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# **Massachusetts Universal Pre- Kindergarten Pilot Program Evaluation**

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# Executive Summary

In Fiscal Year 2007, the state budget included funding for the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to pilot a Universal Pre-Kindergarten program with the goal of ensuring that all children in the state have access to quality preschool and, as a result, promoting school readiness and positive outcomes for children, especially those at risk of poor developmental outcomes. All types of providers are included under the “umbrella” of the state’s universal pre-kindergarten program, including child care centers, Head Start centers, public and private school programs, and family child care. To achieve its goals of access to high-quality care, EEC has adopted the strategy of providing funding, through grants to eligible sites to spend in areas hypothesized to link to quality and, ultimately, to child outcomes. Exhibit 1 depicts the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program, and the causal pathway leading from a comprehensive statewide system of quality preschool to child outcomes.

For the UPK Pilot Initiative, EEC established a set of specific eligibility criteria for the grants and solicited applications from early education programs and school districts across the Commonwealth through a competitive process. The grants were targeted to sites that demonstrated evidence of a commitment to higher quality practices, including use of a developmentally appropriate program, use of an approved assessment system, and national accreditation. In the first round of grants in FY07, 131 entities were selected to receive Classroom Quality grants; the first cohort of grantees included agencies representing child care centers (public and private, including Head Start centers), public school districts, agencies representing family child care homes, and independent family child care providers. The first cohort of grantees received continuing funding in FY08, assuming that they still met the eligibility criteria. In addition, a second cohort of 105 program sites and agencies received Classroom Quality grants in FY08. Grant amounts were based on the number of children served by the grantee and the proportion of children who were subsidized along with the hours of operation of the program. The state legislature appropriated \$4.6 million in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget for the Pilot Initiative, which was expanded to \$7.1 in Fiscal Year 2008, and further expanded in Fiscal Year 2009 to \$12.1 million.<sup>1</sup>

EEC also funded this external evaluation of the implementation and early outcomes of its pilot grant program for UPK. The evaluation focuses on three primary questions about the grants:

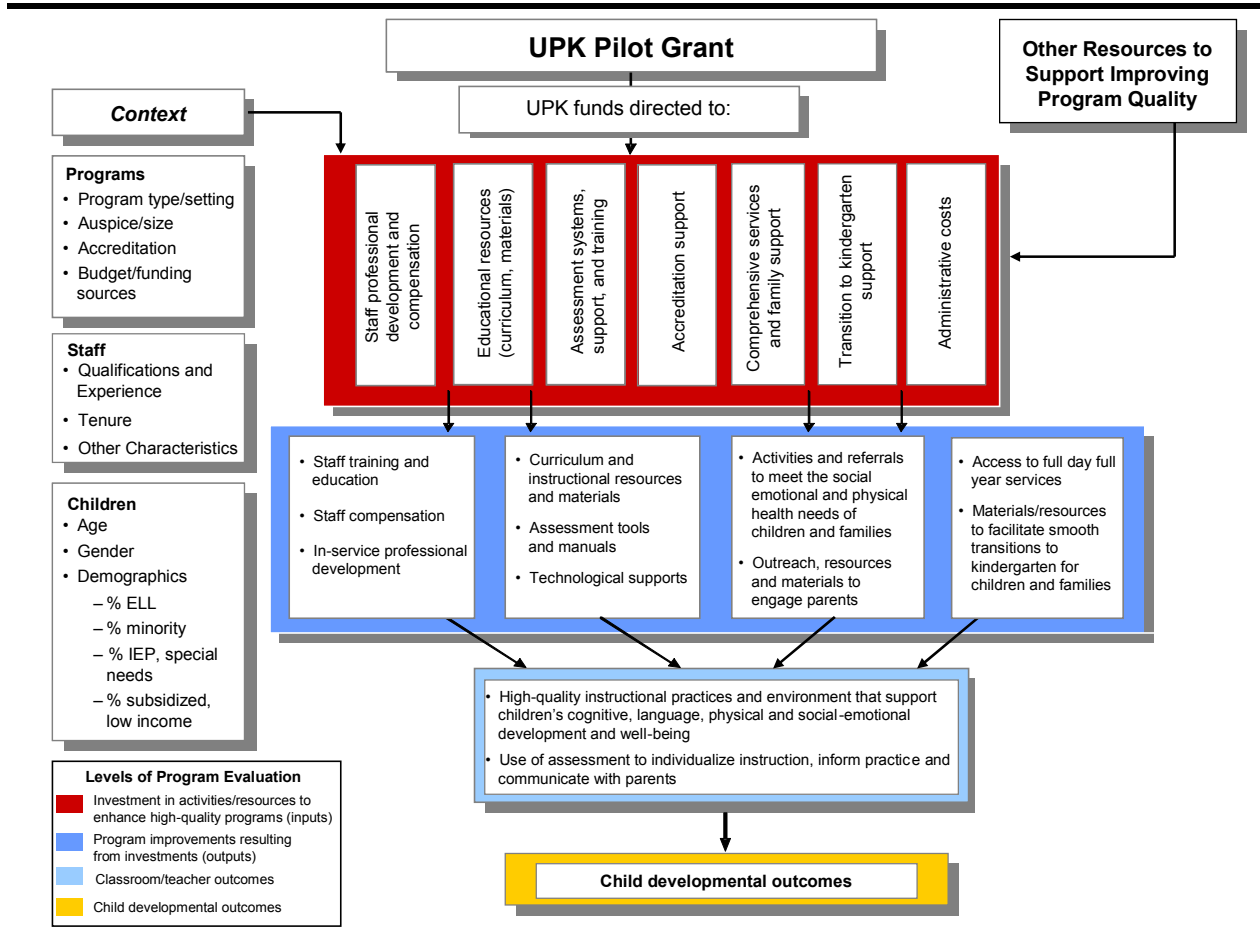
- How did program/system administrators choose to allocate their grant funding to improve the quality of the program?
- What were the perceptions of administrators, teachers and family child care providers about improvements in quality since the grant funding was received; and, if there were improvements, how were they potentially linked to the grant funding?
- What are the areas where program needs remain?

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<sup>1</sup> This amount was subsequently reduced to \$11.6 million due to FY09 mid year state budget cuts.

The sample for the current evaluation are the grantees who received Classroom Quality grants for both of the first two years of the Pilot Initiative—a total of 125 program sites including 81 child care centers, 5 public school district prekindergarten programs, and 39 family child care homes. The data for the evaluation came from telephone and in-person interviews with respondents at both the agency level and site level (teachers and family child care providers) who received funds for quality improvements.

**Exhibit 1. Logic Model for the Massachusetts UPK Initiative**



## Findings

### Characteristics of Grantees

The UPK grants were intended to target not only sites with higher quality but also sites serving children who could be considered at risk for poor developmental outcomes because their families were low income and programs in districts deemed to be underperforming by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). Overall, the majority of the children being served by

the grantees (64%) were receiving financial assistance.<sup>2</sup> About 30% of the children were from homes where English was not the primary language spoken, and half of these children were characterized as having limited English proficiency. About 10% of the children were diagnosed special needs. The family child care homes had the highest proportion of subsidized children (over 80%) and the highest proportion of children from second language backgrounds (47%). The school district programs served fewer subsidized children (20%) but the highest proportion of special needs children (21%).

The UPK grants were intended to target sites with staff with relevant training and education. Among classroom teachers, the majority (75%) had a college degree. Among family child care providers, although only a quarter had a college degree, the majority (67%) had a CDA certification. Also, nearly 70% of the family child care providers reported being able to speak the language of the children who came from second language homes.

### **Distribution of Grant Funds**

Grantees were given guidance on areas in which they were allowed to use their UPK grant funds, including curriculum and materials, professional development, staff compensation, expanded services, and some administrative costs. In the first year of the pilot program, funds were released late in the year, which meant that grantees only had two months to spend their awards. As a result, the largest proportion of the grant funds (46%) was used in areas where funds could be expended quickly, specifically educational materials and resources such as books, mathematics materials and gross motor equipment (Exhibit 2). The other area where a substantial proportion of grants were spent was staff compensation (24% of funding). Given more time to plan for and disperse their second year of funds (Fiscal Year 2008), the grantees allocated their grants differently. In the second year, expenditures for materials and curricula dropped to 28%, while expenditures for staff increased, including both staff compensation (31%) and professional development activities (16%). The most commonly reported professional development training topics were use of assessment systems, use of specific curricula, general child development, classroom management strategies, and serving children with special needs.

The center-based programs and the family child care providers allocated their grant funds somewhat differently. In the second year of funding in both child care centers and school district programs, half of the grant funds were allocated to staff and just over a quarter of the grant funds were used to buy materials or curricula. For the family child care homes, 40% of grant funds were used for materials and curricula and 40% of funds for staff expenditures. Notable was the spending by public school programs on extending the classroom day. This was not an area of expenditure for child care centers and family child care homes, which typically provide full-day care. Also, only the public school programs spent more than 10% of their grants to purchase assessments.

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<sup>2</sup> EEC's current approach is laying the foundation for a broad-based and multi-pronged plan to meet the simultaneous challenges of access, quality and affordability as part of a comprehensive UPK system. EEC envisions that the eventual UPK system will maintain and build upon the pilot's current approach to defining and supporting program quality, while increasing parent access, affordability, and information.

**Exhibit 2. Percentage of UPK Grant Funds Allocated to Quality Improvement Areas by Type of Grantee<sup>a</sup>**

Expenditure Category	Overall (All Grantees)		Center-based Grantees		Family Child Care System Grantees		Public School Grantees	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>Expenditures for education/instruction</b>	46%	28%	46%	26%	45%	40%	47%	27%
Assessment	16%	10%	15%	10%	13%	7%	34%	17%
Curricula/educational materials	29%	14%	30%	13%	29%	27%	13%	6%
Support for obtaining accreditation	1%	4%	1%	4%	3%	5%	1%	5%
<b>Expenditures on staff</b>	34%	48%	38%	49%	17%	40%	22%	48%
Staff compensation	24%	31%	27%	32%	11%	20%	20%	44%
Professional development	9%	16%	11%	17%	6%	20%	2%	4%
<b>Expenditures for program operations</b>	12%	17%	10%	18%	19%	10%	25%	23%
Comprehensive services	6%	9%	6%	10%	11%	4%	3%	13%
Full-day/full-year services	3%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	20%	6%
Administrative costs	3%	6%	2%	6%	8%	6%	2%	4%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages do not add to 100% across education, staff and program operations because respondents did not always have access to all necessary records.

The majority of grantees reported that the grant funds resulted in improvements in the quality of their programs, in the areas where funds were allocated. The one exception was the area of staff expenditures, where grantees reported some improvement in their ability to hire staff or to compensate staff adequately but also felt that their programs were not able to finance their staffing needs sufficiently.

**Remaining Program Needs**

Grantees were asked about how they would spend additional funds if they were to become available. Overall, the largest proportion of grantees indicated that they would use additional funding to invest in staff as the area of greatest need. Staff compensation was identified as the area of greatest need by 50% of family child care providers, 60% of public school programs, and 70% of child care centers.

Professional development was also cited as an area of need for 48% of child care centers and 60% of family child care providers, although not for public school programs. In general, family child care providers identified more areas of need, including comprehensive services (possibly because homes are serving a high proportion of at-risk children) and material resources.



## **Implications and Next Steps**

Overall, grantee attitudes about the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program were extremely positive. Reports by grantees indicate that the grant monies went to the program areas most likely to lead to meaningful differences for children—high-quality curricula, systematic assessment, and staff support through professional development and compensation. Based on grantee responses, the UPK pilot initiative is successful in its implementation and achievement of its initial goal of promoting high-quality early childhood education for children in the Commonwealth. The evaluation also highlighted aspects of the UPK program that merit additional consideration, including raising parent awareness of UPK and its benefits, potential shifts in the targeting of funds, addressing widespread concern about staff compensation, training around child assessment and use of curricula, and developing strategies for raising quality in specific types of early childhood care settings, including those not ready to participate in UPK.

### **Targeting Allocation of Funds**

The fact that, given sufficient planning time, grantees allocated more of their funding to professional development for staff and for staff compensation, underlines programs' recognition that (a) staff are a critical, if not the most important feature in determining the quality of a program, (b) investments in staff require some long-range planning, and (c) unlike materials, needs in the area of support for staff cannot be met on a one-time basis but are a continuing part of quality. It also suggests that, over time, programs can become more sophisticated about targeting their funding to what are, arguably, the area of highest priority for quality—investments in staff. The findings suggest the need for consideration of different allocation guidelines for different stages in funding, with more flexibility initially for grantees and requiring a more targeted spending plan in later years of funding.

### **High Priority for Investments in Staff**

Many respondents said the ability to invest in staff compensation had a noticeable effect on morale and job satisfaction as well as staff retention of current teachers and providers. A direct implication for program quality is the ability for agencies to retain more highly educated staff. Many programs gave bonuses to teachers with bachelor's degrees which had a two-fold effect. First, the bonuses were an incentive for teachers to stay in their programs instead of looking for higher paying jobs elsewhere. Second, bonuses to bachelor's-level teachers may have created an incentive for teachers with associate's degrees to obtain a bachelor's.

With regard to hiring of new staff, grantees reported being able to offer more competitive salaries to more highly educated/qualified teachers. Respondents also described the effect of adding staff to the classrooms as lowering child-teacher ratios, increasing personalized attention to children, addressing diversity/language/cultural needs, hiring substitute teachers so that teachers could more frequently participate in professional development opportunities, and hiring education coordinators and coaches/mentors to provide assistance for improving teaching skills.

### **Promoting High-Quality Practices in Use of Assessment and Curricula**

Respondents were pleased with the improvements the UPK grant funds afforded in the areas of assessment and curriculum. The updated assessments allowed for better individualized instruction,

better communication with parents and suggestions for lesson plans. Increased documentation resulting from the upgraded assessments resulted in a deeper understanding and insight by the teachers and the parents. Program administrators were able to see larger trends in educational needs within centers, and the information was less piecemeal and more effective in higher-level decision-making.

With regard to curricula and educational materials, respondents were very outspoken about their appreciation for the enhancements to the classrooms and programs overall. They said that the new materials are helping to support children's learning in the areas of math, science and literacy. Many of the materials not only replaced outdated and broken equipment, they also help with accreditation requirements.

Research tells us that high-fidelity implementation of scientifically-based curricula is most likely if staff are given in-class mentoring and coaching as well as group training. Further, increasing program use of assessments does not guarantee appropriate administration of assessments and use of data for planning instruction. Down the road, more attention to the best use of these resources and assistance in doing so may be necessary to move quality to the most meaningful levels.

### **Differences between Grantee Groups**

One of the goals of the UPK Program is to distribute grant funds through a mixed service delivery system—to child care centers, Head Start programs, public school districts, and family child care systems. Results from the implementation study suggest that there are some differences between the grantee groups on a number of dimensions:

- Populations served—family child care providers served a greater number of children coming from homes in which English is not the primary language or who are English language learners themselves and public school programs served a higher percentage of children with special needs.
- Allocation of grant funds—relative to public school programs and family child care systems, a higher percentage of center-based programs allocated UPK funds to assessments, staff compensation and professional development. Further, relative to the other grantee types, a lower percentage of family child care systems allocated UPK funds to accreditation and full-day/full-year services. Lastly, a lower percentage of public school programs allocated funds to curricula and educational materials.
- Perceptions about impacts on quality improvement—relative to the other grantee types, a lower percentage of public school programs perceived quality improvement in professional development and comprehensive services resulting from UPK funds. Further, relative to center-based and public school programs, a lower percentage of family child care systems perceived quality improvements in curricula/educational materials and accreditation support resulting from UPK funds.

There were also differences in the degree of communication between the grant administrators and those working within the programs/systems, and, ultimately, the level of awareness of the source and goals of the grant funding. Family child care providers tended to have less information about the

UPK pilot program than classroom teachers in center-based and public school programs. To realize the maximum benefit, programs might gain from further guidance about how to allocate funds in a way that targets the different populations served by the different agencies and systems.

