



Aligning for Success

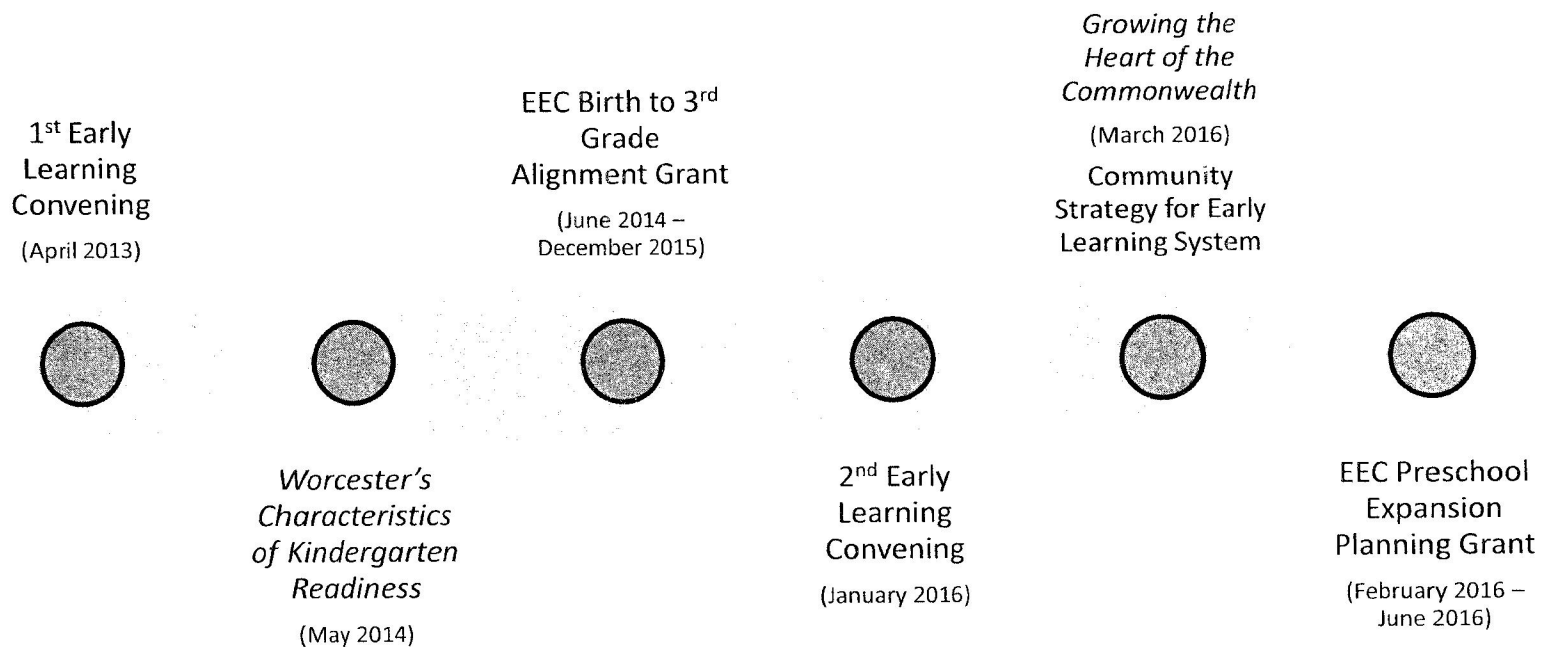
Preschool Expansion Strategic Plan

WPS School Committee Meeting

December 1, 2016



Worcester's Birth to 3rd Grade Alignment Timeline



ESCS Early Learning Leadership Advisory Council

- Subcommittees formed
- Sought funding

Worcester Reads formed
Principal Group Meetings
Cross-sector PD: Family Engagement, SEL, B-3 Alignment
School-Community Date Work Group
Let's Get Ready for Kindergarten!
WPS School Committee presentation



Worcester's Alignment Work Grants

Community awarded two grants through the Department of Early Education & Care:

