

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

## Board of Early Education & Care – February Meeting

February 14, 2024

# Agenda

## Routine Business

- Approval of Minutes from January 10, 2024 Meeting – VOTE

## Items for Discussion and Action

- FY25 Budget Updates
  - Gateway to Pre-K Initiative
- Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)
  - Panel Discussion with Salem CPPI Partners
- CCDF State Plan Notification

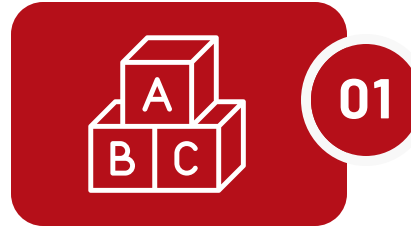
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## FY25 Budget Updates

# Gateway to Pre-K

Administration's agenda to make early education and child care more affordable and accessible for all families across Massachusetts:



Delivering universal, high-quality preschool access for four-year-olds in all Gateway Cities by the end of 2026



Increasing Child Care Financial Assistance eligibility from 50% SMI to 85% SMI



Continue Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)



Signed executive order directing the administration take a whole-of-government approach to ensuring affordable, high-quality child care

# Gateway to Pre-K H.2 Budget Highlights

## \$38.7 million for Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)

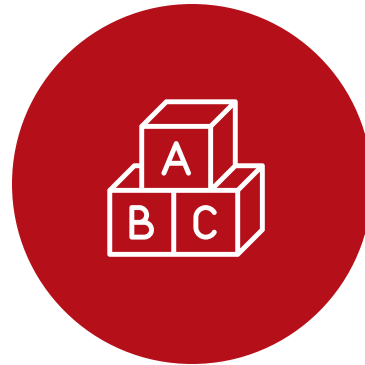
- \$15 million increase to expand access to high-quality preschool into additional districts with a priority focus on Gateway Cities
- \$21 million in Fair Share, \$17.7 million in CPPI line item

## Access for Additional Families

- \$75 million in Fair Share for child care affordability to serve an additional 4,000 children

## \$475 million for Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)

- \$150 million in Fair Share and \$325 million in C3 line-item



# Additional H.2 Budget Highlights

Overall, H.2 funds EEC at \$1.56 billion, 3.4% increase from FY24 final enacted budget



## \$914 Million Child Care Financial Assistance

- \$20 million to increase Child Care Financial Assistance rates, in addition to the annualization of the \$65 million rate increases implemented this year
- \$20 million for new FY25 increases from Fair Share (1596-2434); \$45 million from Fair Share (1596-2434) and an additional \$10 million each in line item (3000-3060; 3000-4060) for annualized FY24 rates



## \$35 Million Important Cross-Secretariat Line Items

- \$30 million for Literacy Launch, a partnership between EOE, DESE, and EEC to expand promising early literacy programs and support increased access to evidence-based, high-quality materials for school districts and child care providers.
- \$5 million for mental health systems and wraparound student supports



# EEC H.2 Budget

**\$1.56 billion in FY25**

Line Item & Fair Share	Description of Purpose and Investment	FY25
Administration	Funds staff positions and six offices across the Commonwealth	12,189,926
Quality Supports	Funds monitoring and licensing activities, quality supports, coaching and technical assistance for programs and educators in the child care system	47,603,764
Access Management	Funds child care resource and referral activities, as well as a statewide parent hotline	20,000,000
Child Care Financial Assistance	Supports financial assistance for eligible children enrolled in child care, including annualizing FY24 rate increases, child care financial assistance waitlist remediation effort, and the Early Education and Care Staff Program, includes \$75M for new access	893,775,368
CCFA Rate Increases	Provides funding to increase daily reimbursement rates to programs participating in EEC's Child Care Financial Assistance programs	20,000,000
Grants to Head Start	Supports a grant to all Head Start grantees in MA to help meet their non-federal match	15,000,000
Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)	Funds existing and new partnerships between local school districts and community-based early education and care programs to provide access to low or no cost high-quality preschool, inclusive of the Summer Step Up Program	38,673,127
Mental Health Consultation	Funds access to mental and behavioral health consultants for coaching and technical assistance to child care providers	5,000,000
Community and Family Engagement	Supports a network of 81 community collaboratives designed to provide parenting resources and supports to all families in every community, inclusive of Parent Child Plus programs	15,859,190
Neighborhood Villages	Funds a pilot program to provide high-quality economically-integrated infant and toddler classrooms	1,000,000
Higher Education- Career Pathways	Supports Career Pathways program at all community colleges to help educators obtain ECE college certificates and earn credits towards associate degrees, including free early childhood coursework, books, tutoring, advising and technical support	10,000,000
Reach Out and Read	Supports Reach Out and Read, a pediatric literacy intervention program which trains doctors, nurse practitioners, and other medical professional to incorporate evidence-based model into regular pediatric checkups	1,000,000
Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)	Ongoing monthly payments to support operating costs for all EEC-licensed child care providers	475,000,000



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## Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)



# Federal Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) 2015-2019



## Fully funded new classrooms serving

- Low income families
- Prioritized children without prior early education



## Significant funding for quality investments

- Professional learning
- Quality curriculum
- Educator qualifications and salaries
- Meaningful family engagement



