



# EEC

*MA Department of Early  
Education and Care*



2014

## Workforce and Professional Development



### EPS Core Areas

1. **Educator and  
Provider Planning**
2. **Coaching and  
Mentoring**
3. **Competency  
Development**

### Educator and Provider Support Grant

EEC envisions a workforce development system that is accessible to educators throughout the state; professional development opportunities that are interconnected but occur statewide, regionally, and locally; and core functions that are available statewide with access points that contribute unique functions, key partners, linkages and pathways to the system.

EEC's Educator and Provider Support grant supports educators and providers in EEC's mixed delivery system including educators working in center-based, family child care, public and private preschools, and out of school time/after school programs.

This grant supports pathways that lead educators to degree attainment and increased competency through certificates and credentials; and supports providers (programs) in attaining and maintaining accreditation and upward movement on the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).



# Early Childhood Education Degree Programs

## State of Higher Education

Access to higher education is not a new obstacle for early childhood educators. One challenge lies with finding the right degree program to fit the educator’s educational needs including one that addresses the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. The second obstacle is of course the cost of attendance. The average cost per course at a public 2-year institution is \$531.39 the cost per course nearly doubles at the 4-year public institution, \$950.62 per course (2013-2014 academic year). Additionally, to earn a degree educators currently working in the field require a degree program that addresses the needs of adult learners and provides the appropriate resources and supports to help them succeed.

Through the EPS grant and the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship program the state has put systems and resources in place to support early childhood educators through some of the challenges they face when looking to earn a degree. Currently there is a lack of funding and appropriate degree programs to support the growing demand. A demand that will only increase as more and more programs progress through the QRIS.

Fifty-three (53) institutions of higher education (IHE) in Massachusetts offer a degree in early childhood education. However, this does not infer to higher education’s ability to support the growing number of early education and out of school time educators and administrators looking for a degree for their chosen field.

Twenty 20 IHEs in MA award an associate’s degree and 33 offer a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education (ECE). It cannot be assumed that a degree program entitled “early

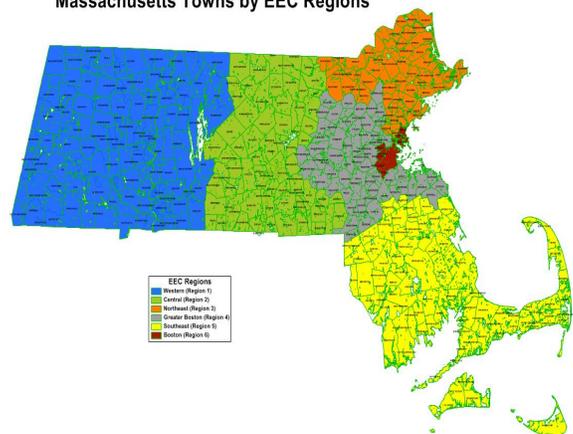
childhood” is aligned with EEC requirements and core competency areas. Nor can it be assumed that these degree programs provide the knowledge and competencies required for working with children birth through age 8 in a non-public school setting.

At most institutions the ECE degree is intended for educators working in the public school sector and were developed to meet the needs and criteria set for teacher licensure requirements established by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE).

There are exceptions to this including the UMass Boston EECIS program and the newly developed BA in Early Childhood and Youth Education degree program at Becker College. Additional public and private 4-year campuses have been inquiring about expanding degree options to meet workforce needs.

Ninety-two percent (92%) of IHEs align their curriculum with ESE teacher licensure requirements; only 62% align with EEC’s Core Competencies.

