



Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

2017 Annual Report



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**

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Executive Summary

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) was established in 2005 with a mission to provide "*the foundation that supports all children in their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers.*" The Department of Early Education and Care serves as the entry point of Massachusetts' birth to 21 education pipeline. "Early education and care" includes formal programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children during out-of-school time; group homes; foster care and adoption placement agencies; and residential schools for children with special needs; as well as programs in informal settings such as home visiting, and community-based family engagement networks that provide literacy and other developmental activities for children and parents in libraries and adult education centers.

The Department of Early Education and Care endeavors to deliver the most effective high-quality, comprehensive early learning and development system in the nation. This requires ensuring that the 9,000 programs we license meet safety and best practice standards through regulatory review, technical assistance, and monitoring, and are supported in advancing to higher levels of quality through a system of standards and support. At the heart of a high-quality and comprehensive early education and care system are its educators, and the Department works to build the knowledge, competencies and career pathways of the 100,000 educators who comprise our workforce and are key to closing the early achievement gap and ensuring that all of our children enter school ready to succeed. To this end, some of our accomplishments and achievements in 2017 included:

- ✚ We provided access to subsidies for high-quality early education and care for eligible low-income and at-risk families, averaging support of 54,000 children daily;
- ✚ We supported higher salaries through a 6% reimbursement rate increase for all subsidized child care programs, an additional 2% rate increase for center-based child care programs and Family Child Care Systems administration, and an increase in the infant care rate to the median regional private rate;
- ✚ We successfully completed a 2nd year and started a new a 3rd year cohort of the "Preschool Expansion Grant" program, providing free high-quality preschool to 850 four-year-old children in 5 cities;
- ✚ We launched Phase 3 of the Licensing Education Analytic Database (LEAD), using it for all licensing visits under the new Differential Licensing model for all licensed program types;
- ✚ We provided developmental screenings for 4,731 young children through our family engagement networks;
- ✚ We provided consultation to 340 children at-risk of suspension or expulsion from an early education and care program, and 62% of these children successfully remained in their programs;
- ✚ We had 1,769 programs rated at Level 2, 3, or 4 of EEC's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that supports programs in attaining high levels of quality and we brought forward new standards for the QRIS;
- ✚ We awarded a 3rd round of EEC's Capital Fund Facility Improvement grants totaling \$4.1M to five agencies, which leveraged \$5.7 million in private investments from banks, foundations and other sources;
- ✚ We began developing a new system for conducting expanded levels of required Background Record Checks that will help expedite the review process; and
- ✚ We supported 115 college courses in early childhood education at colleges across the state that were accessed by nearly 1,200 early childhood educators.



In 2014, the Board of Early Education and Care set a five year Strategic Plan for the Department that set the vision and priorities for the agency's work. This report provides an update on EEC's accomplishments and activities over the past year (January to December 2017) in each of the four areas of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Direction #1: All young children in the Commonwealth will be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful, and their families will be provided with opportunities to support their children's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical development.

The Department of Early Education and Care licenses 9,000 group child care centers, family child care homes, residential programs, and foster care/adoption placement agencies across the Commonwealth, that have the capacity to serve over 230,000 children. On a daily basis, EEC supports an average of 54,000 children from low-income or at-risk families to attend a high quality early education and care program. In 2017, EEC continued to make progress toward providing universal early education and care for preschool-aged children through our "Preschool Expansion Grant" program, which provides a year of free-preschool to four-year-old children. The second cohort of students graduated in summer 2017 and the third cohort of students began in the program in fall 2017; approximately 850 students across the five participating cities of Springfield, Holyoke, Boston, Lawrence, and Lowell are served in each yearly cohort. Abt Associates continued its longitudinal evaluation of the "Preschool Expansion Grant" program, measuring the change in children's skills from the beginning of preschool to the beginning of their Kindergarten year. Abt found that the children in the 2nd cohort (2016-2017 academic year) entered Kindergarten closer to the national average than they were when they entered preschool, increased their executive function skills over the preschool year, and increased their English proficiency (if they were bilingual and had low English proficiency at the start of preschool).

In addition to providing access to formal early education and care, EEC provided informal early education opportunities for children through the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) program. In 2017, 90 CFCE networks across the state provided families in 351 communities with parent-child activities that promote children's language and literacy skill development, and linkages to comprehensive services that support children's development and school readiness. The CFCEs also completed 4,731 screenings of children to measure their developmental progress and make referrals for intervention services as needed. EEC also provided supports to address developmental, emotional, and behavioral challenges faced by children and their families through the Mental Health Consultation Grant program, which delivers consultation services designed to help ensure children's healthy social-emotional development and reduce the rate of suspensions and expulsions in early education and care settings. The FY18 state budget provided \$2.5 million for Early Childhood Mental Health, double the appropriation in FY17. The additional \$1.25 million will allow EEC to provide additional professional development and coaching opportunities in early 2018 on children's social-emotional and behavioral health, and to expand the capacity of the six Early Childhood Mental Health networks to serve more early education programs that require support to meet the needs of children with behavioral challenges. Finally, in order to address EEC's enabling statute regarding prevention practices to reduce expulsion rates, in 2017 EEC began work to implement a Preschool Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) Pyramid Model. The PBS Pyramid Model provides coaching for educators on fostering children's behavioral health and social emotional wellness.



Strategic Direction #2: Programs offered in early childhood, out of school time settings licensed or license exempt by the EEC will promote and support the high quality education and healthy development of children that enables all children to be successful as school members and citizens.

In 2017, EEC began implementation of Differential Licensing for all program license types. Differential Licensing is model for program monitoring that is based on a provider's history of compliance with state regulations. In Differential Licensing, each licensee's level of compliance is used to determine the level of health and safety risks to children, and licensors use this to determine the frequency and/or depth of monitoring needed for each respective provider. As part of the move to a Differential Licensing model, EEC began using the cloud-based Licensing Education Analytic Database (LEAD) system to conduct licensing visits and store relevant data. LEAD houses all information related to the licensing process. In September 2017, EEC went live with Phase 2 of implementing LEAD, using it for all licensing visits under the new Differential Licensing model for all licensed program types. In addition, EEC expanded the LEAD Provider Portal to allow for additional licensing functions/transactions including submitting Corrective Action Plans, filing an incident or injury report, and filing quarterly restraint reports (for Residential & Placement programs). Also in 2017, EEC finished developing Phase 3 of LEAD, which will be used all licensing transactions (e.g., applying for new license, applying to renew a license, requesting a change in licensed capacity). EEC anticipates going live in with LEAD Phase 3 in 2018. EEC has secured \$1 million in capital funds to support LEAD development and enhancements and help meet CCDBG requirements.

EEC conducted a review of its workforce development system against the new training requirements under the reauthorized Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and concluded that key foundational components are needed within EEC's system of workforce supports. In 2017 EEC began updating and developing new content at the foundational level, and building a suite of trainings and materials that will become part of EEC's licensing and QRIS expectations. The topics include health and safety trainings, the pre-licensing process and provider orientation, and educator core competencies such as child growth and development from birth to age eight.

EEC also continued to conduct extensive background records checks on individuals in our licensed and funded programs in order to ensure the safest environments possible for children. For three of the mandatory background checks -- Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI), Sex Offender Record Information (SORI), and the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Registry of Alleged Perpetrators -- EEC processed over 350,000 checks of these systems for nearly 80,000 individual applicants in 2017. EEC also received and reviewed the results of fingerprint-based checks of the national and state criminal history databases for nearly 30,000 individual applicants in 2017. EEC continued to conduct weekly cross-checks of the addresses of EEC's licensed child care facilities with the addresses of registered sex offenders maintained by the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB).

EEC also promotes high-quality in early education and care programs through the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), in order to enhance outcomes for all children in Massachusetts, especially those populations most at risk. In the QRIS, program quality is measured across five areas of standards: Curriculum and Learning; Safe, Healthy Indoor and Outdoor Environments; Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development; Family and Community Engagement; and Leadership, Management and Administration. Quality is rated across four levels, with four being the highest level of quality. At the end of 2017, 5,292 programs were participating in the QRIS. Of these programs, 219 were rated Level 3 and 28 were rated Level 4 on the QRIS. In 2017 EEC developed proposed new standards for the QRIS. EEC



solicited feedback on the proposed revisions to the QRIS and presented the QRIS Standards to the Board of Early Education and Care. The Board is expected to vote on the revised QRIS in early 2018.

EEC also continued to be actively involved with the state's Birth to Grade Three (B-3) alignment initiative, which focuses on linking early education and elementary education as a comprehensive strategy for improving the quality of early education programs, and strengthening the capacity of elementary schools to sustain student learning gains in the early school years. The B-3 Advisory Group Executive Committee continued to collaborate with the state's Early Literacy Expert Panel in the area of effective early childhood developmental screening and assessment. The Early Literacy Expert Panel endorsed the use of a unified approach to developmental screening through greater use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). EEC undertook efforts to provide training, technical assistance, and related materials required to support programs at levels 2 and 3 of the QRIS to fully implement the ASQ, including its on-line components which provide EEC with valuable aggregate child data.

In 2017 EEC awarded a third round of Early Education and Care and Out-of-School Time (EEOST) Capital Fund grants to support facility improvements at programs that serve low-income children. Five agencies received a total of \$4.1 million dollars to renovate existing facilities or purchase new buildings. The FY17 grant awards will improve the quality of existing settings for approximately 300 children in EEC- licensed programs, increase the capacity of these programs to serve an additional 119 children in higher quality settings, and support the creation of 13 educator positions and 72 construction jobs. In addition, the \$4.1 million in grant awards leveraged more than \$5.7 million in private investment from foundations, banks and other sources, towards the renovation, purchase or construction of high-quality facilities.

Strategic Direction #3: The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce who works with children and families in the Commonwealth is professionally prepared, adequately compensated, and diverse.

In 2017, the Department of Early Education and Care continued to place a strong focus on strengthening the early educator workforce as a key to providing high levels of program quality that lead to improved outcomes for children. The Board of Early Education and Care has directed its attention to the needs of the early education workforce, its opportunities for entry and advancement in the field, and the rates paid to programs to support their staff. In 2017 EEC provided four increases to the subsidy reimbursement rate paid to child care programs:

- a 3.6% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to center-based child care programs for EEC-subsidized child care (FY17)
- an increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to all child care programs (center-based and family child care) for care of infants through an EEC child care subsidy, up to the median private rate for infant child care the region (implemented in Apr 2017)
- a 6% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to all child care programs (center-based and family child care) and Family Child Care Systems for EEC-subsidized child care (FY18)
- a 2% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to center-based child care programs for EEC-subsidized child care, and to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays for Family Child Care Systems administration (FY18)

EEC provided resources to increase educators' knowledge, skills, and competencies, through the state's five Educator and Provider Support networks, which provide professional development opportunities,



coaching and mentoring to the early education workforce. EEC continued the Peer Assistance and Coaching project, which provides training of trainers on peer coaching, and offers professional learning communities for early educators. EEC also continued the Early Childhood Educator Scholarship program in partnership with the Department of Higher Education (DHE). In the 2017-18 academic year, 503 educators were approved for an Early Childhood Educator Scholarship that funds the cost of up to 12 college credits. EEC and DHE adopted a new Early Educator Scholarship policy in 2017 that narrowed the list of eligible degree programs to *Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Family Studies, Child Care Administration or fields that directly name early child development and its areas of inquiry*. Finally, in October 2017 EEC doubled the staff level in the Teacher Qualifications Unit -- which is the office that oversees the certification of early educators -- which significantly decreased the wait time for a decision on an application from an average of 91 days beginning in mid-October to an average of 42 days by the end of the calendar year.

