



Workforce Council

June 5, 2025

JUNE 5, 2025

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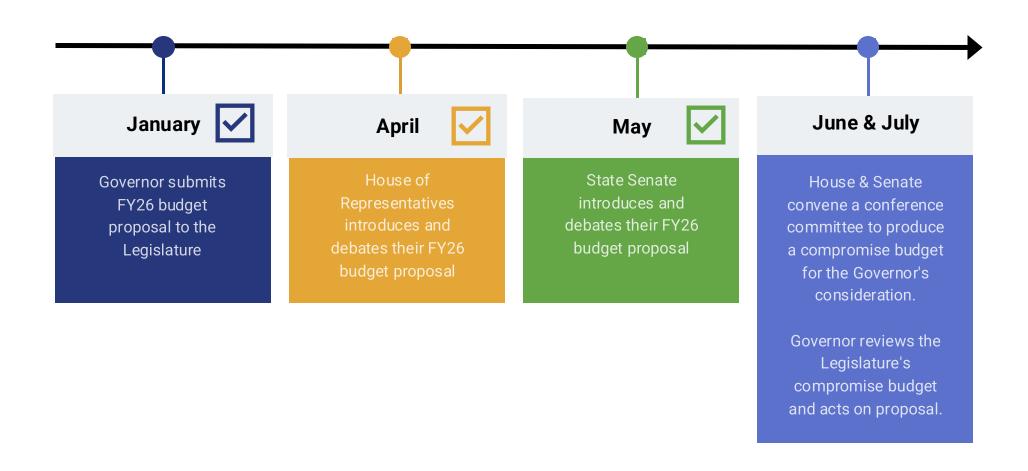
Agenda

- FY26 Budget Process Updates
- New Educator Credential: Development Process and Status
- EEC 5-Year Strategic Action Plan



FY26 State Budget Development Updates

State Budget Process



Gateway to Pre-K H.1 Budget Highlights

The Governor's H.1 budget continues to make progress in key areas of the Gateway to Pre-K agenda:

Continued investment in the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)

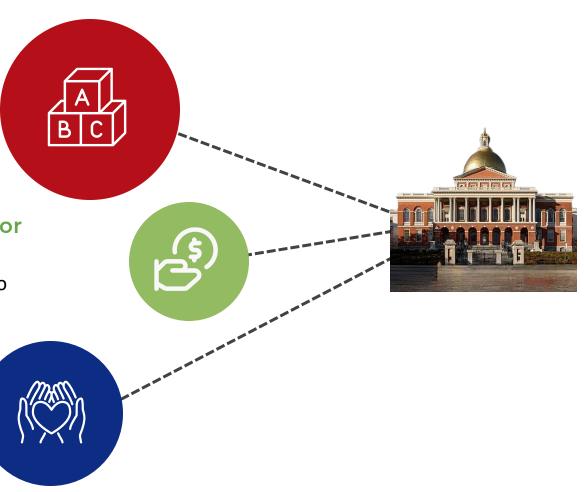
The CPPI line item in FY26 will maintain and support all existing communities, with additional funding in Fair Share Supplemental distributed between FY26 to FY28 for expansion within existing and new communities; priority for Gateway Cities

Supporting continued access to affordable care for families through Child Care Financial Assistance

Investments in child care financial assistance line-items to maintain FY24 and FY25 caseload expansion

Sustaining \$475M for Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)

C3 continues to be a priority and state investment in the program maintains critical operational supports to early childhood programs



Gateway to Pre-K H.1 Budget Highlights

Overall, H.1 funds EEC at \$1.679 billion, 10% increase from FY25 final enacted budget

Key EEC investments included in the Governor's budget proposals include:

- \$475 million for Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3), funded from both general appropriations and Fair Share revenue
- \$1 billion to support families receiving Child Care Financial Assistance (Income Eligible and DTA/DCF-Related)
- \$17 million for the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI), supplemented by \$50 million available for the program over 3 years through the Fair Share Supplemental budget, allocating \$25 million for CPPI in FY26.

