requests and receiving data. The new, secure, web-based Manager, will allow EEC to notify an EEC licensed program online of the results of the vast majority of BRC requests submitted to EEC (The BRC process includes the CORI checks.)

SECTION 2: PROGRESS UPDATES BY INITIATIVE

This year's Progress Updates by Initiatives- as outlined in MGL 15D: section3(g) and in line-item 3000-1000 of the FY09 General Appropriation Act- cross all of the EEC Board's Five Strategic Directions- Quality; Workforce; Family Support; Access, and Affordability; Communications; and Infrastructure.

Initiatives

- a) Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)
- b) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- c) Alignment of "Rates" and Quality Standards
- d) School Readiness Assessment/Child Outcomes
- e) Workforce and Professional Development (Core Competencies)
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a) Universal Pre-Kindergarten

EEC has made significant progress in the third year of implementation of the Massachusetts Pilot Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program. Through UPK, EEC seeks to ensure that all children have access to a high-quality learning experience and enter school ready to learn and succeed.

The current pilot program is the first phase of a multi-pronged plan for a state UPK system. To plan for the longer term implementation of UPK, EEC has developed and continues to gather input on a UPK Concept Paper that summarizes the current state of preschool access, quality, and affordability and proposes key components of a comprehensive UPK system. The concept paper is available online at: http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/UPK_Concept_Paper_mostrecentMay2008.pdf

Quality and Planning Grants:

There are currently two types of UPK pilot grants to programs: UPK ***Classroom Quality Grants*** and ***UPK Assessment Planning Grants***.

Current ***Classroom Quality*** grants are awarded to program sites (renewed each year subject to ongoing eligibility and appropriations) to maintain and improve the quality of their services. The UPK eligibility requirements include:

- Accreditation from a nationally recognized organization;
- Well educated and skilled teachers/providers in each classroom/setting;
- Use of curriculum guidelines aligned with the Massachusetts K-12 Curriculum Frameworks;
- Use of an appropriate child assessment tool to ensure children's educational progress and effective implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Quality grants are being used to:

- Improve teacher compensation;
- Strengthen teaching practice and professional development opportunities;
- Help programs understand and communicate about children's progress;
- Support accreditation activities;
- Provide additional comprehensive services;
- Enhance family engagement activities;
- Facilitate transitions to kindergarten and other programs;
- Improve the classroom environment; and
- Provide or facilitate access to full-day full-year services for working families.

Current UPK **Assessment Planning Grants**, which help emerging programs as they work to meet the UPK standard, are awarded on a one-time basis to allow programs to fully meet grant goals. These funds help programs implement developmentally appropriate child assessment systems. EEC has also been coordinating assessment-related technical assistance for grantees and providing and connecting programs to assessment trainings.

Table 1 below presents an overview of current UPK grantees. In addition, EEC is currently in the process of finalizing new FY09 Classroom Quality grants; this year EEC received applications for quality grants from more than 301 eligible classrooms serving over 4,600 children, which would cost \$6.6 million to fully fund (versus the \$1.5 million available for new sites), and has preliminarily selected 53 new sites for funding (please note that the new sites are not reflected in Table 1 since their grant status is still being finalized). 100% of these preliminary grantees are either in designated priority districts and/or serving more than 50% subsidized children, as has been prioritized by Board/EEC policy. EEC will not be able to award additional assessment planning grants this year because of the 9c budget reduction implemented in January; over 175 programs applied for these funds.

Table 1: Current UPK Grantee Overview

Grant Program	# Sites	# UPK Classrooms/ Homes	# UPK Children	# Cities/ Towns	Grant Award Amount
Current Classroom Quality Grantees* (originally funded in FY07 or FY08, renewed each year)	245**	406	5,700	97	\$5,000 - \$200,000 (average= \$36,400 per site)
FY09 Assessment Planning Grantees*** (one-time funding)	60 agencies including 162 programs	N/A	N/A	72	\$2,800 - \$60,000 (average= \$12,500 per agency)

*Classroom Quality grants have been awarded to designated classrooms within specific program sites or to designated family child care providers; 70% of current grantee sites are fully funded for all preschool classrooms.

**The 245 UPK sites include: 126 center-based programs (56 of which are Head Start sites); 106 family child care providers; 14 public school preschool programs, and 1 private school program.

***Assessment Planning grants have been awarded to designated program sites or family child care providers within agencies.

UPK Implementation Evaluation:

In Fiscal Year 2008, EEC funded an external evaluation of the implementation and early outcomes of the UPK pilot program and findings from this evaluation were released this fiscal year. The evaluation focused on documenting how the grant funding was allocated as well as perceptions of administrators, teachers, and family child care providers about improvements in quality since the grants were received and program areas where needs remained. This evaluation found that the pilot program is being implemented as intended and that programs are positive about the impact of the funds. A summary of the findings is available on-line at:

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/UPK%20Evaluation%20Executive%20Summary.pdf> and
<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/UPK Board Sept08 Evaluation.pdf>

Some recommendations were also made to EEC about how to further refine the grant programs to meet the needs of different programs types. These recommendations included:

- Narrowing allowable grant expenditures over time to focus on building staff capacity and other key quality improvement activities, with more flexibility given initially and more targeted spending in subsequent years of funding;
- Linking grant expenditures to more specific program outcomes;
- Improving communication with and supports for UPK family child care providers;
- Further studying how programs are using assessment data and how assessment is informing instruction;
- Further developing statewide technical assistance and training infrastructure to support assessment and other quality improvement activities; and
- Developing longer-term strategy for involving parents in the UPK system and increasing their awareness/understanding of quality early education.

EEC is in the process of designing program modifications in response to the above recommendations and plans to consider refinements to the grant program in the areas of grant expenditures, family child care supports and communications, parent communications, and statewide technical assistance and training infrastructure in Fiscal Year 2010.

Phase II of UPK Evaluation:

EEC is in the process of selecting a qualified research organization through a competitive process to serve as the evaluator for the next phase of assessing the effectiveness of the UPK program. EEC envisions that this evaluation will be multi-year and focus on: 1) assessing if UPK programs are providing a high-quality learning environment for preschool children and 2) measuring child outcomes to understand UPK is preparing children for school success.

CCSSO Technical Assistance Project:

EEC was recently selected to participate with three other states in a national technical assistance project with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (*See Section d below, School Readiness Assessment System*). As part of this project, EEC will receive technical assistance from national experts about the assessment tools that UPK programs are required to use and the design and implementation of the next phase of UPK evaluation.

Alignment of Quality Enhancement Grants: EEC's efforts to align classroom-based quality enhancement grants will be addressed in the "Capacity Report"- required by Chapter 15, Section 85 of the Acts of 2008- which will be submitted to the Legislature in June 2009.

UPK Related Board/EEC Policy Decisions and Changes (see Section 1 above for more information)

- *Prioritizing FY09 expansion funds;*
- *Refining eligibility requirements for family child care providers; and*
- *Expanding allowable quality expenditures to include family engagement and transition to kindergarten activities.*

b) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

EEC's Universal Pre-Kindergarten program has taken bold steps toward defining quality indicators in preschool programs, which has helped set the stage for the development of the QRIS.

EEC has contracted with Oldham Innovative Research to develop the QRIS, which can be a powerful tool in supporting programs and providers to reach higher levels of quality. The process of developing this system, which will continue to take place over the next several months, began in early February 2008 with presentations to EEC staff and the EEC Advisory Team. At these meetings, Anne Mitchell, a nationally recognized expert on QRIS models, provided an overview of QRIS structures being used in other states, what the field has learned about their impact on program

quality, and key components and issues that EEC should consider in developing a successful model for Massachusetts.

Today, Massachusetts is well on the way in the process of creating a QRIS that will facilitate the state's efforts to build a comprehensive early care and education system. The QRIS will serve as a framework for organizing all of the functions of this system; this framework will include each of the five traditional components of a QRIS:

- 1) Standards
- 2) Monitoring and Accountability
- 3) Program and Practitioner Supports
- 4) Fiscal Incentives
- 5) Parent Outreach and Education

The work plan for Massachusetts' QRIS outlines three phases through which each of these components will evolve: Design, Public Input, and Implementation. Though Massachusetts began formally developing its QRIS in February 2008, the state's work to develop Standards and Guidelines for Early Childhood¹, and the coming together of EEC's two predecessor agencies, were both early efforts at beginning to build a QRIS. While each phase will be relatively fast and intense, it will still take several years before Massachusetts has a fully implemented QRIS.

An overarching principle to the development of the QRIS has been to have a transparent and collaborative process. Accordingly, design teams have been convened for each component of the QRIS; these teams bring together the relevant internal and external experts. In addition, opportunities for public input have been a deliberate step in the development process.

Since last February, Massachusetts has focused on designing the overarching structure of the QRIS and the Standards. To do this work, EEC convened both an Internal EEC QRIS Team, and an External Stakeholders QRIS Team. The two teams met together in the beginning and then the External group completed the majority of the work. This group worked tirelessly to develop overarching recommendations and a draft of the Standards. The EEC Board, Advisory Team, and Parent Advisory Team also gave guidance into the process. In June, a draft of the Standards was transferred to the Internal EEC QRIS Team. The job of this team was to review for any inconsistencies with other EEC efforts and to add their own expertise. The internal team produced a draft that then went through a research review to check for potential gaps based on what other states have been doing. The draft that emerged was previewed with the EEC Advisory Team in November 2008, and brought to the EEC Board in January 2009.

In the spring of 2009, the public input process will begin. This process will include presentations around the state about what a QRIS is, as well a review of the content of the standards. In addition, all relevant information will be on EEC's website with an online survey including specific questions on which EEC is seeking feedback. Public comments and suggestions will be incorporated and a further revised draft of the Standards will be ready to pilot in winter 2010.

Work has also begun in designing the Monitoring/Accountability and the Program/Practitioner Supports components of the QRIS. With the current challenging fiscal environment, EEC is working hard to align its efforts and to ensure that quality supports to programs are being delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Ideally, the QRIS will be ready to pilot by FY10. This will launch the process of testing out that the processes, forms, and ratings work. Then, EEC hopes to be able to conduct a validation study of the QRIS, to ensure that the proposed standards differentiate between levels of quality, before taking it to full scale. One of the key pieces of work for the next year will be designing the Fiscal Incentives component of the QRIS. One of many options that EEC could consider is how reimbursement rates

¹ Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences and Early Childhood Program Standards

can be aligned with quality standards. In the meantime, EEC is also looking for ways to allow options for the Income Eligible procurement to align with the QRIS when it is more fully implemented.

c) Alignment of “Rates” and Quality Standards

EEC has taken several steps over the past three years to begin effectively aligning the rates paid to our providers of subsidized early education and care services with the standards EEC uses to ensure quality programming, outlined below. The development of the Income-eligible Re-procurement and QRIS will help to inform future multi-year plans to align rates and quality standards.

FY2009 9C Reductions: Realizing Subsidy Management Efficiencies and Implementing Rate Standardization/Reform

- Transition Management of CPC Direct Services to On-Line and Automated Systems:
EEC has been working with local CPC lead agencies to transition “subsidy” management from CPCs to EEC automated billing and information management systems either through local EEC Income Eligible contracted providers or through the regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies. This transition has been discussed for several years and the current fiscal situation required us to move more quickly to make this system change.

While CPC’s will no longer perform the enrollment and billing functions of financial assistance, they will continue to act as the local point of entry to support families in accessing high quality programs by providing parents with information and referrals, as well as access to the EEC Centralized Waiting List.

- Standard State Rate for All Children Receiving EEC Financial Assistance:
Another key part of the 9C cost savings/rate reforms was to expedite implementation of single payment/rate structure for all providers of subsidized early education and care. In the multiple subsidy programs EEC inherited when the agency was created, providers were paid varied rates – even for the same service to two different children in the same classrooms. This plan has three components that are still in process of being implemented:

1. CPCs: Effective January 1, 2009, all CPC providers serving EEC children (through contracts, vouchers or grants) received the Regional State Rate (Tier 4) for children in their care (see <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/FY08PublishedRateChart.xls>). EEC has been working over the past several years to create greater consistency in policies and practices across our financial assistance programs, including the variation of rates paid to our providers. While this has been a difficult change to manage mid-year, EEC has been working directly with CPCs and their providers to ensure continuity of care for all children currently receiving EEC financial assistance.

2. Grandfathered Rates: Another element of this plan is to reduce the “Grandfathered” rates to the regional state rate (paid to all other providers). Grandfather rates were, years ago, individually negotiated and EEC has been slowly phasing them out through rate increases over the past three years. Forty-two (42) providers still receive “grandfather” rates. We estimated the savings associated with this rate reduction allowed us to achieve the total target reduction (\$450,000).