1. Birth to 3rd Grade Alignment Grant

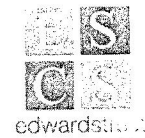
Grantee: ESCS

Timeframe: May 2014 – December 2015

2. Preschool Expansion Planning Grant

Grantee: WPS

Timeframe: February 2016 – June 2016



Alignment Partnership Council

Edward Street Child Services

Worcester Public Schools

Worcester Child Development Head Start

Quinsigamond Community College

Family Services of Central MA

Worcester Family Partnership

YWCA of Central MA

Worcester Comprehensive Education & Care

Guild of St. Agnes

Rainbow Child Development Center

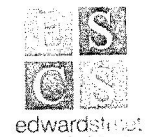
Webster Square Day Care Center

Worcester Public Library

Worcester Education Collaborative

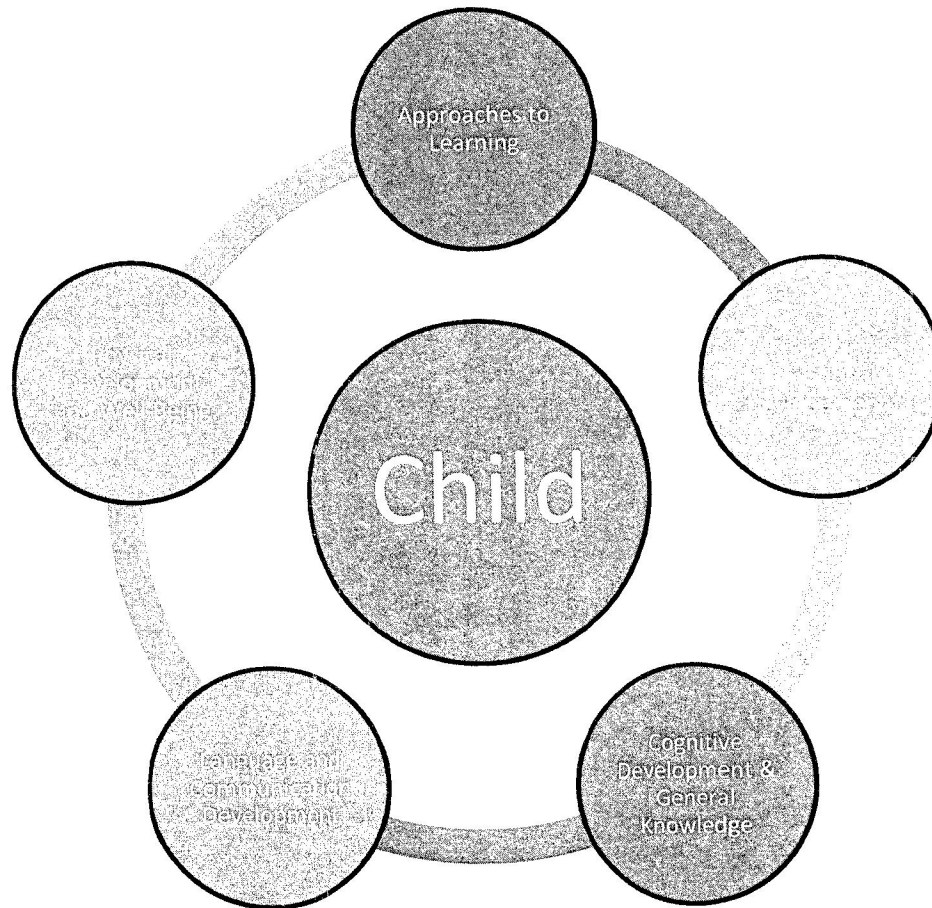
Latino Education Institute

Pernet Family Health Services



Created Characteristics of Kindergarten Readiness

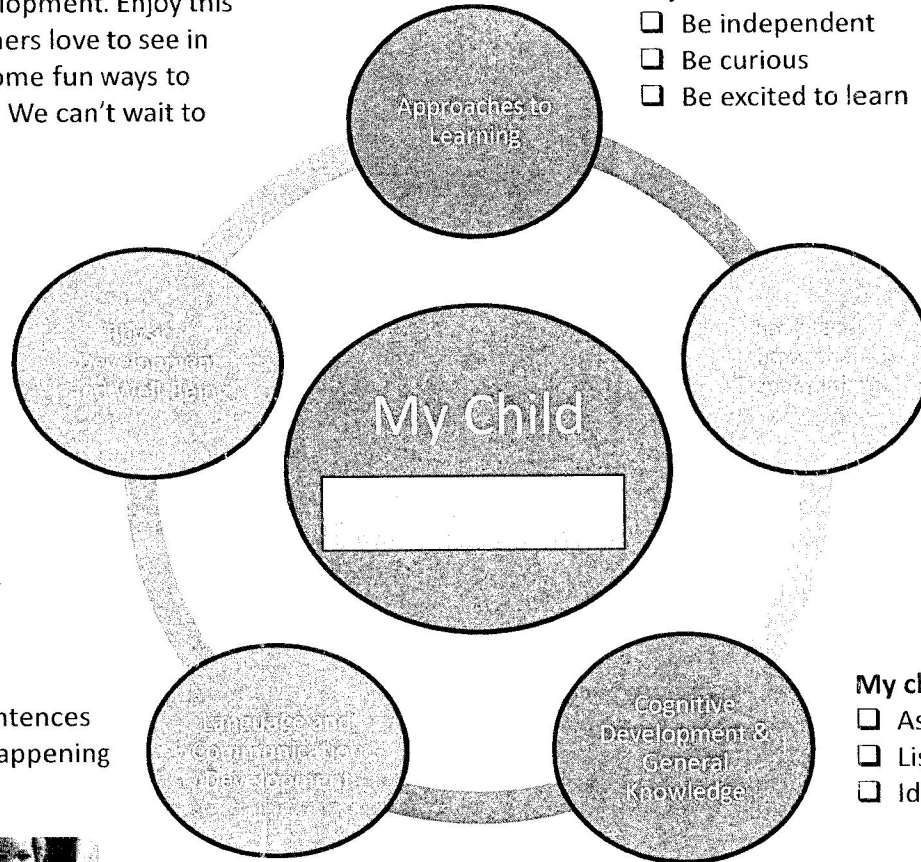
Community definition to anchor educators' work – common language, shared expectations



Let's Get Ready for Kindergarten!

Dear Families

Wow, time flies! The years before kindergarten are full of new learning and development. Enjoy this time together. Here's what teachers love to see in Kindergarten. On the back are some fun ways to help your child build these skills. We can't wait to meet your child!



My child can...

- Be independent
- Be curious
- Be excited to learn

My child can...

- Take turns
- Express emotions
- Play well with other children

My child can...

- Draw pictures
- Hop, skip and jump
- Pick a healthy snack

My child can...

- Have a conversation
- Speak in complete sentences
- Understand what is happening in a story

My child can...

- Ask questions
- Listen to me read a story
- Identify some letters and numbers



For information on playgroups and programs contact: 508.799.3136 or visit <http://www.wfcp.worcesterschools.org/worcester-family-partnership>.

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Ready, Set, Go!

How can you help your child get ready?



Talk

In your home language, describe what you are doing. Talk about what you see on walks and rides. Ask questions to start conversations with your child. Tell stories.

Read

Start with just 20 minutes every day. Visit the library once a week. Read favorite stories again and again...and again!

Sing

Sing favorite songs together. Sing while you work. Make up silly songs. Play with rhymes. Play music.

Move

Dance, run, jump, hop and skip. Visit parks. Go on walks. Play outside every day.

Write

Let your child watch you write lists and letters. Encourage her to try. Draw pictures together.

Eat Healthy

Try new fruits and vegetables. Grow a garden. Travel to a farmer's market. Cook together. Make a chart of your child's favorite healthy snacks as you try new ones together.

Encourage

Children love to try to do things themselves. Let your child try zippers, buttons, and serving himself at meal time.

