

2018

Worcester's Preschool Expansion and Sustainability Strategic Plan Update WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Funded by a Commonwealth Partnership Initiative Planning Grant
This plan is supplemental to the June 2016 Worcester's Preschool Expansion
Strategic Plan.

Kim Davenport, Managing Director, Birth to 3rd Grade Alignment
Edward Street Child Services, 50 Portland Street, Worcester, MA 01608
6/15/2018



Executive Summary

In 2016, Worcester developed its first Preschool Expansion Strategic Plan which outlined a comprehensive plan to provide new high quality early education for preschool children, particularly those who did not have access to formal preschool. In the spring of 2018 (April – June), Worcester's Alignment Partnership Council (Planning Team) focused on further development of preschool quality and expansion plans. It considered updated needs assessment data and newly developed strategic plans within the community, revisited its data needs, confirmed leadership and governance structures, and identified essential priorities for high quality preschool and related costs within three funding conditions.

Top priorities for enhancing preschool environments include: Coaching with specific shared use of the CLASS Tool, Family Engagement support (Support Specialists and family programming), Common assessment (community & WPS continuity in use of TSGOLD; WPS ELA assessment tool), Curriculum alignment, and increase staff compensation. Potential preschool programming enhancements to bolster school readiness include Playgroups and Summer Boost Programs.

Plans were refined to reflect potential levels of funding: (1) Preschool Expansion - Worcester's original PEG Strategic Plan stands as the backbone for adding new classrooms; (2) Preschool Enhancement – Operates with in existing classrooms strategically elevating the level of quality and serving as a community-based pilot; (3) Preschool Enrichment – Assumes current funding is static and seeks to realign current resources and engage a strategic set of partners in advancing supports for preschool children with modest project-based funding from local foundations.

Leadership & Governance

Leadership and Governance were outlined extensively in Worcester's initial Preschool Expansion Strategic Plan and the core elements were confirmed in review (March – June 2018). The following enhancements and modifications were made:

Municipal leadership structure name change – A Children's Cabinet (formerly Children's Early Learning Council) would be the designee for leadership and implementation of key early learning initiatives. ESCS and APC members are circulating the concept across Worcester along with the Early Learning Framework.

Community backbone organization identified – Edward Street Child Services would be able to serve as a backbone organization for specific early learning projects, like preschool enhancement or expansion.

Integration of City of Worcester Division of Public Health and Together for Kids (TFK) Coalition in Worcester's Early Learning Framework – Worcester's Division of Public Health has been engaged Worcester's Early Learning Framework. Their work is expanding to creatively partner with early learning agencies to enhance the reach to young children and their families. This year DPH participated in Worcester's Day of Play Family Festival and it added a 7th play area – Health & Wellness. It was sponsored by a collaborative of DPH, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

(SAMHSA), and the Massachusetts Multi-City Young Children’s Mental Health System of Care Project. This model can be expanded in future community-wide efforts to support health and mental wellbeing. DPH is being integrated into the Children’s Cabinet structure for Worcester.

Needs Assessment, Data & Outcomes

Needs assessment data was re-examined to include updated information from Child Care Aware/CCR&R, Worcester Family Partnership (CFCE) Needs Assessment, Worcester Community Connections Coalition’s (WCCC) Family Needs Committee’s Parent Survey, and updated information on the current preschool landscape.

What we learned and confirmed:

- Demand is steady and increasing in some areas.
- Supply is shrinking due to program closures and/or staff capacity issues (turnover, lack of qualified applicants, etc.)
- There is a need for full year, full day preschool care. Families currently without preschool, report the greatest barriers are cost and transportation.
- Worcester’s children experience high level of risk demographics: homelessness, dual language learners, low-income, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- Worcester’s Latino children without preschool experience greater suspension/retention and academic issues.

Supply and Demand

In 2017, statewide data on Supply and Demand for Child Care for children under 6 was uploaded into an interactive tool by Child Care Aware – Mapping the Gap™: Examining Child Care Supply & Demand Across the Country. They also collected data on costs of child care by type.

MA Average Annual Cost by Program Type (MA – statewide average)			
4 Year Old	Center Based Care		\$14,256
4 Year Old	Family Child Care		\$11,834

They examined the number of available slots through licensed capacity in both Center-based and Family Child Care against the need for support paying for child care. Worcester has a heavy demand of >500 unmet slot needs. This need is reflective of the difference in the number of children under 6 in a particular zip code and the number of slots. A subset of Worcester zip code data is below.

Worcester Zip Code	# Children Under 6 with all parents working	Licensed Capacity	Unmet Slot Need
01605	1568	1145	423
01608	181	218	0
01604	1851	961	890
01602 – West Side	793	202	591
01609	398	1133	0
01606 - Greendale	791	397	394
01610	1603	598	1014
TOTALS	7,185	4,654	3,312

Data source: 2017 Mapping the Gap™ Child Care Aware, Massachusetts Map Data

This data can be examined to understand overall unmet need in Worcester for care for children under 6, and it can highlight child care deserts - areas of high concentrations of young children (0-6) where child care slots are not available. This information will help us target future expansion.

