



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Early Education and Care

Meeting of the Board

October 12, 2021



Public Comment from Emergency Regulations

- The public comment period for the emergency regulations was open from September 1, 2021 until September 30, 2021.
- The Department received a total of 37 public comments on the revised regulations.
- 18 of these comments were related to workforce and hiring, 17 were related to the mask policy, and 1 of them was related to the CPR policy.
- All of the comments were related to policy rather than the regulations; EEC is using this commentary to inform and refine its policy development.
- EEC will file a certificate of compliance with the Secretary of State's Office to make the emergency regulations permanent.

I have had wonderful teachers with background and course work in elementary education who became very discouraged about the amount of work it takes to become an early childhood educator. I wished that some of their applicable course work could count for their EEC certification. I like the idea of Directors playing more of a role in the process of certifying teachers, but my hope is that the process would be efficient, clear and not take a huge amount of extra time. Directors have so much going on right now because of COVID!

Agenda: Focus on Program Initiatives

Programs



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

1. Child Care Program **Sustainability**
 - System-wide COVID Capacity Impact Analysis
 - Stabilization Grants Analysis & C3 Formula
 - Additional FY22 Investments in Stability
 - EOST Regulation Vote
2. Program **Continuous Quality Improvement**
 - Licensing Revisions to Quality
 - Building “Toolbox” of Supports for Program Leaders to Support Quality
3. Program **Innovation and Expansion**
 - Learnings from Stakeholders
 - Enabling innovation & Engaging Employers
4. Budget Priorities
 - FY22 Summary (to date)
 - FY23 Budget Recommendation- Discussion

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Summary of the Current Child Care Capacity

Following COVID disruption and rebuilding, EEC is working to support program sustainability as the foundation for rebuilding capacity, quality, and innovation within the child care infrastructure.

Overall System-wide Capacity is Reduced:

1,200 programs have closed since March 2020; EEC has licensed 725 new providers during this same time.

- Overall loss in licensed 'seats' of ~6,000
- Family Child Care closures have been steady pre- and during pandemic

Enrollment is Rebounding Slowly:

- While enrollment since March 2021 has improved across all market segments, large group providers show greatest challenges meeting maximum licensed capacity
- Staffing shortages appear to be the primary constraint to enrollment, based on Stabilization Grant data
- Enrollment for programs serving higher SVI communities is lower; enrollment for programs serving higher percentages of subsidized children is higher

Capacity is Impacted by Workforce Shortages:

- Compensation is a limiting factor in attracting and hiring staff in center based settings specifically, with compensation tending to be lower in programs serving higher numbers of subsidized children
- Enrollment fluctuations are limiting revenue available to increase salaries and thus impacting capacity; programs report investing in short-term workforce investments with EEC funding
- Less than 40% of Family Child Care providers enlist the support of an assistant, which increases capacity
- Only 45% of FCC providers report using stabilization grants towards compensation investments

System-Wide Capacity Trends

Shifts in the market from program closures and openings reflect both the business instability within the sector, as well as the changes in demand across the Commonwealth:

- Since March 2020, 1,192 licensed and/or funded providers have closed, a 12% increase in program closure over the year pre-pandemic. During this same period, 725 programs have been newly licensed to open.
- The overall closure rate is being mitigated by newly licensed center-based providers; FCCs have also seen fewer closures In 2021 than in 2020.
- While licensed capacity was largely consistent in the year prior to pandemic, there has been an overall loss of 6,205 seats since March 2020, representing 2.5% of overall capacity lost.
- Preliminary trend analysis of Year Two of the pandemic shows that program closures appear to continuing.

Program Closure by Setting:

- Large group providers closed at a higher rates
- Family Child Care closures were on par with previous years

Program Closures in Year Before & First Years of Pandemic, by Program Setting

| Provider Type | Year Prior (March 2019-Feb 2020) | Year One (March 2020-Feb 2021) | Year Two (to date) March 2021-Sept 2021) | Total |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------|
| Family Child Care | 490 | 495 | 308 | 1293 |
| Large Group | 154 | 168 | 131 | 453 |
| Small Group | 10 | 3 | 4 | 17 |
| Total | 654 | 666 | 443 | 1763 |

Number of Group Care Licensed Openings & Closures by Provider Size 3/1/19-9/10/21

| Licensed Capacity | Licensed Closures | % Closures | Licensed Openings | % Openings | Difference in # Closed V Opening |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| N/A | 1 | 0% | 0 | 0% | -1 |
| 0-24 | 120 | 26% | 80 | 21% | -40 |
| 25-49 | 190 | 40% | 154 | 40% | -36 |
| 50-74 | 105 | 22% | 85 | 22% | -20 |
| 75-99 | 30 | 6% | 38 | 10% | 8 |
| 100-124 | 14 | 3% | 11 | 3% | -3 |
| 125-149 | 6 | 1% | 9 | 2% | 3 |
| 150+ | 4 | 1% | 8 | 2% | 4 |
| Grand Total | 470 | 100% | 385 | 100% | -85 |

Provider Replacement Rate:

- Provider turn over was replaced at lower rates for small to medium sized providers, netting a total loss of 96 providers.
- Large group providers grew, mitigating the impact on capacity loss.

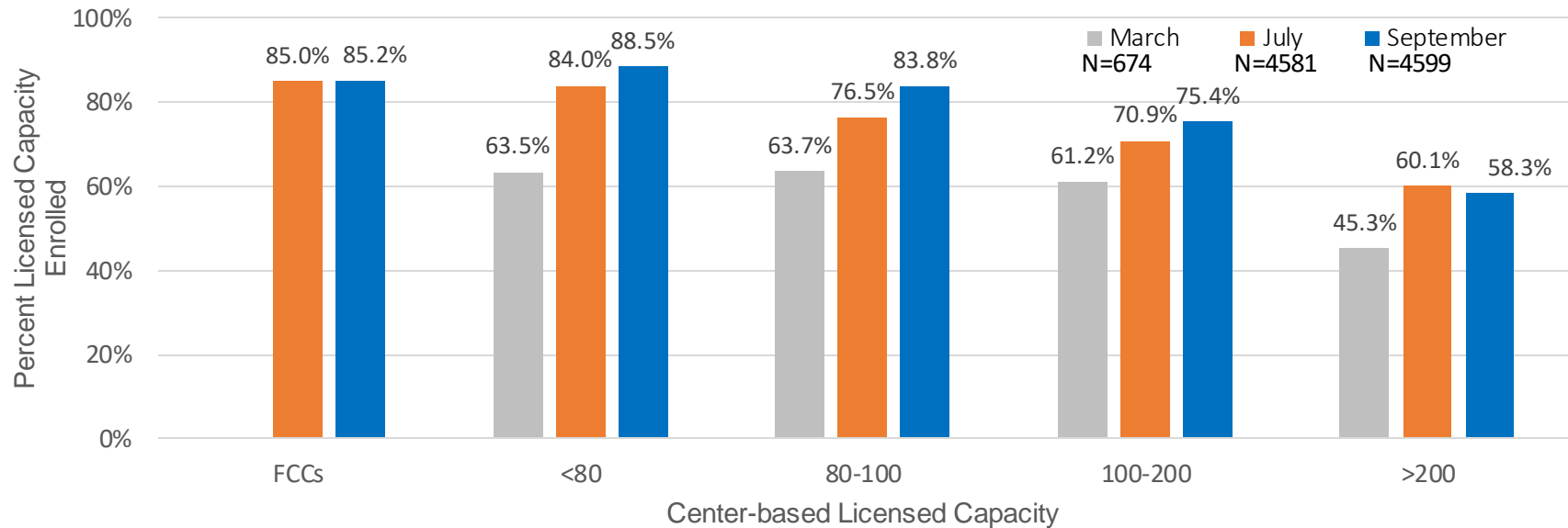


System-Wide Capacity Summary

| Region and Type | # programs pre-COVID | # programs open October 8 th | % of pre-COVID |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|----------------|
| 1 – Western FCC | 873 | 720 | 82% |
| 1 – Western GSA | 394 | 382 | 97% |
| 2 – Central FCC | 1157 | 984 | 85% |
| 2 – Central GSA | 522 | 489 | 94% |
| 3 – Northeast FCC | 1296 | 1094 | 84% |
| 3 – Northeast GSA | 675 | 660 | 98% |
| 5 – Southeast & Cape FCC | 938 | 821 | 88% |
| 5 – Southeast & Cape GSA | 614 | 576 | 94% |
| 6 – Metro Boston FCC | 1066 | 947 | 89% |
| 6 – Metro Boston GSA | 687 | 644 | 94% |
| | 8,222 | 7,317 | 89% |

Note: This represents the number of programs currently open and the percentage of current programs open as the Department had open pre-COVID. This does not represent the number of programs re-opened. Additionally, with the state of emergency ending on June 15th, EEC changed its definition of emergency closure, affecting these numbers.

Enrollment Analysis



Data Insights

Based on self-reported enrollment data collected by EEC, enrollment has been improving for all programs since March '21

- **Larger programs show greater challenges in filling their licensed capacity**
- Very large programs also tended to have fewer educators per licensed slot, suggesting services to older children or hiring challenges

Accounting for variations in program size across communities, communities are experiencing variations in enrollment

- **Programs in high SVI communities more likely to have lower percent capacity enrolled**, with larger numbers of FCC's than in low SVI communities and smaller numbers of slightly larger center-based providers
- Programs serving a higher percentage of subsidized children in May were more likely to have a higher percentage of their capacity enrolled
- **Subsidized enrollment has continued to increase since late FY21**

Capacity is Limited by Workforce Shortages

Workforce Compensation Context

- Initial reported staffing levels from Stabilization Grants were at 85% of projections, indicating workforce shortages
- Employment experts (including MassHire Boards) have expressed concerns about recruiting to child care industry due to low wages and limited room for advancement
- Despite investments in funding through family subsidies over the past 5 years, initial grant data shows that EEC educators are still hovering around minimum wage



Initial salary data from stabilization grants show persistent compensation challenges in raising wages incrementally:

- Mean salaries for assistants show very little variation between low and high amounts; **high salary levels for assistants bridge to low salary levels for teachers.**
- Teacher and director salaries show greater average variation, indicating more of a range of salaries with a program—potentially reflecting experience or other professional qualification
- Salaries tend to be higher in larger programs, but lower in programs with higher percent of subsidized children and higher SVI communities**
- Only 38% of FCCs report an assistant, 30% a full-time assistant



Summary of Stabilization Grant Analysis

The ARPA Stabilization Grants gave EEC an opportunity to pilot the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Formula as a method for delivering funds targeted to stabilizing child care operations. Grants are designed to offer flexible financial support for child care infrastructure so they can maintain operations during times of fluctuating enrollment and market liquidity challenges.