# Successes from the Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG)



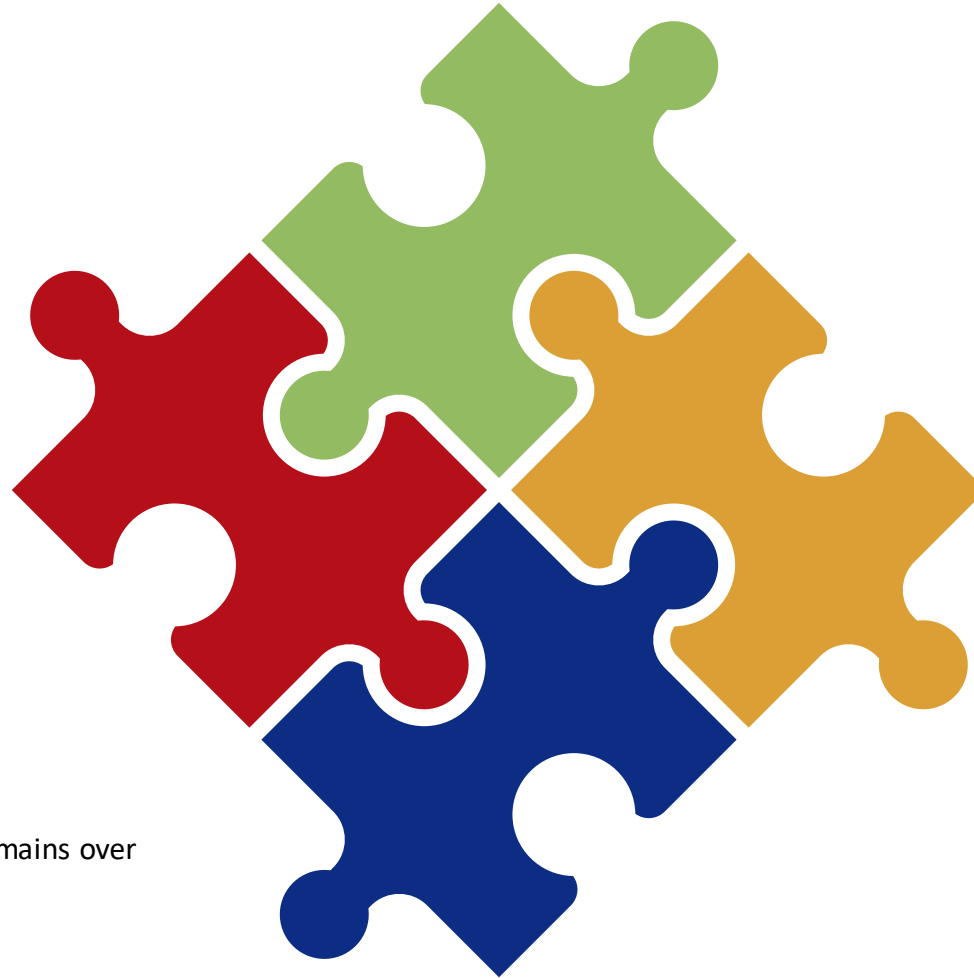
## Early Academic Outcomes

PEG significantly impacted children's early academic outcomes. Impacts greatest for children without prior early education experience and dual language learners.



## Increased Quality

PEG classroom quality improved in some domains over time.



## Economic Benefit

PEG families reported improved income and employment outcomes at the end of a year of PEG enrollment.



## Building a Strong Foundation

PEG classrooms had higher quality scores than non-PEG classrooms in the same agencies as well as public school programs in the same districts (in three communities). PEG teachers and leaders reported feeling more supported.

# Transition to CPPI

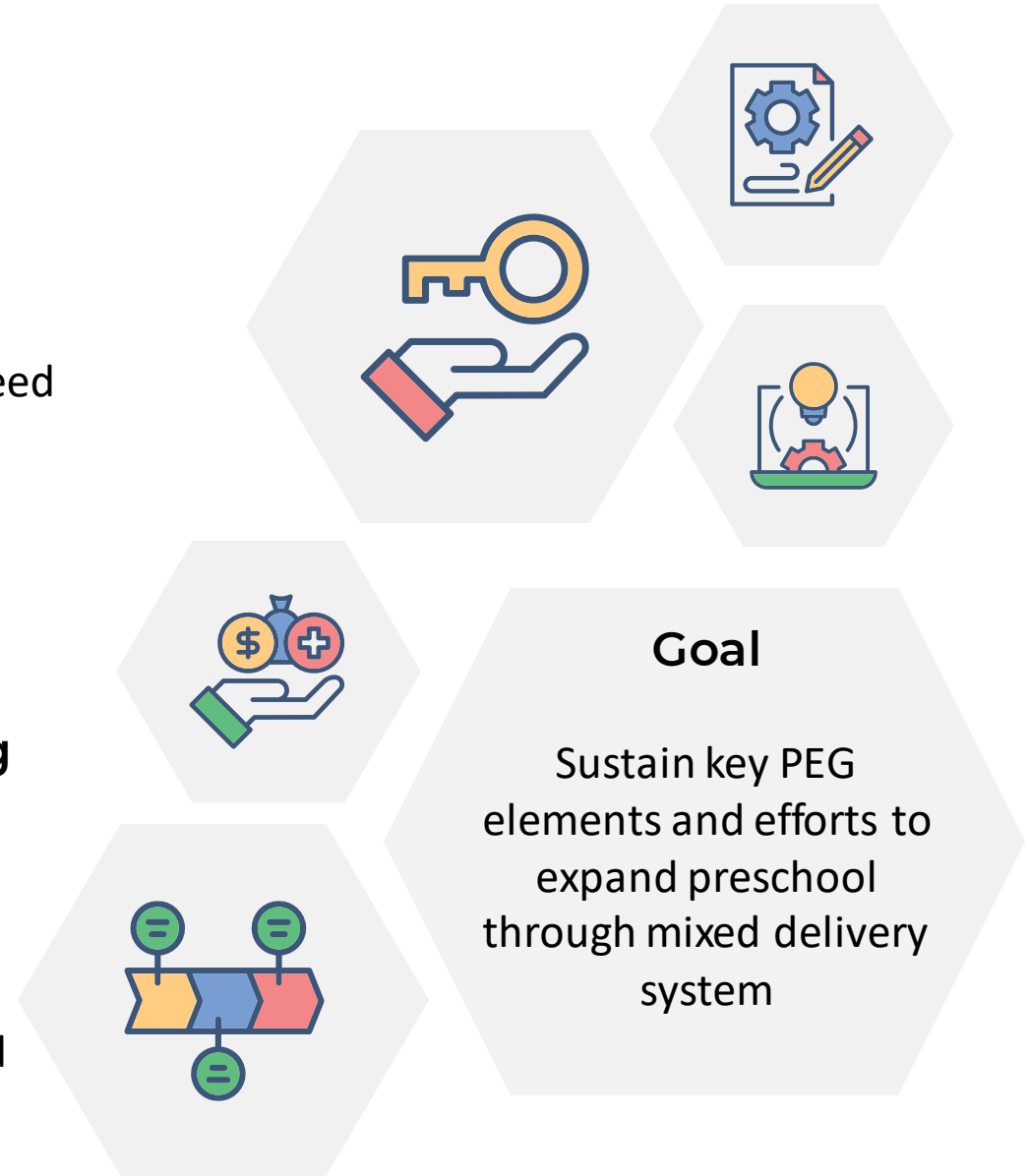
## Expanded to include more districts

## Responsive to lessons learned

- Allow communities to determine families with highest need for preschool access
- Focus greater attention on access to special education services
- Continue focus on quality investments

## Replaced federal funding with a braided funding approach

- Subsidies, district funds and Head Start funding most common
- CPPI supported costs essential to sustaining local partnerships and coordinating ongoing local planning and quality improvement



# CPPI Objectives & Priorities

## Pre-K Across Mixed Delivery

Create partnership between public school district and community-based early education and care classrooms, promoting family choice and strengthening the current local system