Governor Healey's budget proposal also maintains critical funding across EEC line-items:

- \$47 million for licensing staff, initiatives, and supports through the agency's Quality Improvement line item
- \$20 million for child care resource and referral services
- \$18.5 million for supplemental grants to Head Start and Early Head Start programs
- \$11.7 million for the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant program
- \$5 million for Career Pathways
- \$5 million for early childhood mental health grants
- \$4.25 million for the ParentChild+ program

To see the **full list of line items** and proposed funding levels, see the Governor's proposed budget <u>here.</u>

House and Senate Budget Proposals: Highlights

House of Representatives

- \$1.02B for CCFA caseload maintenance
- \$15M for new CCFA access through contracted seats
- **\$475M** for C3
- \$20M for CCR&Rs
- \$18.5M for Head Start
- \$10M for CPPI
- \$5M for early childhood mental health grants
- **\$5M** for Career Pathways
- \$4.25M for Parent Child+
- \$1.75M for Reach Out and Read
- Increases cap on C3 funding available to large, multisite private programs from 1% to 1.25%
- Requires agency to reimplement CCFA unit price contracts rather than cost-reimbursement and enable 20% retained revenue.

Senate

- \$1.06B for CCFA caseload maintenance
- \$475M for C3
- **\$27.7M** for CPPI
- \$20M for CCR&Rs
- \$20 M for Head Start
- \$5M for early childhood mental health grants
- \$4.25M for Parent Child+
- **\$2.5M** for an employer-sponsored care program
- \$1M for Reach Out and Read

EEC FY26 House Budget Development (in millions)

GENERAL FUND LINE ITEMS

Line Item	Appropriation	FY25 GAA	FY26 H.1	FY26 House	FY26 Senate
3000-1000	Admin	\$27.7	\$8.0	\$13.8	\$8.0
3000-1020	Quality Improvement	\$52.6	\$46.9	\$46.9	\$45.0
3000-1045	C3 Stabilization Grants	\$300.0	\$200.0	\$115.0	\$150.0
3000-1049	Employer-sponsored Child Care	\$2.5			\$2.5
3000-2000	Access Management	\$20.0	\$20.0	\$20.0	\$20.0
3000-3060	DCF/DTA Related Child Care	\$356.6	\$448.2	\$448.2	\$448.2
3000-4060	Income-Eligible Child Care	\$417.2	\$517.6	\$517.6	\$517.6
3000-5000	Grants to Head Start Programs	\$18.5	\$18.5	\$18.5	\$20.0
3000-6025	CPPI Pre-K Initiative	\$17.5	\$17.7	\$10.0	\$17.7
3000-6075	Early Childhood Mental Health	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0
3000-7050	Coordinated Family & Community Engagement	\$11.9	\$11.7	\$11.7	\$11.7
3000-7052	Parent-Child Plus Program	\$4.3	\$4.3	\$4.3	\$4.3
3000-7055	Neighborhood Villages	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$1.0
3000-7066	Career Pathways	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0	
3000-7070	Reach Out and Read	\$1.8	\$1.8	\$1.8	\$1.0
	Total	\$1,241.6	\$1,305.7	\$1,218.8	1,252.0

EEC FY26 House Budget Development (in millions)

FAIR SHARE-FUNDED LINE ITEMS

Line Item	Appropriation	FY25 GAA	FY26 H.1	FY26 House	FY26 Senate
1596-2410	Child Care Grants to Providers	\$175.0	\$275.0	\$360.0	\$325.0
1596-2411	Income Eligible Access (Waitlist Remediation)	\$15.0		\$15.0	
1596-2412	CPPI Pre-K Initiative	\$5.0			\$10.0
1596-2429	Early Education & Care Provider Capital Grants	\$15.0			
1596-2434	Rate Increases for Early Education and Care	\$65.0			
1596-2435	EEC Affordability	\$18.0			
1596-2452	Child Care Supports		\$98.0	\$53.0	\$98.0
	Total	\$278.0	\$373.0	\$428.0	\$433.0

To see the full list of line items and proposed funding levels, see the House of Representatives' proposed budget here.

FY25 Fair Share Supplemental Budget

In January, Governor Healey filed an FY25 Fair Share Supplemental Budget to complement her FY26 budget proposal. It included \$150 million to support:

- capacity building & workforce development
- family access & affordability
- implementation of the Early Education & Care Task Force recommendations
- Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) (over the next 3 years).

The House and Senate recently approved their versions of the Fair Share Supplemental Budget, which will be reconciled and sent to the Governor for her approval.

House of Representatives

- **\$20 million** for capacity building & workforce development, family access & affordability, implementation of the Early Education & Care Task Force recommendations, & CPPI.
- \$20 million for CCFA reimbursement rate increases in FY26.
- \$8 million for CCFA access for staff working in early education & care.
- \$7.5 million for loan repayment for staff working in early education & care.
- \$3.8 million for local child care and out-of-school-time programs to support capital and programmatic improvements.
- Establishes the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Massachusetts

Senate

• **\$2.6 million** for local child care and out-of-school-time programs to support capital and programmatic improvements.