Provider Participation and Uptake:

Of 7,760 programs, nearly two thirds, or 4,831, have received Stabilization Grant funds.

- Small center-based providers who do not accept state child care subsidies are the least likely to have applied for the funding
- Family Child Care providers represent 72% of programs receiving grants

Analysis of the C3 Formula Efficacy:

- Higher grant take-up rates for communities representing every equity dimension measured:
 - Programs participating in the subsidy system participating at higher rates, as well as those in higher social vulnerability indices, Gateway Cities, and majority BIPOC census tracts.
 - Higher levels of Family Child Care Applicants reflect investments in majority women and minority owned businesses
- Funding distribution is reflective of equity priorities, with all priority communities receiving significant proportions of the funding
- Over 90% of grant recipients intend to invest funding in staff compensation strategies

Enhancements to the Grants:

- EEC intends to leverage the success of the program to extend the grant to 12 months, using additional appropriations in the FY22 budget
- Using data from the initial months of roll out, EEC will explore adaptations to the formula to:
 - Address persistent compensation challenges even within an uncertain financial environment for businesses
 - Include new providers addressing the changing needs of families



Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Formula Summary

Piloting the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Funding

- The Commonwealth is the creator of the formula and first to implement – it is now being replicated by other states
- It is currently being used to distribute Federal ARPA Stabilization Grants
- At least **\$225 million** initial investment will be allocated through C3 formula in direct payments to providers
- Applications began in July; providers currently eligible for up to six monthly payments
- Operates in addition to current state funding system - does not impact subsidy payments for programs that serve subsidized children

Guiding Principles

- Stability
 - Help programs continue to **operate** and **maintain quality of child care infrastructure** through pandemic recovery
- Adequacy
 - Support **healthy finances** and programs' ability to invest in **compensation for early educators** to address the workforce crisis
- Equity
 - **Support all** early education and care providers, and recognize the **unique needs** of providers who serve children and families of color and low-income communities
- Simplicity
 - **Avoid heavy burden** for providers to participate and access flexible funding

Key Grant Metrics as of 10/8/21

| Region and Type | % providers applied for grants (as of 9/9) | % providers applied for grants (as of 10/8) |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1 – Western FCC | ~70% | ~73% |
| 1 – Western GSA | ~59% | ~70% |
| 2 – Central FCC | ~73% | ~76% |
| 2 – Central GSA | ~60% | ~76% |
| 3 – Northeast FCC | ~80% | ~82% |
| 3 – Northeast GSA | ~55% | ~68% |
| 5 – Southeast & Cape FCC | ~72% | ~75% |
| 5 – Southeast & Cape GSA | ~60% | ~71% |
| 6 – Metro Boston FCC | ~78% | ~80% |
| 6 – Metro Boston GSA | ~48% | ~64% |



5,549
programs submitted
applications for
funding (~76% of all
eligible programs)



~60% of applicants are
from **subsidized**
programs



~\$80 million already
disbursed to programs



~20% of applicants
chose Spanish as their
primary form of
communication

Take-up Shows High FCC, Equity Based Participation

| As of 9/27/21 | Overall Take-Up Rates | Take-Up Rates in Majority BIPOC Census Tract | Take-Up Rates in Majority Gateway Cities | Take-Up Rates in Low SVI (0-.25) | Take-Up Rates in Highest SVI (.75-1) | Take-Up Rates in Progs Serv. No Children Receiving Subsidies | Take-Up Rates in Progs Serv. Children Receiving Subsidies |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| FCC | 75% | 85% | 82% | 66% | 84% | 57% | 90% |
| Center Based | 60% | 62% | 69% | 55% | 66% | 52% | 67% |

The percentage of FCC providers who submitted at least one application is notably higher than the percentage of Center-Based providers who submitted one application

Center-Based providers in Gateway Cities, Highest SVI areas, and those who serve children receiving subsidies had the highest take-up rates

FCC providers in majority BIPOC census tracts, Highest SVI areas, and those who serve children receiving subsidies had the highest take-up rates

Overall Take-up = total number of providers who have submitted at least one approved application (some providers have submitted for multiple months) out of all eligible providers.

Majority BIPOC census tract take-up = total number of providers who have submitted at least one approved application (some providers have submitted for multiple months) located in Majority BIPOC census tracts, out of total eligible providers who are located in Majority BIPOC census tracts.



Funding Distribution Compared to Share of System Capacity

| As of 9/27/21 | % of Funding Received | % of Licensed Slots in the System |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Family Child Care Homes | 22% | 17% |
| Center Based Providers | 77% | 83% |
| Majority BIPOC Census Tracts | 23% | 22% |
| Gateway Cities | 31% | 28% |
| Low SVI (0 - .25) | 16% | 21% |
| Highest SVI (.75 - 1) | 31% | 26% |
| Small (0-40) | 12% | 30% |
| Medium (41 - 80) | 33% | 26% |
| Large (81 - 120) | 24% | 18% |
| X-Large (121+) | 30% | 26% |

When comparing the share of ARPA funding against share of system capacity, we see the following positive effects for specific market segments and geographies:

- **Family Child Care Homes** absorbing funds at higher than capacity rates, reflecting the equity goals, as they identify as non-white at greater rates than group based care licensees; 43% of FCC report as race other than white and 47% report their ethnicity as Latinx/Hispanic.
- **Larger allocations of funds across all equity factors**, including BIPOC census tracts, Gateway Cities, and communities with high social vulnerability indices

Programs serving infants and toddlers receiving higher payments



| As of 9/27/21 | Median per Licensed Slot | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | No I/T | Serves I/T |
| Serves Infants and Toddlers? (I/T) | No I/T | Serves I/T |
| All Providers | \$131 | \$203 |
| Majority BIPOC Census Tracts | \$140 | \$198 |
| Low SVI (0 - .25) | \$108 | \$167 |
| Highest SVI (.75 - 1) | \$140 | \$214 |
| Receive Subsidy | \$140 | \$210 |
| Do Not Receive Subsidy | \$118 | \$183 |

As designed, programs serving infants and toddlers are receiving larger payments on average that account for the greater costs associated with this age group.

- **Larger allocations of funds also seen for programs serving infants and toddlers across all equity factors,** including BIPOC census tracts, Gateway Cities, and communities with high social vulnerability indices

Enhancements to the Grants

Mechanisms to Adjust Funding

- **Extend the length:** Commit to monthly grants for a longer period of time, as programs are cautious to invest in fixed cost increases given the uncertainty of the year ahead
- **Funding adjustments:** Provide all programs with additional funds per licensed slot
- **Incentivize investments in compensation and benefits:** Provide bonus payments to programs that make long-term investments in their workforce as an incentive



Proposed Implementation

- Extend the grant through FY22
- Consider incentives for salary investments
- Consider increases given educator shortages
- Leverage all EEC appropriations to ensure maximum support for programs

Summary of Additional FY22 Investments in Stability

In addition to the infrastructure grants that EEC is sustaining through the fiscal year, two additional investments in program sustainability will supplement this funding.

Business Supports to Programs:

- EEC has piloted cohorts to support the knowledge and competency building specific to business administration practices among program leadership, both center-based and FCC.
- The curriculum aims to increase business stability and identify program-specific strategies to improve business margins for quality and workforce investments.
- Data from initial cohorts is driving additional partnership exploration and innovations to be scaled to target business sustainability across all program types.

EEOST Program and Regulations:

- After the success of the smaller scale program in FY21, EEC proposes to sustain the grant levels at \$100,000-\$250,000 to accommodate program health and safety proposals.
- EEC will continue working with Children's Investment Fund to streamline the process for programs proposing new projects.
- Additional modifications to the regulations are being proposed to achieve the FY22 goals for the program.

Business Administration Cohorts

Summary: Coupled with this unprecedented infusion of government funding, EEC is expanding technical assistance resources targeted at enhancing business skills for child care program leaders. Cohorts targeted to both FCC and Center-Based Directors will build on the initial curriculum and seek to grow coaching capacity to support more businesses over the course of the year. Ultimately, strong business administration and planning will be critical to increasing operational stability and revenue margins for investment in innovations in quality and increases in compensation - without impacting parent affordability.

- **Business Administration Cohorts piloted in summer 2021**
 - GSA Pilot targeted to Administrators and Directors/program leadership
 - FCC Pilot was conducted with 60 Family Child Care partners with training by United Way of Mass Bay
 - Administered by Neighborhood Villages
 - Initial program specifications include 6 weeks training followed by one on one coaching and monthly in-depth workshops
- **Pilots expanded with both home and center based providers**
 - Fall pilots will increase group sizes and add to center-based curriculum
 - Winter pilots will intensify training and coaching, add communities of practice
 - Additional curriculum is being explored to continue scaffolding program leadership, based on feedback for additional professional development
- **Early results positive**
 - 95% completion rate
 - Plans to test impact/ knowledge and practice change

EEOST Program Overview

The Early Education and Out of School Time (EEOST) Capital Fund was created by An Act Financing the Production and Preservation of Housing for Low and Moderate Income Residents in November 2013 and reauthorized in May 2018.

- The statute authorizes EEC to administer up to \$45 million in general obligation bond funds for grants to develop eligible facilities for use as licensed Large Group and School Age Child Care Programs as defined in 606 CMR 7.00.
- The EEOST Capital Fund provides grants to tax-exempt non-profit corporations or organizations in which a non-profit corporation has a controlling interest, to develop and/or rehabilitate eligible facilities in which at least 50% of the slots in the facility shall serve low income families who are eligible for public subsidy.
- The Executive Office of Administration and Finance has allocated \$3.6M in grant funding in FY22 for the EEOST Capital Fund Program.

EEOST Program Changes

Proposed Grant Program Changes to Promote Health and Safety During COVID-19

- In FY21, EEC amended its regulations to allow for smaller EEOST grants in the \$100,000-\$250,000 range to allow more programs to receive funding for capital projects to make health and safety improvements, an especially critical need during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In FY21, 36 programs received a total of \$7,500,000 in grant awards. EEC plans to keep the smaller sized grants for the FY22 Grant Round because the need for such COVID-19 related capital improvements is still high.
- In order to allow for the continuation of the smaller grants, EEC must amend its regulations for FY22 in the same manner it did in FY21. The FY22 amendments are a continuation of the previous year's amendments.