Massachusetts Towns by EEC Regions



**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS:**

*The median time it took for 2008 bachelor's degree recipients to earn their degree was 52 months. Forty-four percent of 2007–08 first-time bachelor's degree recipients completed a bachelor's degree within 48 months of their initial postsecondary enrollment, another 23 percent within 49–60 months, and an additional 9 percent within 61–72 months.*

*Graduates who started at a 2-year public institution and subsequently obtained a bachelor's degree had a median time to degree of 63 months. Bachelor's degree recipients who delayed entry into postsecondary education had a median time of 80 months<sup>1</sup>.*

## Time to Earn a Degree

Even with the appropriate degree program it still takes time, resources, and additional supports for educators to earn their degree.

The ECE Scholarship provides approximately \$3.2M annually in state funds to support educators working in the field and working towards their associate's or bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. The ECE Scholarship began in 2005 and the demand has increased each year. One thousand forty-three educators were approved for the ECE Scholarship for the 2014-2015 academic year.

Initially the ECE Scholarship supported a maximum of 3 courses per semester or 9 courses per year (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Now it is more likely that a recipient will receive funds for only 3 courses per year.

	<b>Associate's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>
<b>Degree Program Credits</b>	<b>60 credits</b> (~3 credits per course)	<b>120 credits</b> (~3 credits per course)
<b>Intended Completion Rate</b>	2 years	4 years
24 credits/ 8 courses per year (4 Fall courses + 4 Spring courses)	2.5 years	5 years
12 credits/ 4 courses per year (2 Fall courses + 2 Spring courses)	5 years	10 years
6 credits/ 2 courses per year (1 Fall course + 1 Spring course)	10 years	20 years

At a rate of 3 courses per year an educator earning their degree based solely on the support of the ECE Scholarship would earn their associate's degree in approximately 6-7 years or their bachelor's degree in 13 years. Recipients may also incur greater out of pocket expenses since the scholarship has not been able to keep up with the rising cost of college tuition.

Furthermore, early childhood educators may not be eligible for other forms of financial assistance because they are not enrolled at the college full time. Educators are also reluctant to acquire loans when it is unlikely they will be compensated upon earning their degree.



## Workforce Data

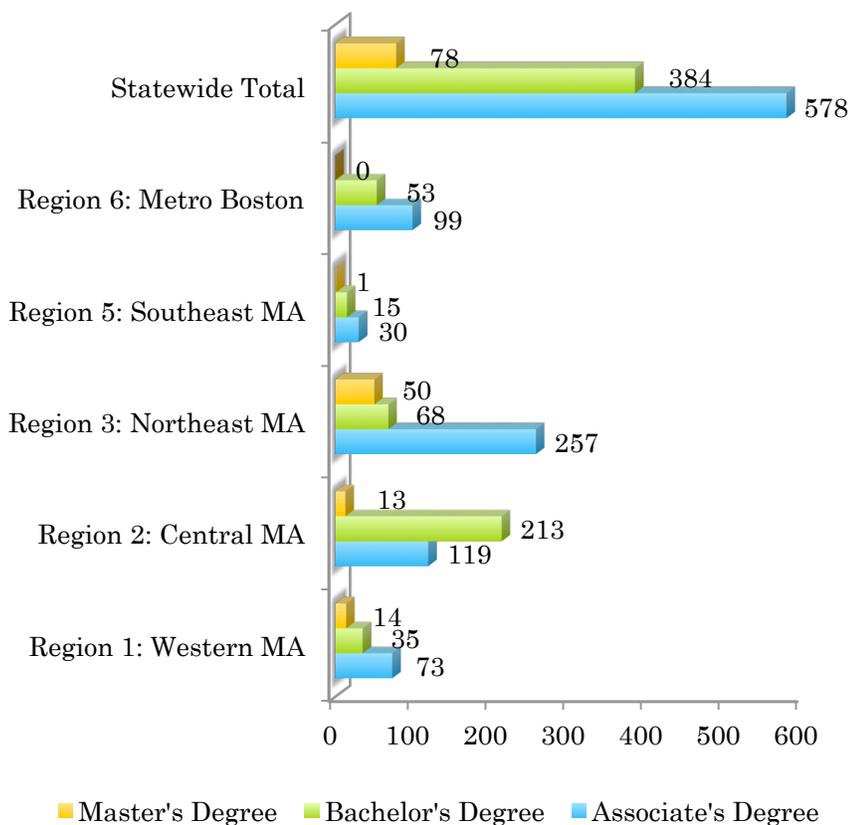
EEC currently licenses 6,964 family child care and 2,809 center-based child care programs, including school age child care.