Data Cautions:

- 2017 data – most recent available – is not inclusive of number of providers in 2018; there have been multiple center closures and family child care closures
- Worcester has a highly transient population so the children under 6 number would need to be reviewed over a 2-3 year period to see population patterns.
- Families more typically choose child care closer to their place of employment versus where they live.

There are an estimated 6,832 preschool-aged children (3 – 5 year olds) in Worcester (US Census, 2010). Preschool learning experiences are provided by an array of programs and mixed delivery system providers. Currently, there are 29 early education centers, approximately 180 family childcare providers, 4 Head Start programs with a funded enrollment of 615 students, and 697 students in the Worcester Public School’s 33 preschool classrooms. Unfortunately, only 55% of entering kindergarten children reported having a formal preschool experience (WPS, 2017). This is well below the state average of 70% and demonstrates a significant gap in participation. According to the WPS Research and Accountability Office, at kindergarten entry 56% of students are classified as ELLs (English Language Learners).

In 2016, there were 6,088 births in the City of Worcester. According to the Greater Worcester Community Health Assessment (2015), the teen birth rate was 16.3 per 1,000, which is higher than the state average of 10.6. Infant mortality rates also exceeded state averages at 6.42 per 1,000, as compared to 4.29.

The FY18 CFCE Needs Assessment confirmed the need for additional preschool experiences. Members of the Planning Team as well as other community and municipal agencies participated in the data collection and analysis process.

Key findings from Worcester Family Partner (CFCE) Needs Assessment (FY18) <i>(Related to Preschool Expansion Need)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Worcester reports more families without preschool experience than the state average. 2. The number of opportunities for early education and care are decreasing as programs close or are unable to staff existing capacity 3. Third grade reading proficiency is lower than the state average, which is lower than desirable despite being better than other states. 4. Eighty percent (80%) of kindergarteners entering Worcester Public Schools meet the definition of “high need.” 5. Latinos are Worcester’s largest minority and rank higher in school absenteeism statistics as well as being significantly represented as those <u>without</u> preschool experiences.

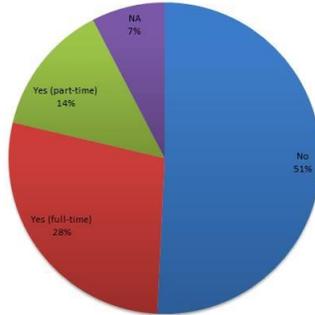
In 2016-2017 Worcester Community Connection Coalition Parent Action group conducted a survey of families and caregivers to identify the needs and barriers families face in finding and securing children care and after school care. Key findings are highlighted below.

Key Findings from WCCC Parent Action Child Care and Out of School Time Survey (2016-2017) SUMMARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• 438 parents & caregivers (197 age 0-5; 241 (5-24) <li style="width: 50%;">• 85% City of Worcester Residents <li style="width: 50%;">• Administered in English & Spanish <li style="width: 50%;">• 61% households earn less than \$30K
<p>51% parent/cargeivers (0-5) reported no access to child care on regular basis</p> <p>72% of parents/caregivers (0-5) agreed/strongly agreed that their access to affordable child care influences their ability to work and/or the quantity of the hours they can work</p> <p>The top barriers to child care are cost and transportation</p> <p>Infant and Toddler care need is higher than preschool, but almost 50% of families surveyed reported the need for preschool.</p>

Data highlights from Parent Action Survey are represented in the following series of charts and graphs.

Access to childcare: Parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5

Do you currently have access to childcare on a regular basis?

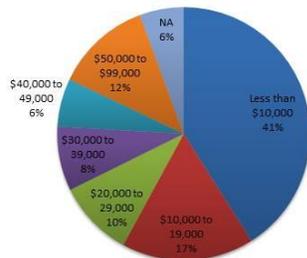


Worcester Community Connections
 Coalition of YOU Inc.--Parent Action Group

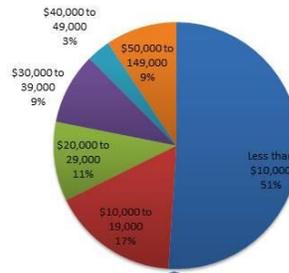
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Lack of Access to Childcare by Income

