MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

March EEC Board Meeting

March 11, 2026

Agenda

Routine Business:

- Approval of minutes from February 11, 2026 Meeting – VOTE

Items for Discussion and Action:

- Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) & Preschool Access
  - Program Update
  - Community Partner Panel
- Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care Task Force: Year Two Report

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) & Preschool Access

Notable Studies in High Quality Preschool

Landmark Studies



Perry Preschool study

higher high school graduation rates, higher earnings, lower rates of grade retention, and reduced involvement with criminal justice system

Abecedarian study

higher literacy and math achievement, increased college attendance, and improved long-term academic performance

Massachusetts Studies



Longitudinal Boston public preschool research

substantial improvements in language and vocabulary, early literacy and math, executive function, and social-emotional development

Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) impact evaluation

positive and statistically significant impacts on children's early academic outcomes, especially early literacy skills

Research on High Quality Preschool Consistently Identifies Short and Long Term Impacts for Children

High quality learning and care environments can predict improved child outcomes.

Impact evaluations have demonstrated school readiness and life success outcomes resulting from high quality early education for 3- and 4-year-olds.

- Enter kindergarten more prepared
- Have stronger literacy and math skills
- Are less likely to repeat a grade
- Need fewer special education services
- Are more likely to graduate high school and attend college
- Are less likely to be involved in justice system

Gateway to Pre-K Strategy

Goal: Universally accessible high-quality preschool starting with four-year-olds in all Gateway Cities by the end of 2026.
How: Multiple levers build capacity, support affordability, local alignment and quality investments.

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)

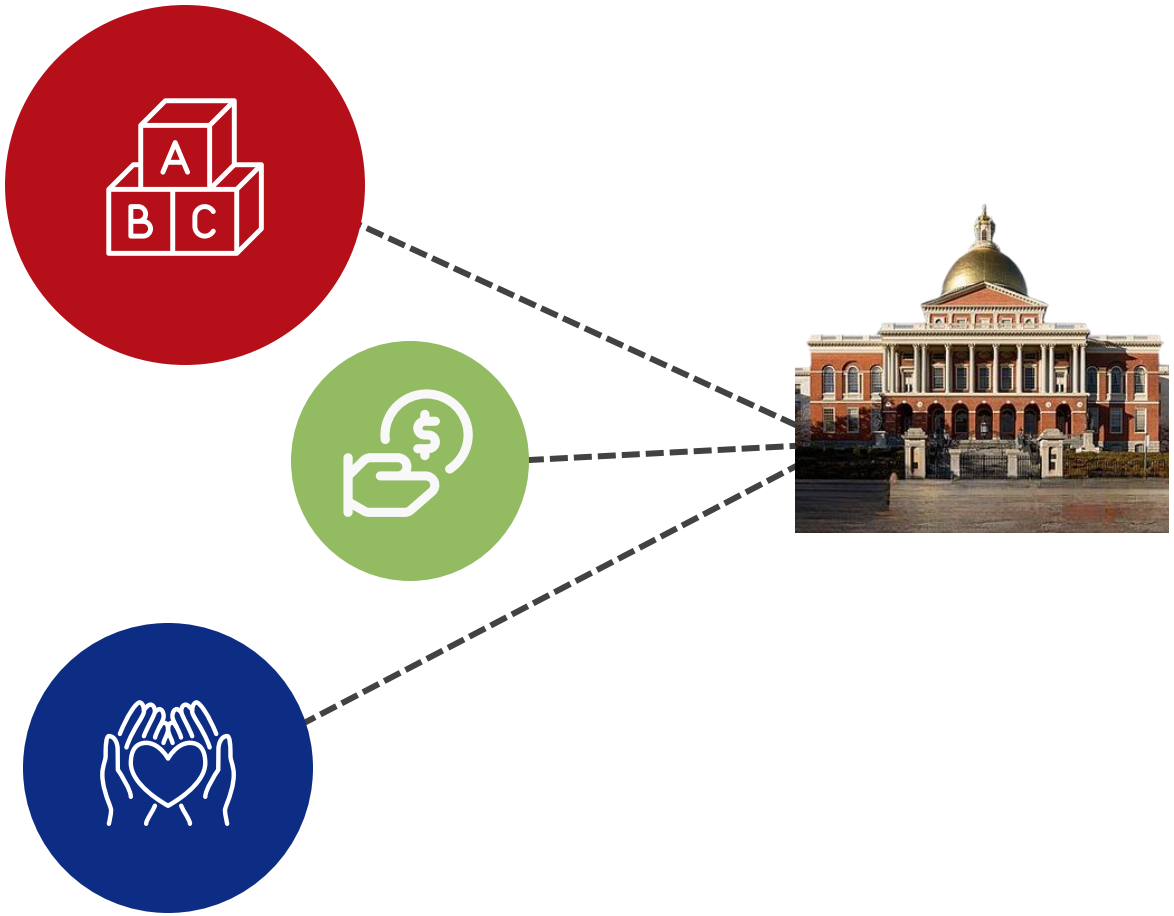
Builds local infrastructure to coordinate the mixed delivery system and integrate funding streams in service of access to high quality preschool

Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA)

Supports affordable access for low-income families statewide with rates sufficient for quality programming

Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)

Operational funding builds program capacity statewide and enables quality investments, including educator compensation

