Report on the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) Grant FY2023

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Purpose of Report

This report satisfies the requirement set forth in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA), line item 3000-6025, that the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) report to the Joint Committee on Education and the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means on the status of the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) implementation activities. The report requirement includes, but is not limited to, a listing of the recipients of grant funding, the number of children served by the grant recipients, the size of awarded grants by recipient, and the recipients' workforce development efforts. This report covers FY2023 grant activities.

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative History

The state first established the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative in the FY2016 GAA as a planning grant to encourage communities to identify the local infrastructure, funding, and supports needed to increase access to high quality preschool programs through public school and EEC-licensed program collaboration.

In FY2020, the CPPI Grant funded implementation activities in local communities through community-based collaboration between public school districts and EEC-Licensed early education programs. The purpose was to expand local access for 3-and 4-year-olds to high quality care that met the diverse needs of families in their communities. Funding was distributed in two separate competitive procurements which resulted in nine communities receiving funding through the grant:

- Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, North Adams, Northampton, Somerville, Springfield

In FY2022, the grant received an increase $5 million, allowing EEC to post two new competitive grants during the fiscal year; the **FY2022 CPPI Planning Grant** and the **FY2022 CPPI Implementation Grant**.

In FY2022, the CPPI Planning Grant opportunity supported districts and community-based organizations in completing comprehensive needs assessments to determine local gaps in preschool accessibility and quality. Local leadership teams worked together to conduct the needs assessments and develop Strategic Implementation Plans. In addition to informing local initiatives, EEC incorporated these findings in the development of future CPPI Grant applications.

EEC developed a set of Priority Strands to support local partnerships in focusing their planning efforts:

- **Priority I**: *Expansion and Access to Quality Preschool*
  The focus of this strand was for communities to make a significant investment in addressing local affordability and identify access challenges for local families.
- **Priority II:** *Building Locally Aligned Quality*

The focus of this strand was for communities to assess the status of locally aligned quality regarding curriculum and learning goals across community and public-school preschool classrooms.

- **Priority III:** *Equitable Access to Special Education and Inclusion*
  The focus of this strand was to assess options for coordination of services for children with IEPs across all program types serving preschool aged children to provide child care options decreasing the need for unnecessary transitions or barriers for extended day care.

Nine communities applied for the FY2022 CPPI Planning Grant, including Brockton, Fall River, Falmouth, Hoosac Valley, Lynn, Malden, Milton, Sandwich, and Worcester. All nine applications were approved for grant funding. Five of these planning grant communities subsequently applied for and received implementation funding from the FY2023 CPPI Grant, including Brockton, Fall River, Lynn, Malden, and Sandwich.

FY2022 Implementation Grants funded local partnerships that supported contracts between school districts and local EEC-licensed early education programs to provide free public preschool opportunities for PreK age children. This grant provided funding to "braid" with other local and state funding, allowing districts to combine funding streams to expand program options for working families. Similar to *the FY22 Planning Grant*, the Priority Strands were also utilized in communities receiving Implementation Grants to support local partnerships in focusing their implementation efforts. Three communities applied for the *FY2022 CPPI Implementation Grant*, including Boston, Framingham, and Salem. All three communities were approved for grant funding and, furthermore, the three communities subsequently applied for and received continuation funding from the FY2023 CPPI Grant.

FY2023 Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative

In FY2023, EEC conducted three (3) competitive procurements to award implementation grants to cities, towns, regional school districts, or educational collaboratives for the purposes of expanding high-quality pre-kindergarten or preschool opportunities, on a voluntary basis, to three and four-year-old children who will be eligible for kindergarten by September 2023 and September 2024.

EEC continued to use the model of the CPPI grant to engage communities in developing collaborative relationships between public school districts and EEC-licensed early education programs to expand local access to high quality preschool across the mixed delivery system for three and four-year-old children that met the diverse needs of families in their communities. The grant has fostered creativity and innovation within participating communities, supporting the development, maintenance, and expansion of strong community-and-school partnerships. Importantly, the grant brings together key stakeholders and collaborations with family-oriented supports, including local Coordinated Family Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees, in an effort to maximize the use of resources across the community.

The focus of the grant initiative in FY2023 was to continue building local infrastructures that consisted of public and private preschool classrooms that meet the quality requirements of the grant, as well as:

- Expand access for three and four-year-old children within the community,
- Align with the community's Birth to Grade 3 Strategic Plan,
- Address family needs effectively, including working families; and
- Serve high need and underserved populations.

