

Report to the Legislature: Kindergarten Expansion Grants - Fiscal Year 2013

This Report to the Legislature on Kindergarten Expansion Grants pursuant to Chapter 139 of the Acts of 2012 line item 7030-1002 provides information on kindergarten expansion grants across the Commonwealth.

May 2013

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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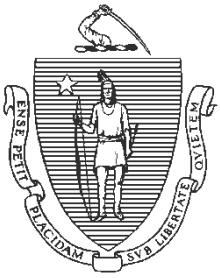
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75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

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TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

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Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this Report to the Legislature: *Kindergarten Expansion Grants*, pursuant to Chapter 139 of the Acts of 2012 line item 7030-1002.

Between fiscal years 1999 and 2013 (FY99-13), the percentage of public school kindergarten children statewide attending full-day programs grew from 29 to 86 percent. This increase in full-day kindergarten enrollment, despite the difficult economic times, demonstrates districts' commitment to ensuring that students have the strongest foundation from which to build their learning. Although several factors contributed to the growth of full-day programs, support provided by the state's kindergarten grants and districts' commitment to expand their early education programs are primary among them.

In FY13, 166 funded entities receive Quality Full-Day Kindergarten grants. The number of students in full-day kindergarten across the state increased by nearly 4,000 from a total of 56,264 students in FY12 to 60,165 in FY13. The 86 percent of kindergarten students in full-day programs is up from 83 percent in FY12. During this time period, the percent of students paying tuition for full-day classes stayed the same at 16 percent in all districts, and 11 percent in grant-funded districts.

In November 2012, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) released the Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Funding Opportunity Request for Proposals (RFP). The purpose of these grants is to encourage the voluntary expansion of high-quality, full-day kindergarten classrooms across Massachusetts. The grants assist districts with the preparation needed during FY13 to be able to implement full-day kindergarten in FY14. Through this competitive process, five public school districts were awarded Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten grants (Bourne, Hudson, Mansfield, Mendon-Upton Regional, and Scituate). Awards are anticipated to create full-day kindergarten opportunities for approximately 400 students starting in September 2013. More information on these grant awards is posted to the [Grants Funding Opportunities web site](#).

Universal, voluntary full-day kindergarten is a key component of an early care and education system for children from birth to third grade, and of the Commonwealth's efforts to address grade 3 proficiency in English language arts and mathematics. Kindergarten is the threshold year in children's lives and education, merging home, non-public, and public early education and care and preschool programs into the public education system. Funding for the Kindergarten Grant Program in the last fourteen fiscal years (FY00-FY13) has supported school districts' voluntary

transition from half-day to full-day kindergarten, and the ongoing quality enhancement of existing full-day programs.

The benefits of full-day kindergarten contribute to cost savings and improve educational outcomes, if the elements of quality are in place from preschool through third grade with strong leadership at every level. The Department is committed to full-day kindergarten programs, even during fiscally challenging times. In light of extensive research that documents the greater impact for students from lower versus higher income families, the Department is considering restructuring funding and targeting grant awards in future years to high need districts. The Department also supports Chapter 70 reimbursement policies that promote free full-day kindergarten and create disincentives for eliminating existing full-day kindergarten programs.

I am available if you have questions or would like to discuss this further. You may also contact Associate Commissioner John L.G. Bynoe, III at jbynoe@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-6300.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: Kindergarten Expansion Grants – FY2013 pursuant to Chapter 139 of the Acts of 2012, [line item 7030-1002](#):

“...provided further, that not later than January 17, 2013, the department shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means on the total number of grants requested and awarded;...”

Grants Program Overview

A high quality education system for children from preschool (pre-K) through third grade includes universal, full-day kindergarten. Kindergarten is a pivotal year in children’s lives and education, bridging home or preschool programs provided in diverse settings—family child care, Head Start, private early education and care, or public preschool—and the public elementary education system. Kindergarten is the first experience of formal schooling for many children; on average 22 percent of children who enter kindergarten in grant districts come without preschool experience. Since FY00, the legislature and the governor have approved funding for the Kindergarten Expansion Grant Program as an ongoing program to accomplish two primary goals:

1. Increase the number of districts with high-quality full-day kindergarten by supporting selected districts’ preparations for implementing full-day kindergarten through the *Transition Planning for Full-Day Kindergarten Grant*; and
2. Support elements of high quality programs that provide children with optimal learning experiences in their first formal year of public education with the *Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant*.

Districts with kindergarten-age students must provide part-time kindergarten sessions for at least 425 hours per school year ([603 CMR 27.03\(5\)](#)). Districts are encouraged to offer full-day kindergarten programs. Funding guidelines define full-day programs as 5 hours per day and 5 days per week, or a minimum of 850 hours per school year.