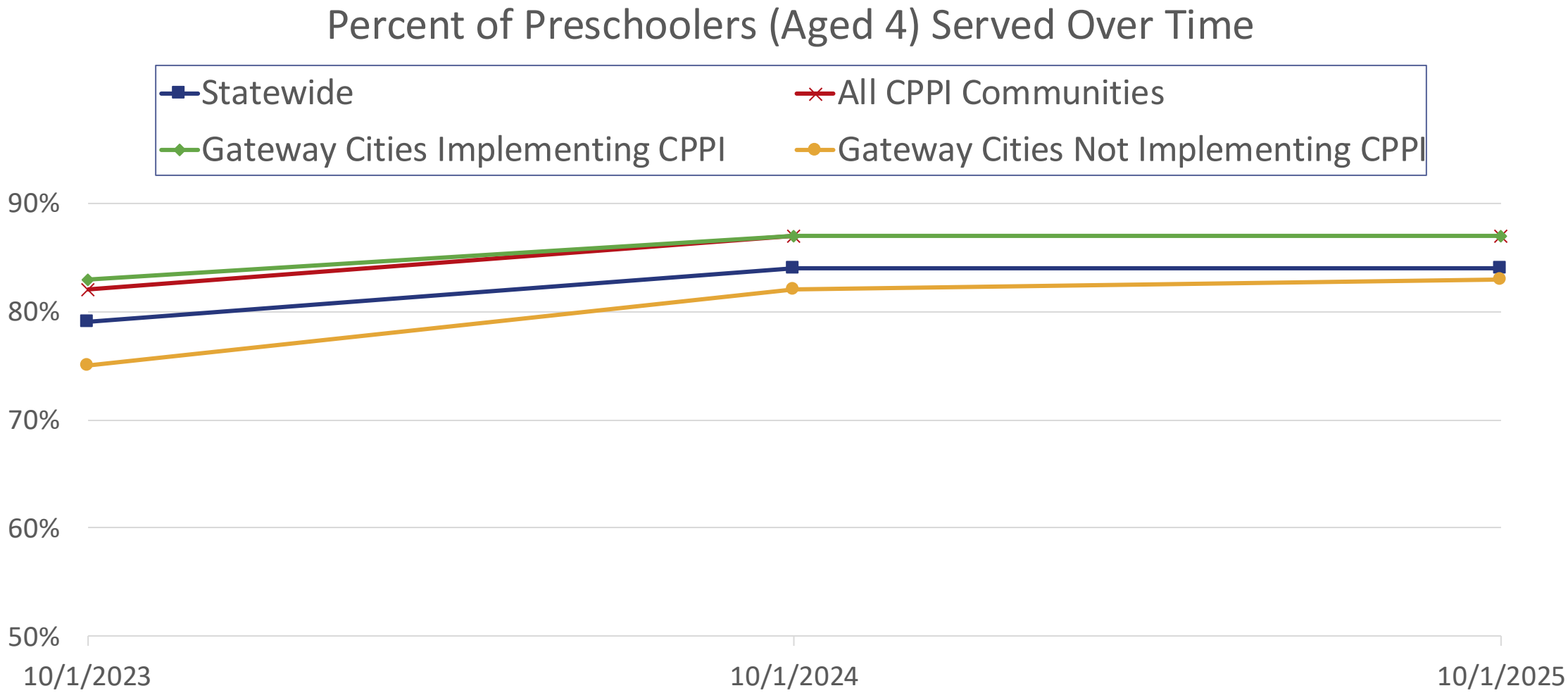


CPPI Team

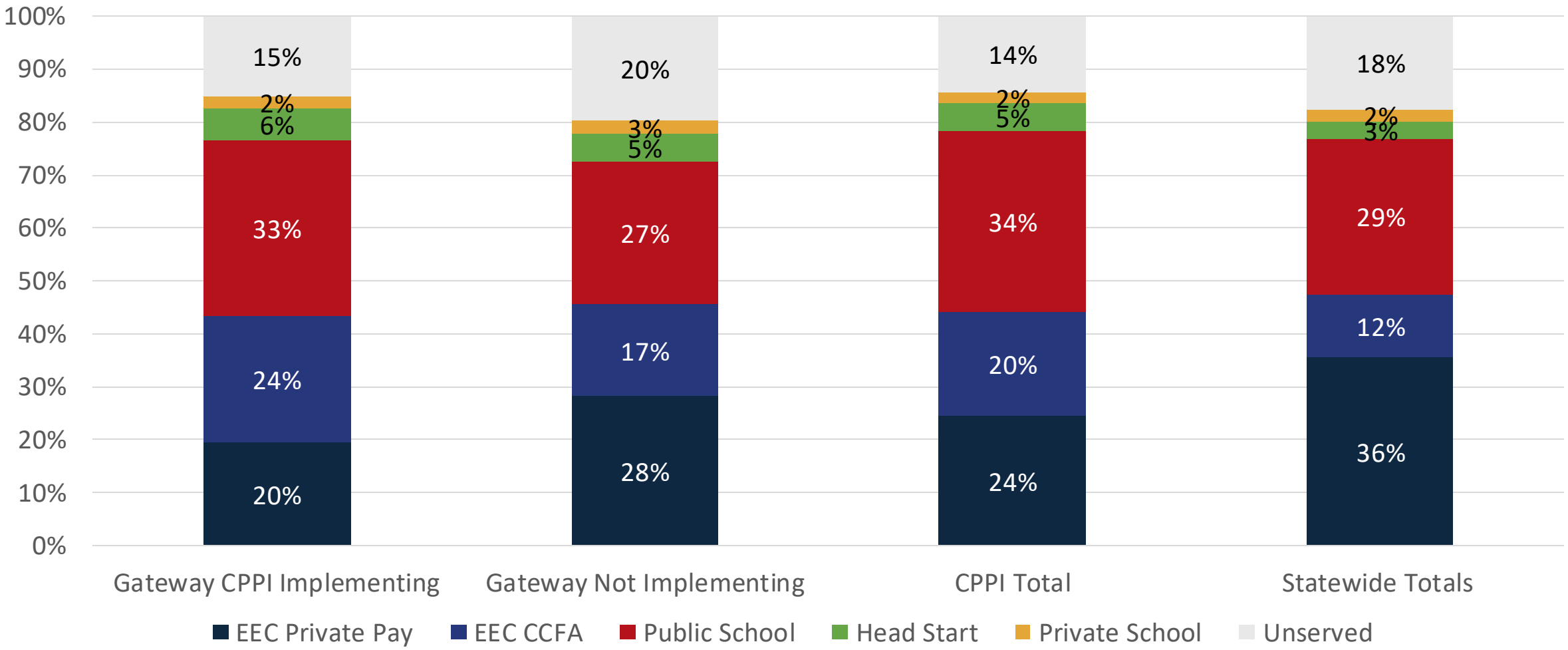
Collaboration across EEC's teams and with our partners at DESE.

- **Jocelyn Bowne**, Deputy Director for Workforce Program and Innovation
- **Kyla McSweeney**, Director of District and Community-based Partnerships
- **Jay Swanson**, Procurement and Educational Specialist
- **Virginia Spinks**, CPPI Data Specialist
- **Michele Smith**, Procurement and Finance Specialist
- **Flo Howes**, Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant Manager
- **Sakile Braithwaite- Hall**, Grant Manager
- **Kathie Lange**, Grant Manager
- **Aimee Smith-Zeoli**, Special Education
- **Jennifer Crandell**, Early Literacy Practice Specialist
- **Donna Traynham,** (DESE) Early Learning Team Lead
- **Emily Taylor**, (DESE) Early Learning Specialist