Participating communities were required to develop plans and implement services for at least one of the three priority goals for accessing quality preschool, addressing key issues, and identifying outcomes for implementation of services. Building from the priority strands used in previous years of the grant, the priorities included:

- ***Priority I: Expansion of access to affordable quality preschool****. This strand makes a significant investment in addressing local affordability and addresses access challenges for families. This strand funds additional resources such as Mental Health supports, Social Workers, community resources, transportation, etc. for educators, leadership, and caregivers in the community*.
- ***Priority II: Building locally aligned quality****. This strand focuses on building locally aligned quality through the alignment and strengthening of curriculum, providing professional development opportunities and job-embedded supports for educators to deliver curriculum concepts to fidelity.*
- ***Priority III: Equitable access to special education and inclusion****. The focus of this strand is the implementation of a program design that ensures full inclusion of a child with special needs across all settings, ensuring that children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) have access to require supports without necessary transitions or other barriers through an Itinerant Team model.*

In FY2023, there were 16 grantees in the implementation phase of the grant. **Appendix A** lists the grantees and their partner programs. There were two cohorts of grantees in the implementation phase distinguished by the length of time they had been receiving funding. Maintenance grantees consist of the original FY2020 CPPI Grantees. Cohort 3 grantees received initial funding September 1, 2022. Cohort 4 grantees received initial funding on April 19, 2023. The grantees, selected priorities, and funding amounts awarded are listed in the table below. All grantees utilized funding to implement a program design that meets the requirements of their selected priorities.

Table 1, on the next page, provides details about the grantee's classrooms, enrollment, and funding amounts. Fifteen grantees addressed Priority I, nine grantees addressed Priority II, and 14 grantees addressed Priority III. Implementation grantees received $9.58 million.

Table 1. FY2023 CPPI Grantees, Priority Strands, Classrooms, and Award Amounts

Grantee Name	Priority	Number of Classrooms	Number enrolled	FY2023 Award
Boston Public Schools	I and III	11	155	$670,000
Holyoke Public Schools	I, II and III	4	77	$428,000
Lawrence Public Schools	I	14	204	$310,000
Lowell Public Schools	I, II and III	11	201	$964,000
New Bedford Public Schools	I and III	11	156	$670,000
North Adams Public Schools	I and II	6	79	$316,000
Northampton Public Schools	I and III	10	107	$670,000
Somerville Public Schools	I, II and III	10	188	$897,000
Springfield Public Schools	III	7	86	$406,000
Brockton Public Schools	I and III	9	151	$750,000
Fall River Public Schools*	I and III	0	0	$494,000
Framingham Public Schools	I, II and III	2	40	$750,000
Lynn Public Schools	I, II and III	1	16	$538,000
Malden Public Schools	I, II and III	48	517	$222,011
Salem Public Schools	I, II and III		75	$750,000
Sandwich Public Schools	I, II, and III	6	96	$750,000
Gloucester Public Schools**	III			$330,00
Haverhill Public Schools**	I, II, and III			$750,000
Hoosac Valley Public School**	I and III			$672,000
Plymouth Public Schools**	I and III			$494,000
Westfield Public Schools**	I, II and III			$750,000
Total				**$13,109,000**

*Fall River was unable to open classrooms due to a staffing shortage at the time of data collection, March 2023. The community engaged in other grant activities to develop a program design that met the requirements of their selected priorities. Since the reporting of March data, Fall River has reported that their Head Start room has opened with 13 children currently enrolled. The second partner, People Inc, classroom opened a classroom, July 2023.

**In the spring of FY2023, five additional implementation grants were funded in the following communities: Gloucester, Haverhill, Hoosac Valley, Plymouth, and Westfield. These grants were funded after data collection and therefore not accounted for in the data.

Table 2 outlines key demographic information of the children attending CPPI-funded classrooms. Children in CPPI classrooms serve a diverse group of children, including more than 12% identifying as multi-racial.