Regulatory Adjustments to Support Programmatic Change

- Continue to allow the Commissioner to change the length of the grant period. 606 CMR 15.04(2)(c)
- Continue to allow the Commissioner to change the timetable for grant recapture in case of default to reflect the shorter grant periods. 606 CMR 15.04(2)(d)
- Continue to allow the Commissioner to waive the requirement for a recorded Land Use Restriction against the property received the EEOST grant. 606 CMR 15.04(2)(e)
- Continue to allow the Commissioner to waive the requirement for a recorded Mortgage Lien against the property receiving the EEOST grant. 606 CMR 15.04(2)(f)



EEOST Regulations Vote

Board Vote: That the Board of Early Education and Care, in accordance with G.L. c. 15D, §§ 3 and 18, hereby approves the draft amended regulations governing the Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Fund Grant Program and authorizes the Commissioner of Early Education and Care to file the amended regulations with the Secretary of the Commonwealth for publication of a Notice of Public Comment in the *Massachusetts Register* consistent with the Department's proposed policy directions and subject to the approval of the final regulations, after a Public Comment period, by the Board.

EEOST Regulations Timeline

| Tasks | Timeline |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Presentation to the EEC Board for vote on adoption of draft regulations to be sent for Public Comment | October 12, 2021 |
| Draft regulations and Notice of Public Comment sent to Secretary of State | No later than October 15, 2021 |
| Public comment period | October 29, 2021-November 19, 2021 |
| EEC reviews public comment | November 22, 2020-November 29, 2021 |
| Present public comment to EEC Board; vote on adoption of final regulations | December 7, 2021 |
| Send final regulations for promulgation and publication in Massachusetts Register | No later than December 10, 2021 |
| Regulations published in Mass. Register for final promulgation | December 24, 2021 |

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Summary of Continuous Quality Improvement Strategies

Regulations as the Foundation for Quality:

- As outlined in the Strategic Action Plan, revisions to the existing licensing regulations are needed to effectively set the foundation of quality while allowing for flexibility and program innovation.
- Structuring the licensing regulations by program type will support more effective regulatory structures that match program delivery models. Modeling six regulatory categories will allow for integration with program quality structures.

Building a Toolbox of Supports for Program Leaders:

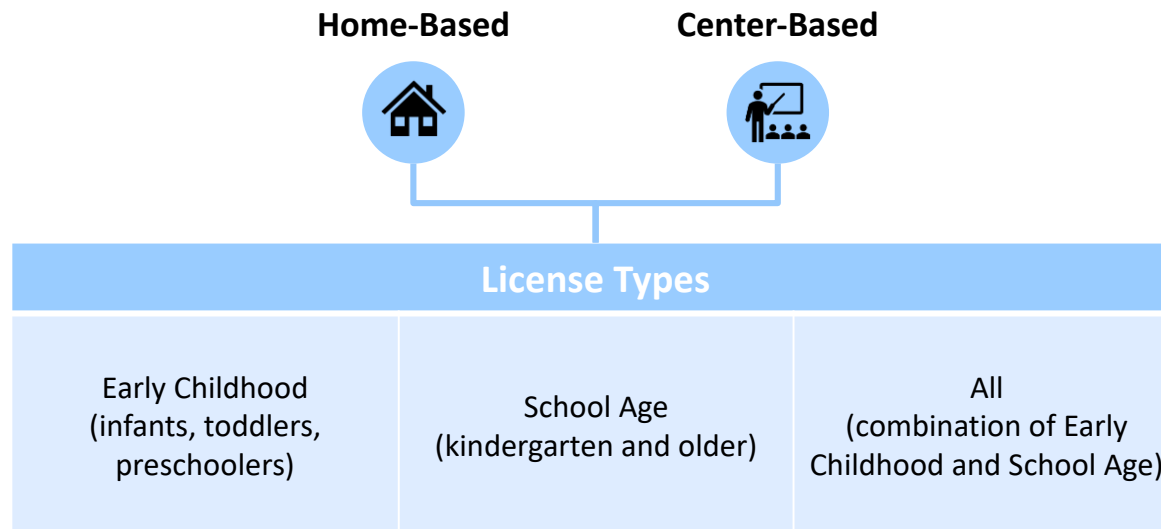
- Seamless integration between regulatory monitoring and technical assistance requires licensing structures that build the foundation for program leadership to support continuous quality improvement efforts within their chosen focus area.
- EEC is working to learn from existing efforts to build a cadre of tools for program leaders structured around domains of quality and appropriate to the setting they are leading (i.e. FCC, center-based, school-based)
- EEC aims to offer a variety of supports with targeted tools and specific expected outcomes can help ensure interventions are appropriately focused on meeting specific program goals.
- Additional lessons from investments aimed at fostering collaboration across program models will help EEC identify additional strategies that can efficiently impact quality at the community-level

Reconceptualizing the Licensing Structure

EEC is exploring a license structure that better accommodates the program models serving children and families across the Commonwealth. This structure:

- Enables regulations to better incorporate the developmental needs of the children in care
- Offers better alignment with research on program quality and monitoring practices
- Leverages the unique assets of each program model and allows for better alignment with community resources appropriate to the population served
- Allows for cleaner alignment with technical assistance and support structures targeted to specific practices appropriate for specific program-types

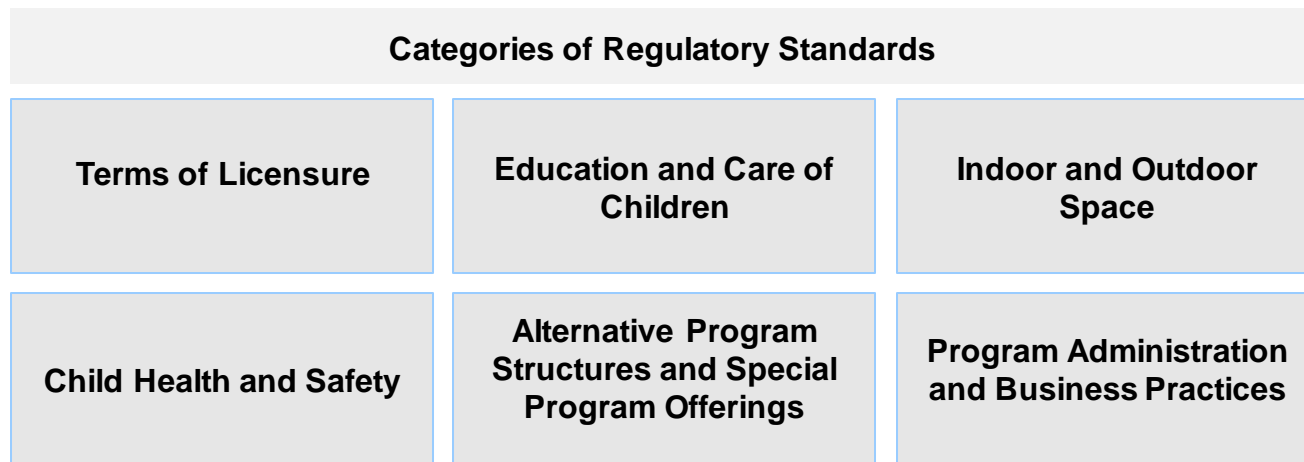
This kind of custom, user-oriented approach responds to the priorities in the Strategic Action Plan, based on feedback from constituents across the Commonwealth.



Regulatory Standards Establish a Quality Floor

Regulations set minimum expectations for program leaders and allow for annual monitoring. Regulations must serve multiple purposes. EEC is exploring categories of regulations for program licensing that will support:

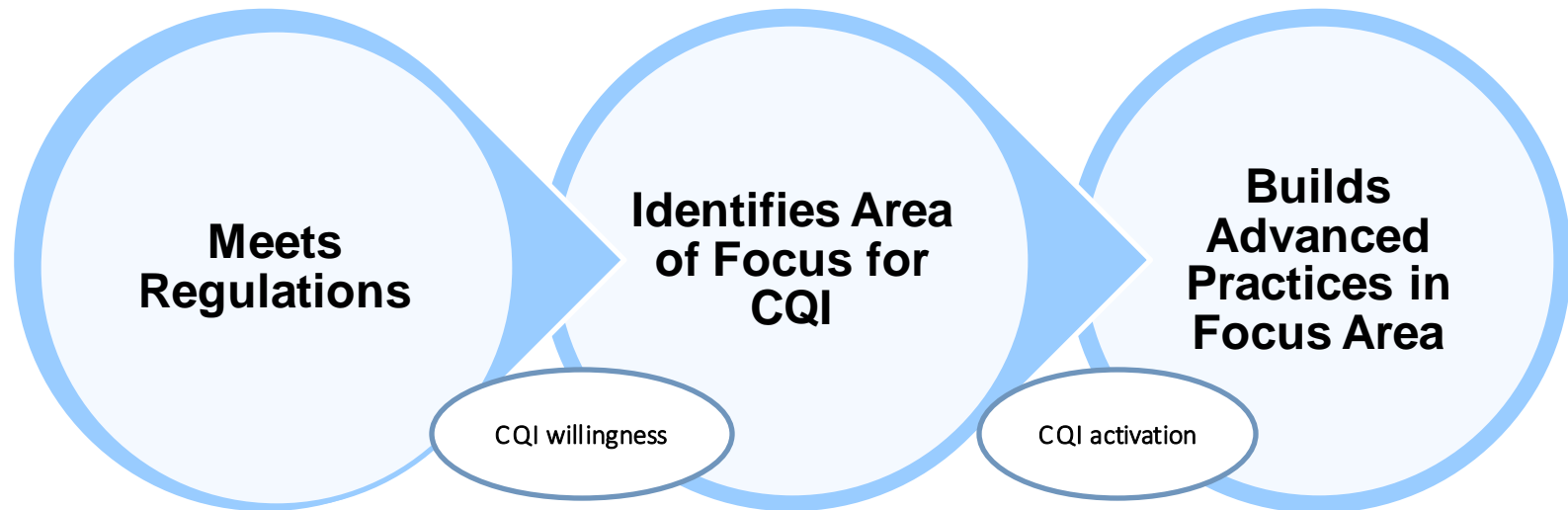
- Clear guidance for program leaders on EEC's minimum expectations for program operations
- A tool for monitoring that balances compliance with referrals to support continuous quality improvement efforts
- Alignment of public and private resources towards continuous quality improvement, including contracted services and innovative efforts at the local level.



