Department of Early Education and Care

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Amy Kershaw, Commissioner

Report on the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) Grant FY 2024

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Executive Summary

FY 2024 CPPI Grantees, Number of Children Served, and Award Amounts		
GRANTEE NAME	NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED	FY 2024 TOTAL AWARD AMOUNTS
Boston Public Schools	171	$670,000
Holyoke Public Schools*	88	$566,800
Lawrence Public Schools*	210	$1,000,000
Lowell Public Schools*	213	$1,000,000
New Bedford Public Schools*	160	$1,000,000
North Adams Public Schools	90	$316,000
Northampton Public Schools	90	$1,000,000
Somerville Public Schools	208	$1,000,000
Springfield Public Schools*	105	$1,000,000
Brockton Public Schools*	105	$966,812
Fall River Public Schools*	29	$494,000
Framingham Public Schools	94	$750,000
Lynn Public Schools*	101	$942,602
Malden Public Schools*	312	$750,000
Salem Public Schools*	76	$1,000,000
Sandwich Public Schools	135	$1,000,000
Gloucester Public Schools	72	$609,905
Haverhill Public Schools*	119	$1,000,000
Hoosac Valley Regional Schools	51	$1,000,000
Plymouth Public Schools	64	$494,000
Westfield Public Schools*	89	$1,000,000
Planning Grantees		
Barnstable Public Schools	N/A	$50,000
Chicopee Public Schools*	N/A	$50,000
Fitchburg Public Schools*	N/A	$50,000
Gateway Regional Schools	N/A	$50,000
Quincy Public Schools*	N/A	$50,000
Pittsfield Public Schools*	N/A	$50,000
Taunton Public Schools*	N/A	$50,000
Wareham Public Schools	N/A	$50,000
Worcester Public Schools*	N/A	$178,678
TOTAL * Indicates Gateway City	**2582**	**$18,138,797**

In FY 24, the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) provided $18,138,797 in funding to 30 grantees supporting 2,582 children. CPPI advanced workforce development through aligned

professional development plans, CLASS® informed coaching and training, as well as targeted investments in compensation to strengthen child outcomes.

Purpose of Report

This report satisfies the requirement set forth in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA), line item 3000-6025 and Education and Transportation Fund 1596-2410, that the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) report to the Joint Committee on Education and the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means on the status of the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) implementation activities, including but not limited to, a listing of the recipients of grant funding; the number of children served by the grant recipients; the size of awarded grants by recipient; and the recipients' workforce development efforts. This report covers FY 2024 grant activities.

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative History

The state first established the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) in the FY 2016 GAA as a planning grant to encourage communities to identify the local infrastructure, funding and supports needed to increase access to high quality preschool programs through public school and EEC-licensed program collaboration. In the past eight years, EEC has offered several funding opportunities. In FY20 EEC funded implementation activities in local communities to expand affordable access for 3-and 4-year-olds to high quality care that met the diverse needs of families in their communities. Funding was distributed to nine communities. In FY22 an additional $5 million was added to the budget allowing EEC to post two new competitive grants; the FY22 Planning Grant and the FY22 Implementation Grant. The two funding opportunities provided a foundation to apply for and receive funding for the FY23 CPPI grant, which forms our current cohort of grantees for FY23 and FY24. EEC is currently funding twenty-one (21) communities for implementation, with twelve of these grantees located in Gateway Cities. In April 2024, EEC also announced funding to nine (9) new planning grantees, seven (7) of which are located in Gateway Cities.

FY24 Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative

FY24 provided both level funding to current grantees and the opportunity for expansion and new planning grants. EEC continues to utilize the model of a collaborative relationship between the public school district and EEC-Licensed programs to expand local access to high quality preschool across the mixed delivery system for three and four-year-old children that meet the diverse needs of families in their communities. The grant has fostered creativity and innovation within communities to build, maintain and expand strong community-school partnerships with key stakeholders and collaborations with the local Coordinated Family Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees to maximize the use of resources across the community.