New Educator Credential: Development Process and Status

Transitioning to Credential System

Develop new system that supports professional advancement across the field

- Inclusive and accessible to all educators and program types
 - Builds a competency-based system of expectations hand in hand with regulatory development
 - Integrate expectations for training/coursework, and
 - Practice application
- Identify clear and accessible entry points
- Create a system to support professional advancement including clear career ladder
- Engage with field broadly to ensure system aligns with/meets the needs of all program types and roles

Staged launch of system to ensure easy access and seamless transition

- Develop professional development pathway to complement new certificate in higher education
- Build more opportunities to develop leadership and mentoring skills
- Pilot apprenticeships for all program types aligned with new credential
- Provide alternatives to certification while integrating new credential into regulation development
- Communicate clearly about upcoming transitions and support educators in understanding and navigating future changes

Recognizing the Importance of Educational Leadership

Strong educational leadership capacity is an essential component to drive the processes and create the conditions that facilitate quality educator practice



Revised credential expectations reflect an enhanced focus on the role of leadership in driving continuous quality improvement (CQI) and sustaining quality practices in programs



Fundamental shift in the role of leadership in all program types



Educational leaders need intensive targeted supports for creating the enabling conditions for educator professional growth and quality improvement in the program



Leaders Implement:

- CQI and Professional Development Planning
- Opportunities for reflective practice
- Collaborative reflection and planning
- Job-embedded professional learning opportunities

Defining a Career Pathway & Credentialing System

UPDATE

Phase 1 February – April 2023	 Maintain use of minimum hiring requirements for stability and flexibility Hire vendor to develop verification requirements for credential Finalize proposed pathways and credentials, building on existing work Prioritize two levels of educator credentialling and directors 		
Phase 2 June 2023 – March 2024	 'Staged relaunch' of certification Open optional professional certification for professional validation and goal setting (Now Director, Teacher and Lead Teacher) Deploying incremental development of supportive IT systems for enhancing certification and new credentialling processes Finalizing plan for new educator registry and data migration strategy 		
Phase 3 March 2024 – June 2025	 Socialize the revised pathway and credentials Engage with stakeholders and partners Regulatory revision to match new credential Plan staged launch of new pathways and credentials Prioritizing levels that recognize skills of current field Educator registry available to support credentialling processes 		

New pathways to earning a credential

Higher Education Pathway

- Degrees & Certificates
 - Higher Education Courses
 - Practicum
- Apprenticeships

Professional Development Pathway

- Approved EEC Endorsed Training Packages
 - Training
 - Job Embedded Practice
- Apprenticeships

+ Years of Experience

Stakeholder Engagement

EEC Team & State Partner Collaboration

- EEC Regional Directors,
 Supervisors, & Licensors
- Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
- Department of Apprenticeship Standards

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EEC Credentialing Working Group

Cross-agency membership weekly meeting

Higher Ed & Workforce Supports

- Professional Development Centers & ECSO's
- Higher Education Partners
- MA Association for Community Colleges (MACC)



Focused Small Group Conversations

To dive deep on particular needs and collaboration

Early Childhood Programs & Community Organizations

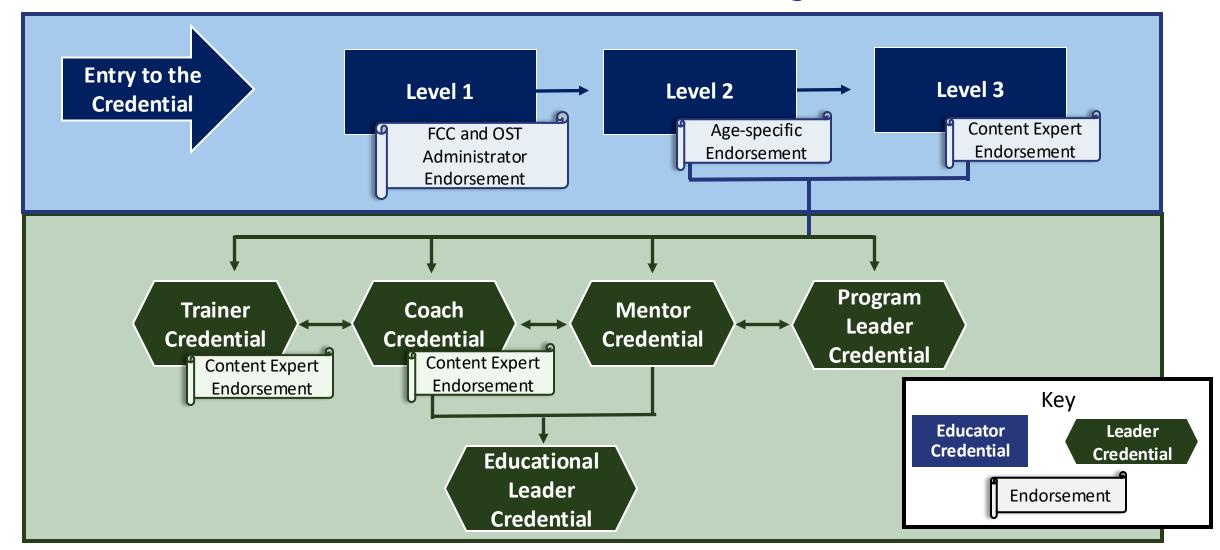
- MA Association for Community Action (MASSCAP)
- Family Child Care Systems
- Early Childhood Director Groups