Annual Household Income of Survey Respondents



No current access to childcare, by income

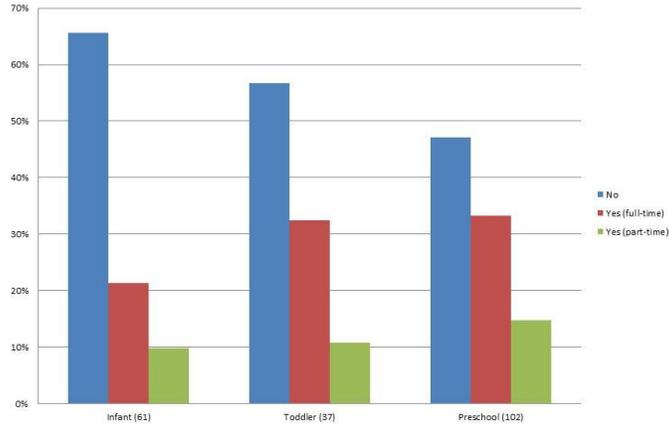


Over 68% of respondents with no current access to childcare live beneath the federal poverty line (\$20, 420) for a family of 3 (2017 Federal Poverty Guidelines)

Worcester Community Connections
 Coalition of YOU Inc.--Parent Action Group

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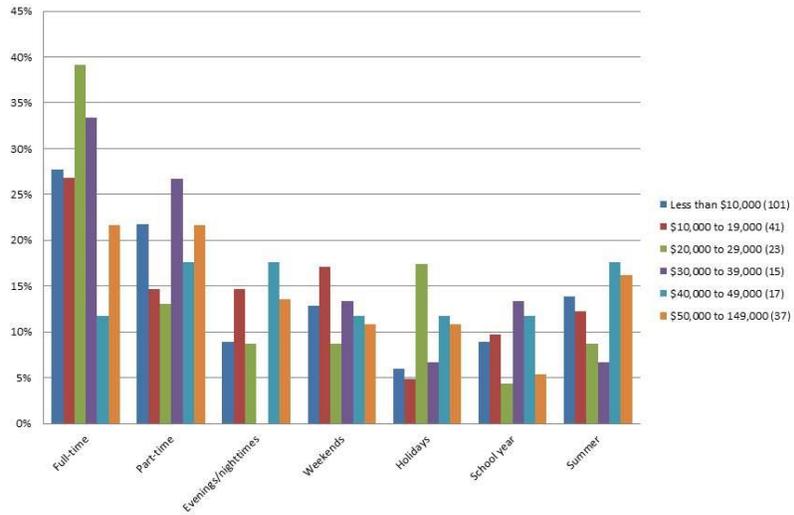
Access to Childcare, by Age of Child



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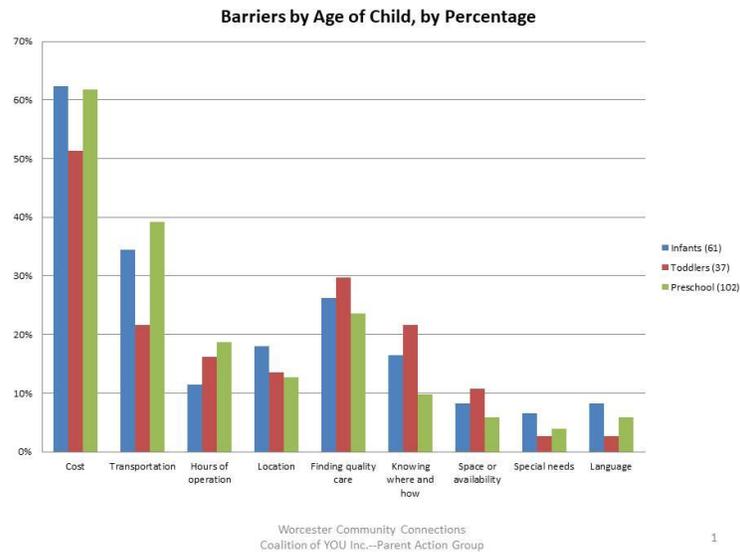
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Time of care needed, by income



Worcester Community Connections
 Coalition of YOU Inc.--Parent Action Group

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Strategic Planning Alignment

Strategic Planning by several local entities was also examined and integrated into planning and strategies for Worcester over the upcoming 3-5 years.

Edward Street Child Services – In 2017, ESCS completed its first strategic plan which included a specific and sustained focus on Birth to 3rd Grade Alignment. ESCS’ Board’s commitment to this work in the Worcester community provides a key resource for work related to Worcester’s early learning framework, *Growing the Heart of the Commonwealth: Early Alignment for Lifelong Success*. The Board committed to support a staff position dedicated to alignment work. ESCS is positioned to provide leadership.

