# Spring 2013 Kindergarten Newsletter

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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LSS Kindergarten website: [http://www.does.mass.edu/kindergarten](http://www.does.mass.edu/kindergarten)

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KINDERGARTEN EXPANSION GRANTS

FY14 Grant Policies
The Line Item for the Kindergarten Expansion Grant is 7030-1002. Details about anticipated grants and eligibility amounts will be provided later this spring, at a later stage in the fiscal year 2013-2014 (FY14) state budget cycle.

FY14 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Tuition Related Policies

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) posted to the Kindergarten site the following FY14 Tuition and Lottery Policies, Sliding Fee Scale Policies, and Tuition Related Statement of Assurance. Please review the policies for updates and guidance.

- FY14 Tuition and Lottery Policies
- FY14 Sliding Fee Scale Policies - District Worksheet and Sample
- FY14 Tuition Related Statement of Assurance

The documents are very similar to those from FY13. Changes are pointed out near the top of the Tuition and Lottery Policy document; they primarily relate to requiring a waiver of fees for children in foster care, with temporary guardians, or in the care of grandparents, and to providing discounted tuition for families with more than one child attending the full day kindergarten program in the same year.

Grantees who plan to charge FY14 tuition but have not yet publicized the amounts need to submit their sliding fee scale to the Department (ATTN: Min-hua Chen, LSS Unit), two weeks before it is made available to families. (See top of the newsletter for the LSS Unit’s mail, email, and fax information.) All grantees that charge tuition must submit a signed Statement of Assurance confirming that they are following the Department’s tuition policies. Grantees who have questions, or who have already alerted families of plans for tuition should contact their grant liaison or the LSS Unit for more information regarding tuition fees that may need to be adjusted.

FY13 Quality Full-Day Grant Update (FC 701)

FY13 701 Grant Confirmation and Fund Increase

The FY13 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Fund Code (FC) 701 Request for Proposals (RFP) was drafted and posted in June 2012, before the FY13 state budget passed with final line-item funding. The RFP contained Attachment E - FY2013 Eligible Applicants and Maximum Initial Funding Amounts, and included the amounts for which eligible entities could initially apply based on available budget information from the state legislature in June.
In July 2012, the Governor and the Legislature approved a budget that included approximately $23.9M for the Kindergarten Expansion Grants for FY13, reflecting an increased commitment of $1M from the FY12 funding level. As a result, the Department moved forward with funding increases for the Quality Full-Day Kindergarten grantees. In order to distribute the additional funds, the Department utilized data from the FY13 Classroom Confirmation Form to calculate new eligibility amounts. The data collected helped us to make the following decisions on distributing the additional funds:

1. **All grantees' initially-funded classes** had funding levels increased from the $5K/$10K per class noted in the RFP, to $5,626/$11,252 per class.
2. **Grantees' currently funded classes** at the lower amount but with at least 0.5 FTE instructional assistant in each class were adjusted up to $8,626 (there were not enough funds available to increase these to the $11,252 per class).
3. **Grantees that are Level 3-5 districts** received additional funding to enhance the quality in existing but not-previously-grant-funded classes ($1,500 per class).
4. **Additional funds for Level 4-5 districts** - After all budgets were processed for both the Quality Full-Day Kindergarten and the Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten grant programs, a limited amount of funds remained available for distribution. The Department allocated these funds to support supplemental grant-related efforts in Level 4 and 5 districts receiving the FY13 Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant ($13,120 per district).

**Final FY13 funding amounts** are posted on the Kindergarten website.

Should you have any questions regarding the amendments that were processed this winter, please contact the LSS Unit, or Min-hua Chen, state Full-day Kindergarten Coordinator, via 781-338-6352; mchen@doe.mass.edu.

**NAEYC Accreditation Update**

NAEYC Accreditation is a broad-based and rigorous accreditation system for programs serving children from birth through kindergarten. Researchers, policymakers and practitioners generally accept NAEYC accreditation as a comprehensive high standard for overall early childhood program quality.