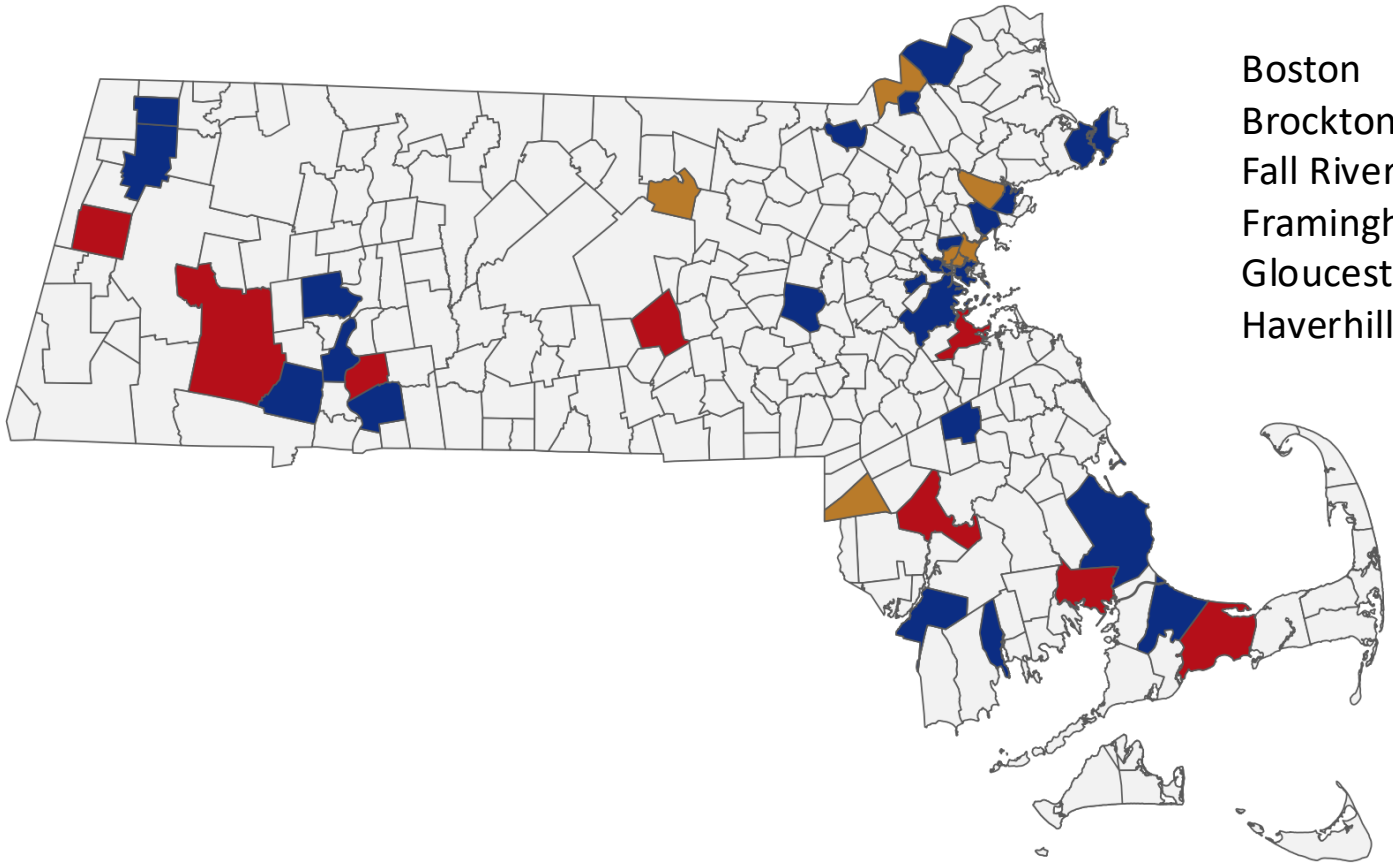
Preschool Access Over Time: Statewide and for Gateway Cities (CPPI and Non-CPPI)



CPPI Gateway cities show both higher public preschool participation and reduced reliance on full tuition payment



Status of CPPI Implementation FY26



**Gateway Cities*

Mid to Late Implementation

Boston
Brockton*
Fall River*
Framingham
Gloucester
Haverhill*
Holyoke*
Hoosac Valley
Lawrence*
Lowell*
Lynn*
Malden*
New Bedford*
North Adams
Northampton
Plymouth
Salem*
Sandwich
Somerville
Springfield*
Westfield*
Worcester*

Early Implementation

Barnstable*
Chicopee*
Fitchburg*
Gateway Regional
Pittsfield*
Quincy*
Taunton*
Wareham

Gateway Not Yet Implementing

Attleboro*
Chelsea*
Everett*
Leominster*
Methuen*
Peabody*
Revere*

CPPI Goals and Priorities

The goal of CPPI is to promote collaborative partnerships with diverse stakeholders across preschool settings to build quality preschool access including special education services.

Priority I

Expansion of access to affordable quality preschool



- CPPI enrollment data by key demographics
- Includes data on family access to CPPI related subsidy, CCFA and/or other local financial assistance

Priority II

Alignment of high-quality curriculum and supports across the mixed delivery system



- Validated ratings of selected curricula
- Curriculum implementation supports being provided
- CLASS observations 2x/ year
- Professional development & coaching provided

Priority III

Equitable access to special education and inclusion



- Special education services received by preschool setting, including referrals
- Program unenrollment with reasons for leaving

Tracking our progress

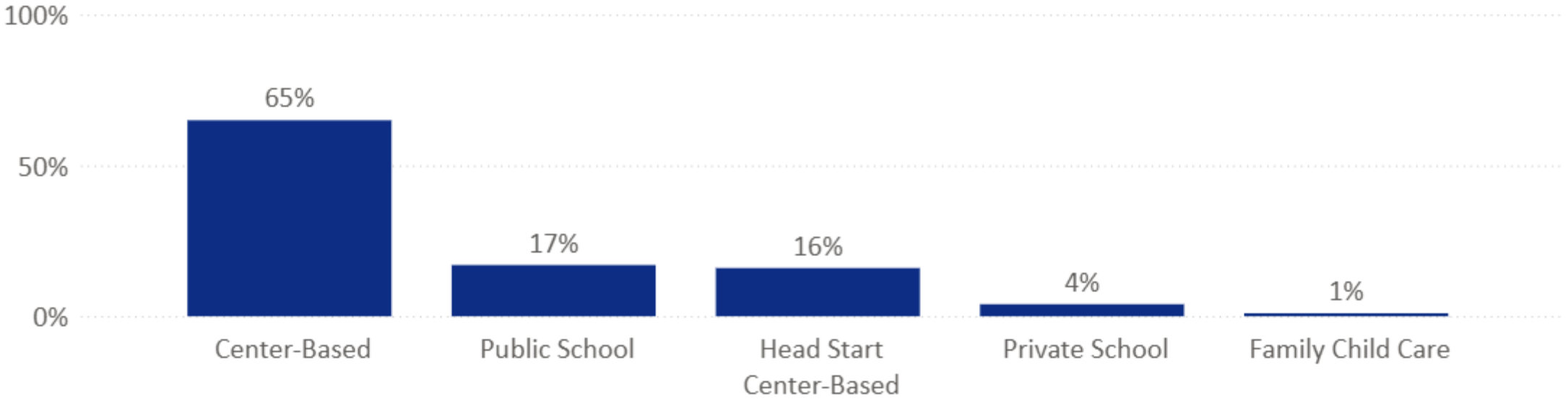
CPPI Enrollment Statewide

CPPI served 3,249 preschool-aged children across all partner programs in FY25.