- Terms of Licensure: What is legally required to obtain and maintain a child care license and who is exempt?
- Education and Care of Children: what is the experience of a child within a licensed program?
- Indoor and Outdoor Space: what standards must these spaces meet for the purposes of safety, child development, and learning?
- Child Health and Safety: what protocols and preparation must be followed for children to be safe?
- Special Program Offerings: what options exist for enhanced and alternative programming?
- Program Admin and Business: what are the minimum expectations for oversight and compliance in a business operating programs for children?

Operationalizing Quality Through Licensing

Because regulations set minimum expectations for program operations, they must be able to support scaffolding for program leaders across annual compliance requirements and Continuous Quality Improvement goals; these will drive engagement with coaching opportunities and other support resources.



Specific operational strategies are targeted to building alignment across compliance and quality improvement resources:

- CQI Plans will be part of licensing renewals
- Compliance monitoring will be re-organized to integrate CQI planning
- Referral process will be developed between licensor compliance visits and program quality supports
- Shared articulation of the continuous quality improvement goals in a specific area will be shared across program monitoring teams and program support resources through a shared access to the CQI plan and regular systems of data sharing

EEC is testing operational systems and structures now that will better integrate licensing and quality resources as new regulations are being developed.



Building a Toolbox of Supports for Program Leaders

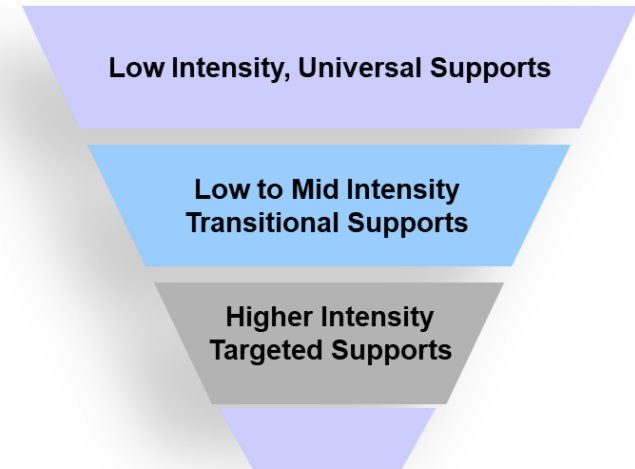
Ensuring high quality adult-child interactions requires program leaders to set the conditions of good practice at the program level, so that educators may engage in reflective, job-embedded professional development appropriate to the program model. EEC aims to develop a suite of available tools that can support program leaders of all types. Applying research on CQI with real-time learning from EEC initiatives has encouraged increased definition to focus areas and engagement levels as we revise contracts with technical assistance providers:

Defining Focus Areas



- All domains of program quality work in sync to support positive child outcomes driven through adult/child interactions.
- Focusing on continuous quality improvement processes in one domain, rather than point in time quality measures across domains, can better serve program leaders in CQI efforts

Defining Engagement Level

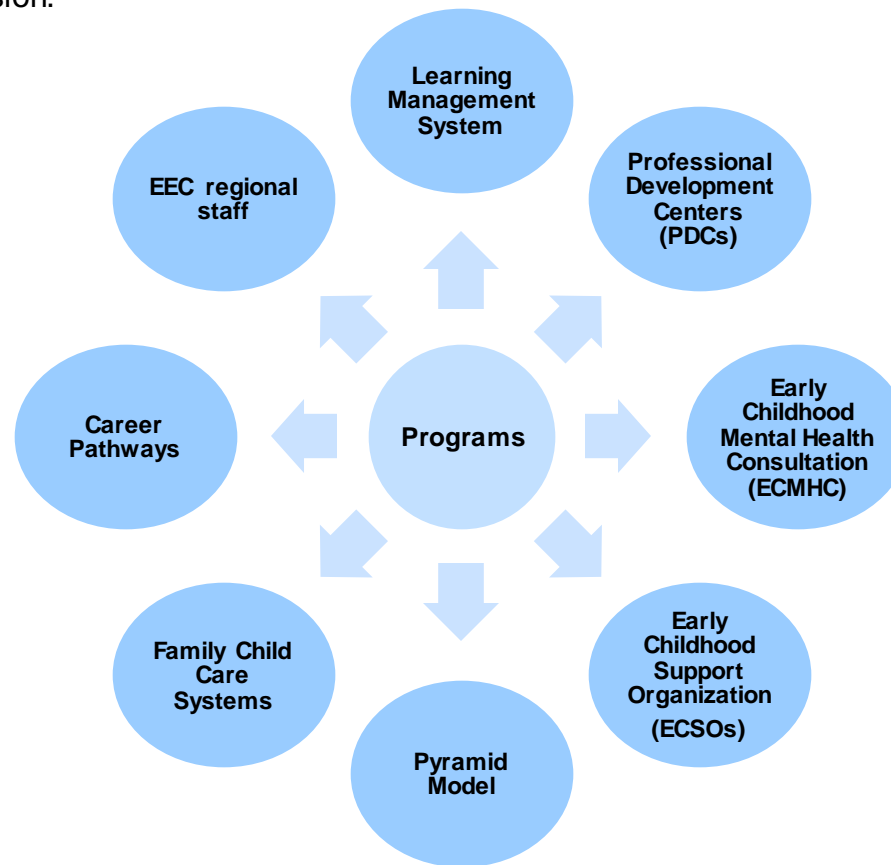


- Distinguishing between topic areas or issues that are better served by light-touch technical assistance versus in-depth coaching will be vital for aligning EEC functions appropriately.
- Building resources that are available for assistance across all tiers of needed support will better allow for a data-driven approach to matching program leaders and program support resources.

Current Program Support Resources

As EEC restructures the licensing regulations, a realignment of investments targeted to program leadership will be refocused towards specific domains of quality with defined engagement levels. A variety of supports will continue to be available to meet the needs of program leaders across communities.

- EEC currently has many program support resources available to program leaders.
- Formats range from targeted coaching to coursework or training, to peer learning.
- The frequency and nature of each program support, as well as the level of funding from EEC, vary widely.
- The current system is composed of multiple points of entry and differing eligibility and access criteria – leading to fragmentation and confusion.



Summary Learnings from Current Support Efforts

The following three initiatives have offered valuable lessons throughout the pandemic that will be integrated into the program support planning ahead:

- **Professional Development Centers (PDCs)**

- Launched in FY19 to realign regional professional development resources towards leadership coaching.
- Provide a range of professional learning, training, TA, and coaching supports offered across all program types
- Supports are differentiated by program setting and offered as part of a sequence or continuum of job-embedded professional learning
- Significant pivot to online resources during COVID have given opportunities for on-going learning

- **Early Childhood Support Organizations (ECSOs):**

- Launched in FY20 to support building instructional and curricular practices in center-based programs
- Intensive leadership coaching intervention
- Public-Private Partnership with New Profit leverages research and initiative alignment

- **Pyramid Model**

- Collaboration in Massachusetts established in 2018, expanded during COVID
- Professional learning around social-emotional competency building and addressing challenging behaviors. Varying levels of support include:
 - Learning and training modules hosted within EECs Learning Management System available broadly
 - Pyramid Model Coaches work across 58 sites for training and individualized support to implement the model

- **Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative:**

- Launched in FY19 CPPI builds structures for collaboration towards kindergarten readiness
- Local education agencies and licensed child care providers work in partnership to build and align program quality and access

- **Summer Step-Up:**

- With United Way, EEC invested in partnerships between local schools and child care providers to prepare young children for in-person schooling
- Communities implemented programs with support from local and national technical assistance providers

Professional Development Centers

Five regional PDCs offer high-quality professional learning, training, technical assistance, and coaching services to program/site leaders and staff members in GCC, FCC, and OST programs licensed or funded by EEC.

Focus for Provision of Services in FY21 – Accessibility and Responsiveness

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and to address an unexpected set of challenges related to the operation of programs, the PDCs rapidly adapted the content and delivery of services.

Served as an essential provider of information about health and safety requirements and provided differentiated support to programs by developing a variety of online planning and implementation sessions plus providing site-specific coaching services in Cantonese, Mandarin, English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Conducted multiple online sessions related to EEC professional learning priorities including engaging in reflective practice, empowering professionals to serve as leaders, supporting online learning, enhancing the social and emotional development of children and youth, ensuring the fiscal and operational stability of programs, and improving program quality.

As of August 2021, distributed 812 laptop computers to educators across the Commonwealth to increase their access to online professional learning opportunities and conducted required training sessions in multiple languages to provide technical support to recipients.

Professional Development Centers

Services in FY22 – Evolution of the Work

The PDCs are implementing strategies to continually enhance the content and quality of services, ensure that enrollment and other types of data plus feedback from participants inform the design and delivery of professional learning opportunities, significantly increase access to services, and maximize the expertise of PDC team members.

Enhancing Collaboration and Alignment Across PDCs

- The PDCs are expanding Network services and continuing to offer regional services; Network services are collaboratively developed, address EEC systemic priorities, and available to educators across Massachusetts.
- Network services are addressing four primary domains of work: 1) enhancing the provision of coaching services; 2) increasing equity and access; 3) enhancing mental health and well-being; and 4) continually improving program quality. The PDC Network is continuing to offer selected services from FY 21.