The following districts’ kindergarten programs were accredited or re-accredited since last school year. Congratulations on your achievement!
**News from NAEYC**

The Week of the Young Child™ is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose of the Week of the Young Child™ is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. The 2013 Week of the Young Child™ is April 14–20 and the theme is *Early Years Are Learning Years®.*

New Guidance on NAEYC Accreditation Criteria Effective April 1, 2013: Since the [NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria](#) took effect in 2006, NAEYC has periodically released *Guidance on NAEYC Accreditation Criteria* to clarify the accreditation criteria. This document provides programs with advanced notice of important changes to Guidance that impact how specific NAEYC Accreditation Criteria are assessed during site visits after April 15, 2013. These changes to Guidance will more closely align NAEYC’s assessment of accreditation criteria with the recently released 3rd edition of *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards (CFOC).* The CFOC, 3rd edition represents the current best practices regarding health and safety in child care. This updated guidance will be incorporated into the Tools for Self-Assessment available within [The Online Resource Center Headquarters (TORCH)](#) before April 30, 2013.

Other resources also available from NAEYC including:
- [Enrollment Maintenance Fee Implemented January 1, 2013](#)
- [Register Now for an Online Training Course on Classroom Portfolios](#)
- [Renewal Deadlines for currently accredited programs](#)

**FY13 Transition to full-day Kindergarten Grant (FC702)**

Based on the FY13 state budget language, the Department offered districts with part-day kindergarten the opportunity to transition to full-day kindergarten with support from the [Transition to Full-Day Kindergarten Grant (FC702)](#). The grant is intended to help districts with the preparation needed during FY13 (School Year 2012-2013) to open full-day kindergarten classes in FY14 (School Year 2013-2014). After a competitive process, the Department awarded five districts the FY13 FC 702 grant: Bourne, Hudson, Mansfield, Mendon-Upton, and Scituate Public Schools. Congratulations!

REMINDER TO FC 702 GRANTEES: The Required Forms section of the FC 702 grant RFP requires a Letter of Assurance from the [School Committee Chair](#) demonstrating support for the grant proposal and commitment to opening full-day kindergarten in FY14. Please make sure to review the details again about this from the [FY13 FC 702 RFP](#), and let us know if you have questions.

Please work with your school committee to submit this letter, if you have not done so, and send it in no later than April 30, 2013 to the Department, ATTN: Min-hua Chen, LSS Unit (see top of newsletter for mail, email, and fax information).
Please also review the newly released FY14 Tuition Policy and the FY14 Sliding Fee Scale carefully to make fiscal plans for next school year if the district is considering charging tuition for the second half of the full-day kindergarten day.

Grant Amendments
If you need to amend the district’s FC 701 or 702 grant budgets, amendments will be accepted through the end of May, as needed. Details about the Department’s amendment process can be found on the Department’s Grants website.

The following two forms are necessary when submitting the amendment request:

- **Amendment Request Form:**
  In section III, put your original budget items in Column A, the previously approved budget amendment amounts in Column B (if applicable), the proposed amount to increase or decrease each line in Column C, and the totals (revised budget amounts) for each line in Column D.

- **Budget Pages:**
  Be sure of the following when working on the revision of the budget page:
  - Reflect the new amounts as listed in Part III Column D of the Amendment Form
  - Revise the budget narrative to reflect the changes in the budget (including descriptions of the proposed changes).
  - Provide number of staff and FTEs in Lines 1-3, and rates if used for stipends.
  - Provide rates for consultants, etc. in Line 5.

Send three sets of the forms (at least one set having an original signature) to the Department, ATTN: Min-hua Chen, LSS Unit (see top of newsletter for mail, email, and fax information). After our approval signature on them, an original set is required for the grants office; one set gets mailed back to the districts, and one set is kept in the program files.

Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA)
The Department is collaborating with the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) through EEC’s [Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge](#) grant funds, on the development and implementation of a Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA). This initiative is focused on producing a common statewide measure of children's school readiness, and helping teachers to use the assessment data to guide curriculum and instruction in order to implement the state learning standards.

Three assessment tools were selected for the first year implementing the kindergarten entry assessment (FY12). The tools were: Teaching Strategies Gold, Work Sampling System (WSS), and High Scope COR. A total of 20 districts piloted the assessment practice in kindergarten. They received assessment materials and training on their selected tool, and conducted the first assessment in the fall of this school year (School Year 2012-2013).
From the experience of the first year of the project, state agency partners and local districts see the MKEA as an important opportunity for teachers’ professional development. The data collected across developmental domains provides teachers with a comprehensive understanding of the child’s development and learning. The results of the assessment are intended to guide better curriculum planning and instructional practices to implement the state curriculum standards, meet children’s needs, and to have better communication with parents.