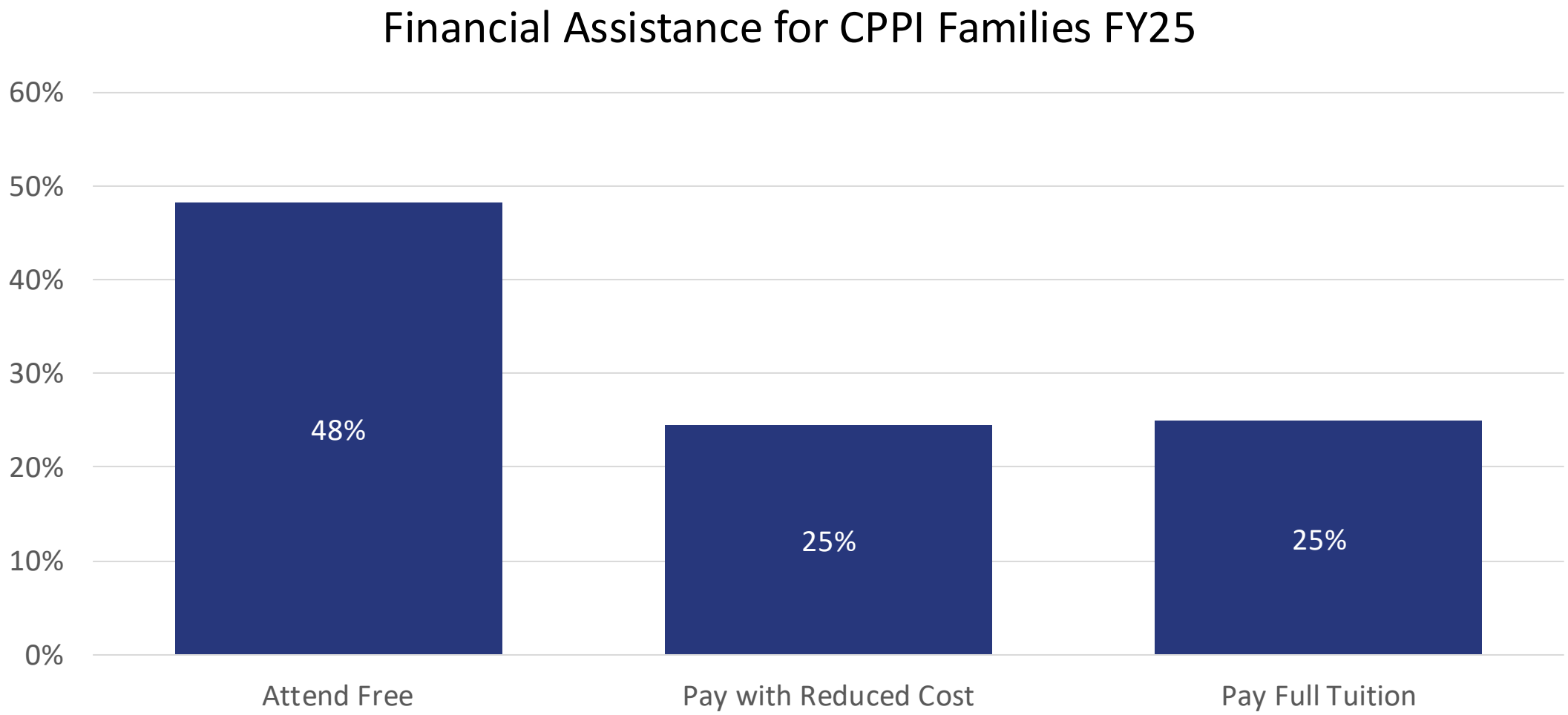
Number of CPPI Partner Programs by Program Type, FY25

Center-Based	Public School	Head Start Center-Based	Private School	Family Child Care
66	19	14	1	8

Proportion of CPPI Children by Enrollment Setting



CPPI Affordability



CPPI Quality

CPPI-funded classrooms are required and supported to implement high-quality curriculum effectively.

High-Quality Curriculum:

- Independent validation of the selected curriculum across all key domains: social emotional development, language and literacy development, mathematics
- Curriculum Review Process to ensure thoughtful selection & identification of implementation supports needed

Implementation Quality:

- Educators participate in training/coaching/PD on curriculum implementation
- Leaders use implementation or fidelity tools to support educators to implement the curriculum

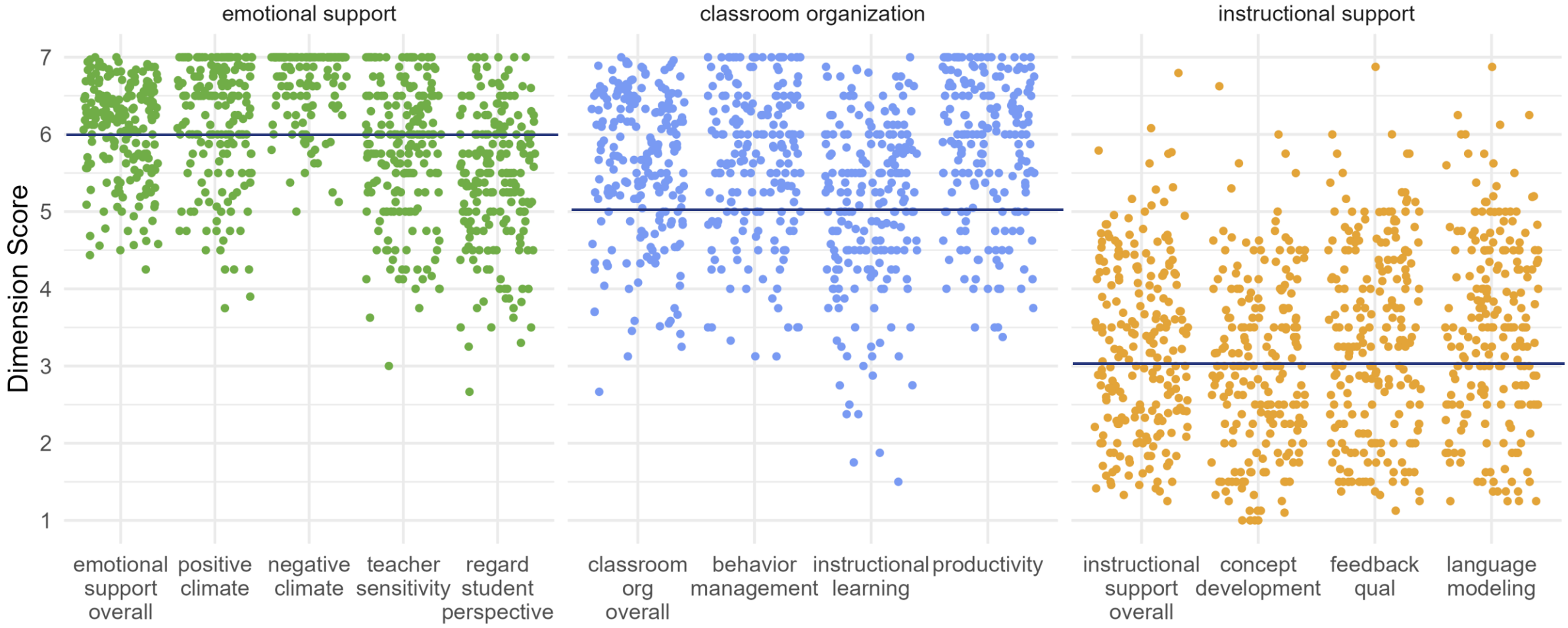
CPPI uses CLASS scores to understand quality