3. Phasing Out of “Tiered” Reimbursements: The Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) implemented a tiered reimbursement system to encourage providers to achieve greater levels of quality. Providers agreeing to participate in or implement various quality activities were able to receive incremental and permanent increases in quality. The program was successful in many ways as the majority of providers achieved the highest rate level (Tier 4). One aspect of the rate reform implemented in the current fiscal year is to formally conclude or

phase out the tier program as EEC prepares for its successor – the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

Income Eligible Reprocurement:

The Income Eligible Reprocurement has been designed to align with the nascent Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) where possible. Specific efforts to align these two initiatives include:

- The Reprocurement evaluation criteria to select programs has been written to conceptually align with the QRIS Standards;
- During the first period of contracting, programs will be required to make progress on elements that will eventually be part of the QRIS Standards;
- At the time of renewal, there will be the opportunity to align with the QRIS standards as far as they have been developed at that time.

Market Rate Study:

The Federal funding agency, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides funding for all subsidized children in Massachusetts. ACF provides approximately 50% of funding for state subsidies through the Child Care Development Fund. Use of these funds is regulated by ACF under 45 CFR Parts 98 and 99. These regulations require states to complete a survey of market prices of child care every two years. The results of this market price study must be included in the state plan that each state submits to ACF every two years describing the activities of the state child care lead agency in the coming two years. ACF compares the results of the market rate survey to the state reimbursement rates to child care providers to determine whether the state rates provider access to child care for children using the subsidies. If the state sets its reimbursement rate at the 75th percentile of child care rates, ACF deems that the state to provide adequate access to early education and care for subsidized families. If the reimbursement rates are lower than the 75th percentile, the state must explain how it provides access for subsidized children. Many states including Massachusetts have reimbursed providers at maximum rates below the 75th percentile and justified access to care for subsidized children by citing the number of providers who participate in the subsidy program (60% of all licensed providers in Massachusetts accept subsidies from EEC).

2009 Market Rate Study

EEC has launched its 2009 Market Rate Survey which will gather new and valuable information from the provider community, and enable EEC to compare current prices to existing state regional reimbursement rates and analyze possible alternatives.

To complete the 2009 study, EEC has contracted with Mills Consulting Group and Goodman Research Group, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Presently, (January and February 2009), early education and care programs are being contacted by their local Child Care Resource and Referral agency and asked to update their price information. Data on market prices will be collected at the zip code level to provide the most detailed local data possible.

Collecting rate information at the zip code level requires that EEC collect data from more providers than in the past when a sample of providers was used to survey the price of care in each region. This year EEC will request data from all full day, full week providers which will allow analysis at a finer level. This data can be used to describe the actual locations of providers with similar rates and allow EEC to review the existing rate regions and explore amending these regions to better reflect actual provider price groupings.

Results will be published by 2009, and will not include identifying information about specific providers.

Board/EEC Policy Decisions and Changes (see Section 2 above for more information)

- *Transitioning Subsidy Management from CPCs*
- *Paying Standard State Rate to all CPC Providers; Eliminating grandfather rates*
- *Income-eligible Re-procurement*

d) Developing an Early Childhood Assessment and Accountability System to Measure Child Outcomes

As public investments in programs serving children birth to five, and particularly for three- and four-year olds have increased, state leaders are increasingly and seriously involved in designing processes for demonstrating outcomes for children, especially those participating in state preschool programs. As assessment systems are developed, it is critical to both 1) take into account the co-measure of program quality and 2) develop assessment systems that are congruent with knowledge about the complexities and risks of large-scale assessment of very young children (NECATF, 2007; Snow, & Van Hemel, 2008). The younger the child, the greater the potential for mis-measurement and the more critical the development of systems that protect both children and practitioners from the consequences of misapplying assessment practices more appropriate for older students (ECEA SCASS report, 2009). Finally, EEC recognizes that it is important for the agency's data systems to link child outcome measures to program standards and accountability (through QRIS, described above in section 2b) and to teacher qualifications and competencies through EEC's Professional development registry/data management system (described in the attached Workforce Report).

With these challenges and opportunities in mind, EEC is engaged in the following initiatives that are informing the development of a statewide system of early childhood accountability and assessment:

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) grant:

Massachusetts is one of four states to have received a technical assistance grant from CCSSO to help develop an early childhood accountability system. This project will build on recommendations made by the National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force in the report *Taking Stock: Assessing and Improving Early Childhood Learning and Program Quality* (http://ccf.tc.columbia.edu/pdf/Task_Force_Report.pdf). This report provides a framework for state planning and policy development in the areas of program quality, child learning standards, assessments, and data system development. EEC is the primary lead for the grant, in partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and community partners as appropriate. Through the grant, EEC is receiving technical assistance from Drs. Sharon Lynn Kagan, of Columbia and Yale Universities, and Thomas Schultz, of CCSSO; the other states are Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana. The work of this project builds on the work that Massachusetts has been doing for several years with the Massachusetts School Readiness Indicators Project and several additional workgroups along with EEC's support for assessment through UPK Assessment Planning grants and requirement for programs to use a selected child assessment tool to participate in the UPK program (see section 2a). The purpose of this grant and year-long process is to help develop and finalize Massachusetts' approach to school readiness assessment and child outcome measurement.

The three areas where technical assistance will focus are:

1. The next phase of evaluation of the Massachusetts UPK program, which will potentially include a longitudinal evaluation of children's outcomes;
2. How to measure and report on the developmental progress of all young children in Massachusetts, including how/if to coordinate this with: 1) current Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Indicator data reporting efforts and 2) current assessment tools that UPK programs are required to use to inform program practice; and
3. Guidance about how to sequence EEC's concurrent efforts to develop an early childhood accountability system.

As a result of this work, we expect to have a robust methodology for our UPK evaluation; a report with recommendations about how to pursue a population approach to child assessment followed by a responsive work plan; and a strategic work plan for our accountability efforts.

Unified Information Technology System Development

The development of a unified and comprehensive information technology system will facilitate EEC's efforts to build a high-quality early education and care and out-of-school time system and align our quality efforts with rates. From February 2007 through June 2007, EEC embarked on a comprehensive process to develop a strategic vision for a unified information technology system. In December 2007, the Commonwealth's Information Technology Division (ITD) made a \$9.4 million commitment to fund the EEC's three-year information technology strategic plan. The strategic plan will transform the existing technology infrastructure into a state-of-the-art system that will:

- Provide "one-stop-shopping" for families, with a single, user-friendly information portal for all EEC services and a unified enrollment process for all types of financial assistance
- Streamline billing, payment, licensing and information-sharing processes for providers;
- Provide policymakers with tools to **track the progress of** children in early education and care programs and build connections across state agencies to share information and coordinate services for children.

The RFR for a solution provider was developed, released and awarded between February 2008 and August 2008. For the past three months, EEC has been negotiating with the winner of the \$6 million bid, Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC). However, on February 13, 2009, after failing to reach agreement on key contract provisions, including the overall cost of the project to the Commonwealth, EEC ended contract negotiations with CSC. EEC is currently revising the approach and timeline for achieving the initiative's goals. In the coming weeks, EEC will work with partners and stakeholders on planned key project activities, including defining the nature of the new business processes and tools that will serve as the basis of the new unified online information system. EEC remains fully committed to continuing to move forward with the implementation of this important project.

Assignment of State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs)

A key recommendation under the Governor's Education Action Agenda, is the development of a "Readiness Passport" for every child enrolled in Massachusetts schools. The Readiness Passport will provide parents, guardians and agencies the ability to document key elements of a child's educational experiences. One critical first step in this process is beginning to assign unique student identify numbers or SADIDs to children in early education. Children currently receive these numbers when they enter the public school. Under the guidance of EOE, legal counsel from EEC, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) have begun discussions on how to address state and federal privacy law constraints, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations (FERPA), that affect the ability of these agencies to share information with one another.

Board/EEC Policy Discussions:

In May, Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan of Columbia University presented findings from the recent report of the National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force entitled Taking Stock: Assessing and Improving Early Childhood Learning and Program Quality, and discussed the implications of this report for Massachusetts. Dr. Kagan noted that Massachusetts is the only state to make such a strong commitment to quality and infrastructure within its UPK system. Board member questions focused on whether comparisons can be made across states in terms of child outcomes, how Massachusetts should proceed in terms of developing an early childhood assessment system and evaluation of its activities, how EEC and ESE can align their work, and how Head Start can inform the broader system.

e) Workforce and Professional Development (Core Competencies)

EEC offers three professional development initiatives that directly support early education and care and out of school time educators earn a credential or degree. Below, please find a brief overview of these initiatives: the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Scholarship program, the Building Careers

Grant, and the Child Development Associates (CDA) Scholarship programs. For a more detailed discussion and a full update of EEC's Workforce and Professional Development efforts, please see the attached Workforce Report: *"Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Workforce Development System Building update, February 2009."* Also see Attachments 3a and 3b for more information on the ECE Scholarship and Building Careers programs.

The Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship:

The ECE Scholarship program is administered jointly by EEC and the Department of Higher Education Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA). It is a direct scholarship to eligible educators who are currently working in early education and care or out of school time, enrolled in an associates or bachelors degree program in early education and care or in a related degree field. Participants are eligible for a maximum of 9 credits per semester, 27 credits per year. ECE Scholarship award amounts are based per credit and vary depending on the institution of higher education. Scholarship recipients are required to remain in the field for six months for each semester of scholarship aid after graduation.

ECE Scholarship Program Funding History:

FY2009	\$4M	1018 applicants approved by EEC	57% Attending Public Institution 43% Attending Private Institution
FY2008	\$4M	980 applicants approved by EEC	54% Attending Public Institution 46% Attending Private Institution
FY2007	\$3M	743 applicants approved by EEC	55% Attending Public Institution 45% Attending Private Institution
FY2006	\$1M	614 applicants approved by EEC	59% Attending Public Institution 41% Attending Private Institution

Building Careers in Early Education and Care Grant:

The Building Careers grant program funds 21 institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth to support degree attainment by the early education and care and out of school time workforce. The Building Careers is based on a cohort model that supports coursework, academic advising, and other necessary college supports at times that are convenient for working adults. Awards to colleges range from \$48,480 - \$68,000 for 2- and 4-year institutions respectively. Goal of the program is to increase the number of educators in the field with a degree in early childhood education or a related field; increase access to higher education for early education and care and out-of-school time educators; promote high quality professional development; and encourage partnerships and broad-based collaborative planning efforts that leverage and maximize resources across public and private agencies.

Building Careers Funding History:

FY2009	\$1.2M	717 participants (projected)	18 Public Institutions 3 Private Institutions
FY2008	\$1,017,000	749 participants	18 Public Institutions 3 Private Institutions
FY2007	\$1,130,175	818 participants	19 Public Institutions 5 Private Institutions
FY2006	\$1,158,325	869 participants	20 Public Institutions 5 Private Institutions
FY2005	\$1,063,973	674 participants	20 Public Institutions 5 Private Institutions

Child Development Associate (CDA) Scholarship:

The CDA Scholarship program is a direct scholarship to individuals in the early education and care field who are applying for the national CDA credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition. To participate in this program an educator must be living and working in Massachusetts and have a family income at or below 100% of the statewide median income. The Council issues CDAs to educators working in center-based programs with infants and toddlers or preschoolers, family child care providers, and home visitors. Almost half of the scholarships are awarded to family child care providers. Awards range from \$50 - \$325 depending on the credential applied for, and whether it is an initial, second setting, or renewal application. All funding is directly paid to the Council of Professional Recognition on behalf of the educator.

CDA Scholarship Funding History:

	Allocated Funding	Approved Applicants
FY2009	\$50,000	146
FY2008	\$30,150	172
FY2007	\$23,175	136
FY2006	<i>Data not available</i>	44
FY2005	<i>Data not available</i>	67

f) Supporting National Accreditation

EEC supports programs to become accredited through the Community Partnership for Children (CPC) Accreditation Grant Program; the Quality Improvements Grant Program (license plate fund); and UPK Classroom Quality grants.

In FY09, EEC awarded 115 grants totaling \$1,738,739 to CPC lead agencies across the Commonwealth to support programs in achieving national accreditation (i.e., National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for center-based programs and National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) for independent or system-affiliated family child care programs).

In the FY09 grant requirements, CPC programs were encouraged to collaborate with other CPC programs to maximize services in a larger geographic region. EEC also provided greater direction on the types of allowable accreditation activities to ensure greater consistency in service provision across the state. Specifically, grants are being used to support costs associated with accreditation and/or re-accreditation; consultation and mentoring, including a new provision allowing programs to provide stipends for staff to complete portfolios and documentation; and classroom quality materials and supplies.

In FY07, the last year for which we have data,

- 1,189 programs across the state participated in CPC and NAEYC accreditation activities
 - Of these, 693 programs became accredited by NAEYC.
- 180 family child care providers across the state participated in CPC and NAFCC accreditation activities;
 - Of these, 19 providers became accredited by NAFCC.

It is important to note that Massachusetts currently leads the nation in the number of accredited programs, with 1,067 programs serving 81,443 children. This includes 795 center-based, licensed

programs, 263 public school programs (111 are kindergarten accredited only), and 9 accredited programs are delegated, exempt or unlicensed.

Quality Improvement Grant Program:

Programs were also able to access accreditation support through the Quality Improvement Grant Programs (funding through revenues from the "Invest in Children" special Massachusetts license plates). In February 2008, EEC awarded 17 grants for \$247,734 and in January 2009, awarded 19 grants for \$208,808, to fund accreditation fees, materials, and consultation associated with accreditation, as well as other quality initiatives.

