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CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR

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KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$4.1 Million for Early Education Programs

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WEBSTER, MA – The Baker-Polito Administration and the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC) today announced \$4.1 million in grant awards for facility improvements at early education and care programs that serve low income children. Five agencies were selected to receive an Early Education and Care and Out of School Time (EEOST) capital improvement grant, which will help increase the quality of their early education programs through critical facility repairs and renovations.

Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito made the announcement at the Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC), early education program in Webster, the site of one of the facilities funded by the 2017 grant awards.

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"These grants will support the renovation and construction of early education and care programs for our youngest children," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "Facility improvements like these, coupled with an already announced 6% rate increase for early education providers, ensure that more children have access to high-quality environments and staff that will improve their learning experience."

"The facility improvements funded through the EEOST capital improvements grants are modernizing spaces and providing a better environment for the children to grow and learn," **Lt. Governor Karyn Polito said**. "We are proud today's grants will improve the early education experience for families in North Adams, New Bedford, Belchertown, Roxbury, and Webster."

The \$4.1 million in FY17 grant awards will improve the quality of existing settings for approximately 301 children in programs licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care; increase the capacity of these programs to serve an additional 75 children in higher quality settings; and will support the creation of an estimated 13 educator positions and 72 construction jobs during the grant period.

Since taking office in Jan 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded more than \$15.1 million to 21 grantees.

"In 2011, a study on the condition of early childhood and out-of-school time facilities in Massachusetts found that deficiencies in the buildings impacted the quality of teaching and learning, and recommended the development of a sustainable source of public capital to help non-profit providers serving children living in low income communities improve their facilities," **Education Secretary James Peyser said**. "We have made a commitment to invest in these facilities, and know that it will positively impact the learning environments of our youngest students."

The Early Education and Care and Out of School Time capital improvement grants are financed through the state's capital budget and provide matching funds that leverage private investment. The Baker-Polito Administration's FY18 Capital Budget Plan included \$4 million for the Early Education and Out of School Time grant program.

"Thoughtfully designed and developmentally-appropriate environments help children learn and grow successfully," **said Early Education and Care Commissioner Tom Weber**. "This strategic investment of public resources helps early education and out-of-school time programs leverage private funding to create high-quality learning spaces for children that otherwise might be out of reach."

All of the programs selected to receive a grant award serve publicly subsidized families, have demonstrated financial need, and have secured additional funding to pay for a portion of their project costs. The Department of Early Education and Care partnered with CEDAC's affiliate, the Children's Investment Fund, to administer the grant awards. All of the grantees are tax-exempt non-profit corporations or organizations in which a non-profit corporation has a controlling interest.

"The EEOST Capital Fund is a critical resource for helping non-profit child care providers improve the spaces where so many low income children attend child care," **said Theresa Jordan, Program Manager of Children's Investment Fund**. "It has helped fund renovations and construction of centers, creating wonderful learning environments across the Commonwealth. The child care community is grateful that policymakers had both the vision and commitment to quality that led to establishment of the Capital Fund. This Fund has made Massachusetts a national leader in developing facilities that support children's education and wellbeing."

Ten organizations submitted requests for funding that totaled nearly \$9 million combined. The applicants selected for a grant award demonstrated sound feasibility of project, readiness for implementation, and likely potential for long-term sustainability and success. The grantees and their award amounts are listed below:

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

"We are thrilled to be receiving this important state grant which will allow us to bring these critical Head Start services back to a community where they are needed," said **WCAC Executive Director Jill Dagilis**. "Today represents the culmination of several years of hard work to identify a good site which addresses the needs of Webster's working families and their children. WCAC is indebted to the many generous funders, public officials and other partners for helping to make this project possible."

The grants were financed through the Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Capital Fund, which was established in 2013 through An Act Financing the Production and Preservation of Housing for Low and Moderate Income Residents. The legislation that established the capital fund provided \$45 million in general obligation bond funding over five years.

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