Table 2. Demographics of Children Attending CPPI-funded Classrooms

	Count	Percent
Age on September 1, 2022		
3 years	981	45.7%
4 years	1163	54.1%
Missing	4	0.2%
Gender		
Female	999	46.5%
Male	1,124	52.3%
Non-binary	1	0.0%
Missing	24	1.1%
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	251	11.7%
Black	336	15.6%
Latino	745	34.7%
Native/ Pacific Islander	11	0.5%
White	581	27.0%
Missing	224	10.4%
Multi-Racial		
Not Multi-Racial	1,874	87.2%
Multi-Racial	274	12.8%

Figure 1 displays the number of children reporting a primary language other than English, and those who identify as Dual Language Learners (DLL) for services. Most children (81%) identifying as having a primary language other than English spoken at home also identify dual language learner.

Figure 1. DLL Service to Primary Language at home (English or Other)

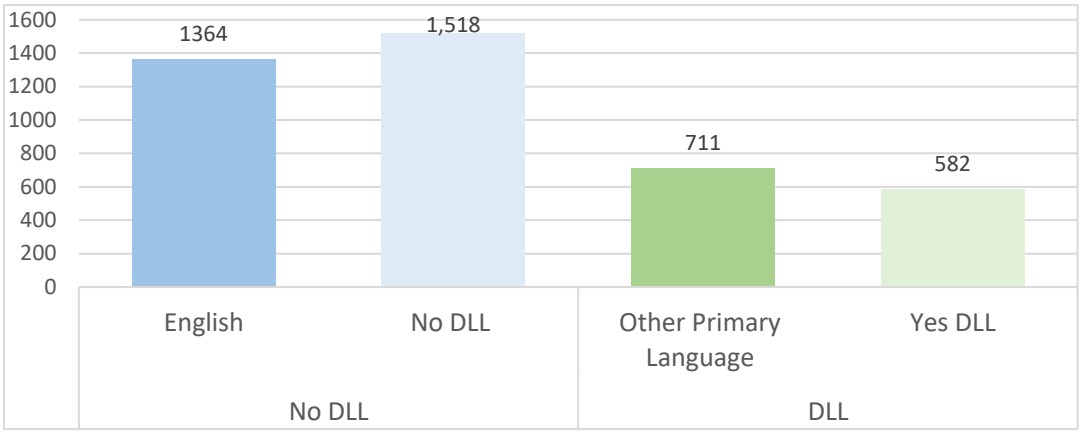
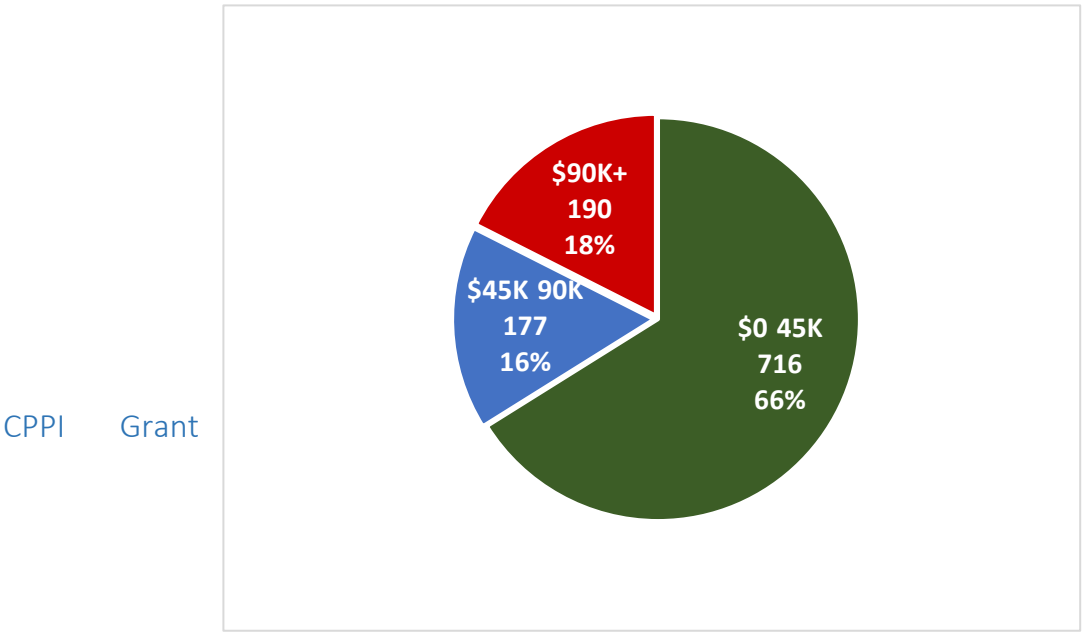


Table 3 provides known family demographics for those served in CPPI-funded classrooms. Family gross income represents a range of income levels, including 13.7% reporting less than $15K annual income, and 9% earning over $90K. **Figure 2** shows who has been served by this grant to further highlight families accessing these high-quality classrooms regardless of income status and based on community need, with 66% of children served reporting family incomes of $45K or less, the next 16% earning up to $90K, and the final 18% of children served come from families earning over $90K per year.