As the state moves into year two of the initiative’s implementation, the assessment tools open for selection are WSS and Teaching Strategy Gold. All Quality Full-Day Kindergarten grantees were invited to participate. Currently, 57 districts have confirmed participation in the year two cohort. A Question and Answer document for participating districts can be found on EEC’s website. Stay tuned for more information and updates on the MKEA.

**Kindergarten Regional Networking Meetings**

*Winter 2012 Kindergarten Networking Meetings*

The Department hosted three regional networking meetings in Worcester, Lowell, and Mattapoisett in November and December. We are thankful to Worcester, Lowell, and Mattapoisett Public Schools for providing the meeting spaces. The Department’s P-20 group presented their work on a Longitudinal Data System: Early Childhood/School Readiness component. The project will produce school readiness reports that are focused on linking early education and K-12 education to:

- Better understand the impact of early education programs to inform policy and decision making; and
- Provide educators with all educational experiences of students, including early childhood and after-school and out-of-school time, to enable them to best serve the student’s needs.

Participants shared their suggestions and feedback related to the data elements and data usage process.

Topics in the afternoon networking sessions were curriculum, family engagement, and MKEA.

*Spring 2013 Kindergarten Regional Network Meetings*

The Department will host three spring regional networking meetings in May. Please register online and select the session you would like to attend.

- Monday, May 6 (at the Department, 75 Pleasant St, Malden, MA 02148)
- Monday, May 13 (Berkshire Hill Regional School District, 318 Monument Valley Rd., Great Barrington)
- Friday, May 17 (Framingham Public School District, King Building, 454 Water St.)
New Initiatives from the Department

Curriculum Development

Model Curriculum
The Department is committed to supporting implementation of the new Frameworks that incorporate the Common Core State Standards, and is using federal Race to the Top grant funds to do so. The Department is developing Model Curriculum Units with embedded performance assessments and curriculum maps that districts can choose to adopt, adapt, or use templates to create their own. The Department is working with Race to the Top districts to develop the model curriculum units, along with innovative digital resources provided by WGBH, embedded performance assessments, and curriculum maps. All of these will be housed in the Teaching and Learning System and linked to the standards, student assessments, and digital resources.

Massachusetts Curriculum Alignment & Mapping Project
The Department offers districts a Massachusetts Curriculum Alignment & Mapping Project. The project encourages districts to have a team to take their curriculum mapping work to the next level by doing the following work:

- Create maps to align all instructional components, including content, skills, assessments, activities, and resources;
- Use mapping to facilitate the curriculum and instruction shifts required by the Common Core-based Curriculum Frameworks; and
- Move beyond mapping to real, ongoing implementation, including processes for regular revision.

Webinars in May, an Institute in the summer, and a Curriculum Summit in the fall will be provided for district team participation. View the “Conference” section below for dates on these upcoming opportunities of the project.

State Policy on Gender Identity
The Department recently released Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity. All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students each play an important part in creating and sustaining that environment. This guidance is intended to help school and district administrators take steps to create a culture in which transgender and gender nonconforming students feel safe, supported, and fully included, and to meet each school’s obligation to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, in compliance with G.L. c. 76, §5 and the state regulations.
National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day – Thursday, May 9, 2013

You can help raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health by sharing information about trauma and resilience in children. Communities around the country participated last year by holding their own Awareness Day events, focusing either on the national theme, or adapting the theme to the populations they serve. The effort seeks to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health. Positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth. Resources are available from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Professional Development Opportunity from EEC

EEC is offering a second opportunity for advanced graduate study in early education research, policy and practice. Early childhood educators can apply to a Post Master’s Certificate Program in Early Education Research, Policy, and Practice. This program will be delivered to three cohorts of 15 early educators from across the state between 2012-2015. The first cohort began in January 2013, and the second cohort will start in September 2013. The program includes four, 3-credit courses that will be delivered in a “blended” format of both online and face-to-face sessions between September 2013 and July 2014. Eligible candidates for the program will be educators with a master’s degree who work directly with young children birth to age five, or in out-of-school-time programs up to age eight, in EEC-licensed (or license-exempt) programs.

NOTE: See the Conferences and Professional Development (PD) section towards the end of this document for additional PD opportunities.