Increasing Equity and Access

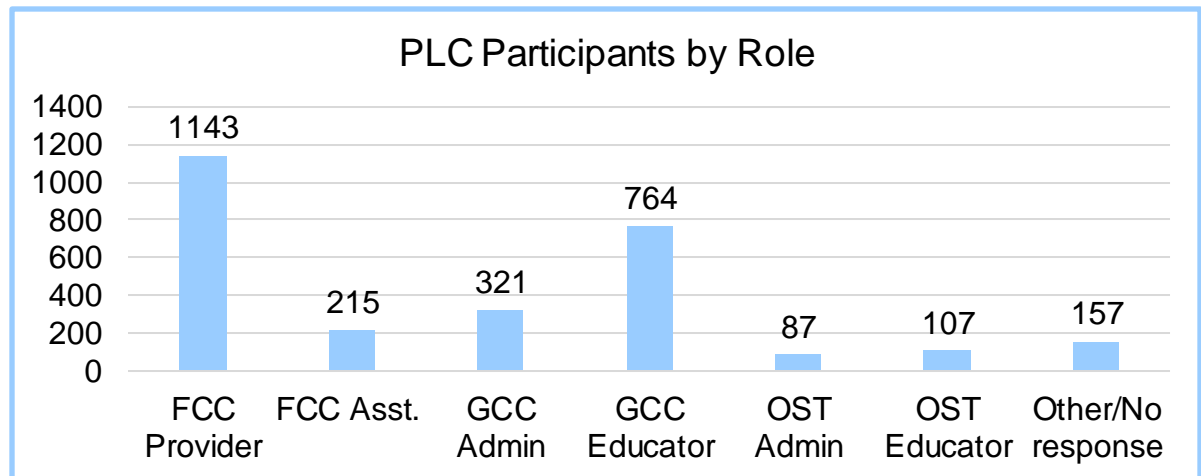
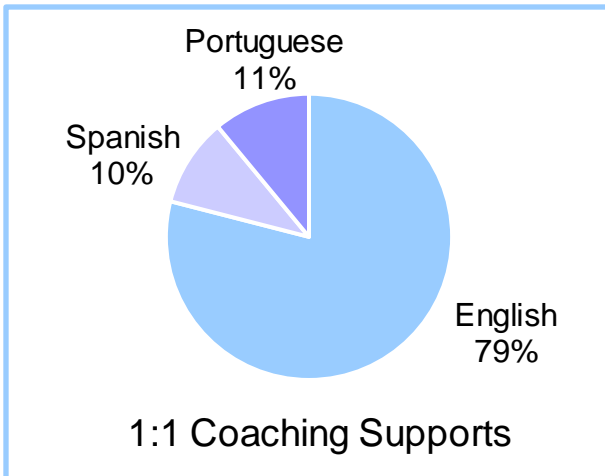
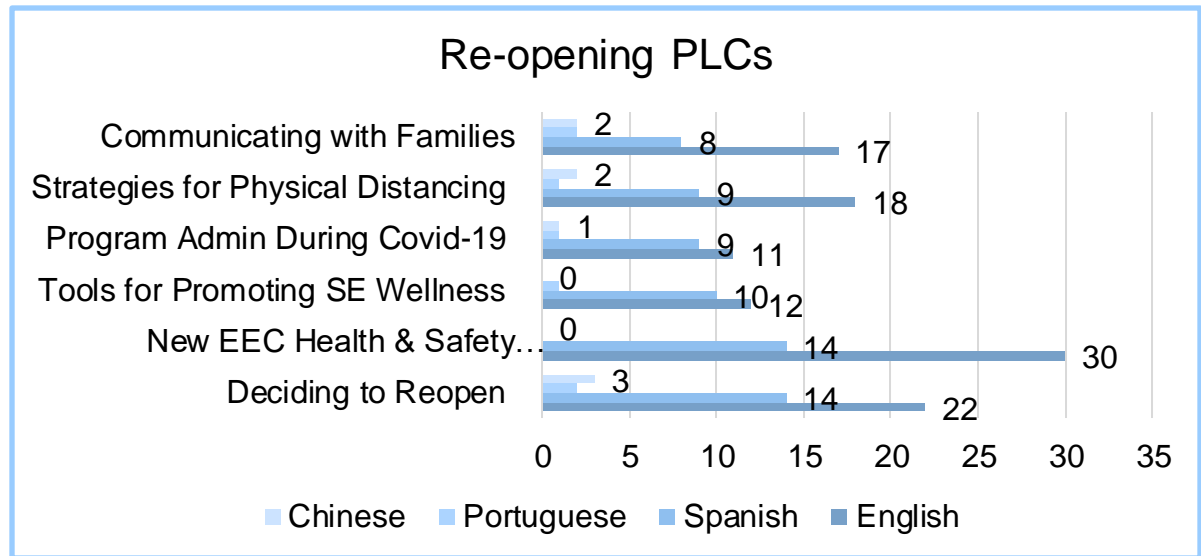
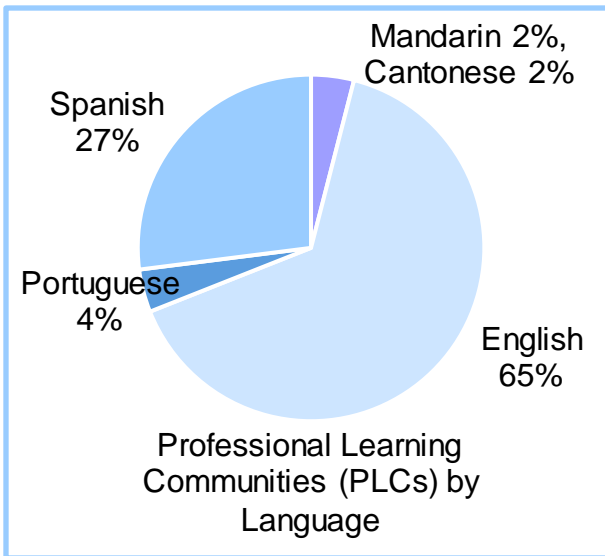
- All Network services must be offered in five core languages – Cantonese, English, Mandarin, Portuguese, and Spanish – and the PDCs are enhancing capacity to translate materials, develop linguistically accurate and culturally relevant sessions, and recruit multilingual trainers and coaches.
- Network services are differentiated by program type and educators receive both tiered and differentiated support.

Promoting Continuous Learning

- All Network services are being offered as part of a sequence or continuum of job-embedded professional learning opportunities.



Professional Development Centers – FY 21 Data



In FY 21, PDCs offered 497 PLCs serving 2,794 unduplicated individuals representing 1,700 programs. In addition, the PDCs provided approximately 461 hours of one-on-one consultation to 128 programs (GCC and ASOST administrators and FCC providers).

Early Childhood Support Organizations (ECSOs) Overview

ECSOs are public private partnerships that support key strategies to sustain practice improvements and accelerate instructional excellence and quality improvement



Use data to accelerate continuous improvement



Program leaders create routines to facilitate educator learning and development



Focus on curriculum and essential practices that impact child outcomes

Early Childhood Support Organizations (ECSOs)

What supports do ECSOs provide to leaders and their programs?

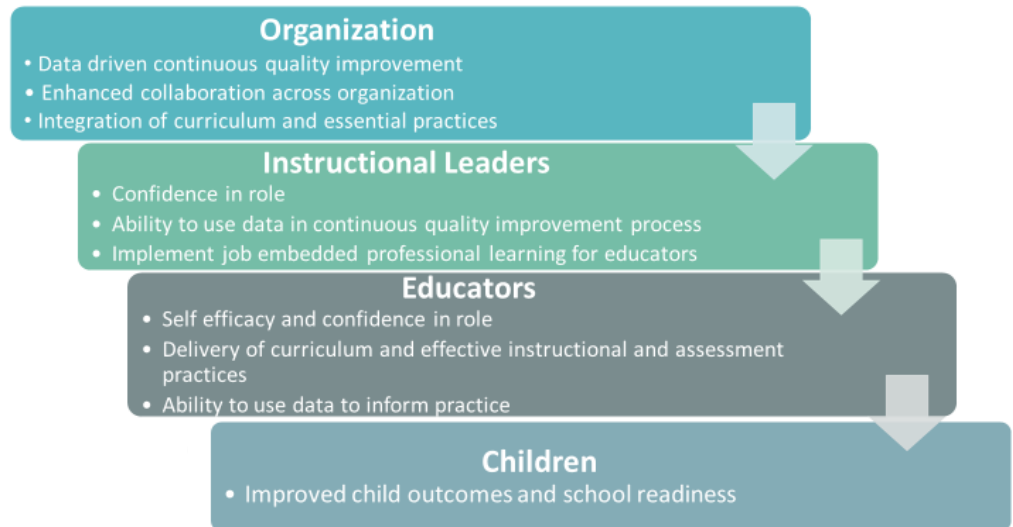
Integrated coaching, training and peer learning communities for leaders

Support for curriculum selection and implementation

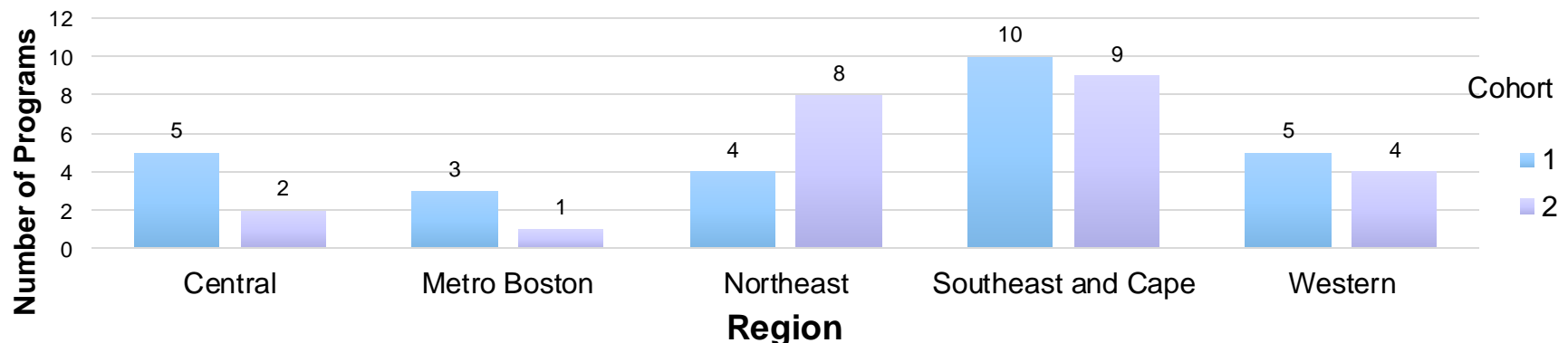
Job-embedded professional development for educators (from leaders and/or ECSO)

Set of tools to support educators (curriculum, child assessment, coaching protocols, etc.)