Strategic Direction #4: The Department and Board of Early Education and Care will provide leadership, direction and resources to meet the mission of the agency with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of the Commonwealth.

The Board of Early Education and Care (EEC Board) continued its regular schedule of meeting monthly in open session from September to June. The meetings included at least 30 minutes for public testimony. In 2017, the Board held seven of the meetings in the EEC Boston office and three of the meetings regionally (in Framingham on April 4, 2017; in Springfield on June 13, 2017; and in Sandwich on December 12, 2017) to allow for greater participation of stakeholders across the state. The EEC Board held its yearly retreat on July 25, 2017 and focused the discussion on the federal Child Care Development Block Grant requirements, early educator workforce development and program quality supports, and transportation. On December 15, 2017, Governor Baker appointed David Cruise to the Board of Early Education and Care, as business representative with demonstrated commitment in education.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 15D, §3A there is also an Advisory Council on Early Education and Care (EEC Advisory Council). The EEC Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from the early childhood, K-12, and higher education sectors; civic, labor, and business communities; social service agencies; health care providers; and parent organizations. All appointees have a special expertise or interest in high-quality early childhood education and care. The Advisory Council may review and offer comments on any rules or regulations before promulgation by the Board of Early Education and Care, and may, from time to time, make recommendations to the Board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services. The EEC Advisory Council met five times in 2017 and reviewed the following topics: EEC's Transportation Study Design (March 24, 2017); the QRIS Revisions Process (May 26, 2017); EEC's Transportation Study Results (June 29, 2017); Proposed Changes to EEC's Financial Assistance Regulations (October 13, 2017); and Proposed Changes to EEC's FY 2019 Educator and Provider Support Grant (December 8, 2017).

The fiscal year 2018 (FY18) General Appropriations Act (GAA) appropriated \$561.5 million for the Department's total budget. Notable items included \$15 million for a center-based child care rate increase (that is funded in a line item in EEC's budget; in previous fiscal years the funding for a rate increase was appropriated in a rate reserve), \$30 million for program quality improvement (including \$2 million for direct grants to programs to support movement to Levels 3 or 4 of the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System, and \$100,000 for a statewide study of the early education and care workforce),



\$255 million for Income Eligible Child Care (which includes funding for 2,292 new child care vouchers), and \$2.5 million for early childhood mental health – double the amount of funding provided in FY17.

In 2017, EEC contracted with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to analyze the agency’s transportation efforts and make recommendations regarding transportation services in EEC-funded early education programs in the future. EEC reviewed the initial findings with the Board of Early Education and Care and expects to make final recommendations from the transportation study in 2018.

In 2017, EEC received funding from the Barr Foundation and the Boston Foundation to support having a data analyst on staff who will document the data needs of EEC and its stakeholders, identify gaps in EEC’s existing data sets, support improved data reporting both internally and externally, and develop plans for future data collection. EEC was also awarded a \$75,000 “Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grant” from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. This grant provided EEC with additional support to better understand how aspects of the subsidy system shape the stability of children’s participation in high quality early education and care, and identify and evaluate cost-effective ways to improve such stability.



Submission of Annual Report:

This reports satisfies the Board of Early Education and Care's reporting mandates, as codified in M.G.L. c. 15D, §§ 3(g), 4, 5, 10, and 13(d), to submit an annual report describing its progress in achieving the goals and implementing the programs authorized under Chapter 15D of the General Laws of the Commonwealth. The accomplishments and activities described in this report are for 2016.

(See Appendix A for the reporting language).

Mission of Department:

The Department of Early Education and Care was established in 2005 with a mission to provide "***the foundation that supports all children in their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers.***"

We support this mission in partnership with the approximately 9,000 programs licensed by the Commonwealth through our agency. The Department of Early Education and Care serves as the entry point of Massachusetts' birth to 21 education pipeline. "Early education and care" includes formal programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children during out-of-school time; group homes; foster care and adoption placement agencies; and residential schools for children with special needs; as well as programs in informal settings such as home visiting and community-based family engagement networks that provide literacy and other developmental activities for children and parents in libraries and adult education centers. We also administer financial support for children from families that are low-income or who have been referred by the Department of Children and Families or the Department of Transitional Assistance, to attend a high-quality early education and care program.

The Department of Early Education and Care endeavors to deliver the most effective high-quality, comprehensive early learning and development system in the nation. This requires ensuring that programs meet safety and best practice standards through regulatory review, technical assistance, and monitoring, and are supported in advancing to higher levels of quality through a system of standards and support. At the heart of a high-quality and comprehensive early education and care system are its educators, and to this end the Department works to build the knowledge, competencies and career pathways of the over 100,000 educators who comprise our workforce and are key to closing the early achievement gap and ensuring that all of our children enter school ready to succeed.



Governance:

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is part of the Executive Office of Education, one of eight Executive Offices under Governor Charlie Baker. Education Secretary James A. Peyser oversees the Executive Office of Education and is Governor Baker's top advisor on education. The Commissioner of Early Education and Care, Thomas L. Weber, manages the Department of Early Education and Care.

An eleven member Board of Early Education and Care sets policies and regulations related to early education and care programs and services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Education Secretary Peyser and the Secretary of Health and Human Services are ex-officio members of the Board of Early Education and Care; the other nine members are appointed by the Governor. Commissioner Weber is the Secretary to the Board. The members of the Board of Early Education and Care are:

Nonie Lesaux, Ph.D, Chair
Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Professor of Education and Society, Harvard University
At-large Representative

James A. Peyser - Secretary, Executive Office of Education

Marylou Sudders - Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (Patricia Mackin, designee)

Mary Walachy, Vice Chairperson - Executive Director of the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation
At-large Representative

Sheila Balboni - Executive Director, The Community Group
Appointed as early education and care provider with management and administrative experience

Joni Block - Grant Specialist, Brockton Public Schools
Appointed as an early education and care teacher

David Cruise – President and CEO, Regional Employment Board of Hampden County
Appointed as business representative with demonstrated commitment in education

Kathleen C. Joyce – Head of US Corporate Affairs and Media Relations, Shire
Appointed as a parent of a child receiving early education and care services

Alison Schonwald, MD - Pediatrician; Medical Director, Developmental Behavioral Outreach, Boston Children's Hospital
Appointed as pediatrician with a focus on child development

Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Ed.D. - Associate Professor at Wheelock College
Appointed as an expert in evaluation and assessment of pre-schools

Joan Wasser Gish, Esq. - Director of Strategic Initiatives, Boston College
At-large Representative



On December 15, 2017, Governor Baker appointed David Cruise to the Board of Early Education and Care, as business representative with demonstrated commitment in education.

The Board of Early Education and Care (EEC Board) meets monthly from September to June each year. The meetings are open to the public and include 30 minutes for public testimony. The Board holds most meetings in the EEC Boston office, however in 2017 the Board also held meetings in Framingham (April 4, 2017), Springfield (June 13, 2017), and Sandwich (December 12, 2017) to allow for greater participation of stakeholders across the state. The EEC Board held its yearly retreat on July 25, 2017 and focused the discussion on the federal Child Care Development Block Grant requirements, early educator workforce development and program quality supports, and transportation.

The EEC Board continued with the committee structure consisting of an Oversight Committee that meets regularly (monthly or bi-monthly), and *ad hoc* working groups that meet as needed to address specific objectives that support the agency and are guided by the larger strategic goals of the Board. The Oversight Committee reviews EEC budget-related activities that are brought to the Board for discussion and decision making, and supports EEC's efforts to implement a system to improve and support quality statewide and to offer an array of high quality, comprehensive, and affordable programs designed to meet the diverse and individual needs of children and families. J.D. Chesloff chaired the Oversight Committee in 2017; EEC Board Chair Nonie Lesaux assumed chairmanship of the Oversight Committee in February 2018. The EEC Board also convened a Workforce and Quality Improvement *ad hoc* working group seven times in 2017; agenda topics covered by this working group included revisions to the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) standards, development of a career lattice for early educators, and workforce grant planning. In addition, the EEC Board convened an *ad hoc* working group on the new Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) requirements, and the CCDF *ad hoc* working group met twice in 2017.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 15D, §3A there is also an Advisory Council on Early Education and Care (EEC Advisory Council). The EEC Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from the early childhood, K-12, and higher education sectors; civic, labor, and business communities; social service agencies; health care providers; and parent organizations. EEC's Advisory Council members represent a geographic balance of the state and reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. All appointees have a special expertise or interest in high-quality early childhood education and care. The Advisory Council may review and offer comments on any rules or regulations before promulgation by the Board of Early Education and Care, and may, from time to time, make recommendations to the Board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services. The EEC Advisory Council met five times in 2017 and reviewed the following topics: EEC's Transportation Study Design (March 24, 2017); the QRIS Revisions Process (May 26, 2017); EEC's Transportation Study Results (June 29, 2017); Proposed Changes to EEC's Subsidized Child Care/Financial Assistance Regulations (October 13, 2017); and Proposed Changes to EEC's FY 2019 Educator and Provider Support Grant (December 8, 2017).



Statutory Responsibilities and Strategic Directions:

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the lead agency for all early education and care services and funding in the Commonwealth. EEC is the state education agency for the purposes of early education and care services under federal law and is responsible for compliance with early education and care services under the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-193). EEC's statutory obligations include:

- Seeking federal funds for early education and care services;
- Licensing or approval of early education and care programs, group care facilities, adoption and placement agencies, school-aged child care programs, and temporary shelter facilities;
- Establishing provider rates and participant fees for EEC-licensed programs;
- Implementing a number of programs and administering any related grant awards;
- Providing ongoing program monitoring to ensure quality as well as adherence to regulations and standards;
- Providing Technical Assistance to providers and potential providers;
- Facilitating the development of the EEC workforce and, when appropriate, providing training and Professional Development;
- Maintaining an educator database and comprehensive waitlist of children expressing interest in services;
- Providing family education in English and other, commonly spoken languages when available and;
- Addressing infant and toddler needs, including parent education, early literacy services, and informal developmental opportunities.

The EEC Board's Strategic Plan¹ for the Department of Early Education and Care focuses on four key areas:

1. All young children in the Commonwealth will be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful, and their families will be provided with opportunities to support their children's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical development.
2. Programs offered in early childhood and out of school time settings licensed or license-exempt by the EEC will promote and support the high quality education and healthy development of children that enables all children to be successful as school members and citizens.
3. The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce who works with children and families in the Commonwealth is professionally prepared, adequately compensated, and diverse.
4. The Department and Board of Early Education and Care will provide leadership, direction and resources to meet the mission of the agency with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of the Commonwealth.