Kindergarten Data

Full-Day Kindergarten Facts Across the Country

The Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) provides updated state Kindergarten Fact Sheets that speak to the benefits of full-day kindergarten and the work of states to implement full-day kindergarten. For this and many other articles related to early childhood, visit the CDF website.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

The federal National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has launched a longitudinal study of the kindergarten class of 2010-2011 that will run through their expected completion of fifth grade in 2016. The first report First-Time Kindergartners in 2010-11: First Findings From the Kindergarten Rounds of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011) is a profile of the nation’s 3.5 million first-time kindergartners, drawn from the study’s nationally representative sample of 18,200 children enrolled in 970 schools. The recently released profile of kindergartners includes both demographic and educational information. The new study from NCES, which is part of the U.S. Department of Education, is the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children.
In the recently released profile of kindergartners, NCES also assessed children’s early reading and math skills using individually administered direct assessments based on the framework used for the National Assessment of Educational Progress. According to the NCES profile:

- Older first-time kindergartners – those born between January and August 2004 – scored better, on average, on the early math assessments than all younger age groups and better, on average, on reading, than all kindergartners born between September and December 2004.
- Kindergartners in households with incomes below the poverty level scored lowest on early math and reading skills, and children in households with incomes at least twice the poverty level scored highest.
- Kindergartners whose parents had more education scored higher on reading and math assessments than children whose parents had less education.
- Children living with two parents out-performed children in other types of households on assessments of reading and math skills.

“The study will provide information on students’ status at entry to school, their transition into school, and their progression through the elementary grades,” the report notes. “The longitudinal nature of the … data will enable researchers to study how a wide range of family, school, community and individual factors are associated with educational socio-emotional and physical development over time. Information is being collected from the students, their parents/guardians, their teachers, their school administrators, and their before- and after-school care providers.”

**PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES**

**Resources (journal publications, articles, and websites)**

My Town Matters: *Kindergarten in Milton.*


U.S. Census: *2010 Census Data*

Center for Public Education:  
*Starting out Right: Pre-k and Kindergarten*

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard:  
- The Foundations of Lifelong Health  
- Persistent Fear & Anxiety Can Affect Young Children's Learning and Development  
- The ABCs of ADD  
- The Forum at HSPH Features Discussion of Toxic Stress
Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Research Brief:

- Kindergarten Achievement: *Fine Motor Skills and Executive Function Contribute to Kindergarten Achievement.*

Children’s Defense Fund

- An updated Full-Day K map and fact sheets
- Full-Day Kindergarten fact sheet in Massachusetts

**Child Health Online:**
Free Downloadable Health & Safety Booklets

**Council of Chief State School Officers:**
The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) sponsors State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS). The Early Childhood Education Assessment (ECEA) SCASS Consortium is focused on helping states design and implement standards for children’s learning and development through early childhood program quality, child and program assessments, data systems, and accountability initiatives for early education, kindergarten and primary grade programs. Many resources are available on early childhood assessment through the ECEA SCASS.

**Education Commission of the States:**
Provides information on kindergarten and other elementary school issues.

Education Week:

- *The Power of Movement in Teaching and Learning*

ED Pubs: *Helping Young Children and Families Cope with Trauma* (English and Spanish)

**Eye on Early Education:**

- *Early Language Skills Linked with Later Self-Control.* January 9, 2013 by Irene Sege
- *Credit for Accreditation.* January 29, 2013 by Irene Sege

The Foundation for Child Development (FCD):

- FCD’s latest case study, *The Promise of PreK-3rd: Promoting Academic Excellence for Dual Language Learners in Red Bank Public Schools*, tells the story of Red Bank, New Jersey’s coherent PreK-3rd approach to educating Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and preparing them for expanded life opportunities.
- *Starting Early with English Language Learners: Lessons from Illinois*
- *The Foundation for Child Development also has a program initiative focused on PK-3: A New Beginning for Publicly Supported Education.*
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
- Resources on dual language development

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:
*Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity*

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
NAEYC has information about Accreditation and other early education issues.

National Association of Early Childhood Specialist in State Departments of Education
The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education has several position papers available on assessment, standards, and curriculum.

National Center for Children in Poverty

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition
The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition collects, coordinates and conveys a broad range of research and resources in support of an inclusive approach to high quality education for ELLs. To fulfill its mission NCELA supports high quality networking among state-level administrators of Title III programs.