Table 3. Demographics of Families Served by CPPI

	Count	Percent
Family Gross income (in dollars)		
0 to 15K	294	13.7%
15 to 30K	214	10.0%
30 to 45K	208	9.7%
45 to 60K	94	4.4%
60 to 75K	41	1.9%
75 to 90K	42	2.0%
90 to 125K	42	2.0%
125 to 175K	26	1.2%
More than 175K	122	5.7%
Not asked, Unknown, Missing	752	35.0%
Homeless		
Yes	32	1.5%
No	2,045	95.2%
Unknown, Missing	71	3.3%

Figure 2. Families in CPPI Classrooms by Income Category



Implementation

In FY2023, CPPI grant implementation efforts emphasized community collaboration in the 16 communities, with a focus on at least one of the three goals of the grant:

- Expanding access to low- and middle-income children not currently enrolled in preschool.
- Building consistent quality across all CPPI-funded classrooms and aligning quality expectations with K-3 programs.
- Expanding access to integrated special education services for working families through an Itinerant Team model.

In each community, the grant implementation was managed by a Leadership Team comprised of leaders from the grantee school district, EEC-licensed subgrantees, and key community stakeholders. These groups meet monthly to coordinate grant activities, review strengths, make changes as necessary, and plan for future activities. The Leadership Teams may also work with established subcommittees to manage more intensive development work resulting from local planning, such as coordinating professional development, identifying criteria for grant-funded tuition scholarships to expand access, and coordinating community-wide Birth-to-Grade Three planning and outreach. All CPPI grantees have Grant Coordinators, whose role is to facilitate collaboration, manage communication, and facilitate the administrative work of the grant. In addition, grantees were encouraged to work closely with their local CFCE grantee to maximize the use of funding and provide entry to children and families currently not enrolled in formal child care. Grant participation required grantees to use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening tool, which allows programs to collect data on children and provide an opportunity to build partnerships with caregivers on their goals for their child's development.

Each school district sub-contracts with between two and eight EEC-licensed child care programs. Typically, the grant funds go to programs already in operation to strengthen key quality components, ensure the needs of children with special needs and their families are met, and expand access to low- and middle-income families not currently eligible for subsidies.

Priority I: Expansion of Quality Access

This priority focuses on understanding local patterns of access to quality preschool, as shaped by family need, local demographics, geography, transportation, program services and supply. Grantees were asked to develop a program model that overcame the barriers that existed for families in accessing their program of choice and prioritizing the type of programming they most value. Grantees were encouraged to seek out additional funding opportunities for long-term sustainability. **Table 4**, on the next page, shows how grantees used the five identified funding approaches, including:

- Chapter 70 Funding
- Subsidy Vouchers/Contracts
- Head Start
- Parent Tuition and Fees
- CPPI-funded Financial Aid/Tuition Assistance

Table 4. Grantees Use of Funding Streams

	Funding Stream				
Grantee	**Chap. 70 Funds**	**EEC Child Care Financial Assistance**	**Head Start Funds**	**Parent Tuition/fees**	**CPPI Funded Tuition assistance**
Boston	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Brockton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Framingham	No	No	No	No	Yes
Holyoke	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Lawrence	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Lowell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lynn	No	No	No	No	Yes
Malden	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
New Bedford	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Adams	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Northampton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Salem	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Sandwich	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Somerville	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Springfield	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Percentage of Grantees	88%	88%	32%	83%	88%

Many school districts have utilized CPPI funding to expand the number of hours of public-school preschool programing from 2.5 hours per day to 6 hours/5 days a week, including Brockton, Lowell, New Bedford, North Adams, Malden, and Sandwich. Districts and providers also utilized CPPI funds to provide reduced or no-cost care to working families who may not qualify for subsidies.