Between FY99 and FY13 the percentage of public school kindergarten children statewide attending full-day programs grew from 29 to 86 percent. Although several factors contributed to the growth of full-day programs, support provided by the state’s Kindergarten Expansion Grants and the commitment by districts to expand their early education programs are primary among them.

District Kindergarten Programs

Full-day programs are optional, and districts have different budget issues and priorities so they offer full-day kindergarten in a variety of configurations. Districts have the option of offering a full-day program that has the capacity to serve all or some of their kindergarten-age children, and districts may charge tuition for the hours beyond the mandated part-time program. If a district offers a limited number of full-day classes, it may place children by lottery or parent request, or

offer full-day classes in particular neighborhood schools. In FY13, 309 districts serve kindergarten students, of which 298 provide at least some full-day classes.

One hundred and sixty-six (166) entities, including 6 charter schools, receive the Quality Full-Day Kindergarten grants in FY13. Appendix A provides a list of grant recipients. There are five districts that are new recipients this year (Duxbury, Granby, Haverhill, Mansfield, and Uxbridge). These districts opened new full-day kindergarten classes in FY13, and received the FY12 Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten grant. Of the 60,165 students enrolled in full-day kindergarten across the Commonwealth in FY13, a total of 47,203 (78 percent) are served by grantee districts.

Uses of Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Funds

Quality Full-Day Kindergarten (Quality) grants support the ongoing improvement of full-day programs and in most years have been continuation grants, meaning that eligible districts receive funding if they are in compliance with program requirements. In FY13, nearly \$23.8 million has been awarded to the 166 funded entities through the Quality grants (see Appendix A for the list of grantees). Most Quality grant dollars (in recent years approximately 95 percent) fund staff positions, primarily paraprofessionals or assistant teachers. Grant funds supplement local funds and tuition. Funding priorities and activities include:

- Developing/implementing a full-day curriculum using the Department's [*Kindergarten Learning Experiences*](#) (April 2008), based on the revised 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, for planning curriculum;
- Seeking accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or an alternative to accreditation approved by the Department;¹
- Supporting paraprofessionals in each classroom to maintain appropriate adult-child ratios and appropriate class sizes;
- Offering effective professional development for administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals;
- Working on continuity of curriculum and assessment, from preschool to grade three;
- Promoting family involvement and improving the transition of children and their families from preschool into kindergarten, and from kindergarten into first grade;
- Increasing the number of children with disabilities included in the general education classroom, improving the quality of inclusion, and improving the quality of classes and services for children with disabilities; and
- Improving the education of English language learners.

All districts with Quality grants maintain ongoing School Readiness and Early Childhood/Early Elementary Curriculum committees that may operate separately, jointly, or as a subcommittee to

¹ Approximately thirty-five (35) districts are approved to use one of the alternatives to accreditation, which include: the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS); Ready School Assessment (High/Scope); New England Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation; Work Sampling System (Pearson Learning); and the Tools of the Mind Curriculum (Bodrova and Leong).

another council (such as Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Councils). Required members include representatives of private preschools and kindergartens; Head Start; teachers from public preschools, kindergartens, grades 1 to 3, and special education; school administrators and curriculum coordinators; after-school programs and other relevant programs; parents; and interested community members.

The primary tasks of the committees are to: improve the readiness of children and the readiness of schools; assist with developing and aligning an interdisciplinary and inclusive full-day curriculum addressing all domains of development, using the aforementioned *Kindergarten Learning Experiences*; align assessments from preschool to grades 2-3; and improve transitions for children and families from preschool into kindergarten and from kindergarten into first grade.

Uses of Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Funds

Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten (Transition) grants assist districts planning to convert part-time sessions to full-day programs. During years the Transition grant program has been funded, requests from eligible high-need districts were given priority, but grants have also been awarded to all types of communities. The Transition grants, along with the potential for Quality grants in succeeding years to help support a full-day program, provide a significant incentive for districts to adopt and expand full-day kindergarten.

In November 2012, the Department released the [Funding Opportunity](#) for the competitive Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten grant program. The purpose of these grants is to encourage the voluntary expansion of high-quality, full-day kindergarten classrooms across Massachusetts. The grants assist districts with the preparation needed during FY13, so that they will be able to implement new full-day kindergarten classes in FY14. Through this competitive process, five public school districts were awarded Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten grants (Bourne, Hudson, Mansfield, Mendon-Upton Regional, and Scituate). Awards are anticipated to create full-day kindergarten opportunities for approximately 400 students starting in September 2013. More information on these grant awards is posted to the [Grants Funding Opportunities web site](#).

As noted early in this report, FY13 is the fourteenth year that the state funded Kindergarten Grant Program has supported school districts' voluntary transition from half-day to full-day kindergarten, and the ongoing quality enhancement of existing full-day programs.