The focus of the grant initiative continues to build a local infrastructure that consists of public and private preschool classrooms that meet the quality requirements of the grant and that (1) expand access for three and four-year-old children within the community, (2) align with the community's Birth to Grade 3 Strategic

Plan, (3) address family needs effectively, including working families; and (4) serve high need and underserved populations. Communities were required to develop a plan and implement services for at least one of the priority goals for accessing quality preschool, addressing key issues, and identifying outcomes for implementation of services. The priorities are:

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

In FY24, the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) supported 2,582 children across 189 classrooms, spanning 83 early education providers statewide. There were twenty-one (21) grantees utilizing funding to implement a program design that met the requirements of their selected priorities. *Appendix A* lists the Grantees and their Partner Programs. Table 1 provides details about the grantee's selected priorities, classrooms, enrollment, and funding amounts. Fifteen (15) grantees addressed Priority I, nine (9) grantees addressed Priority II, and fourteen (14) grantees addressed Priority III. In total, grantees received $13,109,000. On average, the 189 CPPI classrooms enrolled about 16 kids per classroom. Of classrooms, 81% are in community-based programs, and the remaining are in Public School Pre-K classrooms.

Fifteen (15) grantees were awarded expansion funding in March 2024. The expansion funding was available to previous CPPI grantees (not to exceed $1,000,000 per grantee) to support the addition of new grant-funded preschool classrooms and partners and to provide all required activities for all priority strand(s) across funded classrooms and programs. Grantees were expected to use these funds to, at minimum, support additional classrooms that meet the program design requirements of this grant and provide all services expected of all grant priorities to all funded classrooms. Funding was also allowed to add services for priorities not yet addressed for all grant-funded classrooms and fund additional classrooms, or, for grantees already providing services across all priorities, may be focused on expansion to additional classrooms and partners. Grantees awarded Expansion funds were also asked to participate in a Needs Assessment, Cost Modeling and Strategic Plan activities.

Additionally, nine (9) planning grantees were identified and funded, including Barnstable, Chicopee, Fitchburg, Gateway Regional, Pittsfield, Quincy, Taunton, and Wareham for needs assessment planning at $50,000 each and Worcester for transition from planning to early implementation at $178,678.

Table 1. FY 2024 CPPI Grantees, Priority Strands, Classrooms, and Award Amounts

GRANTEE NAME	PRIORITY	NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS	NUMBER ENROLLED	FY 2024 INITIAL AWARD	FY 2024 EXPANSION AWARD	FY 2024 TOTAL
Boston Public Schools	I and III	12	171	$670,000	N/A	$670,000
Holyoke Public Schools*	I, II and III	6	88	$428,000	$138,800	$566,800
Lawrence Public Schools*	I	16	210	$310,000	$690,000	$1,000,000
Lowell Public Schools*	I, II and III	13	213	$964,000	$36,000	$1,000,000
New Bedford Public Schools*	I and III	15	160	$670,000	$330,000	$1,000,000
North Adams Public Schools	I and II	8	90	$316,000	N/A	$316,000
Northampton Public Schools	I and III	11	90	$670,000	$330,000	$1,000,000
Somerville Public Schools	I, II and III	15	208	$897,000	$103,000	$1,000,000
Springfield Public Schools*	III	7	105	$406,000	$594,000	$1,000,000
Brockton Public Schools*	I and III	6	105	$750,000	$216,812	$966,812
Fall River Public Schools*	I and III	2	29	$494,000	N/A	$494,000
Framingham Public Schools	I, II and III	8	94	$750,000	N/A	$750,000
Lynn Public Schools*	I, II and III	8	101	$538,000	$404,602	$942,602
Malden Public Schools*	I, II and III	22	312	$750,000	N/A	$750,000
Salem Public Schools*	I, II and III	8	76	$750,000	$250,000	$1,000,000
Sandwich Public Schools	I, II, and III	7	135	$750,000	$250,000	$1,000,000
Gloucester Public Schools	III	4	72	$330,000	$279,905	$609,905
Haverhill Public Schools*	I, II, and III	7	119	$750,000	$250,000	$1,000,000
Hoosac Valley Regional Schools	I and III	3	51	$672,000	$328,000	$1,000,000
Plymouth Public Schools	I and III	5	64	$494,000	N/A	$494,000
Westfield Public Schools*	I, II and III	6	89	$750,000	$250,000	$1,000,000
Barnstable Public Schools	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Chicopee Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Fitchburg Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Gateway Regional Schools	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Quincy Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Pittsfield Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Taunton Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Wareham Public Schools	Planning	N/A	N/A	$50,000	N/A	$50,000
Worcester Public Schools*	Planning	N/A	N/A	$178,678	N/A	$178,678
TOTAL		**189**	**2582**	**$13,687,678**	**$4,451,119**	**$18,138,797**