This spring EEC will begin designing the Program and Practitioner Supports section of the QRIS. To do this work we have formed a Design Team of internal and external stakeholders. As national accreditation is emerging as a significant aspect of the QRIS standards, it will be important to consider the effectiveness of our current approach to supporting accreditation and how we can strengthen and grow this support. The one-time System Capacity report that EEC has legislatively been asked to prepare will also focus on the issue of how to best maximize our current resources to help programs meet and maintain increasing levels of quality.

g) Promoting Positive Behavioral and Mental Health in Early Education and Care

Mental Health Consultation Services:

EEC's mental health initiatives are aimed at providing mental health promotion, prevention, and intervention services as soon as possible for children and their families. In FY09, EEC continues to fund two types of mental health consultation programs:

1. Mental Health Consultation Services Grant- \$2.4 million in FY09, serving over 1,400 children
EEC issued Mental Health Consultation Services continuation grants to ten grantees serving more than 70 cities and towns. Grantees serve as an "on-call" resource to child care programs, responding to referrals of children exhibiting behavioral challenges and providing on-site consultation by a mental health consultant to coach and mentor program staff.

Through this grant, EEC aims to accomplish the following objectives:

- Reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions of children from EEC funded programs
- Enhance staff competencies to work with behaviorally challenged children, thereby benefiting all children enrolled in the program
- Strengthen parenting skills and parent involvement, and
- Promote collaboration for better access to services for children and families.

From July to December of 2008, grantees provided consultation services for 1424 individual children referred due to behavioral concerns. In response to these referrals, mental health consultants provided more than 12,700 hours of on-site consultation services to 200 programs – directly benefiting all of the children in 587 classrooms or family child care homes.

EEC tracks consultation service grantee data, including the number of suspensions and expulsions (terminations due to behavior), the frequency of types of behavioral issues, and strategies used to address them. The mid-year data indicates that the most common emotional-behavioral issues in order of frequency (that grantees report as the primary problem for the child) are aggression and oppositional behaviors, peer relations/social skills issues, and overactivity/attention issues. The most frequent strategies used to ameliorate these behaviors are direct consultation to child care staff, modifications in teaching strategies including adjusting the daily schedule and classroom layout, modeling of behavior management strategies, and consultation with the child's family. Whole staff training appears to be particularly useful to help support children's peer relations/social skills needs.

Preliminary (mid-year) data indicates low rates of expulsions amongst the programs receiving mental health consultation services. Amongst 1424 children referred and receiving services because they were at risk for expulsion, there were 3 suspensions and 9 expulsions reported. Accounting for all of the children in the 587 classrooms served, a high estimate of the expulsion rate would be 1 out of 1000², which is significantly lower than the oft-cited study (Gilliam, 2005) estimating Massachusetts' rate of expulsion to be more than 11 per 1,000 children.³

While externalizing ("acting out") behaviors are most likely to put a child at risk of being expelled from a child care program, it is important to note that grantees also provided a significant amount of service to children with internalizing behaviors such as depression and anxiety. These mental health issues – while causing less disruption in the classroom – are also important to address, as they can also have a negative impact on children's ability to learn and be prepared for school.

2. Comprehensive Mental Health in Child Care (CMHCC) programs- \$620,000 in FY09, serving 360 children

In collaboration with MassHealth/Mass. Behavioral Health Partnership, EEC has worked to connect early education and care providers with mental health clinics to locate clinicians on-site at 16 child care programs that have Supportive Child Care contracts with EEC. These "embedded" mental health clinicians provide support and training to staff at the child care program and link families with needed clinical services through the partnering clinic. Goals include:

- Reducing expulsions or suspensions of children due to behavioral issues
- Preventing repeat psychiatric hospitalizations of children
- Improving the quality of child, parent, and family relationships, and
- Reducing the risk factors that impact children's emotional development and their acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for success in school

From July to December of 2008, 360 children received individual services through the CMHCC program. EEC funding pays for approximately 2/3 of the clinicians' time to support non-billable services such as home visits, classroom observations, service coordination, training and travel costs. The remaining 1/3 is made up by billing insurances for the clinical services provided. In the 6-month period mental health clinicians reported that they provided 2,500 hours of individual services to children, 1,400 hours of consultation to child care staff, 950 hours working with families, and 2,000 hours coordinating services for children involved in therapy. There were 2 suspensions and 3 expulsions reported.

Reducing and Monitoring Suspension and Expulsion

Research shows, and EEC's experience confirms, that mental health consultation services significantly reduce terminations due to challenging behavior. EEC's endeavors to provide strong social-emotional supports for all children are not limited to mental health consultation. Quality enhancement and workforce development efforts clearly improve overall classroom practice as well as support teachers' ability to manage challenging behavior. Finally, EEC's strengthened Licensing Regulations ensure that programs implement a procedure to prevent suspension and expulsion, including meeting with the parents, developing a behavioral intervention plan, providing referral options, and pursuing options for supportive services to the program.

As mentioned above, EEC currently monitors suspensions and expulsions in programs receiving mental health consultation services. EEC has conducted surveys of Child Care Directors and Mental Health Specialists (2007) and of Supportive Child Care Programs (2008) which have informed our planning. In both of these surveys about a third of programs report that they have expelled a child in the past year (yielding an estimate of 3.8 expulsions per 1000 children- still lower than Gilliam's

² This estimate is based on an assumption of approximately 17 children per classroom. In future years, EEC will require Mental Health Consultation Services grantees to report on the precise number of children in each classroom benefitting from consultation services.

³ "Prekindergartners Left Behind: Expulsion Rates in State Prekindergarten Systems," Walter S. Gilliam, Yale University Child Study Center, 2005.

estimate of 11.15 per 1000). We know that at times a child may benefit from a well-planned transition to a program that can more effectively accommodate the child's needs. Of most concern are children who are terminated from multiple programs due to behavioral challenges. EEC anticipates that its new Unified Information System will allow us to much more accurately estimate statewide expulsion rates. The new data system will make it possible for the agency to monitor retention of individual children in their child care placements, requiring all of our subsidized programs to report terminations due to behavior when they do occur.

Mental Health Consultation Services Expansion

The FY09 Budget included an additional \$500,000 for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, which was eliminated in the 9C reductions effective January 28, 2009.

EEC had proposed to use these funds to issue a competitive RFR for a new model of Mental Health Consultation Services Expansion Grants. EEC's Board approved a plan that would provide a comprehensive and collaborative array of supports to early education and care programs by combining the "embedded" and "on-call" consultation models.

Before the 9C reductions went into effect, an RFR was issued with priorities that reflected EEC's learning from current grantees and from gaps identified in a 2007 Survey of Child Care Directors and Mental Health Specialists. The RFR required grantees to build capacity for 3rd party billing and prioritized serving "at-risk" children and children enrolled via Supportive Child Care, serving infants and toddlers, addressing families' cultural and linguistic needs, working in partnership with families, coordinating with EI and Public Schools, and providing referral options for children with intensive mental health needs. While EEC was not able to award these grants, the RFR requirements point to EEC's future objectives regarding mental health consultation services. An additional \$500,000 would have allowed EEC to award 4-5 additional grants, potentially providing services in an additional 35-40 communities (over 100 total), but would still be far from funding mental health consultation services available to early education and care providers statewide.

Board/EEC Policy Decisions and Changes (see previous section for more information)

- *Approval of Mental Health Consultation Funding*
-

AREAS ON WHICH WE ARE NOT REPORTING

It is important to note that there are two areas on which the Board/EEC are asked to report that are not included in this document:

- Preschool Suspensions and Expulsions: “the estimated number of preschool suspensions and expulsions that occur each year in the commonwealth, the relative frequency of each type of mental illness or behavioral issues among children receiving programs and services from the department, and an analysis of the most effective intervention strategies.” (FY09 General Appropriations Act, line item 3000-1000)
 - Section 2, section g above reports some of this information for our Mental Health grants programs. However, at this time, we do not have the capacity to collect this data statewide. The development of our new Unified Information Technology System described in this report (Section 2d) provides an opportunity to begin developing the internal infrastructure necessary to collect this kind of data in the future.
- Full-day, full-year care study: “an estimate of the need for full-day, full-year care that meets the needs of parents who work full-time and shall include the number of pre-school aged children in the commonwealth who may be at risk due to family poverty, TAFDC status, special needs, or other risk factors.” (MGL Chapter 15D, Section 13d)
 - EEC has not conducted a study of this nature.

CONCLUSION

As this report illustrates, the past year has been one of tremendous progress on a number of key strategic initiatives. With a growing record of accomplishment, EEC looks forward to continuing the important work of creating a comprehensive and coordinated system focused on the needs of children and families. The on-going support and partnership of the Legislature, the Executive Office of Education, and the Governor have been instrumental and deeply appreciated. There is much more work to be done, and we look forward to working together in the months and years ahead.

Index of Reporting Requirements

Requirement	Source	Where to find in this report
<p>CAPACITY REPORT (as required by an outside section of Legislative Session Law): {Added July 2008}</p> <p>The Board, in consult with the Advisory Council, shall report on the current and potential capacity of the existing early education and care system to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) enhance the quality of early education and care programs; (2) provide multiple points of entry and outreach for families including those in hard to reach populations; (3) deliver comprehensive services including mental health consultation and intervention services to decrease expulsion rates; (4) foster collaboration and coordinate resources among providers of early education programs and linkages with human services agencies, the department of elementary and secondary education and local school districts; (5) undertake school readiness assessments and program evaluations; (6) maximize resources for workforce and professional development for early education and care professionals; and (7) reestablish trial court child care programs. <p>The report shall include: (8) a review of the local and regional organizational structures required by section 4 of chapter 15D of the General Laws, along with recommendations for how to achieve the most effective regional and local coordination to enhance the quality of services delivered through the early education and care system ; and (9) recommendations relative to any legislation necessary to support or authorize such plans.</p>	<p><i>Chapter 215, Section 85 of the Acts of 2008</i></p>	<p>Not included as part of this report. After approval by the Board, EEC will submit the Capacity report on June 15, 2009.</p>
<p>ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT (as required by Budget Line Item language):</p> <p>The Department shall report on status of the department's programming, which shall contain: (1) the proposed core competencies to be issued by the department, (2) the status and findings of the department's quality rating system, (3) a multi-year plan for the alignment of rates and quality standards and for programs to move toward meeting the quality standards enumerated in item 3000-5075, (4) details on the implementation of universal pre-kindergarten grants, along with any legislative recommendations for the improvement of the program, (5) a multi-year plan for the alignment of all classroom based quality enhancement grants funded by the department in order to ensure fairness and consistency across all preschool grant programs, (6) the department's recommendations on the consistent implementation of accreditation assistance across the commonwealth, (7) the number of early childhood educators and providers who have received such training, the estimated number who have requested such additional training, and a review and analysis of the most effective types of professional development, and (8) the estimated number of preschool suspensions and expulsions that occur each year in the commonwealth, the relative frequency of each type of mental illness or behavioral issues among children receiving programs and services from the department, and an analysis of the most effective intervention strategies.</p>	<p><i>G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 3(g), as amended by Section 3 of Chapter 321 of the Acts of 2008 and G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 10</i></p>	<p>Progress Updates by Initiative: p. 10-22</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Proposed core competencies: attached Workforce Report; 2) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS): p. 12; 3) Alignment of Rates and Quality Standards: p. 14; 4) Universal Pre-Kindergarten: p. 10; 5) Alignment of classroom based quality grants: Will be included as part of Capacity Study to be submitted in June 2009; 6) Accreditation: p. 19; 7) Training and professional development: attached Workforce Report; 8) Suspension and expulsion: Partially addressed on p.20; also addressed on p. 23 (<i>areas on which we are not reporting</i>)