Additionally, districts have been implementing creative solutions to promote increased access and affordability. For example:

- Brockton Public Schools implemented a model that extends the day beyond 6 hours by delivering wrap-around services to families in need of a longer day. Families receive free transportation and no-cost extended care through an EEC-Licensed partner, Brockton Day Nursery.
- Somerville continues to build a sustainable braided funding system by creating new partnerships across city departments and leveraging other grants within the city to expand their Financial Assistance Program, currently they have aided 37 children from families living below 80 percent of the local median income. In addition, they assist all families in the process of identifying high quality early education and care opportunities by creating an online single point of entry system, the *Somerville Hub Connect*.
- Holyoke utilizes funding to provide extended care at no-cost for families. Three EEC-Licensed classrooms were located in a public-school building, providing opportunities to establish connections between EEC-Licensed staff and public-school staff. The Leadership Team highlighted one of the strengths of having classrooms located in a public-school building was providing on-site testing for Special Education referrals, the building of lasting relationships for families with the school and an easier transition for children that attend Kindergarten in the same building.
- Boston maximizes the use of CPPI funding by prioritizing care for three-year-old children as part of their UPK initiative. Families were able to access high- quality, extended care at a reduced cost. In addition, it provides access to the Special Education Itinerant Team to support with referrals as children transition from Early Intervention services to the Public School. Boston was planning on piloting funding for Family Child Care providers to provide additional options of care for families.
- Lawrence utilizes their funding to support pay-parity for EEC-licensed educators, reducing turn-over of staff and offering stability for children and families. Lawrence Public School partners with their EEC-Licensed programs to offer joint professional development opportunities, communication regarding kindergarten transition and special education referrals. Lawrence did not receive funding for Priority III; however, they began work in September on developing an Itinerant Team model to provide IEP services for children enrolled at community partner site. EEC continues to work closely with the community, providing guidance and support to help them achieve their goal of offering Special Education services in EEC-Licensed classrooms.
- Salem utilized the collaborative relationships already established to develop two new leadership structures: the Salem Children's Cabinet and Office of Thriving Children. The Salem Children's Cabinet was co-chaired by the Mayor of Salem and the Superintendent of Salem Public Schools. It serves as an advisory committee overseeing the work of the newly formed Office of Thriving

Children. The Office of Thriving Children works to maximize the community's resources and ensures all young children (birth to five) in Salem enter school ready to thrive academically, physically, socially, and emotionally and continue to do so through third grade and beyond. The work was focused on closing the achievement and opportunity gap by coordinating and better utilizing the considerable resources of the district, city, and community. By braiding and blending these resources, Salem hopes to create stronger, more equitable environments for young children and families.

- Sandwich Public Schools was planning on increasing funding support to additional EEC-licensed programs for year two of the grant. Sandwich hopes to increase quality access to additional EEC-Licensed programs to promote alignment of quality curriculum, deliver Itinerant Services, and professional development opportunities to expand the number of choices for child care for families in the community.

The requirement of offering expanded care across a mixed-delivery system was just one goal of the grant. Grantees also utilize funding to provide comprehensive service support, offering access to mental health services for children, families, and educators. In addition, EEC supported grantees who were implementing Priority I strategies to develop and implement a Professional Development plan. These plans aim to address community-wide professional development needs and identify joint professional learning opportunities for both district and early learning partner educators. Grantees implemented a system to capture data with the Classroom Assessment Screening System tool (CLASS®) and other assessment data to develop and implement plans to meet the professional development needs of their early education workforces. Grantees utilize funding for coaching and job-embedded resources to provide support and training for the implementation of high-quality adult – child interactions, which lead to better child outcomes. Communities develop robust professional development plans that consider the individual professional development goals of all program staff.

One challenge grantees reported was the effect the staffing crisis on the expansion of CPPI-funded classrooms in some communities. EEC-Licensed programs were unable to open CPPI-funded classrooms due to the shortage of trained, qualified staff. Teaching positions at both district and community-based programs have remained vacant for several months, despite extensive outreach and marketing efforts.

Priority II: Building Locally Aligned Quality

Priority II focuses on building locally aligned quality by providing common learning goals for children and strengthening the implementation of curriculum. Communities were asked to develop and implement a program model that supported the use of curriculum that was appropriate and aligned in the district. Grantees were asked to develop and implement a plan that addressed the community's expectations for learning goals for children along the birth-to-three continuum, including the development and implementation of a road map that identifies key developmental domains and local goals for success.