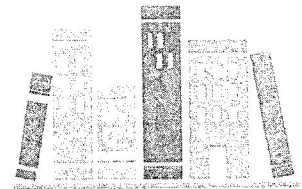
Join Your Child...Play Together

Children learn best through play. Play lots of games, build forts, play hide and seek, build block towers, or dig in the garden. Have fun together!

For more fun ideas go to www.earlychildhoodcentral.org, www.toosmalltofail.org, or www.brainbuilding.org.



Deepened Community Focus on Early Literacy



**WORCESTER
READS**

*20 Minutes. Every Child. Every Day.
20 Minutos. Cada Niño. Cada Día.*

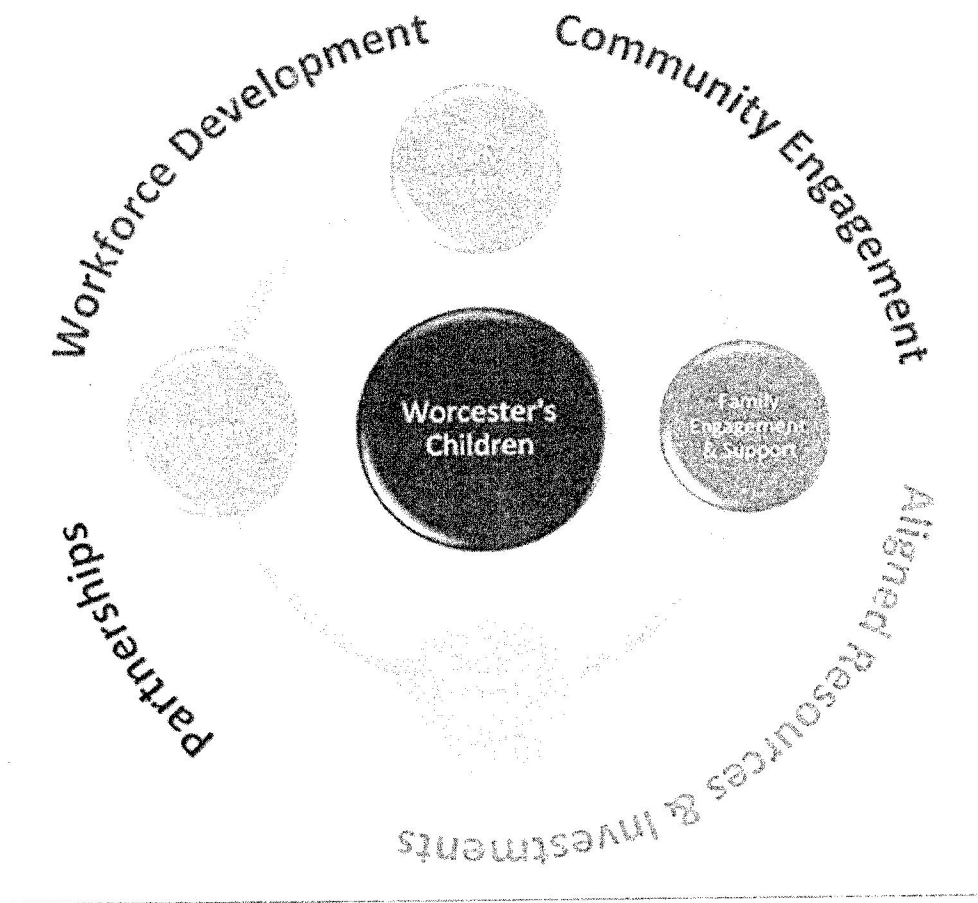


**The Most Important 20 Minutes of Your Day.
Read with Your Child.**

www.worcesterreads.org

Strategic Framework: *Growing the Heart of the Commonwealth*

Worcester's Early Learning System



State Issues Preschool Expansion Planning Grants

- In 2015, Commonwealth of MA awarded federal grant (US DOE) to expand high-quality, full-day, full-year preschool programming to 4 year olds through public-private partnerships. (5 year, \$15M)
 - Five communities: Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell and Springfield.
- October 2015 DEEC issues RFR for Preschool Expansion Planning Grants funded through state budget allocation.
 - Thirteen (13) communities awarded planning grants.