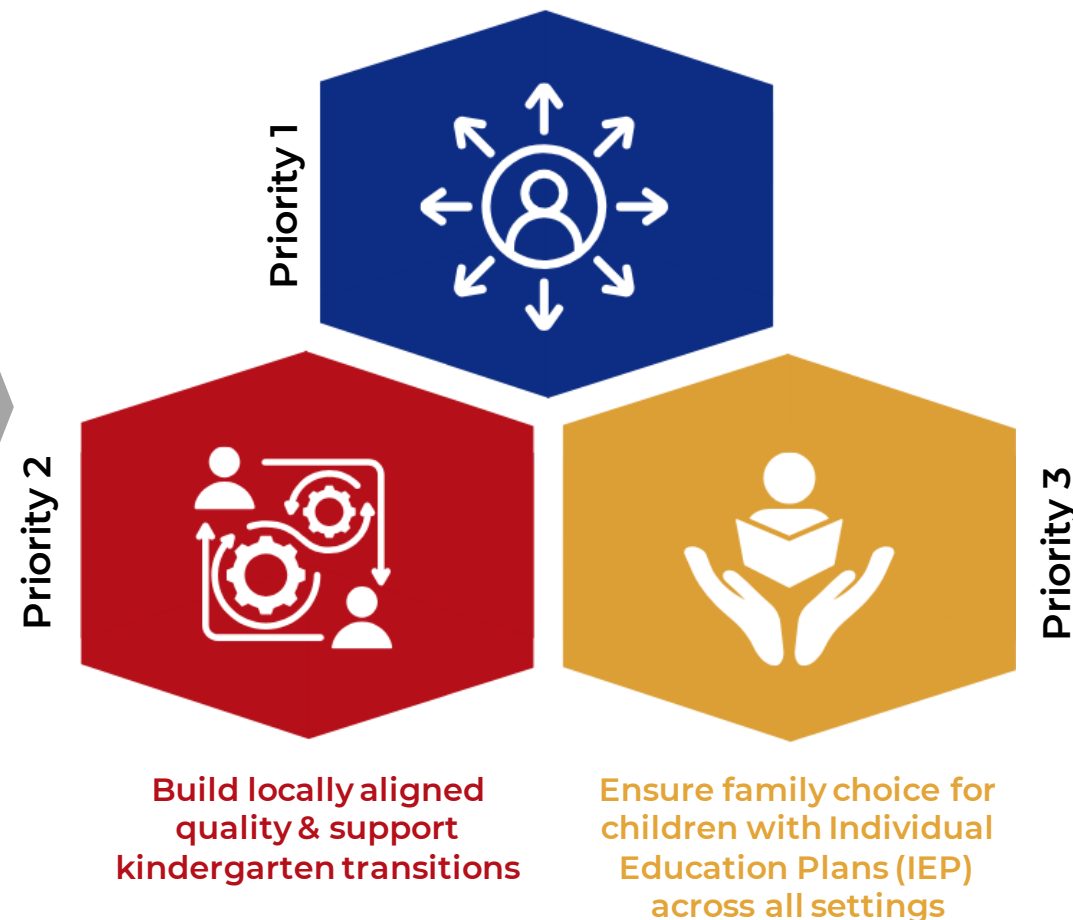


## Support Collaboration

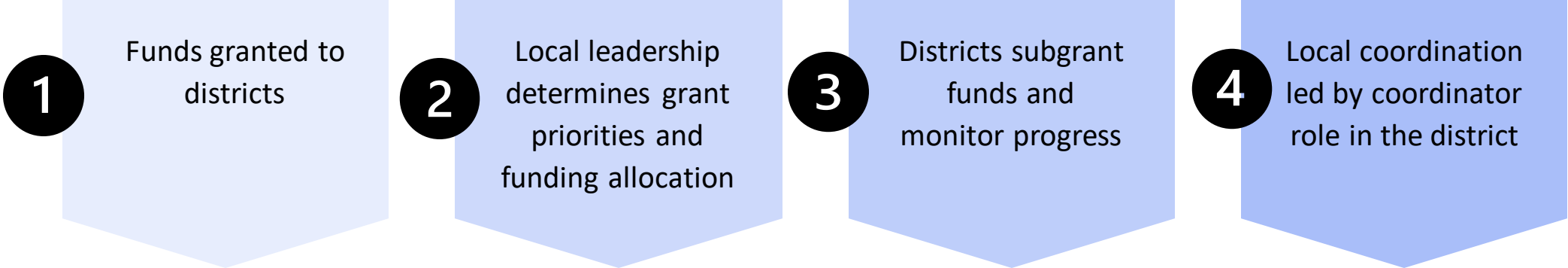
Build coordination across private and public classrooms to create equitable access for all families that meets their unique needs

Communities create a **leadership team**, made up of community programs, school district and dedicated staff to identity priorities and create a plan to meet the grant priorities.

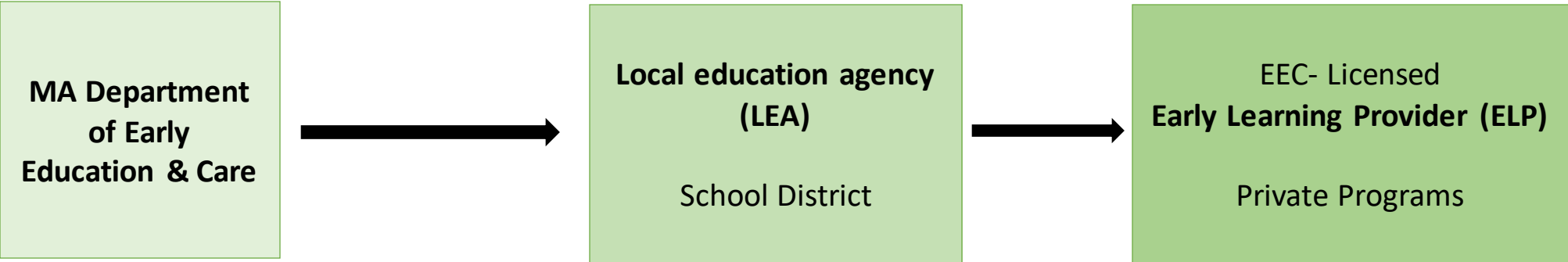
Significant investments in access to affordable care



# CPPI Grant Structure



## Grant Structure



# Fiscal Year 2024 Implementation Awardees



**The \$13.1 million in funding is supporting 21 districts, which includes 2,456 spaces for children across 164 classrooms.**

School District	Cities & Towns Served	Award
Boston Public Schools	Boston	\$670,000
Holyoke Public Schools	Holyoke	\$428,000
Lawrence Public Schools	Lawrence	\$310,000
Lowell Public Schools	Lowell	\$964,000
New Bedford Public Schools	New Bedford	\$670,000
North Adams Public Schools	North Adams	\$316,000
Northampton Public Schools	Northampton	\$670,000
Somerville Public Schools	Somerville	\$897,000
Springfield Public Schools	Springfield	\$406,000
Brockton Public Schools	Brockton	\$750,000
Fall River Public Schools	Fall River	\$494,000
Framingham Public Schools	Framingham	\$750,000
Lynn Public Schools	Lynn	\$538,000
Malden Public Schools	Malden	\$750,000
Salem Public Schools	Salem	\$750,000
Sandwich Public Schools	Sandwich	\$750,000
Gloucester Public Schools	Gloucester	\$330,000
Haverhill Public Schools	Haverhill	\$750,000
Hoosac Valley Regional School District	Adams and Cheshire	\$672,000
Plymouth Public Schools	Plymouth	\$494,000
Westfield Public Schools	Westfield	\$750,000



# Expansion in Fiscal Year 2024

## Opportunities in current CPPI communities



Expand services across all grant priorities



Expand number of funded classrooms (both new and existing)



