

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Contact: Tom Weber**  
**617-330-7389 (Office)**  
**617-669-3678 (Cell)**

**EARLY EDUCATION FOR ALL CAMPAIGN COMMENDS GOVERNOR PATRICK  
FOR HIS COMMITMENT TO YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN STATE BUDGET**

Boston – The Early Education for All Campaign (EEA) applauded Governor Deval L. Patrick for increasing investments in early education and care programs in his Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09) state budget. Specifically, Governor Patrick has proposed a \$15 million increase to the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (MA UPK) Program, an \$8.4 million increase to the Kindergarten Expansion Grant Program, and a \$1.2 million increase for professional development for early education and care providers.

Margaret Blood, EEA Campaign Director, commented, “We are grateful to Governor Patrick for championing the cause of young children and families in his state budget. This challenging budget climate presents an opportunity to pursue policies that achieve better results for our Commonwealth and maximize state resources. Research demonstrates that investments in high-quality early education produce positive outcomes for our children and our economy, while yielding a substantial return on the taxpayer’s investment. We look forward to working with the Patrick Administration and the Legislature throughout the budget process to ensure that critical investments in early education and care are included in the final FY09 state budget.”

Early education opportunities have a lifetime impact on young learners in terms of greater academic readiness, higher test scores, and improved social skills. Low-income children who participate in two years of 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. The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis estimates a 16% return for every dollar invested in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. Currently three states have universal pre-kindergarten, while 14 states and the District of Columbia are moving toward universal pre-kindergarten. Last year, 36 states increased investments in pre-kindergarten.

The Early Education for All Campaign is a growing coalition of leaders from business, early childhood, labor, religion, health care, education, and philanthropy, working in partnership with families, grassroots leaders, and state policymakers to make high-quality pre-kindergarten education and full-day public school kindergarten available to every Massachusetts child. The specific goals of the Campaign are to ensure:

- Voluntary, universally accessible, high-quality pre-kindergarten for every child delivered through a mix of public and private programs;
- Voluntary, universally accessible, high-quality full school-day public kindergarten for every child; and
- A statewide system to improve the training, education and compensation of the early childhood workforce.

*The Early Education for All Campaign is an initiative of [Strategies for Children, Inc.](#), a non profit organization based in Boston. Its mission is to improve the well being of children and their families through public policy, advocacy, constituency building, and public awareness.*

For more information, visit [www.earlyeducationforall.org](http://www.earlyeducationforall.org).