Goal: Build a comprehensive strategic plan to expand and strengthen high-quality preschool for 2.9 to kindergarten entry.



Preschool Expansion Planning Team

Project Planning Team

Darlene Beleveau	YWCA of Central MA
Kim Davenport	ESCS
Eve Gilmore	ESCS
Laurie Kuczka	WPS – Head Start/Early Learning
Ed Madaus	Guild of St. Agnes
Charlene Mara	QCC
Marco Rodriguez	WPS
Joyce Rowell	Rainbow Child Development

Other collaborating partners included:

- Worcester Family Partnerships
- Worcester Public Library
- Family Services of Central MA/Center for Childcare Careers
- Higher Education Community

Data & production support from Early Childhood Associates (ECA)



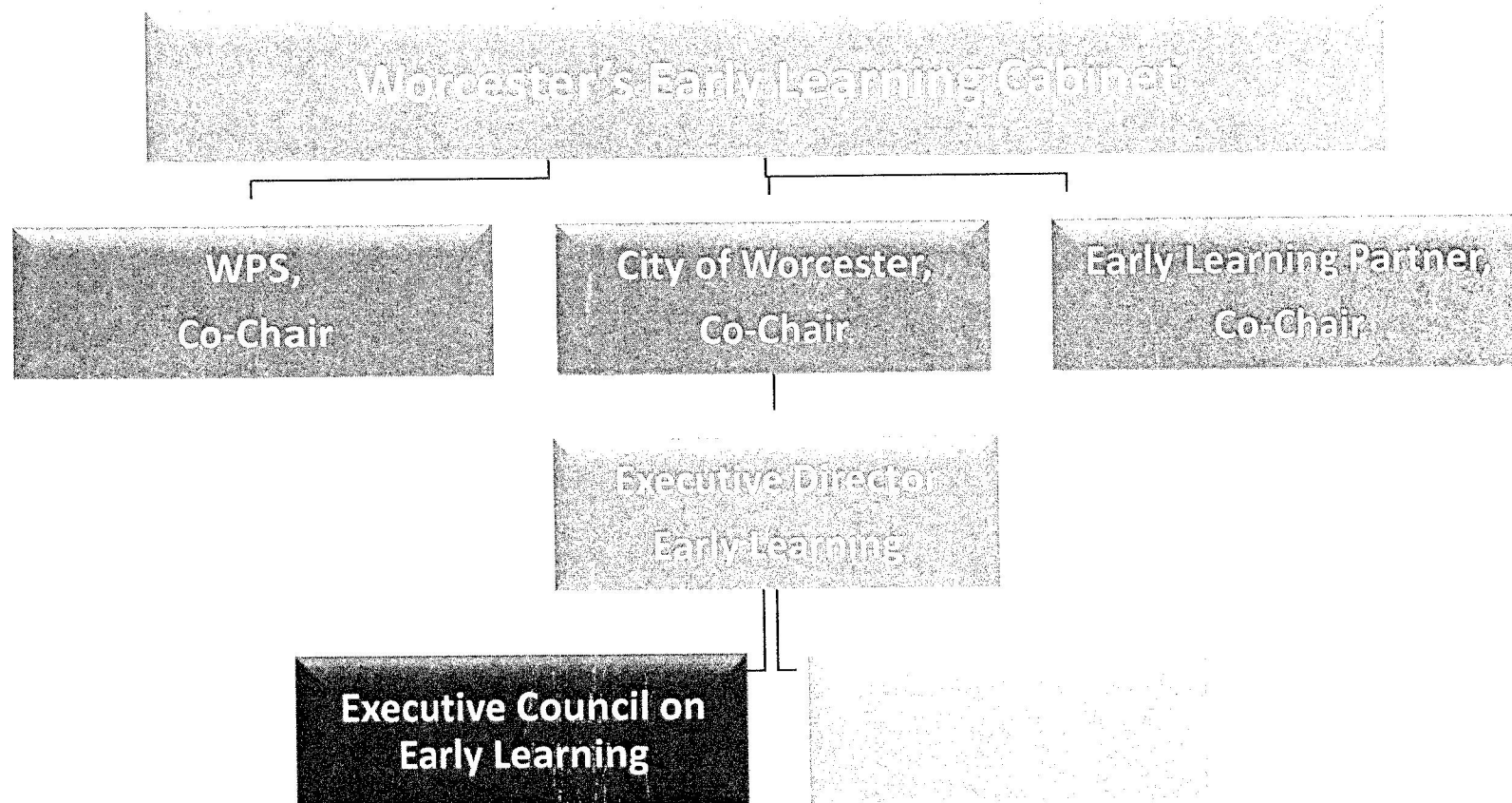
Preschool Expansion Strategic Planning Grant