Public school district and EEC-licensed program leaders and educators come together to discuss the application of curriculum in their community. ECC provided program leaders and educators the

opportunity to attend a training utilizing the *EEC Curriculum Rubric Foundational Review* to review current curricula or to complete a review of newly identified curricula. Communities reported that the opportunity was an "eye-opening" experience to complete comprehensive reviews of their curriculum, highlighting both the strengths and the deficits of a curriculum. Curriculum Teams have reported this process has led to updating their current curriculum materials to provide children with enhanced equitable access to the curriculum objectives.

Communities have demonstrated creativity and innovation in their planning:

- Somerville utilized their review of their community wide *SEE Every Child* Curriculum, to make adjustments that made the curriculum more accessible to educators by purchasing curriculum materials and updating activities on their Curriculum Website.
- Lowell continues to utilize the framework as a guide to develop a three-year-old curriculum to support developmentally appropriate practice for a three-year-old enrolled in CPPI-funded classrooms. In addition, Lowell prioritized English language acquisition as a key goal, providing assessment and support to dual-language learners in both district and EEC-Licensed classrooms.
- Malden utilized the funding to purchase a new curriculum to be implemented in both district and EEC-Licensed programs. They will be utilizing funding to purchase supplemental materials and provide training opportunities for educators on implementation of the curriculum.
- North Adams developed a modified Parent program that provides enrichment materials paired with a curriculum-themed book to all children enrolled in CPPI-funded classrooms. Families receive home visits which includes a book and supporting materials to engage in literacy-focused activities at home with their child. Families are also encouraged to participate in family engagement events throughout the year.

In addition, all grantees were encouraged to implement a plan that utilizes formative assessment tools to collect data on child outcomes that demonstrate overall skill development and individualization of instructional tools for diverse learners and supports a successful transition to kindergarten. Program Leaders were encouraged to implement clear guidelines to provide families an opportunity to provide input on content of the curriculum to reflect the diversity and culture of the children and families enrolled in the classrooms.

Professional development was an important component in supporting educators to implement a curriculum to fidelity. Utilizing data from program leaders and educators, grantees were encouraged to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for professional learning opportunities for educators that includes, data driven coaching models and job-embedded supports.

The staffing crisis had had an impact on program leader and educator participation in professional development opportunities. Program Leaders reported that coverage was a key challenge to making staff available for one-to-one coaching and mentoring and attendance at professional development events. Even with the addition of stipends to pay educators for time after regular working hours, program leaders reported staff were overwhelmed by the day-to-day responsibilities of being in a classroom and find it hard to engage in professional development at the end of a day.

Priority III: Equitable Access to Special Education and Inclusion

This priority focuses on the development of a program design that explores the concept that inclusion is first, a belief that everyone belongs, regardless of need or perceived ability, and that all are valued and contributing members of the school community. Grantees were asked to develop a program design to provide Individual Enrichment Plans (IEP) services to children in collaboration with community-based organizations.

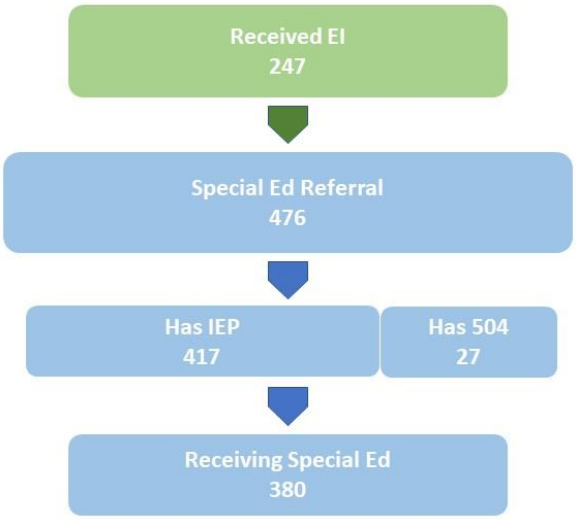
Districts implement an Itinerant Team model to provide IEP services directly in EEC- licensed programs, reducing the need for transitions for children throughout the day and provides additional options for families who require a longer day of care. In addition, many communities explored ways to maximize the use of Chapter 70 funding and other grant opportunities to support the Itinerant Team model to provide services to additional EEC-Licensed programs in the community.

Communities were asked to implement a plan that improves the local system of screening and referrals with consideration of how transitions into early intervention and from early intervention to preschool special education was supported. Districts were encouraged to provide a system that supports both the child and family during the referral process, providing caregivers with knowledge and support throughout the referral process.

