



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

Workforce Council

March 9, 2023

Agenda

Welcome

Items for Discussion

- Current State and Next Steps in Defining a Career Pathway and Credentialing System
- Innovations in Motion
 - Early Childhood Educator Pilot
 - Job Board and Public Information Campaign
 - FCC Start Up
 - Center-Based Recruitment and Retention
- Discussion



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Update on Workforce Development Efforts



Building the Workforce System: Transitioning from Current to Future State

EEC is working on two parallel and equally important tracks to address system needs.

Build robust professional opportunities and career pathways for educators



Innovations in motion to address urgent workforce capacity challenges

- **Early Childhood Educator Pilot:**
Child care financial assistance (subsidies) for staff working in early education and care
- **Supported and clear pathways into the field:**
 - Public information campaign and job board
 - Family Child Care capacity building
 - Center-Based staff recruitment and retention

Defining a Career Pathway & Credentialing System: Next Steps

Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain use of minimum hiring requirements for stability and flexibility• Vendor selected to develop verification requirements for credential<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize proposed pathways and credentials, building on existing work• Prioritize two levels of educator credentialing and directors
Short Term (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish strategy for 'staged relaunch' of certification<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess feasibility of opening optional professional certification for professional validation and goal setting (<i>initially Directors only</i>)• Design and incrementally deploy supportive IT systems for enhancing certification and new credentialing processes• Establish data migration strategy to new IT solution
Long Term (12 -24 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socialize the revised pathway and credentials<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with stakeholders and partners• Regulatory revision to match new credential• Staged launch of new pathways and credentials<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritizing levels that recognize skills of current field• Educator registry available to support credentialing processes

Career Pathway & Credential Development

- Vendor selected and contract complete – American Institute of Research (AIR) will develop the specifics of verification processes for each level of the credential
 - Includes equivalency between currently certified educators and new credential levels
- Verification decisions will inform the following steps to support implementation:
 - Field communication
 - Regulation changes
 - IT development
- Launch of initial levels planned for second or third quarter of FY24, pending regulation changes
- Will communicate professional learning opportunities needed to support educators in advancing in the credential and make these available prior to launch

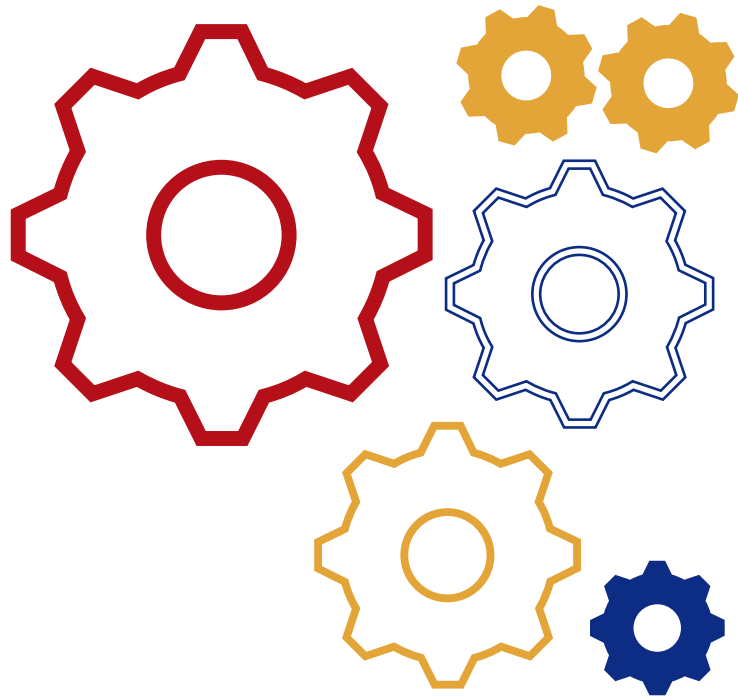
Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC)