Financial incentive: \$1000 per classroom



Number of Programs by Region



ECSOs: What we have learned so far

Value of public-private partnership

- Funding from private sector partner provides flexibility and influx of funding to support scale
- Integration of work into public system leads to successful uptake and sustained implementation
- Willing to test innovation at a system level and integrate evaluation activities

Initiative design

- Value of ECSO Community of Practice – value of shared learning and continuous improvement at the initiative and ECSO level
- Importance of including a focus on curriculum and assessment as a critical resource
- Targeted and specific goals of the support organizations focused on results - not trying to solve every problem

System innovation

- Three support models provide an opportunity to understand various approaches to collective goals and allow for program choice
- Comprehensive approach to select and prioritize program recruitment and participation to set partners and programs up for success

ECSSOs: Program Design and Recruitment Process

Program Design

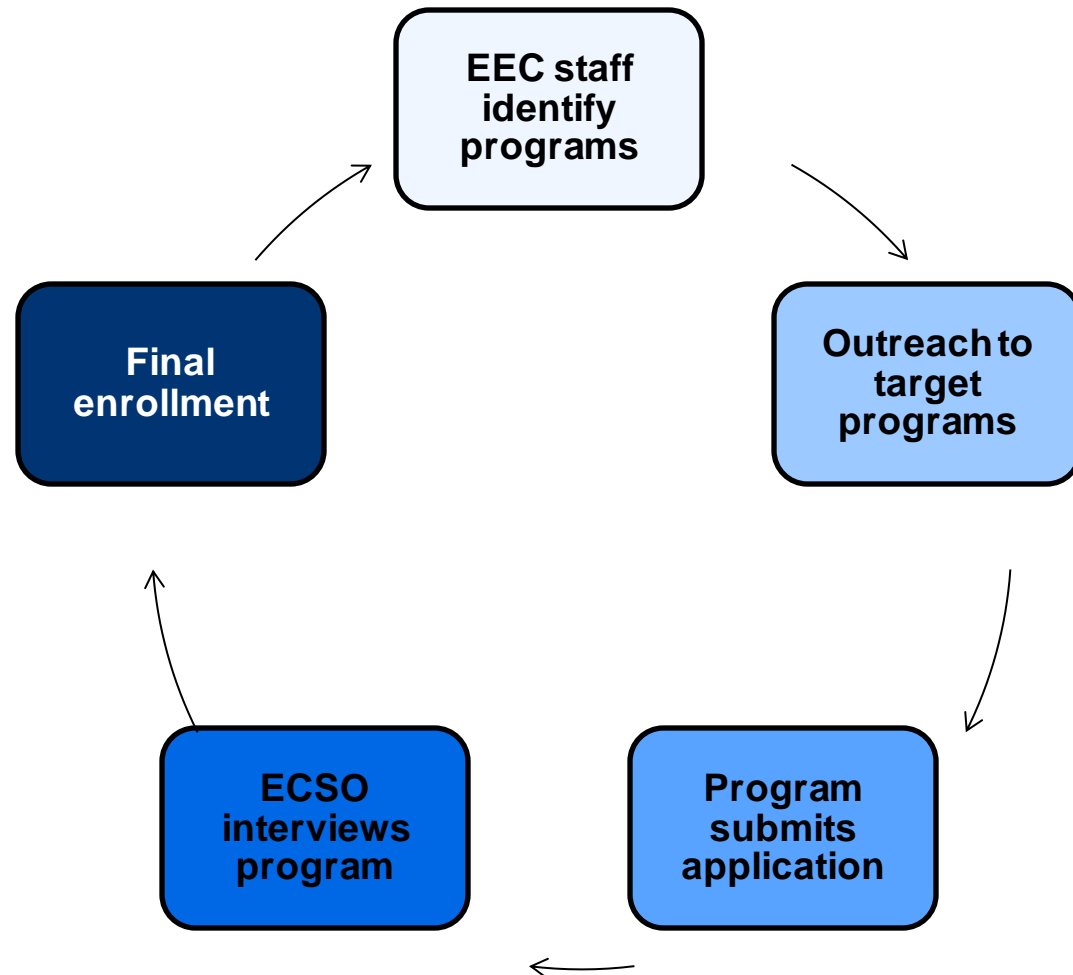
Observable practices in place as a foundation for improvement (meet readiness criteria)

- Intentional approach to support educators
- Attention to program design and classroom practices
- Commitment to continuous improvement

Commitment to serve historically marginalized communities

- % subsidized children served
- Head Start
- Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)

Recruitment Practices



MA Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social-Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices for supporting social emotional development and addressing challenging behavior. Since 2018 EEC in partnership with DESE has supported Pyramid Model implementation in ECE settings.

Pyramid Model Implementation Sites

- 58 implementation sites in FY21 - external Pyramid Model Coaches support ECE program Leadership Teams with implementation through training and individualized support
- Programs work to build system-wide supports that promote social and emotional development and prioritize equity and diversity to ensure success for all children

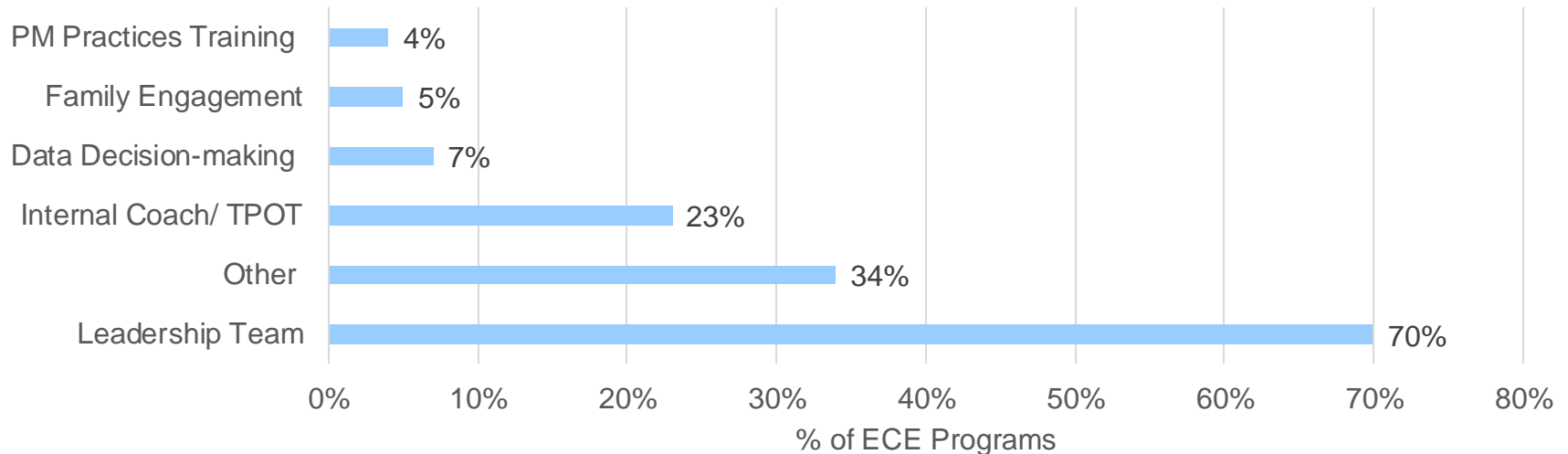
Statewide Opportunities & Collaborations

- FY21
 - PLCs and e-Pyramid modules on EEC's StrongStart Professional Development System (SSPDS) – PM Birth to Five (English), PM Infants Toddlers (English), and PM Preschool (English)
 - 9th Annual Pyramid Model Summit: *Addressing Equity and Intergenerational Trauma through the Pyramid Model*
- FY22
 - Partnership with Boston Public Health Commission – development of PM Coaching Guide and more e-modules on SSPDS: PM Birth – Five (Spanish), Culturally Responsive Care/Implicit Bias (English), and Trauma Informed Care and the Pyramid Model (English)

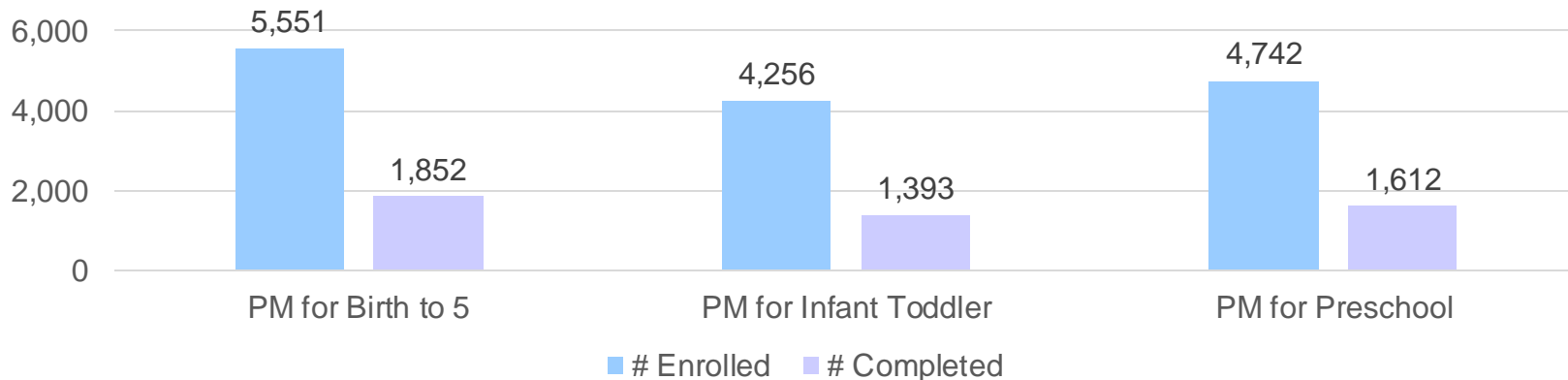


MA Pyramid Model Supports

Supports Provided to ECE Implementation Sites



e-Pyramid Module Participation



CPPI: Community Building that Centers Family Needs

Through the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI), EEC grants to local education agencies (like school districts) who then contract with licensed early learning providers to collaborate in meeting community needs. Funding also supports a thriving mixed-delivery eco-system at the community level and incentivizes the coordination of programs around family needs, rather than vice versa.

Long term goal: kindergarten readiness.

Methods:

Develop structures for local collaboration & alignment:

- Partnership building
- Improve program quality and alignment
- Coordinate workforce supports

Coordinate resources for family needs, preschool access

- Systems of access based on family needs
- Improve special education services
- Target comprehensive, wrap-around supports

Lessons for Future Innovation

Local unit of change must be small enough to allow for attention to complexities of access gaps

- Success is based on grassroots/community knowledge and clarity on problem to solve
- Engagement of community leadership critical
- Working together helps establish mutual understanding how changes within each part of system (ex. public PreK) can impact other parts (ex. infant toddler care).

Local quality improvement and alignment is a powerful tool

- Allows for local commitment to school readiness goals and alignment of system around these goals
- PD supports offer mutual benefit when coordinated
- Equitable access to special education services achieved through increased family options, increased collaboration across systems serving families, and resolution to challenges at local level

CPPI: Investments for Future

In considering investments in family access and community infrastructure building for the future, CCPI is a model poised for increased scale, with a few priorities for exploration through expansion.