Professional development was also a key component of this priority, communities were encouraged to develop a plan that includes professional training opportunities on topics related to multi-tiered support, behavior management and continuity of services across a child's day. In addition, members of the Itinerant Team serve as mentors for administrators and educators in EEC-Licensed programs ensuring the child was receiving reinforcement of skill development not just during the activity, but across the child's entire day. The grant provides job-embedded and coaching support for all educators in both district and EEC-Licensed CPPI-funded classrooms.

CPPI funds fourteen (14) grantees to develop and implement an Itinerant Team model of delivering Special Education services directly in inclusive settings. Figure 3 provides a visual of the counts of all children who were going through the Special Education process and or receiving services in this year of the CPPI grant.

Figure 3. Special Education Services



Grantee communities were utilizing different strategies to support their Priority III work. For example:

- Northampton developed a robust Itinerant Team model that offers push-in special education services to sub-grantees of the CPPI grant and additional EEC-Licensed programs not funded by the CPPI grant. The grantee uses blended funding from local grants, district, and state funds to support a coaching model that includes several options for program leaders and educators to engage in professional development. Educators can receive coaching with a culturally sensitive lens providing strategies to develop and promote empathy and foster learning in classrooms that include the child's home language and culture. The coach also provides guidance in instructional practices for children acquiring English as a second language. The public-school district offers coaching specific to Special Education, providing guidance on implementation of IEP goals for individual teaching teams. In addition, leadership mentoring was available for Program Directors to help tackle professional development challenges regarding staff supervision, strategic planning for sustainability and the onboarding and retention of staff. All EEC-licensed programs in the community regardless of CPPI-funding, have access to family engagement and professional development opportunities in the community.
- Holyoke utilizes district funding to offer IEP Services through an Itinerant Team model to additional EEC-Licensed programs not receiving CPPI funding. The team works with these additional programs on the referral process and provides services directly in the community provider's classroom. The model provides expanded options of care for children and families who have been recommended to receive IEP services in the Holyoke community.
- Springfield was working to improve the referral process in their community in addition to providing services to all children in CPPI-funded EEC-licensed programs. Public-school staff work closely with EEC-Licensed staff to identify and support families with the referral process for Special Education services. EEC-Licensed staff have direct communication with the Special Education Director at Springfield Public Schools. This allows them to provide support to both staff and

families when a child was referred to the public school for an evaluation. Families reported they feel more comfortable with the process knowing they have a trusted partner to work with them and advocate on behalf of their child.

One of the challenges for implementation of the Itinerant Team model in FY2023, for many CPPI grantees, was the availability of qualified Special Education staff. Public Schools were recording historic high rates of open Special Education positions within the district. The Itinerant Team model was a new concept for many Public-School districts, which requires the drafting of new job descriptions, working with local unions and staff and receiving approval from the School Committee. This year grantees have invested time into the drafting and approval of new job descriptions, and the posting and hiring of positions. Grantees reported difficulties in filling the open job positions with qualified staff.

Workforce Supports

The CPPI grant was designed to provide support for communities early education workforce by requiring grantees to utilize Teachstone, Inc.'s Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) tool to improve preschool programming over the course of the school year. To support communities in using the tool and the data it provides, EEC funded the CLASS® Training Supports Grant in the state's FY2023 budget.

EEC awarded multi-year funding through a competitive procurement to Wellesley College to support preschool educators and program leaders to improve their adult-child interactions in the classroom. Research indicates that high-quality adult-child interactions leads to improved child outcomes across all learning domains.

Wellesley College will provide the following supports for the CPPI-funded classrooms:

- Train and/or use a cadre of Reliable Raters to conduct approximately 250 classroom observations.
- Provide professional development opportunities to approximately 160 educators in understanding the components of the CLASS® domains, dimension, and indicators.
- Provide professional development opportunities to approximately 65 program leaders in understanding the CLASS® tool, to inform professional development opportunities for the educators.

In Year Two of the grant, Wellesley College will expand professional development support to provide coaching that supports the integration of the CLASS® competencies for the programs' coaches and educators to use the observation data to individualize educator feedback and professional development.

In addition, grantees were required to invest in coordinated quality improvement through the provision of professional supports to both educators and program educational leadership at the local level. Grantees were encouraged to utilize funding to offer job embedded support and coaching to both public-school and EEC-Licensed staff. Program leadership utilize data collected from teacher surveys, child data and CLASS® scores to develop both individual and community professional development plans. These plans include support for behavior management consultation, Special Education mentoring and joint-

professional development opportunities. Communities also utilize funding to provide reduced or no-cost college courses to obtain both associate and bachelor's degrees for CPPI-funded staff. Lowell offers a nine-month intensive Leadership Course through the University of Denver to both public school and EEC-Licensed educators and leaders.