Community Leadership and Alignment

ESCS Five Year Strategic Goals & Select Objectives	
Goal 1: Lead cross sector alignment in early learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community preschool-school data system developed • Establish Data Collaborative focus on children 0-8 • Worcester’s expansion plan for high quality preschool in motion • Leverage APC to drive ownership and adoption of Worcester’s Early Learning Framework • Expand resource alignment across community (0-5)
Goal 2: Influence investment in early education and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Children’s Cabinet institutionalized at city level
Goal 3: Advance high quality early learning environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold presentations to Boards and Organizations on current early learning environment • Connect with and participate in other CBO/Board presentations on children’s issues

Goal 4: Support a thriving early learning workforce

- **Grow ESCS Scholarship to support leadership development**
- **Raise public awareness of the need for early education and care compensation to be increased**
- **Educator content knowledge is increased**
- **Corporations identify the value of quality care for their workforce**

Excerpted from Edward Street Child Services Strategic Plan 2017-2023

Worcester Public Schools – In 2018, WPS completed its first strategic plan in 25 years. The plan was created by the community and lead by Worcester Education Collaborative and the Worcester Regional Research Bureau with consulting support from the Renee Center. The comprehensive 5 year plan includes opportunities for strategic community partnerships. Worcester’s Early Learning Framework, Preschool Expansion Plan, Characteristics of Kindergarten Readiness, and other key early learning documents were put forth in strategic planning subcommittee meetings. The strategic plan is set to be presented to the WPS School Committee on June 21st.

Several WPS goals connect with preschool quality and expansion planning themes and initiatives:

- Intentional focus on early literacy and early intervention
- Incorporation of social emotional learning as core to curriculum (preK – 12)
- Focus on trauma informed schools and training
- Focus on family engagement and welcoming schools
- Educator pipeline from WPS high schools into early childhood AA programs and employment opportunities
- Community partnership as a lever to action and success
- Embrace innovation and scale what works

According to the WPS strategic plan, *Defining Our Path: A Strategic Plan for Education in Worcester* (2018-2023), by 2021, WPS students will reach key benchmarks.

- | | | |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Meet/Exceed expectations on 3 rd grade ELA MCAS | Current: 31% | Target: 47% |
| 2. Reduce chronic absenteeism | Current: 17% | Target: 14% |

WPS Strategic Plan Connections and Alignment

FOCUS AREA	SELECTED OBJECTIVES (Connect with Expanded Preschool Plan Objectives)
INNOVATION <i>All students will have access to high quality learning experiences which leverage effective approaches.</i>	Identify demonstrated best practices regionally and across the globe that can be adapted to Worcester’s unique conditions to alleviate achievement gaps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Network of Schools to Pilot and Scale Evidence-Based Practice. Increase the capacity of school leadership to leverage existing resources for school improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Supports and New Learning Experiences for Veteran Leaders –

	<p>Develop an institute for veteran principals to support growth in school management and classroom pedagogy.</p>
<p>ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE <i>All students will have access to rigorous and personalized learning supported by technology.</i></p>	<p>Increase opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and demonstrate knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Early Learning Interventions – Increase implementation of early literacy and math interventions. • Test and Scale Early Learning Solutions – Pilot early literacy initiatives in select elementary schools to determine what may work best at scale throughout the district. <p>Increase career awareness and exploration at all grade levels through a coordinated and tiered career learning program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Community-Based Career Learning Opportunities – Expand career learning opportunities for students by scaling existing pathways and developing new initiatives in partnership with business and community organizations. <p>Leverage Worcester’s distinct community assets to increase choices in learning opportunities and academic support through partnership with higher education and community organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Credit-Bearing Courses in Partnership with Colleges and Universities.
<p>WELCOMING SCHOOLS <i>All students will gain a holistic set of skills and be supported by a network – inclusive of their families and the community – to realize their personal, academic, and professional goals.</i></p>	<p>Prioritize development of systems that support a shared vision for social and emotional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Availability of Wraparound Resources – Develop wraparound coordinator position in all buildings. <p>Implement comprehensive, district-wide approach to monitoring and measuring social and emotional growth and school climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Staff Capacity to Address Trauma – Provide training on trauma intervention and trauma-sensitive practices at each school • Scale Tested Trauma Supports to All Schools <p>Increase opportunities for family engagement and participation in decision making at the school level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and Increase Positive Parent Engagement Experiences – Partner with community organizations to strengthen engagement with constituents and foster a welcoming culturally sensitive environment in each school. • Develop a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council – Establish a parent advisory group that represents the diverse language community of Worcester and can contribute to school-level decision making. • Increase Collaboration Between Parents and Teachers – Provide co-trainings for parents and teachers on how to collaborate effectively for student success and school improvement.
<p>EDUCATORS <i>All students will be supported by effective educators who</i></p>	<p>Review teacher recruitment and retention approach and implement strategies that will increase access to highly qualified, diverse teacher workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the Number of Highly Qualified Teacher Candidates

demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhancing student learning and development.

- **Expand and Enhance Recruitment of Diverse Educator Candidates**
- **Develop a Pipeline of Educators among WPS Students**

TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS

All students will learn in an efficient and fiscally sound district.