Eligible to expand funding to \$1M per community



## Planning grant opportunities for new communities

Prioritizing Gateway Cities



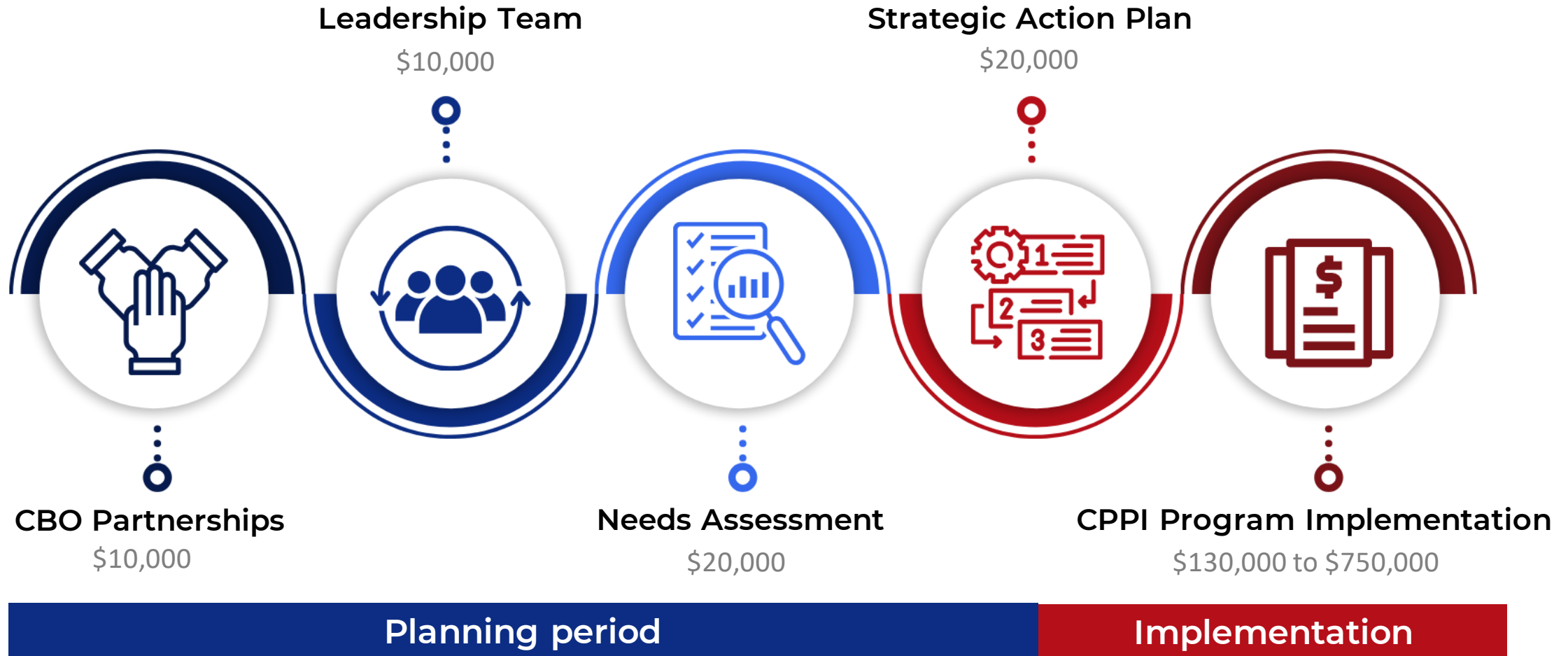
Support through a planning to implementation process



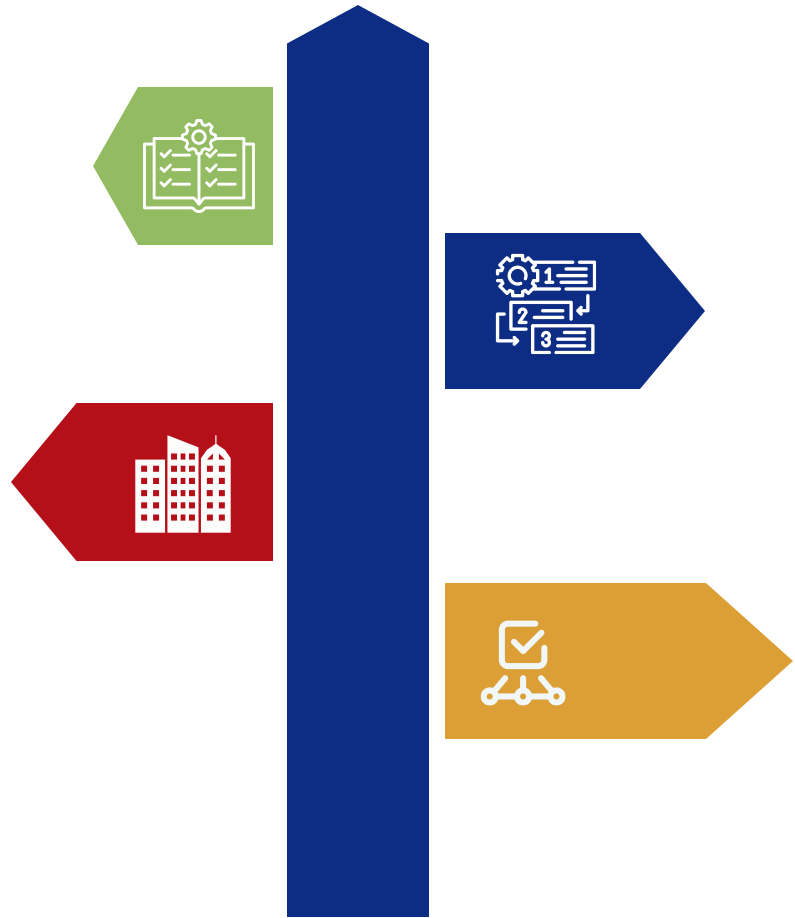
Funded based on stages of development



# Roadmap to Grant Selection Planning and Implementation Applicants



# Moving towards goal of universal access



1.

## Guidance to Superintendents

Executive Office of Education to provide guidance to superintendents recommending expanding preschool access through the mixed delivery system

2.

## Strategic Planning

Revisit strategic planning and cost analyses for all grantees. Standardize expectations and provide support for districts to reach all three priorities.

3.

## Focus on Gateway Cities

Focus Gateway City grantees around ambitious and achievable goals for system expansion. Define goals that build on current system, rather than replacing it.

4.

## Address Barriers

Address barriers at the state level, by resolving regulatory conflicts and facilitation of effective braided funding.

# Panel Introductions



**Dr. Stephen Zrike**

*Superintendent*  
Salem Public Schools



**Tabitha Williams**

*Owner*  
Ashley's Preschool and Daycare



**Kate Carbone**

*Deputy Superintendent*  
Salem Public Schools



**Leanne Smith**

*Principal*  
Salem Early Learning Center



**Celeste Hamilton**

*Site Director*  
Salem Community Childcare



**Charity Lezama**

*Executive Director*  
Salem YMCA



**Shawna Erps**

*Early Learning Coach*  
CPPI Grant Coordinator



**SALEM**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
*Where belonging leads to opportunity.*

# The Story of the Salem PreK Partnership

*Presented to the EEC Board of Directors  
February 14, 2024*



# Introductions

Member Name	Role
Dr. Stephen Zrike	Superintendent
Kate Carbone	Deputy Superintendent
Charity Lezama	Executive Director of the Salem YMCA
Celeste Hamilton	Site Director at Salem Community Childcare
Tabitha Williams	Owner of Ashley's Preschool and Daycare
Leanne Smith	Principal of the Salem Early Childhood Center
Shawna Erps	CPPI Grant Coordinator/Early Learning Coach