The CLASS observation tool measures the extent classroom interactions are organized to support children's development. Scores above key thresholds have been shown to predict children's language development, social-emotional skills and engagement in learning.

CLASS observes

- **Emotional Support** where high quality reflects a warm and responsive classroom where children feel safe, valued, and supported in learning
- **Classroom Organization** where high quality reflects a well-managed, productive classroom where children's behavior is guided in positive ways to focus on engaged learning and interactions
- **Instructional Support** where high quality reflects a classroom where the foundations for rich learning are in place and teachers are effectively supporting children's thinking and communication

CLASS Score Distributions (FY25) Show Emotional Support Is Strong and Stable; Instructional Support Varies Widely

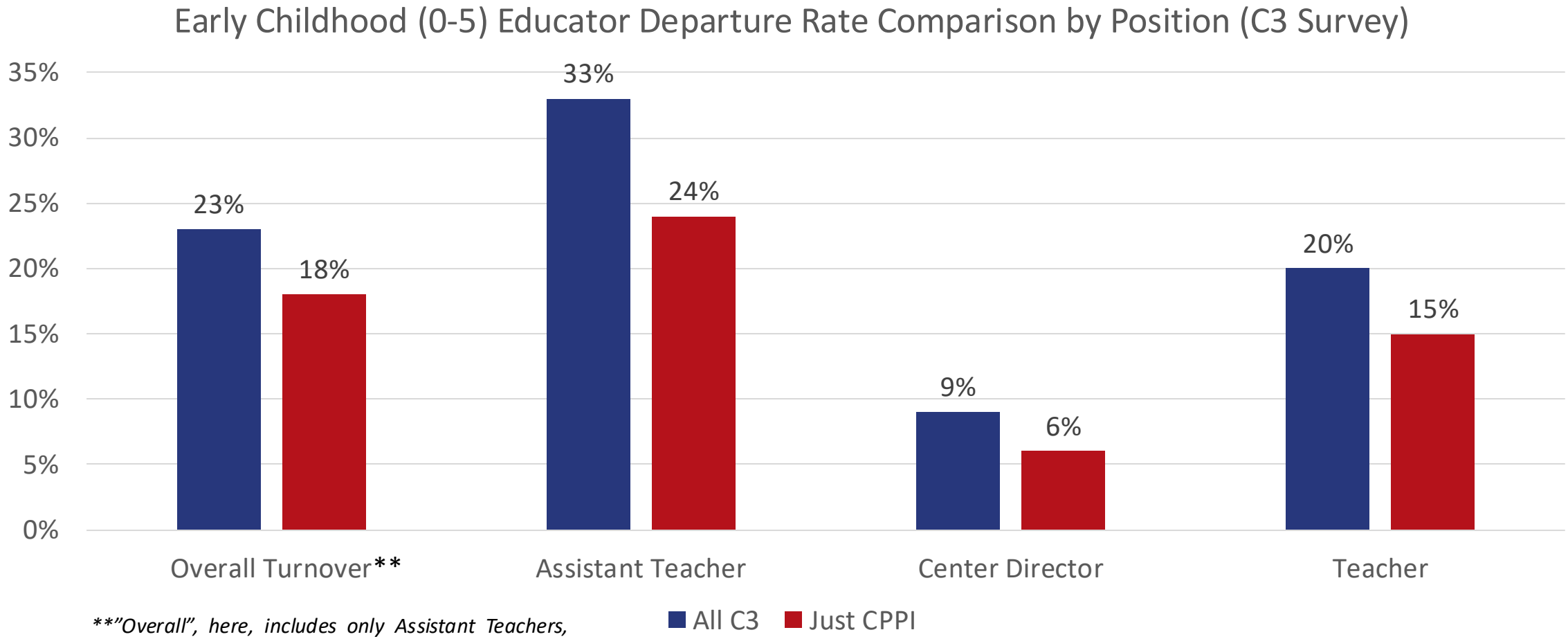


(Average score across CPPI classrooms 6.18)

(Average score across CPPI classrooms 5.67)

(Average score across CPPI classrooms 3.4)