### **Outreach to Parents**

Parental decision-making about child care and early education is a mix of pragmatic factors (cost, convenience, hours) and personal preferences (home-like, provider who speaks the same language as the family). While nearly all parents are very concerned about the quality of care for their children, their definition of quality does not necessarily match closely with aspects of the early childhood field's definition. If we want parents to press for more quality, as part of a unified push toward environments that maximize children's development and school readiness, we will have to develop better strategies for bringing them into the process. This is likely to be a long-range and important goal for the UPK program down the road.

### **Next Steps for UPK Initiative and for Evaluation**

According to grantees, the Massachusetts UPK Pilot Program was well received, funds were targeted to appropriate areas of need, and the implementation of the program was well executed. The vast majority of grantees reported quality improvements in all allowable expenditure categories, and in most cases, the grantees reported "substantial improvement in quality." UPK funds were described by respondents as helpful, but in many cases they were reported to be insufficient to address pressing quality improvement needs.

### **Recommendations for Programmatic Next Steps**

As the UPK program moves out of the pilot phase, decisions will have to be made about (a) prioritizing continuing grants to current grantees versus adding new grantees, (b) targeting use of funds differently over time to grantees with continuing funds, (c) expanding funding to try to address the needs for deeper professional development, curriculum implementation, and provision of comprehensive services, (d) developing different strategies for programs not yet ready to participate in the UPK program, and (e) systematically informing and engaging parents. Recommendations for programmatic next steps are highlighted below.

#### *Provide more quality-related technical assistance and training to all programs*

- Continue funding for high-quality program to ensure support for the level of program quality that research shows is necessary for positive child outcomes.
- Continue to implement and align supports so that lower-quality programs become UPK-eligible.

#### *Refine guidelines for allowable areas of spending*

- Give grantees more flexibility in initial years of funding.
- Require more targeted spending plan in subsequent years.

*Develop a plan specifically for family child care*

- First step—work with agencies to involve and educate providers about the UPK program and investment in quality care and education.
- Next steps—devise a quality rating system and provide training and technical assistance based on ratings.

*Develop a plan for involving parents and the public*

- Provide program materials and information.

**Recommendations for Evaluation Next Steps**

As experienced by UPK programs across the country, the question of impacts on children is asked earlier or later, by legislators, policy-makers and, potentially, the early childhood providers. If understanding the link between the UPK program and children’s school readiness is a goal, it will require a commitment to designing and implementing an assessment process that will provide meaningful information about impacts. Recommendations for evaluation next steps are highlighted below.

*Begin collecting data on the effects of UPK funding on program quality to better understand longer-term outcomes for early care and education systems*

- Document the level of quality of care in all programs and separately in UPK and UPK-eligible settings.
- Examine accessibility of quality care for all children, especially those at risk.

*Design and conduct an evaluation of child outcomes*

- Longitudinal data collection to provide a picture of long-term growth in children’s skills, involving tracking children’s skills at the beginning (baseline) and end of pre-k, kindergarten and first grade.
- Track outcomes across developmental domains—language and concept development, early literacy, math, social adaptation and self-regulation.
- Compare the status of children in Massachusetts (general population and at-risk populations) and changes over time relative to national norms.
- Compare the status of children in UPK and UPK-eligible programs with children in other programs.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Background

High-quality early childhood care and education is now generally recognized as conferring long-term benefits to individuals and to society as a whole (Duncan, Ludwig & Magnuson, 2007). Of particular importance, early childhood education appears to help reduce the well-documented gap in school readiness between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more advantaged peers. Disadvantaged children enter kindergarten with cognitive and language skills far below national norms with higher rates of behavior problems (Lee & Burkham, 2002; Sadowski, 2006). Investment in education during the early childhood years is known to improve children's life chances and results in benefits to society that easily outweigh the costs (Galinsky, 2006; Greenwood, 1999; Grunwald & Rolnick, 2006). Preparing disadvantaged children for school is a key goal of many publicly funded early care and education programs (e.g., Head Start). Promoting school readiness for at-risk populations by making preschool programs affordable and accessible is a common goal fostered by many and should be viewed not only as an educational intervention but also as an economic development investment.

Findings from well-known studies on the effects of high-quality preschool exposure on at-risk children (e.g., Perry Preschool Project, Abecedarian Project, Chicago Child-Parent Center) suggest that the return on the initial investment is dramatic with regard to crime rate and delinquency, incidence of teenage pregnancy, and welfare dependency (Campbell & Ramey, 2007; Masse & Barnett, 2002). Children in high-quality preschool programs have demonstrated significantly higher rates of pro-social behavior, academic achievement, employment, income, and family stability as compared with control groups.

Researchers have long argued that universally available, high-quality preschool programs should be made available for all children to increase their chances for future success. Economists, too, espouse the long-term social and economic benefits of investing in state and federal programs to make quality preschool programs available to disadvantaged youth (Cunha & Heckman, 2006). Although investments in preschool have stagnated at the federal level in recent years, states have initiated and dramatically increased public funding for state-run preschool programs during the same time period. In 2006, 38 states reported spending state funding on pre-kindergarten programs, with the top 10 states serving between 34 and 68 percent of four-year-olds in their states (Barnett et al., 2007). Some of these state systems provide pre-kindergarten resources to multiple types of care settings, including school-based programs, child care centers, Head Start programs, and home-based family child care. The assumption behind state spending on pre-kindergarten is that a properly-designed and adequately-funded pre-kindergarten program will have the potential to produce significant learning gains that will translate into long-term academic and life success.

## Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) were created in 2005 to oversee the broad system of early childhood care and education settings in the state. EEC is responsible for a comprehensive set of services, including (a) licensing early education and care programs, (b) financial assistance to low-income families for child care services, (c) information and referral

services, (d) inclusive programming for children with special needs, (d) parenting support, and (e) professional development opportunities for staff in the early education and care field. Licensing, professional development, and other technical assistance offered by EEC is provided to all types of early childhood care settings, including child care centers, family child care homes, public preschool programs, private preschool programs and Head Start programs. Many of these programs also are supported by financial assistance to families. All told, EEC supports thousands of early education and care providers serving more than 140,000 preschool aged children.

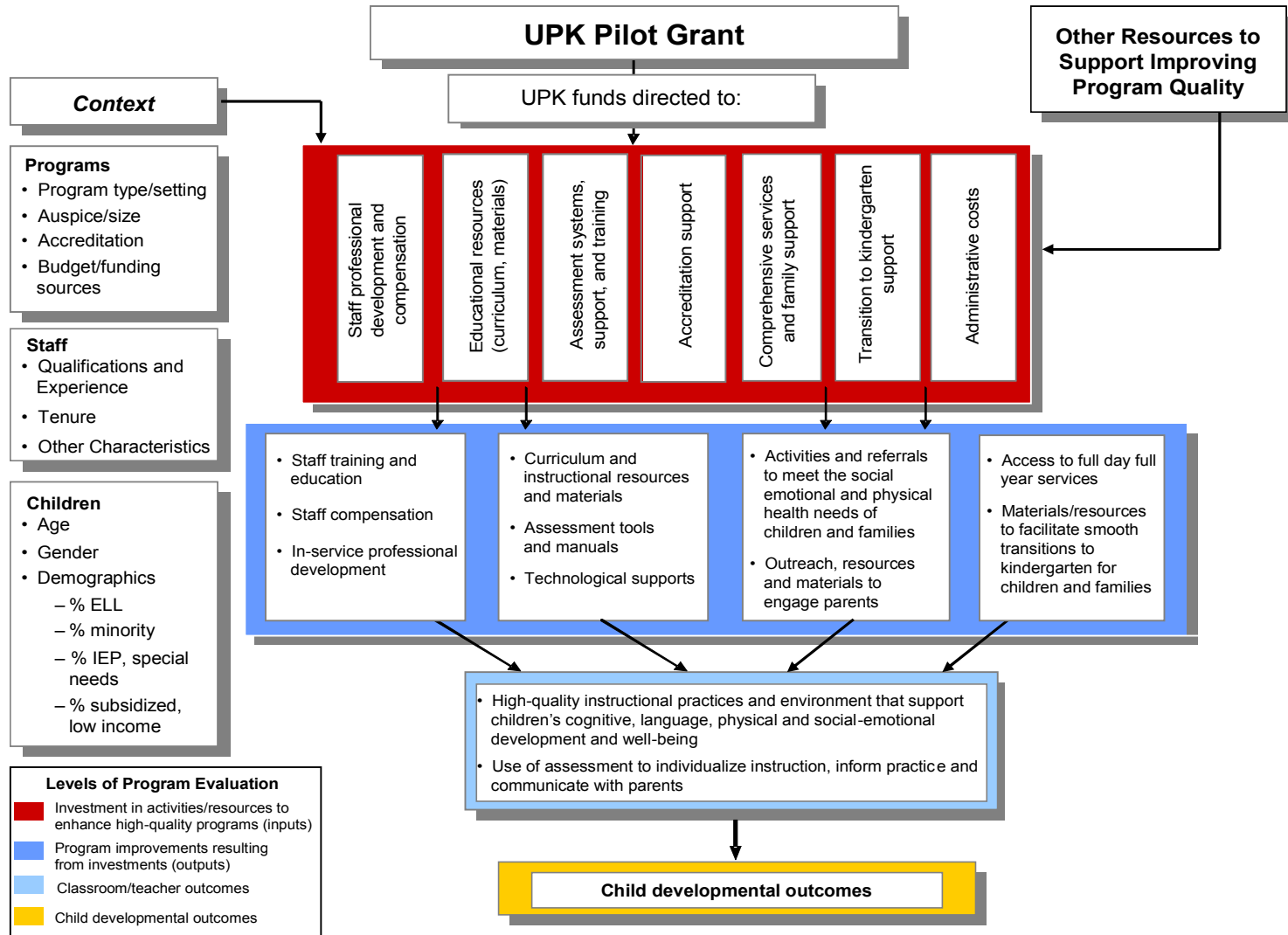
In 2006, the EEC implemented a pilot initiative as its first step toward a full Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Program in the Commonwealth. The goal of the UPK Program is to provide universally accessible, high-quality early education and care for children in the Commonwealth so as to promote school readiness and positive outcomes for children, especially those at risk of school failure or poor developmental outcomes. UPK is being enacted through a mixed service delivery system, including public and private school programs, Head Start programs, and licensed child care providers (both center-based and family child care). The decision to include all forms of care in the UPK system was based on the desire to improve the quality of child care for all children, across the array of care settings selected and preferred by parents, and with the recognition that most preschool children already are in an out-of-home setting, but not necessarily a high-quality one. The program focuses on children in the age range of 2 years and 9 months until kindergarten eligibility, as defined in the community in which they live. Exhibit 3 depicts the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program, and the causal pathway leading from a comprehensive statewide system of quality care to child outcomes.

In addition to supporting and enhancing the quality of early childhood education and care in the state, the UPK Pilot program also includes the following goals:

- identifying measurable quality program characteristics that lead to school readiness;
- encouraging program use of child assessment tools to effectively measure children's developmental progress and provide information for more targeted learning activities;
- identifying the scope of data collection and technology needs at the program and system levels to inform the development of a state-wide system of child assessment; and
- informing the longer-term implementation of a program of universally accessible, high-quality early childhood education.

EEC's current approach is laying the foundation for a broad-based and multi-pronged plan to meet the simultaneous challenges of access, quality and affordability as part of a comprehensive UPK system. EEC envisions that the eventual UPK system will maintain and build upon the pilot's current approach to defining and supporting program quality, while increasing parent access, affordability, and information.

**Exhibit 3: Logic Model for the Massachusetts UPK Initiative**



## Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Initiative

The state legislature appropriated \$4.6 million in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget for a UPK Pilot initiative to begin implementing a system to support quality early education and care. In Fiscal Year 2008, the legislature appropriated \$7.1 million to UPK and in fiscal year 2009 \$11.6 million will be available.

These monies are being used to fund the UPK Pilot Initiative with the following structure:

1. Each year in the state budget, a UPK quality standard has been put forward, which applies to all types of early childhood care providers in the state. Prominently, all UPK providers must use one of four child assessment systems, follow state preschool guidelines, and be nationally accredited (or in Fiscal Year 2007, a Bachelor's degree teacher could substitute for accreditation).
2. EEC designed two UPK grant programs to support and enhance the quality of preschool education in the Commonwealth—Classroom Quality Grants and Assessment Planning Grants.

### Pilot Grant Programs

In putting together its UPK grant program, EEC made a strategic decision to use the UPK funds to support providers who have already demonstrated a commitment to quality or made substantial progress towards quality. The two grant programs funded in the UPK pilot initiative limit eligibility to settings that meet a set of criteria intended to guarantee a minimum level of quality. Almost all of the eligibility criteria apply to all types settings, including both center-based and home-based. These specify that eligible providers must:

- Be EEC licensed or license-exempt;
- Serve preschool-age children;
- Serve or be willing to serve EEC subsidized children;
- Provide access to full-day, full-year care for working families directly or through a partnership;
- Provide a developmentally appropriate program as evidenced by use of *Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences* and *Early Childhood Program Standards* (except for family child care providers);
- Demonstrate a commitment to using one of the four EEC approved assessment tools:<sup>3</sup>
  - Work Sampling System;
  - High Scope Child Observation Record (COR);
  - Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum;
  - Ages and Stages Questionnaire;
- Have access to a qualified professional to ensure appropriate administration of a developmentally appropriate program.

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<sup>3</sup> Programs currently using one of the four EEC approved assessment tools were eligible to apply for Assessment Planning Grants if the tool has been in use for less than one year and if the tool has not been implemented fully—e.g., not conducting assessments across all developmental domains or not using the electronic version of the instrument. Programs were required to have used the tool for at least one year to be eligible for the Classroom Quality Grants



In addition, in Fiscal Year 2007, providers were required to meet the following additional criteria that differ for group and family child care settings:

- Center-based programs (including child care centers, public school pre-kindergarten programs, Head Start, and private preschools) must:
  - Have a teacher/provider with a bachelor’s degree (BA/BS) in any subject, along with specialized training in early childhood education for each EEC qualifying classroom/family child care home, and/or;
  - Be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).<sup>4</sup>
- Family child care providers (system affiliated or independent) were required to have one of the following credentials:
  - An active Child Development Associate (CDA) credential; or
  - A bachelor’s degree (BA/BS) in any subject, with specialized training in early education; or
  - Accreditation from the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).<sup>5</sup>

The two grant programs provide funding for different program activities that are intended to increase the quality of the educational setting.

**Classroom Quality** grants are to be used for one or more of the following expenditures that are assumed to support program quality:

- a. To increase teacher salaries and benefits;
- b. To enhance program’s ability to interpret and use assessment data to improve program quality;
- c. To purchase hardware, software, or training to fully implement the electronic component of the assessment tool currently in use;
- d. To enhance developmentally appropriate practice;
- e. To provide staff professional development opportunities;
- f. To incorporate comprehensive services into the program needed to meet children’s social-emotional or physical health needs; and
- g. To provide or facilitate access to full-day/full-year services for working families.

Grant amounts are based on a combination of total UPK classroom enrollment and the number of subsidized pre-school aged children served. In Fiscal Year 2007, selected programs also received a portion of the first-year funds for one-time “start-up” expenses associated with the implementation of UPK at the program or classroom level, including:

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<sup>4</sup> In Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009, center-based programs are required to be nationally accredited.

<sup>5</sup> In Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009, family child care providers are required to be nationally accredited or have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or higher.

- a. Upgrading technology systems to enable electronic collection and submission of assessment data including the purchasing of hardware associated with one of the four EEC approved assessment tools;
- b. Providing one-time training for staff or program administrators in administering child assessments associated with one of the four EEC approved assessment tools; and
- c. Improving classroom materials or purchase program supplies/equipment needed to support the delivery of UPK quality level services.