¹ EEC Strategic Plan 2014-2019. Adopted by the Board of Early Education and Care on June 10, 2014.



Highlights from 2017 and Looking Ahead to 2018

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) has embarked on a multi-year campaign to stabilize the early education and care system and enhance the quality of services throughout the system, and EEC's efforts and resources in 2017 were focused on advancing these priorities. The Department and the Board of Early Education and Care arrived at the focus on stability and quality after careful consideration of the agency's licensing, program quality, and financial data as well as the substantial input from service providers and advocates. EEC's twin focus on quality and stability reflects a necessary and practical response to the very real needs of the existing early education and care system as well as a prerequisite to establishing a strong foundation for future system expansion. Despite a challenging fiscal environment, EEC made important progress in 2017 towards these goals, including but not limited to the accomplishments in the following areas:

- Subsidy Rates -- Developed and successfully advocated for a plan to fund the highest annual rate increase in EEC's history – 6% in FY18 – in addition to increasing all Infant/Toddler Rates to the 50th percentile of the market rate.
- Income Eligible Care -- Developed and successfully advocated for a plan to increase access to Income Eligible Care in FY18 for approximately 2,292 children.
- 12 Month Subsidy Authorizations -- Developed and successfully advocated for a plan to initiate Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)-required 12 month authorizations during FY18.
- Foundational Training for Educators and Programs -- Developed content for trainings associated with new CCDBG health and safety requirements.
- Regulation Changes: In order to meet new CCDBG requirements, EEC proposed amendments its regulations on background record checks (606 CMR 14.00); the licensure/approval of adoption and foster care placement agencies (102 CMR 5.00); and subsidized child care (606 CMR 10). EEC expects the revisions to become effective in 2018.

In 2017, the Baker-Polito Administration highlighted various education programs, initiatives and funding opportunities from early education to college level, aimed at providing a quality and affordable education for every student in the Commonwealth. In May 2017, Governor Baker, Education Secretary Peyser, and Commissioner Weber visited a Head Start program and childcare center at the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc. (GLCAC) to read to toddlers and meet with early education teachers. The discussion covered child care, workforce recruitment issues facing the program and the importance of exposing students to STEM curriculum at an early age as they do at GLCAC, where young children build miniature bridges and learn math skills.

At the heart of a high-quality and comprehensive early education and care system are its educators, and EEC is committed to building the knowledge, competencies and career pathways of the educators who comprise our workforce and are key to closing the early achievement gap and ensuring that all of our children enter school ready to succeed. In 2017, EEC conducted research to examine the current state of the early education and care workforce. Partnering with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI), EEC identified that:



- The median age of the early education workforce in Massachusetts is 42 years old.
- 27% of the early education workforce works more than 40 hours per week.
- 40% of the early education workforce are parents.
- 28% of the Center-Based workforce (which include educators and administrators) have a Bachelor's Degree while 14% of the Family Child Care (FCC) workforce have a Bachelor's Degree.
- 42% of FCC educators and 21% of Center-Based workers have a high school education or less.
- 23% of FCC educators have limited English speaking ability (as compared to 7% for Center-Based providers) and 12% reside in linguistically isolated communities.
- 37% of FCC and 25% of Center-Based provider receive public health insurance.

In addition, EEC conducted a review of its own standards, licensing requirements, licensing data, and licensor experiences related to the needs of the workforce and found that early educator Core Competencies have been identified and built into core requirements but do not align with EEC's Regulatory Categories of Study course content; college transfer pathways exist, but more needs to be done so that courses and prior knowledge transfer easily from public to private Institutes of Higher Education; and Early Learning Standards exist and training has been offered to the field, but EEC does not have information on whether the standards are being used in all programs, or whether higher education has incorporated them into early education programs.

In response, in 2017 EEC focused its efforts on three integrated strands of work: supporting the foundation knowledge of educators, supporting program's quality improvement through a program-focused approach, and supporting enhanced qualifications through career pathways. All of these efforts are ultimately intended to result in better outcomes for young children and their families. Research tells us that high-quality early education and care provides long-term benefits for children and for society as a whole, and that the investments up front in child development supports reduce the need for more costly interventions in the future. Several of our initiatives have provided us with early evidence that the children who were served are better off now as a result of our investments; these include:

- Two years of evaluation data on the four-year-old children in our "Preschool Expansion Grant" program show academic gains at Kindergarten entry;
- In the last two years, 62% to 72% of preschool children who were at risk of suspension or expulsion and whose early education program received consultation from our Early Childhood Mental Health networks, were successfully retained in their program.
- Our Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) networks completed screenings for 4,731 children in 2017, that help identify possible developmental delays; if the child's ASQ scores are below a specified cutoff, CFCE staff provide the family with referrals to other supports, such as Early Intervention and public preschool special education, as well as information on activities that may help support their child's development.

Looking Ahead to 2018

As the early education and care workforce represents the centerpiece of EEC's program quality and stability agenda, in 2018, EEC intends to revise and finalize a Career Lattice for family, group, and school-age educators that will frame the essential competencies for each category of educator and set the stage



for the development of a new EEC Teacher Qualifications System in FY19. In addition, EEC will advance professional development activities that support child screening, expand Targeted Coaching for educators, and develop a Health and Safety Module for programs, to promote essential foundational training through a competency-based approach.

EEC intends to deliver Final Quality Rating and Improvement (QRIS) Standards to the Board in 2018, and consider the new QRIS's relationship with an emerging Career Lattice, as well as tiered reimbursement rate models. EEC plans to bring short and long-term recommendations on subsidized transportation to the Board in 2018 and has reserved funding to further research the impacts of any proposed recommendations. EEC and Abt Associates will produce additional research on the "Preschool Expansion Grant", including Year 2 implementation findings, Year 2 children Kindergarten outcomes, impact evaluation results for Year 2 of the "Preschool Expansion Grant", and Year 3 classroom observations.

Finally, EEC will continue to endeavor to deliver the most effective high-quality, comprehensive early learning and development system in the nation.

The remainder of this report summarizes EEC's activities in 2017 and progress in each of the four Strategic Directions for the Department.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS / FIVE-YEAR GOALS

Strategic Direction #1: All young children in the Commonwealth will be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful, and their families will be provided with opportunities to support their children’s cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical development.

Child Care Financial Assistance

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) provides financial assistance for children from eligible families to attend high quality early education and care programs. EEC subsidizes approximately 54,000 children from birth to age 14 (up to age 16 for children with a special need) in settings across EEC’s mixed delivery system of care, which includes center-based programs, family child care homes, public preschool programs, and Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms. Together these programs have the capacity to serve over 230,000 children.

The three major state funding programs for child care financial assistance that EEC administers are Income Eligible Child Care, Supportive Child Care, and Transitional Child Care. The Income Eligible Child Care program provides child care financial assistance for low-income families with a service need, on a first come/first served basis. The Supportive Child Care Program provides child care placements for families referred by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). EEC primarily enrolls children in Supportive Child Care through contracts with providers and issues vouchers as needed to ensure that children have access to this type of care. The number of Supportive Child Care vouchers that EEC has awarded has increased in the last two years. The Transitional Child Care Program provides child care vouchers for families receiving Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) cash assistance and participating in the Employment Services Program, or who are in the 12 month period after close of their TAFDC benefits. The Income Eligible Child Care Program also funds two specific types of care: Teen Parent Child Care and Homeless Child Care for families residing in homeless shelters affiliated with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); or domestic violence shelters and substance abuse shelters affiliated with DCF. On average per month in 2017, 638 children residing in shelters and/or hotels and 298 children of teen parents were enrolled in an EEC-contracted early education and care program. (See Appendix C for the number of children served in EEC’s three child care financial assistance programs in 2017.)

In spring 2017, EEC competitively re-procured the contract for Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services in the Commonwealth. CCR&Rs support families in accessing high-quality child care by administering vouchers, providing information and referral services, and helping to manage the waitlist for child care subsidies. Seven CCR&R agencies serve as the regional hubs for providing these services for families across the state. EEC also uses Mass 211 to provide information and referral services including placing families on the waitlist for Income Eligible Child Care.

Preschool Expansion Grant

In 2017, EEC continued to make progress toward providing universal early education and care for preschool-aged children through our “Preschool Expansion Grant” program, which provides a year of free-preschool to four-year-old children. In December 2017, EEC received a fourth year of federal funding, in the amount of \$15 million. This award brings the total funding that Massachusetts has received from the “Preschool Expansion Grant” program to \$60 million over four years. The “Preschool Expansion Grant” program provides a year of free, high-quality preschool to four-year-old children from low-income



families, the majority of whom would otherwise not have had access to preschool before entering Kindergarten, in five communities: Springfield, Holyoke, Boston, Lawrence and Lowell. Through the grant funding, 48 new preschool classrooms were opened in fall 2015 with space for approximately 850 children in each year of the grant. The “Preschool Expansion Grant” program kicked off in the 2015-2016 school year with the first cohort of 850 preschool students. In 2017 the second cohort of students graduated and the third cohort of students began in the program. The 48 “Preschool Expansion Grant” program site locations are listed below.

Boston (15 Classrooms)

- Roxbury YMCA
- East Boston YMCA
- Walnut Grove Head Start/ABCD (4 classrooms)
- Nurtury (3 sites)
 - Learning Lab,
 - Tremont Street
 - Horadan Way
- Wesley Education Center
- Ellis Memorial
- Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester
- Paige Academy, Inc.
- Catholic Charities (Nazareth)
- Catholic Charities (Yawkey)

Holyoke (4 Classrooms)

- Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start
 - Churchill Head Start
 - Lawrence Full Service Community School
- Valley Opportunity Council
 - Sullivan School
 - Morgan Full Service Community School

Lawrence (10 Classrooms)

- Lawrence Early Achievement Partnership
 - GLCAC Inc., Head Start (4 classrooms)
 - The Community Group (6 classrooms)

Lowell (8 Classrooms)

- Lowell Collaborative Preschool Academy

Springfield (11 Classrooms)

- Springfield Public Schools’ Early Childhood Center (5 classrooms)
- Square One
- Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start
- YMCA of Greater Springfield

The “Preschool Expansion Grant” funds support high quality program offerings through required design elements such as inclusive full-day and full-year programming with low child-to-teacher ratios (10:1 or less); workforce development supports for educators, including individualized growth plans, joint professional development between the school district and community early education programs, and coaching and mentoring; and use of highly credentialed educators who are compensated at a rate comparable to public school district salaries. The classes provide programming for the children from 8 to 10 hours per day.

The Department of Early Education and Care is contracting with Abt Associates to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the programs funded by the “Preschool Expansion Grant.” In the longitudinal evaluation, Abt Associates is measuring the change in children’s skills from the beginning of preschool to the beginning of their Kindergarten year. Abt found that the children in the 2nd cohort (2016-2017 academic year) entered Kindergarten demonstrating math, literacy, and vocabulary skills that were closer to the national average than they were when they entered preschool, increased their executive function skills over the preschool year, and increased their English proficiency (if they were bilingual and had low English proficiency at the start of preschool). In the 2016-2017 year of the “Preschool Expansion Grant” program, Abt Associates began an impact evaluation that will provide causal estimates of the effects of the grant-funded program at the end of the preschool year. Results will be forthcoming in the spring of 2018.



Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative - State Planning Grant

In the spring of 2017, EEC awarded a 2nd round of "Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative" grants to support communities in developing strategic plans and building public-private partnerships for providing additional high-quality preschool programs for 3 to 5 year old children. EEC funded three communities -- Boston, Brockton and Salem – at \$20,000 each, to develop plans that consider both the feasibility of expanding preschool with existing resources and feasible expansion levels that would require additional funding. These grants were similar to those awarded in 2016 to 13 communities: Athol, Brockton, Cape Cod, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, North Adams, Pittsfield, Somerville, Springfield and Worcester. The 2017 Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative grants were designed to support a planning process that increased the communities’ readiness for preschool expansion by establishing shared visions among public school districts, EEC-licensed programs and other local stakeholders; conducting needs assessments; setting priorities; and identifying available resources.

The grantees specifically focused on identifying plans that could be accomplished with currently available funding and identifying desired activities that could be accomplished if additional funding were to become available. Each community took the opportunity to engage the local early education community in the planning process and designed local governance structures that could be continued with current funding. Although community plans differed, the activities that were proposed within current funding levels included joint professional development opportunities, aligned curriculum and developmental screening of children. Activities that the communities identified as ones that were important but would require additional funding included expanding prekindergarten seats by offering a variety of schedules, coordinating enrollment, providing family support services, providing behavioral health consultation, providing coaching for educators, retaining highly qualified educators with salaries that are commensurate with the public school, and developing pipeline programs with local community colleges.

Early Childhood Mental Health

The Department Early Education and Care (EEC) has provided funding for early childhood mental health consultation services since 2008, and in fiscal year 2018 EEC awarded \$2.12 million to six agencies through the Mental Health Consultation Grant program. The grantees provide mental health supports, strategies, and services that address the developmental, emotional, and behavioral challenges of young children; help promote children's success in school; and help to reduce the rate of suspensions and expulsions in early education and care settings. The current fiscal year 2018 (FY18) Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation grantees are listed below. (See Appendix E for additional information about the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Grant program.)

FY18 Grantees	Award	Region	Cities/Towns
Behavioral Health Network	\$463,156	Western	102
Community Healthlink	\$307,579	Central	65
Enable, Inc.	\$288,877	Northeast, Metrowest, Southeast	60
Justice Resource Institute	\$393,742	Southeast, Cape and Islands	69
MSPCC	\$359,793	Northeast	47
The Home for Little Wanderers	\$310,103	Metro Boston	8
Total	\$2,123,250		351



The FY18 award amounts reflect an \$870,000 increase over the grantees' FY17 award levels. EEC received \$2.5 million in the Early Childhood Mental Health line item in the FY18 state budget – double the appropriation in FY17. In addition to increasing the award amounts to the Early Childhood Mental Health grantees, the additional funding will be used to provide three additional professional development and coaching opportunities that build the skills, knowledge and competencies of educators and programs in the area of social-emotional and behavioral health.

Improving Positive Social-Emotional Skills and Relationships through Positive Behavior Supports

In order to address EEC's enabling statute regarding prevention practices to reduce expulsion rates, in 2017 EEC began work to implement a Preschool Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) initiative using the Pyramid Model design (PBS Pyramid Model). The PBS Pyramid Model is designed to provide resources to early education programs such as coaching and professional development on behavioral health, trauma, equity, and social emotional wellness that supports children and reduces educator turnover. EEC has aligned this work with similar efforts by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH), specifically ESE's work with Massachusetts public school districts currently engaged in the Pyramid Model activities and DPH's work with a the Parents Interacting with Infants approach (PIWI) which aligns and fits within the Pyramid Model. EEC will hire a vendor to evaluate the effectiveness of the PBS Pyramid Model and will design the evaluation component to align with that of ESE and DPH.

Early Childhood Special Education/Supports for Young Children with Disabilities

EEC is engaged in several interagency efforts that support inclusive and high-quality education for young children with disabilities. EEC partners with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) in providing joint professional development and technical assistance opportunities and supports for school districts and early childhood programs. In 2017, EEC's and ESE's early childhood special education strategic areas of focus included: children's healthy social emotional development, family supports, transitions, early literacy, and educational outcomes. The Departments are jointly offering professional development and coaching on early literacy and language development that includes a three-session series which covers the topics of Building Literacy Skills by Increasing Discussions in Pre-K to 3rd Grade Classrooms, Promoting Language Use in the Primary Classroom, and Promoting Language Use through Reading and Writing. In addition, EEC continued to participate in the state's Special Education Advisory Council coordinated by ESE, and the Massachusetts Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) that advises the Department of Public Health on the Early Intervention program for children birth to age three. In FY17 EEC is co-chairing the ICC along with a parent of a child who participated in the Early Intervention program.

EEC also supports inclusive learning environments for preschool children with disabilities through the Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments Grant program. This grant provides funding to 18 EEC-licensed center-based preschool programs and 102 public preschool programs to provide preschool learning opportunities in settings that serve children with and without disabilities together in an inclusive setting. In FY17, EEC awarded 79 grants totaling \$8.43 million for programs to provide inclusive preschool learning environments for 4,729 children in 157 communities across the Commonwealth (1,667 children with disabilities and 3,062 children without disabilities.) In FY18, EEC awarded 79 grants totaling \$6.27 million for programs to provide inclusive preschool learning environments for up to 4,900 children in 157 communities across the Commonwealth (1,890 children with disabilities and 3,010 children without disabilities.) In both fiscal years, the majority of the grantees were public school preschool programs.



Head Start

Massachusetts received a five-year \$875,000 federal grant award that funds the continuation of the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) at the Department of Early Education and Care from 2016 to 2021. The HSSCO facilitates partnerships between the 30 local Head Start agencies in Massachusetts and other state entities that provide services to benefit low-income children and their families. Head Start is a federally-funded grant program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families that provides early education and care programs for children from low-income families to support their readiness for school at Kindergarten entry. Head Start programs serve children from three to five years of age, and Early Head Start programs serve children from birth up to age three. The Massachusetts HSSCO aligns the state's activities and goals with the priorities set forth by the federal Office of Head Start; local Head Start and Early Head Start grantees across Massachusetts; the Massachusetts Head Start Association; and the federally-supported Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System for Head Start.

EEC also administers the state-funded Head Start State Supplemental Grant program, which provides funding to the 30 Head Start and Early Head Start agencies in Massachusetts to ensure that children and families have access to the full array of comprehensive Head Start services. The FY18 budget appropriation of \$9.1 million is prioritized to fund workforce development supports and enhanced quality activities that lead to the following:

- Improved salaries, compensation and benefits for child development staff;
- Incentives for staff to increase their qualification through credential or degree attainment;
- Workforce supports in classrooms and family child care homes, including coaches, mental health consultants and additional teaching staff that reduce child/teacher child ratios;
- 100% participation in QRIS by all Head Start and Early Head Start programs;
- Access to comprehensive Head Start services for 180 state-funded children; and
- Direct support for non-Federal matching funds for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to meet their 20% Federal Head Start funding requirements

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement/Parent Child Home Program

Since its inception in fiscal year 2010, the primary role of the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant has been to identify, engage and support high needs families not involved in the formal mixed delivery system of early education and care. By linking these families to educational opportunities and comprehensive services in their communities, they will be better equipped to support their child's development and readiness for school. There are currently 90 CFCE grantees that serve 351 cities and towns across the Commonwealth, acting as community-based information and resource hubs for families with young children, especially those with multiple risk factors and/or are hard to reach, in order to increase their knowledge of, and accessibility to, high-quality early education and care programs and services. The priorities of the CFCE grant include: 1) universal and targeted outreach to families; 2) linkages for families to comprehensive services that support family well-being and children's optimal development; 3) educational opportunities about child development and parent-child activities that promote language and literacy skills, and 4) coordination of activities and community-based resources that promote successful birth to eight transitions, with a specific focus on Kindergarten. The CFCE networks create linkages between educators and providers on the local level to professional development supports and opportunities available through EEC's statewide system of educator and provider support.

Thirty CFCE grantees provide Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) services. PCHP is a parenting, early literacy, and school readiness program designed to help strengthen families through verbal interaction and



educational play between parents and their children. Services are delivered to high need families through intensive home visits. Community-based early literacy specialists visit each family twice a week for two program cycles over a two-year period (typically two school calendar years), starting when a child is between 18 months and 30 months, and ending when the child enters the pre-Kindergarten year. Over the course of the two years, every family receives a library of 46 high quality books and educational toys, and 46 curricular guide sheets with tips on fostering young children’s skill development and engaging children through literacy, music or art activities. EEC served approximately 720 children and families with PCHP in 2017.

In support of finding new ways to identify children who could benefit from additional resources to succeed, the CFCE networks utilize the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) developmental screening tool to provide parents and families with information about their child's progress across five developmental domains. If the child's ASQ scores are below a specified cutoff, CFCE staff provide the family with referrals to other supports, such as Early Intervention and public preschool special education, as well as information on activities that may help support their child's development. In 2017, the CFCE networks completed 4,731 ASQ screenings.



Strategic Direction #2: Programs offered in early childhood and out of school time settings licensed or license-exempt by the EEC will promote and support the high quality education and healthy development of children that enables all children to be successful as school members and citizens.

Differential Licensing and LEAD

In 2017, EEC began implementation of Differential Licensing for all program license types. Differential Licensing is model for program monitoring that is based on a provider's history of compliance with state regulations. In Differential Licensing, each licensee's level of compliance is used to determine the level of health and safety risks to children, and licensors use this to determine the frequency and/or depth of monitoring needed for each respective provider. Differential Licensing uses key indicators in its monitoring tools, which are the regulations that would pose the highest probability of harm to children if found to be in non-compliance. These include adequate staffing, functional communication logs, and evidence of emergency preparedness.

As part of the move to a Differential Licensing model, EEC began using the cloud-based Licensing Education Analytic Database (LEAD) system to conduct licensing visits and store relevant data. LEAD is a single system for licensing and investigation information, and replaces the two existing licensing data systems: Licensing Manager and Complaint Tracking System. LEAD follows the licensing process from beginning to end and houses all information related to the licensing process. In September 2017, EEC went live with Phase 2 of implementing LEAD, using it for all licensing visits under the new Differential Licensing model for all licensed program types. In addition, EEC expanded the LEAD Provider Portal to allow for additional licensing functions/transactions including submitting Corrective Action Plans, filing an incident or injury report, and filing quarterly restraint reports (for Residential & Placement programs). Also in 2017, EEC finished developing Phase 3 of LEAD, which will be used all licensing transactions (e.g., applying for new license, applying to renew a license, requesting a change in licensed capacity). EEC anticipates going live in with LEAD Phase 3 in 2018. EEC has secured \$1 million in capital funds to support LEAD development and enhancements and help meet CCDBG requirements.