Our five regional EPS grantees serve as hubs for professional development and are the main access points through which educators receive information about the whole education system.

Professional development opportunities provided through the EPS grant must award academic currency, continuing education units or college credit. Each grantee works with IHEs in their region to support degree attainment and to provide early childhood coursework to the field.

Statewide more than 3000 educators completed or updated an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) through the EPS grant network during fiscal year 2014. Thirty-four percent (34%) reported a goal of degree attainment. The chart below provides the breakdown of individual educator's goals by region

**Number of Educators with Degree Attainment Goal in FY14 by Region and Degree Type**



### *THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN:*

*A key component of quality programs is the quality of teacher.*

*Recruitment and retention of child care staff is extremely difficult. The average child care teaching assistant earns roughly \$10,500 a year and the highest paid child care teachers are paid roughly \$18,000 a year.*

*Turnover of staff averages 31 percent. In public schools, although salaries are much higher than for child care teachers, there is difficulty retaining talented teachers and recruiting more experienced teachers to troubled schools.*

*Scholarships, financial aid, and loan forgiveness are insufficient to help many early childhood educators obtain excellent preparation and ongoing professional development<sup>2</sup>.*

### *BESSIE TART WILSON INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN:*

*The median salary for educators in center-based program is \$22,501 - \$25,000; the range for family child care educators is \$25,001 - \$27,500.*

*The median salary for educators in public preschool school is \$30,001 - \$32,500 in MA<sup>3</sup>.*

## EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry

As of August 2014 there were 93,799 total records in the EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry (PQR). The graph on the right depicts participants' highest level of education.

Registry data from February 2014 indicate that an associate's degree was the highest level of education for 12% of center-based educators and 11% of family child care providers similarly 29% of center-based and 14% of family child care educators reported a bachelor's degree for their highest education level.

Educators are required to be "Active" in the PQR to participate in state-funded professional development opportunities; including the ECE Scholarship.

One intent of the PQR was to provide EEC with data pertaining to the current workforce. Currently the data available is limited since not all of the information is verified, participants can activate their account annually without actually updating their record, and the application is not connected to other systems. Gathering data from the PQR also poses a challenge since the information is not verified.

EEC is exploring external database options to support the EPS grantees and provide a unified database system for capturing data elements and the individual educator and provider level.

### References:

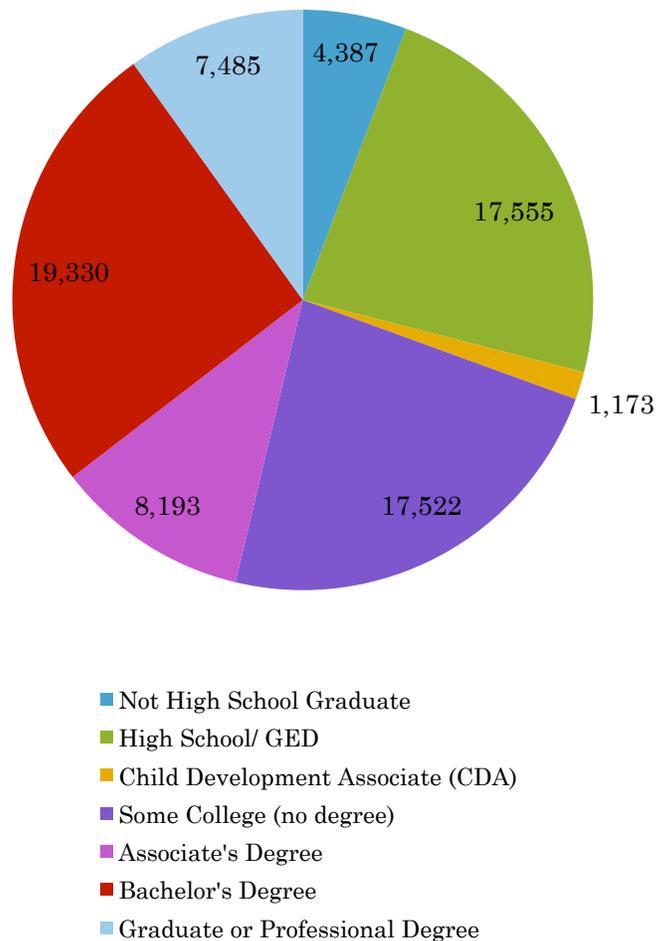
<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). 2008–09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:08/09): A First Look at Recent College Graduates (NCES 2011-236), Table 3.

