**Playful Learning Institute, PK-3rd Grade** (PLI)

The Playful Learning Institute, PK-3rd Grade (PLI) is designed for district and school administrators, PK–3 classroom educators, and Out-of-School Time (OST) program staff and administrators. Participants gain tools and strategies to intentionally design and embed playful learning across the course of the day to meet learning goals aligned with our standards. Playful learning supports deep dives into content, creates equitable access to learning for all children, and creates many varied opportunities for authentic assessment, particularly during instructional blocks across the content areas.

The Institute will include professional development for school teams (see required team membership below). Asynchronous and in-person professional development is planned to take place in July 2023 and will result in coordinated grade level action plans for each team to implement in the 2024-25 school year. The grade-level action plans will focus on implementation of playful strategies at each grade level using at least one of the following:

* Boston Public Schools' [Focus Curriculum](https://www.bpsearlylearning.org/our-curricula); and/or
* Implementation of two or more of the [playful learning instructional practices](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/) (Community Meeting; Read Alouds; Center/Studios; Writing, Storytelling/Story Acting; and Thinking and Feedback) that are utilized in this integrated curriculum; and/or
* Other playful learning strategies learned through the professional development.

Additionally, for the 2024-25 school year, coaches will be assigned to work with PK–3 educators for 3–5 hours per month, as well as to coach district/school leaders for 1–2 hours per month. This in-classroom/school coaching model will be aligned with and support implementation of the action plan created by the district/school team. More information about the Playful Learning Institute can be found on our [website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/pli.html).

Key Grant Requirements/Expectations:

* A school team is required consisting of educators from 2 classrooms for each grade level, Preschool through 3rd grade (preference will be given to teams with educators from the same school), the school administrator for the selected educators and a district administrator (preferably someone who has decision making responsibilities for curriculum in the elementary grades). Note: If the district doesn’t have more than one classroom at each grade level, the team can consist of one educator for each grade, rather than 2.
* All team members are required to participate in professional development (8-10 hours of asynchronous/virtual pre-work and 10 hours of in-person professional development) prior to the start of the 2024-25 school year and in-classroom coaching for educators and school/district leaders during the 2024-25 school year, both of which will be organized and held by the Department in collaboration with a selected vendor. (Note: School teams will be required to have structures in place to support debrief meetings after coaching sessions, as needed.)
* School team members are required to participate in an evaluation of this pilot initiative.
* Priority will be given to districts receiving 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funds and participating in and implementing the playful learning initiative as part of their out-of-school time programming in the early grades.

Allowable Fund Use:

* participation of team members in
  + 8-10 hours of asynchronous/virtual professional development;
  + 10 hours of in-person professional development;
  + development of an action that will be implemented in coordination with coaches in the 2024-25 school year;
  + and evaluation activities.
* coordinator time, travel to in-person professional development, stipends, substitutes, supplies and materials.

Funds cannot be used for equipment, building/construction projects and our curricular programs.

Funding:

Eligible districts can apply for up to $175,000 for the school team. $80,000 will be set aside for professional development and coaching; $25,000 for evaluation activities and $70,000 for stipends/substitutes/classroom supplies.

Vendor Set Aside:

DESE is in process of approving one or more vendors with which grantees under this category will work to provide training and support for this project. Grantees must budget the following that will go directly to the selected approved vendor:

* $80,000/training and coaching to VENDOR to deliver professional development (asynchronous and in-person) and coaching to school teams; and
* $25,000/instructor to VENDOR for participation in evaluation of the Playful Learning Institute.

Assurances:

Adhere to PLI requirements and guidelines as outlined in Part IV of the RFP.