* Indicates Gateway City

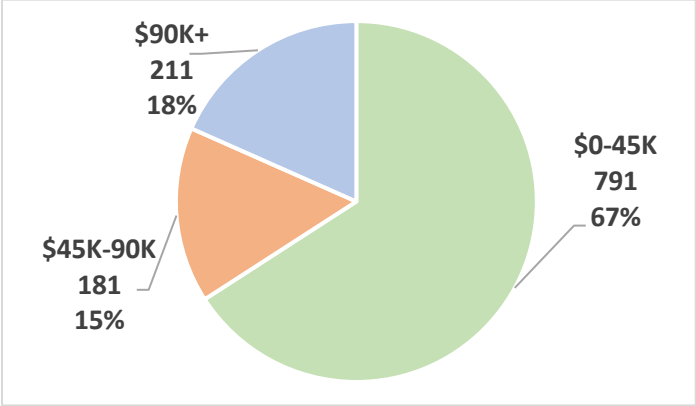
Table 2 outlines child demographics, and Table 3 provides known family demographics for those served in CPPI-funded classrooms. Children in CPPI classrooms, of which 35% are in formal care for the first time with CPPI programing, represented a range of races and ethnicities, including 11% identifying as multi-racial, and 32% with a primary language other than English spoken at home. Figure 1 shows families served by income, with 67% of children served reporting family incomes of $45K or less, the next 15% earning up to $90K, and the final 18% of children served coming from families earning over $90K per year.

Table 2. Child Demographics

	Count	Percent
Age on September 1, 2023		
3 years	1,206	46.7%
4 years	1,368	53.0%
Missing	8	0.3%
Gender		
Female	1,266	49.0%
Male	1,307	50.6%
Non-binary	1	0.0%
Missing	8	0.3%
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	220	8.5%
Black	441	17.1%
Latino	715	27.7%
Multi	294	11.4%
Native/ Pacific Islander	9	0.3%
White	838	32.5%
Missing	65	2.5%
Primary Home Language		
Chinese (all)	67	2.6%
Creole (all)	52	2.0%
English	1,757	68.1%
Portuguese	120	4.7%
Spanish	444	17.2%
Other*	98	3.8%
Unknown	44	1.7%

* Other Primary Languages: Afan Oromo, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Czech, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Malayalam, Nepali, Punjabi, Russian, Tamil, Telugu, Tibetan, Vietnamese.

Figure 1. Families in CPPI Classrooms by Income Category



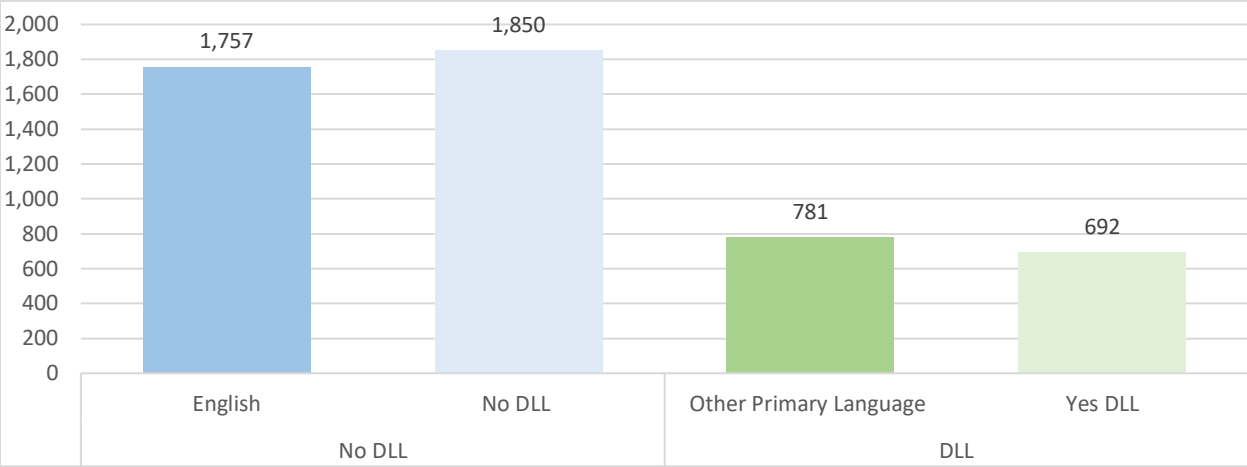
Note, Figure 1: Family income data was missing for 37% of CPPI children. Percentages represent only those for whom data was available.