CPPI Educator Departure Rates are Lower than the State Overall

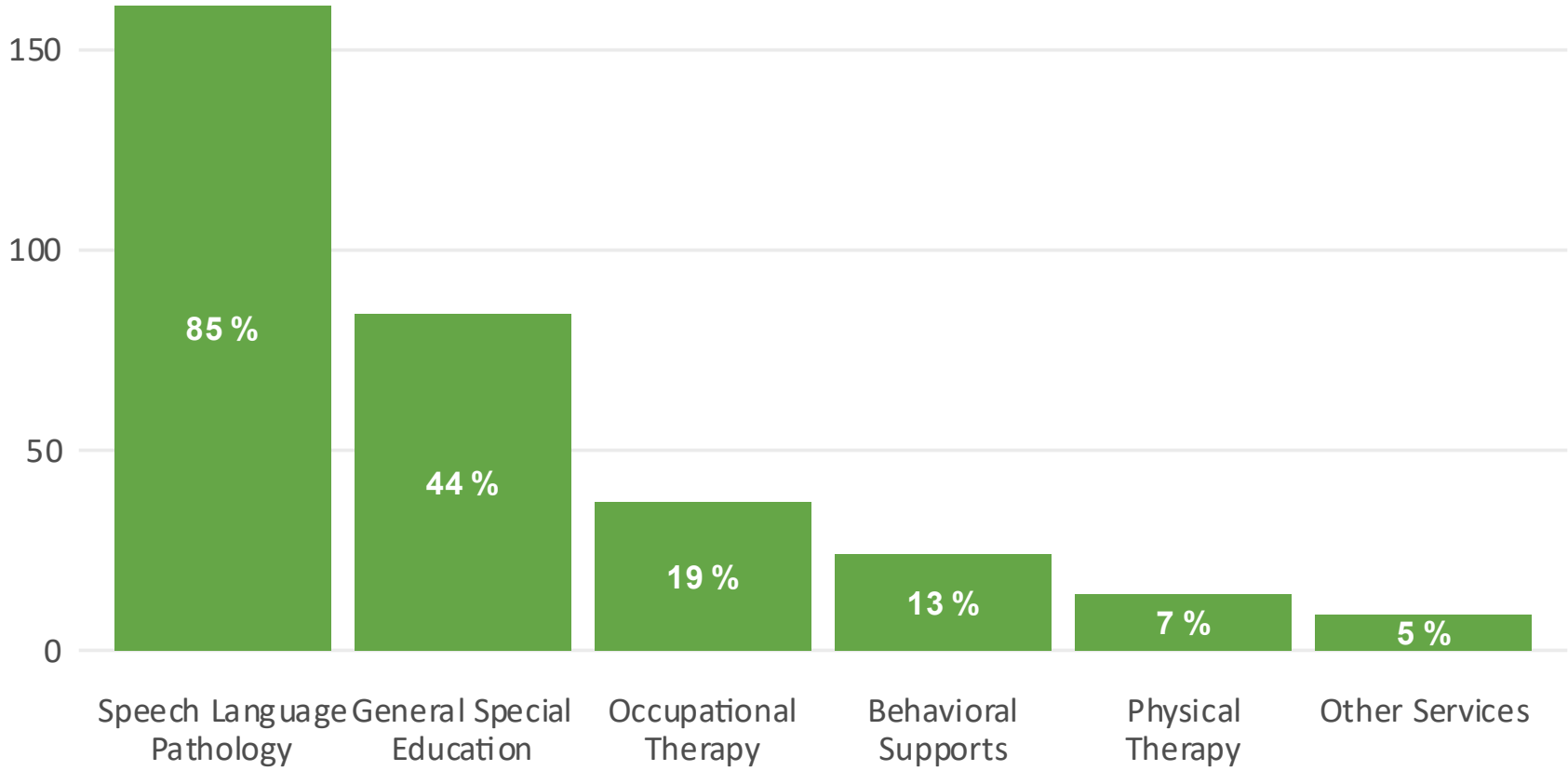


***"Overall", here, includes only Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers and Center Directors, or educators for Center-based (Ages 0-5) Early Education programs, and not educators of school-aged children.*

Special Education Services

CPPI's itinerant services model allows children to receive their services in an inclusive setting, regardless of where they are enrolled.

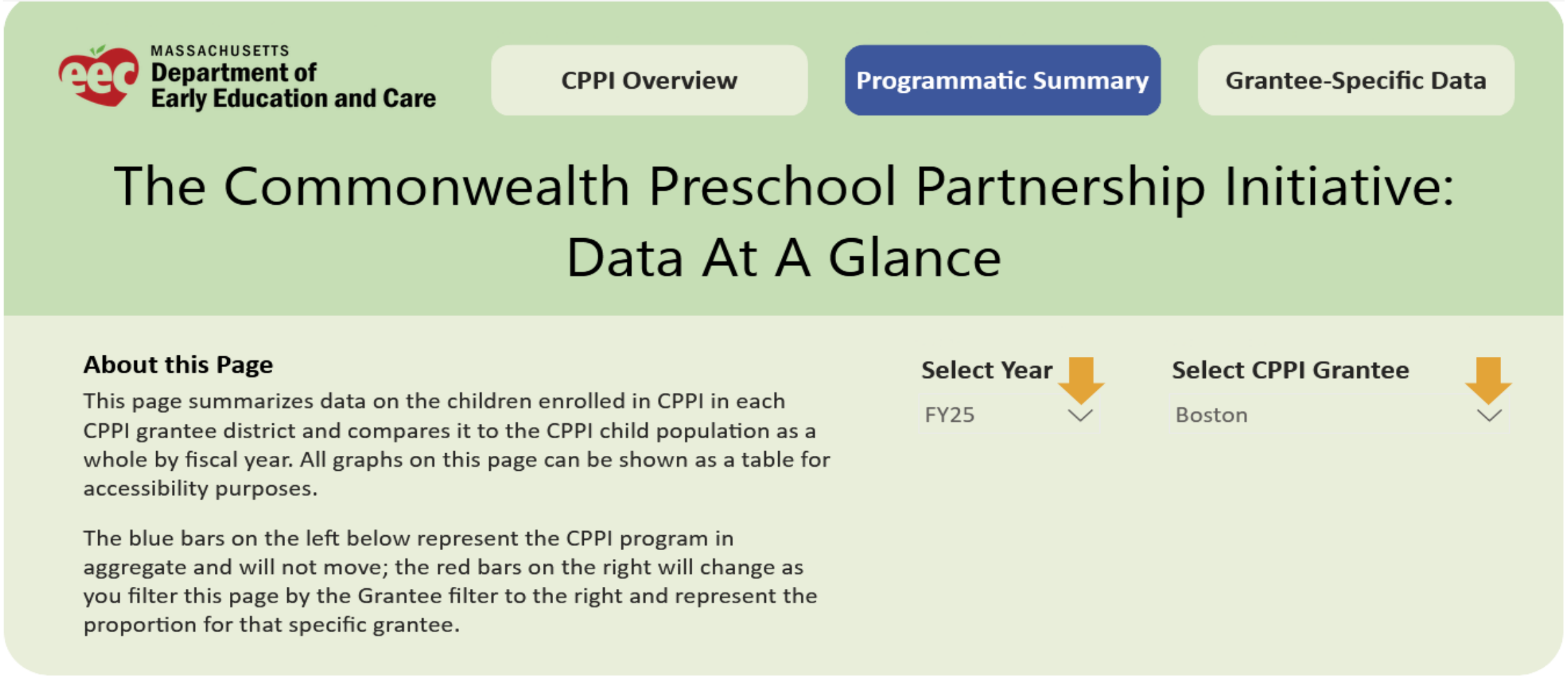
In FY25, 190 CPPI-enrolled children with IEPs received services from an itinerant team in a community-based preschool.



**Columns will not add to 100% as children can receive more than one kind of service

Data-Informed Implementation

Grantee Dashboard



Strengthening and Expanding CPPI

Continue to support and strengthen joint leadership models between school districts and community partners during planning and implementation.

Continued TA in using CPPI data to plan ongoing classroom improvements and expand delivery of special education services in community-based settings.

