Statement on the Massachusetts House Ways and Means Committee FY2014 Budget Release

The Massachusetts House Ways and Means Committee released its proposed budget for the Commonwealth today. Carolyn Lyons, President and Chief Executive Officer of Strategies for Children, issued the following statement:

“It is critical that we make new investments in early education to close the achievement gap. The House Ways and Means budget released today decreases funding for early education by $15.8 million. While we acknowledge and appreciate the Committee's proposal to ensure efficiency and timely placement of children in high-quality education programs, Massachusetts has a stagnant and costly achievement gap which has remained intractable over the last decade. According to the 2012 MCAS results, 40% of Massachusetts third graders are not proficient in reading, a critical predictor of future academic success. We will not close this gap until we invest more in high-quality early education. Research shows that children from low-income families who enroll in high-quality early education and care are 40% less likely to be retained a grade or require special education, 30% more likely to graduate high school and twice as likely to attend a four-year college. We look forward to working with the Legislature as the budget process continues.”

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.