Table 3. Family Demographics.

	Count	Percent
Family Gross income		
0 to 15k	351	13.6%
15 to 30k	207	8.0%
30 to 45k	233	9.0%
45 to 60k	115	4.5%
60 to 75k	47	1.8%
75 to 90k	19	0.7%
90 to 125k	45	1.7%
125 to 175k	44	1.7%
More than 175k	122	4.7%
Not asked in our Program	384	14.9%
Caregiver Declined	57	2.2%
Unknown/Missing	958	37.1%
Homeless		
Yes	46	1.8%
No	2,476	95.9%
Unknown, Missing	60	2.3%

Figure 2 displays the number of children in families who reported a primary language other than English, and those who identified as Dual Language Learners (DLL) for services. Most children (89%) identified as having a primary language other than English spoken at home also identified as a dual language learner.

Figure 2. Dual Language Learners to Primary Language at home (English or Other)



CPPI Grant Leadership

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

Each public-school sub-contracted with between two (2) and eight (8) EEC-licensed programs. Typically, grant funds went to programs already in operation to build key quality components, ensure the needs of children with special needs and their families were met, and expand access to low- and middle-income families not eligible for EEC Child Care Financial Assistance.

Priority I: Expansion of Quality Access

The focus of this priority is on understanding local patterns of access to quality preschool, as shaped by family need, local demographics, geography, transportation, program services and supply. Grantees are asked to develop a program model that overcame the barriers that have existed for families in accessing their program of choice and prioritizing the type of programming they value most. Grantees also utilize funding to provide comprehensive service support, offering access to mental health services for children, families, and educators. Grantees are encouraged to seek out additional funding opportunities for long-

term sustainability. Table 4 shows which grantees used which of the six funding approaches: Child Care Financial Assistance vouchers/contracts, Head Start, Parent Tuition and Fees, CPPI-funded Financial Aid/Tuition Assistance or City/Municipality Funded Tuition Assistance.

Table 4. Grantees Use of Funding Streams

Grantee	Chap. 70 Funds	EEC Child Care Financial Assistance	Head Start Funds	Parent Tuition/ Fees	CPPI Funded Tuition assistance	City/ Municipality Funded Tuition Assistance
Boston	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Brockton	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Fall River	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Framingham	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Gloucester	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Haverhill	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Holyoke	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hoosac Valley	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Lawrence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Lowell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lynn	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Malden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Bedford	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
North Adams	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Northampton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Plymouth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Salem	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Sandwich	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Somerville	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Springfield	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Westfield	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Percentage of Grantees	**76%**	**95%**	**76%**	**76%**	**81%**	**33%**

Many public-school districts have utilized CPPI funding to expand the number of hours of public-school preschool programing from 2.5 hours per day to 6 hours / 5 days a week, including Lowell Public School, New Bedford Public School, North Adams Public School, Malden Public School, and Sandwich Public School. CPPI funds can also be utilized to provide reduced or no-cost care to working families who may not qualify for Child Care Financial Assistance. Of all children in CPPI funded classrooms, 42% attended with no costs to the family with the use of these blended funding streams.

Additional creative solutions have been enacted by grantees:

- **New Bedford:** New Bedford continued to engage in supporting students with disabilities across diverse preschool settings and offered New Bedford families the opportunity to remain in their EEC-Licensed preschool programs and receive special education services. This benefited working families with access to a longer school day. In addition, it provided CPPI educators the opportunity to collaborate, plan, and develop their own teaching practices to support all children enrolled.
- **Lynn:** Lynn Public Schools(?) utilized the data collected from the Child Data Checklist, to inform program design. In recent years, there has been a shift in the income and family needs in the Community-based partner programs, with many more families in need of 10-hour care to obtain and retain employment. The tuition assistance component of the grant removed the barrier of EEC-Licensed programs having to absorb the fees to provide tuition assistance for children/families who may not qualify for Child Care Financial Assistance. Providing CPPI funding for tuition assistance, supported families to have access to care, regardless of the economic status of the household. It also created a stronger sense of community where families were motivated to register their young children for a formal child care setting that provided opportunities for early literacy and math, as well as social emotional learning with peers.