Collaboration

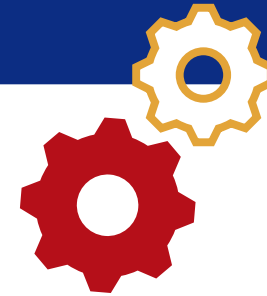
EEC, MACC & DHE working in partnership with the MA community colleges to:

- Build a system-wide process to expand degree and certificate attainment for early childhood educators to earn college credit for knowledge and work experience in the field, via assessment and credit for prior learning
- Develop shared communication strategies to inspire new educators to pursue certificates and degrees in early childhood education
- Consider enhancements to articulation agreements among high schools, colleges, and professional development entities to facilitate interest and entrance to the field of early childhood education
- Monthly meeting schedule has been established among partners to assess progress and align communication content

*In the
Meantime...*



Innovations in Motion



Early Childhood Educator Pilot: Overview

Background

- On January 11, 2023 EEC launched the pilot through the existing child care financial assistance program to provide priority access to vouchers and contracted slots to income eligible staff working in programs licensed or funded by EEC.
- Detailed pilot information on the [website](#).

Goals

- To support access to affordable child care
- Assist with cost associated with personal child care
- Assist with recruitment and retention workforce challenges

Who is Eligible?

- Current or newly employed staff at a licensed or funded early education or school age program and Massachusetts including out of school time program, family child care providers and assistants
- Residing in Massachusetts
- **Have an income at or below 85% [State Median Income \(SMI\)](#)**

ECE Pilot: Preliminary Data (Staff Access)

1325 Children reached with the ECE priority so far!



130 Children active on the waitlist



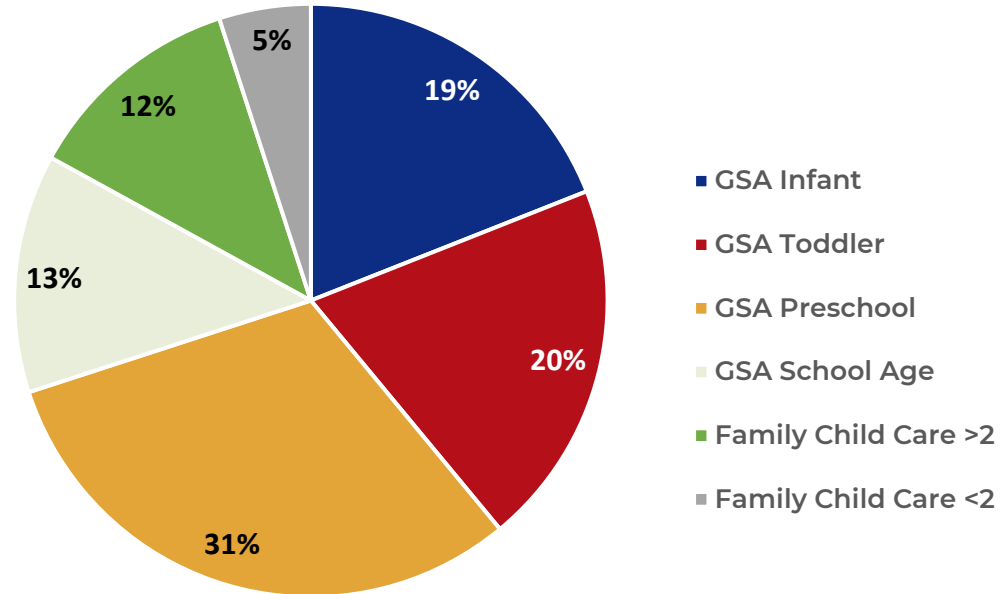
697 Children in pre-enrollment
Determining and awaiting placement



277 Children enrolled in care

77 Early Childhood Educators in the pilot are between 50 and 85% SMI
([Click here to learn more about SMI](#))

Enrollment by Age Group



ECE staff are accessing:

- 279 Child care vouchers
- 4 Care through a contracted slot

ECE Pilot: Preliminary Data (Program Data)