**Assessment Planning** grants are intended to help providers meet and maintain the UPK quality criteria so that they may qualify to participate in the UPK Program in future years. The Assessment Planning Grants are being used at the agency level to support program implementation and/or use of one of the four EEC approved child assessment systems/tools, so as to effectively measure children's progress across all developmental domains and improve program quality.

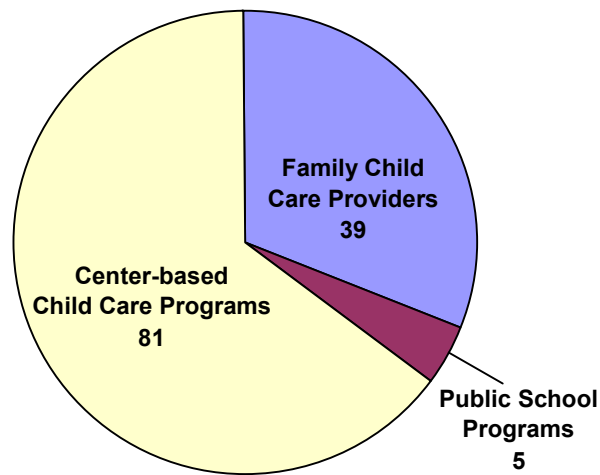
Two rounds of grant funding have gone out under the Pilot Initiative. In the first round of grants, 131 programs were selected, including agencies representing child care centers (public and private, including Head Start centers), public school districts, agencies representing family child care homes, and independent family child care providers. Classroom Quality grants were funded on a six-month basis from January – June 2007. A second round of grants were disseminated in FY 2008 and included continuation of funding to the first round of grantees (assuming the grantee still met the eligibility requirements) as well as funding for additional grantees. In the second round of funding, new grants were awarded to 105 sites.

The grantees for the current evaluation include those who received Classroom Quality grants in the first year of awards and were still eligible in the second year: a total of 125 program sites including 81 child care centers (43 Head Start sites and 38 non-Head Start center-based sites), 5 public school programs, and 39 family child care homes. This distribution is shown in Exhibit 4.

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**Exhibit 4: FY07 UPK Grantees by Provider Type**

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## Evaluation of the Universal Pre-K Pilot Program

EEC has undertaken an independent evaluation of the implementation and early outcomes of the first two years of Classroom Quality grants. The evaluation is intended to provide information to help EEC understand how the grants are being used to support the quality of classrooms/homes and programs, whether the funds are perceived to be helping improve program quality, and if grantees identify remaining program needs.

## Presentation of Findings

The findings from the evaluation are presented in the subsequent three chapters, as follows:

- Chapter 2: Overview of study design and composition of study sample;
- Chapter 3: Findings;
- Chapter 4: Policy implications and next steps.

## Chapter 2: Study Design

This chapter describes the methodology for the evaluation of the Massachusetts UPK pilot initiative and the sample of grantee administrators, UPK classroom teachers and family child care providers who were interviewed.

### Research Questions

The study focused on three primary questions about the grants:

- How did program/system administrator choose to allocate their grant funding to improve the quality of the program?
- What were the perceptions of administrators, teachers and family child care providers about improvements in quality since the grant funding was received; and, if there were improvements, how were they potentially linked to the grant funding?
- What are the areas where program needs remain?

For each question, the study also examined differential responses across the three major program settings.

### Methodology

The data for the evaluation consisted of interviews with respondents at both the agency level (grantees) and teachers and family child care providers who received funds for quality improvements from their sponsoring agencies. As described in Chapter 1, most of the pilot grants were distributed to programs that either administered education and care directly or, in the case of family child care systems, provided support to family child care providers. The evaluation methodology included:

1. Interviews were conducted with 97% of the 68 agencies at the agency/system level. For each center-based program, school district and family child care agency that received a UPK grant, an administrator was identified who had primary involvement in administering the UPK funds. In the case of the two independent family child care providers who received grants, that provider was the respondent in the interview.
2. Interviews were conducted with *random samples of providers—teachers and family child care providers*—who directly experienced the effects of the UPK grant funds.
  - a. The sample of teachers for the interviews was selected in a two-stage process. First, 20 centers and one public school were randomly selected from a total of 86 centers and public school programs. Then, the lead teacher in one UPK-designated classroom in each of those centers was interviewed.
  - b. Seventeen family child care providers were randomly selected from a total of 37 providers who received funding from the UPK grant to their agencies. (The two family child care providers who were awarded grants directly also were interviewed.)

#### Interviews with Administrators

Interviews were conducted with 66 of the 68 administrators of agencies that oversee 125 sites that received Classroom Quality grants. The interviews were conducted with one or more staff from each

agency that was identified as being the most knowledgeable about budget and programmatic decisions. In most center-based care settings, this person was the executive or program director at the agency level; for public schools, this person was generally the early childhood coordinator; for family child care homes that are part of systems, this was a member of the system staff; and, for independent family child care homes, the respondent was the provider herself.

Starting with the list of administrators who received grants, interviewers made initial contact with the program to determine the correct person to be interviewed, and then scheduled a time for the interview that was convenient for the respondent. To help ensure cooperation, EEC sent out a letter to all the administrators who received grants, explaining the evaluation and the importance of the interviews, and urged the grantees to participate. The response rate was high (97%).

The interview with administrators asked about areas to which each program/system allocated UPK grant funds. The interview also asked descriptive information on each area of expenditure and how the use of the grant might lead to improved program quality. The interviews took approximately 45 minutes to administer and were conducted by experienced interviewers who were hired and trained for the evaluation.

### **Interviews with Classroom Teachers and Family Child Care Providers**

Teachers and family child care providers also were interviewed. A response rate of 87% was obtained for these interviews.

These interviews provided additional information about the possible effects of the quality grants on practices with children. The interviews with lead teachers focused on educational practices in classrooms and how the practices may have changed since the setting received its quality grant. This information validates and adds to the picture of quality improvement obtained from the program director. The types of quality practices that were explored include:

- The use of child screening assessments for referrals and planning;
- Availability of training and use of technology to support these assessments;
- Use of curricula or systematic program activities and description of these;
- Use of curriculum-linked assessments to determine the level of children's acquisition of the skills being taught;
- Participation in training/professional development; and
- Adequacy of materials and resources in the classroom.

### **Time Frame**

The study methodology, including the survey instruments, was reviewed and approved by EEC prior to the study being fielded. All respondents were told that their answers to the survey would not be linked to their names in any report or document provided to the EEC and would be kept confidential to the extent allowable by law. The interviews were conducted between April and June of 2008.

## Chapter 3: Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the evaluation of the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program. This chapter is organized into three sections: Section I describes characteristics of the grantees, including their backgrounds, programs, classrooms and homes; Section II describes how funds were distributed across the allowable expenditure categories; and Section III discusses grantee perceptions of the UPK program and remaining program needs.

### I. Characteristics of the Early Childhood Programs and Staff Who Received UPK Grant Funds

#### A. Grant Administrators

The administrative agencies receiving UPK grants varied widely in size, with large differences across the types of grantees. The 52 agencies who were awarded monies for center-based programs oversaw a total of 81 programs (i.e., centers), with an average of 1.5 centers per agency. Each of these agencies had, on average, eight classrooms for preschool-aged children across the UPK sites and on average, three were UPK-designated. The five public school district grantees had an average of only three prekindergarten classrooms and two were UPK-designated, on average. The nine family child care systems had an average of 55 providers in their networks with an average of four receiving UPK funds. The two sole proprietor family child care providers had one home each.

The schedule of operation of the centers and homes also varied according to type of setting (Exhibit 5). While the public school programs operated on a school-year basis, all of the family child care homes and most child care centers were open full-day and year-round. The majority of family child care homes also provide full-day care, as do about half of the child care centers. School district classrooms typically are half-day programs (full school-day), and Head Start programs provide either half-day or extended day care.

Even before receiving their UPK grants, many of the centers and family child care homes were accredited (Exhibit 5). This was true for all of the public school classrooms and 83% of the other center-based programs, but only 60% of the family child care homes. For center-based programs, all accredited programs were NAEYC-accredited. Family child care homes were accredited by the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).

**Exhibit 5. Characteristics of Classrooms/Homes by Type of Grantee**

	<b>Overall (All grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Adult/ child ratio in UPK-funded classrooms/homes	1:7	1:8	1:5	1:7
Percent of UPK classrooms/ providers with accreditation <sup>a</sup>	82%	83%	60%	100%
Percent operating year-round programs	80%	81%	100%	40%
Percent operating full-day programs	48%	47%	75%	20%

<sup>a</sup>Eligibility criteria changed for new grantees in FY08—programs are now required to be accredited (or CDA for providers)

The early childhood programs receiving UPK funds have a variety of resource staff available to children and their families (Exhibit 6). Most of the family child care systems made a social worker available to the homes in their systems, and about half of the systems also had other specialists available to the homes. Less than half of the school district grantees and center-based grantees reported access to a social worker. The center-based grantees were least likely to have resource staff available in general, and this low average is despite the fact that the Head Start programs in this sample have resource personnel as part of their staff.

**Exhibit 6. Percent of Programs with On-Site Resource Staff Available by Grantee Type**

<b>Type of staff</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Social workers	47%	43%	83%	40%
Family outreach workers	32%	26%	50%	60%
Speech therapists	34%	32%	50%	40%
Parent staff (parent education, parent involvement)	33%	38%	0%	20%
Nurses	21%	21%	0%	40%
Psychologists	17%	13%	33%	40%

The majority of the grantees report having other funding sources for supporting quality improvements in their program in addition to their UPK grant. The most common source of funding is support for professional development offered by Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) or by child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) (Exhibit 7). A few of the center-based programs have other sources of funds, such as a federal Early Reading First grant.

**Exhibit 7. Sources of Funding for Quality Improvements: Proportion of Grantees by Type**

Sources of funding for quality improvements	Overall (All Grantees)	Center-based Grantees	Family Child Care Grantees	Public School Grantees
Financial support for quality improvements <b>other than UPK</b>	76%	74%	71%	100%
<b>Among grantees with other quality improvement funding, proportion with each source<sup>a</sup></b>				
CPC funding for professional development	60%	66%	20%	60%
CCR&R funding for professional development	42%	46%	20%	40%
Scholarship for early childhood educators	38%	43%	20%	N/A
Funding from “Building careers”	27%	31%	0%	N/A
Private funding	14%	15%	0%	20%
CDA scholarship	11%	9%	20%	N/A
Grant for mental health consultation	11%	11%	0%	20%
Quality improvement monies from license plate funds	11%	11%	20%	0%
“262” funds	7%	0%	0%	60%
Grant from U.S. Dept. of Education for Early Reading First	7%	9%	0%	0%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages sum to more than 100% because grantees could have more than one source of funding.

The grantees through their full programming serve children from birth through school-age, although the age ranges served varies by the type of grantee. The youngest children served in school districts were three years old, while the centers and family child care homes served the entire age range. On average, family child care homes served over four times the number of infants than did centers

Nearly all of the grantees served some subsidized children, but the proportion varied by type of grantee (Exhibit 8). The school district programs served the fewest (EEC) subsidized children, and 40 percent of the public school programs served no (EEC) subsidized children. The family child care homes served the highest proportion of subsidized children and in almost half of the family child care agencies, all of the children were subsidized. A third of the centers also served all subsidized children.

Across all of the grantees, nearly half of the children served were non-Hispanic white and one quarter was Hispanic (Exhibit 8). The proportion of minority children was highest for family child care homes, where over a third of the children were Hispanic. This is a relatively high percentage, considering that the U.S. Census Bureau reported in 2006 that 7.9% of the Massachusetts population is Hispanic. A smaller proportion of children served by the center-based and family child care home grantees were diagnosed with special needs or had IEPs (8%), compared with an average of 20% of the children in the school district programs.



**Exhibit 8. Characteristics of Children Enrolled in UPK Programs**

	<b>Overall (All grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
<b><i>Subsidized children</i></b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Children receiving subsidies	64%	66%	81%	21%
--No subsidized children	8%	6%	0%	40%
--100% subsidized children	33%	34%	44%	0%
<b><i>Race/Ethnicity of children<sup>a</sup></i></b>				
White, non-Hispanic	48%	47%	47%	61%
Black, non-Hispanic	15%	17%	9%	11%
Hispanic	24%	22%	38%	19%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	5%	5%	3%	8%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	1%
Multi-racial	3%	4%	0%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b><i>Other child characteristics</i></b>				
Children with IEPs	9%	8%	8%	21%
Children from homes in which English is not the primary language	29%	26%	47%	24%
English language learners	17%	16%	25%	15%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding/unavailable information.

**B. Classroom Teachers and Children**

Information about teaching experience and educational background is drawn from interviews with a smaller subsample of 17 teachers. The teachers in the UPK classrooms were, in general, experienced educators who had been in their current positions for nine years and in the field of early childhood for an average of 14 years. Approximately 75% had a college degree, with nearly half of those with some graduate-level coursework as well. Even the teachers without college degrees tended to have some college credits.

In general, teachers in UPK-designated classrooms did not notice major shifts in student populations during the two years of grant funding. The majority of teachers (approximately 65%) reported no change in the average number of children enrolled in the classroom since receiving UPK funds, no change in the percentage of children in their classes referred for special education evaluation, no large shifts in the percentage of children with IEPs, and no significant change in the percentage of children who had limited English proficiency.

### **C. Family Child Care Providers and Children**

Information about teaching experience and educational background is drawn from interviews with a smaller subsample of 12 child care providers. The providers in the UPK-designated family child care homes also were experienced caregivers, with an average of 18 years caring for children in their homes. Twenty-five percent had a college degree, and another 8% had an associate's degree. Sixty-seven percent had a CDA.

The family child care homes had, on average, seven children enrolled across all ages. Almost half of the children in the family child care homes were Hispanic background, and most of the rest were non-Hispanic white. Almost a quarter of the children in the homes are considered to be English language learners with limited English proficiency. Almost seventy percent of the providers reported being able to speak the home language of at least some of the ELL children in their homes. Approximately 15% of children in family child care homes already had IEPs or were diagnosed with special needs

## **II. Distribution and Use of UPK Funds**

Grantees were asked about how they dispersed their UPK grant funds across classrooms and family child care homes and how they spent their UPK grant funds by category of expenditure. Both aspects of fund use varied by grantee type. To summarize:

- Dispersion of funds: Most of the center-based grantees and family child care agencies targeted their UPK funds primarily or exclusively to the UPK-designated classrooms or homes (Exhibit 9); grantees were encouraged by EEC to target funds to UPK classrooms or homes even if other classrooms benefited from the grant activities.
- Expenditure areas: In the first year of the grants, virtually all of the grantees used at least some of their UPK grant funds on educational or instructional materials, primarily in the area of curricula (Exhibit 10). The proportion dropped somewhat in the second year of the grants. Most of the center-based and school district programs spent some of their UPK funds on their staff, especially staff compensation. Only about half of the family child care agencies gave funds directly to providers in the first year of the grant; this rose to nearly 90% in the second year. Overall, the grantees were less likely to use their UPK funds for program operations (e.g., comprehensive services, full-day/full-year services, administrative costs) than for other expenditures. However by the second year, the majority of grantees of all types were allocating some of their funds to program operations.

