

# Invest in High-Quality Early Education and Care

## Give children the start they need to succeed in school

Experts agree that high-quality early education has a lifetime impact on young learners.

Decades of research confirms the following benefits: Improved school readiness, increased academic achievement, reduced reliance on special education, increased standardized test scores, fewer high school dropouts, greater college attendance.

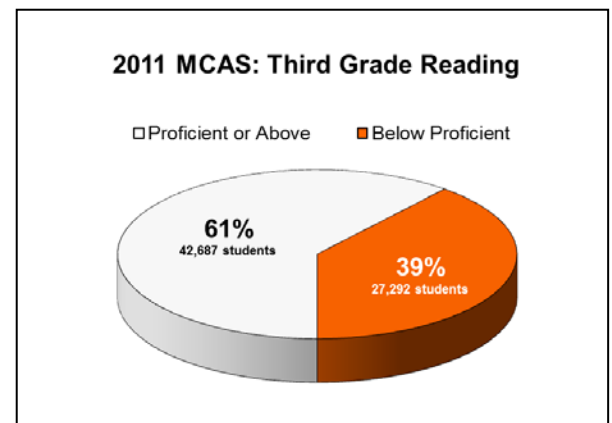
## Close the achievement gap before it begins

In Massachusetts, nearly 40% of third graders do not read at grade level. Research shows that 74% of these students will continue to struggle in school and are far less likely to graduate from high-school, attend college, and develop skills essential for today's economy. The "achievement gap" begins early. Disparities in child outcomes (cognitive, social, behavioral, and health) are evident at 9 months and grow larger by 24 months of age.

High-quality early education is one of the few proven strategies to have an impact on school readiness, later academic achievement and life outcomes.

Low-income children who participate in high-quality early education programs are:

- 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade;
- 30% more likely to graduate from high school; and
- Twice as likely to go to college.



## Now is the time to act

Massachusetts is one of nine states to win a federal Race to the Top/ Early Learning Challenge grant. The state was awarded \$50 million over four years and earned the second highest score in the nation. Leverage this momentum in early childhood by increasing state investments in high-quality early education to improve academic readiness and close the achievement gap. **Like the state's first Race to the Top award, these funds cannot be used to supplant existing funding of programs.**

## A high return on taxpayers' investment

Higher-achieving students and more successful adults reduce costs in education, health care and other public service sectors while generating new revenue sources. Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman and other leading economists estimate **high-quality early education yields a 10%–16% return on investment.**

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## Improve the quality of early education and care programs

### Universal Pre-Kindergarten Grant (UPK) Program (3000-5075)

To improve the quality of pre-kindergarten programs for children age 2 years and 9 months to kindergarten eligibility, delivered through a mixed system of public and private providers. In FY12, \$7.5 million in total funding provided grants to 210 early education programs serving approximately 6,100 children in nearly 100 cities and towns for professional development and training, teacher compensation, curricula and materials, accreditation support, assessment training and other quality improvements.

- **Early Education for All Campaign (EEA) recommendation: \$12.14 million**

### Quality Rating and Improvement System (3000-xxxx)

To further the implementation of a statewide quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). A QRIS sets clear quality standards for all programs and leads to greater accountability and continuous program improvement. State funding will help individual programs to improve, while enabling EEC to monitor and evaluate quality improvement efforts and share information with families and communities.

- **EEA recommendation: \$4 million**

## Ensure there are high-quality educators in every early education and care setting

### Massachusetts State Scholarship Program (7070-0065) - Early Childhood Educators Scholarship

Research consistently demonstrates that the quality of classroom instruction is a critical determinant of children's achievement. Yet only 30% of early educators in center-based programs and 18% of family child care providers in Massachusetts have bachelor's degrees. Since FY06, the Early Childhood Educator Scholarship has provided more than 5,000 scholarships to early educators to pursue associate or bachelor's degrees in exchange for continued employment in the field.

- **EEA recommendation: \$87.61 million with \$3.4 million for Early Childhood Educators Scholarship**

## Build a strong early education and care system for young children and families

**Dept. of Early Education and Care Administration (3000-1000):** For EEC operations and administration of services

- **EEA recommendation: \$12.51 million**

**Access Management (3000-2000):** For the coordination of early education and care programs and services

- **EEA recommendation: \$6.05 million**

**Income Eligible (3000-4060):** For early education and care and out-of-school-time services for low-income children

- **EEA recommendation: \$242.90 million**

**Head Start (3000-5000):** For grants to Head Start and Early Head Start programs

- **EEA recommendation: \$9 million**

**Mental Health (3000-6075):** For early childhood mental health services in early education and care programs

- **EEA recommendation: \$1 million**

**Services for Infants and Parents (3000-7050):** For providing coordinated family and community engagement services

- **EEA recommendation: \$19.20 million**

**Reach Out and Read (3000-7070):** For Reach Out and Read, a research-proven, pediatric literacy intervention program

- **EEA recommendation: \$800,000**

**Kindergarten Expansion Grants (7030-1002):** For the expansion and quality enhancement of full-day kindergarten

- **EEA recommendation: \$25.95 million**

**Early Education and Care Provider Rate Increase (1599-0042):** To support program quality through increased workforce salaries and benefits in subsidized early education and care programs.

- **EEA recommendation: \$25 million**