

Massachusetts Graduates First Class in Preschool Expansion Pilot Program

Second Year Cohort of Students Begins This Month

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced the graduation of the first class of students from the state's Preschool Expansion pilot program, which provides a year of free, high quality preschool for four year old children from low income families in five cities across the state, and the start of the second cohort of students to participate in the program.

"This year we were proud to offer over 800 children free high-quality preschool in Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, and Springfield, who have not previously been exposed to a formal preschool setting," said Secretary of Education Jim Peyser. "We thank all the partners from non-profits, school districts, and communities who have come together to make the success of the first year possible, and we look forward to another successful year ahead."

In the 2015-2016 school year, 48 new preschool classrooms serving approximately 850 children in Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell and Springfield opened through the Preschool Expansion pilot, which is funded through a two-year \$30 million federal grant award. These children graduated from the program in August 2016 and will attend Kindergarten in the fall. The second class of the Preschool Expansion program starts in September 2016 and approximately 850 four year old children in the same five communities will attend a year of free high-quality preschool. Massachusetts applied for \$60 million in Preschool Expansion grant funds over four years and is eligible for up to \$30 million in additional funding for two more years, subject to budget appropriation.

In the Preschool Expansion program, the local public school district in each city partnered with early education and care programs licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care to provide high-quality preschool programs for 4-year-olds in the community. The Preschool Expansion grant funding supports a high quality program model that includes full-day and full-year programming; higher salary compensation for educators; classroom staffing requirements (child-teacher ratio of 10:1 and at least one educator with a Bachelor's degree); use of formative assessment tools and curricula that aligns with state standards and guidelines; and family engagement activities that support transition to and from preschool.

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 that will follow the children into elementary school and will estimate the impact of the grant-funded programs on child outcomes.

In January of this year, the Department of Early Education and Care awarded \$500,000 in "Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative" grants to 13 cities and towns to engage in strategic planning efforts that support expanding access to high-quality preschool for 3 to 5 year old children in their community through public private partnerships that are aligned with Massachusetts' Preschool Expansion program model. The "Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative" grants provided funds for communities to conduct needs assessments, identify needed and available resources, and develop plans for implementing expanded access to preschool in their community. The "Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative" grantees completed their strategic plans in June.

"The Preschool Expansion program and the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative are advancing the Massachusetts birth to third grade early learning system as an essential component of a cradle to career education pathway for students in the Commonwealth," said Early Education and Care Commissioner Tom Weber. "Collaborating to strategically leverage the strengths and achievements of our field is essential to sustaining a system that provides high quality preschool opportunities for all children."

The Preschool Expansion program sites and the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative communities are listed below.

Preschool Expansion Program Sites

<p>Boston (15 Classrooms)</p> <p>Roxbury YMCA 285 Martin Luther King Boulevard</p> <p>East Boston YMCA 215 Bremen Street</p> <p>Walnut Grove Head Start (ABCD) 22 Elm Hill Ave Boston, MA 02121</p> <p>Nurtury 38 Horadan Way (Ruggles) Roxbury, MA 02120</p> <p>Nurtury Learning Lab (Bromley-Heath) 33 Bickford Street Jamaica Plain, MA 02130</p> <p>Nurtury 436 Tremont Street (Castle Square) Boston MA</p> <p>Wesley Education Center 29 Stanton St. Dorchester, MA 02124</p> <p>Ellis Memorial Early Education Center 58 Berkeley St. Boston, MA</p> <p>Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester 1135 Dorchester Avenue</p> <p>Paige Academy, Inc. 40 Highland Avenue Roxbury, MA</p> <p>Catholic Charities (Nazareth Child Care Center) 19 St. Joseph St. Jamaica Plain, AM</p> <p>Catholic Charities (Yawkey Konbit-Kreyol Center) 185 Columbia St. Dorchester, MA</p>	<p>Holyoke (4 Classrooms)</p> <p>Kelly Full Service School (Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start) 216 West Street</p> <p>Lawrence Full Service Community School (Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start) 156 Cabot Street</p> <p>Sullivan School (Valley Opportunity Council) 400 Jarvis Avenue</p> <p>Morgan Full Service Community School (Valley Opportunity Council) 596 South Bridge Street</p> <p>Lawrence (10 Classrooms)</p> <p>Lawrence Early Achievement Partnership at Head Start (GLCAC Inc., Head Start) 96 East Haverhill Street</p> <p>Lawrence Early Achievement Partnership at The Community Group (The Community Group) 404 Haverhill Street</p> <p>Lowell (8 Classrooms)</p> <p>Lowell Collaborative Preschool Academy (Community Teamwork/CTI and Little Sprouts) 554 Pawtucket Street</p> <p>Springfield (11 Classrooms)</p> <p>Square One, Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, YMCA of Greater Springfield 15 Catherine Street</p> <p>Family Square @ Square One 1095 Main Street</p> <p>Learning Center @ YMCA of Greater Springfield 275 Chestnut Street</p>
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Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start
@ Mason Square
33 Wilbraham Road

"Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative" Communities

Athol	New Bedford
Brockton	North Adams
Cape Cod	Pittsfield
Fall River	Springfield
Holyoke	Somerville
Lawrence	Worcester
Lowell	

The strategic plans developed by the communities who received a Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative grant are posted on the [Department of Early Education and Care website](#).

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