**Exhibit 9. UPK Grant Funds Allocation Decisions among Classrooms/Homes by Program Type<sup>a</sup>**

Allocation of UPK Grant Funds	Overall (All Grantees)		Center-based Grantees		Family Child Care System Grantees		Public School Grantees	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
Allocated funds <b>only</b> to UPK-designated classrooms OR only to preschool children in home	50%	44%	57%	49%	25%	25%	25%	25%
Targeted funds <b>primarily</b> to UPK-designated classrooms OR only to preschool children in home	33%	36%	29%	30%	62%	62%	25%	50%
Allocated funds <b>equally</b> to all pre-K classrooms OR only to preschool children in home	17%	20%	14%	21%	13%	13%	50%	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup> Excluding 2 center grantees, 2 FCC, and 1 public school with only one UPK classroom

**Exhibit 10. Types of Expenditures for UPK Grants by Program Type<sup>a</sup>**

Expenditure Category	Overall (All Grantees)		Center-based Grantees		Family Child Care System Grantees		Public School Grantees	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>Any expenditures for education/instruction</b>	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%
Assessment	88%	92%	89%	96%	88%	75%	75%	75%
Curricula/educational materials	98%	95%	100%	96%	100%	100%	75%	75%
Support for obtaining accreditation	22%	62%	22%	67%	25%	25%	25%	75%
<b>Any expenditures on staff</b>	91%	97%	100%	98%	50%	88%	75%	100%
Staff compensation	81%	87%	89%	90%	38%	75%	75%	75%
Professional development	79%	89%	91%	92%	38%	75%	25%	75%
<b>Any expenditures for program operations</b>	71%	90%	70%	94%	63%	75%	100%	75%
Comprehensive services	52%	59%	54%	61%	38%	38%	50%	75%
Full-day/full-year services	19%	23%	17%	25%	13%	13%	50%	25%
Administrative costs	31%	82%	30%	86%	38%	75%	25%	50%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages sum to more than 100% because grantees have expenditures in multiple categories.

The percentages of UPK grant funds spent on the different quality improvement areas are shown in Exhibit 11. Overall, funds allocated to education and instruction (assessments, curricula/educational materials and accreditation support) decreased from 2007 to 2008 (46% to 28%, respectively). Conversely, expenditures on staff (staff compensation and professional development) increased from 2007 to 2008 (48% to 34%, respectively). Finally, although there was an overall increase in spending on program operations (comprehensive services, full-day/full-year services, administrative costs), this increase (12% to 17%) is largely representative of the center-based grantees. Public school grantees remained relatively consistent on their spending for program operations while family child care grantees decreased their spending in this area.

**Exhibit 11. UPK Grant Funds Allocated to Quality Improvement Areas by Type of Grantee<sup>a</sup>**

Expenditure Category	Overall (All Grantees)		Center-based Grantees		Family Child Care System Grantees		Public School Grantees	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
<b>Expenditures for education/instruction</b>	46%	28%	46%	26%	45%	40%	47%	27%
Assessment	16%	10%	15%	10%	13%	7%	34%	17%
Curricula/educational materials	29%	14%	30%	13%	29%	27%	13%	6%
Support for obtaining accreditation	1%	4%	1%	4%	3%	5%	1%	5%
<b>Expenditures on staff</b>	34%	48%	38%	49%	17%	40%	22%	48%
Staff compensation	24%	31%	27%	32%	11%	20%	20%	44%
Professional development	9%	16%	11%	17%	6%	20%	2%	4%
<b>Expenditures for program operations</b>	12%	17%	10%	18%	19%	10%	25%	23%
Comprehensive services	6%	9%	6%	10%	11%	4%	3%	13%
Full-day/full-year services	3%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	20%	6%
Administrative costs	3%	6%	2%	6%	8%	6%	2%	4%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages do not add to 100% across education, staff and program operations because respondents did not always have access to all necessary records.

In addition to the differences observed between center-based, family child care and public school grantees, there were also some noteworthy differences between Head Start center-based grantees and those from non-Head Start center-based programs. In all types of center-based programs (child care centers/public school programs and Head Start programs), the majority of teachers had a four-year college degree or higher. A smaller proportion of Head Start teachers had graduate degrees, relative to child care center/public school teachers. Another difference between Head Start centers and other center-based programs was that Head Start programs in this sample served fewer black, non-Hispanic children and more Hispanic children, compared with the other child care centers. Head Start centers also enrolled almost three times as many children with IEPs, compared with the other child care centers.

With regard to grant expenditures in 2008, Head Start centers and child care centers used their funds differently. Both types of programs expended the largest percentage of funds on staff, but Head Start used most of its funds for staff compensation and child care centers expended more on professional development. Head Start programs spent only a small part of their grant funds on curricula and educational resources, while centers spent a third of their funds in this area. Finally, Head Start programs

spent more of their funds on program operations (defined as comprehensive services, full-day/full-year services, and administrative costs) compared with the child care center programs.

In addition to the information presented above, overall, 97% of respondents reported using their UPK grant funds generally as expected. Usually because of minor changes, 33% reported amending their budgets. Almost eighty percent of respondents indicated it was clear to them what were acceptable grant expenditures and what were not. Eighty three percent reported using all of their funds in 2007, and 94% used all of their funds in 2008.

In the sections below, we present detail on how grant funds in each of the major areas were spent.

### **A. Assessments**

One of the important issues for early childhood education programs is their use of child assessments, first, to help providers understand children's developmental status and any potential developmental delays that signal the need for referral for evaluation and, second, to provide information to help providers individualize the developmental and learning activities in the setting. Use of an assessment system was one of the required elements for eligibility for receipt of a UPK grant. Therefore, all providers were using some type of assessment and, in fact, the majority of grantees had been using assessments for a number of years before the UPK program began. Seventy-five percent of respondents first implemented their current assessments between 1991 and 2005. Because a number of grantees changed the assessment tool they were using with the UPK funds, some indicated they began using their current assessment after receipt of funds in 2007.

We gathered information about assessments from all of the agencies and from our sample of teachers and family child care providers with whom we spoke with directly. We report on the responses of each group separately.

#### *Agencies*

Agencies report using assessment systems that were different from one another by program type (Exhibit 12). Center-based grantees, most commonly-cited the Creative Curriculum Developmental Assessment Toolkit, a product offered by the developers of Creative Curriculum that can be used as a stand-alone assessment system or can be linked with curriculum activities. For family child care homes, the most frequently used measure is Ages and Stages Questionnaires. Most public school programs used Work Sampling.

Nearly all of the grantees (95%) reported that they communicate assessment results to parents, and all grantees indicated that the method used to communicate with parents was in-person scheduled parent conferences as opposed to other methods of communication such as telephone calls or in writing.

**Exhibit 12. Developmental Assessment Systems Used by Type of Grantee<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Assessment System</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Work Sampling	22%	20%	9%	75%
High Scope	11%	14%	0%	0%
Creative Curriculum <sup>b</sup>	57%	64%	36%	25%
Ages & Stages <sup>c</sup>	12%	4%	55%	0%
Other <sup>d</sup>	14%	16%	0%	25%

<sup>a</sup> Totals do not add to 100% because some grantees used more than one type of assessment

<sup>b</sup> The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment Toolkit for Ages 3-5

<sup>c</sup> Ages and stages questionnaires (ASQ).

<sup>d</sup> An assessment system developed independently by grantee or in combination with a commercially available assessment system

### ***Teachers***

In keeping with findings at the agency level, all of the teachers interviewed reported that they were using a child assessment system; however the percentages using each of the systems were somewhat different, due to sampling. Among the teacher sample, forty-seven percent reported using Creative Curriculum, 35% using the Meisels Work Sampling System, and 18% using High Scope. In keeping with our findings at the agency level, all of the teachers reported that they received training on administering and interpreting assessments and that they use assessment results to inform instruction. In addition, all of the teachers reported that they informed parents of the assessment results.

### ***Providers***

Again, we gathered information about assessments from providers as well as from their sponsoring family child care systems. The providers reported using assessments however they reported using them in different percentages than agencies; the two most commonly used were Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment Toolkit (56%) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (44%). Nearly all of the providers said that they communicated the results of the assessments to all parents.

## **B. Curricula/Educational Materials**

### ***Agencies***

Overall, 60% of grantees used some of their UPK funds to purchase a curriculum or associated educational materials (Exhibit 13). This was particularly true for the centers, where 67% purchased curricula; in comparison, 45% of family child care agencies and only 25% of public school programs bought curricula. Nearly all grantees reported using UPK funds to buy some materials, especially books.

**Exhibit 13. Proportion by Program Type that Purchased Educational Materials<sup>a</sup>**

Material type	Overall (All Grantees )	Center-based Grantees	Family Child Care Grantees	Public School Grantees
Curriculum	60%	67%	45%	25%
Educational materials				
• Books	95%	96%	100%	80%
• Puzzles	80%	88%	50%	60%
• Math materials	94%	96%	90%	80%
• Nature/science materials	91%	96%	70%	80%
• Letter/alphabet materials	77%	78%	80%	60%

<sup>a</sup> Sample in exhibit only includes grantees who reported spending UPK grant funds on assessments.

**Teachers**

All teachers reported using a curriculum and the large majority (82%) reported that there were changes to the curriculum itself or training for it since receiving UPK funds. All teachers also reported receiving support for the curriculum from educational staff in their programs and 94% reported that they receive ongoing curriculum training.

The characteristics of the curricula used by teachers are reported in Exhibit 14.

**Providers**

Sixty-three percent of providers reported a new or updated curriculum was purchased using UPK funds. Of note, 78% of providers reported there was training on their existing curriculum prior to receiving UPK grant funds, and 63% reported that UPK funds were used for curriculum training.

**Exhibit 14. Percentage of Teachers Who Reported Different Curriculum Characteristics**

Curriculum suggests goals for children's learning & development	100%
Curriculum suggests ways to involve parents in children's learning activities	94%
Curriculum suggests teaching materials	94%
Curriculum suggests specific activities for children	88%
Curriculum suggests teaching strategies	88%
Curriculum suggests methods of child assessment	88%
Curriculum is formal/written	79%

Providers reported on the kinds of educational materials purchased with UPK funds:

- Books = 80%
- Puzzles = 70%
- Math materials = 60%

- Nature/science materials = 80%
- Alphabet/letter recognition materials = 60%
- Other materials = 20%

### C. Accreditation Support

Many center-based respondents said that UPK funds were used to assist in the new NAEYC accreditation process and requirements. A number of grantees overseeing center-based programs bought and distributed digital cameras to assist with the new portfolio requirement. Other grantees hired accreditation consultants to help with the new NAEYC process. Yet others hired substitutes to allow classroom teachers time to work on portfolios or prepare for accreditation site visits. UPK funds “took the edge off the budget” and allowed teachers time to work toward the new or updated accreditation processes.

### D. Staff Support

**Compensation.** The majority of the center-based programs used some of their UPK funds to increase salaries or provide bonuses to current staff (Exhibit 15). Center-based programs were most likely to use their funds for this purpose. School district programs were least likely, possibly because their teachers are part of teacher unions. About 40% of grantees hired new staff with their grant, including full and part-time teachers, substitutes, education coordinators, and family advocates.

**Exhibit 15. Proportion of Each Type of Grantee That Used Funds for Staff Support**

UPK funds use	Overall (All Grantees)	Center-based Grantees	Family Child Care System Grantees	Public School Grantees
Hire new staff	43%	44%	40%	40%
Increase salaries/bonuses for current staff	83%	86%	80%	60%

**Professional development.** As shown in Exhibit 10, by the second year of the UPK grants, most grantees used some of their funds for staff professional development. Exhibit 16 shows the topics of that professional development. The most commonly reported topics across all types of grantees were training on using assessment systems. After that, the most common topics addressed by the professional development were training on a specific curriculum, general child development, and specific classroom management issues, including managing children with problems behaviors, and working with children with special needs. The one area where there appears to be a difference by type of grantee is that the family child care systems more frequently mention professional development in the areas of multiculturalism and working with children who are bilingual. This may be the result of the relatively high proportion of Hispanic children in family child care systems.



**Exhibit 16. Topics of Professional Development on which Each Type of Grantee Focused**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care Systems Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Assessment/evaluation	95%	96%	100%	75%
Curriculum training	75%	84%	50%	40%
Child development	66%	64%	90%	25%
Classroom management/ programming	63%	62%	70%	50%
Behavior management	63%	60%	90%	25%
Services for children with special needs	55%	54%	70%	25%
Mental health issues	45%	46%	60%	0%
Child/family health	40%	39%	60%	0%
Multicultural understanding	38%	36%	60%	0%
Family services & case management	31%	30%	50%	0%
CPR	22%	22%	30%	0%
General administration & management	20%	16%	40%	25%
Violence, abuse & neglect	20%	18%	40%	0%
Bilingual education	19%	16%	40%	0%

The professional development supported with the UPK funds was provided in a variety of ways (Exhibit 17). Across all grantees, the majority reported that their professional development was provided both within the program and by a vendor outside of the program, such as through college course. The exception was the school district programs, where only a quarter received professional development from within the program, compared with 70% or more among the other types of grantees.

**Exhibit 17. Sources of Professional Development (PD) Topics for Each Type of Grantee**

	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
<b><i>PD Classes/Training</i></b>	94%	94%	100%	75%
• Inside program	78%	84%	70%	25%
• Outside location	75%	76%	80%	50%
<b><i>Other PD support</i></b>	91%	96%	80%	50%
• Resources	81%	84%	80%	50%
• Supervision and follow-up on PD	80%	84%	80%	25%

Teachers reported attending about 40 hours of in-service training within the previous year, both UPK funded and otherwise. Topics that all or most teachers reported for this professional development include:

- Child assessment/evaluation (100%);
- Child behavior management (100%);
- Providing services for children with special needs (94%);
- Children's health issues (88%);
- Child development (82%);
- Educational programming (76%); and
- Child abuse & neglect (82%).

Issues specific to working with children from different cultural and language backgrounds were mentioned by teachers as well:

- Bilingual education (41%); and
- Multicultural sensitivity (76%).

Another set of professional development topics that were less common involved working with family needs, including:

- Family health (76%);
- Family needs assessment & evaluation (71%);
- Case management services to families (59%);
- Working with other agencies to assist families (53%); and
- Domestic violence/family violence (53%).

## **E. Comprehensive Services**

Overall, approximately 50% of grantees used some of their UPK funds to enhance or expand their comprehensive services. The two most commonly identified types of services that were funded were psychological services (about half the programs, with the exception of public school programs) and family outreach services (Exhibit 18).

**Exhibit 18. Types of Comprehensive Services Added to/Enhanced with UPK Funds**

Type of Service	Overall (All Grantees)	Center-based Grantees	Family Child Care System Grantees	Public School Grantees
Family outreach	49%	54%	29%	33%
Psychological services	44%	46%	43%	0%
Social work	37%	38%	43%	0%
Health services	30%	28%	43%	33%
Nutrition services	18%	18%	14%	33%
Special education services	18%	21%	14%	0%
Speech therapy	16%	18%	14%	0%
Physical therapy	12%	15%	0%	0%
Dental care	8%	10%	0%	0%

**F. Administrative Costs**

A high proportion of grantees used at least some of their UPK grant funds to pay for costs of administering the grant, which was allowable up to eight percent of the grant award (Exhibit 19). For the public school programs, UPK funds were not used for any other administrative costs. For centers and family child care homes, around half of these grantees reported using their funds to pay for costs associated with fringe on salaries, and about a quarter of the grantees used their funds for auditing or other overhead costs.

**Exhibit 19. Uses of UPK Funds for Administrative Costs: Proportion of Grantees by Type**

Administrative cost element	Overall (All Grantees)	Center-based Grantees	Family Child Care System Grantees	Public School Grantees
Salaries associated with grant administration	78%	75%	89%	100%
Fringe costs	49%	48%	67%	0%
Internal audit	27%	27%	33%	0%
Other overhead costs	29%	30%	33%	0%
Rental of space	9%	9%	11%	0%

**III. Perception of UPK Grants****A. Quality Improvements*****Grantees***

Grantees were asked to rate the extent to which their UPK grant had improved the quality of aspects of their program on which grant funds were expended. In general, grantees felt that program quality had benefited from the grants (Exhibit 20).

