



A FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE NATION

In 2005, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to establish one agency – the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) – to oversee early education and care and after-school services for families.

EEC was created by consolidating the former Office of Child Care Services with the Early Learning Services Unit of the Department of Education (now the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). The primary impetus was the development of a single, unified, more efficient system of early education and care. More than a consolidation of existing programs, or a simplification of organizational charts, EEC was born of a revolutionary, top-to-bottom rethinking of how to orient state resources to support families in a way that is responsive to their needs.

EEC was created within the context of increasingly accepted evidence from childhood brain development research showing long-term impact of high-quality early education and its potential return on investment. We know that access to early education and care is crucial, and we know that the quality of that care matters – a lot. EEC has been balancing these two priorities since its inception.

Each day EEC administers financial assistance to approximately 60,000 children from low income families, from birth to 13 years of age, and licenses nearly 12,000 early education and care and out-of-school-time programs statewide.

EEC also supports a network of local and regional organizations that provide information and referral services for thousands of Massachusetts families, inclusive programming for children with special needs, innovative parenting and family support programs and professional development for educators. Through this network of community partners, EEC touches the lives of more than 275,000 children every day.

Commissioner

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Board of Early Education and Care

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A schedule of meetings of the Board can be found at:
www.eec.state.ma.us/oo_meetings.aspx

OUR MISSION

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care provides 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.

Three Year Strategic Directions

- Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide.
- Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.
- Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.
- Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public.
- Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

EEC provides information for families about EEC financial assistance options and early education and care programs through the Massachusetts Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Programs and the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R).

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION

EEC offers services and resources for pre-school children with special needs and their families. EEC is responsible for overseeing federal IDEA preschool special education funds for young children ages 3 to 5, and working with public schools on special education services.

UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN

EEC implements the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) pilot program in the Commonwealth. The UPK initiative promotes school readiness and positive outcomes for children and furthers the long-term creation of a universally accessible, high-quality early education program by providing grant funding directly to pre-school programs meeting specific quality guidelines.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

EEC provides financial assistance to help eligible low-income working and at-risk families pay for early education and out-of-school time programs. Due to limited funding, however, EEC maintains a centralized waiting list which currently includes more than 20,000 children in families who need financial assistance to afford licensed, appropriate child care and afterschool programs.

LICENSING AND MONITORING

EEC sets licensing standards, issues licenses and monitors early education and care and after school programs in the Commonwealth, including group child care centers and family child care homes. We license adoption placement agencies, foster placement agencies and residential care programs as well.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM QUALITY ADVANCEMENT

EEC manages and supports an array of professional development opportunities for early education and out-of-school time professionals including the ECE Scholarship Program, Child Development Associate (CDA) Scholarship, Building Careers Grant Program, EEC Professional Registry, Quality Improvement Grant Program (funded by Invest in Children License Plate), and Community Partnerships for Children for programs seeking accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

EEC supports a set of innovative family support programs like the Massachusetts Family Network (MFN), the Parent Child Home Program (PCHP), and Reach Out and Read (ROR) that directly engage families around strategies to promote children's learning and development.

CONTACT US:

EEC CENTRAL OFFICE

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EEC REGIONAL OFFICES

To contact one of our five regional offices, or learn more about us, go to: mass.gov/eec