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

Priority II: Building Locally Aligned Quality

The focus of this priority is building locally aligned quality, by providing common learning goals for children and strengthening the implementation of curriculum. Communities are asked to develop and implement a program model that supports the alignment of quality curriculum and assessments. Grantees are asked to develop and implement plans that address the community's expectations for learning goals for children along the birth to three continuum, including the development and implementation of a road map that identifies key developmental domains and local goals for success.

Public School District and EEC-Licensed program leaders and educators come together to discuss the application of curriculum in their community. They have had the opportunity to attend a training utilizing the *EEC Curriculum Rubric Foundational Review* to review current curricula or to complete a review of newly identified curricula. Communities reported that it was an "eye-opening" experience to complete a comprehensive review of their curriculum, highlighting both the strengths and areas for improvement in the curriculum. Curriculum Teams have reported this process has led to updating their curriculum materials to provide children with enhanced equitable access to the curriculum objectives.

Communities have demonstrated creativity and innovation in their planning:

- **Lowell :** Lowell has worked to align their curriculum and goals for children to improve reading outcomes in third grade. Educators across the mixed delivery system worked together to create seven curriculum modules around evidence-based instructional practices. Lowell's modules are

theme based and include time for direct instruction and students to have voice and choice throughout the day. Daily components include Dialogic Reading, Introduction to Centers, Small Group Instruction, Routines and Center Time. Published curriculum such as Building Blocks Mathematics, Second Steps, and Heggerty augment their home-grown curriculum. All programs collect data on students using the Phonological Awareness and Language Screening tools in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. Programs use either LPS report card or Teaching Strategies Gold to report to families on students' progress. A team of teachers as well as UMass Boston engaged in reviewing their curriculum using the tool developed by DESE, EEC, and AIR. Support to implement the curriculum and our KPI for CPPI grant are the focus of on-going professional development offerings. Anyone working in early childhood is welcome at the professional development offerings. Only CPPI programs, however, received coaching. During FY24, professional development focused on supporting community programs in understanding their role and responsibilities in the implementation of the Individual Education Plans. This included a series of focused workshops on Autism. Professional development and in-class coaching is provided on how to use Language for Life, (LAMP) a pre-programmed vocabulary providing children without expressive language a voice using technology.

- **Boston.** The BPS team has worked over the past several years to launch a 'Focus on 3' and 'Focus on 4' curricula that can serve both ages, including in mixed-aged classrooms. The team of veteran educator coaches, that provide instructional support in classrooms, have helped community-based teachers integrate these two curricula to meet developmental milestones for both ages and effectively prepare both 3 and 4-year-olds for long-term educational success.
- **Westfield:** Westfield has focused their work in this priority on developing shared expectations for kindergarten readiness by aligning curriculum and expectations throughout all preschool classrooms to focus on academic, social/emotional and developmental readiness.

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

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

The staffing shortage continues to have an impact on program leader and educator participation in professional development opportunities. Program Leaders reported that coverage was a key challenge to making staff available for one-to-one coaching and mentoring and attendance at professional development events. Even with the addition of stipends to pay educators for time after regular working

hours, program leaders reported staff were overwhelmed by the day-to-day responsibilities of being in a classroom and found it hard to engage in professional development at the end of a day.

Priority III: Equitable Access to Special Education and Inclusion

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

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

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

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

CPPI funded fifteen (15) grantees to develop and implement an Itinerant Team model of delivering special education services directly in inclusive settings. Through a referral process (Figure 3) to these Itinerant Teams, 278 children were evaluated and services recommended for 244 of the, including Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Pathology, Physical Therapy, General Special Education Services, and Behavioral Supports/Services. Figure 4 provides a visual of the counts of all children who were going through the special education process through the public schools and were receiving services the year of the CPPI grant.