**Exhibit 20. Perceived Improvement in Quality Because of UPK Grant: Proportion of Grantees By Type**

Used UPK funds for:	Overall (All Grantees)		Center-based Grantees		Family Child Care System Grantees		Public School Grantees	
	Moderate increase in quality	Substantial increase in quality	Moderate increase in quality	Substantial increase in quality	Moderate increase in quality	Substantial increase in quality	Moderate increase in quality	Substantial increase in quality
Assessments	26%	71%	24%	72%	18%	82%	75%	25%
Curriculum/materials	26%	70%	28%	72%	18%	55%	20%	80%
Staff compensation	35%	50%	35%	51%	63%	25%	0%	80%
Professional development	33%	64%	34%	64%	40%	60%	0%	75%
Comprehensive services	36%	56%	31%	63%	57%	29%	33%	33%
Accreditation support	34%	44%	32%	47%	0%	67%	75%	0%
Extension of schedule for care (full-day, year-round)	33%	50%	33%	47%	--	--	33%	67%

- Assessments. The majority of respondents (71%) said quality of using assessments to guide instruction had improved substantially relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds, with about a quarter of respondents describing quality as moderately higher (average = 3.9 on a five-point scale).
- Curricula/educational materials. The majority of respondents (70%) said the quality of their curricula and educational materials had improved substantially relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds, with about a quarter describing quality as moderately higher (average = 3.9 on a five-point scale).
- Staff compensation. Approximately half of the respondents said that teacher/provider satisfaction with salary had improved substantially relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds (average = 3.3 on a five-point scale).
- Professional development. The majority of respondents (64%) said the quality of their professional development had improved substantially relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds, with one third describing quality as moderately higher (average = 3.8 on a five-point scale).
- Comprehensive services. Over half of respondents (56%) said the quality of their comprehensive services had improved substantially relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds, with one third describing quality as moderately higher (average = 3.6 on a five-point scale).
- Accreditation support. For those respondents who used funds for accreditation support, less than half (44%) said that accreditation support had substantially improved relative to what it was before receiving UPK funds (average = 3.2 on a five-point scale).
- Schedule of care. The majority of grantees reported that they already provided full-day services; among the grantees who didn't and who used their funds to extend their services, approximately

half of respondents said the quality (both quality of program and number of hours) of full-day/full-year services had improved substantially since receiving UPK funds (average = 3.3 on a five-point scale).

### ***Teachers***

All of the teachers who were interviewed reported that they were aware of the UPK grant program and the funds awarded to their classroom.

Although eighty two percent of teachers reported that the assessment tool used in their classroom had not changed since receiving UPK funds (they were still using the same assessment tool as before receiving funds), 25% said that their use of assessments to guide instruction had moderately improved in quality, with an additional 53% reporting quality “substantially higher now relative to before receiving UPK funds” (average = 3.4 on a five-point scale).

All teachers said the quality of their curricula and educational materials had improved, with over 80% describing quality as “substantially higher now relative to before receiving UPK funds” (average = 4.3 on a five-point scale).

The majority of teachers (82%) reported the amount or intensity of in-service training available changed since receiving UPK funds. The vast majority of respondents (89%) said the quality of their professional development had improved, with three-quarters describing quality as “substantially higher now relative to before receiving UPK funds” (average = 3.9 on a five-point scale).

### ***Providers***

Twenty two percent of providers said the quality of their curricula and educational materials had moderately improved, with an additional 78% describing quality as “substantially higher now relative to before receiving UPK funds” (average = 4.3 on a five-point scale).

All providers said the quality of using assessments to guide instruction had improved since receiving the UPK grant monies. All providers described quality as “substantially higher now relative to before receiving UPK funds” (average = 4.75 on a five-point scale).

Sixty three percent of providers reported increases in salaries, bonuses or stipends resulting from UPK funds. Approximately one quarter of the respondents said that provider satisfaction with salary had moderately improved as a result of UPK funds, with an additional 50% reporting salary satisfaction had significantly improved (average = 3.3 on a five-point scale).

## **B. Views of UPK Impacts on Program Quality and Future Spending**

As described earlier, most grantees expended their funds in multiple areas. Grantees were asked about the areas of expenditure that they felt had the greatest impact on the quality of their program (grantees could indicate more than one). The four areas mentioned most often by all types of grantees were assessments, curricula and educational materials, staff compensation, and professional development (Exhibit 21).

Grantees felt that their UPK grants had improved the quality of their programs in a number of ways, and programs also reported on ways that they would use additional funding above their current award levels, should it be available. Their responses indicate a clearly perceived need for funding to increase staff compensation and provide additional training (Exhibit 22).

**Exhibit 21. Area of Expenditure With Greatest Impact on Program Quality: Proportion of Grantees by Type**

<b>Expenditure category</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Assessment	41%	40%	36%	60%
Curricula/educational materials	39%	36%	45%	60%
Staff compensation	39%	42%	18%	60%
Professional development	39%	40%	55%	0%
Comprehensive services	21%	27%	0%	0%
Accreditation support	11%	12%	9%	0%
Full-day/full-year services	2%	0%	9%	0%
Administrative costs	0%	0%	0%	0%

**Exhibit 22. Uses of Additional Funds: Proportion of Grantees**

<b>Expenditure category</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Staff compensation	77%	84%	55%	60%
Professional development	71%	72%	73%	60%
Curricula/educational materials	48%	48%	45%	60%
Comprehensive services	48%	48%	55%	40%
Assessment	32%	34%	27%	20%
Accreditation support	29%	32%	18%	20%
Administrative costs	26%	28%	27%	0%
Full-day/full-year services	17%	16%	0%	60%

Conversely, grantees were asked which areas of expenditures they would most likely cut or eliminate if less grant funds were available. Their responses indicate they would most readily cut spending on curricula/educational materials and administrative costs. Because almost all programs and systems allocated funds to the purchase of curricula/educational materials in the first year of the grant program, they may have felt that additional spending in this area was no longer an urgent need. In contrast, staff compensation and assessment were two expenditure areas that a smaller proportion of grantees felt could be cut (Exhibit 23).

**Exhibit 23. Expenditure Categories to Cut or Eliminate: Proportion of Grantees**

<b>Expenditure category</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Curricula/educational materials	43%	43%	33%	67%
Administrative costs	27%	32%	0%	33%
Accreditation support	29%	30%	11%	67%
Professional development	27%	19%	56%	33%
Staff compensation	20%	19%	33%	0%
Assessment	22%	27%	11%	0%
Full-day/full-year services	18%	19%	11%	33%
Comprehensive services	6%	8%	0%	0%

### **C. Remaining Needs**

When asked about the greatest area of remaining need for their programs, the largest proportion of grantees indicated staff compensation and professional development. Differences in response by grantee type emerged in this area; fewer family child care system grantees reported staff compensation was an area of great need. Similarly, grantees from public schools differed from other grantee types with none indicating professional development as a major area of need. Finally, unlike other grantees, those from family child care systems responded that one of their greatest remaining needs is comprehensive services (Exhibit 24).

There were also some differences between Head Start center-based grantees and those from non-Head Start center-based programs when it came to remaining needs. Staff compensation was the most frequently identified area of need by all centers, and was mentioned by 83% of Head Start grantees versus 63% of child care center grantees. Professional development was identified as a need by one-third of Head Start programs versus more than half of child care programs. Only six percent of Head Start grantees reported a remaining need for more funds for curricula or educational materials versus 22% of child care centers. Also, although funds for assessments were not identified as a primary need in either group of grantees, more of the Head Start programs reported they needed additional funds to fully support their assessment systems.

**Exhibit 24. Greatest Areas of Remaining Need: Proportion of Grantees**

<b>Expenditure category</b>	<b>Overall (All Grantees)</b>	<b>Center-based Grantees</b>	<b>Family Child Care System Grantees</b>	<b>Public School Grantees</b>
Staff compensation	66%	70%	50%	60%
Professional development	46%	48%	60%	0%
Comprehensive services	23%	18%	60%	0%
Curricula/educational materials	22%	16%	56%	20%
Assessment	12%	12%	10%	20%
Accreditation support	5%	6%	0%	0%
Administrative costs	5%	2%	10%	20%
Full-day/full-year services	2%	2%	0%	0%

Classroom teachers and family child care providers responded somewhat differently when asked about area of greatest need. Providers identified need in the areas of curriculum and educational materials, which is where they would allocate any additional grant funds (Exhibit 25).

**Exhibit 25. Provider Perception of Remaining Needs: Proportion of Providers**

<b>Category</b>	<b>If additional funds became available, where would they be allocated?</b>	<b>What is the greatest area of remaining need?</b>
Curricula/educational materials	67%	44%
Professional development	56%	33%
Staff compensation	44%	33%
Comprehensive services	44%	33%
Assessment	22%	11%
Accreditation support	22%	11%
Administrative costs	11%	0%



## Chapter 4: Policy Implications & Next Steps

Overall, grantee attitudes about the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program were extremely positive. Respondents voiced appreciation for the influx of funds to support program needs, and in many cases, grantees, teachers and family child care providers stated that the UPK funds led to program improvements that could not have happened without the grant. Further, reports by grantees indicate that the grant monies went to the program areas most likely to lead to meaningful differences for children—high-quality curricula, systematic assessment, and staff support through professional development and compensation. In sum, based on grantee reports, the UPK pilot initiative is a success in terms of effective implementation and achievement of its initial goal—promoting high-quality early childhood education for children in the Commonwealth, a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for preparing them for long-term academic and life success.

The evaluation also highlighted aspects of the UPK program that merit additional consideration, including potential shifts in the targeting of funds, addressing widespread concern about staff compensation, training around child assessment and use of curricula, and developing strategies for raising quality in specific types of early childhood care settings. These topics are discussed briefly below, along with their implications for future direction and decision-making for the UPK Initiative.

### Distribution of Funds

There were lessons to be learned from the different uses of UPK grants in Year 1 versus Year 2. The timing of fund distribution differed dramatically in the first two years of the program, with first-year funds only becoming available to grantees in April due to EEC first needing to design and gain approval to implement the pilot program. This meant that grantees had only two months to use their awards. In the second year, grantees received their funds much earlier in the fiscal year, enabling additional time to plan and allot funds with a more measured approach. As a result, there are noticeable differences in how funds were apportioned between the two funding years. In general, as a consequence of the short timeline for using the first year funds, programs tended to spend a greater percentage of their awards on educational materials and resources that could be purchased quickly and easily, such as books, puzzles, science/nature and mathematics materials and gross motor equipment. Some also used their first-year funds to replace classroom furniture in need of updating. In the second year of funding, with more time to plan for use of the grant funds, the allocation of monies shifted toward expenditures on staff such as salary increases and bonuses as well as increased professional development opportunities.

This pattern suggests that under more ideal circumstances, when programs have time to plan out longer-term quality improvements, grant monies are likely to be invested in building staff capacity as opposed to enhancing the materials in the program. This underlines programs' recognition that (a) staff are a critical, if not the most important feature in determining the quality of a program, (b) investments in staff require some long-range planning, and (c) unlike materials, needs in the area of support for staff cannot be met on a one-time basis but are a continuing part of quality. Another area in which there was an increase in the second year was comprehensive services to children and families, which also is a part of programming that requires long-range planning and investment.

It might be expected that the funding allocations in the second year of the program will be more representative of future and ongoing fund allocations. To further illustrate this point, when asked about greatest areas of remaining need and what programs/systems might do with additional funds if they

become available, grantees consistently responded monies would be directed to teacher salaries, staff professional development and comprehensive services for children and families. This information might help UPK program staff target or increase grant monies for these areas where both dollar investments and time demands are greatest.

## **Staff Compensation**

It is well known that teacher and family child care provider salaries fall to the lower end of the income spectrum. Low salary, in combination with the demanding nature of a teacher/provider's job, often results in high rates of burn-out, turn-over and dissatisfaction. The large majority of grantees allocated funds to staff compensation. Overall, approximately 80% of grantees reported increasing teacher/provider salaries or providing bonuses. Over 40% hired additional staff to ease some of the burden on existing staff and lower child-teacher ratios. Many respondents said the ability to invest in staff compensation had a noticeable effect on morale and job satisfaction of current teachers and providers. Grantees described the effect of increased compensation as an acknowledgement and appreciation of staff commitment and recognition of the increases in responsibilities that result from striving toward higher quality. Further, a direct implication for program quality is the ability for programs/systems to retain more highly educated staff. Many programs gave bonuses to teachers with bachelor's degrees which had a two-fold effect. First, the bonuses were an incentive for teachers to stay in their programs instead of looking for higher paying jobs elsewhere. Second, bonuses to bachelor's-level teachers may have created an incentive for teachers with associate's degrees to obtain higher degrees.

With regard to hiring of new staff, grantees reported being able to offer more competitive salaries to more highly educated/qualified teachers. Respondents also described the effect of adding staff to the classrooms as lowering child-teacher ratios, increasing personalized attention to children, addressing diversity/language/cultural needs, hiring substitute teachers so that teachers could more frequently participate in professional development opportunities, and hiring education coordinators and coaches/mentors to provide assistance for improving teaching skills

In general, staff compensation comprises a large proportion of the budget for early childhood care and education programs. Although grantees reported allocating a substantial portion of their UPK funds to staff compensation, because the grant size was very small relative to the cost of salaries, it could only be expected that this funding could have a marginal effect. In most cases the increases were relatively small raises in hourly wages, modest bonuses, or paying an aide to come earlier or stay longer.

## **Assessments & Curricula**

Respondents were excited about the improvements the UPK grant funds afforded in the areas of assessment and curriculum. Many said on-line versions of previously used paper and pencil assessments were purchased with the UPK funds. They described the upgrades as "better and easier to use". The updated assessments allowed for better individualized instruction, better communication with parents and suggestions for lesson plans. Increased documentation resulting from the upgraded assessments resulted in a deeper understanding and insight by the teachers and the parents. Teachers were able to provide higher quality and more detailed reports for parents that in turn increased teacher credibility in the eyes of parents and ultimately teacher pride and job satisfaction. Program administrators were able to see larger trends in educational needs within centers; the information was less piecemeal and more effective in

higher-level decision-making. It would be instructive in the next phase of the evaluation to move beyond staff report and to document the ways in which the assessments are systematically used and how these changes affect instruction.

With regard to curricula and educational materials, respondents were very outspoken about their appreciation for the enhancements to the classrooms and programs overall. They said that the new materials are helping to support children's learning in the areas of math, science and literacy. Further, many programs bought fine and gross motor equipment, social/emotional materials, and multicultural materials to match their student populations. Programs also bought materials recommended by therapists and are hiring outside consultants to support physical education, art and music education, sign language, computer literacy and even yoga. Many of the materials not only replaced old, outdated, and broken equipment, they also help with accreditation requirements. A number of programs bought computers and digital cameras to assist with their assessments/curricula and student portfolios.

If improving curricula and focusing on child assessments to inform instruction is a means by which to improve the quality of early childhood education, the UPK Pilot Program promises great potential for success. The early childhood education providers in Massachusetts with whom we spoke expressed eagerness and commitment to increasing the quality of the education they provide to children. The UPK Program can be a vehicle to provide the structure and guidance to achieve this common goal. In future years, however, there will need to be more attention to training and professional development for both assessments and curricula. Research tells us that high-fidelity implementation of scientifically-based curricula is most likely if staff are given in-class mentoring and coaching as well as group training. Further, increasing program use of assessments does not guarantee appropriate administration of assessments and use of data for planning instruction. Down the road, more attention to the best use of these resources may be necessary to move quality to the most meaningful levels.

## **Differences between Grantee Groups**

One of the goals of the UPK Program is to distribute grant funds through a mixed service delivery system—to child care centers, Head Start programs, private and public school programs, and family child care providers. Results from the implementation study suggest that there are substantial differences between the grantee groups with regard to the populations served, how grant funds are allocated across the expenditure categories, the resulting perceptions about impacts on quality improvement, the degree of communication between the grant administrators and those working within the programs/systems, and, ultimately, the level of awareness of the source and goals of the grant funding.

The family child care system was the segment of the early childhood education field where there appeared to be the least connection between the UPK grant program and the provider on the ground. The family child care providers were, in general, unaware of the source of additional funds and the intended link between the funds and quality environments for children. This is not to imply that the funds were used inappropriately; these providers used their funds as intended by the UPK guidelines, although possibly more often for materials and resources than for professional development or services to families.