Index of Reporting Requirements

<p>ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT (as required by EEC's Enabling Act): {Added July 2005}</p> <p>The Board shall submit an annual report describing its progress in achieving the goals and implementing the programs authorized in this chapter, which shall evaluate the progress made toward universal early education and care for preschool-aged children and toward reducing expulsion rates through developmentally appropriate prevention and intervention services. G.L.c. 15, Sec. 3(g).</p> <p>{Added July 2008}: The Board shall included in its annual report rules and regulations promulgated by the board relative to the use of civil fines and sanctions, the types of sanctions, and the amount of those fines. G.L.c. 15, Sec. 10.</p> <p>{Added November 2008}: The Department shall include an annual report on behavioral health indicators that includes estimates of the annual rates of preschool suspensions and expulsions, the types and prevalence of behavioral health needs of children served by the department, the racial and ethnic background of the children with identified behavioral health needs, the existing capacity to provide behavioral health services, and an analysis of the best intervention and prevention practices, including strategies to improve the delivery of comprehensive services and to improve collaboration between and among early education and care and human services providers. G.L.c. 15, Sec. 3(g)</p>	<p><i>G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 3(g), as amended by Section 3 of Chapter 321 of the Acts of 2008 and G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 10</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Progress in achieving goals and implementing programs: Board/EEC Actions, Policy Decision, and Accomplishments: p.4-9 2) Universal Pre-Kindergarten: p. 10 (UPK progress update) 3) Reducing expulsion rates: p.20 (Mental Health progress update) <p>Not included as part of this report.</p> <p>Progress Updates by Initiative: p.20 (Mental Health progress update)</p>
<p>UPK Statute as it relates to the ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT (as required by EEC's Enabling Act):</p> <p>The department, with the approval of the board and in consultation with the state advisory committee on early education and care established in Section 3A, shall study and present any additional recommendations on the programmatic, financing, and phase-in options for the development and universal implementation of the Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program. This study shall include an estimate of the need for full-day, full-year care that meets the needs of parents who work full-time and shall include the number of pre-school aged children in the commonwealth who may be at risk due to family poverty, TAFDC status, special needs, or other risk factors. <i>The department shall include its findings and recommendations, and any updates of its findings, in the annual report required under Section 3.</i></p>	<p><i>G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 13(d)</i></p>	<p>Universal Pre-kindergarten Progress Update: p.10 <i>(study relative to the need for full-day, full-year care not included in this report; has not been conducted)</i></p>
<p>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (as required by EEC's Enabling Act): {Added July 2005} The Board shall develop and annually update, an implementation plan for a workforce development system designed to support the education, training and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, family child care, infant, toddler, preschool and school-age providers. The board shall solicit input from organizations and agencies that represent a diverse spectrum of expertise, knowledge and understanding of broader workforce development issues and of the professional development needs of the early childhood and care workforce.</p>	<p><i>G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 5</i></p>	<p>Attached FY09 Workforce Report</p>

Index of Reporting Requirements

<p>5 YEAR MASTER PLAN (as required by EEC's Enabling Act): {Added July 2005} The commissioner shall analyze the present and future goals, needs and requirements of early childhood education and care in the commonwealth and recommend to the board comprehensive means to achieve a well-coordinated system that promotes positive social and emotional development, high educational achievement, and quality care in the commonwealth. Following consultation with the board, the commissioner shall prepare and submit to the secretary, for the secretary's review and approval, a 5-year master plan for achieving such a coordinated system. The master plan along with an annual progress report shall reflect the goals and standards established by the board and the secretary.</p> <p>{Added July 2008} The master plan shall include, but not be limited to: enrollment projections; identification of measures for age-appropriate child development and school readiness; expulsion rate projections; utilization of existing facilities; promotion of research; programmatic excellence; recommendations for construction or acquisition of new facilities; program distribution; the addition of new programs; the elimination of existing programs; and the need for program revisions. The commissioner shall receive reports, undertake research, and facilitate coordination among and between all entities delivering programs or services under this chapter. The commissioner shall promote the partnership of providers of early education and care programs and services with elementary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education and business and civic organizations.</p>	<p><i>G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 4</i></p>	<p>EEC Board Strategic Plan Attached.</p> <p>Accompanying EEC Work Plan, including annual updates, is in development and will be submitted as a separate document upon completion. This will address specific requirements required herein.</p>
<p>As required by Budget Line Item language {Added July 2008} The Department shall issue a report detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) As required by Budget Line Item language {Added July 2008}, the Department shall issue a report detailing: the number of families receiving child care who are transitioning from cash assistance in each of the past 3 fiscal years, b) of these families, the number of years each family has been receiving child care since their cash assistance benefits have been terminated, c) the correlative fiscal and policy impact on item 3000-4060 should former TAFDC recipients be added as a priority population, d) the correlative fiscal and policy impact on this item should former TAFDC recipients' child care remain within this entitlement account, e) the breakdown of the entire caseload of this item by TAFDC status and employment and training status, which shall be provided by the department of transitional assistance, and f) the number of former TAFDC recipients who transition off child care benefits due to exceeding income-eligibility requirements. 	<p><i>3000-4050</i></p>	<p>Not included as part of this report. Will be submitted separately in March 2009.</p>

MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM BUILDING UPDATE

MARCH 2009

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since its creation in 2005, the Board and Department of Early Education and Care have been charged through the enabling statute (MGL Chapter 15D: Section 5) to develop, implement, and annually report on progress towards a Workforce Development System for the early education and out of school time field (see Appendix A). Through this System, the goals of the Board and Department are to produce positive outcomes for children by supporting those who work with them directly or indirectly in a variety of roles and settings every day.

EEC released its first “*Workforce Development Plan in January, 2006*”¹ which provided a framework for the work and described the current state of the field. In June, 2007² EEC released an updated plan, which included key system elements and identified next steps for FY2008-2009.

Significant progress was made by the Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task (Workforce Task Force), which was established in July 2007 by EEC, the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and the Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education³, now the CAYL Institute. The Workforce Task Force was charged with conducting further research and analysis to make recommendations on four key aspects of the workforce development system. These four areas; Core Competencies; EEC Orientation; Credentialing and Career Lattice; and Articulation/Transfer Agreements and Credit for Prior Learning were derived from the key elements of an effective workforce development system as defined in EEC’s 2007 Workforce Development Plan. The work of each of the four Workforce Task Force committees is highlighted throughout this report. The complete report of the task force, “*Steps Forward: Recommendations of the 2007-2008 Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Report*,” can be found at <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/EEC%20OST%20WDTaskForceFINAL.pdf>; the summary brochure is available at <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/08EECBrochure.pdf>.

THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE HAS BEEN IMPORTANT IN HELPING MASSACHUSETTS TO TAKE THREE STEPS FORWARD: INITIATING BROAD INPUT, FURTHER DEFINING KEY ELEMENTS OF A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, AND CRAFTING NEXT STEPS.

-STEPS FORWARD, 2008

II. KEY ELEMENTS OF A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

EEC has identified the following key elements that must be in place to establish a comprehensive Workforce Development System for Massachusetts:

1. Statewide Infrastructure Building, Leadership, and Strategic Planning;
2. Core Competencies (and Orientation);
3. Professional Development Data Management System;
4. Credentialing and Career Lattice (Career Pathways); and
5. Professional Development Opportunities and Resources Aligned with Requirements and Workforce Needs

¹ EEC’s 2006 Workforce Development Plan is available at

http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/Workforce_Development_Plan_2006.pdf

² EEC’s 2007 Workforce Development Plan Update is available at: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/2007WorkforceReport%206.6.07.pdf>.

³ The Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education is now the Community Advocates for Young Learners (CAYL) Institute.

1. STATEWIDE INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING, LEADERSHIP, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Building a statewide infrastructure, leadership, and strategic planning are at the forefront of a well developed and comprehensive system. This past year has seen two pivotal events that expand and underscore this work. The creation of the Executive Office of Education (EOE) overseeing the Departments of Early Education and Care (EEC), Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), and Higher Education (DHE) provides greater opportunity for connecting the professional development systems of these three agencies into a teacher preparation system in the Commonwealth. The report of the Governor's Readiness Commission, "*Ready for 21st Century Success*," emphasizes the importance of life long learning, beginning at birth, and the urgency of developing a workforce that can support the readiness of our children and youth at all stages of their development.

Although workforce development requires an infrastructure all its own, it is also a key structural element in several related EEC initiatives such as Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) that are building blocks of the larger statewide system of early education and care. In 2008, EEC began to encourage UPK programs to allocate funds on professional development opportunities that align with EEC's Core Competencies and offer undergraduate or graduate credits or CEUs; and the future QRIS will recognize Program and Practitioner Supports as a key need of that system.

EEC's professional development initiatives have not been exempt from the pervasive economic events of these past several months. Diminishing state revenues and the resulting 9C cuts necessitated a 36% reduction in the funding EEC planned to expend on professional development in FY2009. Specifically, professional development funding to the CCR&Rs was cut by 45%; funding to the CPCs was cut by an average of 46%. A \$200,000 increase in the CDA scholarship program was eliminated and the Building Careers grant program received a minor funding cut as well.

Despite these challenges, EEC's vision of a professional development system for the early education and care and out of school time workforce remains undiminished, although it will likely take longer to achieve. What has become clear in this climate is that we can no longer afford to do "business as usual;" there is new urgency to maximize resources, reduce duplication, and foster collaborative relationships among our professional development partners in the field. If there is a silver lining in these tough economic times it is this opportunity to examine and improve the infrastructure for delivering professional development services to our workforce.

2. CORE COMPETENCIES AND ORIENTATION

EEC's WORKFORCE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

INVOLVE AND ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND ASSESSMENT OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM;

INCLUDE ALL STAFF ROLES AND LEVELS, WORKING IN ALL SETTINGS, WITH CHILDREN OF ALL ABILITIES, BIRTH TO AGE 14;

BUILD ON THE STRENGTHS OF CURRENT WORKFORCE;

PROVIDE A FULL CONTINUUM OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STAFF ROLES AND LEVELS;

ASSURE EQUITY THROUGH INTEGRATION AND ALIGNMENT OF STANDARDS ACROSS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SYSTEMS;

ENSURE AND PROMOTE DIVERSITY AMONG ALL ROLES AND LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE, THROUGHOUT REGIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH ACCESSIBLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CLEAR CAREER PATHWAYS;

SET HIGH STANDARDS AND PROVIDE THE SUPPORTS AND INCENTIVES FOR INDIVIDUALS TO MEET AND MAINTAIN THEM;

ESTABLISH BEST PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BASED ON CURRENT RESEARCH;

LINK SUCCESSFUL CAREER ADVANCEMENT TO INCREASES IN COMPENSATION; AND

MAINTAIN A BALANCE AMONG ACCESS, COST, AND QUALITY ACROSS THE SYSTEM.

Core Competencies are defined as the range of knowledge and observable skills that adults working with children need to facilitate learning and development (National Child Care

One Goal of Core Competencies

"TO CAPTURE THE BREADTH AND DEPTH OF WHAT EDUCATORS, YOUTH WORKERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS IN THE FIELD SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE."

STEPS FORWARD, 2008

Information and Technical Assistance Center, 2005); and give educators a framework for professional development -- a road map -- leading them to new credentials, or guiding on-going professional development at various career stages.

Massachusetts is among several states developing and implementing core competencies for early education and care. Massachusetts is, however, unique in creating a single core competencies document for all types of care and all ages served birth to 14 years old. The competencies are

also intended for use across early education and care, out of school time, and Early Intervention (through a collaborative process with the Department of Public Health (DPH)) to facilitate increased transferability of knowledge and skills.

In addition, EEC has proposed regulations that require that all who enter the Massachusetts early education and care and out of school time workforce undergo an orientation to their profession⁴, EEC's vision is to develop a statewide orientation system that offers those entering the field an introduction to core knowledge about child development and other competency areas.

Two committees of the Workforce Task Force worked to align this key system element; the Core Competencies Committee determined the 8 core areas of competency all staff must demonstrate and the Orientation Committee imbedded these competency areas in its recommended 40 hours of required orientation that staff would undergo during their first two years of employment in the field.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

EEC is developing a comprehensive system that will provide current and accurate data on the early education and care and out of school time workforce. This system is being designed to support educators by recognizing and documenting their qualifications, and providing them with information about professional development opportunities across the state, qualified trainers, as well as career options and pathways. EEC anticipates that the initial phase of this data management system, a basic registry, will be in operation in fiscal year 2010. EEC's proposed regulations will require annual registration by all staff working in EEC-licensed programs.⁵

4. CREDENTIALING AND CAREER LATTICE (CAREER PATHWAYS)

The lack of a clear set of credentials and a career lattice or pathway for the early education and care and out of school time workforce continues to be an obstacle in the development of a comprehensive and equitable workforce development system. Developing a single

⁴ In its proposed regulations, EEC has included a requirement that, "All educators must attend an orientation to early education and care approved by the Department".

⁵ EEC's proposed regulations require that, "All educators must register annually with the Department of Early Education and Care in accordance with EEC policies and procedures."

career lattice for our field that aligns different program types (e.g. group, family child care, school age programs) and includes all positions (group leader, director, and family child care assistant, etc.) is very challenging.

The Credentialing and Career Lattice Committee of the Workforce Task Force was charged with outlining a set of credentials for each type of care and setting and identifying the various pathways for movement within and among these credentials and domains. The purpose of this work is to develop a flexible lattice model with multiple points of entry that illustrate the options for career growth and advancement for all educators.

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES ALIGNED WITH REQUIREMENTS AND WORKFORCE NEEDS

Since 2007 EEC has worked to align its professional development requirements and standards through agency initiatives.

EEC strives to leverage and maximize available resources by requiring entities receiving Professional Development funding (CCR&R agencies, Building Careers Colleges and CPC programs) to collaborate with each other and other entities such as family child care systems, Massachusetts Family Networks (MFNs), Parent-Child Home Programs (PCHPs), institutions of higher education, Head Start programs, local education authorities (LEAs), and educational collaboratives to address the professional development needs of the field.

EEC also supports two scholarship programs, the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship and Child Development Associate (CDA) Scholarship. The ECE scholarship aims to increase the number of degreed staff in the field. The CDA credential requires formal education, time in the field, evaluation and observation to document the increased ability of the educator to meet specific needs of children and work with parents to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. The attainment of a CDA credential enables family child care providers to meet EEC requirements for the CPC and UPK grants and corresponds with EEC Lead Teacher Certification requirements.