- **Increase Opportunities for the Community to Engage in Policy Discussions** – Expand School Committee planning and strategy processes to engage the public in policy discussions.
- **Launch Campaign for Increased State Funding for School District** – Establish committee and campaign to advocate for an increase in the foundation budget.

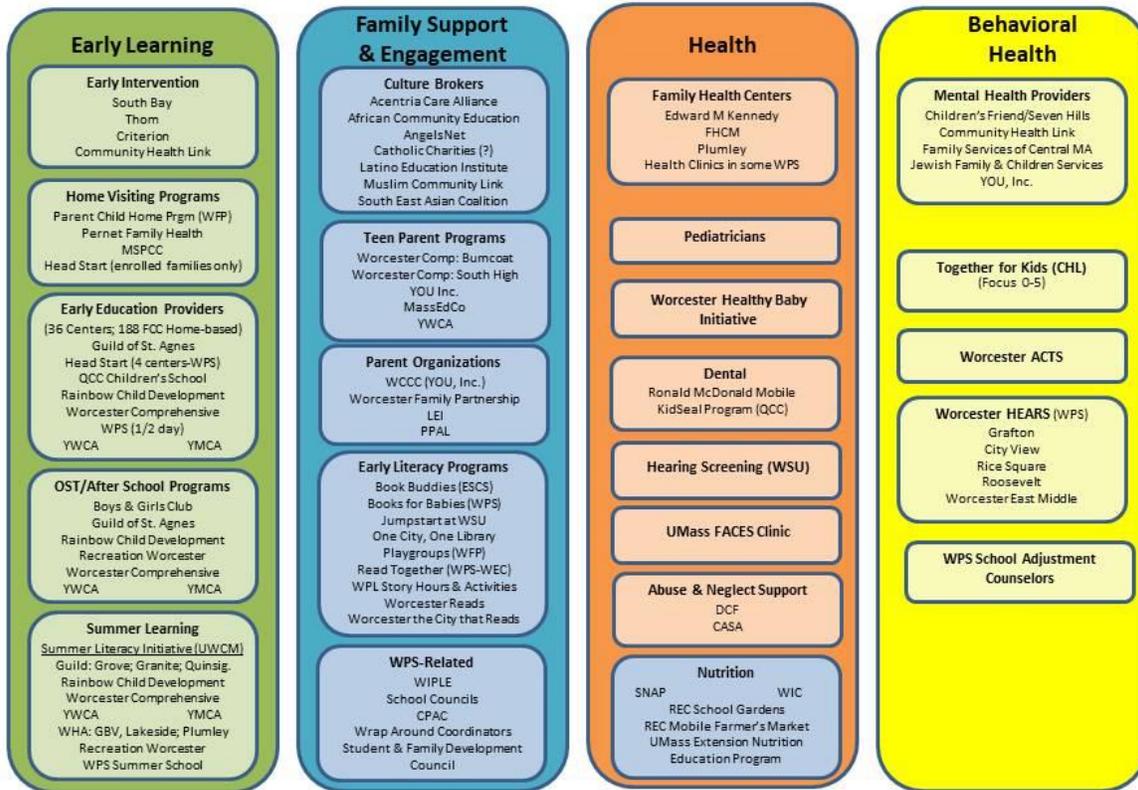
City of Worcester – The City of Worcester is currently developing its strategic plan. It has been delayed from its original due date of May 2018. The APC will continue to inform the City’s plan as opportunities arise (surveys, public hearings or presentations) and will advocate for community goals that prioritize young children.

Worcester’s Early Childhood Landscape

The Planning Committee developed a landscape picture of services and providers in Worcester serving children (0-8) in the four broad categories of Worcester’s Early Learning Framework: Early Learning, Family Engagement, Health and Behavioral Health. Many of the providers are integrated with early learning programs in Worcester; others are newly engaged in the alignment work and would be strategic resources for preschool enhancement or expansion in order to support comprehensive services for children and families.

As of 4.3.18

Worcester's Early Childhood Landscape (Children 0-8)



Worcester's Early Learning Framework strategic areas and local programs.

