Strategies for Children Applauds Governor Patrick’s FY14 Budget for Early Education

Paul O’Brien, chairman of the board of Strategies for Children, and Carolyn Lyons, SFC’s president and CEO, issued the following statement on the proposed increased investments in early education contained in Governor Patrick’s fiscal year 2014 budget. Strategies for Children is a non-profit organization that works to ensure that children in Massachusetts have access to high-quality early education and become proficient readers by the end of third grade.

“Governor Patrick’s budget recommendation presents Massachusetts with the opportunity to solidify its standing as a national leader in education and close the achievement gap by targeting investments where research clearly shows they have the most impact: early childhood. The governor’s plan recognizes the importance of the critical third grade reading benchmark in predicting a child’s chances of future success and recognizes that learning begins at birth. It is a comprehensive plan that builds on the strong foundation laid by the governor and his administration, including Commissioner Sherri Killins of the Department of Early Education and Care and Commissioner Mitchell Chester of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; the Legislature; and educators and leaders across the state who work daily with children and families. In a state where 39% of third graders scored below proficient in reading on the latest MCAS and performance has remained virtually stagnant since 2001, the governor would invest in developing the skills essential to the 21st century workforce. In a state where a wide achievement gap persists and 60% of third graders from low-income families scored below proficient in reading, the governor would close the achievement gap by investing in the early childhood years when the gap is first evident. We applaud the governor for his leadership and look forward to working with the Legislature to increase investments in high-quality early education.”

Strategies for Children and its signature Early Education for All Campaign work to ensure that children in Massachusetts have access to high-quality early education and become proficient readers by the end of third grade. Read our Eye on Early Education blog. Find us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter. View us on YouTube.