Background Records Checks

EEC's background records check process includes four checks: a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check, a Sex Offender Record Information (SORI) check, a check of the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Registry of Alleged Perpetrators, and a fingerprint-based check of the national and state criminal history databases. For the CORI, SORI, and DCF Registry of Alleged Perpetrators checks, EEC processed nearly 80,000 individual applications and ran over 350,000 checks of these systems in 2017, as a separate query must be completed for each name (e.g., maiden name, former name, alias) on an application. For the fingerprint-based checks of the national and state criminal history databases, in 2017 EEC reviewed the results of nearly 30,000 applicants. In addition, EEC continued to conduct weekly cross-checks of the addresses of EEC's licensed child care facilities with the addresses of registered sex offenders maintained by the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB). When the analysis of the databases results in a match, the Department investigates the address to ensure that a registered sex offender is not located at an address where early education services are being provided. In 2017, EEC and SORB continued using an interchange to share the data needed to conduct the address cross-check.

The 2014 reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) required EEC to complete four additional background checks: a National Criminal Information Center check, a check of the criminal database in all states where applicants resided in the previous five years, a child welfare check in all states



where an applicant resided in the previous five years, and National Sex Offender Registry check. In 2017 EEC engaged in an intensive effort, with support from the Governor's Office, the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS), and the Executive Office of Education (EOE), to develop a new Information Technology (IT) system capable of more efficiently meeting the workforce's needs as well as the CCDBG requirements. Approximately \$2.5M in capital funding is supporting the development of a new Background Record Checks system that is expected to be complete in 2018.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

EEC has developed a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to support programs in engaging in a process of continuous quality improvement, in order to enhance outcomes for all children. In the QRIS, program quality is measured across five areas of standards: Curriculum and Learning; Safe, Healthy Indoor and Outdoor Environments; Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development; Family and Community Engagement; and Leadership, Management and Administration. Quality is rated across four levels, with four being the highest level of quality. At the end of 2017, 5,292 programs were participating in the QRIS with either an application in review or rating level granted by EEC. Of these programs, 5,239 had a QRIS rating level confirmed by EEC, as follows:

QRIS Level 1: 3,462 programs

QRIS Level 2: 1,522 programs

QRIS Level 3: 219 programs

QRIS Level 4: 28 programs

In order to validate whether the QRIS tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality, EEC and the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute conducted a study of the QRIS and assessed the extent to which quality ratings are related to children's progress in learning, development, and school readiness. Using feedback from the validation study and public comment, in 2017 EEC developed proposed new standards for the QRIS. EEC solicited feedback on the proposed revisions to the QRIS and presented the QRIS Standards to the Board of Early Education and Care. The Board is expected to vote on the revised QRIS in early 2018. EEC also worked on interim changes to the current QRIS to address some areas that the validation study found to be burdensome for programs.

In 2017 EEC renewed its contract with Wellesley College to continue providing Environment Rating Scales (ERS) Reliable Rater site visits to those center-based programs, family child care providers, and out-of-school time programs applying to become QRIS Level 4, and to make Technical Assistance site visits to those center-based programs, family child care providers, and out-of-school time programs who are applying for QRIS Level 3. In addition, EEC renewed its contract with Collaborative for Educational Services to provide training to programs at QRIS Levels 2 through 4 in the use of standardized tools for effectively measuring structural and process quality indicators as part of their self-assessment process.

Building the Foundational Knowledge of Early Education Providers

EEC conducted a review of its workforce development system against the new training requirements under the reauthorized Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and concluded that key foundational components are needed within EEC's system of workforce supports. In 2017 EEC began developing new content at the foundational level, and building a suite of trainings and materials that will become part of EEC's licensing and QRIS expectations. The topics include the following:

Health and Safety Trainings: Licensing pre-service orientation and ongoing training to educators in all programs (including home-based and license-exempt) in areas such as:



- Appropriate Precautions in Transporting Children
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning
- Prevention of and Response to Emergencies due to Food and Allergic Reactions
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, SIDS/SUID, and Use of Safe Sleeping Practices
- Recognizing and Reporting Appropriately to Incidents of Child Abuse and Neglect

Pre-Licensee Process and Required Provider Orientation: Before applying for a license, EEC requires applicants complete an orientation to EEC license requirements. After completing this training and applying for a license, licensees receive a provisional license and, after 6 months operating under this license, must complete an additional training on license expectations. EEC is updating and revising these trainings and will include information on the QRIS in the revised orientation.

On-going Foundational Core Knowledge Trainings: CCDBG requires that EEC establish training and professional development requirements that improve the knowledge of the workforce, including those in license-exempt programs. EEC is developing foundational trainings that align with EEC's expectations around educator's knowledge and competencies in the following areas:

- Understanding Child Growth and Development (Birth – 8 Years of Age);
- Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth (Birth – 8 Years of Age);
- Effective Partnering with Families;
- Identifying and Caring for Children with Special Needs; and
- Program assessment using evidence-based tools.

Birth to Grade Three Strategy Development

Massachusetts has embraced Birth to Grade Three (B-3) alignment as a comprehensive strategy that seeks to improve young children's access to high quality birth to grade three programs, and strengthens the capacity of schools to sustain student learning gains in the early elementary years. In 2017, the B-3 Advisory Group Executive Committee (consisting of representatives from the Executive Office of Education; the Executive Office of Health and Human Services; EEC; and the Departments of Elementary Secondary Education, Higher Education, and Public Health) and members of the B-3 Advisory Group including Strategies for Children and several institutions of higher education, focused on examining developmental screening in coordination with the Early Literacy Expert Panel, and also reviewed workforce development and integrating data systems. The B-3 Advisory Group Executive Committee will continue to collaborate with the Early Literacy Expert Panel in 2018 to develop policy guidance on effective early childhood screening, including recommendations for a developmental screening tool.

Developmental Screening

Developmental screening of children can both detect developmental delays as well as recognize achievement of developmental milestones. The QRIS Validation Study found that 77% of Level 1 programs and 35% of Level 2 center-based programs in the study did not offer developmental screening of children. The draft revision of the QRIS requires the use of developmental screening at Level Two for all program types. In addition, in 2017 the Massachusetts Early Literacy Expert Panel endorsed the use of a unified approach to developmental screening through greater use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). To prepare for and support programs in using an evidence-based screening tool to conduct developmental screenings, in 2017 EEC undertook efforts to provide training, technical assistance, and related materials required to support programs at levels 2 and 3 of the QRIS to fully implement the ASQ, including its on-line components which provide EEC with valuable aggregate child data.



Universal Pre-Kindergarten Classroom Quality (UPK) Grant

One of the grant programs that the Department of Early Education and Care uses to improve the quality of programming for children in the Commonwealth is the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Classroom Quality (UPK) Grant. The UPK grant is awarded to programs across the mixed-delivery system of early education and care and aids in the state's efforts to improve the quality of child care programs in all communities. This grant program supports the ability of preschool programs to:

- Promote the early learning guidelines to support school readiness and positive outcomes for children participating in UPK classrooms and homes;
- Enhance the quality of services for children in UPK classrooms and family child care homes, especially for high needs children and/or children living in underperforming school districts;
- Maximize parent choice by ensuring participation from all program types within a mixed public and private service delivery system;
- Use evidence-based formative assessment to measure children's progress across developmental domains and use this information to inform practice through individualized teaching; and
- Serve as models of excellence, engage in communities of practice, and support the process of continuous quality improvement across the Commonwealth.

In FY 2017, EEC awarded approximately \$5.7 million in UPK Grants through a renewal process to 138 preschool programs and a total of 458 classrooms serving 7,276 children (of which 4,948 are "high needs" children). These 138 preschool programs consist of 91 center-based programs, 9 public school programs; and 38 system-affiliated family child care providers.

Early Education and Care and Out-of-School Time (EOST) Capital Fund Grants

In August 2017 EEC awarded a third round of Early Education and Care and Out-of-School Time (EOST) Capital Fund grants to support facility improvements at programs that serve low-income children. Five agencies received a total of \$4.1 million dollars to renovate existing facilities or purchase new buildings. The FY17 grant awards will improve the quality of existing settings for approximately 300 children in EEC-licensed programs, increase the capacity of these programs to serve an additional 119 children in higher quality settings, and support the creation of 13 educator positions and 72 construction jobs. In addition, the \$4.1 million in grant awards leveraged more than \$5.7 million in private investment from foundations, banks and other sources, towards the renovation, purchase or construction of high-quality facilities. The EOST grants are financed through the state's capital budget and provide matching funds that leverage private investment. EEC partnered with the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation and the Children's Investment Fund to administer the funding. Since 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded \$15.1 million in EOST grants to 21 agencies. The 2017 EOST grant awards are as follows:

Lead Agency	Service Area	Award
Child Care of the Berkshires	North Adams	\$1,000,000
Belchertown Day School, Inc.	Belchertown	\$1,000,000
Action for Boston Community Development	Roxbury	\$743,740
YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts	New Bedford	\$800,000
Worcester Community Action Council	Webster	\$600,000



Strategic Direction #3: The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce who works with children and families in the Commonwealth is professionally prepared, adequately compensated, and diverse.

Center-Based Child Care Rate Increase

In 2017 EEC provided four increases to the subsidy reimbursement rate paid to child care programs:

- a 3.6% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to center-based child care programs for EEC-subsidized child care (FY17)*
- an increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to all child care programs (center-based and family child care) for care of infants through an EEC child care subsidy, up to the median private rate for infant child care the region (implemented in Apr 2017)
- a 6% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to all child care programs (center-based and family child care) and Family Child Care Systems for EEC-subsidized child care (FY18)
- a 2% increase to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays to center-based child care programs for EEC-subsidized child care, and to the reimbursement rate that EEC pays for Family Child Care Systems administration (FY18)

The rate increases support early educator salaries and benefits, in order to improve hiring and retention issues faced by programs that serve families receiving state subsidies; professional development of educators; and progress toward EEC's goal to have the subsidized rate in all regions of the state meet at least 75 percent of the local private market rate for the same type of care. (*Per the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Service Employees International Union Local 509, Family Child Care providers that take EEC child care subsidies received a 3.6% increase in FY17.)

Teacher Qualifications

EEC's Teacher Qualifications Unit certifies educators in licensed early education and care programs, by reviewing applicants' education and experience to ensure that they possess the qualifications necessary for employment in specified positions. In 2017 the Teacher Qualifications Unit received 12,918 applications and processed 12,116 applications. In October 2017, EEC doubled the staff level in the Teacher Qualifications Unit to 4.0 Full Time Equivalents (FTE). The additional staff contributed to a significant decrease in wait time for a decision on an application, from an average of 91 days beginning in mid-October to an average of 42 days by the end of the calendar year (and to an average of 8 days by February 2018). The Teacher Qualifications Unit also released a Professional Qualification Certification E-Learning Tool for self-training on the certification process, a Course Content Guide to provide clarity on the required course objectives to secure a certificate, and made significant revisions to the Teacher Qualifications application. Additionally, the Teacher Qualifications Unit continued their relationship with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) by providing internships for three interns from MRC. These internships allowed the individuals to gain professional experience, mentorship, and recommendations for full time, permanent employment. EEC was recognized on October 26, 2017, as an Employee Partner at the 6th Annual Disability Mentoring Day hosted by the City of Boston's Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Professional Qualifications Registry

Educators working in EEC-licensed programs serving children from birth through school age, must create an individual educator profile in EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry (PQR) and update it annually. EEC requires educators who work in programs that are not subject to EEC licensure, including those who



work in public preschools, to register if they would like to participate in trainings funded by EEC or are working in programs that are participating in EEC's Quality Rating Improvement System. At the end of 2017, there were approximately 140,000 total records in the PQR, of which approximately 115,000 are likely valid records, as the pending categories often include duplicate records. The PQR is connected to the Teacher Qualifications (TQ) System and the Online Professional Development Calendar.