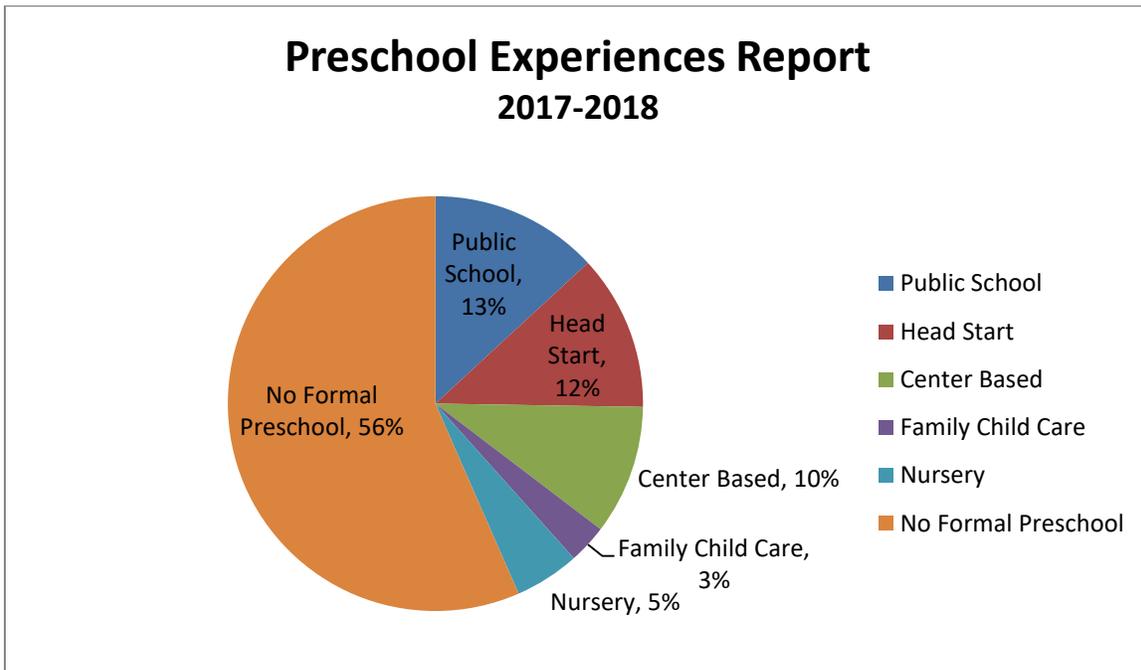
Current Preschool Capacity

Worcester Public Schools collects preschool experience data from parents at kindergarten enrollment. In 2017, the preschool experiences data fields were updated and a training guide with parent-friendly language was created to better ensure accuracy of data collected when working with families. WPS Intake Specialists collect this data at the Parent Information Center during enrollment.

Specific changes that are now part of the data collection system:

1. Explanation of why WPS is collecting preschool experience data.
2. Definitions of each category
3. Drop down list of major preschool early learning providers in Worcester.

Parent Reported Preschool Experiences 2017-2018



Data source: WPS Parent Information Center. Preschool Experiences Data February 2018

The increase in the number of children entering kindergarten without a formal preschool experience is dramatic. Data on preschool experiences has been tracked since 2015-2016.

Type of Preschool Experience	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Public School	14%	12%	13%
Head Start	20%	19%	12%
Center Based	11%	8%	10%
Family Child Care	8%	10%	3%
Nursery	9%	14%	5%
No Formal Preschool	39%	37%	56%
	100%	100%	100%

Data source: WPS Parent Information Center. Preschool Experiences Data

Slots in the Community and Waitlist Numbers

According to Seven Hills Foundation (CCR&R) the following numbers represent waitlists for early learning slots across Worcester (September & June, 2018).

Worcester Waitlist for Subsidized Slot			
Date	Infant/Toddler	Preschool	Out of School Time
September 2017	405	147	537
June 2018	195	160	290

Progress has been made in cleaning and refreshing the waitlist, and likely in connecting families with needed subsidies in some categories. **However, the number of children on the waitlist for preschool remains steady and has increased.**

Total Preschool licensed center-based capacity in Worcester is 2,458.

Current preschooler using vouchers is 1,409 (136 DCF voucher via Seven Hills)

Current number of EEC contracted slots (TDB)

Worcester’s State Funding via Department of Early Education & Care

The Planning also examined state funding from DEEC over a two year period. The data corralled grant awards from numerous programs into a central location. A disturbing trend was identified. Overall, state funding through DEEC decreased. In FY17, overall state funding to Worcester was \$3,023,644; in FY18, overall state funding was \$2,802,277. Most grant awards to the community decreased or were level funded. Actual dollars decreased by \$381,364. The funding loses jeopardize quality programming and initiatives designed to education and support our youngest children.

**Worcester EEC-Related Grants for Early Childhood Education
FY18 Overview**

State Grant	State Budget FY18	FY18 Amount Awarded to Worcester	Increase/Decrease/Flat from previous year	Additional Notes
Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments (IPLE) (FC 391)	6.2 M (79 grants awarded)	510,471	Reduction (\$188,236) State Budget Reduction \$2.2M	Worcester – Public School State reducing & eliminating; transfer funds to Program Quality line item FY19 Worcester: \$342,016 FY20 Worcester: \$229,151
Head Start Supplemental	9.1 M (31 grants awarded)	457,959	Reduction (\$6,413)	Worcester – Head Start Added grantee so overall awards reduced
Coordinated Family Community and Engagement (CFCE)	13.3 M (89 grants)	605,225	Reduction (\$13,775)	Worcester Family Partnership (Under