Workforce Working Group

Cross sector membership monthly meeting

Draft New Credential Pathway



Draft New Credential - Starting on the Credentialing Pathway

Before Working With Children Extending Expertise and Responsibilities

Continued learning to go towards level 1 of the credential



EEC Essentials 2.0

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Background Record Check



First Aid/ CPR certified



20 hours of training of EEC-approved content on StrongStart



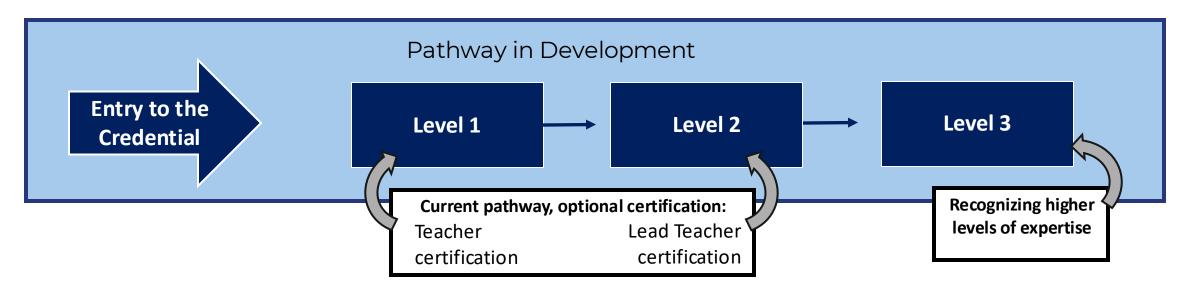
At least 3 months working in an Early Childhood program



Entry level educators are support in selecting a preferred pathway and initiating Level 1 educational requirements.

Higher Education Pathway Professional Development Pathway

Draft New Credential: Educator Levels



What we heard from Educators



For Out of School Time (OST) and Family Child Care (FCC) Programs administrative skills are needed early in the pathway.



Allow for growth in and out of the classroom as educators, coaches and leaders.

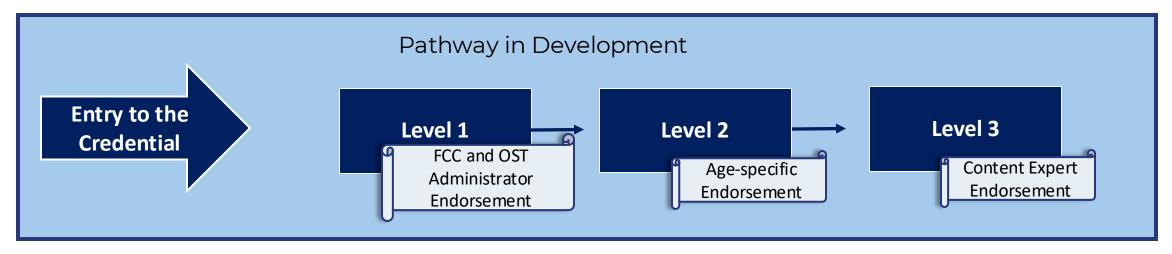


Show special skills (age specific expertise) but not required to move along levels.



Educators who are skilled and have expertise beyond lead teacher.