Figure 3. Itinerant Team Services

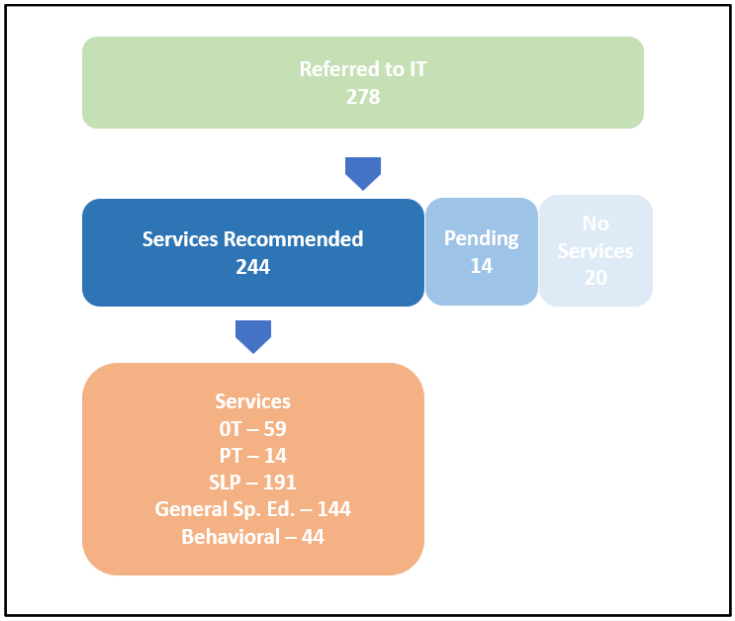
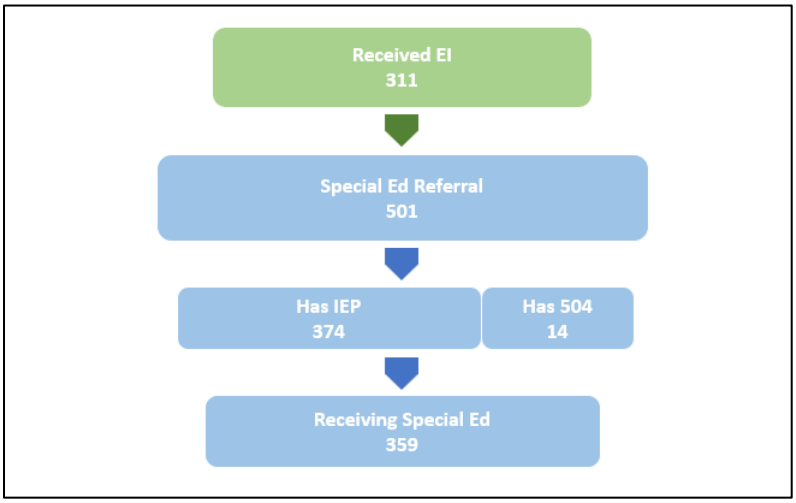


Figure 4. Special Education Services



Grantee communities utilized different strategies to support their Priority III work.

- **Somerville:** One aspect of Somerville's early childhood program design, within Priority III is a new Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), setting the community on the path to operating a fully inclusive model across the mixed-delivery system. With the support of the CPPI Grant and a cost-sharing model with Somerville Public Schools and the City of Somerville, an itinerant team has been added, consisting of a full-time Early Childhood Access Specialist and Coach, a full-time Itinerant Speech and Language Pathologist and a full-time Board-Certified Behavior Analyst. Children with Individualized Education Plans and those needing an additional level of support now have full access to the support they need in their own classroom, reducing unnecessary transitions for them and their parents/caregivers. Somerville's Multi-tiered System of Support creates a

pathway for children to thrive and succeed academically and nourishes the life skills needed to become confident, socially engaged, and independent learners. Educators and parents/caregivers are also receiving guidance and resources to support children. Center Directors described the MTSS as “amazing,” “wonderful,” “cohesive,” “the most valuable asset for my program,” and as “a relationship of trust without judgment that has allowed us to provide exactly what our children and families need.”