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(FC 237)	awarded)			WPS) 2 nd largest award in state
UPK Universal Pre-Kindergarten (FC 511)	5.728 M (107 grants awarded)	477,000 (10 grants in Worcester)	Reduction (\$18,000)	Mixed delivery system: FCCs, Centers, Head Start (Renewal)
2017 QRIS Improvement Grant (FC 764) <i>(Administered by UW Mass Bay & Merrimack Valley)</i>	1.5M	159,997.27	TBD	No award information posted on 2017 for comparison.
Educator & Provider Support (EPS) (FC 322)	3.3 M (5 grants awarded)	711,620 - Region <u>106,700 est. for Worcester</u>	Level Funded	Regional grants with 1 lead agency per region Region 2 cover 96 towns, incl. Worcester
Early Childhood Special Education Entitlement (FC 262)	7,057,443 (315 grants)	284,330	Reduction (\$9,210)	District/charter grant Under WPS – SPED (3-5 yr olds)
Early Childhood Mental Health	1.25 M (6 grants awarded)	181,095	Level Funded	Regional grants Community Healthlink (TFK)
Assessment Grant (Screening & Assessment Tools) (FC 513)	400K	80,000 (est) Region <u>12,000 est for Worcester</u>	Level Funded (renewal)	State Vendor: Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) Took 1/5 of full grant for Region and then 15% of Region for Worcester
QRIS (Quality) Measurement Tools Program Quality Measurement Tools	250K	50,000 (est) for Region <u>7,500 est for Worcester</u>	Level Funded (renewal)	State Vendor: Child Development and Education, Inc. (CDE) Took 1/5 of full grant for Region and then 15% of Region for

				Worcester
EEOST Facilities Development Grants	4.1 M (5 grants awarded)	0	Project-based funding for facilities; compete with shovel-ready project and portion of funding	FY 17 Rainbow Child Development for playground \$200K
TOTAL	\$52,185,433	\$2,802,277 <i>(FY18 5.34% total)</i>	(\$235,634 est.)	FY17 6% state total

Child Wellbeing Dashboard

In collaboration with Greater Worcester Community Foundation and Worcester Regional Research Bureau, we identified the need for a centralized hub for data on our community's young children (0-5). Worcester's Almanac and other data sources typically stratify data by larger age groups like "18 and under" or "school age" or "Under 5" but without disaggregating data for the youngest years (0-5) we have a murky picture of need and progress.

Three strategies emerged to address these needs:

1. Call out data on young children (0-5) in the Worcester Almanac. At the end of March 2018, WRRB added a new section to the Worcester Almanac entitled, "Focus on Children" where it compiled all of its current data sets into one appendix. It was built out with minimal cost (time) because the data existed across several areas within the data almanac. WRRB will expand its data set as new regularly available and verifiable data sources are identified.
2. Identify key data points that community wants to collect on regular basis. GWCF, ESCS and the Alignment Partnership Council co-developed a set of data points on young children to help Worcester measure its health and progress.

Proposed data points:

- # of children 0-2; 3-5; 5-9 (state data lumps 0-5 or older);
- Demographic characteristics; Geographic concentration of children (map);
- #/% of children in or near poverty (200% FPL?) by age group;
- #/% of children in immigrant families or families where English is not primary language;
- # births; infant mortality; birth weights
- Maltreatment/foster care;
- Incidence of maternal depression;
- #/% children with medical and dental home;
- # children receiving developmental screenings;
- #/% children in licensed child care by type;
- # licensed care slots;

- Chronic absenteeism;
- 3rd grade reading.

We would also capture outcomes data relating to the goals in our Early Learning Strategic Framework, which include high quality preschool, and summer learning.

3. Explore an electronic dashboard solution to measure and monitor progress. The APC and GWCF will explore the model recently adopted by Springfield for their Campaign for Grade Level Reading work – Clear Impact. Leadership at CGLR shared that several communities are working with Clear Impact and that they are developing a non-profit product that could meet community needs at a more affordable price. At this point, NPOs can have their first ten (10) indicators for free.

Goals forward for the Planning Team include: (1) refine and integrate data sets, and (2) construct a data hub. To support this work, Edward Street Child Services is in process to apply for a Project HOPE grant funded by the RWJ Foundation and lead by three partners, BUILD, Nemours, and BMC Vital Village. One component of the grant request targets support for a data hub. Other key components connects with early childhood mental health and marketing to engage municipal and business leadership in early education.

Program Design & Development

The Planning Team re-examined the original program design and confirmed the desire to implement the design should full funding become available. In addition, elements from the design were prioritized for implementation pending funding conditions – one to one match new funding, or no new funding. One area of new programming consideration is the implementation of Summer Boost programs for preschool age children entering kindergarten in the fall.