# CPPI Grant Attempts

## CPPI Grant Applications: 2 unsuccessful attempts

- FY19 grant not funded
- FY20 grant not funded

## Grant Awarded to Salem

- February 2022 (\$345,000)
- August 2022 (FY23) (\$750,000)
- August 2023 (FY24) (\$750,000)
- Continuation expected in FY25 (\$750,000)

### Enhanced Infrastructure

- Early Learning Coach
- Launched use of PreK curriculum & literacy/numeracy assessment

### Salem PreK Partnership Task Force

- Support for a new position: Director of Salem Children's Alliance



# Community Strengths

Total # of 4 year olds being served: **170**

23-24 SPS Kindergarten enrollment: **315**

**54%**

## SPS PreK classrooms

- **Early Childhood Center**
  - 8 Integrated classrooms (4 are PreK)
  - 2 Sub-separate classrooms
- **Bates Elementary & HMLS**
  - 2 PreK classrooms at each site
  - Extended day program
    - Offered at all 3 sites until 5:00pm
- **CPPI partner classrooms**
  - 2 Classrooms - **SCCC**
  - 2 Classrooms - **Salem YMCA**
  - 1 Classroom - **Ashley's Preschool**

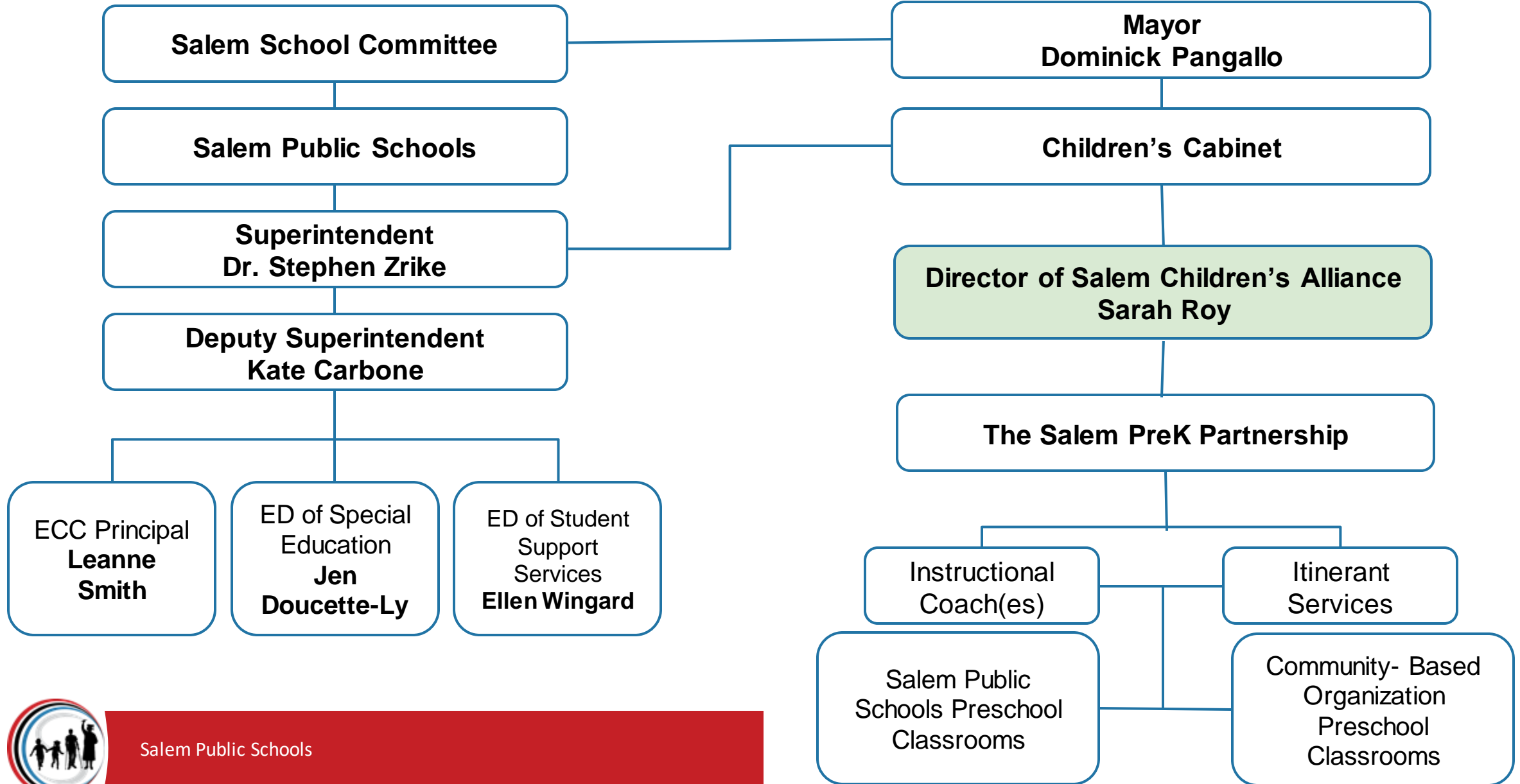


## PreKs Co-Located within Salem Public Schools

- Angela's Daycare
- Pathways for Children



# Community Strengths: Leadership and Governance Structure



# Challenges

## **Sustainable funding is issue for both partners & the district**

- The district opened new classrooms with ESSER funding
- Partner programs do not have the resources necessary to boost teacher salaries or provide tuition relief to the extent they would like.





# Salem PreK Focus on Quality

## Strand I: Expansion & Access to Quality PreK

- Tuition relief for families w/ need
- Boosting teacher salaries in partner classrooms
- Expanded day for SPS PreK classrooms

## Strand II: Building Locally Aligned Quality

- Adoption of 3 Cheers for PreK curriculum
- Use of MyIGDI
- CLASS reviews by outside rater
- Joint PD
- 2 Early Learning Coaches