The state's commitment to this program stems from the benefits of full-day kindergarten, which include improved educational outcomes if the elements of quality are in place from preschool through third grade with strong leadership at every level. Research has shown that full-day kindergarten programs help to improve attendance, reduce student retention (repeating the year), and reduce the need for special education and Title 1 services, thus contributing to cost savings for school districts.

Department leadership and staff understand the value of full-day kindergarten programs and will continue to look for ways to promote free full-day kindergarten and create disincentives for eliminating existing full-day kindergarten programs.

Appendix A: Fiscal Year 2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Recipients

District Code	FY2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grantee District (Fund Code 701)	FY2013 Grant Amount
003	Acushnet Public Schools	\$45,008
603	Adams-Cheshire Regional School District	67,512
005	Agawam Public Schools	129,772
007	Amesbury Public Schools	80,260
008	Amherst Public Schools (Pelham)	91,516
010	Arlington Public Schools	237,867
610	Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District	78,764
014	Ashland Public Schools	67,512
615	Athol-Royalston Regional School District	56,260
016	Attleboro Public Schools	182,469
018	Avon Public Schools	11,600
616	Ayer-Shirley Regional School District	90,316
020	Barnstable Public Schools	212,662
024	Belchertown Public Schools	98,642
026	Belmont Public Schools	166,154
027	Berkley Public Schools	23,200
618	Berkshire Hills Regional School District	45,008
028	Berlin Public Schools	11,600
030	Beverly Public Schools	114,768
622	Blackstone-Millville Regional School District	67,512
035	Boston Public Schools	2,369,683
039	Boylston Public Schools	20,400
044	Brockton Public Schools	625,608
046	Brookline Public Schools	306,009
049	Cambridge Public Schools	384,590
050	Canton Public Schools	73,512
052	Carver Public Schools	67,512
635	Central Berkshire Regional School District	76,138
061	Chicopee Public Schools	270,048
064	Clinton Public Schools	90,016
065	Cohasset Public Schools	48,382
440	Community Day Charter School	20,400
071	Danvers Public Schools	144,276
645	Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District	113,772
077	Douglas Public Schools	56,260

District Code	FY2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grantee District (Fund Code 701)	FY2013 Grant Amount
079	Dracut Public Schools	\$86,264
658	Dudley-Charlton Regional School District	135,024
082	Duxbury Public Schools	80,000
087	East Longmeadow Public Schools	54,260
091	Erving Public Schools	11,600
094	Fairhaven Public Schools	56,260
095	Fall River Public Schools	435,218
096	Falmouth Public Schools	157,528
662	Farmington River Regional School District	11,600
097	Fitchburg Public Schools	237,725
099	Foxborough Public Schools	73,512
100	Framingham Public Schools	321,804
101	Franklin Public Schools	213,788
670	Frontier Regional School District	57,008
103	Gardner Public Schools	89,638
105	Georgetown Public Schools	56,260
674	Gill-Montague Regional School District	58,128
107	Gloucester Public Schools	129,398
111	Granby Public Schools	33,756
114	Greenfield Public Schools	93,390
117	Hadley Public Schools	23,200
680	Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District	101,268
683	Hampshire Regional School District	84,764
125	Harvard Public Schools	31,130
128	Haverhill Public Schools	252,044
685	Hawlemont Regional School District	7,424
137	Holyoke Public Schools	239,660
142	Hull Public Schools	43,896
144	Ipswich Public Schools	64,886
149	Lawrence Public Schools	483,444
150	Lee Public Schools	33,756
151	Leicester Public Schools	56,260
153	Leominster Public Schools	277,469
154	Leverett Public Schools	11,600
155	Lexington Public Schools	233,666
157	Lincoln Public Schools	64,886
160	Lowell Public Schools	590,720

District Code	FY2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grantee District (Fund Code 701)	FY2013 Grant Amount
162	Lunenburg Public Schools	\$48,382
163	Lynn Public Schools	594,707
165	Malden Public Schools	270,048
698	Manchester Essex Regional School District	23,200
167	Mansfield Public Schools	67,512
168	Marblehead Public Schools	135,024
170	Marlborough Public Schools	133,146
700	Martha's Vineyard Charter School	11,600
466	Martha's Vineyard Regional School District	105,393
172	Mashpee Public Schools	67,512
173	Mattapoisett Public Schools	33,756
174	Maynard Public Schools	67,512
176	Medford Public Schools	188,845
178	Melrose Public Schools	151,186
181	Methuen Public Schools	261,453
182	Middleborough Public Schools	135,024
185	Milford Public Schools	166,154
186	Millbury Public Schools	67,512
187	Millis Public Schools	45,008
189	Milton Public Schools	157,528
717	Mohawk Trail Regional School District	38,707
712	Monomy Public Schools (formerly Chatham and Harwich Districts)	101,268
191	Monson Public Schools	33,756
196	Nahant Public Schools	11,600
720	Narragansett Public Schools	44,642
725	Nashoba Regional School District	78,764
198	Natick Public Schools	202,536
660	Nauset Public Schools	104,268
444	Neighborhood House Charter School	23,200
201	New Bedford Public Schools	429,301
728	New Salem/Wendell Regional School District	11,600
204	Newburyport Public Schools	65,634
207	Newton Public Schools	256,638
208	Norfolk Public Schools	45,008
209	North Adams Public Schools	90,016
211	North Andover Public Schools	139,146
215	North Brookfield Public Schools	23,200