1. Surface learning that can help codify the elements of a sustainable local governance structure

- Increase facilitation bandwidth at the local level
 - Help lead collaboration
 - Support participants with training
 - Establish sustainable practices for facilitation and collaboration practices
- Build tools to support grantee success and aligned vision
 - Coordinate supports for collaboration with DESE
 - Provide examples of solutions from current grantees

- Develop guidance on pathways to success around goals for:
 - Expanding preschool access
 - Aligning quality locally through curriculum and PD
 - Building equitable access to special education

2. Pilot innovative funding structures

- Braid subsidy funding with public school funding to wrap full day/ full year options around public preschool hours
- Ensure local attention to systemic impacts of preschool expansion

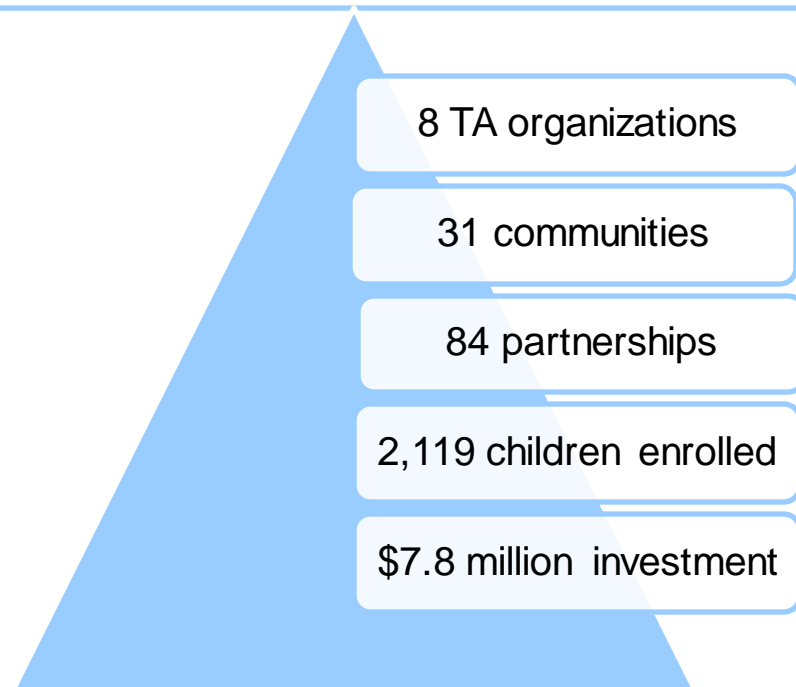


Summer Step Up: Meeting Urgent Needs through Collaboration

Summer Step Up was created as part of the Baker-Polito administration's investment in summer learning opportunities to support the return to in-person learning in fall 2021. Designed and administered by EEC in partnership with United Way, Summer Step Up supported school districts in providing youngest learners with extended, high-quality in-person learning experiences through school-community partnerships with access to a network of local and national technical assistance providers.

Lessons for Future Innovation

- Provide resources with as much flexibility as possible for communities
- Mitigate administrative barriers to funds
- Ensure strong support/resources for educators and connections with local leadership
- Ask the guiding question 'what will be best for the children?' to elevate beyond logistics towards outcomes
- Ensure a role for neutral partner to convene, facilitate



EEC is providing access to the subsidy system through continuity of care policies for all eligible children who participated in Summer Step Up



Summer Step Up: Participating Communities

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Attleboro | Haverhill | Marshfield | Revere | Stoneham |
| Boston | Holyoke | North Berkshire School Union | Salem | Taunton |
| Chelsea | Hoosac Valley Regional | North Adams | Somerville | Waltham |
| Everett | Lawrence | Northampton | Southbridge | Winchendon |
| Fitchburg | Lowell | Peabody | Southern Berkshire Regional | Winthrop |
| Fall River Framingham | Lynn | Randolph | Springfield | Worcester |

“Thanks to the partnership of Summer Step Up, we have been able to offer camp scholarships, enhance social, emotional, and academic support while providing professional development for staff. As a result, more children have had access to a summer camp experience when they needed it more than ever. Collaborations like this are critical to furthering our commitment to children and families in our district, and it would not be possible without the support of EEC and the United Way.”

— Charity Lezama, Executive Director of Salem YMCA

Summer Step Up: Technical Assistance Providers

Boston Children's Museum (Boston, MA)

Boston Public Schools (Boston, MA)

Collaborative for Educational Services (Northampton, MA)

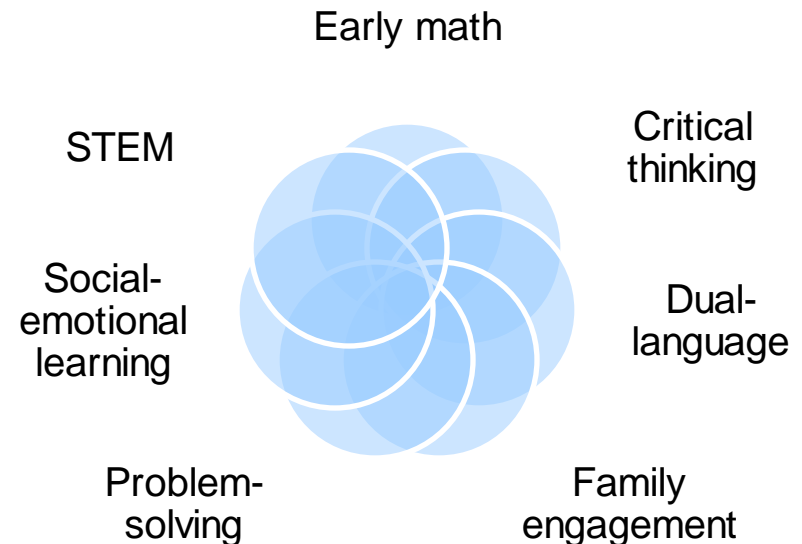
Education Development Center (Waltham, MA)

Erikson Institute (Chicago, IL)

JASON Learning (Ashburn, VA)

Museum of Science (Boston, MA)

Project Adventure (Beverly, MA)



“The support from EEC and United Way could not have come at a better time. At a time when many families continue to struggle economically, providing free access to high-quality summer programming that provides not just an academic boost, but also supports their social and emotional growth, is helping our youngest learners prepare for a strong start in September.”

Denise Snyder, Assistant Superintendent, Lawrence Public Schools

Enhancing Quality Supports for Home-Based Settings

EEC has been intentionally working across providers, Systems, and national experts to plan for a re-design of the FCC support system that meets the unique needs and assets of Family Child Care Educators in Massachusetts. Learnings to date include:

- **Priority supports for FCCs** identified through the project include:
 - Pre-licensing and licensing needs
 - Quality and professional advancement
 - Business and technology needs
 - Family support and engagement
- **What is the role of the Family Child Care System?**
 - More than half of FCC Educators are enrolled in systems
 - Systems provide a range of supports to

families (primarily through subsidy system) and educators (billing and collections, TA)

- These supports are not all the same across systems, nor are they offered in the same way

- **Family Child Care supports must incorporate characteristics unique to these settings**
 - Predominance of mixed age groupings
 - More flexible scheduling approaches
 - Priority focus on meeting parent needs and expectations
 - Rich spectrum of cultural and linguistic backgrounds
 - Market segments based on FCC System involvement, subsidy involvement

Better understanding localized innovation in Family Child Care is informing improvements in system-level supports moving forward.

Agenda: Focus on Program Initiatives

Programs



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

1. Child Care Program **Sustainability**
 - System-wide Capacity Analysis
 - Stabilization Grants Recap: C3 Formula Analysis
 - Additional FY22 Investments in Stability
 - EEOST Regulation Vote
2. Program **Continuous Quality Improvement**
 - Licensing Revisions to Quality
 - Building “Toolbox” of Supports for Program Leaders to Support Quality
3. Program **Innovation and Expansion**
 - Learnings from Stakeholders
 - Enabling innovation & Engaging Employers
4. Budget Priorities
 - FY22 Summary (to date)
 - FY23 Budget Recommendation- Discussion

Looking to Future Innovation and Expansion

Identifying the Changing Needs of Working Families:

Through extensive engagement with families and employers, EEC has captured several emerging themes. Shifts in the landscape among families and their employers suggest the need to address:

- Affordability
- Flexibility
- Localized access
- Improved coordination across the business sector

Identifying Emerging Solutions:

Building incentives for programs to innovate in their delivery models without impact parent affordability will require research and design within a more supported private delivery market. Despite program support and state-funded child care subsidy, solutions to support the economic recovery will require creative partnerships across the public and private sectors.

Meeting the Changing Needs of Working Families

A shifting landscape calls on unprecedented levels of adaptiveness – and urgency in meeting changing family needs. Dialogues with hundreds of families and businesses/employers in recent months have revealed common themes.

- **Families prioritize child care affordability** as their biggest challenge; **employers also cite access to affordable care** as the most pressing concern within their workforce
- Both constituencies feel that the **current child care supply is not adequately meeting family needs** – either in overall capacity, location of care, hours and schedules of care, or available services within community care structures
- Family sessions identified a series of core **challenges related to care access**:
 - Affordability across all income groups
 - Combination of quality care, nearby, with hours needed by families
 - Availability/ supply of special needs, infant/toddler, before/after school care
 - Access ‘navigation’ – referrals, access to subsidies, support finding transportation options
 - Supportive services in care – ex. specialized learning, mental/behavioral health supports
 - Shorter provider hours or other constraints due to availability of childcare workforce
- When asked how they determine **whether care is high quality**, families answered:
 - Is it flexible to my needs (affordability, location, hours of care)?
 - Is my child in a place where I can trust the adult who will care for them, and they will be safe and happy while I am away?
 - Will my child learn and grow academically, socially, emotionally?
- **Employers have made changes to support working families – but there are ongoing concerns**:
 - Most have increased flexibility as their primary policy/resourcing shift
 - Majority continue to adopt hybrid work policies
 - Primary areas of concern are females and ‘second and third shift’ workforces – with disproportionate impacts for each
 - Cost is leading factor – losing strong employees because their salaries are simply not enough to justify child care costs
 - Difficulties more deeply felt among smaller businesses

Emerging Themes to Address Challenges

| Challenge | Emerging Theme |
|---|--|
| Many families have experienced a change in work situation/location; with someone working remotely or at home; family schedules, hours, and related child care needs are likely to continue evolving | Smaller, place-based programs will be needed to more easily customize services to family needs now, and remain nimble and adaptive as those needs change over time |
| Family service needs have changed and been exacerbated through pandemic's economic, employment uncertainty | Re-evaluate community infrastructure to support family navigation and integrated service delivery |
| Systemic inequities identified in Future of Work report and associated research include limitations on work format, flexibility for those who are not in white-collar jobs | Need for business policies and structures that allow for more consistency in family work and child care needs, incl. schedules, hours; this may also help mitigate the impact of changes in child care on employment instability, esp. COVID related closures, quarantines |
| Workforce research supports that instability and insecurity in working class jobs is partly tied to nonstandard and precarious scheduling practices | |
| Commonwealth's annual private child care cost is ~\$5K above national average for home-based and \$6-\$8K above national average for center-based – many states in this region share average costs above and well above national averages | Innovate on statewide structures for care affordability that can increase access to child care for families beyond subsidy system |

Agenda: Focus on Program Initiatives

Programs



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Budget Updates

Executive Summary:

EEC has targeted investments towards subsidized caseload and flexible policies, and has continued to see steady increases in caseload.