## Strand III: Equitable Access to Special Education & Inclusion

- Behavior Specialist (certified BCBA)
- Speech & Language Pathology Assistant



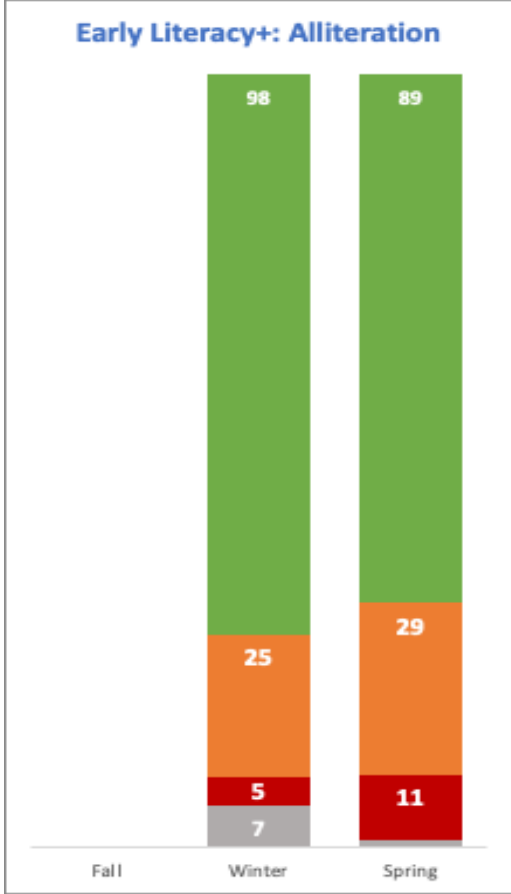
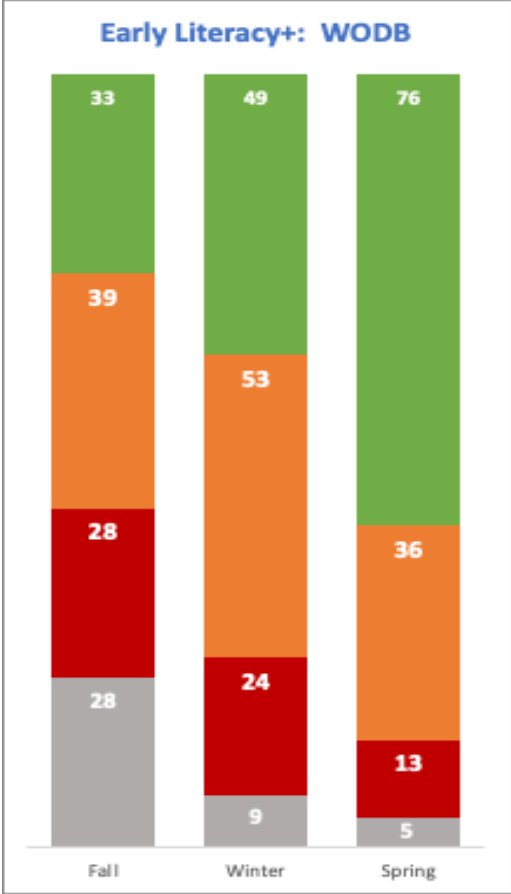
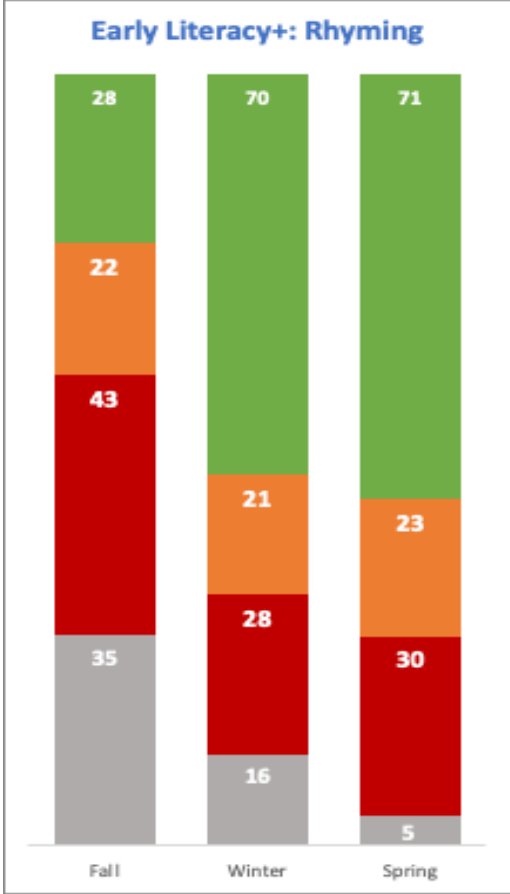
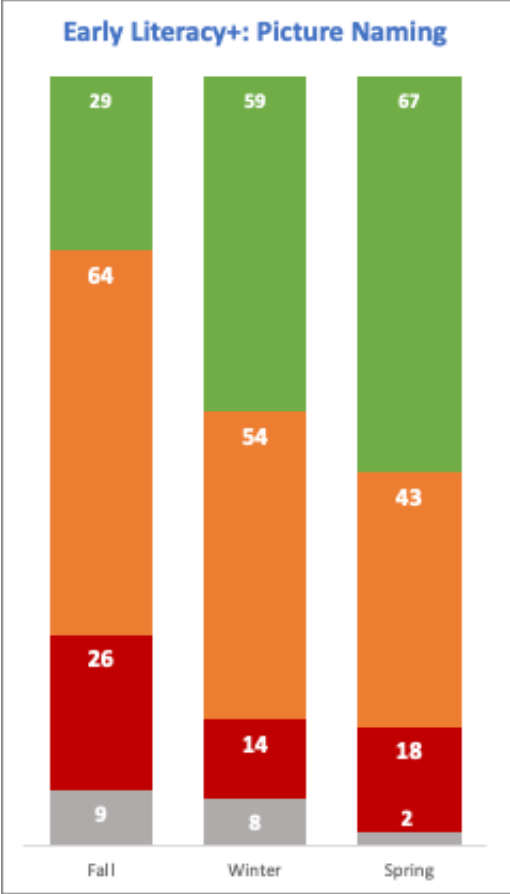
# Indicators of Impact