- **Holyoke*:*** In addition to hiring a dedicated Pre-K Special Education teacher, who not only visits the partner classrooms, but other community-based programs throughout the district that are not part of the grant to enhance communication efforts, this team works with the CPPI classroom teachers to help best support each child in a least restrictive environment. Consultation and support are ongoing to all programs including community outreach by the entire Pre-K team which includes the ARENA team (which provides assessments for special education), Special Education Teacher, Pre-K Coach, our Director of Intensive services, and many other support professionals. The continued support and professional learning offered to grant partners have led to collaboration among all agencies to support children and families to ensure access to the best resources that will ultimately affect a child’s well-being and overall impact on academic success.
- **Plymouth:** Plymouth Public Schools hired an itinerant team who provides special education services, administration of screenings, RTI, Child Find, addresses social/emotional skills within the classroom setting and collaboration. First and foremost, this allows students to receive special education services in their current daycare/preschool placements. This has limited transitions for these students, eliminating traveling to another school to receive services and losing out on critical play, social and learning times. The itinerant team screened all students in the pre-kindergarten CPPI classrooms. The opportunity to screen students allowed for the team to identify students in need as well as those students at risk. Students at risk are now provided with RTI services from the itinerant team as well as the staff in their classrooms. Some of these students may not have been identified until they got to kindergarten. Another important aspect of priority strand III is the collaboration between the itinerant team and the early learning partners. The itinerant team is able to model and assist the early learning partners in understanding and incorporating accommodations that are found within the IEP that can be used for all students in their classrooms to access the curriculum. Overall, the work that has been done through Priority Strand III has had numerous benefits for all involved.
- **Haverhill**: The Haverhill CPPI Grant Team decided to add an itinerant team of special educators to support students across partner programs. The itinerant team currently consists of a Physical Therapist, a Speech and Language Therapist, and a Literacy Coach (currently provided by Haverhill Public Schools). The itinerant team began the year by meeting individually with classroom leads from each CPPI partner to adapt and adjust programming to fit the needs of each program. The itinerant team visits each CPPI classroom each week, providing in-class support through whole group lessons and teacher coaching opportunities. The itinerant team also supports family engagement through the development and sharing of a monthly newsletter. The itinerant team and classroom leads meet monthly to collaborate across programs and share ideas that are working at each location. Having the itinerant team members come directly to the CPPI

classrooms, where supplies are located across the district, has strengthened the network and increased support for educators. It also provides best practices and professional development for educators who are learning about the therapies and tools provided by the District. It is a true benefit to the children who can remain in place and in an environment that is familiar and comforting. The relationships between the CPPI program educators, special education providers, and administrators across programs and classrooms are seeing extraordinary outcomes including new partnerships, initiatives, and a kindergarten task force that is addressing student and educator needs.

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

Workforce Supports

All communities are expected to maintain up to date Professional Development plans that address the community-wide professional development needs and highlight joint professional learning opportunities for both district and early learning partner educators. Grantees implement a system to capture data with the Classroom Assessment Screening System tool (CLASS®) and other assessment data to develop and implement a plan to meet the professional needs of the early education workforce. Grantees utilize funding for coaching and job-embedded supports to provide support and training for the implementation of high-quality adult-child interactions which lead to better child outcomes. Communities develop robust professional development plans that take into account the individual professional development goals of all program staff.

To support communities in effectively using the CLASS observation system to evaluate quality and inform professional learning plans, EEC awarded multi-year funding through a competitive procurement to Wellesley College to support preschool educators and program leaders to improve their adult-child interactions in the classroom. Wellesley College supports early education and care communities through the CPPI grants to understand and learn how to use the CLASS® tool (developed by Teachstone) to improve both teaching quality and prekindergarten children's development. They have done this through communication, training and work with all 21 school districts that were CPPI grantees. This includes both the district-level prekindergarten classrooms and the community-based programs that have partnered with the district.

The Classroom Assessment System® (CLASS®) is a classroom assessment tool made up of three domains related to supporting young children's development. It is completed by a trained and reliable rater or observer. The scores derived from the assessment can be used to help formulate professional

development for individual educators or for entire programs. The scores also help coaches focus on areas in need of improvement. Dr. Robeson is providing the following services to grantee communities:

Introduction to the CLASS

As a trained and certified CLASS trainer, Dr. Robeson provided online sessions covering the domains and dimensions of the CLASS® tool. This introduction helps participants understand what an observation is all about as well helps with professional development and coaching. Wellesley College offered a full day introduction for leaders.

During FY24, 48 leaders have attended online sessions. They also offered a half day on-line introduction to Coaches and Educators. During FY24, 29 coaches and educators attended sessions.

Reliable Rater Trainings

In order to conduct the CLASS assessment, training is required and is conducted by staff of the developers (Teachstone). Up to 15 people may be trained at one time- either in person or online. Training has been offered to CPPI coordinators, leaders, directors, coaches as well as to their community counterparts and to others that work in early education and care positions.

In Year 1 we had 4 Reliable Rater trainings. In FY24 we have had 8 completed trainings with 60 participants in throughout the year.

Coaching

There is a team of coaches that are responsible for working with 21 CPPI grantees, which includes 21 School Districts, over 70 community-based early education and care programs and hundreds of prekindergarten classrooms.

Since August, 2023, the Coaches worked with every CPPI district to help with improve classroom CLASS scores through practice-based coaching methods. Monthly meetings were established with any coaching staff of the CPPI grantee as well as CPPI coordinators and directors. The needs of each CPPI differ widely and the coaches tailor their work to each grantee.

