Good morning Chairwoman Peisch, Chairman Lewis, and members of the committee.

As the director of research and policy at Strategies for Children, I would like to draw your attention to the PEG evaluation conducted over the past four years by researchers at Abt Associates.

On April 9, 2019, at a meeting of the EEC Board, researchers summarized the PEG evaluation’s many findings:

- Programs had a sizeable impact on children’s early literacy and early math skills,
- Classroom quality improved over time, and PEG classrooms scored higher than non-PEG classrooms on the CLASS measurement.
- PEG children showed less “chronic absence” in Kindergarten and 1st grade,
- Parents of children in PEG classrooms made economic gains during the preschool year, presumably because they were able to work while their children were in safe, full-day, full-year programs,
- Areas for improvement include: instructional quality, child vocabulary, and special education services.

You will hear more about the PEG evaluation in a legislative briefing that EEC is planning for the near future.

But what is clear today is that the federally funded PEG program did what it was designed to do - support 48 of the highest quality preschool classrooms in the state. PEG was funded at a level to support educator compensation and professional development, comprehensive services and family engagement, and full-day / full-year programming for children from very low-income families.

Now we’re all familiar with national research on the benefits of high-quality early education. However, I should note that during my 11 years at Strategies for Children, only a handful of local evaluations have been conducted in this state. The PEG evaluation is the most comprehensive and most promising. It sheds light on how to continue to build high-quality preschool programming here in Massachusetts.

Thank you for your support. If you have further research questions, contact me any time. I’m happy to be a resource on this critical issue. 617-330-7387 or tdosremedios@strategiesforchildren.org.