Draft New Credential: Educator Endorsements



Based on feedback we are creating optional "endorsements" at each level to recognize additional skills attained



Additional "endorsement" available within Credential level based on completion of relevant competency-based training

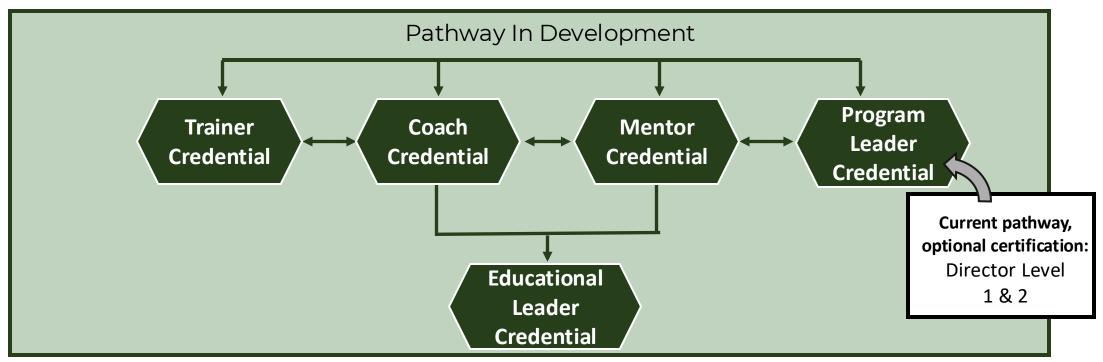


Not required to move along the levels, but allows educators to develops special skills



Enables FCC and OST to gain and get recognition for admin skills early on

Draft New Credential: Leader Levels



What we heard from Educators



Also include option for "endorsements" in leadership levels to demonstrate specific expertise