78

FCC Programs
Systems

119 Total New
Voucher
Agreements



Center-based
programs

30

FCC Programs
Independent

11



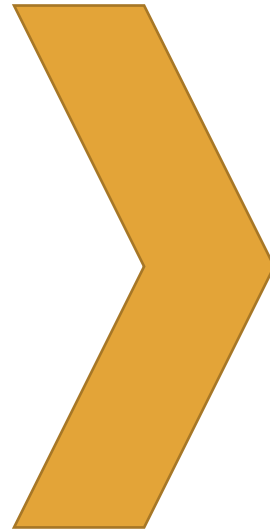
Supported & Clear Pathways into the Field

- Current EEC Priority Projects focus on building supported pathways into the profession for FCCs and Center-based program staff
- Public information campaign and job board being developed to support new entries in learning about the field and identifying opportunities
- FCC Start Up supports to recruit new providers to the field and ensure success in opening and sustaining operations
- Support for apprenticeships and other recruitment of staff new to the field to encourage the availability of paid entry level positions that include mentoring and coursework leading to qualified educator positions

Public Information Campaign and Job Board

Goal: to support recruitment into the field, while uplifting our existing educators

Story: focus on the voice of educators on the joy of working in early education



Guiding Principles

- Multi-lingual and multi-cultural
- Asset based
- In partnership
- Data driven
- Evolving

Call to Action

- Job board
- Workforce supports

Proposed FCC Start UP Pilot Supports

Pre - licensing

- Self assessment
- Training on licensing requirements and EEC technology systems
- Foundational training: curriculum and planning, business (budget), initial program setup
- Matched with trained FCC educator as mentor
- Start - up grants

Early licensure

- Licensing – home set up, health and safety requirements
- Business – technology, business management, marketing and enrollment, Infant/Toddler rate increase for subsidized FCC
- Program - curriculum and schedules, screening (Ages & Stages Questionnaire - ASQ), building relationships with families, quality improvement and professional development plans, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Ongoing support

- Access to one-on-one technical assistance and peer learning (licensing, business, program)
- Training in content areas of interest/need

Support from EEC

- Efficiencies and tools to support the licensing process, including regional topic specific facilitated group technical assistance
- Leadership of co-design process and continuous improvement
- Coordination and increased access to EEC funded program supports (initial and ongoing) and ongoing coaching and technical assistance
- Evaluation

FCC Start Up Pilot Strategy

- Target scale (in progress)
 - Our goal is to reach pre-pandemic number of educators and licensed capacity (a net gain of 458 FCCs and 2,972 FCC seats) over the next two years
- Proposed Supports for pre licensure and early licensure (in progress)
 - Analysis of existing resources to identify gaps and areas for further development
 - Mentor/coach training is a gap and immediate need for development
 - Next steps
 - Interest in surveying FCC who recently entered or left the field
 - Finalize scope of services, timeline, targets of scale, partnerships and required coordination, recruitment strategy
 - Evaluation plan

Center-Based Recruitment and Retention

Goals

1. Build the supply and retention rate of center-based educators and directors in targeted geographies
2. Support sustainable and scalable approaches to create supported pathways for entry to the early education and care field

Apprenticeships and other workforce training/coursework programs create a structured pathway to support entry and ongoing professional advancement

- Variety of program structures and pathways
- Common elements of program design that are aligned to principles of adult learning and integrate features of future credential system
- Wide range of initiatives underway with participation of sector partners, including formal workforce development centers
- Limited capacity of support infrastructure (i.e. mentor teachers, directors)

Discussion: Role for EEC

- Define the scope of the workforce crisis, define targets and outcomes
 - Fund gaps in service by geography or other targets
 - Catalyze investments to increase opportunities to meet targets
- Set industry standards
 - Provide professional recognition
 - Communicate clear expectations
- Provide support in sustainable design
- Leverage and coordinate existing resources to accelerate current initiatives
 - Landscape analysis needed to understand program design of current initiatives
 - Develop coordinated efforts across partners