Components of Strategic Plan

- **Leadership Structure**
- **Program Design**
 - Needs Assessment
 - Teacher Capacity & Program Quality Strategies
 - Comprehensive Services & Family Engagement Strategies
 - Inclusion Strategies
 - Curriculum and Assessment Strategies
 - Birth to Grade Three Alignment
- **Costs**



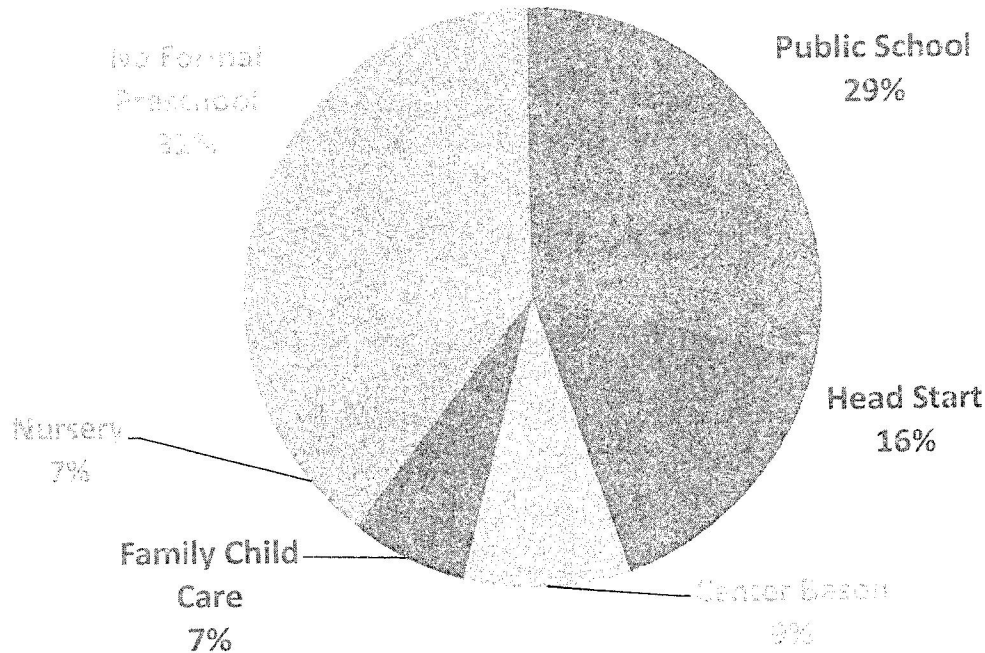
Proposed Leadership Framework to support Worcester's Early Learning System



Preschool Expansion: The Need

Approximately one-third of kindergarteners have had no formal preschool experience.

Parent Reports of Preschool Experience At Kindergarten Entry (2015)



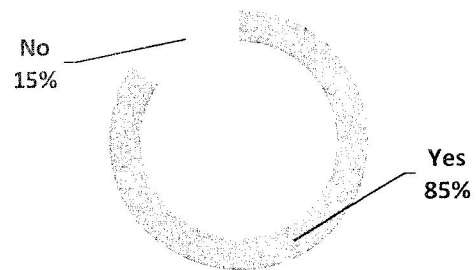
Preschool Expansion: Our Capacity

Worcester's centers are at capacity and most maintain active waitlists.