One possible reason for the disconnect is that family child care providers, unlike teachers in child care centers and public school preschool programs, do not benefit from close physical proximity to administrators and other staff; providers often are more isolated from system administrative offices and don't always have the advantage of regular exchange of information. If understanding the intent of the

UPK program is important for its long-range success, then more will have to be done about direct education of family child care providers. Working with the state's family child care providers to improve quality has to be a goal for any universal early education system, since family child care enrolls disproportionate numbers of children from low-income and language-minority homes, exactly the children whose developmental trajectory is a policy priority.

The other issue raised related to the classrooms in the public school systems. In general, the staff in these classrooms are credentialed and more highly-trained and compensated than staff in child care centers and family child care providers. At the same time, these classrooms are asked to educate a high proportion of children with identified special needs and IEPs. The needs of these programs may be quite different from the needs of the other center-based and home-based settings. To realize the maximum benefit, the program might gain from further thought about how to allocate funds in a way that targets the different populations served by the different agencies and systems that are most in need of quality improvement.

## Parents

Although many grantees reported informing parents of the UPK grants, the program's goals were not thoroughly explained or advertised in a way that would maximize awareness of the quality implications for programs receiving UPK funds. Parental decision-making about child care and early education is a mix of pragmatic factors (cost, convenience, hours) and personal preferences (e.g., home-like, provider who speaks the same language as the family). While nearly all parents are very concerned about the quality of care for their children, their definition of quality does not necessarily match closely with aspects of the early childhood field's definition. If we want parents to press for more quality, as part of a unified push toward care environments that maximize children's development and school readiness, we will have to develop better strategies for bringing them into the process. This is likely to be a long-range and important goal for the UPK program down the road.

## Next Steps

According to grantees, the UPK Pilot Program was well received, funds were targeted to appropriate areas of need and the implementation of the program was well executed. The vast majority of grantees reported quality improvements in all allowable expenditure categories, and in most cases, the grantees reported "substantial improvement in quality." UPK funds were described by respondents as helpful, but in many cases they were reported to be insufficient to address pressing quality improvement needs. As the UPK program moves out of the pilot phase, decisions will have to be made about (a) which programs to prioritize given limited resources, (b) targeting use of funds differently over time to grantees with continuing funds, and (c) expanding funding to try to address the needs for deeper professional development, curriculum implementation, and provision of comprehensive services.

The long-term benefits of providing high-quality early childhood care and education to disadvantaged, at-risk populations is well recognized as a benefit to society as a whole (Duncan, Ludwig & Magnuson, 2007). Research findings support the assertion of positive outcomes resulting from high-quality early childhood education with regard to minimizing the school readiness gap and decreasing the longer-term risks of crime, delinquency, teenage pregnancy and welfare dependency (Campbell & Ramey, 2007; Masse & Barnett, 2002). All UPK programs in the country have the challenge of raising public awareness of their programs specifically, and of the importance of quality more generally, with quality defined in ways that align with the research on how to impact children. This includes raising the

consciousness about research-aligned quality indicators. Universal preschool programs ultimately need to address the question of impacts on children being raised by legislators, policy-makers and, potentially, the early childhood care providers. If understanding the link between UPK programs and children's school readiness is a goal, it will require a commitment to designing and implementing an assessment process that will provide meaningful information about impacts.

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## **Appendix**

### **INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS**

**CENTER BASED CHILD CARE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**



**PROGRAM NAME:**

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**INTERVIEWEE:**

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**INTERVIEWER:**

---

**DATE/TIME:**

---

**Massachusetts Universal Pre-  
Kindergarten Pilot Grant  
Evaluation:  
Center-Based Interview Protocol**

**April 2008**

*Prepared by:*  
Abt Associates, Inc.

**I. USE OF UPK FUNDS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Did you distribute your UPK funds only to designated UPK pre-k classrooms or to all pre-k classrooms?

**2007**

- a.  Only to designated UPK pre-k classrooms
- b.  To all pre-k classrooms

*If (b):* Did all pre-k classrooms benefit equally from the grant or did you target funds mostly to UPK classrooms?

- a.  All classes benefitted equally
- b.  Targeted to UPK classrooms

**2008**

- a.  Only to designated UPK pre-k classrooms
- b.  To all pre-k classrooms

*If (b):* Did all pre-k classrooms benefit equally from the grant or did you target funds mostly to UPK classrooms?

- a.  All classes benefitted equally
- b.  Targeted to UPK classrooms

---

2. According to the MA UPK guidelines, there are eight allowable UPK expenditure categories that will come up throughout our conversation. I am going to list for you those expenditure categories and I'd like you to tell me whether or not you spent your UPK funds on each of these categories and if so, what percentage, both for 2007 and 2008.

**2007**

- a.  Purchase assessments materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Curricula/educational materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Teacher/staff compensation,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  Staff professional development,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Provide more comprehensive services to families,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Accreditation support,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Full-day full-year services,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Administrative costs,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Other (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2008**

- a.  Purchase assessments materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Curricula/educational materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Teacher/staff compensation,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  Staff professional development,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Provide more comprehensive services to families,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Accreditation support,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Full-day full-year services,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Administrative costs,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Other (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A. Assessments**

3. What assessment tool or tools are you using now with preschool children?

- a.  Work Sampling System
- b.  High Scope Child Observation Record (COR)
- c.  Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum
- d.  Ages and Stages
- e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. When did you start using this tool (month/year)? *By start, I mean your teachers were trained and you had completed one assessment cycle.*

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. Are assessment results being communicated to parents (e.g., to provide directed guidance on areas (academic/developmental/social-emotional) where children need additional help or support)?

- a.  All parents
- b.  Some parents
- c.  No

---

6. What is the most typical way you communicate to parents about their children's progress (for example, notes sent home, telephone calls, in-person)?

- a.  Class newsletter
  - b.  Notes sent home
  - c.  Telephone calls
  - d.  In-person (informal before/after school)
  - e.  In-person (scheduled conferences)
  - f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

- 
7. I'd like you to think of a scale from 1-5. One represents no difference from before you received UPK funds and 5 represents substantially better than before you received UPK funds. How would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's use of assessments to inform instruction now relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?
- a.  1 – Same level of quality
  - b.  2
  - c.  3 – Higher quality
  - d.  4
  - e.  5 – Substantially higher quality
- 
8. How has your use of grant funds on assessments improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program/family child care home?
-

**B. Curricula/Educational Materials**

9. I'm going to read through a list of educational materials you may have purchased with UPK funds. Please tell me if UPK funds were used to purchase these items.

- a.  Books
- b.  Puzzles
- c.  Math materials
- d.  Nature/science materials
- e.  Letter/alphabet materials
- f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

10. Did you use UPK grant funds to purchase any other classroom materials?

- Yes
- No

*If yes:* What other materials did you purchase? \_\_\_\_\_

---

11. Did you use grant funds to purchase a new or updated curriculum for your program/center/home?

- Yes
- No

---

12. Was there training for teachers/providers using your curriculum prior to receiving UPK grant funds?

- Yes
- No

---

13. Have you used UPK funds for curricula training?

- Yes
  - No
-

---

14. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's preschool curriculum and educational materials relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

15. How has your use of grant funds on curricula or educational materials improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program?

---

### C. Teacher Salaries

16. Have you used UPK grant funds to hire new staff?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, What kind of staff have you hired? (Prompt: lead teacher, assistant teacher, support workers, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_

---

17. Has your hiring process/review of candidate qualifications changed?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, How has your process changed?* \_\_\_\_\_

---

18. Did you increase salaries and benefits of, or provide bonuses to current teachers?

- Yes
- No

---

19. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the teacher/provider salary satisfaction relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher

---

20. How has your use of grant funds for teacher salaries (either through the hiring of additional staff or increased salary/benefits for current staff) improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program?

---

## D. Staff Professional Development

21. I'm going to read a list of different types of professional development that may have been offered with UPK funds. Please tell me whether UPK funds were used for:
- a.  Training sessions/workshops held within your program/center/home
  - b.  Training sessions/workshops held outside your program/center/home
  - c.  Courses at local colleges
  - d.  Resources made available at your program/center/home (print, computers, multi-media)
  - e.  Ongoing supervision and feedback by program/center/home staff
  - f.  Follow up training (to help put training into practice)
  - g.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
22. Now I'm going to read a list of professional development topics. Please indicate whether UPK funds were used to provide professional development for each of the following:
- a.  Child development
  - b.  Assessment/evaluation (including observation and recording)
  - c.  Classroom programming/management
  - d.  Child/family health issues
  - e.  Family services and case management
  - f.  Mental health issues
  - g.  Bilingual education
  - h.  Providing services for children with special needs
  - i.  Behavior management
  - j.  CPR
  - k.  Violence, abuse, and neglect
  - l.  Multicultural understanding and sensitivity
  - m.  General administration/management
  - n.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-



---

23. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's professional development relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

24. How has your use of grant funds on professional development improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program?

---

## E. Comprehensive Services

25. I'm going to list some types of comprehensive services you may have added or expanded using UPK funds. Please tell me whether UPK funds were used to add or expand each of the following:

- a.  Nutrition services
- b.  Health services
- c.  Dental care
- d.  Psychological services
- e.  Speech therapy
- f.  Physical therapy
- g.  Special education services
- h.  Social work
- i.  Family outreach
- j.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

26. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's provision of comprehensive services to children and their families relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

27. How has your use of grant funds on comprehensive services improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program, specifically with regard to the services offered to children and their families?

---

## F. Accreditation Support

28. Has your accreditation status changed since first receiving the UPK grant?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, How has it changed? (Prompt: temporarily lost accreditation, got new accreditation, permanently lost accreditation, etc.)*

---

---

29. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's receipt of accreditation support relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

30. How has your use of grant funds on accreditation support improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program?

---

## G. Full-Day/Full-Year Services

31. Were full-day, full-year services offered prior to receiving UPK funds?

- Yes
- No (*Ask both follow-up questions*)

*If no to 31:* Do you directly offer full-day full-year services currently?

- Yes
- No

*If no to 31:* Does your program/center/home have a partnership agreement with another program?

- Yes (*Ask follow-up question*)
- No

*If yes:* How are you using UPK funds to provide full-day, full-year services through your partner program?

- a.  Conducting needs assessments of families
- b.  Transporting children to partner program
- c.  Subsidizing cost of other program when your center is not in operation
- d.  Enhanced referral
- e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

32. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center/home's full-day, full-year services relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

33. How has your use of grant funds on full-day, full-year services improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program?

---

## H. Administrative Costs

34. Which administrative costs are currently being covered by UPK funds?
- a.  Salaries associated with grant administration and oversight
  - b.  Fringe costs associated with staff administering the grant program
  - c.  Rental of space used for administration of the grant program
  - d.  Other overhead costs (utilities, equipment maintenance) associated with administration of grant program
  - e.  Internal audit costs to ensure administration of the grant program
  - f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

## **II. PARENT COMMUNICATION/KNOWLEDGE OF UPK PROGRAM**

35. Although not a requirement of the UPK program, has there been an effort to inform parents of UPK grant funds?

- Yes
- No

---

36. What kind of information has been disseminated to parents about the UPK program?

---

### **III. REMAINING PROGRAM NEEDS**

37. If you had more grant funding directed towards maintaining or improving the quality of your program, in what category(ies) of allowable expenditures would you concentrate the additional funds?

- a.  Assessment costs
- b.  Curricula/educational materials
- c.  Teacher salaries
- d.  Professional development
- e.  Comprehensive services
- f.  Accreditation support
- g.  Full-day full-year services
- h.  Administrative costs
- i.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

38. If your grant was smaller and you had to decide where to cut spending while maintaining the highest possible quality, would you:

- a.  Cut evenly across of your current expenditure areas
- b.  Retain spending in some areas but cut or eliminate others
  - i. Which expenditures would you most likely cut or eliminate?
    - 1.  Assessment costs
    - 2.  Curricula/educational materials
    - 3.  Teacher salaries
    - 4.  Professional development
    - 5.  Accreditation support
    - 6.  Full-day full-year services
    - 7.  Administrative costs
    - 8.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

39. What is your greatest area of remaining need in improving the overall quality of your program/center/home?

- a.  Assessment costs
  - b.  Curricula/educational materials
  - c.  Teacher salaries
  - d.  Professional development
  - e.  Comprehensive services
  - f.  Accreditation support
  - g.  Full-day full-year services
  - h.  Administrative costs
  - i.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**IV. PERCEPTIONS OF UPK GRANT**

40. Which category of UPK grant expenditures has made the greatest impact on the quality of your program/center/home?

- a.  Assessment activities
- b.  Curricula/educational materials
- c.  Staff compensation
- d.  Professional development
- e.  Accreditation support
- f.  Full-day full-year services
- g.  Administrative costs
- h.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

41. Have you used your funds as you expected to?

- Yes
- No

If no, Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

42. Did you find it necessary to amend your budget/use of your funds?

- Yes
- No

---

43. Did you use all of your UPK funds/do you anticipate returning some of the award? (*Ask separately for FY07 and FY08*)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Used all UPK funds | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Used all UPK funds |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Returned some      | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Returned some      |
| <b>2007</b>                                    | <b>2008</b>                                    |

---

44. Was it clear to you what acceptable expenditures were and what was out of the realm of intended grant use?

- Yes
  - No
  - In some cases
-



45. Did you feel your UPK funds were sufficient for pressing quality improvement needs?

- Yes
- No

---

46. On a five-point scale with 1 being extremely negative and 5 being extremely positive, how would you characterize your overall experience with EEC in the context of UPK?

- 1  Extremely negative
- 2  Negative
- 3  Neither positive or negative
- 4  Positive
- 5  Extremely positive

---

47. Are there areas in which you felt you needed more information/guidance from EEC in terms of your UPK grant?

- a.  General communication
  - b.  Grant application process
  - c.  Grant administration
  - d.  Allowable expenditures
  - e.  Monitoring
  - f.  Best practices
  - g.  Assessment support
  - h.  Other (please specify)
-

**V. CONTEXT**

**A1. Background (Child Care Center/Program Directors and School District Early Childhood Coordinators [FOR DIRECTORS/COORDINATORS ONLY])**

48. How long have you been the director of this program?

# years \_\_\_\_\_

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49. In total, how many years of child care/early childhood experience do you have as a director, teacher or assistant teacher?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

50. What is the last or highest grade of school you have completed?

- a.  GED
  - b.  high school diploma
  - c.  some college courses (no degree)
  - d.  associates degree
  - e.  CDA
  - f.  bachelor's degree
  - g.  some graduate courses (no graduate degree)
  - h.  graduate degree
  - i.  other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

51. In what field(s) is/are your degrees (if applicable)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

52. Do you have any job-related licenses or certificates? If yes, what are they?

- a.  Early childhood teaching license/certification
  - b.  Elementary school teaching license/certification
  - c.  Reading specialist teaching license/certification
  - d.  Special education teaching license/certification
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

53. In addition to managing your program, what other job responsibilities do you hold?

- a.  Classroom instruction (as a substitute or regular teacher)
  - b.  Family/parent education, outreach, social services
  - c.  Staff training/education
  - d.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**A2. Background (Family Child Care Providers) [FOR PROVIDERS ONLY]**

54. How long have you been running a family child care home?

# years \_\_\_\_\_

---

55. In total, how many years of child care/early childhood experience do you have as a provider, teacher or assistant teacher?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

56. What is the last or highest grade of school you have completed?

- a.  GED
  - b.  high school diploma
  - c.  some college courses (no degree)
  - d.  associates degree
  - e.  CDA
  - f.  bachelor's degree
  - g.  some graduate courses (no graduate degree)
  - h.  graduate degree
  - i.  other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

57. In what field(s) is/are your degrees (if applicable)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

58. Do you have any job-related licenses or certificates? If yes, what are they?

- a.  Early childhood teaching license/certification
  - b.  Elementary school teaching license/certification
  - c.  Reading specialist teaching license/certification
  - d.  Special education teaching license/certification
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

59. Other than parent tuition and subsidies, do you currently receive federal, state or local grants/funds/monies other than your UPK grant for quality improvements? (*Prompt for each one.*)

- Yes
- No

*If yes:*

**I am going to list some funding sources. Please tell me whether or not you received funding for these purposes or from these sources.**

- a.  Participate in professional development trainings offered by CCR&R

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- b.  Early Childhood Educators Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- c.  CDA Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- d.  Professional Development offered by Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- e.  Building Careers

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- f.  Mental Health Consultation Grant from EEC

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

g.  Accreditation support through Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

h.  Quality Improvement License Plate Funds

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

i.  Early Childhood Special Education to support Integrated Preschool (262 funds)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

j.  Early Reading First

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

k.  Other: (ask follow-up questions for each)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

---

60. Do you currently receive any private funding for quality improvements?

Yes

No

*If yes:*

a.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

b.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

**B. Child Care Center/Program and School District Information [PROGRAM-LEVEL INFORMATION]**

61. How would you describe your program/center?

- a.  Public school pre-kindergarten (operated by the public school system)
  - b.  Child care center (privately owned and operated center in the community)
  - c.  Head Start program (in school building)
  - d.  Head Start program (in community setting)
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

62. Does your program operate year-round or part-year?

- a.  Year-Round
  - b.  Part-Year
- 

63. How is your program structured (e.g., part-day, full-day, combined)?

- a.  Part-day sessions
  - b.  Full-day sessions
  - c.  Combined part and full-day sessions
- 

64. How many classes do you currently have in your program/center?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

65. How many are UPK-designated classrooms?

# \_\_\_\_\_

*(If 2-4, ask about each classroom but combine numbers in questions 71-81)*

---

66. Other than parent tuition and subsidies, do you currently receive federal, state or local grants/funds/monies other than your UPK grant for quality improvements?