Governor Healey's proposed H.2 budget would enable more communities to participate in CPPI and expand the reach and impact of the program.

Planning grant opportunity

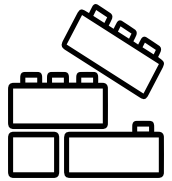


Include all Gateway Cities (7 remaining)

Expand current grantee implementation



Deepen implementation of all priorities



Expand to new programs and classrooms

Quincy CPPI Partner Panel



Kevin W. Mulvey, J.D.
Superintendent
Quincy Public Schools



Nicole Caldwell
Director
Campus Kinder House



Erin Perkins, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Quincy Public Schools



Janece Boudreau
Center Director
South Shore Stars Quincy Preschool



Keather Reichel
Program Director
Quincy Community Action
Programs, Inc. (QCAP) Head Start



Sonya Nesbitt
Early Learning Center Director
South Shore YMCA

Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care Task Force Update

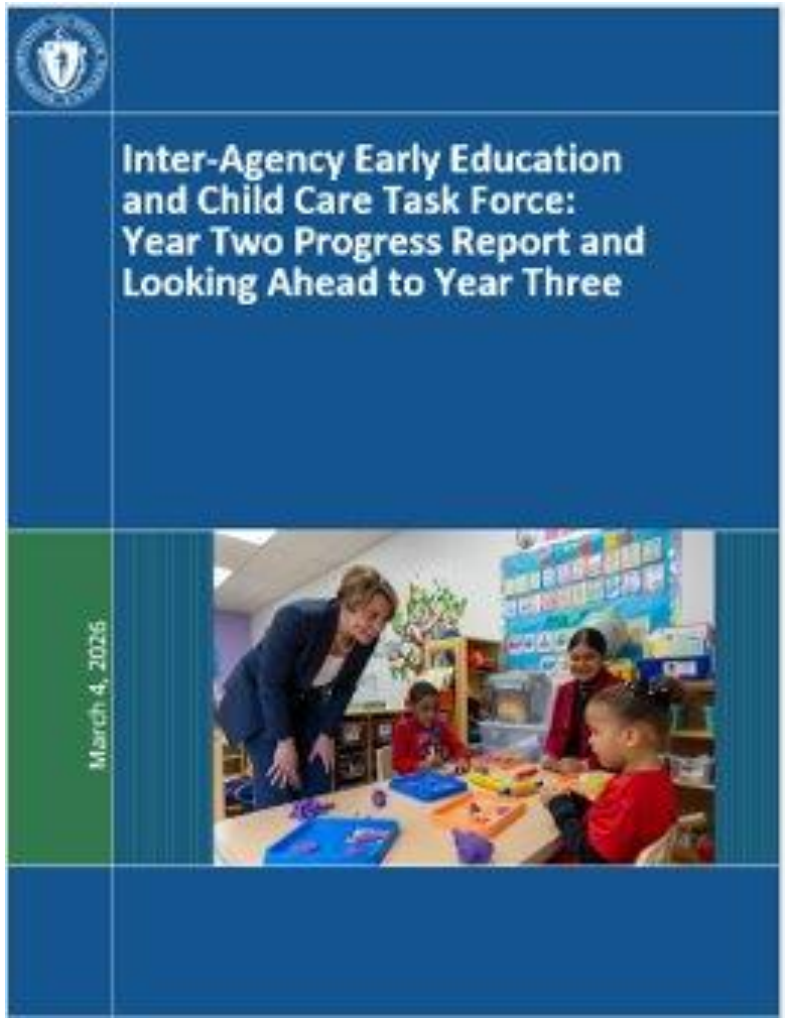
About the Inter-Agency Task Force

Established in 2024 by Executive Order 625 to ensure that Massachusetts leads the nation in early education and child care access, affordability, equity, and quality.

The Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care (IAEECC) Task Force takes a "whole of government" approach and has cross-Secretariat representation. The team engages with various stakeholders, including industry leaders, working parents and caregivers, and child care providers and experts.



The IAEECC Task Force Year Two Report is LIVE!



Visit the Mass.gov site to read the report:

Early Education and Child Care Task Force | Mass.gov

Report Structure

Provides updates on recommendation progress through December 2025 across 4 key areas

Accessibility & Affordability

Vision:

The Task Force envisions that all families can access and afford the early education and care options that meet their needs, inclusive of hours, location, and program characteristics.

Quality

Vision:

The Task Force envisions that early education and care programs in Massachusetts will have the resources they need to provide high-quality care including experienced and qualified educators, effective implementation of strong curricula, and ongoing support for professional learning and continuous quality improvement

Sustainable Business

Vision:

The Task Force envisions that early education and care providers receive adequate operational funding and administrative support to maintain and grow thriving businesses and new entrants to the sector have the support they need to develop their programs.

Workforce

Vision:

The Task Force envisions a robust workforce ecosystem where there are supported pathways to enter and meaningful growth opportunities to remain in the field, and where early education and care professionals are compensated competitively and commensurate with their skills, qualifications, and impact in educating young children.

Integrated	**Task Force work has been implemented and has been incorporated into ongoing agency operations**
Implementing	**Rolling out the solution/project plan (e.g., hosting an event)**
Developing	**Building and refining the proposed solution/ project plan**
Scoping	**Defining the project plan, including issue statement and metrics for success**

Increase affordability and accessibility of liability insurance

Recommendation

Under the leadership of the **Division of Insurance (DOI)**, a cross-agency group of stakeholders, including **EEC**, will work to identify potential solutions to increase the affordability and accessibility of liability insurance for early childhood providers.

Status: Scoping

Progress	***Next Steps***
• Identified barriers to availability of liability insurance including high premiums and non-renewals • Organized a cross-agency working group, led by DOI, to explore the challenges early education and care providers are facing and began to map out potential solutions • Began research efforts to better understand the issues and potential solutions, including other states' solutions, and drafted several liability insurance questions for FCCs to include in the C3 survey	The working group will continue to scope the issue of availability and affordability of liability insurance and move towards mapping out any potential solutions in year three

Task Force Recommendations

Issue Area	Recommendation and Prioritization	Status
Access & Affordability	Leverage Family Resource Centers (FRCs)	Integrated
	Modernize EEC's IT systems	Implementing
	Improve family-friendly employer practices	Implementing
	Co-locate child care in housing developments	Developing
	Increase accessibility of child care on higher education campuses	Developing
	Improve traffic safety near EEC programs	Developing
	Expand access to the arts	Scoping
	Reduce local regulatory barriers	Scoping
Quality	Expand access to nature and the outdoors	Implementing
	Improve access to mental/behavioral health supports	Scoping
	Expand mental health professionals	Scoping
	Improve access to services for children with disabilities	Scoping
Sustainable Business	Expand business support to EEC sector	Implementing
	Increase access to broadband	Implementing
	Provide start-up support to FCC providers	Implementing
	Increase affordability & accessibility of liability insurance	Scoping
Workforce	Expand use of Registered Apprenticeship Programs in ECE	Integrated
	Create institutionalized EEC higher education pathway	Integrated
	Expand access to healthcare benefits	Developing
	Offer discounts to EEC educators	Developing
	Support early educators via the formal workforce system	Developing
	Expand access to retirement benefits	Scoping
	Identify opportunities to increase EEC compensation	Scoping

Year 2 Highlight

Expand Use of Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Early Childhood Education (ECE)

- Helped existing Registered Apprenticeship sponsors with credentialing, licensure, and related technical instruction
- Received the SAEF3 Competitive Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor for $5 million for FY26-FY28 to rapidly scale ECE Registered Apprenticeship Programs
  - Round 1: Issued $1.8M to eight organizations to scale the early education workforce and place over 300 apprentices.