Enrollment, Capacity, and Capacity Utilization (N=15)
Worcester Provider Survey, May 2016

Enrollment	Capacity	Capacity Utilization
110	110	100%
100	100	100%
84	87	97%
80	80	100%
59	64	92%
57	57	100%
56	57	98%
55	61	90%
49	49	100%
47	40	118%
42	39	108%
40.5	50	81%
27	37	73%
21	23	91%
7	10	70%
Average Enrollment: 55.6	Average Capacity: 57.6	Average Capacity Utilization: 95%

Worcester Programs with a Waitlist (N=13)



Preschool Expansion: Family Needs

Preschool Expansion will also expand options for families.

- Hours meet needs
- I can afford the school
- Teacher are qualified
- Classroom space is clean
- Costs too much money
- Difficulty getting to the program
- Do not know where to get information



Preschool Expansion: Teacher Capacity

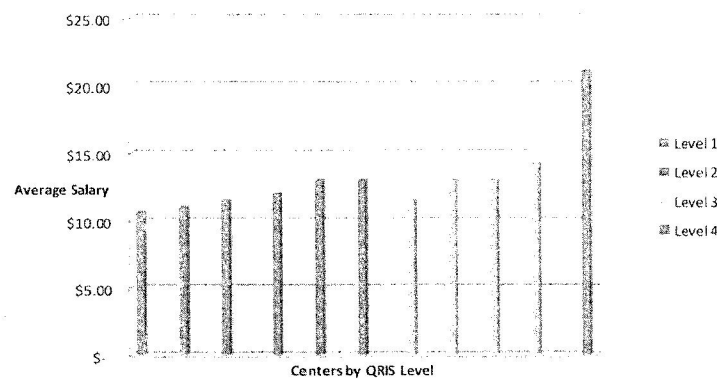
Worcester has a high-quality early learning community, but qualified teachers are undercompensated and leaving centers or exiting the industry.

MA EEC's QRIS Levels Center-Based Programs in PEG Communities and Worcester - April 2016

Data provided by Quality Specialist at EEC, Central Region Office.

City	QRIS Level 1	QRIS Level 2	QRIS Level 3	QRIS Level 4	Total # Participating Programs
Boston	15	5	3	1	24
Holyoke	7	5	3	0	15
Lawrence	8	7	5	0	20
Lowell	18	1	4	0	23
Springfield	26	7	5	0	38
Worcester	15	6	8	1	30

Average Teacher Salaries



Preschool Expansion: Program Design Highlights

Replicate and expand WFP Playgroups connected with culture broker organizations

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Expand preschool offerings across community

- **Strategy 1:** Build an Early Learning Demonstration Center
- **Strategy 2:** Place new classrooms in existing buildings in small clusters

Develop a pipeline of educators and leaders

- Compensation parity across early education system
- Supported, articulated professional education and development