<sup>2</sup> A Call for Excellence in Early Childhood Education (<http://www.naeyc.org/policy/excellence>)

<sup>3</sup> Bessie Tart Wilson Initiative for Children, The Massachusetts Career Ladder and Early Educator Compensation Reform, May 2013

<sup>4</sup> National Institute for Early Education Research, Degrees in Context: Asking the Right Questions about Preparing Skilled and Effective Teachers of Young Children, April 2011

Highest Level of Education



### NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EARLY EDUCATION RESEARCH:

*... the quality of teacher education programs is also impacted by institutional capacity. Current research indicates that the number and expertise of faculty mediates the content and delivery of programs of preparation. Because early care and education teacher preparation, to a far greater extent than K–12, serves both a traditional and a nontraditional student clientele, experts have questioned whether there are sufficient skilled teacher educators and trainers with current knowledge in ECE, recent teaching experience in ECE classrooms, and experience with teaching diverse adult learners to meet current workforce need<sup>4</sup>.*



## Massachusetts Institutions of Higher Education: Associate and Bachelor level Early Childhood Education Degree Programs

American International College	<b>Massasoit Community College</b>
<b>Anna Maria College</b>	<b>Merrimack College</b>
Bay Path College	<b>Middlesex Community College</b>
<b>Becker College</b>	Mount Holyoke College
<b>Berkshire Community College</b>	Mount Ida College
Boston University	<b>Mount Wachusett Community College</b>
Brandeis University	<b>North Shore Community College</b>
<b>*Bridgewater State University</b>	<b>Northern Essex Community College</b>
<b>Bristol Community College</b>	Pine Manor College
<b>Bunker Hill Community College</b>	Quincy College
Cambridge College	<b>Quinsigamond Community College</b>
<b>Cape Cod Community College</b>	<b>Roxbury Community College</b>
College of Our Lady of Elms	<b>Salem State University</b>
Curry College	Smith College
<b>Dean College</b>	<b>Springfield College</b>
Endicott College	Springfield Technical Community College
<b>Fisher College</b>	Stonehill College
<b>*Fitchburg State University</b>	Tufts University
*Framingham State University	University of Massachusetts Amherst
<b>Gordon College</b>	<b>University of Massachusetts Boston</b>
<b>Greenfield Community College</b>	<b>Urban College of Boston</b>
<b>Holyoke Community College</b>	*Westfield State University
Lasell College	<b>Wheaton College</b>
Lesley College	Wheelock College
<b>Mass Bay Community College</b>	<b>Worcester State University</b>
<b>*Mass College of Liberal Arts</b>	

The campuses listed above provide associate or bachelor level degree programs in early childhood education. Programs may meet the requirements for the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and/or the MA Department of Early Education and Care.

Campuses that currently contract with EEC's EPS grantees to provide coursework and/or academic advising are indicated in bold. Institutions that house a MA Regional Readiness Center have been starred.