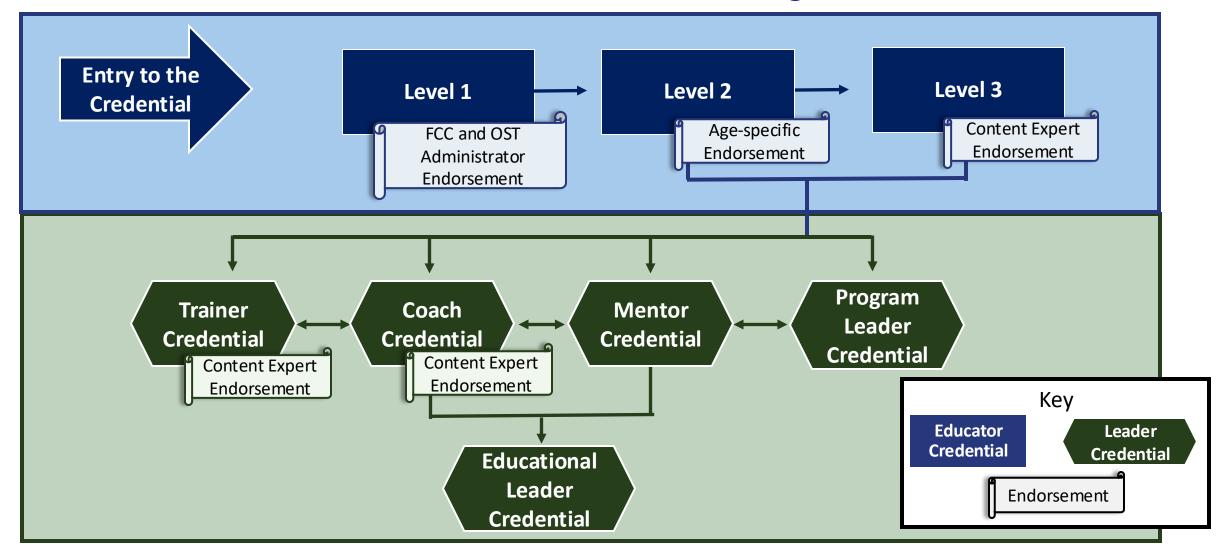


Have varied leadership skills to help people grow along the credential

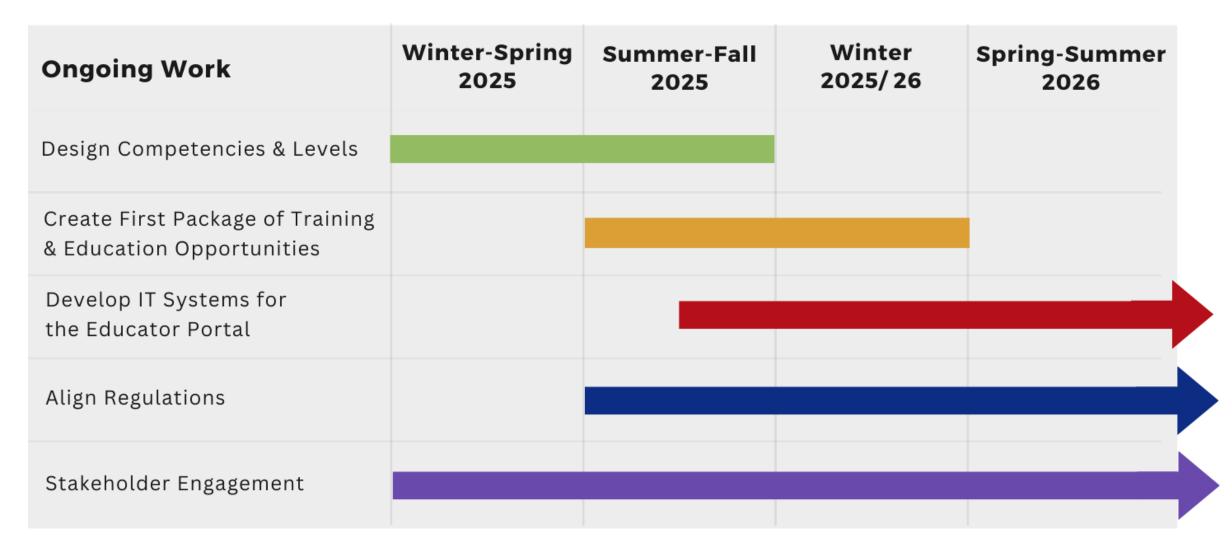


Highly important to have FCC Mentor opportunities to support new educators

Draft New Credential Pathway



Work in Process



Next Steps

Teacher Certification
Continue option for teacher,
lead teacher, director



Community Colleges
Introduce certificate at
the colleges



Licensing Regulations Continue to develop licensing regulations to align with credential





New Training
Pilot trainings built to support the new professional pathways (Strong Start &

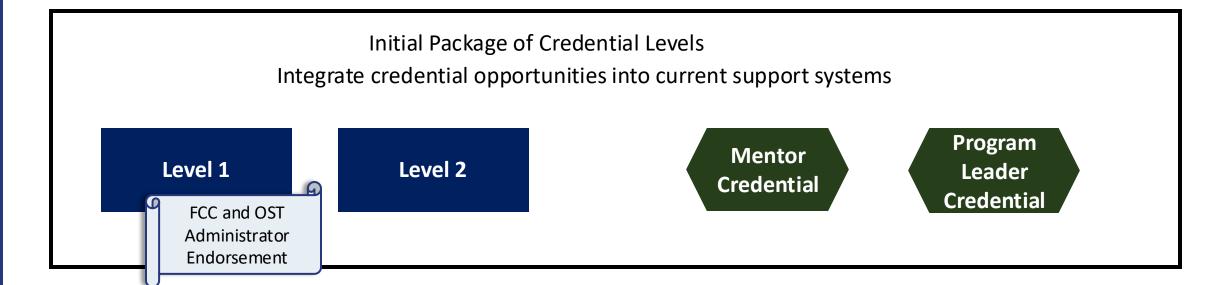
Professional Development Centers)



Apprenticeships
Pilot opportunities for all program types (OST, FCC and center-based)



Educator Portal
Staged launch of new portal





EEC 5-Year Strategic Action Plan

Strategic Action Plan Requirements

The agency's 5-year strategic action is required by MGL 15D, Chapter 4.



Conduct assessment of current and future goals



Submit recommendation to the Board for feedback



Submit a plan to the Secretary for review & approval



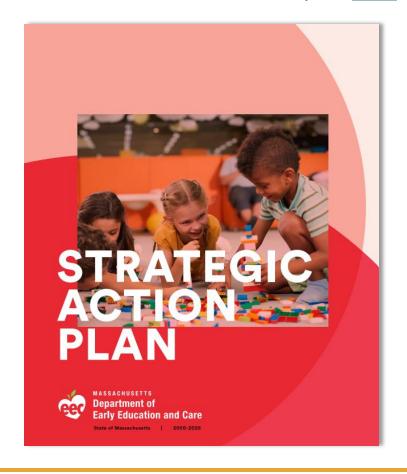
Submit annual progress reports reflecting the goals and expectations set by the Board and Secretary

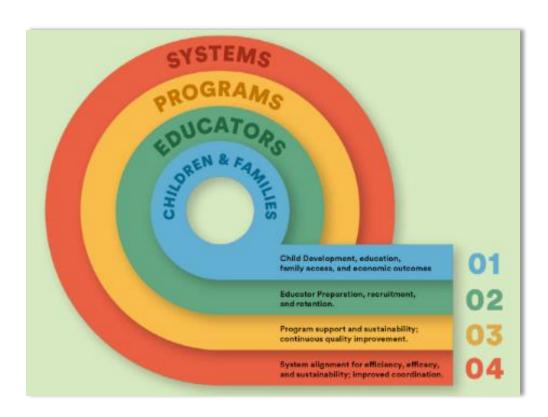


Progress on 2020-2025 Strategic Plan

EEC 2020-2025 Strategic Action Plan

EEC released its 2020-2025 Strategic Action Plan in March 2020. You can read the full plan here.