In addition, educators in EEC-licensed classrooms were often trained with public school educators, providing opportunities to align practice and build a strong local professional community. Coaching has supported educators in high fidelity curriculum implementation and in understanding how to make effective adaptations, responsive to the needs of children in their classrooms. Grantees who implement program designs from *Priority III – Equitable Access to Special Education and Inclusion* focus expertise support for children with special needs and work with educators to build strong inclusive practices in CPPI classrooms, particularly in EEC-licensed programs. The support was delivered either through onsite comprehensive service providers or itinerant special education supports. In these models, experts consult with educators around best practices for working with children who have particular needs (i.e., speech/language, behavioral challenges, occupational therapy needs), identify opportunities for adjustments to classroom practices, and support educators in effectively engaging in the special education referral and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. CPPI grant funding can be used to increase salaries for CPPI-funded EEC-Licensed educators to better align with Public School District Preschool teachers.

CPPI grantees were strongly encouraged to develop joint professional development plans based on classroom quality observation data and include community goals for educators and opportunities for educators from EEC-licensed programs and public schools to engage in training together.

Future Directions

EEC plans to continue to support the current grantees in building and expanding their program designs and partnerships within the community. EEC encourages grantees to expand funding for additional classrooms with existing partnerships or provide funding opportunities to develop partnerships with new EEC-Licensed programs.

The FY2023 CLASS® Training Supports Grant will deliver additional professional development opportunities in year two (2) of the grant. They will provide Professional Learning Community (PLC) opportunities for program leaders and educators to come together to learn from each other on ways to engage and fully implement the indicators of the CLASS® assessment tool. In addition, grant-funded coaches can receive professional development on researched-based, coordinated coaching strategies to support their educators in developing a plan to engage in robust adult-child interactions, tailored to their program design and learning environments.

Appendix A: List of Grant Partners

Maintenance Grantees

Boston Public Schools
- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester
- Ellis Memorial

Holyoke Public Schools
- Valley Opportunity Council
- YMCA

Lawrence Public Schools
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- The Community Group

Lowell Public Schools
- Community Teamwork
- Greater Lowell Family YMCA

New Bedford Public Schools
- Little People's College
- NorthStar Early Learning
- P.A.C.E Head Start

Cohort 3 Grantees

Brockton
- Self-Help Head Start
- Brockton Day Nursery

Fall River
- People Incorporated
- Citizens for Citizens Head Start

Framingham
- Framingham State University Child Care
- MetroWest YMCA

Lynn
- Gregg House
- LEO Head Start

Malden
- Malden Early Education and Learning
- Cheverus Catholic Schools
- Little Love Bugs Daycare
- Malden YMCA

- YMCA South Coast

North Adams Public Schools

- Child Care of the Berkshires
- YMCA

Northampton Public Schools

- Community Action Head Start and Early Learning Center
- Gummybears Family Child Care
- Meadowlark Childcare Center
- Nonotuck Community Schools
- Cloverdale Preschool
- New Village / Farm Hands Family Child Care

Somerville Public Schools

- Elizabeth Peabody House
- Somerville YMCA
- Dandelion Montessori
- Community Action Agency of Somerville Head Start
- Open Center for Children
- Bigelow Cooperative Daycare
- Pooh and Friends Child Care
- Tree House Academy
- Kingdom Rock Children's Village

Springfield Public Schools

- Springfield Partners
- Square One
- YMCA of Greater Springfield
- My Little Best Friends Child Care

Salem

- Salem YMCA
- Salem Community Child Care Center
- Ashley Preschool and Daycare

Sandwich

- School for Early Learning
- Joyful Noise

Cohort 4 Grantees

Gloucester

- YMCA of the North Shore (Cape Ann YMCA)
- Pathways for Children

Haverhill

- Haverhill Public Schools
- Community Action Inc.
- Haverhill YMCA

Hoosac Valley

- Hoosac Valley Public Schools
- Childcare of the Berkshires
- Youth Center

Plymouth

- Tiny Town
- Bright Ideas

Westfield

- Westfield Public Schools
- YMCA of Greater Westfield
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Westfield