In FY23, EEC intends to continue its investment in making affordable care accessible for families, to continue to invest in child care infrastructure, and to invest in and leverage community-level integrated supports for families.

Caseload Overview

- The child count in FY21 steadily declined from the July '20 starting point through Feb. '21, but the child count surged through last quarter and nearly recovered to July '20 levels.
- The child count has continued to increase each month in FY22
- Costs have trended downward as the utilization of school age care placements increased with the beginning of the school year
- EEC will continue to maintain stable supports for providers and families through at least the first half of FY22 such as:
 - Payment based on enrollment
 - Covering Parent Fees through the end of calendar year 2021
 - Extended Job Search
 - Allowing for unlimited absences

FY22 Caseload Account Spending Update

| <u>Number of Billed Children</u> | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | June Actuals | July Actuals | Aug Actuals |
| DCF Voucher | 4,526 | 4,669 | 4,715 |
| DCF Contract | 6,419 | 6,558 | 6,570 |
| DTA Voucher | 7,399 | 7,437 | 7,514 |
| IE Voucher | 18,078 | 18,052 | 18,217 |
| IE Contract | 11,702 | 11,884 | 12,099 |
| | 48,124 | 48,600 | 49,115 |
| | | | |
| <u>Actual Costs</u> | | | |
| | June Actuals | July Actuals | Aug Actuals |
| 3000-3060 Base Caseload | \$ 21,280,102 | \$ 26,431,280 | \$ 22,377,510 |
| 3000-4060 Base Caseload | \$ 23,259,244 | \$ 24,652,983 | \$ 24,468,506 |
| Parent Fees | \$ 6,442,539 | \$ 7,080,169 | \$ 7,050,218 |
| Total: | \$ 50,981,885 | \$ 58,164,431 | \$ 53,896,233 |
| FY2021 Actuals | | \$ 61,059,848 | \$ 48,438,263 |
| <i>Difference</i> | | \$ (2,895,417) | \$ 5,457,970 |

Income Eligible Utilization - Overview

| Income Eligible Child Care | Anticipated Placements | Current Placements | Difference | Percent Utilized |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Voucher | 21,665 | 18,438 | 3,227 | 85.1% |
| Contract | 13,541 | 10,120 | 3,421 | 74.7% |
| Total | 35,206 | 28,558 | 6,648 | 81.1% |

Source:

- Voucher information based on CCRR weekly report for week ending 9/25/2021.
- Contract information based on contract utilization on 9/29/2021.

Income Eligible Utilization – Voucher Detail

| CCRR | Voucher Allocation | Current Placements | Difference | Percent Utilized | Current Waitlist |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Child Care Circuit (Northeast) | 6,274 | 5,923 | 351 | 94.41% | 4,061 |
| Child Care Network (Cape & The Islands) | 1,114 | 868 | 246 | 77.92% | 326 |
| Child Care Choices of Boston (Boston) | 3,374 | 2,661 | 713 | 78.87% | 2,818 |
| Community Care for Kids/QCAP (Metro) | 1,743 | 1,380 | 363 | 79.17% | 1,091 |
| PACE Child Care Works (Southeast) | 3,466 | 3,173 | 293 | 91.55% | 2,679 |
| Child Care Resources (Central & Western) | 5,694 | 4,433 | 1,261 | 77.85% | 4,254 |
| Total: | 21,665 | 18,438 | 3,227 | 85.11% | 15,229 |

Source:

- Voucher information based on CCRR weekly report for the week ending 9/25/2021.
- Waitlist information based on active children as of 10/1/2021

Income Eligible Utilization – Contract Detail

| Region | Program Type Description | Slots Awarded | Slots Used | Flex Slots Used | Total Slots Used | Slots Open* | Percent Utilized | Current Waitlist |
|--|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 1,081 | 561.5 | 18.5 | 580 | 501 | 53.65% | 1,459 |
| | GSA - School Age | 593 | 313.5 | 9 | 322.5 | 270.5 | 54.38% | 891 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 295 | 215.5 | 96.0 | 311.5 | | 105.59% | |
| Region Totals | | 1,969 | 1,090.5 | 123.5 | 1,214 | 771.5 | 61.66% | 2,350 |
| 2 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 483 | 349 | 22 | 371 | 112 | 76.81% | 905 |
| | GSA - School Age | 349 | 348.5 | 49 | 397.5 | | 113.90% | 538 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 562 | 511 | 169 | 680 | | 121.00% | |
| Region Totals | | 1,394 | 1,208.5 | 240 | 1,448.5 | 112 | 103.91% | 1,443 |
| 3 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 1,122 | 749 | 37 | 786 | 336 | 70.05% | 2,786 |
| | GSA - School Age | 901 | 787 | 136 | 923 | | 102.44% | 1,344 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 748 | 674 | 246 | 920 | | 122.99% | |
| Region Totals | | 2,771 | 2,210 | 419 | 2,629 | 336 | 94.88% | 4,130 |
| 4 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 481 | 354.5 | 13 | 367.5 | 113.5 | 76.40% | 1,241 |
| | GSA - School Age | 529 | 307.5 | 51 | 358.5 | 170.5 | 67.77% | 664 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 423 | 338 | 55 | 393 | 30 | 92.91% | |
| Region Totals | | 1,433 | 1,000 | 119 | 1,119 | 314 | 78.09% | 1,905 |
| 5 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 1,175 | 617 | 61 | 678 | 497 | 57.70% | 1,943 |
| | GSA - School Age | 925 | 539 | 8.5 | 547.5 | 377.5 | 59.19% | 983 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 451 | 312 | 0 | 312 | 139 | 69.18% | |
| Region Totals | | 2,551 | 1,468 | 69.5 | 1,537.5 | 1,013.5 | 60.27% | 2,926 |
| 6 | GSA - Infant to Pre-School | 1,923 | 840 | 45 | 885 | 1,038 | 46.02% | 1,547 |
| | GSA - School Age | 705 | 443.5 | 53 | 496.5 | 208.5 | 70.43% | 928 |
| | FCC - All Ages | 795 | 742.5 | 48 | 790.5 | 4.5 | 99.43% | |
| Region Totals | | 3,423 | 2,026 | 146 | 2,172 | 1,251 | 63.45% | 2,475 |
| <i>GSA - Infant to Pre-School Total</i> | | <i>6,265</i> | <i>3,471</i> | <i>196.5</i> | <i>3,667.5</i> | <i>2,597.5</i> | <i>58.54%</i> | <i>9,881</i> |
| <i>GSA - School Age Total</i> | | <i>4,002</i> | <i>2,739</i> | <i>306.5</i> | <i>3,045.5</i> | <i>1,027</i> | <i>76.10%</i> | <i>5,348</i> |
| <i>FCC - All Ages Total</i> | | <i>3,274</i> | <i>2,793</i> | <i>614</i> | <i>3,407</i> | <i>173.5</i> | <i>104.06%</i> | |
| Grand Total | | 13,541 | 9,003 | 1,117 | 10,120 | 3,798 | 74.74% | 15,229 |
| * Negative values have been removed from the "Open Slot" column since they are caused by EEC's current policy of unlimited flex and do not take away from the total number of slots still available. | | | | | | | | |

Source:

- Contract information based on contract utilization on 9/29/2021; Waitlist information based on active children as of 10/1/2021.

Income Eligible Utilization – Waitlist Detail

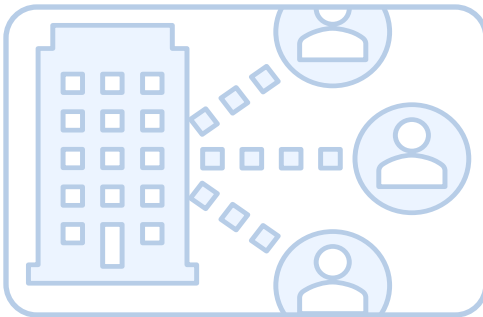
| Region | Infant | Toddler | Preschool | School Age | Total |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Region 1 - Western | 340 | 578 | 541 | 891 | 2,350 |
| Region 2 - Central | 279 | 368 | 258 | 538 | 1,443 |
| Region 3 - Northeast | 859 | 969 | 958 | 1,344 | 4,130 |
| Region 4 - Metro | 313 | 460 | 468 | 664 | 1,905 |
| Region 5 - Southeast | 495 | 676 | 772 | 983 | 2,926 |
| Region 6 - Boston | 483 | 610 | 454 | 928 | 2,475 |
| Total: | 2,769 | 3,661 | 3,451 | 5,348 | 15,229 |

Source:

- Waitlist information based on active children as of 10/1/2021

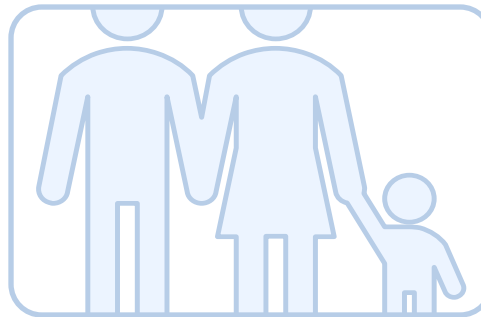
Proposed FY23 Budget Priorities

EEC recognizes the need for a multi-pronged approach in order to continue to support all aspects of the child care field: programs, families, children and communities



Invest in child care infrastructure

Use data to 1) inform enhancements to operational grants launched with ARPA funds and to 2) determine ways to address compensation and hiring challenges



Address affordability of child care for families

Undertake substantial re-vamp of current subsidy system to remove barriers for families



Invest in community-level integration of services

Connect families to resources through community collaboration and integrated supports