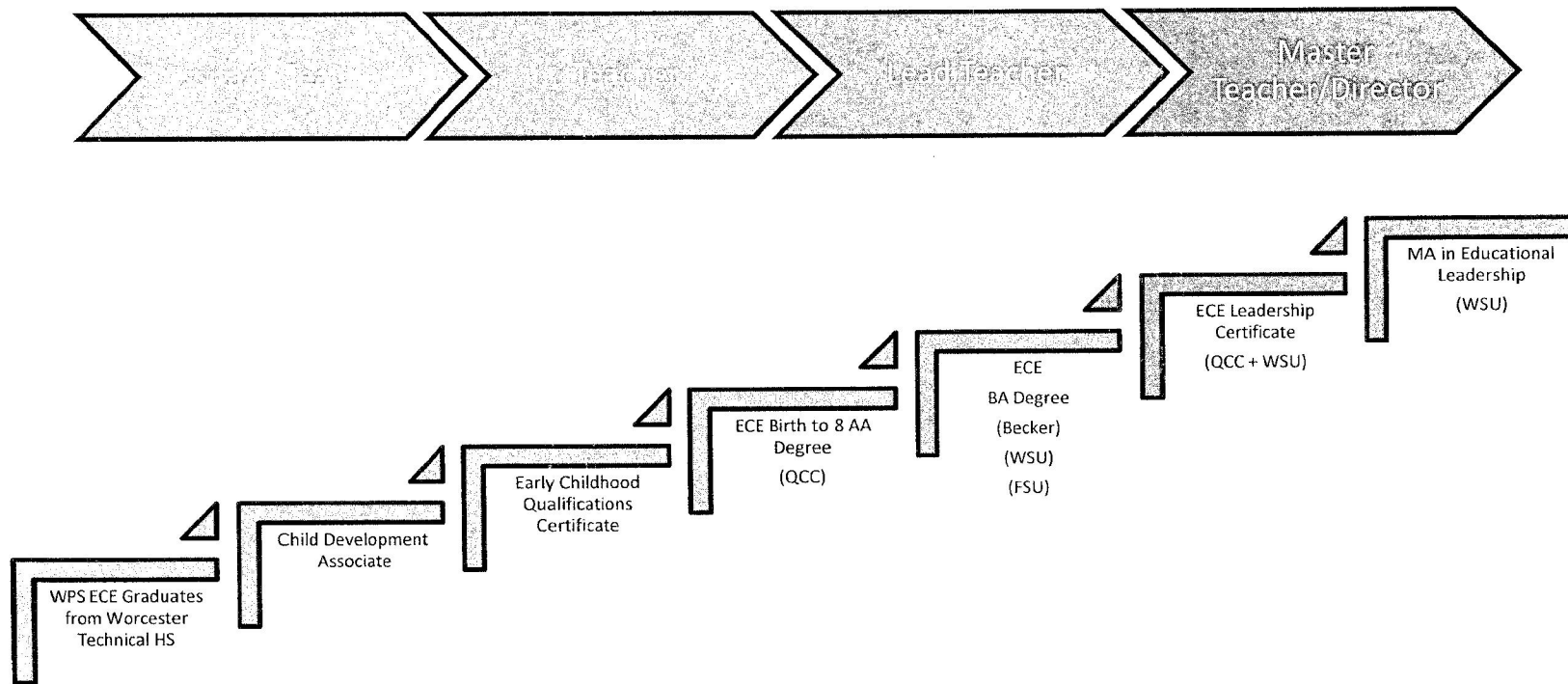
Program Design : Demonstration Center Site

Build an Early Learning
Demonstration Center

- New preschool classrooms by several collaborating partners
- Shared curriculum, professional development, coaching and assessment
- Comprehensive services for families
- Incorporate transportation needs of families
- Push-out and spread best practices across early learning partners in city



Workforce Development: Professional Development and Leadership Pipeline



Community Collaboration from EPS, IHEs and Programs



Preschool Expansion: Cost Estimates

Cost of Implementation

Estimate \$22K - \$25K per child cost – fully loaded and includes transportation

As a comparison, current PEG cities are averaging \$18K per child without transportation. There is a cost study underway by researchers, Abt Associates, Inc.

Other costs related to centralized demonstration site

- Building
- Renovation
- Ongoing operational costs (tbd)



Preschool Expansion: How do we get it done?

Start Up

- Access new funding – likely federal – that expands current PEG program.
- Identify local resources – city, business, philanthropy – to:
 - Source a building
 - Renovation & construction costs
 - Discrete project-based initiative for start up
- Finalize governance structure

Sustainability

- Access addition state preschool funding (slots/vouchers) to provide partial funding
- Braid existing resources to support child participation
- Expand strategy and identify revenue stream(s) to sustain and grow number of children served such that preschool is a universal offering available to families through a vibrant mixed delivery system.



Discussion

Questions