Early Childhood Educator Scholarships

The state's Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Scholarship Program was established to increase early educators' access to higher education and to support them in attaining college degrees. The ECE Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to early education and care out-of-school time providers working in EEC-licensed or licensed-exempt programs who are pursuing Associate's or Bachelor's degrees in early childhood education at 50 colleges and universities in Massachusetts. The ECE Scholarship is jointly administered by EEC and the Department of Higher Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA). In January 2017, a new Early Educator Scholarship policy was implemented that specified eligible degree programs for the current Scholarship program year; specifically: *Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Family Studies, Child Care Administration or fields that directly name early child development and its areas of inquiry*. The application period for the 2017-2018 ECE Scholarship Program opened in April 2017. In total, 503 educators were approved for a scholarship that funds the cost of up to six credits in the fall 2017 term and up to six credits in the spring 2018 term.

Educator and Provider Support (EPS) Networks

EEC's Educator and Provider Support (EPS) Networks provide a statewide comprehensive system of professional development for early educators, that includes degree and career pathway supports such as coaching, and mentoring, and access to evidence-based training that aligns with EEC licensing regulations, EEC core competencies for early educators, Massachusetts' early learning guidelines, and the QRIS Standards. In 2017, five EPS networks received \$3.3 million in funding, as follows:

- Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc./ Valley Opportunity Council (Western Region)
- Family Services of Central MA (Central Region)
- North Shore Community College (Northeast Region)
- Child Development and Education, Inc. (Southeast, Cape and Islands Region)
- Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (Metro Boston Region)

Professional development through the EPS Networks includes courses and trainings that address young children with disabilities, diverse learners, English language learners, children at risk of developmental delay, and children with high needs. The EPS networks also support EEC-licensed and license-exempt programs in attaining and maintaining national accreditation and upward movement in the QRIS. In 2017, the EPS networks provided a range of supports and resources to early educators and programs, including:

- 115 college courses in early childhood education in colleges across the Commonwealth, that served 1,200 early education and out of school time educators;
- 195 continuing education opportunities that supported the professional development needs of 6,300 educators in meeting EEC licensing hours, and EEC certification or QRIS requirements;
- Coaching and mentoring, academic advising and career counseling to nearly 3,000 educators and 700 programs between January and July 2017; and
- Support for more than 1,000 programs in revising or completing a professional development plan or continuous quality improvement plan.



Professional Development Conference for Early Educators: EarlyEdCon

For the third year in a row, EEC partnered with North Shore Community College, Salem State University, and Burlington Public Schools, to offer EarlyEdCon -- a professional development conference for early educators. EarlyEdCon was held on Saturday, October 21, 2017 and nearly 500 early educators from across the state attended the event. The conference topics included language and literacy skill development; preschool Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education; children's social and emotional development; leadership development; and supporting families. The sessions were targeted to educators in EEC-licensed and public school settings, including out of school time. Commissioner Weber served as the keynote presenter at the conference.

Professional Qualifications Categories of Study Course Identification Project

EEC worked with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute to review EEC's Licensing Categories of Study and EEC's Educator Core Competencies, and to examine the Teacher Qualifications system, with the goal of developing recommendations to revise and align the system to respond to the progressing needs of EEC and its workforce. In 2017 EEC developed a joint Categories of Study/Educator Core Competencies document that is a foundational piece for the development of an early educator career lattice, and two draft career lattices: one for center-based educators and one for family child care educators. In 2018, EEC will focus on developing the Afterschool and Out of School-Time career lattice, and the administrator lattices for each early education program type.

Coaching Infrastructure Project

In 2017, EEC awarded a competitive grant to Abt Associates, Inc. (Abt) to support the Department in the research and development of a comprehensive plan for early childhood coaching. Abt completed research that included a literature review, an analysis of coaching infrastructure in other states, and a scan of coaching in Massachusetts. Abt also began work with Early Childhood Associates, to develop and implement of a "Coach Academy" and a career lattice for coaches and trainers that aligns with the draft career lattice for educators that EEC is developing with University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute.

Peer Assistance and Coaching

In 2017, EEC renewed its contract with Early Childhood Associates to provide a Peer Assistance and Coaching model that includes a professional development series for coaches, and aligns with proposed changes to the QRIS. Early Childhood Associates conducted additional training of trainers on coaching, and continued to provide a statewide Professional Learning Community (PLC) for EEC designated coaches. As part of this project, in 2018 Early Childhood Associates will collaborate with Abt Associates to identify and develop additional measurable educator competencies that need to be addressed in EEC's Core Competencies Technical Assistance Guide for Early Educators.



Strategic Direction #4: The Department and Board of Early Education and Care will provide leadership, direction and resources to meet the mission of the agency with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of the Commonwealth.

FY18 Budget

The FY18 General Appropriation Act (GAA) provided \$561.5 million in funding for EEC's total budget. Below is a brief summary of EEC's FY18 budget accounts:

3000-1000 / Administration: The FY18 appropriation totals \$5.7 million and supports EEC's administrative and operational expenses, including payroll and building leases.

3000-1020 / Quality Supports: This account, funded at \$30,112,455, supports most of the quality activities that EEC performs. Appropriation 3000-1020 has within it earmark language as follows: *"or quality investments in early education and care, including not less than \$4,000,000 to be expended for training, research and grants related to the development of the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), of which not less than \$2,000,000 shall be expended for direct grants to early education and school age programs participating in the Massachusetts QRIS that are actively engaged in efforts to achieve Level 3 and Level 4 in order to improve quality in early education and school age system of care... and provided further, that not less than \$100,000 shall be expended for a comprehensive statewide study, conducted by the University of Massachusetts at Boston, relative to the early education and care workforce in the commonwealth."*

3000-2000 / Access Management: This account is for the regional administration and coordination of services provided by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies. The FY18 appropriation of \$6,675,311 is the same level as FY17.

3000-1042 / Center-Based Child Care Rate Increase: This account provides \$15 million for a reimbursement rate increase for center-based subsidized early education and care (including Family Child Care (FCC) System Administration rates) to be used for salaries, benefits, and stipends for educator professional development. These funds helped support a 6% rate increase retroactive to July 1, 2017, and an additional 2% increase for all Center Based Providers and to the FCC System administration rate effective January 2018 retroactive to July 2017.

3000-3060 / Supportive-DTA: This account provides early education and care and afterschool services for children referred by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). Legislative language requires this account to provide immediate access to all eligible families referred by DCF and DTA. The GAA maintains transferability from 3000-4060 to this account, but no funds are allowed to be transferred out of 3000-3060. The account was funded at \$222,098,540 in FY18.

3000-4060 / Income Eligible: The FY18 budget includes \$255,389,342 for Income Eligible Child Care, which provides child care, early education, and afterschool financial assistance for children from low-income and at-risk families through contracts and vouchers, including 2,292 new Income Eligible Child Care vouchers in FY18.



3000-5000 / Head Start: The FY18 budget provided \$9.1 million for supplemental salary grants for 31 federally funded Head Start and Early Head Start agencies to support their programs.

3000-6025 / Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative: This account was included in the FY18 budget and funded at \$200,000 to support planning activities in cities, towns, regional school districts, or educational collaboratives currently providing pre-kindergarten or preschool opportunities to expand pre-kindergarten or preschool opportunities on a voluntary basis to children who will be eligible for kindergarten by September 2019.

3000-6075 / Mental Health: This account mainly funds grants for mental health consultation services to empower programs to manage children’s mental health issues in order to reduce the number of expulsions from school. The account was funded at \$2.5 million in FY18.

3000-7050 Services for Infants and Parents: This account funds grants to 91 Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) networks to provide comprehensive support for children and their families through educational programming and referrals to various service providers. The CFCE grantees support family stabilization and optimal child development, which are identified with school readiness and school success. The account was funded at \$13,541,999 in FY18.

3000-7070 Reach Out and Read: Reach Out and Read is a research-proven, pediatric literacy intervention program which trains doctors and nurse practitioners to provide advice to parents on reading aloud to children and provides books for children living in poverty and in underperforming school districts through programs established in community health centers, medical practices, and hospitals. The account was funded at \$1 million in FY18 GAA.

Regulatory Amendments

In 2017, EEC proposed amendments to two sets of regulations under the Department’s authority: Criminal offender and other background record checks (606 CMR 14.00), and the Standards for the licensure or approval of agencies offering child placement and adoption services (102 CMR 5.00). EEC expects the revisions to become effective in 2018. A summary of the impetus for the proposed changes in each set of regulations, follows.

Criminal offender and other background record checks (606 CMR 14.00): EEC’s Criminal Offender and Other Background Record Check Regulations at 606 CMR 14.00 *et seq.* require that candidates providing child care or support services within programs licensed, approved or funded by the Department must undergo a Background Record Check (BRC) through the Department to ensure that the candidates have appropriate backgrounds to serve in their positions. In November 2014, the federal government reauthorized the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), mandating that child care candidates complete additional checks and be subject to certain disqualifications. The Department must be in compliance with most components of the law by September 30, 2018. The proposed amendments to 606 CMR 14.00 *et seq.* include the following major changes: conducting BRCs on programs not licensed or approved by the Department but in receipt of Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funding; conducting BRCs on all program staff, regardless of whether such staff have unsupervised access to children; conducting additional checks as part of the BRC (a National Sex Offender Registry check, and an out of state criminal, child welfare, and sex offender check in all states where the individual resided in the prior five years); conducting automated “subsequent activity” checks to identify future criminal activity; conducting all BRCs at the same time; requiring candidates to complete the fingerprint and the sex



offender checks before being authorized to work in a supervised capacity; implementing mandatory disqualifications that automatically disapprove an individual's presence in a program; having EEC complete all BRCs (except for foster and adoptive parents) instead of program administration, in order to protect candidates' confidentiality; allowing candidates to transfer BRC suitability decisions between child care programs; and implementing a maximum turnaround time of 45 days for completing the BRCs. The Criminal Offender and Other Background Record Check Regulations at 606 CMR 14.00 were last amended in December 2013.

Standards for the licensure or approval of agencies offering child placement and adoption services (102 CMR 5.00): EEC is responsible for the licensure or approval of placement agencies and family foster care which is not supervised and approved by a placement agency. EEC's Adoption and Placement Regulations at 606 CMR 5.00 are intended to protect the dignity of children, birth families, and adoptive families; to fulfill every child's right to a permanent, loving, and caretaking family; and to ensure that the child is the primary client of all placement agencies. The Department last revised its regulations regarding Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Agencies Offering Child Placement and Adoption Services ("Adoption and Placement Regulations") in 1999. EEC proposed changes to these regulations to reflect new best practices, an increase in "open adoptions", and new research into adoption trends. In drafting the amendments, EEC convened an Adoption Advisory Group and a Foster Care Advisory Group to obtain key stakeholder input. Once revised, the Adoption and Placement Regulations will be moved to the Department's regulations at 606 CMR 5.00 (they are currently located at 102 CMR 5.00).