# Impact: Early Literacy Data

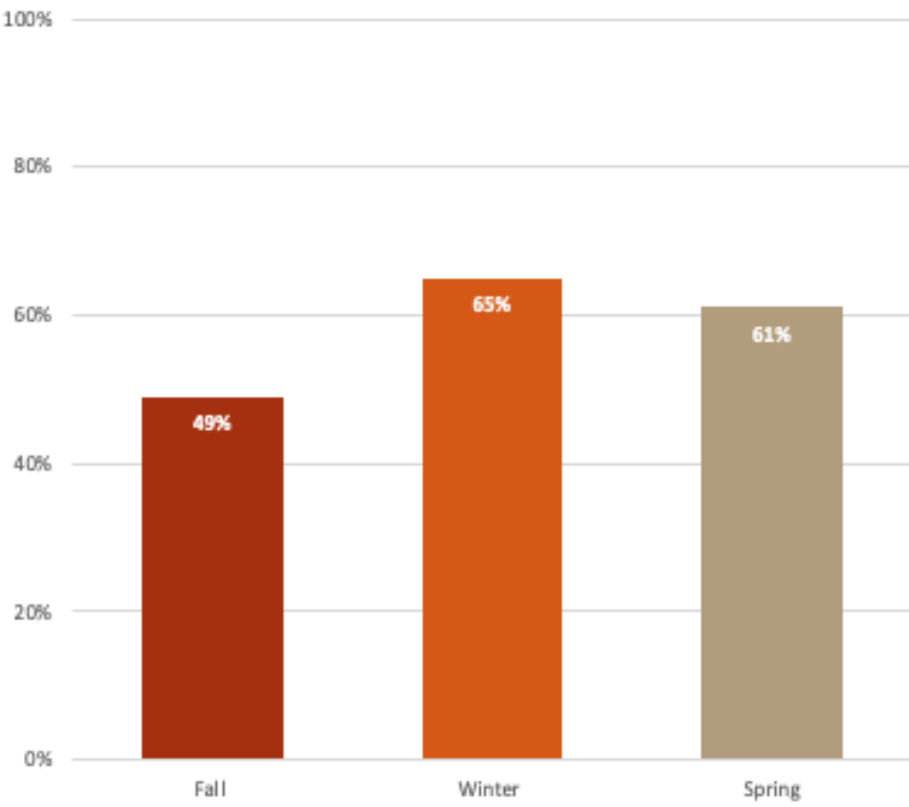
myIGDI



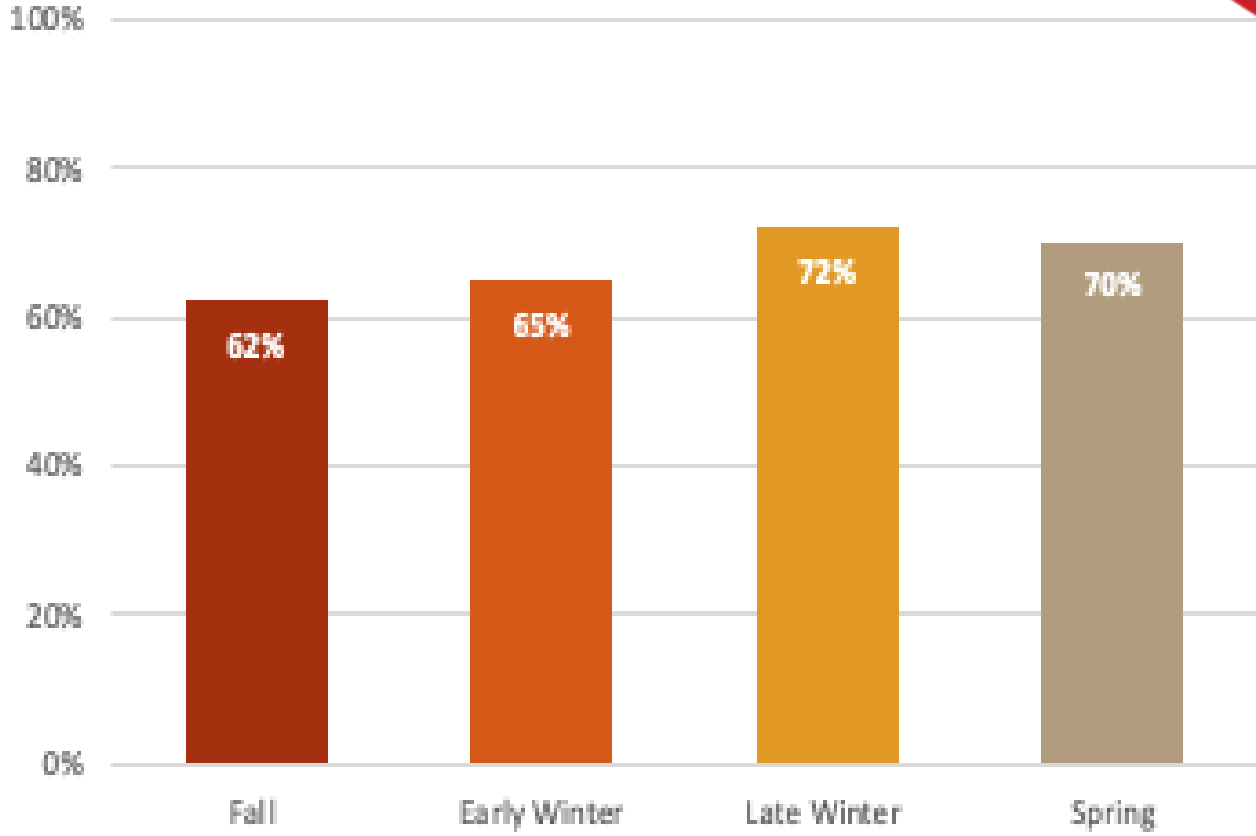
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 ■ Tier II/III   
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# Kindergarten Early Literacy STAR Data

2021-2022  
Before PreK



2022-2023  
With PreK



# Program Highlights





## Salem Public School is excited to share success in the following areas:



- All students are engaged in instruction using the Three Cheers for Pre-K curriculum.
- Assessments have been created and are being utilized based on high priority skills from Three Cheers for Pre-K
- Data Driven Instruction is being used to guide differentiated instruction
- Full implementation of the following instructional priorities:
  - Form small groups to deliver differentiated instruction to develop phonemic and phonological awareness skills
  - Increase student discourse through the use of interactive read-alouds, routines for turn and talk, and purposeful play.
- Professional development is designed based on staff feedback and trends.
- Use of ipads for Math Shelf in all classrooms with positive preliminary data



# Ashley's Preschool & Daycare



- Engaging themes for learning that also allows for teacher creativity
- Supports creative and purposeful play while building skills and knowledge
- Using assessments to learn more about our students
- We can better meet the needs of all children

“With the savings, we’ve been able to pay off debt incurred in her first years. We invested in a children’s museum membership for weekend enrichment as well as swimming and other extra curriculums. We’ve set aside money for travel to support her cultural education and a subscription to a digital learning app.”







## The Salem YMCA is excited to share success in the following:

- 100% teacher retention
- 100% of families are receiving a reduction in tuition fees
- All students are engaged in instruction using the Three Cheers for Pre-K curriculum.
- Use of ipads for Math Shelf in all classrooms with positive preliminary data



“The shared professional development with the school district has greatly benefited my teaching skills. I’m creating a learning environment that shapes the future of our little learners and I couldn’t feel more supported.”





# Salem Community Child Care Inc.



We have retained our teachers through both years of the grant.

Students have access to the same curriculum materials and it supports teachers with materials such as big books. Teachers do not have to recreate the wheel because they have so many resources to choose from, but they have the option to be creative with activities.

We look at the myIGDI data with the coaches to see what skills need to be worked on for specific students but also for the class throughout the year.

The common professional development is worthwhile. Teachers are learning new skills and are also supported. One example is professional development related to CLASS to support quality across our program.





Quality early education transforms children.





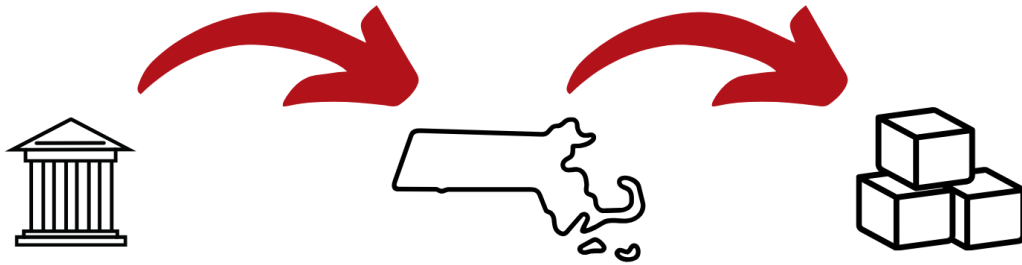
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# State Plan Notification

# CCDF Background & Overview

## Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) BACKGROUND

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a federal and state partnership program authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) that provides federal funding for child care subsidies to help eligible low-income families access child care and improve the quality of child care for all children. States use CCDF to also invest in initiatives including building the skills and qualifications of the workforce, supporting programs to achieve higher standards, and providing consumer education to parents.



Just under 50% of EEC's budget in FFY23 was direct federal funding or tied indirectly to federal funding through either the CCDF or TANF block grants.