District Code	FY2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grantee District (Fund Code 701)	FY2013 Grant Amount
735	North Middlesex Regional School District	\$124,520
210	Northampton Public Schools	94,890
213	Northborough Public Schools	79,512
214	Northbridge Public Schools	100,142
218	Norton Public Schools	53,634
220	Norwood Public Schools	150,589
223	Orange Public Schools	34,130
229	Peabody Public Schools	260,426
231	Pembroke Public Schools	45,756
750	Pioneer Valley Regional School District	45,008
236	Pittsfield Public Schools	379,898
238	Plainville Public Schools	56,260
753	Quabbin Regional School District	101,268
243	Quincy Public Schools	329,670
244	Randolph Public Schools	111,762
482	River Valley Charter School	23,200
250	Rochester Public Schools	33,756
252	Rockport Public Schools	33,756
253	Rowe Public Schools	4,051
258	Salem Public Schools	198,328
264	Scituate Public Schools	54,382
486	Seven Hills Charter School	35,256
271	Shrewsbury Public Schools	82,138
272	Shutesbury Public Schools	11,600
760	Silver Lake Regional School District	144,926
273	Somerset Public Schools	112,520
274	Somerville Public Schools	210,859
278	South Hadley Public Schools	78,764
488	South Shore Charter School	23,200
276	Southborough Public Schools	56,260
277	Southbridge Public Schools	114,388
765	Southern Berkshire Regional School District	52,847
766	Southwick-Tolland Regional School District	51,008
767	Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District	91,516
281	Springfield Public Schools	1,160,988
285	Stoughton Public Schools	160,528
290	Sutton Public Schools	56,260

District Code	FY2013 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grantee District (Fund Code 701)	FY2013 Grant Amount
291	Swampscott Public Schools	\$90,016
293	Taunton Public Schools	343,846
775	Triton Regional School District	57,008
300	Truro Public Schools	11,600
304	Uxbridge Public Schools	33,756
309	Ware Public Schools	57,760
310	Wareham Public Schools	114,020
314	Watertown Public Schools	107,229
316	Webster Public Schools	78,764
332	West Springfield Public Schools	138,772
325	Westfield Public Schools	236,292
330	Weston Public Schools	78,764
331	Westport Public Schools	60,573
335	Westwood Public Schools	106,899
341	Williamstown Public Schools	31,130
342	Wilmington Public Schools	146,276
343	Winchendon Public Schools	64,886
346	Winthrop Public Schools	94,485
347	Woburn Public Schools	225,040
348	Worcester Public Schools	987,154

Appendix B: Chapter 139 of the Acts of 2012, Line 7030-1002, FY13 State Budget

7030-1002 KINDERGARTEN EXPANSION GRANTS

For kindergarten expansion grants to provide awards to continue quality enhancement of existing full-day kindergarten classrooms; provided, that the department shall administer a grant program to encourage the voluntary expansion of high quality, full-day kindergarten education; provided further, that grants funded through this appropriation shall not annualize to more than \$18,000 per classroom in subsequent fiscal years; provided further, that preference shall be given to grant applicants with high percentages of students scoring in levels 1 or 2 on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exam, and school districts which serve free or reduced lunch to at least 35 per cent of its students, as determined by the department based on available data; provided further, that any grant funds distributed from this item shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city, town or regional school district and held in a separate account and, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, shall be expended by the school committee of such city, town or regional school district without further appropriation; provided further, that such program shall supplement and shall not supplant currently funded local, state and federal programs at the school or district; provided further, that not later than January 17, 2013, the department shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means on the total number of grants requested and awarded; provided further, that all kindergarten programs previously funded through community partnership councils at the department of early education and care may receive grants from this item in amounts equal to the amounts they received in fiscal year 2012, reduced in proportion to the overall reduction of this item from fiscal year 2012 to fiscal year 2013; and provided further, that no funds shall be expended for personnel costs.....\$23,948,947