During the spring of 2008 EEC formally began developing a Massachusetts Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS), which is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care & education and after-school settings (Stair Steps to Quality, United Way Success by Six, p. 4). A key piece of this system is building on current/existing resources to put an infrastructure in place that supports programs and practitioners in meeting and maintaining quality standards (Mitchell, 2005).

EEC continues to strive to knit together current resources into a professional development system that will facilitate the identification of existing gaps and necessary resources.

III. KEY NEXT STEPS (2007-2008)

In the 2007 Workforce Development Plan, EEC identified 10 key next steps to moving forward with the establishment and advancement of the workforce system's key elements.

1. Convene the Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force.

2. Build EEC's capacity by hiring additional staff to implement the workforce plan.
3. Continue to collect and analyze data on "current state" including assessing statewide professional development needs.
4. Work with the DHE to build the capacity of two and four year schools to work with the early education and care and out of school time workforce.
5. Continue linking funding increases to staff/program quality through Universal Pre-K (UPK), and other quality initiatives development.
6. Seek feedback and finalize Core Competencies.
7. Design a basic EEC Orientation program to help all educators that are entering the field learn about EEC regulations, core competencies, and resources for professional development and support.
8. Begin building an IT infrastructure for EEC Professional Development Data Management System.
9. Continue research on developing comparable credentials for those working across settings and how those can most effectively link to both core competencies and a career lattice.
10. Identify critical gaps and develop FY2009 budget priorities to begin addressing most critical needs.

IV. PROGRESS TO DATE

Listed below is the progress made in the past year per each key next step identified in the 2007 Workforce Development Plan.

KEY NEXT STEP 1:

Convene the Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force.

In collaboration with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and the Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education, now the CAYL Institute, EEC convened the Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force (Workforce Task Force) in July 2007. The Workforce Task Force was comprised of more than 50 members representing early education and out of school time, colleges and universities, state agencies, professional organizations, training organizations, workforce development agencies, private business partners, and private funders. The purpose of the Workforce Task Force was to provide EEC with feedback, recommendations, and actionable next steps for developing a comprehensive system of professional development for the field. The Workforce Task Force focused on four of the key areas from EEC's 2007 Workforce Development Plan: core competencies, orientation, credentialing and career lattice, and transfer agreements and credit for prior learning.

KEY NEXT STEP 2:

Build EEC's capacity by hiring additional staff to implement the workforce plan.

EEC re-organized its structure and filled positions to prioritize workforce development. EEC divided the previously existing Quality and Workforce Development Unit into two distinct units to sharpen the focus on workforce development. In addition, two staff members were hired resulting in a Workforce Development unit comprised of an Associate Commissioner position and three specialists devoted entirely to workforce development policies and programmatic development. Three additional staff in the unit support the professional certification program that reviews the qualifications of staff in group child care settings.

KEY NEXT STEP 3:

Continue to collect and analyze data on “current state” including assessing statewide professional development needs.

EEC continues to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the early education and care and out of school time workforce through a variety of mechanisms including annual grant applications, mid and end of year reports, and the professional development calendar. EEC also receives feedback on the needs of the workforce anecdotally from internal and external stakeholders such as the EEC Advisory and other groups. However, there remains a critical need for robust data on the early education and out of school time workforce and its professional development needs. After developing a specifications document detailing its information and technology (IT) needs, EEC issued an RFR for the development of a Unified Information Technology System to align existing computer applications and to develop the forward-looking tools EEC needs. One of the first components to be developed will be the Professional Data Management System which will enable EEC to gather and analyze “real-time” data on the composition and professional development needs of the workforce.

KEY NEXT STEP 4:

Work with the DHE to build the capacity of two and four year schools to work with the early education and care and out of school time workforce.

The Articulation/Transfer Agreements and Credit for Prior Learning Committee of the Workforce Task Force was charged with developing recommendations to make higher education more accessible to the early education and care and out of school time field by addressing the articulation of credit across institutions and recognition of prior learning. The committee identified two goals: 1) strengthen Massachusetts’ current statewide transfer policies and practices, and 2) develop new policies and practices that support student success. To this end, the committee researched how Massachusetts’ institutions of higher education address prior learning, and studied articulation and transfer systems in other states. For the committee’s specific recommendations refer to *“Steps Forward: Recommendations of the 2007-2008 Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Report”*.

DHE has statutory authority over inter-institution student transfer. In April 2007, DHE created the Commonwealth Transfer Advisory Group (CTAG) to analyze issues that affect transfer and to recommend improvements. CTAG included members of the Joint Committee on Higher Education; faculty and staff from public institutions of higher education; members of the Joint Admissions Executive Committee; and experts on transfer issues. Over a 10-month period ending in March 2008, the group diagnosed barriers associated with transfer, examined other states’ policies and practices, identified costs associated with improvements, and recommended solutions. Specific recommendations from CTAG are available in the group’s final report *“MA Board of Higher Education Final Report from the Commonwealth Transfer Advisory Group”*.

The two committees shared a Chair and had a similar charge. As a result, the committees made several recommendations in common including the need for:

- A directory of course-to-course equivalencies;
- An electronic transcript delivery system with eventual addition of online degree audits;
- A statewide transfer website;
- An annual report to the Legislature;
- A full-time transfer coordinator at DHE;
- Statewide faculty meetings;
- Regular institutional reviews;
- Public recognition of good transfer practices; and
- An increase tuition waiver to a 100% tuition discount.

With these recommendations, easing access to higher education for the early education and care and out of school time field is being given priority at both agencies and at the Secretariat level; it is also a key recommendation of the Governor's *Readiness Report/ Education Action Agenda* (see inset below).

Ready for 21st Century Success, 2008

Action Steps and Related EEC Initiatives

Short Term (2008-2011)

Provide students with maximum flexibility and mobility to earn a college degree by guaranteeing transfer of course credit between and among the state's public higher education institutions.

- *EEC is working with DHE and institutions of higher education to improve articulation agreements and develop policies to support students.*

Mid Term (2012 – 2015)

Annually increase the investment in and availability of dual enrollment opportunities for all students. We will focus initially on first-generation college-goers, students interested in science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines, and concurrent enrollment programs for students with special needs.

- *The Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship and Building Careers in Early Education and Care grant provide early education and care and out of school time educators with the means and flexibility to earn a college degree.*
- *In partnership with DHE EEC is working to provide school age children with additional opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).*

Long Term (2016 and beyond)

To capitalize on the critical role of community colleges in our education and workforce development system and to enhance the ability of Massachusetts' students and businesses to compete internationally, the public education system should include guaranteed access to free community college or the equivalent postsecondary or vocational education.

- *The Building Careers in Early Education and Care grant includes 13 of the 15 community colleges in the Commonwealth. Both the ECE Scholarship and Building Careers grant provide free community college to the early education and care and out of school time workforce.*

KEY NEXT STEP 5:

Continue linking funding increases to staff/program quality through Universal Pre-K (UPK), and other quality initiatives development.

Universal Pre-K (UPK): EEC continues to link funding increases to staff/program quality through the implementation of Universal Pre-K (UPK).

Through the UPK program, EEC seeks to ensure that all preschool children have a high-quality early learning experience and enter school ready to learn and succeed. EEC has awarded UPK pilot grants to programs to maintain and improve the quality of their preschool services by funding a system of workforce development that links program quality, staff competency, resources and supports.

EEC's UPK concept paper, *"Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Expansion and Phase-in Concept Paper, Updated May 2008"*, summarizes the current state of preschool access, quality, and affordability and key components of a comprehensive UPK system including leadership and professional development.

The UPK program grants can be used to fund increased teacher compensation and to strengthen teaching practice and professional development opportunities for staff. The recent August 2008 study by Abt Associates, Inc., *"Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Pilot Program: FY08 Evaluation"*⁶ confirmed the link between programs' use of UPK funds and professional development.

FY2008 UNIVERSAL PRE-K

- **218 QUALITY GRANTS AWARDED WITH 312 CLASSROOMS OR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES.**
- **67 AGENCIES REPRESENTING MORE THAN 285 SITES AWARDED ASSESSMENT PLANNING GRANTS.**

"THE FACT THAT, GIVEN SUFFICIENT PLANNING TIME, GRANTEEES ALLOCATED MORE OF THEIR FUNDING TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF AND FOR STAFF COMPENSATION, UNDERLINES PROGRAMS' RECOGNITION THAT (A) STAFF ARE A CRITICAL, IF NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE IN DETERMINING THE QUALITY OF A PROGRAM, (B) INVESTMENTS IN STAFF REQUIRE SOME LONG-RANGE PLANNING, AND (C) UNLIKE MATERIALS, NEEDS IN THE AREA OF SUPPORT FOR STAFF CANNOT BE MET ON A ONE-TIME BASIS BUT ARE A CONTINUING PART OF QUALITY. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT, OVER TIME, PROGRAMS CAN BECOME MORE SOPHISTICATED ABOUT TARGETING THEIR FUNDING TO WHAT ARE, ARGUABLY, THE AREA OF HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR QUALITY—INVESTMENTS IN STAFF."

MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN (UPK) PILOT PROGRAM: FY08 EVALUATION, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 2008

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS): In February 2008, EEC began developing a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to evaluate, communicate, and improve the quality of programs in Massachusetts. EEC convened a group of experts from the field to make preliminary recommendations on the goals, principles, structure, standards, and overall vision for the QRIS.

FIVE COMMON ELEMENTS OF A QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

- 1. STANDARDS**
- 2. ACCOUNTABILITY**
- 3. PROGRAM AND PRACTITIONER OUTREACH AND SUPPORT**
- 4. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES**
- 5. FAMILY/CONSUMER EDUCATION**

- MITCHELL, 2005

The QRIS is being designed for licensed and license-exempt programs and providers serving children birth through age 14, which includes center or public school-based programs, family child care, and after school and out of school time programs. Participation in the QRIS will initially be voluntarily and over the long term may become mandatory for programs and providers benefiting from certain funding streams. The QRIS standard areas deliberately parallel the core

⁶ The complete executive summary is available at:
<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/UPK%20Evaluation%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

competency areas identified by the Workforce Task Force. The career lattice is also a central part of the “Workforce Quality and Support” standard area.

The recommendations and foundational work of the Workforce Task Force are an important resource for the QRIS workgroup. The intentional overlap in the membership for both initiatives supported necessary communication to align and coordinate these efforts. Over the next year components of QRIS will be developed and implemented including supports for programs and practitioners.

KEY NEXT STEP 6:

Seek feedback and finalize Core Competencies.

Based on an initial draft and expert consultation with the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC), the Workforce Task Force subcommittee established 8 core competency indicators. The committee stressed that the resulting document is a draft and recognized that this “first edition” will evolve as the field gains experience with its use.

EEC has imbedded the recommended Core Competency Areas in grant and contract applications for FY2008 and FY2009 including the Building Careers in Early Education and Care (Building Careers) and Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) Professional Development Grants, and the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) contracts for professional development. Each entity is responsible for indicating how their current trainings and coursework align with the recommended core competency areas.

In addition, EEC’s new electronic Professional Development Calendar⁷ has been designed to sort the available professional development opportunities by these core competency areas allowing educators to select professional development that best suits their needs. This will also allow EEC to determine which core competency areas need additional resources.

CORE COMPETENCY AREAS

- 1. UNDERSTANDING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
- 2. GUIDING AND INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
- 3. PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**
- 4. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION**
- 5. LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM**
- 6. OBSERVATION, PLANNING, AND ASSESSMENT**
- 7. PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**
- 8. PROFESSIONALISM AND LEADERSHIP**

KEY NEXT STEP 7:

Design a basic EEC Orientation program to help all educators entering the field learn about EEC regulations, core competencies, and resources for professional development and support.

In 2008, EEC guided the proposed child care licensing regulations, including the requirement for a standard orientation to the field, through both informal and formal public comment processes. Upon implementation (scheduled for January 2010), this Orientation would then be phased-in as a requirement.

⁷ EEC’s Professional Development Calendar can be viewed at <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/ProfessionalDevelopment/WebFindTraining.aspx>

The Orientation Committee of the Workforce Task Force conducted an extensive comparison of orientation models from other states and researched aligning orientation with a statewide workforce development system. The committee made the following recommendations:

- 40 hours of orientation required for all new staff;
- 10 hours of basic orientation to be completed within first 120 days of entering the workforce;
- 10 additional hours completed by the end of the first year of employment for a more in-depth review of the competencies;
- An additional 20 hours of professional development in the second year which addresses specific age groups, settings, and roles;
- Family child care providers must participate in an additional 5 hour pre-service orientation before working directly with children; and
- Completion of the 40 hours of content should be approved for 4 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), weighted credit at community colleges and/or credit toward EEC required in-service professional development hours.

KEY NEXT STEP 8:

Begin building an IT infrastructure for EEC Professional Development Data Management System.