The 2020-2025 plan organized work by systems, programs, educators, and children and families.

Children, Youth, and Families

2020-25 Goal: Children are on track for success in school and to reach their full potential, and their families are empowered to work, build their skills, and attain economic mobility while supporting their children's education and development.

Shifted focus of CCFA reimbursement rate increases to target covering the cost of care

Refined C3 formula to distribute funds more equitably \$100 million in CCFA rates since 2022 Expanded
participation in the
Commonwealth
Preschool Partnership
Initiative (CPPI)

for Trauma
Responsive Early
Educator Training
(STREET) initiative

Launched
Summer Step
Up program to
support school
readiness

Partnered with EOE to launch the Literacy Launch Initiative

Participating in crossagency development of Mental Health Framework from birth to college Re-procured
Coordinated Family
and Community
Engagement (CFCE)
grants

Updated
CCFA regulations to
modernize system
and re-orient around
the family experience

Educators and Professionals

2020-25 Goal: The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce is professionally prepared, well supported, adequately compensated, and culturally and linguistically representative of the population it serves.

Identified key
educator skills
and
competencies
for new EEC
Credentialing
Framework

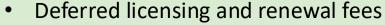
Outlined multiple defined career pathways, including higher education, professional development, and apprenticeships

Partnering with all 15
state community
colleges to provide
credential-aligned
education and
training through
Career Pathways

Partnering with local and regional professional development centers (PDCs) to provide credential-aligned programming

Prioritizing
ECE
educators
and staff
for CCFA

The 2020-2025 plan also included several actions the agency completed in response to COVID-19



- Expedited process for background record checks and amended teacher qualifications
- Supported targeted workforce mental health initiatives

Programs

2020-25 Goal: Programs will increase their sustainability, engage in continuous quality improvement, and promote high-quality education and healthy development among children and youth.

Codified C3
into state law
and fully
funded it with
state resourc
es

Shifted focus of CCFA reimbursement rate increases to target covering the cost of care

Completed two cost of care studies to better understand programs' real costs

Refined
C3 formula
to distribute
funds more
equitably

Increased
EEOST capital
funding to
\$10.6 million/
year

Professional Development
Centers, ECSOs, and EEC Program
Quality team provide trainings on
continuous quality improvement,
professional learning planning,
and curriculum

Expanded regional staffing capacity (Behavioral Health and Program Quality specialists) to respond to emerging needs in the field

Integrating professional development focus into new Credentialing expectations.

Increased Early
Childhood
Mental Health
Consultation
Services grants to
\$5 million

Systems

2020-25 Goal: To efficiently and effectively steward public investments in early education and care with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of Massachusetts.

Developed agency strategic objectives organized around families, educators, and families Hired Director of
Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion, and Belonging
and launched DEIB
Council

Increased agencywide capacity
through
intentional and
targeted hiring

Facilitated regular working groups, focus groups, and listening sessions to collect input from external stakeholders

Created agency's first
Data Analytic and
Research teams, to
facilitate the regular
analysis and use of data

Launched Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboards

Created agency's first Product team to refine our approach to technology enhancements, development, and refinement Grounded
development of new
technology/product
procurements in the
user experience



2026-30 Strategic Plan

2026-30 Strategic Plan: Our Approach

- Continue and expand upon current workstreams
- Center input and feedback from families and providers
- Build on best-practice research from the field
- Prioritize user-centered design
- Utilize EEC data and metrics to drive improvements and measure progress

2026-30 Foundations: Engagement

The agency has engaged with many stakeholders over the last few years and will use their input to inform our next Strategic Action Plan.

Interagency Early Education and Child Care Task Force listening sessions

In the summer of 2024, the Task Force hosted 14 listening sessions across the state and virtually.

Regular stakeholder engagement opportunities

The agency regularly engages stakeholders through listening sessions, working groups, focus groups, and the 9:30 call.

Advisory, Workforce, and Data Advisory Councils/Commissions

On a quarterly basis, we meet with our council members to gather input on agency initiatives.

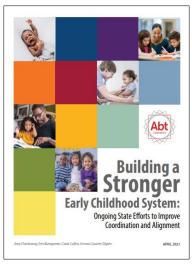
Regulation Revision Engagements

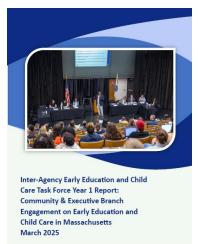
It is required by statue to host public comment opportunities whenever the agency revises regulations.

