The Massachusetts School Improvement Act of 1985 established a state-funded public school early childhood program for children at risk. This Act gave rise to the Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) initiative, which was expanded in 1993 to coordinate the services offered by all early care and education programs within a community. In 1996, a focus on services for 3- and 4-year-olds from working families was introduced. Children are eligible from the age of 2 years, 9 months until the locally determined kindergarten-entrance age. Parent fees are based on a sliding scale and scholarships are available to families with incomes up to 100 percent of the state median income (SMI). Once all children from these families are served, the community may then offer services to children from families earning up to 125 percent of SMI. Children in families with higher incomes are also eligible to be served if they have other high-risk factors such as low birth weight or a parent with a disability. The CPC initiative must be inclusive and serve children with and without disabilities.

The CPC initiative emphasizes community collaboration. The state distributes funds to local CPC councils, which are made up of parents, representatives of Head Start, public school, child care, and family child care programs; and other community representatives. Working together, they plan the expansion and coordination of community services based on community needs and resources. Local councils, in turn, allocate funds to private and public agencies to provide services. Annual proposals must address specific funding priorities, such as increasing the affordability and quality of early childhood programs. In April 2003, the state Board of Education adopted the Early Childhood Program Standards and Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences for the CPC programs.

Since fiscal year 2001, state funding for the initiative has been cut by $35.4 million, affecting the quality, quantity, and comprehensiveness of services that communities are able to offer. In 2003-2004, the state appropriated $68.6 million for the CPC program, which provided direct services for 15,959 children, as well as program quality assistance and comprehensive services benefiting thousands more.

Recent developments in Massachusetts include a superior court judge recommendation that calls preschool a “necessity” for children at risk and legislative action that serves as an initial step toward expanding high-quality early education across the state. The state created an independent board and a consolidated Office of Early Education and Care as part of this effort. Massachusetts also supplements federal funding for Head Start as a separate initiative, and in 2002–2003 provided $6.1 million to enhance quality and provide a “necessity” for children at risk and legislative action that serves as an initial step toward expanding high-quality early education across the state. The state created an independent board and a consolidated Office of Early Education and Care as part of this effort. Massachusetts also supplements federal funding for Head Start as a separate initiative, and in 2002–2003 provided $6.1 million to enhance quality and provide for 400 additional Head Start slots.

**ACCESS**

- **State program enrollment**
- **Federally funded Head Start enrollment**
- **State Head Start spending**
- **State spending per 3-year-old**
- **State spending per 4-year-old**
- **Public school teachers**
- **Teacher degree requirement**
- **Teacher specialized training requirement**
- **Assistant teacher degree requirement**
- **Staff-child ratio**
- **Meal requirement**
- **Screening/referral requirements**
- **Federally funded Head Start spending**

**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

- **Policy**
- **State contribution**
- **Local contribution**
- **Federal contribution**
- **TANF spending**
- **Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.**
- **Total state program enrollment**
- **State Head Start spending**
- **State spending per 3-year-old**
- **State spending per 4-year-old**

**RESOURCES**

- **Total state Pre-K spending**
- **Local match required?**
- **State spending per child enrolled**
- **State spending per child served**
- **Teacher degree requirement**
- **Assistant teacher degree requirement**
- **Staff-child ratio**
- **Meal requirement**
- **Screening/referral requirements**
- **Federally funded Head Start spending**

**STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION**

**RESOURCES**

- **Total state Pre-K spending**
- **Local match required?**
- **State spending per child enrolled**
- **State spending per child served**
- **Teacher degree requirement**
- **Assistant teacher degree requirement**
- **Staff-child ratio**
- **Meal requirement**
- **Screening/referral requirements**
- **Federally funded Head Start spending**

**RESOURCES**

- **Total state Pre-K spending**
- **Local match required?**
- **State spending per child enrolled**
- **State spending per child served**
- **Teacher degree requirement**
- **Assistant teacher degree requirement**
- **Staff-child ratio**
- **Meal requirement**
- **Screening/referral requirements**
- **Federally funded Head Start spending**