In FY2009, EEC developed and launched a key component of the Professional Development Data Management System, a web-based Professional Development Calendar to serve as a centralized source of information on courses and training for all educators and licensees. In addition to empowering educators to make informed decisions about their professional development options, EEC's Professional Development Calendar will foster collaboration across training entities, reduce duplication to maximize resources, and make it easier for EEC licensors to identify resources for providers as issues arise.

In February 2009 EEC will launch development of its Unified Information Technology (IT) System which will greatly enhance the agency's capabilities to better achieve its mission of delivering services to Massachusetts families and children and the educators who serve them. One of the first projects of the Unified IT System will be the enhancement of the current Professional Qualifications registry and the Professional Development Calendar to create the EEC Professional Development Data Management System. Enhancements to the current Professional Qualifications system will include accommodating EEC's proposed regulations (to be promulgated in January 2010), adding out of school time educators and family child care educators, and tracking the proposed EEC Orientation requirements. Design for this stage of the project will begin in March 2009 with an anticipated release date of July 2009. The second tier of this project will be to tackle the Professional Development Calendar including necessary enhancements anticipated for fall 2009 with a release scheduled for winter 2010.

KEY NEXT STEP 9:

Continue research on developing comparable credentials for those working across settings and how those can most effectively link to both core competencies and a career lattice.

The Credentialing and Career Lattice Committee established a foundational set of principles to guide the development of the lattice. Their overarching goals were to define clear professional development pathways for all educators that are linked to a system of incentive-based compensation, and to enhance public recognition of early education and

care and out of school time educators as professionals. The committee envisions a credentialing and career lattice system that:

- Ties certificate and degree acquisition to ongoing professional development;
- Values/validates experience and prior learning;
- Facilitates collaboration between institutes of higher education (i.e. articulation agreements, non-traditional methods of education/training);
- Includes career mentoring/counseling;
- Is flexible and offers multiple points of entry and advancement;
- Is based on core competencies and linked to explicit standards;
- Values other bodies of knowledge and provides for reciprocity of training across other systems;
- Is evidence-based and is continually evaluated for effectiveness;
- Addresses the needs of non-traditional learners and linguistically diverse populations; and
- Is culturally sensitive and encourages diversity.

The committee examined other states' systems and developed an outline of position levels with defined roles and responsibilities, education, and experience requirements. The committee also established that, along with education and experience, evaluation is a necessary component of an effective competency-based credentialing and career lattice system.

KEY NEXT STEP 10:

Identify critical gaps and develop FY2009 budget priorities to begin addressing most critical needs.

Building Careers Grants: EEC sustained the Building Careers grant program in FY2008 through a combination of funding streams, including federal funds. In FY2009 Building Careers was funded entirely with state dollars for the first time.

Using a cohort model overseen by a coordinator at each college, the Building Careers program provides academic advising and career counseling to individuals in the field of early education and care and out of school time who are seeking a degree in early childhood education or a related field. In addition to tuition assistance, the Building Careers program responds to the needs of educators in the field by offering courses during weekends and evenings.

EEC has aligned the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship and Building Careers programs by expanding the role of the Building Careers Coordinator to include supporting ECE Scholarship recipients at those colleges so that they too benefit from the support services such as mentoring, tutoring, and advising.

To respond to needs identified by the field, EEC amended the FY2008 grants to 15 Building Careers colleges to fund undergraduate and graduate courses focused on children with special needs. The additional

FY2008 BUILDING CAREERS IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE

- **21** MA INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
- **103** COURSES SUPPORTED
 - 64 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CLASSES
 - 25 GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSES
 - 15 SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSES
- **~137** ADDITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORTED THROUGH TUITION REMISSION
- **~500** EDUCATORS SERVED

FY2008 ECE SCHOLARSHIP

- **\$4M** IN FUNDING
- **1,300** APPLICANTS
- **900** APPROVED APPLICANTS
 - 47% ENROLLED IN ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM
 - 53% ENROLLED IN BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAM
- **MORE THAN 4000** COURSES SUPPORTED

*ECE SCHOLARSHIP DATA PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AS OF JULY 1, 2008.

coursework was available to Building Careers students, staff working with children with special needs, and those who are responsible for training staff. These Building Careers colleges provided at least 315 educators in the early education and care and out of school time field with this critical resource. Given the success of the amendment and demand for coursework related to children with special needs this component was continued in the FY2009 grant application.

STEM Curricula in After School/Out of School Time (ASOST) Programs: EEC is partnering with DHE to provide school age children with additional opportunities to engage in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education through after school/out of school time (ASOST) programming. The goal is to generate interest in students that leads them to consider careers in these fields. This initiative is an outgrowth of the STEM Pipeline Fund, an economic stimulus package the Commonwealth launched in 2003 to develop the STEM workforce by improving educational offerings, producing qualified teachers, and growing the number of students who prepare for and enter STEM careers. STEM Pipeline funds will be used to pilot STEM curricula developed by the Museum of Science and WGBH in eight EEC-licensed after school programs beginning in spring 2009. EEC will facilitate training after school program staff to coordinate the participation of the eight after school programs from three regions in Massachusetts (Western, Metro Boston, and Northeast). Pending results of this pilot and availability of funding, the initiative could be expanded to include more ASOST programs and continue collaborative efforts.

V. NEXT STEPS FOR 2009-2010

1. Work through the Executive Office of Education to align EEC's efforts in developing a workforce development system with the Action Steps in the Governors' Readiness Report.
2. Convene a Professional Development Workgroup of EEC's Advisory Team to advance the recommendations of the MA Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force by integrating the work of the four committees and incorporating the recommendations into EEC's overall workforce development plans.
3. Solicit and share broader input from the early education and out of school time field on the recommendations of the MA Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force.
4. Finalize the core competencies and continue to imbed them into grants, contracts, orientation, and other professional development vehicles.
5. Collaborate with Department of Higher Education, through the Executive Office of Education, to implement recommendations of CTAG and the Workforce Task Force related to transfer and articulation among state institutions of higher learning.
6. Partner with the Executive Office of Education, the Department of Higher Education and institutions of higher education in Massachusetts to develop plans that offer free access to community college to early education and care and out of school time staff.
7. Pending funding availability, connect scholarships for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential to college credit so that candidates have a pathway and are encouraged to pursue college degrees upon achieving their CDA.

8. Expand the existing EEC family child care orientation into the 5 hour pre-orientation recommended by the Workforce Task Force; develop and pilot the first module of EEC Orientation for the entire field.
9. Develop a basic career lattice for the early education and out of school time field by convening small workgroups to address each practice domain (family child care, group child care, and school age child care).
10. Advance the EEC Professional Development Data Management System by developing and implementing a basic staff registry to identify staff that are currently active in the field and gather current workforce data.
11. Analyze data gathered by the online Professional Development Calendar on the current state of professional development opportunities; work to develop data filters within the calendar to better analyze available data; and solicit feedback from calendar users to inform the development of a second iteration.
12. Work with the Department of Higher Education to implement the STEM pilot at 6 to 8 school age programs in 2 to 3 EEC regions and evaluate the results.
13. Identify critical resource gaps and develop FY2010 budget priorities and action plan to address those needs.

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APPENDIX A: MGL, CHAPTER 15 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

M.G.L Chapter 15D: Section 5. Workforce development system; implementation plan requires that “The board shall develop and annually update an implementation plan for a workforce development system designed to support the education, training and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, family child care, infant, toddler, preschool and school-age providers. The board shall solicit input from organizations and agencies that represent a diverse spectrum of expertise, knowledge and understanding of broader workforce development issues and of the professional development needs of the early childhood and care workforce.”

To inform the plan, the board shall consider:

1. An inventory and assessment of the current resources and strategies available for workforce and professional development in the commonwealth, including but not limited to Head Start trainings, community-based trainings, higher education programs, child care resource and referral agency trainings, state and federally funded workforce development trainings/programs, public school system trainings/credentialing, and other trainings that address the needs of those who work with children and make recommendations for coordinating the use of those existing resources and strategies;
2. Analyses using current data on the status of the early education and care workforce, including work experience, certifications, education, training opportunities, salaries, benefits and workplace standards; and
3. An assessment of the workforce capacity necessary to meet the state’s early education and care needs in the future.

In development of the plan, the board shall consider:

1. Core competencies, a common and shared body of knowledge, for all those working in the early education and care fields;
2. Streamlined and coordinated state certification, credentialing, and licensing within the early education and care fields including teacher and provider certification and licensing, the child development associate, public school teacher certification, and other program standards as appropriate for director, teacher and provider credentialing requirements;
3. A mandatory and regularly updated professional development and qualification registry;
4. Agreements among higher education institutions for an articulated system of education, training, and professional development in early education and care;
5. Approval of early education and care training programs and academic coursework, incentives for associates and bachelors programs to meet best practices and to modify curricula to reflect current child development research, and certification of trainers and teachers;
6. Coordination of existing workforce resources among public agencies, including establishing regional workforce support resources in coordination with child care resource and referral agencies;
7. A range of professional development and educational opportunities that provide appropriate coursework and degree pathways for family child care as well as center-based providers at all levels of the career ladder that are available in locations, days, and times that are accessible;
8. Credit for prior learning experiences, development of equivalencies to 2 and 4 year degrees, and the inclusion of strategies for multiple pathways for entry into the field of early education and care;
9. Recruitment and retention of individuals into the early education and care workforce who reflect the ethnic, racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Massachusetts families based on the current census data;

10. Incentives and supports for early education and care professionals to seek additional training and education, such as scholarships, stipends, loan forgiveness connected to a term of service in the field, career counseling and mentoring, release time and substitutes;
11. Guidelines for a career ladder or career lattice representing salaries and benefits that suitably compensate professionals for increases in educational attainment and with incentives for advancement, including a salary enhancement program;
12. Public and private resources to support the Workforce Development System;
13. A data collection and evaluation system to determine whether the workforce and professional development activities established pursuant to this chapter are achieving recruitment, retention and quality of the workforce goals;
14. Ways to recognize and honor advancements in educational attainment among early education and care professionals.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF RESOURCES

1. Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Final Report from the Commonwealth Transfer Advisory Group: <http://www.mass.edu/ABOUTUS/DOCUMENTS/CTAGREPORT.PDF>
2. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Proposed Licensing Regulations: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/licensingRegulations.aspx>
3. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care State Plan: http://www.eec.state.ma.us/kr_StatePlan.aspx
4. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Workforce Development Plan, January 2006: http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/Workforce_Development_Plan_2006.pdf
5. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Workforce Development Plan, June 2007: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/2007WorkforceReport%206.6.07.pdf>
6. Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program Evaluation: www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/MA%20UPK%20Evaluation%20Final%20Report%2012-29-08_FINAL.pdf
7. Ready for 21st Century Success: The New Promise of Public Education: The Patrick Administration Education Action Agenda: <http://www.mass.gov/Agov3/docs/Readiness%20Final%20Report.pdf>
8. Steps Forward: Recommendations of the MA Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/EEC%20OST%20WDTTaskForceFINAL.pdf>
9. Steps Forward: Recommendations of the MA Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force Summary Brochure: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/08EECBrochure.pdf>
10. United Way Success by 6: Stair Steps to Quality: A Guide for States and Communities Developing Quality Rating Systems for Early Care and Education: www.ecpolicycouncil.org/docs/StairStepstoQualityGuidebook.pdf
11. Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Expansion and Phase-in Concept Paper: www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/UPK_Concept_Paper_mostrecentMay2008.pdf



Department of Early Education and Care Strategic Plan

Putting Children and Families First

February 2009



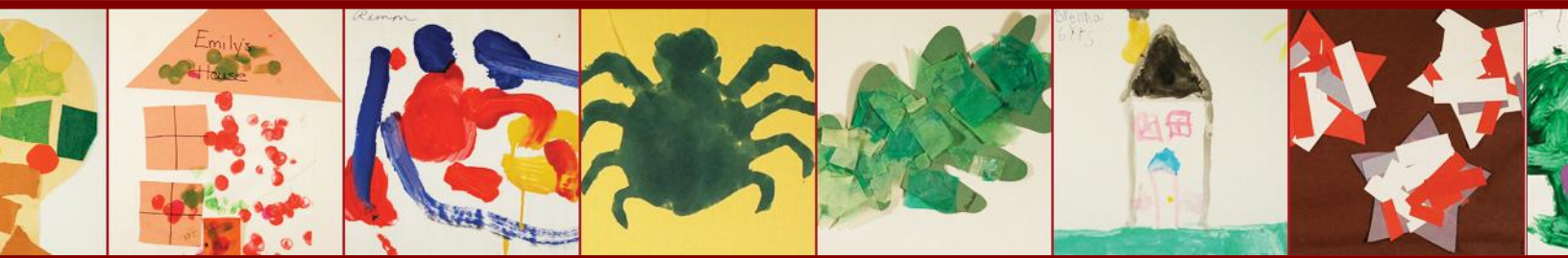


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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends and Fellow Citizens of the Commonwealth,

I am delighted to present the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) Five Year Strategic Plan, a demonstration of the exciting potential of early education and care in Massachusetts and an acknowledgement of the terrific work of the fledgling agency during its first three years. Eight months ago, the EEC Board embarked on a strategic planning process to help define and initiate the next chapter in its evolution as an organization that provides critical learning and care opportunities for Massachusetts children of all ages. This process included the collaborative efforts and exhaustive feedback from a dedicated and distinguished group of educators, experts, parents, EEC staff and other stakeholders.