2026-30 Foundations: External Research

- Building a Stronger Early Childhood System: Ongoing
 State Efforts to Improve Coordination and Alignment,
 Abt Associates, 2021
- MA Special Legislative Early Education and Care Economic Review Commission, 2022
- An Economic Analysis of the Childcare and Early
 Education Market in MA, Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston, 2024
- Building Blocks: Status of Child Care Reform
 in Massachusetts and What Comes
 Next, Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, 2024
- Interagency Early Education and Child Care Task Force
 Year 1 Report, 2025



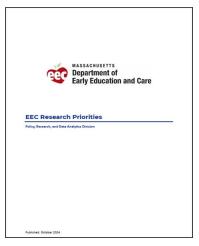






2026-30 Foundations: EEC Research and Data Infrastructure

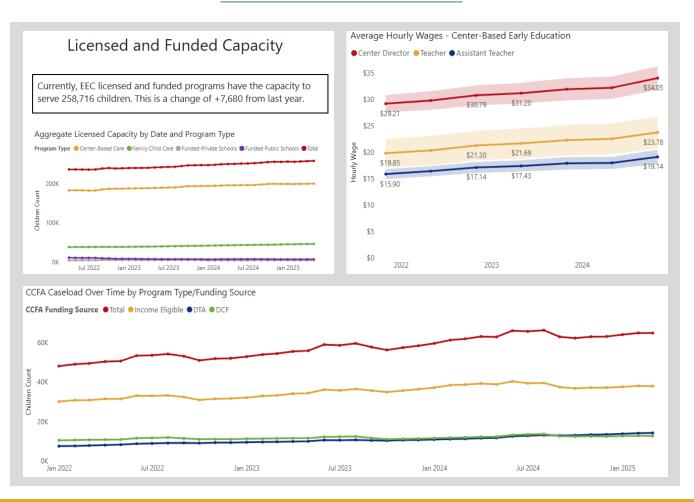
EEC Research Priorities and Projects





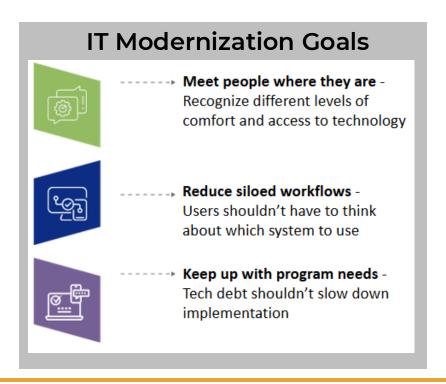


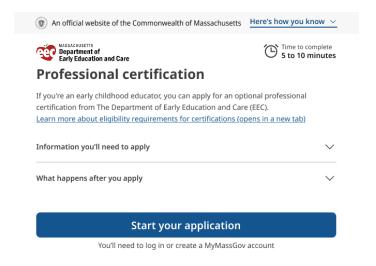
EEC KPI Dashboard



2026-30 Foundations: IT Modernization

- Child Care Financial Assistance Family Portal
- Educator Portal
- Background Record Check Navigator Improvements
- Learning Management System (LMS)





2026-30 Foundations: Strategic Objectives



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.



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.



PROGRAM STABILITY

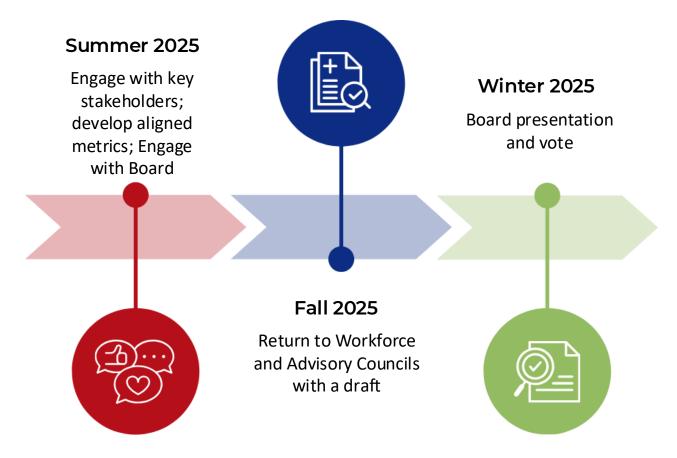
Programs licensed or funded by EEC are operationally stable and financially sustainable.



AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Next Steps



If you'd like to share feedback/input before the fall, email Emily.Conner-Simons@mass.gov