Professional Learning Communities

In the Fall of 2023 Wellesley created a website so that leaders, coaches, educators and others could learn about the training we offer. Starting in December 2023, Wellesley began Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which were held weekly on Tuesday evenings centered on the CLASS® and offered to leaders, educators, coaches and reliable raters via Zoom. These online sessions are recorded so that others may watch them later. In total, 20 PLC were offered through June 2024

In addition, educators in EEC-licensed classrooms are often trained with public school educators, providing opportunities to align practice and build a strong local professional community. Coaching has supported educators in high fidelity curriculum implementation and in understanding how to make effective adaptations that are responsive to the needs of children in their classrooms. Grantees who

implemented program designs from *Priority III – Equitable Access to Special Education and Inclusion* focused on expertise in supporting children with disabilities and work with educators to build strong inclusive practices in CPPI classrooms, particularly in EEC-licensed programs. The support was delivered either through onsite comprehensive service providers or itinerant special education supports. In these models, experts consulted with educators around best practices for working with children who have particular needs (i.e., speech/language, behavioral challenges, occupational therapy needs), identifying opportunities for adjustments to classroom practices, and support educators in effectively engaging in the special education referral and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. CPPI grant funding can be used to increase salaries for CPPI-funded EEC-Licensed educators to better align with Public School District Preschool teachers.

Appendix A. List of Grant Partners

Maintenance Grantees	
Boston Public Schools • Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center • Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester • Ellis Memorial Holyoke Public Schools • Valley Opportunity Council • YMCA Lawrence Public Schools • Greater Lawrence Community Action Council • Community Day Care Learning Center • Lawrence Early Achievement Partnership Lowell Public Schools • Lowel Public Schools • Community Teamwork • Greater Lowell Family YMCA • Lowell Collaborative Preschool Academy • Lowell Day Nursery New Bedford Public Schools • New Bedford Public Schools • Little People's College • NorthStar Early Learning • P.A.C.E Head Start • YMCA South Coast North Adams Public Schools • North Adams Public Schools • Child Care of the Berkshires • YMCA • Berkshire County Head Start	Northampton Public Schools • Community Action Head Start and Early Learning Center • Gummybears Family Child Care • Meadowlark Childcare Center • Nonotuck Community Schools • Cloverdale Preschool • New Village / Farm Hands Family Child Care • The Children's House • Peoples Institute • Smith College Center for Early Childhood Education • VSS Head Start Somerville Public Schools • Somerville Public Schools • Elizabeth Peabody House • Somerville YMCA • Dandelion Montessori • Community Action Agency of Somerville Head Start • Open Center for Children • Bigelow Cooperative Daycare • Pooh and Friends Child Care • Tree House Academy • Kingdom Rock Children's Village Springfield Public Schools • Springfield Partners • Square One • YMCA of Greater Springfield
Cohort 3 Grantees	
Brockton • Self-Help Head Start • Brockton Day Nursery Fall River • People Incorporated • Citizens for Citizens Head Start Framingham • Framingham State University Early Childhood Center • Jeanne M. Canelli Child Development Lab at Framingham State University • Loving Nest • MetroWest YMCA Lynn • Gregg House • LEO Head Start	Malden • Malden Public Schools • Malden Early Education and Learning • Cheverus Catholic Schools • Little Love Bugs Daycare • Malden YMCA • My Little Best Friends Child Care Salem • Salem YMCA • Salem Community Child Care Center • Ashley Preschool and Daycare Sandwich • Sandwich Public Schools • School for Early Learning • Joyful Noise • Montessori Beginnings

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Cohort 4 Grantees</th></tr>
<tr><td>Gloucester
YMCA of the North Shore (Cape Ann YMCA)
Pathways for Children
Haverhill
Haverhill Public Schools
Community Action Inc.
Haverhill YMCA
Marigold Montessori
Hoosac Valley
Hoosac Valley Public Schools
Youth Center
Magic Seasons</td><td>Plymouth
Tiny Town
Bright Ideas
Westfield
Westfield Public Schools
YMCA of Greater Westfield
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Westfield</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Planning and Implementation Grantees (Awarded March 2024)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Barnstable
Chicopee
Fitchburg
Gateway Regional
Pittsfield
Quincy
Taunton
Warham
Worcester</td></tr>
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