The Blueprint we set forth is by no means the end of what our vision should be, but instead is the beginning of what defines why and how we want to make the lives of children in this Commonwealth more enriched and supported. The Plan lays out aspirations and expectations for ourselves as a workforce and a community; it compels us to engage the larger public more in the work that we do for our youngest citizens; and it challenges us all to be accountable for the successes and failures that we encounter along the way as we chart this new course for children and families. The Plan goes beyond inspirational goals and gives strategic directions and tangible indicators that will help EEC adapt as we face changing times, digest new research and learn lessons so that Massachusetts can be a national leader in the delivery of early education and care.

There is great optimism and momentum in early education and care to be captured here in Massachusetts and across the country, despite our current economic situation. We are grateful to have a Legislature that initiated and continues to support the unification of agencies that educate and care for our children into a streamlined coherent system. We are thankful for an inspirational Governor who has prioritized education and instilled a message that we should not just be getting children ready for school but for enjoying life long health, learning and happiness.

The field of early education and care is always evolving – like the children on whose behalf we are all dedicated. There is increasing diversity in our families seeking care and in the needs of the youngsters receiving early childhood services. The research increasingly tells us that high quality early learning experiences provide the foundation for each child's individual development and lifetime possibilities. Our charge is to use what we know and take concrete action to move forward building a high quality system of early education and care that is accessible to all and achieves positive outcomes for each child regardless of background. Every child deserves the very best start and it is all of our responsibility to make that a reality.

Thank you again to all who participated in this Strategic Plan, and especially to my fellow Board members, the Advisory and Parent Advisory Teams, and the staff, for their invaluable effort and input. It is this collaborative spirit that will drive the achievement of our vision.

Sincerely,

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.
Chairperson, EEC Board

CONTEXT FOR THIS REPORT

EEC: Short History and Overview

In 2005, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to create one agency to oversee early education and care and after-school services for families. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) was created by consolidating the former Office of Childcare Services with the Early Learning Services Unit of the Department of Education. The primary impetus was to create a single, unified, more efficient system of early education and care.

Massachusetts did not just consolidate existing programs, merge departments or simplify organizational charts. EEC was born of a revolutionary, top-to-bottom rethinking of how to orient state resources to support families in a way that is responsive to their needs. The scope is broad and presents an opportunity for sweeping statewide impact, dramatically improving the quality and affordability of programs, and expanding access to hundreds of thousands of children and their families.

EEC was created within the context of increasingly accepted evidence from childhood brain development research showing long-term impact of high-quality early education and its potential return on investment. We know that *access* to early education and care is crucial, and we know that the *quality* of that care matters- a lot. EEC has been balancing these two priorities since its inception.

Prior to the creation of EEC, the early childhood sector in Massachusetts was a labyrinth of separate bureaucracies and disconnected categorical programs covering four agencies with oversight for services to children ages birth to 14. There was tension between programs that focused on child care as a parental work support and others that saw the education of the child as a focal point. Almost four decades of “silo” funding and programming was consolidated, influenced by a growing focus statewide and nationally on the importance of *high-quality* early education.

With an annual budget of about \$575 Million and approximately 180 full-time staff, EEC provides the following services and programs, touching the lives of more than 275,000 children every day:

- **Financial Assistance** to help eligible low-income working and at-risk families pay for early education and out-of-school time programs. Currently, EEC administers financial aid to almost 60,000 children from birth to 13 years of age. Due to limited funding, however, EEC maintains a centralized waiting list which currently includes more than 20,000 children in families who need financial assistance to afford licensed, appropriate child care and afterschool programs.
- **Licensing and Monitoring** of nearly 12,000 early education and care programs statewide, including after school programs, group child care centers and family child care homes. EEC also licenses adoption placement agencies, foster placement agencies and residential care programs.
- **Information and Resources** for families about choosing early education and care and out-of-school time programs, finding parenting and other resources in their community and applying for child care financial assistance.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** services and resources for pre-school children with special needs and their families. EEC is responsible for overseeing federal IDEA preschool special education funds for young children ages 3 to 5, and working with public schools on special education services.
- **Universal Pre-kindergarten program (UPK) implementation.** EEC is in the third year of implementing the Massachusetts UPK program in the Commonwealth. The UPK initiative promotes school readiness and positive outcomes for children and furthers the long-term creation of a universally accessible, high-quality early education program by providing grant funding directly to pre-school programs meeting specific quality guidelines.

- **Professional Development and Program Quality Advancement** for early education and out-of-school time professionals delivered primarily through community-based and regional organizations as well as institutions of Higher Education. Support is provided to meet basic licensing requirements and teacher certifications, achieve accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and other accrediting bodies, and address children's behavioral and mental health needs. EEC also administers a number of scholarship programs to help early education and out-of-school time professionals seek higher education degrees.
- **Family Education and Support** including community and home-based family literacy efforts and outreach to and engagement of families with newborn or very young children..

Three years after its creation, EEC is proving successful. The Department is building a strong, integrated infrastructure; promoting consistency in regulations and policies; revamping its technology system to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided; consolidating the waiting list; expanding access to child care for families involved with the Department of Children and Families (formerly the Department of Social Services); and elevating the prominence of the early education and care field.¹ The Gubernatorial-appointed EEC Board is taking hold of its responsibilities to govern and guide.

New Executive Office of Education and the Governor's "Readiness Project"

In January, 2008, legislation passed creating an Executive Office of Education (EOE) to oversee the Commonwealth's three Education Agencies (Department of Early Education and Care, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Department of Higher Education). Governor Deval Patrick proposed this Secretariat to encourage the seamless delivery of education from birth through higher education and beyond. EEC is now a family's first point of entry to the Commonwealth's education system and an integral part of the overall continuum, providing the foundation for children's learning.

In June, the Governor unveiled his Education Action Agenda, a 10-year vision for a comprehensive, child-centered public education system in the Commonwealth. The product of the Governor's "**Readiness Project**"- an extensive process led by the Secretary of Education and a Leadership Council and involving over 100 experts and practitioners- this report outlines a vision for our public education system that begins at birth and continues through workforce development and lifelong learning. Several of the report's Readiness Recommendations pertain directly to the early education and care system, including: 1) annual funding to achieve universal pre-kindergarten; 2) the creation of a Birth to School-age Task Force; and 3) the provision of free community college for early childhood educators.

With EOE and the Readiness Project further elevating the prominence of the early education and care field, EEC is well-poised to declare its future and outline its strategic priorities.

It is within this context and in response to this mandate that EEC submits the EEC Strategic Plan: Putting Children and Families First.

¹ A Case Study of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Rennie Center for Education, Research and Policy

VALUES

- Learning starts at birth.
- We value all children and all families.
- All children can succeed and we have the responsibility to help them do that.
- Families and caregivers are integral to the healthy development of children and must be engaged as partners.
- Our workforce is the backbone of our services; we value and support their skill development, diversity, and fair compensation.
- Families live within communities and must be reached and supported in ways that maximize accessibility.
- We believe in and practice equity and therefore children with the greatest educational and care needs and multiple risk factors come first.
- Providing culturally appropriate services is critical to being effective in the lives of children and families.
- We support the continuum and continuity of every child's education and care.
- A strong, nimble current system exists upon whose assets we will grow services.
- Accountability at all levels is important and we will work together to measure, recognize needs and develop the assets of the field.



GUIDE TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission

Defines the purpose of the agency, who it serves and what it does.

Practical 5-Year Vision

Defines what the agency aspires to do over a five-year period.

Strategic Direction

Names the strategic priorities over the next three years that will help move the agency toward its vision.

Indicators of Success

Measures used to mark the agency's progress within each of the strategic directions.

Work of Success (Accompanying Document)

Specific initiatives and actions required to support the agency's progress within each of the strategic directions.

EEC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Mission

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) provides the foundation that supports all children in their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers.

Practical Five-Year Vision

EEC and the whole field of early education and care are highly regarded, publicly recognized and supported, and clearly understood to be a value to the Commonwealth.

EEC's system offers an array of high quality, comprehensive and affordable programs designed to meet the diverse, individual needs of children & families.

The early education and care workforce is respected, diverse, professional, qualified, and fairly compensated.

EEC is an effective, responsive, efficient, and resilient system.

EEC has clear standards for accountability and evidence that those standards are being met.

Families are engaged as partners integral to the healthy development and learning of their children, and they have access to the necessary resources to do so.

All preschool children have access to high quality pre- kindergarten programs that meet family needs.

Children and families experience seamless transitions throughout their early learning and later developmental experiences.

Three Year Strategic Directions

- Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide.
- Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.
- Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.
- Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public.
- Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

Note: Throughout this plan the term “Early Education and Care Programs” is used to refer to all program types and age groups under EEC’s responsibility, including group child-care, preschool, early education, family child care, after-school, out-of-school time, and residential and placement programs.

QUALITY



Strategic Direction: Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide.

Indicators of Success

- Massachusetts' Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) has been developed, validated, funded and implemented with full involvement of EEC's community partners and EEC staff.
- Massachusetts has standards for quality in early education and care programs that are research-based, broadly understood, successfully implemented, culturally appropriate, and aligned with a quality-building support system.
- Programs seeking to improve their quality have access to a range of resources and supports.
- Parents understand and use information about quality to make informed decisions about early education and care programs.
- Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) system design has been finalized and full-scale implementation has begun.
- Massachusetts has a system that collects, analyzes and disseminates program quality and child outcome data to inform policy and program development and implementation.
- Licensing regulations that reflect best practices have been promulgated, translated, clearly communicated to the field, and enforced consistently throughout all regions.
- Comprehensive services, including mental health consultations, are embedded in the delivery of services for families and children.
- All families experience seamless transitions throughout their child's early learning and developmental experiences.
- Children in residential and placement programs receive quality and appropriate services and are placed in the least restrictive settings.



FAMILY SUPPORT, ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY



Strategic Direction: Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.

Indicators of Success

- Families are aware of the mixed early education and care system and have access to affordable, high-quality early education and care services.
- Families are recognized as full partners in the education of their children and are empowered to be involved with the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of their children.
- Families are informed about child development and aware of family support resources.
- Early education and care services are delivered through a seamless system that is responsive to the needs of all families and provides supports and resources for transitioning children in and out of early education and care programs and services.
- Families of infants have access to programs and services that support the development of healthy attachment between babies and their primary caregivers and promote early brain development.
- Parents are recognized as their child's first teacher and have access to literacy supports that build skills among children and parents.
- Families have access to high quality supports and resources for transitioning children in and out of early education and care programs and services.
- Families that are limited or non-English speaking have access to information about early education and care and the services available.
- Strong partnerships are established between families (parent/caregiver) and educators to maximize high quality early education and care for all children.
- Parents of children in residential and placement programs are aware of and knowledgeable about appropriate placement and treatment options that are compatible with the needs of their children.
- Parents seeking to adopt are aware of and knowledgeable of available adoption resources and state adoption policies.
- Family services are integrated and delivered in a coordinated manner across state agencies.



WORKFORCE



Strategic Direction: Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, & core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.

Indicators of Success

- The early education and care workforce has clearly defined education and professional development standards that are understood and embraced by the field.
- The early education workforce has access to affordable education and professional development resources that support core competencies.
- The early education and care workforce has a well-defined career ladder that adequately and fairly compensates educators as professionals.
- Educators are adequately compensated to assure equitable access to high-quality care in all areas of the state, with emphasis on increasing compensation in communities with greatest need.
- Early education and care professionals are respected and complete their professional responsibilities with confidence and competence.
- The early education and care workforce has broad diversity that allows families and children to feel welcomed and comfortable to address the changing landscape and needs of the families and children.
- The early education and care workforce functions collaboratively and effectively among all aspects of the early education and care system.
- A Professional Development Registry and Workforce Management System are in place to observe and measure the efficacy of the workforce and measure the impact of the workforce system on child outcomes.



COMMUNICATIONS



Strategic Direction: Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to stakeholders, consumers, and the general public and positions EEC as a national education leader.

Indicators of Success

- The public understands and values the purpose of EEC.
- Families of all languages understand the services and resources offered by EEC.
- All stakeholders in the field and consumers are aware of EEC initiatives, policies and procedures and have access to information to facilitate advocacy.
- State and local leaders understand how EEC initiatives serve and benefit their communities.
- EEC is fully aware of and responds to the type, style and nature of the information needed by external stakeholders and consumers.
- All EEC staff members are knowledgeable of agency initiatives, operations, key staff functions, and the agency's community partners.
- EEC is known among major press outlets and institutions of higher education as the authoritative resource on early education and care issues in the state and for leading developments in the field.
- EEC is known as a national education leader, at the forefront of Universal Pre-Kindergarten and unrivaled in the development of quality standards for all early education and care programs.