## CCDF Plan

Defines how states or territories will administer CCDF in alignment with the requirements of the CCDF final rule and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act statute.

- The Office of Child Care (OCC) requires that the State Plan be updated every three years
- Current plan cycle, October 2022-September 2024
- Our next plan, due July 1, 2024, will be in effect from October 2024 – September 2027

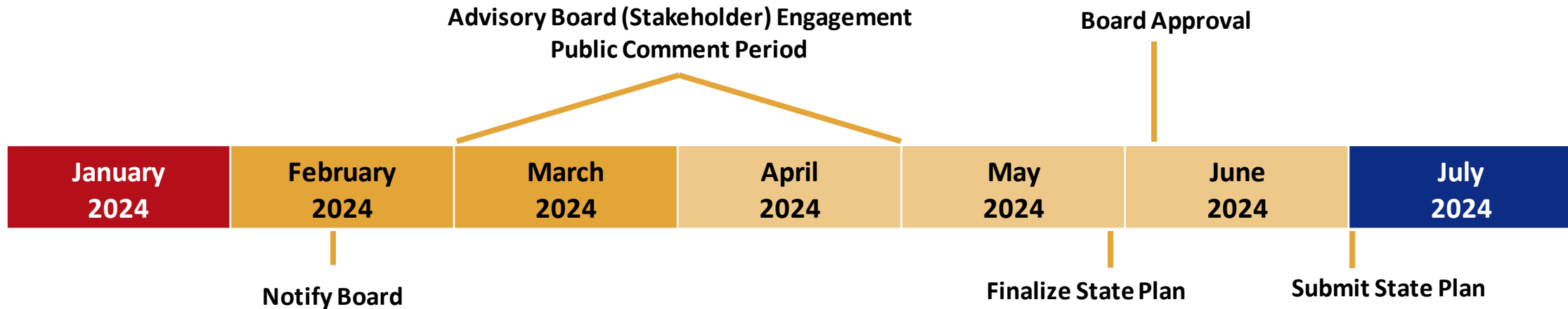
EEC is required to work with stakeholders to draft the plan and the Board is required to vote on the plan before it is submitted to our federal partners.



# FFY25-27 CCDF State Plan: Scope & Timeline

The Office of Child Care (OCC) requires the agency to meet requirements and report on activities, progress, spending and programing in the following areas:

1. CCDF Program Administration
2. Child and Family Eligibility and Enrollment and Continuity of Care
3. Child Care Affordability
4. Parental Choice, Equal Access, Payment Rates, and Payment Practices
5. Health and Safety of Child Care Settings
6. Support for a Skilled, Qualified, and Compensated Child Care Workforce
7. Quality Improvement Activities
8. Lead Agency Coordination and Partnerships to Support Service Delivery
9. Family Outreach and Consumer Education
10. Program Integrity and Accountability



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# Appendix

# EEC Board Proposed FY25 Budget Priorities

Building on the agency's Strategic Objectives, the Board of Early Education and Care's recommendations are to support work across these objectives to support the needs of families, educators and programs.



## FAMILY ACCESS

Families have equitable access to quality and affordable early education and care in the communities in which they live, learn, and work.



## PROGRAM QUALITY

Programs licensed or funded by EEC support children's health and safety and provide high quality environments that are culturally responsive, inclusive, and support children's learning and development in partnership with families.



## PROGRAM STABILITY

Programs licensed or funded by EEC are operationally stable and financially sustainable.



## WORKFORCE SUPPORTS

A diverse field of educators, leaders, and program staff is competitively compensated and supported by clear professional pathways that promote quality, retention, and advancement.



## AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE

EEC has sufficient internal capacity, organizational structures, and diverse perspectives and expertise to carry out its mission and strategic objectives.



# EEC Board Proposed FY25 Budget Priorities

## FAMILY ACCESS



### **Sustain efforts to improve and simplify access to care through Child Care Financial Assistance reforms**

In April 2022, the Board voted unanimously to promulgate revised Child Care Financial Assistance regulations. Since then, the agency has been working diligently to implement related reforms and system improvements to support simplified user experiences that serve people with dignity. The Board recommends continued investment to support the agency's work to improve service delivery for families and, where possible, reach more families.

### **Support expanded access to preschool in Gateway Cities through the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)**

In FY24, the Administration included \$5.5 million to support expanded access to participating 21 school districts and expand access to new Gateway Communities. Additional investment in FY25 would provide planning and implementation support to additional communities across the Commonwealth, while maintaining support for the state's mixed delivery early education system.

### **Strengthen services for young children and families residing in the state's emergency shelter system**

As the number of families residing in the state's shelter system rise, EEC is working collaboratively with cross-secretariat partners and external stakeholders to coordinate services for young children and their families. EEC should continue to meet changing needs of families and create critical play and education opportunities for young children in shelter.

## PROGRAM STABILITY



### **Continue to support and refine Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Grants**

As the Commonwealth moves from emergency stabilization to ongoing operational support, sustained investment in C3 will enable EEC to continue prioritizing equity in the grant by further directing funds to programs serving higher need families and strengthening the focus of the grant on supporting professional development, workforce compensation and quality investments.

### **Continue work to move CCFA rate structure to reflect true cost of care for programs**

The Board has passed historic increases to child care financial assistance rates to meet the needs of programs. EEC should continue to improve rates and close gaps outlined in the cost study, while they pursue an alternative methodology.

# EEC Board Proposed FY25 Budget Priorities

## PROGRAM QUALITY



### **Continue development and implementation with DESE towards a collaborative early literacy strategy for young learners**

We know that early literacy plays a critical role in building children's kindergarten readiness and supporting life-long success in academics and beyond. Prioritizing funding for early literacy supports in FY25 will enable EEC to work collaboratively with DESE to expand the use of literacy screening and integrated supports for EEC-licensed programs.

### **Expand access to mental health supports and trauma-informed training opportunities**

Providers across Massachusetts have reported an increasing need for supports to serve children with behavioral and mental health challenges. The Board supports additional investments into the existing Early Childhood Mental Health grant program to expand supports and services to providers, as well as families, to help create supportive, responsive environments for young children.

## WORKFORCE SUPPORTS



### **Continue and expand access to Child Care Financial Assistance for ECE staff pilot**

Since this pilot was launched in January 2023, programs and educators have reported that the pilot has been a critical tool for recruiting and retaining educators and staff. Primarily, it supports staff to be able to afford to stay in a career they're passionate about. To date, more than 1,500 children of ECE staff have been able to access care. Additional investment to support this pilot could enable the agency to consider program design changes.

### **Invest in key recruitment and retention strategies, like apprenticeships & licensing support for FCC providers**

The Commonwealth's child care sector continues to face persistent workforce challenges that directly impact the accessibility of high-quality child care for families. Investments in this area in FY25 will support the agency's ongoing work to improve recruitment and retention of educators in both center-based and FCC settings.

## AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE



### **Support ongoing growth of agency capacity to continue responding to challenges & opportunities now and in the future**

New investments in the agency's staffing and IT infrastructure can be felt throughout the Commonwealth's early education field, as the agency's business processes modernize and its new divisions make meaningful progress towards identified goals and improvements. Additional support is needed for the agency's continued execution on its important mission by way of its strategic objectives.