- Yes
- No

*If yes:*

**I am going to list some funding sources. Please tell me whether or not you received funding for these purposes or from these source.**

- a.  Participate in professional development trainings offered by CCR&R

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

- b.  Early Childhood Educators Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

- c.  CDA Scholarship  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  Professional Development offered by Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Building Careers  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Mental Health Consultation Grant from EEC  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Accreditation support through Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Quality Improvement License Plate Funds  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Early Childhood Special Education to support Integrated Preschool (262 funds)  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- j.  Early Reading First  
 How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How do you spend these funds?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- k.  Other: (ask follow-up questions for each)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

---

67. Do you currently receive any private funding for quality improvements?

Yes

No

*If yes:*

- a.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- b.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

---

---

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68. How many of the children enrolled in your program/center are:

- a.  Birth through 2 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_

- b.  3 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_

- c.  4 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_

- d.  5 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_

- e.  Older than 5 years? # \_\_\_\_\_

---

69. In addition to staff that work in the classroom, do you employ or contract with other staff who work with either children or families outside of the classroom (e.g., social workers, nurses, speech therapists)?

- a.  Social Workers

- b.  Family outreach workers

- c.  Nurses

- d.  Psychologists

- e.  Parent education specialists

- f.  Parent involvement specialists

- g.  Speech therapists

- h.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



70. Are you currently accredited?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, Which accreditation do you hold?*

- a.  National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - b.  National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
  - c.  NEASC
  - d.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**C. UPK Classroom/Family Child Care Home Information [CLASSROOM/HOME-LEVEL INFORMATION]**

**If grantee is responding about more than one classroom/home, combine the numbers from each classroom/home to arrive at one number to represent all (e.g., 4 classrooms with 4 children each = 16 total)**

71. What is the age range of the children in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s)?

---

72. How many children are enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s)?

---

73. What is the child/teacher ratio in the UPK-funded pre-k classroom(s)/home(s)?

---

74. How many of the children enrolled in the UPK-funded pre-k classroom(s)/home(s) belong to the following racial-ethnic groups?

- a.  White, non-Hispanic # \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Black, non-Hispanic # \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Hispanic, regardless of race # \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  American Indian or Alaskan Native # \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Asian # \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander # \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Multi-racial # \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Other (please specify) # \_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Not available

---

75. How many children with diagnosed special needs are enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s)?

---

76. How many children with IEPs are enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s)?

---

77. How many children enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s) come from homes in which English is not the primary language?

---

78. How many children enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s) have limited English proficiency (LEP)?

---

79. Does the classroom teacher/provider in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s) speak the home/native language of non-English speaking or limited English-speaking children?

- Yes
  - Some (speaks language of some non-English speaking children but not all)
  - No
  - Not Needed
- 

80. How many children enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)/home(s) receive subsidies (including vouchers, contracts, CPC slots, or Head Start funds)?

---

81. Do you offer private scholarships to any children enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s)?

- Yes
  - No
- 

*If yes, At what income level are the scholarships offered and how many children enrolled in the UPK-funded classroom(s) are currently on these private scholarships?*

Income Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of children: # \_\_\_\_\_

---

**FAMILY CHILD CARE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**PROGRAM NAME:**

---

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**INTERVIEWEE:**

---

**INTERVIEWER:**

---

**DATE/TIME:**

---

**Massachusetts Universal Pre-  
Kindergarten Pilot Grant  
Evaluation:  
Family Child Care Interview Protocol**

**April 2008**

*Prepared by:*  
Abt Associates, Inc.

**I. USE OF UPK FUNDS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Did you distribute your UPK funds only to eligible preschool-age children or to all children?

**2007**

- a.  Only to eligible preschool-age children
- b.  To all children

*If (b):* Did all children benefit equally from the grant or did you target funds mostly to preschool-age children?

- a.  All children benefitted equally
- b.  Targeted to preschool-age children

**2008**

- a.  Only to eligible preschool-age children
- b.  To all children

*If (b):* Did all children benefit equally from the grant or did you target funds mostly to preschool-age children?

- a.  All children benefitted equally
- b.  Targeted to preschool-age children

---

2. According to the MA UPK guidelines, there are eight allowable UPK expenditure categories that will come up throughout our conversation. I am going to list for you those expenditure categories and I'd like you to tell me on which categories your system spent UPK funds.

**2007**

- a.  Purchase assessments materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Curricula/educational materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Teacher/staff compensation,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  Staff professional development,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Provide more comprehensive services to families,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Accreditation support,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Full-day full-year services,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Administrative costs,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Other (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2008**

- a.  Purchase assessments materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - b.  Curricula/educational materials,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - c.  Teacher/staff compensation,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - d.  Staff professional development,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - e.  Provide more comprehensive services to families,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - f.  Accreditation support,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - g.  Full-day full-year services,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - h.  Administrative costs,  
% \_\_\_\_\_
  - i.  Other (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_
-

**A. Assessments**

3. What assessment tool or tools are you using now with preschool-age children?

- a.  Work Sampling System
- b.  High Scope Child Observation Record (COR)
- c.  Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum
- d.  Ages and Stages
- e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. When did you start using this tool (month/year)? *By start, I mean you were trained and had completed one assessment cycle.*

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. Are assessment results being communicated to parents (e.g., to provide directed guidance on areas (academic/developmental/social-emotional) where children need additional help or support)?

- a.  All parents
- b.  Some parents
- c.  No

---

6. What is the most typical way you communicate to parents about their children's progress (for example, notes sent home, telephone calls, in-person)?

- a.  Newsletter
  - b.  Notes sent home
  - c.  Telephone calls
  - d.  In-person (at drop off/pick up)
  - e.  In-person (scheduled conferences)
  - f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

- 
7. I'd like you to think of a scale from 1-5. One represents no difference from before you received UPK funds and 5 represents substantially better than before you received UPK funds. How would you rate the quality of your home's use of assessments to inform instruction now relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?
- a.  1 – Same level of quality
  - b.  2
  - c.  3 – Higher quality
  - d.  4
  - e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

- 
8. How has your use of grant funds on assessments improved the quality of your family child care home?
-



**B. Curricula/Educational Materials**

9. I'm going to read through a list of educational materials you may have purchased with UPK funds. Please tell me if UPK funds were used to purchase these items.

- a.  Books
- b.  Puzzles
- c.  Math materials
- d.  Nature/science materials
- e.  Letter/alphabet materials
- f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

10. Did you use UPK grant funds to purchase any other materials?

- Yes
- No

*If yes:* What other materials did you purchase? \_\_\_\_\_

---

11. Did you use grant funds to purchase a new or updated curriculum for your home?

- Yes
- No

---

12. Was there training for providers using your curriculum prior to receiving UPK grant funds?

- Yes
- No

---

13. Has your system used UPK funds for curricula training?

- Yes
  - No
-

---

14. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of home's preschool curriculum and educational materials relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

15. How has your use of grant funds on curricula or educational materials improved the quality of your family child care home?

---

### C. Provider/Staff Salaries

16. Have you used UPK grant funds to hire new staff?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, What kind of staff have you hired? (Prompt: assistant)*

\_\_\_\_\_

---

17. Has your hiring process/review of candidate qualifications changed?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, How has your process changed?* \_\_\_\_\_

---

18. Did you gain in salary/benefits or bonuses/stipends?

- Yes
- No

---

19. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate your salary satisfaction relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher

---

20. How has your use of grant funds for salaries (either through the hiring of additional staff or increases to your own salary/benefits) improved the quality of your family child care home?

---

## D. Staff Professional Development

21. I'm going to read a list of different types of professional development that may have been offered with UPK funds. Please tell me whether UPK funds were used for:
- a.  Training sessions/workshops held within your program/center/home
  - b.  Training sessions/workshops held outside your program/center/home
  - c.  Courses at local colleges
  - d.  Resources made available at your program/center/home (print, computers, multi-media)
  - e.  Ongoing supervision and feedback by program/center/home staff
  - f.  Follow up training (to help put training into practice)
  - g.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
22. Now I'm going to read a list of professional development topics. Please indicate whether UPK funds were used to provide professional development for each of the following:
- a.  Child development
  - b.  Assessment/evaluation (including observation and recording)
  - c.  Classroom programming/management
  - d.  Child/family health issues
  - e.  Family services and case management
  - f.  Mental health issues
  - g.  Bilingual education
  - h.  Providing services for children with special needs
  - i.  Behavior management
  - j.  CPR
  - k.  Violence, abuse, and neglect
  - l.  Multicultural understanding and sensitivity
  - m.  General administration/management
  - n.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

---

23. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of the professional development available to you relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

24. How has your use of grant funds on professional development improved the quality of your family child care home?

---

## E. Comprehensive Services

25. I'm going to list some types of comprehensive services your system may have added or expanded using UPK funds. Please tell me whether UPK funds were used to add or expand each of the following:

- a.  Nutrition services
- b.  Health services
- c.  Dental care
- d.  Psychological services
- e.  Speech therapy
- f.  Physical therapy
- g.  Special education services
- h.  Social work
- i.  Family outreach
- j.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

26. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your system's provision of comprehensive services to children and their families relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

27. How has your use of grant funds on comprehensive services improved the quality of your family child care home, specifically with regard to the services offered to children and their families?

---

## F. Accreditation Support

28. Has your accreditation status changed since first receiving the UPK grant?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, How has it changed? (Prompt: temporarily lost accreditation, got new accreditation, permanently lost accreditation, etc.)*

---

---

29. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your accreditation support relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

30. How has the use of grant funds on accreditation support improved the quality of your family child care home?

---

## G. Full-Day/Full-Year Services

31. Were full-day, full-year services offered prior to receiving UPK funds?

- Yes
- No (*Ask both follow-up questions*)

*If no to 31:* Do you directly offer full-day full-year services currently?

- Yes
- No

*If no to 31:* Do you have a partnership agreement with another program?

- Yes (*Ask follow-up question*)
- No

*If yes:* How are you using UPK funds to provide full-day, full-year services through your partner program?

- a.  Conducting needs assessments of families
- b.  Transporting children to partner program
- c.  Subsidizing cost of other program when your center is not in operation
- d.  Enhanced referral
- e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

32. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your system's full-day, full-year services relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- a.  1 – Same level of quality
- b.  2
- c.  3 – Higher quality
- d.  4
- e.  5 – Substantially higher quality

---

33. How has the use of grant funds on full-day, full-year services improved the quality of your family child care home?

---



## H. Administrative Costs

34. Which administrative costs are currently being covered by UPK funds?
- a.  Salaries associated with grant administration and oversight
  - b.  Fringe costs associated with staff administering the grant program
  - c.  Rental of space used for administration of the grant program
  - d.  Other overhead costs (utilities, equipment maintenance) associated with administration of grant program
  - e.  Internal audit costs to ensure administration of the grant program
  - f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

## II. PARENT COMMUNICATION/KNOWLEDGE OF UPK PROGRAM

35. Although not a requirement of the UPK program, has there been an effort to inform parents of UPK grant funds?
- Yes
  - No

- 
36. What kind of information has been disseminated to parents about the UPK program?
-

### **III. REMAINING PROGRAM NEEDS**

37. If you had more grant funding directed towards maintaining or improving the quality of your family child care home, in what category(ies) of allowable expenditures would you concentrate the additional funds?

- a.  Assessment costs
- b.  Curricula/educational materials
- c.  Teacher salaries
- d.  Professional development
- e.  Comprehensive services
- f.  Accreditation support
- g.  Full-day full-year services
- h.  Administrative costs
- i.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

38. If your grant was smaller and you had to decide where to cut spending while maintaining the highest possible quality, would you:

- a.  Cut evenly across of your current expenditure areas
- b.  Retain spending in some areas but cut or eliminate other
  - i. Which expenditures would you most likely cut or eliminate?
    - 1.  Assessment costs
    - 2.  Curricula/educational materials
    - 3.  Teacher salaries
    - 4.  Professional development
    - 5.  Comprehensive services
    - 6.  Accreditation support
    - 7.  Full-day full-year services
    - 8.  Administrative costs
    - 9.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

39. What is your greatest area of remaining need in improving the overall quality of your family child care home?

- a.  Assessment costs
  - b.  Curricula/educational materials
  - c.  Teacher salaries
  - d.  Professional development
  - e.  Comprehensive services
  - f.  Accreditation support
  - g.  Full-day full-year services
  - h.  Administrative costs
  - i.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**IV. PERCEPTIONS OF UPK GRANT**

40. Which category of UPK grant expenditures has made the greatest impact on the quality of your family child care home?

- a.  Assessment activities
- b.  Curricula/educational materials
- c.  Staff compensation
- d.  Professional development
- e.  Comprehensive services
- f.  Accreditation support
- g.  Full-day full-year services
- h.  Administrative costs
- i.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

41. Have you used your funds as you expected to?

- Yes
- No

If no, Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

42. Did you find it necessary to amend your budget/use of your funds?

- Yes
- No

---

43. Did you use all of your UPK funds/do you anticipate returning some of the award? (*Ask separately for FY07 and FY08*)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Used all UPK funds | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Used all UPK funds |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Returned some      | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Returned some      |

**2007**

**2008**

---

44. Was it clear to you what acceptable expenditures were and what was out of the realm of intended grant use?

- Yes
  - No
  - In some cases
-

45. Did you feel your UPK funds were sufficient for pressing quality improvement needs?

- Yes
- No

---

46. On a five-point scale with 1 being extremely negative and 5 being extremely positive, how would you characterize your overall experience with EEC in the context of UPK?