INFRASTRUCTURE



Strategic Direction: Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

Indicators of Success

- With user input and involvement, EEC has transformed the existing technology infrastructure into a state-of-the-art, unified and comprehensive system.
- The operational roles of EEC's community partners have been clearly defined, aligned to support the agency's vision and accepted by stakeholders.
- EEC regions have the staff, resources and stakeholder partnerships required to achieve the breadth of the agency's readiness vision.
- EEC continues to implement policy initiatives that are backed up by research, developed through stakeholder collaboration and coordinated with agency operations.
- All EEC staff, community partners and families have comprehensive information about educators and early education and care programs.
- EEC staff is diverse, knowledgeable and adequately trained to perform assigned functions and to understand the operations of the agency and its community partners in the field.
- EEC has developed active relationships with other state agencies, community partners, public schools and other stakeholder organizations to meet its mission.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A variety of professionals, both within and without EEC, and parents took part in the development of this plan. Everyone's time, inspirational thinking, and honest feedback is greatly appreciated.

EEC Board

The strategic planning process was chaired and overseen by the Board of EEC which played an integral role in its development. JD Chesloff chaired a Strategic Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the Board, which met separately and put a considerable amount of time and energy to prepare the plan for the full Board's review. The full Board met for three days to establish the foundation for the plan, and then again for a full-day retreat to review a comprehensive draft.

The EEC Board members are:

Paul Reville, Secretary of Education

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq., Chairperson

JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.

(Marilyn Anderson Chase, designee)

Lynson Moore Beaulieu

J.D. Chesloff

Elizabeth Childs, M.D

Julie P. Culhane, Ph.D.

Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D.

Orlando Isaza

Mary Pat Messmer

Carol Craig O'Brien

EEC Advisory Team and Parent Advisory Team

Providers and represented associations comprise EEC's Advisory Team, which meets regularly to review EEC policy and program decisions and provide recommendations thereof. The Advisory Team played a key role in providing feedback in this strategic planning process. Their insight and suggestions are greatly appreciated. The voice and perspective of the Parent Advisory Team was also invaluable.

EEC Staff

Thanks to the many hours EEC staff put in to review drafts and provide content and feedback throughout this process.

The Planning Process

In December, 2007, with a legislative mandate to develop a multiyear plan to achieve a well-coordinated system of high achievement in early education and care in the commonwealth, the EEC Board undertook this planning process. The methodology used was inclusive and participatory and built on the successes and assets of EEC's ongoing work and expertise and wisdom provided by a broad range of planning participants. Called Technologies of Participation, the strategic planning methods provided a guide to clarify the mission, create a practical vision, recognize the organization's current reality and roadblocks, develop decision making criteria to be used by the Board, craft strategic directions and indicators of success, and determine tactics over two-three years to meet these benchmarks. The Board and EEC senior staff participated in three days of planning, and many meetings were held with EEC's Parent Advisory Team, Advisory Team, and Strategic Planning committee to provide data, input and feedback. The planning process and writing of the plan was facilitated by Nancy Jackson, GammyBird Consulting.

ECE Scholarship Program

Purpose of Program: The Early Childhood Educators Scholarship program is jointly administered by the Office of Student Financial Assistance at the Department of Higher Education and EEC. The purpose of the scholarship program is to provide financial assistance to educators working in the early education and care field and out of school time field in Massachusetts to earn a degree in early childhood education or a related field. Awards are based on Institution of Higher Education chosen and number of credits selected by student.

Program Demographics:

FY2009	\$4M	1018 applicants approved by EEC	57% Attending Public Institution 43% Attending Private Institution
FY2008	\$4M	980 applicants approved by EEC	54% Attending Public Institution 46% Attending Private Institution
FY2007	\$3M	743 applicants approved by EEC	55% Attending Public Institution 45% Attending Private Institution
FY2006	\$1M	614 applicants approved by EEC	59% Attending Public Institution 41% Attending Private Institution

Recipient Demographics¹:

Ethnicity:

	FY2009	FY2008	FY2007	FY2006
White (non-Hispanic)	65%	63%	65%	65%
Hispanic/Latino	14%	16%	15%	15%
Black/African American (non-Hispanic)	11%	11%	10%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Indian Subcontinent	2%	2%	2%	2%
Cape Verdean	<1%	1%	1%	1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Multi-racial/Other	3%	2%	1%	1%
Did Not Respond	3%	4%	6%	7%

Position Title²:

	FY2009	FY2008	FY2006
Teacher	36%	36%	36%
Lead Teacher	22%	21%	22%
Family Child Care Provider	11%	12%	15%
Assistant Teacher/Aide/Paraprofessional	8%	8%	7%
Director	6%	6%	6%

¹ Data for FY2006 – FY2008 provided by the MA Office of Student Financial Assistance July 1, 2008.

² Data analyzed from FY2007 did not contain this information; data analyzed from FY2006 does not contain all of the same categories of more recent ECE Scholarship years.



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Assistant Director	2%	2%	2%
Program/Site Coordinator	2%	2%	-
Group Leader	1%	1%	-
Assistant Program/Site Coordinator	<1%	0%	-
Family Child Care Assistant	<1%	<1%	-
Multiple Positions	5%	6%	-
Other ³ Position	5%	5%	13%

Program Successes, Challenges, and Changes:

- Since the beginning of this program, OFSA and EEC have collaborated in new ways. In FY09, now both part of the Education Secretariat this collaboration is expected to strengthen.
- Efforts have been made by both agencies to reduce award wait times for applicants and institutions of higher education. OSFA has provided institutions access to real-time data on approved applicants. EEC has also expedited their approval process and issues student lists to participating Building Careers colleges.
- Administering a scholarship program jointly has posed some challenges since both entities must approve an individual before they can be awarded a scholarship.
- In an attempt to streamline the process the application was made online in FY08; this created unintended consequences and delays in applicant employment verification. In FY09 paper applications were used to reduce verification time.
- In FY08 EEC expanded the role of the Building Careers Coordinator to include supporting ECE Scholarship recipients at participating Building Careers colleges and universities.
- In FY09 EEC's Board voted to further define "related degree" for eligible degrees to align with EEC's licensing regulations; increase academic accountability of recipients including a minimum GPA requirement and consequences for recipients who repeatedly withdraw from scholarship funded courses.

Emerging Performance Measures:

Measure	Plan
# of educators who earn a post-secondary degree	The program has not existed long enough to have educators reach this milestone yet. We will begin reporting on this once data is available.
# of educators who stay in the field after earning a post-secondary degree	This will require a follow-up evaluation study to determine.
Income brackets of scholarship recipients	Data collection efforts are currently being refined.
# or % of educators who increased their certification level through participation in the scholarship program	Data not currently collected.

Further Information:

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³ Examples of other position titles listed by applicants include: Education Coordinator, Home Visitor, School Age Counselor, Treatment Coordinator, Reading Specialist, Disabilities Specialist, and Family Support Services.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential:

- The Council for Professional Recognition awards credentials for family child care, center-based preschool, center-based infant-toddler, home visitor, and bi-lingual.

EEC's CDA Scholarship Program:

- The Council for Professional Recognition awards CDA Credentials on a quarterly basis.
- The CDA Scholarship program supports the cost of the application fees for Assessment (\$325), Second Setting (\$225), and Renewal (\$50) CDA credentials.
- To be eligible for the scholarship applicants must be a Massachusetts residents, have a high school diploma or GED, and a family income at or below 100% SMI.

Scholarship Applications To Date:

Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Approved Applications	Denied Applications	Incomplete Applications
2005	79	67	8	3
2006	59	44	8	6
2007	156	136	9	12
2008	208	174	2	32
2009	244	89	5	124
Total	746	510	32	177

- Scholarship applicants are denied if they are not a Massachusetts resident or if their family income is greater than the current statewide median income for their family size. The majority of denials are due to out of state applicants.
- Individuals who submit an incomplete scholarship application receive notification from EEC to correct or update their application; once the applicant has submitted the necessary information their application will be processed.
- Total applications for fiscal year 2009 include 91 applicants that are have been included on a waiting list for funding.

CDA Scholarship Awards:

Fiscal Year	Applicants Eligible for Scholarship	Applicants Requested Scholarship	Applicants Redeemed Scholarship	Unredeemed Scholarships	Funds Paid to CDA Council
2007	136	118	73	64	\$16,575
2008	174	124	100	74	\$40,450
2009	89	85	18	71	\$19,975 ¹
Total	399	327	191	209	\$77,000

¹ In FY2009 \$50,000 was allocated for CDA Scholarships, \$18,625 of that funding has already been paid to the CDA Council. The remainder has been allocated/promised to applicants.

Applicant Demographics:

Data elements based on applicants who applied in FY2007 and FY2008

By Region:

Region 1 (Western MA):	34 applicants
Region 2 (Central MA):	80 applicants
Region 3 (Northeast):	351 applicants
Region 4 (MetroWest):	33 applicants
Region 5 (Southeast):	41 applicants
Region 6 (MetroBoston):	45 applicants

By Position:

	Number of Applicants	Percent of Applicants
Family Child Care Provider	143	43%
Assistant Teacher	39	12%
Teacher	35	11%
Family Child Care Assistant	5	2%
Director	0	0%
Home Visitor	0	0%
Volunteer	0	0%
Other ²	9	3%
Data Not Available	101	30%

By Credential³:

	Number of Applicants	Percent of Applicants
Family Child Care	150	45%
Center-based Preschool	71	21%
Center-based Infant/Toddler	16	5%
Bilingual	5	2%
Home Visitor	1	<1%
Data Not Available	101	30%

²Other professional positions include Center Director/Teacher, Lead Teacher, Paraprofessional, Family Day Care Specialist, and Family Day Care Provider/ Assistant Teacher.

³ 11 applicants applied for more than one area for their credential.

Building Careers

Purpose of this program: The Building Careers in Early Education and Care program is a grant opportunity to 21 two- and four-year institutions of higher education across Massachusetts. The purpose of the program is to provide funding for college coursework and necessary supports such as academic advising and career counseling for educators in the field of early education and care and out of school time who are seeking a degree in early childhood education or a related field. The program is designed to help non-traditional students succeed academically and professionally.

Performance Measure: 160 educators earned a post-secondary degree in FY08.

Performance Measure: 103 courses (and 137 additional seats) were purchased in FY08.

Performance Measure: Over 400 hours of support services provided in FY08, which includes academic advising, matriculation support, and ESL support.

Program Demographics

FY09 Funding allocated: \$1.2M

(Additional \$219,668 allocated from Federal Preschool Special Education Grant)

	Number of educators served:	Number of Building Career Sites:
FY09:	717 (<i>projected</i>)	21
FY08:	749	21
FY07:	818	24
FY06:	869	25
FY05:	674	25

Building Career Participants:

Program Type:

54% IT or PreK Center-Based
16% Family Child Care
6% School Age Center-Based
3% Public school
8% Other

Ethnicity:

70% White
17% Hispanic or Latino
9% Black of African America
1% Asian or Pacific Islander
1% Multi-racial or multi ethnic
<1% American Indian or Alaska Native

Position Title

38% Teacher
28% Lead Teacher
15% Teacher Assistant
11% Director/Assistant Director
11% Family Child Care Provider

2% School Age Site Coordinator
1% Family Child Care Assistant
1% Group Leader
1% School Age Administrator
<1% Assistant Group Leader
12% Other



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Income:

18% Below \$19,999
60% \$20,000 - \$59,999
19% \$60,000 - \$99,999
4% Above \$100,000
7% Unknown

Degree Pursuing

70% AA
28% BA
2% Certificate program

Program Successes and Challenges and Changes

- Governor's Readiness agenda calls for Free Community College beginning with early education and care and out of school time professionals.
- 11 associate and bachelor degree programs accredited by NAEYC, NCATE, or CIHE; 5 additional campuses are in the accreditation process.
- FY09 is the first year that the program was included in the state budget and funded entirely. This transition also means a shift in the calendar year for programs; EEC will monitor this going forward impacts.
- Ability to support graduate and undergraduate coursework related to special education to the field, not just students participating in the Building Careers program.
- Uncertainty of funding available to support program; Building Careers was fortunately able to continue after reduction of the program from federal funding; and was even included in the Governor's Supplemental Budget.
- EEC began in FY08 asking the Building Careers grant coordinator to reach out and make connections with the ECE scholarship students, Community Partnerships for Children Councils, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and local high schools. We will be continuing to work on improving this relationship this year.

Quotes from Students

"I enjoy taking classes with other child care providers, because we can bring personal classroom experience into our discussions as well as bounce new ideas off of each other or ask for suggestions from others in the same field of work."

"It [the Building Careers program] has encouraged me to finish school."

"I want to thank the building careers program for giving me the opportunity to fulfill my dream of getting my Associates degree in Early childhood education I love working with children and I would not change it for the world I now can bring back to the children all the experience I have learned in my classes Again Thank You So Very Much"

Emerging Performance Measures:

Measure	Plan
% of funds spent on tuition and % of funds spent on support services	Data will be collected in FY09 annual report.
Total number of cities and towns reached through grant	Data will be collected in FY09 annual report.

Further Information:

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Data Sources: FY2008 Building Careers Students Survey; FY2008 Building Careers End of Year Report; and FY2009 Building Careers in Early Education and Care Grant Application.