Study of Transportation in Subsidized Early Education and Care

The Department of Early Education and Care spends approximately \$40M per year on transportation services for the children in subsidized early education programs. EEC contracts with a variety of providers to provide children with transportation services to early education and care centers across the state. In 2017, EEC contracted with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to analyze the agency's transportation efforts and make recommendations regarding transportation services in EEC-funded early education programs in the future. EEC reviewed the initial findings with the Board of Early Education and Care and expects to make final recommendations from the transportation study in 2018.

Strengthening Early Education Data Trust

In 2017, EEC received funding from the Barr Foundation and the Boston Foundation to support having a data analyst on staff who will document the data needs of EEC and its stakeholders, identify gaps in EEC's existing data sets, support improved data reporting both internally and externally, and develop plans for future data collection.

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning

In 2017, EEC was awarded a \$75K "Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grant" from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. This grant provided EEC with additional support to better understand how aspects of the subsidy system shape the stability of children's participation in high quality early education and care, and identify and evaluate cost-effective ways to improve such stability.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Annual Reporting Requirements

M.G.L. c. 15D, Sec. 3:

(g) The board shall submit an annual report to the secretary of education, the secretary of administration and finance, and the clerks of the House of Representatives and senate, who shall forward the same to the joint committee on education, describing its progress in achieving the goals and implementing the programs authorized in this chapter. The report shall evaluate the progress made toward universal early education and care for preschool-aged children and toward reducing expulsion rates through developmentally appropriate prevention and intervention services.

The department shall include an annual report on behavioral health indicators that includes estimates of the annual rates of preschool suspensions and expulsions, the types and prevalence of behavioral health needs of children served by the department, the racial and ethnic background of the children with identified behavioral health needs, the existing capacity to provide behavioral health services, and an analysis of the best intervention and prevention practices, including strategies to improve the delivery of comprehensive services and to improve collaboration between and among early education and care and human services providers. The report and any recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes shall be submitted by February 15th to the secretary of health and human services, the secretary of administration and finance, the children's behavioral health advisory council, the child advocate, and the general court by filing it with the house committee on ways and means, the senate committee on ways and means, the joint committee on education, the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, the clerk of the house and the clerk of the senate.

M.G.L. c. 15D, Sec. 5:

The board shall develop and annually update an implementation plan for a workforce development system designed to support the education, training and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, FCC, infant, toddler, preschool and school-age providers. The board shall solicit input from organizations and agencies that represent a diverse spectrum of expertise, knowledge and understanding of broader workforce development issues and of the professional development needs of the early childhood and care workforce. In order to inform the plan, the board shall conduct:

- (1) an inventory and assessment of the current resources and strategies available for workforce and professional development in the commonwealth, including but not limited to Head Start trainings, community-based trainings, higher education programs, child care resource and referral agency trainings, state and federally funded workforce development trainings/programs, public school system trainings/credentialing, and other trainings that address the needs of those who work with children and make recommendations for coordinating the use of those existing resources and strategies;
- (2) analyses using current data on the status of the early education and care workforce, including work experience, certifications, education, training opportunities, salaries, benefits and workplace standards; and
- (3) an assessment of the workforce capacity necessary to meet the state's early education and care needs in the future.

In the development of the plan, the board shall consider:

- (1) core competencies, a common and shared body of knowledge, for all those working in the early education and care fields;
- (2) streamlined and coordinated state certification, credentialing, and licensing within the early education and care fields including teacher and provider certification and licensing, the child development associate, public



- school teacher certification, and other program standards as appropriate for director, teacher and provider credentialing requirements;
- (3) a mandatory and regularly updated professional development and qualification registry;
 - (4) agreements among IHEs for an articulated system of education, training, and professional development in early education and care;
 - (5) approval of early education and care training programs and academic coursework, incentives for associates and bachelors programs to meet best practices and to modify curricula to reflect current child development research, and certification of trainers and teachers;
 - (6) coordination of existing workforce resources among public agencies, including establishing regional workforce support resources in coordination with child care resource and referral agencies;
 - (7) a range of professional development and educational opportunities that provide appropriate coursework and degree pathways for FCC as well as center-based providers at all levels of the career ladder that are available in locations, days, and times that are accessible;
 - (8) credit for prior learning experiences, development of equivalencies to 2 and 4 year degrees, and the inclusion of strategies for multiple pathways for entry into the field of early education and care;
 - (9) recruitment and retention of individuals into the early education and care workforce who reflect the ethnic, racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Massachusetts families based on the current census data;
 - (10) incentives and supports for early education and care professionals to seek additional training and education, such as scholarships, stipends, loan forgiveness connected to a term of service in the field, career counseling and mentoring, release time and substitutes;
 - (11) guidelines for a career ladder or career lattice representing salaries and benefits that suitably compensate professionals for increases in educational attainment and with incentives for advancement, including a salary enhancement program;
 - (12) public and private resources to support the workforce development system;
 - (13) a data collection and evaluation system to determine whether the workforce and professional development activities established pursuant to this chapter are achieving recruitment, retention and quality of the workforce goals;
 - (14) ways to recognize and honor advancement in educational attainment among early educational and care professionals;
 - (15) professional development opportunities that are provided in languages other than English, and incorporation of these opportunities into any broader, articulated system that is developed; and
 - (16) alignment of the core competencies, course offerings and other professional development opportunities, where appropriate, with the program quality standards established under section 11.
 - (17) training to identify and address infant toddler and early childhood behavioral health needs.

M.G.L. c. 15D, Sec. 10:

The board shall include in its annual report rules and regulations promulgated by the board relative to the use of civil fines and sanctions, the types of sanctions, and the amount of those fines.

M.G.L. c. 15D, Sec. 13(d):

The department of early education and care, with the approval of the board and in consultation with the state advisory committee on early education and care established in [section 3A](#), shall study and present any additional recommendations on the programmatic, financing, and phase-in options for the development and universal implementation of the Massachusetts universal pre-Kindergarten program. This study shall include an estimate of the need for full-day, full-year care that meets the needs of parents who work full-time and shall include the number of pre-school aged children in the commonwealth who may be at risk due to family poverty, TAFDC status, special needs, or other risk factors. The department shall include its findings and recommendations, and any updates of its findings, in the annual report required under section 3.



Appendix B: Licensing Data

New Licensing Enforcement Actions	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sanctions	6	10	5	17	22	19	25	25
Acknowledgment of Vol. Surrender	3	1	13	31	17	27	14	10
Revocation (license and TQ)	5	9	17	6	17	15	26	46
Cease and Desist	8	12	9	24	28	12	30	13
C&D w/ Civ. Injunc.	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	2
C&D w/ Crim. Pen.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Refusal to Renew/Issue	1	5	3	4	6	6	5	21
Emergency Suspension	3	7	8	4	10	19	12	13
Legal Agreement	2	3	4	1	8	16	5	6
Legal Consult	2	1	2	4	2	11	12	10
Appeal of CORI/DCF denial	1	2	0	4	11	16	6	21
Enforcement Mtg.	0	1	3	0	1	1	3	4
Fine	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	3
Correction Order	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	32	56	65	97	107	142	139	174

NOTE: There may be multiple enforcement actions on a license (e.g., emergency suspension, revocation, fine).

LICENSING COMPLAINTS	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	June '17	July '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17
# of closed complaints during month	286	232	317	231	313	347	284	318	306	339	290	249
# of new complaints received during month	272	230	341	266	350	348	272	345	310	341	304	280
# of open complaints on 1st day of month	522	508	506	530	565	602	603	591	618	622	624	638

Note: Complaint data is for all types of complaint intakes.

Complaint Data Source: Licensing Education Analytic Database (LEAD).

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Appendix B: Licensing Data (CONTINUED)

LICENSED PROGRAMS	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17
Central MA	1,785	1,777	1,768	1,768	1,760	1,758	1,758	1,766	1,759	1,759	1,758	1,757
Metro Boston	2,038	2,030	2,023	2,008	2,004	2,002	1,992	1,999	1,990	1,981	1,984	1,981
Northeast	2,153	2,160	2,161	2,168	2,167	2,156	2,151	2,152	2,157	2,144	2,142	2,130
Southeast & Cape	1,753	1,748	1,741	1,735	1,735	1,731	1,715	1,713	1,719	1,716	1,712	1,698
Western	1,566	1,566	1,567	1,564	1,554	1,544	1,541	1,536	1,525	1,505	1,500	1,489
Total # Programs	9,295	9,281	9,260	9,243	9,220	9,191	9,157	9,166	9,150	9,105	9,096	9,055
LICENSED CAPACITY	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17
Family Child Care	46,054	45,950	45,776	45,680	45,558	45,382	45,196	45,132	44,892	44,652	44,529	44,283
Small Group/School Age	396	406	306	296	280	290	291	291	287	287	317	351
Large Group/School Age	178,677	178,481	178,904	178,895	179,135	179,555	180,333	181,735	182,693	182,793	182,858	183,207
Residential & Placement	6,714	6,672	6,664	6,648	6,657	6,619	6,602	6,575	6,531	6,508	6,510	6,501
Total Licensed Capacity	231,841	231,509	231,650	231,519	231,630	231,846	232,422	233,733	234,403	234,240	234,214	234,342
LICENSE ACTIVITY	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17
New	38	29	34	34	38	40	42	71	65	25	44	29
Renewal	244	239	283	278	310	312	193	228	283	275	286	245
Reopen	5	2	7	7	9	3	3	9	7	2	9	7
Moves	26	21	19	14	12	23	26	22	35	17	25	20
Closed Programs	67	64	79	55	64	77	82	81	94	86	65	74
New Applications	62	47	67	55	50	77	67	98	77	53	50	50
Total Licenses Issued	313	291	343	333	369	378	264	330	390	319	364	301

Licensing Visits	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17	Total
Central	109	85	141	121	153	127	102	105	135	141	125	71	1415
Metro Boston	115	97	182	141	185	167	120	160	157	184	185	136	1829
Northeast	181	157	206	167	172	203	124	162	170	178	176	128	2024
Southeast & Cape	175	210	217	194	232	219	200	192	181	181	170	125	2296
Western	77	66	106	93	92	89	69	124	99	92	116	68	1091
Total	657	615	852	716	834	805	615	743	742	776	772	528	8655

Visit Type (CY2017)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Capacity Increase	11	5	12	6	8	13	12	40	8	15	18	15	163
Change of Location	18	19	17	12	15	24	21	25	24	18	18	14	225
Change of Space	5	10	7	6	15	15	9	22	14	16	16	6	141
Enhanced Monitoring											2	5	7
Follow-up	56	90	71	73	71	97	54	61	76	52	54	28	783
Investigation	111	107	109	104	130	114	103	84	100	112	106	65	1245
License Upgrade	4	5	4		12	13	4	9	3	4	1	3	62
Monitoring										20	62	64	146
Monitoring Outside Differential Licensing Cycle	130	130	212	165	213	187	163	147	153	135	79	62	1776
Other (null)									2	4	3		9
Pre-Licensing	32	43	50	36	50	56	26	99	52	50	44	33	571
Progress	7	2	5	8	5	9	13	7	10	7	14	9	96
Prov License 90-day Monitor									6	15	18	7	46
Provisional License Renewal	2	2	1		1		1	1	3	4	8	11	34
Prov License Full Renew			1	4	3				1				9
Re-Activate Provider									1	3		2	6
Renewal - Enhanced Monitoring									2	40	59	37	138
Renewal - Full Review	279	197	351	293	306	267	204	240	280	268	222	132	3039
Renewal - Monitoring										9	46	34	89
Technical Assistance	2	5	12	9	5	10	5	8	7	4	2	1	70
Grand Total	657	615	852	716	834	805	615	743	742	776	772	528	8655

Note: Count of programs and capacity are calculated on the 1st day of the following month.