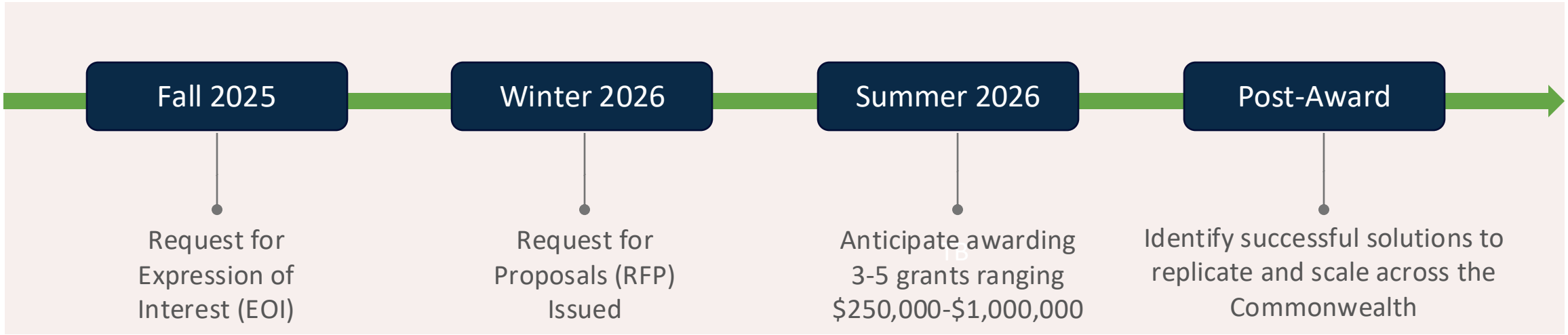


Year 2 Highlight

Improve family-friendly employer practices

Employer Child Care Innovation Fund (ECCIF) Goals:

- Expand access to affordable, high-quality child care for working caregivers
- Expand capacity in the early education and child care sector
- Incentivize employers to advance family-friendly policies for their working caregiver employees



Year 2 Highlights

Provide Startup Support to FCC Providers

FCC Capital Grants

Round 1: $2.7 million awarded to over 150 Family Child Care Educators.

Round 2: $4 million in new funding.

Applicants can request up to $25,000 to fund durable equipment and/or capital improvements.

Anticipated Grant Awards in Spring 2026

MassDevelopment

Increase Access to Broadband

Connected and Online

Initiative to distribute internet-enabled devices. Focused on Gateway Cities and rural communities, designed to expand access to education, workforce training, and telehealth.

Devices are fully equipped with software, accessories, and warranties at no cost to awardees, funded through the U.S. Treasury Capital Projects Fund (CPF).

522 devices awarded to early education and care providers in 2025

CONNECTED & ONLINE

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE at the MassTech Collaborative

Expand Access to the Arts

In partnership with the Mass Cultural Council (MCC), developing a publishable inventory of art and cultural institutions that offer discounts to educators (early education and care, K-12, and higher education) to share with educators.

EEC will promote MCC's grant opportunities to early education and care programs.

Mass Cultural Council



Year 2 Highlights

Expand Business Support to EEC Sector Business Front Door (BFD)

Child care businesses included as a key business type that supports economic development and were included in the rollout of the online concierge service that provides a tailored list of resources such as grant funding, loans, and technical assistance.

Dedicated Early Education and Care Navigator role created and posted February 2026.



Improve Traffic Safety Near Early Education and Child Care Programs

In collaboration with MassDOT, identified the appropriate traffic safety approach to creating "Safety Zones" around early education and child care programs. Drafted a flyer to be refined and distributed.



massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Increase Affordability and Accessibility of Liability Insurance

A cross-agency workgroup led by the Division of Insurance (DOI) is working on identifying potential solutions for early education providers to access liability insurance.

DIVISION OF INSURANCE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Year 2 Highlights

Expand Access to Health Care Benefits

Partnered with MA Health Connector to conduct info sessions, reaching over 200 educators

Coming Soon: Joint webinar with Health Connector and MassHealth to explain options for businesses and individuals

Leverage Family Resource Centers

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and EEC held multiple planning meetings to identify ways to strengthen ways of working between FRCs and the EEC Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) network

Completed a mapping activity to strengthen partnerships between FRC and CFCE programs across the Commonwealth, resulting in additional joint programs being offered to children and families (e.g., early literacy groups, shared playgroups, and parenting resource distribution programs)

Increase Accessibility of Child Care on Higher Education Campuses

Met with leaders from all Massachusetts public universities & community colleges to discuss the importance of child care and identify ways to support the creation of more child care on campuses. Established a regular working group of designees from each institution to discuss child care challenges, opportunities, and share learnings across different models.

Looking Ahead…

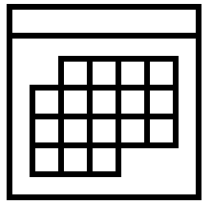
Early Childhood Governance and Finance Project (ECGFP) 2026 Cohort

Massachusetts/EEC was recently accepted into a national initiative supported by the Heising-Simons and W.K. Kellogg Foundations in partnership with the New Venture Fund to support the work of the Task Force.

This funding will help strengthen the Task Force's project management and coordination across agencies to track progress, speed up improvements, and oversee new pilot programs -- showing how a more connected early childhood system can work effectively.

EARLY CHILDHOOD FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

As the Task Force enters its third and final year, it will remain focused on **advancing and deepening implementation** of identified solutions, while ensuring that **cross-agency relationships** and structures are integrated **sustainably** into the way state agencies work together **to support the early education and care system for years to come**.



The Task Force will hold a Year 3 Launch event this spring.

Details coming soon!

Thank you!

View Agency KPI Dashboards (updated monthly) here.

Next Meeting: April 8, 2026 (TBD)