- 1  Extremely negative
- 2  Negative
- 3  Neither positive or negative
- 4  Positive
- 5  Extremely positive

---

47. Are there areas in which you felt you needed more information/guidance from EEC in terms of your UPK grant?

- a.  General communication
  - b.  Grant application process
  - c.  Grant administration
  - d.  Allowable expenditures
  - e.  Monitoring
  - f.  Best practices
  - g.  Assessment support
  - h.  Other (please specify)
-

## **V. CONTEXT**

### **A1. Background (Child Care Center/Program Directors and School District Early Childhood Coordinators [FOR DIRECTORS/COORDINATORS ONLY])**

48. How long have you been the director of this program?

# years \_\_\_\_\_

---

49. In total, how many years of child care/early childhood experience do you have as a director, teacher or assistant teacher?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

50. What is the last or highest grade of school you have completed?

- a.  GED
  - b.  high school diploma
  - c.  some college courses (no degree)
  - d.  associates degree
  - e.  CDA
  - f.  bachelor's degree
  - g.  some graduate courses (no graduate degree)
  - h.  graduate degree
  - i.  other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

51. In what field(s) is/are your degrees (if applicable)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

52. Do you have any job-related licenses or certificates? If yes, what are they?

- a.  Early childhood teaching license/certification
  - b.  Elementary school teaching license/certification
  - c.  Reading specialist teaching license/certification
  - d.  Special education teaching license/certification
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

53. In addition to managing your program, what other job responsibilities do you hold?

- a.  Classroom instruction (as a substitute or regular teacher)
  - b.  Family/parent education, outreach, social services
  - c.  Staff training/education
  - d.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**A2. Background (Family Child Care Providers) [FOR PROVIDERS ONLY]**

54. How long have you been running a family child care home?

# years \_\_\_\_\_

---

55. In total, how many years of child care/early childhood experience do you have as a provider, teacher or assistant teacher?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

56. What is the last or highest grade of school you have completed?

- a.  GED
  - b.  high school diploma
  - c.  some college courses (no degree)
  - d.  associates degree
  - e.  CDA
  - f.  bachelor's degree
  - g.  some graduate courses (no graduate degree)
  - h.  graduate degree
  - i.  other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

57. In what field(s) is/are your degrees (if applicable)?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

58. Do you have any job-related licenses or certificates? If yes, what are they?

- a.  Early childhood teaching license/certification
  - b.  Elementary school teaching license/certification
  - c.  Reading specialist teaching license/certification
  - d.  Special education teaching license/certification
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

59. Other than parent tuition and subsidies, do you currently receive federal, state or local grants/funds/monies other than your UPK grant for quality improvements? *(Prompt for each one.)*

- Yes
- No

*If yes:*

**I am going to list some funding sources. Please tell me whether or not you received funding for these purposes or from these sources.**

- a.  Participate in professional development trainings offered by CCR&R

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- b.  Early Childhood Educators Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- c.  CDA Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- d.  Professional Development offered by Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- e.  Building Careers

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- f.  Mental Health Consultation Grant from EEC

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

g.  Accreditation support through Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

h.  Quality Improvement License Plate Funds

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

i.  Early Childhood Special Education to support Integrated Preschool (262 funds)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

j.  Early Reading First

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

k.  Other: (ask follow-up questions for each)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

60. Do you currently receive any private funding for quality improvements?

Yes

No

*If yes:*

a.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**B. Child Care Center/Program and School District Information [PROGRAM-LEVEL INFORMATION]**

61. How would you describe your program/center?

- a.  Public school pre-kindergarten (operated by the public school system)
  - b.  Child care center (privately owned and operated center in the community)
  - c.  Head Start program (in school building)
  - d.  Head Start program (in community setting)
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

62. Does your program operate year-round or part-year?

- a.  Year-Round
  - b.  Part-Year
- 

63. How is your program structured (e.g., part-day, full-day, combined)?

- a.  Part-day sessions
  - b.  Full-day sessions
  - c.  Combined part and full-day sessions
- 

64. How many classes do you currently have in your program/center?

# \_\_\_\_\_

---

65. How many are UPK-designated classrooms?

# \_\_\_\_\_ (If 2-4, Ask about each classroom individually in questions 71-81)

---

66. Other than parent tuition and subsidies, do you currently receive federal, state or local grants/funds/monies other than your UPK grant for quality improvements?

- Yes
- No

*If yes:*

**I am going to list some funding sources. Please tell me whether or not you received funding for these purposes or from these source.**

- a.  Participate in professional development trainings offered by CCR&R

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

- b.  Early Childhood Educators Scholarship

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you spend these funds? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

- c.  CDA Scholarship  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d.  Professional Development offered by Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Building Careers  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Mental Health Consultation Grant from EEC  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Accreditation support through Community Partnerships for Children (CPC)  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Quality Improvement License Plate Funds  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- i.  Early Childhood Special Education to support Integrated Preschool (262 funds)  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- j.  Early Reading First  
How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- k.  Other: (ask follow-up questions for each)

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

---

67. Do you currently receive any private funding for quality improvements?

- Yes  
 No

*If yes:*

- a.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

- b.  Source: \_\_\_\_\_

How much funding is received? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you spend these funds?

---

---

---

68. How many of the children enrolled in your program/center are:

- a.  Birth through 2 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_  
b.  3 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_  
c.  4 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_  
d.  5 years old? # \_\_\_\_\_  
e.  Older than 5 years? # \_\_\_\_\_

---

69. In addition to staff that work in the classroom, do you employ or contract with other staff who work with either children or families outside of the classroom (e.g., social workers, nurses, speech therapists)?

- a.  Social Workers  
b.  Family outreach workers  
c.  Nurses  
d.  Psychologists  
e.  Parent education specialists  
f.  Parent involvement specialists  
g.  Speech therapists  
h.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

70. Are you currently accredited?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, Which accreditation do you hold?*

- a.  National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - b.  National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
  - c.  NEASC
  - d.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**C. UPK Classroom/Family Child Care Home Information [CLASSROOM/HOME-LEVEL INFORMATION]**

71. What is the age range of the children in your family child care home?

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72. How many children are enrolled in your family child care home?

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73. What is the child/teacher ratio in your family child care home?

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74. How many of the children enrolled in your home belong to the following racial-ethnic groups?

- a.  White, non-Hispanic # \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Black, non-Hispanic # \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Hispanic, regardless of race # \_\_\_\_\_
- d.  American Indian or Alaskan Native # \_\_\_\_\_
- e.  Asian # \_\_\_\_\_
- f.  Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander # \_\_\_\_\_
- g.  Other (please specify) # \_\_\_\_\_
- h.  Not available

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75. How many children with diagnosed special needs are enrolled in your family child care home?

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76. How many children with IEPs are enrolled in your home?

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77. How many children enrolled in your family child care home come from homes in which English is not the primary language?

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78. How many children enrolled in your home have limited English proficiency (LEP)?

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79. Do you or your assistant speak the home/native language of non-English speaking or limited English-speaking children?

- Yes
  - Some (speaks language of some non-English speaking students but not all)
  - No
  - Not Needed
- 

80. How many children enrolled in your family child care home receive subsidies (including vouchers, contracts, CPC slots, or Head Start funds)?

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81. Do you offer private scholarships to any children enrolled in your family child care home?

- Yes
  - No
- 

*If yes, At what income level are the scholarships offered and how many children enrolled in your family child care home are currently on these private scholarships?*

Income Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of children: # \_\_\_\_\_

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**PUBLIC SCHOOL UPK CLASSROOM TEACHER  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**PROGRAM NAME:**

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**INTERVIEWEE:**

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**INTERVIEWER:**

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**DATE/TIME:**

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**Massachusetts Universal Pre-  
Kindergarten Pilot Grant  
Evaluation:  
Classroom Teacher Interview  
Protocol**

**April 2008**

*Prepared by:*  
Abt Associates, Inc.



## **I. EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES**

1. Are you aware that your Pre-K program receives Universal Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Program funds from the state?

- Yes
- No

2. If YES, do you know how those funds are allocated?

- a.  Purchase assessments materials
- b.  Purchase training materials/trainer/staff time for assessment
- c.  Curricula/educational materials
- d.  Teacher/staff compensation
- e.  Staff professional development
- f.  Provide more comprehensive services to families
- g.  Accreditation support
- h.  Full-day full-year services
- i.  Administrative costs
- j.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**\* If no, we will provide information based on grant application/director responses**

**A. Assessments**

3. What assessment system do you currently use to monitor student learning and development?
- a.  Work Sampling System
  - b.  High Scope Child Observation Record (COR)
  - c.  Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum
  - d.  Ages and Stages
  - e.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. For how long have you been using your primary assessment tool?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How many times between September and the end of August do you assess your students (assessment meaning the observation period and the time to record the data)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you use the assessment results to help you in lesson planning or selection of specific classroom activities?
- Yes
  - No
- If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you receive training on administration and interpretation of assessments?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you report results to parents? If so, how?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Has your primary assessment system changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. If so, why did you change your primary assessment tool?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center's use of assessments to inform instruction relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?
- 1 – Same level of quality
  - 2
  - 3 – Higher quality
  - 4
  - 5 – Substantially higher quality
12. How have the UPK grant funds allocated for assessments improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program? (*Prompt: better monitoring of children's progress, improved ability to individualize instruction*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Curricula/Educational Materials**

13. Are you using any curriculum in your preschool classroom?
- a.  What curriculum are you using?
14. Does the curriculum used by your program/center specify the following?
- a.  Goals for children's learning and development
- b.  Specific activities for children
- c.  Suggested teaching strategies
- d.  Suggested teaching materials
- e.  Suggested methods of child assessment
- f.  Ways to involve parent's in their child's learning activities
15. Is the curriculum a formal, written plan like a manual or syllabus? Yes/No
16. Who developed the curricula used by your program?
- a.  Program/center staff
- b.  A college or university
- c.  The school system
- d.  A commercial publisher
- e.  A curriculum training organization
- f.  Don't know
- g.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
17. Have you received training in the use of your program/center's chosen curricula?
- \_\_\_\_\_
18. Was this a one-time training or is it ongoing?
- \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you receive any classroom support from the director or other educational staff on using the curriculum?
- \_\_\_\_\_
20. Who makes most of the decisions about the day-to-day instructional plans for children, such as the calendar or sequence of activities?
- a.  Program administrators
- b.  Individual center director/staff
- c.  Individual teachers
- d.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
21. Has your curriculum or the training on using the curriculum changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)? [IF RESPONSE IS NO, SKIP TO NEXT SECTION.]
- a.  Change in curriculum being used (if so, when)
- b.  Change in teacher training process (if so, how)

22. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center's preschool curriculum and educational materials relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- 1 – Same level of quality
- 2
- 3 – Higher quality
- 4
- 5 – Substantially higher quality

23. How has the use of grant funds on curricula or educational materials improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program? (*Prompt: have more developmentally appropriate resources, curriculum is better aligned with assessments, stronger overall curriculum*)

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**C. Communication with Parents**

24. Currently, how frequently do you talk with most parents of children in your classroom?

- a.  Daily
- b.  Weekly
- c.  Monthly
- d.  Only when necessary

25. What is the most typical way you communicate with parents?

- a.  Class newsletter
- b.  By notes sent home
- c.  Telephone calls
- d.  In-person (informal before/after school)
- e.  In-person (scheduled conferences)
- f.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

26. Does your program have regularly scheduled parent meetings?

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Does your program regularly schedule meetings to talk with parents about their child's progress?

\_\_\_\_\_

28. If NO, how often do you ask parents to come in to talk with you about their child's progress or problems in the classroom?

\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Professional Development**

29. How many hours of in-service training, in total, do you estimate this program/center has provided to you in the last year? (including provided directly by the program and through outside conferences, workshops)

\_\_\_\_\_

30. For each of these topics, has training been provided or made available to you by this program/center in the last year?

	Yes	No
a. Child development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Educational programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Child assessment and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Children’s health issues (e.g., immunizations, childhood diseases)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Family health issues (e.g., AIDS, asthma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Mental health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Bilingual education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Multicultural sensitivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Domestic violence/family violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Child abuse and neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Family needs assessment and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Providing services for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Providing case management services to families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Working with other agencies to assist families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Involving parents in program activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Behavior management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Providing supervision to staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Administration and program management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Head Start principles and practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. Which topic have you received the most training on during the past year?

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Which three topics would you want additional training in to improve the quality of services you can offer to children and their families?

\_\_\_\_\_

33. What types of professional development has your program/center offered?

- a.  Training sessions/workshops held within your program/center
- b.  Training sessions/workshops held outside your program/center
- c.  Courses made available at local colleges
- d.  Resources made available at your program/center (print, computers, multi-media)
- e.  Ongoing supervision and feedback by program/center staff
- f.  Follow up training (to help put training into practice)
- g.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

34. Which method is most characteristic of the training offered or made available through your program/center? Which method is least characteristic?

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35. Overall, how helpful in doing your job is the training provided by or made available by your program/center?

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36. Has the amount or intensity of in-service training opportunities that the program provides changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)? If so, how?

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37. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not changed at all and 5 being substantially higher, how would you rate the quality of your program/center's professional development relative to before receiving UPK grant funds?

- 1 – Same level of quality
- 2
- 3 – Higher quality
- 4
- 5 – Substantially higher quality

38. How has the use of grant funds on professional development improved the quality of your pre-kindergarten program? (*Prompt: improved instruction, improved use of assessments, improved services for children*)

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## II. CONTEXT

39. How long have you been a teacher in this program?

# \_\_\_\_\_

40. Have you held any other jobs in the program—such as classroom assistant, part of the administrative staff?

\_\_\_\_\_

41. If YES, altogether, how many years have you been working within this program/center?

# years \_\_\_\_\_

42. Across all of the jobs you have held, how many years of early childhood experience do you have? (count any time as a teacher or an aide, not including raising own children, babysitting, teaching Sunday school)

# \_\_\_\_\_ years

43. Are you employed full-time or part-time by this center?

\_\_\_\_\_

44. What is the last or highest grade of school you have completed?

- a.  GED
- b.  high school diploma
- c.  some college courses (no degree)
- d.  associates degree
- e.  CDA
- f.  bachelor's degree
- g.  some graduate courses (no graduate degree)
- h.  graduate degree
- i.  other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

45. If BA or higher, in what field(s) is/are your degrees?

\_\_\_\_\_

46. Do you have any job-related licenses or certificates? If yes, what are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

47. Are you currently working on a degree, license, or certificate? If yes, what?

\_\_\_\_\_



48. We'd like to know about how you think about your job as a preschool teacher. I'm going to name some topics and I'd like you to tell me whether it is something that makes your job easier or harder (hand teacher a card with rating categories on it):

- a.  Time to do all that is required of you
- b.  Salary
- c.  Benefits such as sick time, vacation time, and the like
- d.  Support staff
- e.  In-service training/professional development
- f.  Support from/communication with the program administration
- g.  Curriculum guidance
- h.  Resources for supplies and activities
- i.  Relationships with the parents

49. Do you speak any languages other than English?

- a.  If YES, what languages do you speak?
- b.  What is your level of fluency in each?

Language 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Level of fluency \_\_\_\_\_

Language 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Level of fluency \_\_\_\_\_

50. Which of the following does your program/center provide?

- a.  Paid vacation time
- b.  Paid sick leave
- c.  Paid maternity or family leave
- d.  Unpaid maternity leave
- e.  Paid health and/or dental insurance
- f.  Tuition reimbursement
- g.  Retirement plan
- h.  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

51. Is your class a part-day or full-day class?

\_\_\_\_\_

52. How many children are currently enrolled in your class?

# \_\_\_\_\_

53. Has the number of children enrolled in your class changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)?

- yes, higher
- yes, lower
- no change

54. How many of the children currently enrolled in your class have been referred for special education evaluation?

# \_\_\_\_\_

55. Has the number of children enrolled in your class, referred for special education evaluation, changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)?

- yes, higher
- yes, lower
- no change

56. How many of the children currently enrolled in your class have IEPs?

# \_\_\_\_\_

57. Has the number of children with IEPs enrolled in your class changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)?

- yes, higher
- yes, lower
- no change

58. How many children in your class are limited English proficient?

# \_\_\_\_\_

59. Has the number of LEP children enrolled in your class changed since receiving UPK funds (past two years)?

- yes, higher
- yes, lower
- no change

### III. CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

60. What are **two** things you think your class does really well for children and their families?

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61. Finally, if you could change one thing (including staff, administration, classroom practices, and facilities) that you think would significantly improve the quality of the program for the children in your classroom, what would it be?

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