Data Source(s): Licensed Programs, Licensed Capacity, and License Activity data are from Licensing Manager. Visits are from LEAD.



Appendix C: 2017 Caseload Data and Financial Assistance Appeals

2017 Caseload by Age

Age Group	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17
Infant	2,969	2,916	2,872	2,774	2,791	2,739	2,764	2,839	3,063	3,167	3,122	3,024
Toddler	9,124	8,967	8,900	8,722	8,635	8,383	8,274	8,314	8,610	8,883	8,869	8,783
Preschool	18,045	17,859	17,942	17,761	17,717	17,114	17,102	17,092	17,622	17,378	17,407	17,074
School Age	24,512	25,051	25,261	25,741	25,620	25,954	26,753	26,992	24,429	22,701	23,113	23,296
Total	54,650	54,793	54,975	54,998	54,763	54,190	54,893	55,237	53,724	52,129	52,511	52,177

* All data based on billed actuals

2017 Caseload by Account

Child Care Account	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17
Supportive (DCF)	7,542	7,604	7,735	7,730	7,906	8,020	8,259	8,378	8,246	7,914	8,075	8,019
Transitional (DTA)	12,558	12,477	12,604	12,473	12,437	12,007	12,047	11,984	11,719	11,592	11,554	11,279
Income Eligible	34,550	34,712	34,636	34,795	34,420	34,163	34,587	34,875	33,759	32,623	32,882	32,879
Total Children	54,650	54,793	54,975	54,998	54,763	54,190	54,893	55,237	53,724	52,129	52,511	52,177

* All data based on billed actuals

2017 Financial Assistance Due Process Actions

Subsidy Appeals	2010 Total	2011 Total	2012 Total	2013 Total	2014 Total	2015 Total	2016 Total	2017 Total
Requests for Financial Assistance Review	847	1,226	928	974	1,073	1,065	924	1012
Reviews Completed	840	900	864	888	846	500	556	429
Requests for Financial Assistance Hearing	37	60	41	94	83	63	55	71
30A Subsidy Appeals in Superior Court	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	2



Appendix D: Income Eligible Waitlist Data

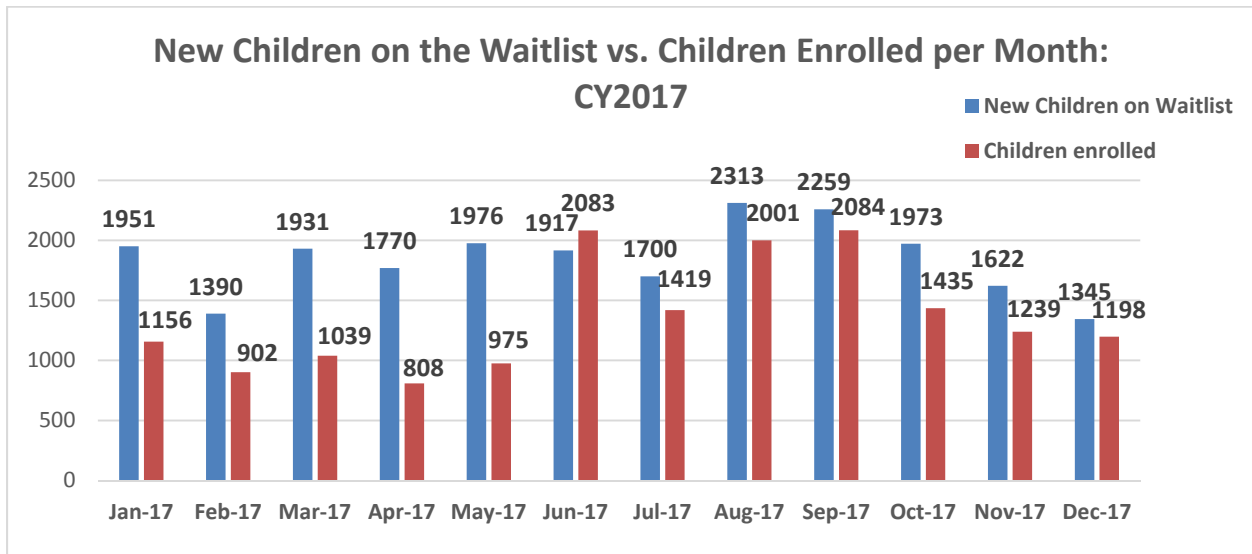
EEC maintains a waitlist of Income Eligible families who are seeking child care financial assistance, using the online self-serve waitlist program (KinderWait). EEC’s financial assistance procedures provide that “inactive” records (i.e., 12 or more months of no applicant activity) are to be removed and archived from the waitlist; this procedure is utilized in order to keep the waitlist current.

Waitlist by Age Group (over time):

2017	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Infants	4132	4089	4107	4171	4259	4233	4219	4188	4118	4181	4074	3905
Toddlers	5317	5338	5395	5550	5710	5574	5568	5593	5415	5341	5181	4843
Preschool	4745	4843	5114	5522	5929	5776	5775	5317	4780	4652	4441	4100
School Age	9670	9504	9586	9839	10370	10230	9576	9513	8971	8864	8713	8025
Total I/T/P	14194	14270	14616	15243	15898	15853	15562	15098	14313	14174	13696	12848
Total	23864	23774	24202	25082	26268	25813	25138	24611	23284	23038	22409	20873

Waitlist Activity:

2017	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total WL	23,864	23,774	24,202	25,082	26,268	25,813	25,138	24,611	23,284	23,038	22,409	20,873
# deactivated	2412	2049	2012	1901	1643	3158	3975	3567	4407	3375	2803	3247
# reactivated	210	137	165	143	148	311	281	260	408	250	207	144





Appendix E: Mental Health Consultation Grant Information

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program

EEC receives state funding to administer an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation program, which provides resources to support young children and their families experiencing emotional and behavioral challenges. The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation program promotes school success and healthy social-emotional development, and aims to reduce the suspension and expulsion rate in early education and care settings. The consultation services involve general classroom/program and on-site child focused observations, which may include the use of evidenced based observation tools used to identify strategies for improving the learning environment and to assess children’s social-emotional and behavioral skills. Consultants meet with educators and families to discuss the strengths and needs of the classroom and/or the child and work together to develop classroom management plans and/or individualized behavior plans to support the needs of specific children. Consultants also provide on-site modeling/coaching to educators to provide guidance on how to provide appropriate responses to address challenging behaviors. If the child presents with behaviors that may require more intensive services, beyond the scope of consultation, the consultants will assist programs and families in locating and accessing appropriate additional services, which may include Early Intervention, special education services and/ or behavioral health services through a community-based mental health service provider.

In FY2018 EEC renewed the Early Childhood Mental Health grants to six agencies:

FY18 Grantees	Award	Region	Cities/Towns
Behavioral Health Network	\$463,156	Western	102
Community Healthlink	\$307,579	Central	65
Enable, Inc.	\$288,877	Northeast, Metrowest, Southeast	60
Justice Resource Institute	\$393,742	Southeast, Cape and Islands	69
MSPCC	\$359,793	Northeast	47
The Home for Little Wanderers	\$310,103	Metro Boston	8
Total	\$2,123,250		351

Below are data on the Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Grant program in 2017:

ECMH Services - Mid Year Comparison: <i>Numbers Served and Hours of Consultation Provided</i>					
Period	Programs	Classrooms	Educators	Hours of Consultation	# of Children Served
Jan. - June 2017	363	516	1,219	4,183	5,852
July - Dec. 2017	323	528	1,299	3,592	6,590

ECMH Services - Mid Year Comparison: <i>Child and Family-Focused Intensive/Special Services</i>				
Period	Children Served	Hours of Consultation	Children/Families Received Intensive Therapy	Children/Families Received Early Intervention/Special Ed
Jan. - June 2017	525	5,635	16%	40%
July - Dec. 2017	554	6,111	14%	29%



Behavioral Issues Identified in Children who Received Child / Family Focused Consultation (CY 2017)
Aggression (biting, hitting, etc.--peers and adults)
Peer relations/social skills (difficulty taking turns, sharing, negotiating, social bullying)
Attention (inability to focus, follow directions)
Oppositional (defiant, disobedient)
Overactive/Impulsive (restless, uncontrolled)
History of trauma

Frequency of behavioral concerns for the children receiving child / family focused consultation services.*

Behavior Concern Identified	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers	School Age
Depression	0	8	17	3
Attachment	4	6	43	6
Anxiety	0	4	71	10
Other	0	5	137	13
Post trauma	0	18	140	24
Overactivity/Impulsivity	2	48	228	28
Attention	2	22	251	38
Oppositional	0	24	287	32
Peer relations/social skills	0	24	350	37
Aggression	1	41	366	26

*Children with more than one behavioral concern were counted for each concern.

The ECMH grantees report to EEC the number of children they provided services to who were at risk of suspension or expulsion from an early education program. In 2017, 340 of the children who were served were identified as "at risk" for suspension or expulsion. Outcomes for these children, by age, is below:

2017 Suspension/Expulsion of Children Served by ECMH	Infant	Toddler	PreK	School-Age	Total	Rate
Retained successfully in program	1	22	166	23	212	62.35%
Retained but at risk of suspension/expulsion	0	2	8	5	15	4.41%
Transitioned to new program that better addresses needs	0	1	22	2	25	7.35%
Suspended from program	0	0	2	2	4	1.18%
Expelled from program; has new program	0	0	12	0	12	3.53%
Expelled from program; no new program	0	2	15	5	22	6.47%
Aged out of program	0	0	14	1	15	4.41%
Other	0	3	30	2	35	10.29%
TOTALS	1	30	269	40	340	



For the children who were expelled from care, the ECMH consultants reported that these children often exhibited extremely unsafe behaviors and were frequently “asked to leave the program” before strategies for retention could be implemented by the program and educators.

The most frequent strategies used by the early childhood mental health consultant to successfully prevent or reduce suspension and expulsion in early education settings in 2017 were *consultation to staff, consultation to parent, individual behavior plans, modeling of strategies, case management supports, and programmatic modifications* (i.e. schedules/routine, suspension/expulsion policies).