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) is supported by the US Department of Education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C and Part B. The organization provides resources related to early childhood and early childhood special education.
- Screening, Evaluation and Assessment

National Institute for Early Education Research
- The National Institute for Early Education Research has online reports that focus on early education research topics, including a report titled "Making the Most of Kindergarten: Present Trends and Future Issues in the Provision of Full-day Programs."


New America Foundation
Maggie Severns. *New Research on Impact of Schools and Teachers on English Language Learners*, (March 2012).
The PreK-3rd Grade National Work Group

US Department of Education – Institute of Education Services (IES)
- Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade (2010)
- First Grade Follow-up Impact Report and Exploratory Analyses of Kindergarten Impacts
- What Works Clearing House
- WWC Quick Review of the Report “The Effectiveness of a Program to Accelerate Vocabulary Development in Kindergarten”


Wheelock Center of Excellence for Military Children and Families.

Conference and Professional Development Opportunities

The Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute: Technology, Play, and Early Childhood Education. April 27, 2013, 9am-1pm. Newton, MA

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL):
- CAL summer professional development institutes in Washington, DC:
  - May 20-21, 2013: Spanish Literacy Institute - Fostering Spanish Language and Literacy Development in Grades K-6 (Instituto de lectura y escritura en español - Cómo fomentar el desarrollo de la lectoescritura en español en los grados K-6)
  - June 3-5, 2013: What’s Different About Teaching Reading to Students Learning English? Training of Trainers
  - June 24-26, 2013: Hot Topics in ELL Education
  - June 27-28, 2013: Multiculturalism in the Classroom
  - July 8-11, 2013: CAL SIOP Training of Trainers
  - July 12, 2013: Research-Based Vocabulary Instruction for English Learners: Grades K-12
  - August 6-8, 2013: What’s Different About Teaching Reading to Students Learning English? Direct Strategies

Department of Early Education and Care (EEC):
EEC in partnership with the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Military Child Education Coalition®, and Wheelock College, is sponsoring a free series of Regional Institutes, *Living in the New Normal™: Helping Children Thrive in Good and Challenging Times*. Each regional session takes place from 8am-4pm and requires registration by Friday, May 17:

- **Monday, May 20, 2013** (in Springfield Technical Community College)
- **Tuesday, May 21, 2013** (in Wheelock College, Brookline)
- **Wednesday, May 22, 2013** (in Bridgewater State University)
- **Thursday, May 23, 2013** (in Independence Hall, Shrewsbury)

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:
**Massachusetts Curriculum Alignment & Mapping Project**
Webinar 2: Mapping Content-Area Standards
- 6 webinars in May (dates TBA)
  - ELA, Math, History/Social Studies
  - Elementary, Secondary
- Content experts identify shifts in new standards
- U.S. Department of Education mapping examples
- Practitioners share mapping examples from MA districts

- Summer Institutes: Guided Team Time
  - Content experts and district peers provide support
  - 2 days each, in 4 locations around the state
    - June 27-28 (Marlborough)
    - July 1-2 (Pioneer Valley)
    - July 8-9 (Bridgewater)
    - July 11-12 (Salem area)
  - 10 PDPs awarded to all who complete summer institute
- Webinar 3
  - Fall, 2013
  - Presentations of MA districts’ work
- Department Curriculum & Instruction Summit
  - November 6-7, 2013
  - Presentations highlighting the work of the project
- Coaching Support/Technical Assistance
  - Follow-up support available from our cadre of content experts and district peers

REL-NEI’s **Early Childhood Education Research Alliance**:
Bridge Webinar on “*State Early Learning Standards: Lessons from Applying Implementation Research*” with ECEA’s CPG member, Harriet Feldlaufer. April 24, 2013 (3-4:30pm)
Illinois Resource Center/WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment):
2013 Common Core and more Summer Institute
- Common Core and More!
  2013 Common Core Summer Institute
  June 23-27, 2013. Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Dual Language Summer Institute

Lesley University
April 27 -28, 2013: Lesley University 21th Anniversary Reggio Emilia Institute
Documentation, Design and Interpretation: Addressing Standards

2013 National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute
May 13-15, 2013 Chapel Hill, NC by The National Early Childhood TA Center (NECTAC) and the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute.

NAEYC's 2013 National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development.


Wheelock College, Boston:
- Metro Boston Race Amity Celebration on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. June 9, 2013 (1-4pm)

World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) 2013 Annual Conference:
October 17-19, 2013. Milwaukee, WI