Summer Boost Program Provides Intense, Short Term Programming

As part of the community's strategy to expand preschool opportunities to children, Plumley Village's Community Village piloted a Summer Boost Program in the summer of 2017. The program is scheduled to run again in the summer of 2018. The program operates on classroom with a reduced class-size (15) and increased staff ratio (3 teachers) to provide a high quality, developmentally appropriate ½ day playgroup for 6 weeks. The program is staffed with local Head Start teachers (on vacation) and implements curriculum from Worcester Child Development Head Start Program. Partners include Worcester Family Partnership, Worcester Public Library, Edward Street Child Services, and other community-based partners who provide services relating to comprehensive support. Funded by the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the program served 11 children in the summer 2018, most of whom had no prior preschool experience. The program was located in Plumley Village, one of Worcester Housing Authority's sites. The location was highly convenient for families who, in some cases, simply had to take the elevator from their apartment to the program. The program connects families with supports they may not have previously received, and families with younger children were

connected with the Head Start program and other local early learning providers for full-year opportunities.

Trauma-Sensitive Community to Surround Early Learning Programs

Work across the community in 2017 and 2018 focuses on developing a trauma sensitive community. Based on the Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences study, Worcester has developed a number of interrelated projects to build community awareness and provide training and support to educators, physicians, and social workers. Cross-sector training opportunities and dialogues including early learning, public school, social work, higher education, business and municipal leadership are shaping a newly informed landscape for young children. Major supporters of the work include The Health Foundation, Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Edward Street Child Services, Worcester Public Schools, Worcester Family Partnership, Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester ACTS, Worcester HEARS, Family Health Center, Community Healthlink, and many more.

Curriculum Exploration and Design Choices

The Planning Committee examined the current landscape of preschool curriculums in programs. Most reported using some level of Creative Curriculum, one reported building own curriculum, and one reported using Opening the World of Learning with a project-based approach. WPS currently does not have a common curriculum across preschool classrooms.

The Planning Committee also explored Lowell's PEG Curriculum, Somerville Public Schools' Preschool Curriculum, and the Boston Public Schools' Focus on K1 (preschool) curriculum. All models demonstrated increased intentionality, incorporated new research, and had extensive professional development programs to support implementation, including training, coaching, and extensions.

The research confirmed that with new fully funded PEG classrooms, we would leverage the BPS Focus on K1 model. Currently, it is the model that also allows for future continuity into kindergarten (Focus on K2) and primary grades available or in development. The BPS model (with some adaptation for Worcester) would directly support alignment efforts across community and public school settings and allows for growth in alignment with kindergarten, should that be desired. It is also well researched with extensive external evaluation and is creating outcomes for young children.

In an Enhanced Classroom model (see below), the partners would be willing to pilot the BPS Focus on K1 model to consider its viability in their programs. Initial work on elevating quality would come through a strong coaching model leveraging the CLASS Tool. Core elements of the Focus on K1 model may be integrated across programs. In both conditions, the BPS Focus on K1 curriculum is available and supported through a comprehensive Google Site, complete with curriculum documents, training videos, and other tools, and it is open for public use.

Further, BPS has a 5 week summer curriculum for rising kindergarteners which we would explore should we build out a Summer Boost Program within Worcester. It is project-based and community oriented.

Enrollment Guidelines

We would seek to enroll children who have not had a formal preschool experience or who have only experienced playgroups. However, given the tenuous nature of parent subsidies and the highly transient population within Worcester, we do not feel it would not be supportive to families to restrict access without flexibility, as some families have had small doses of infant/toddler or preschool care.

Costs and Funding Sources

Three scenarios were considered depending upon the level of funding available. In each scenario careful attention was paid to advancing quality in existing preschool programs, preserving parent choice for lower dosage informal preschool.

(1) Preschool Expansion – New Seats in New Classrooms

This plan is Worcester’s full Preschool Expansion Plan (June 2016) and involves the buildout of a new early learning innovation center and engages several community partners in the implementation of new preschool classrooms with comprehensive supports, alignment curriculum, assessment, coaching and PD. This plan requires new funding not yet currently available and would also incur start-up costs relating to the buildout of new classrooms in an identified building. This is a longer term vision that we believe can be realized with the engagement and support of municipal and business leadership. Matched dollars could be leveraged in this scenario, particularly for start-up costs and if the number of contracted slots were to be grown through provider contracts. Growth of Head Start contracts and Chapter 70 funding may open possibilities for additional rooms and/or the conversion of half day to full day classrooms and slots.

New Classroom Snapshot	
Number of Children Served	184
Total Cost per child in Enhanced Classroom	\$19,000
Total Cost	\$3.04 M
Building Cost	TBD
Start Up Cost Total Renovation	\$2,208 M

(2) Preschool Enhancement – Extended Quality in Existing Classrooms

This scenario aims to enhance services and quality supports inside of existing preschool classrooms across the partners. It involves capitalizing on existing contracted slot funding with new matched dollars raising the total per child funding to \$12K to extend the quality with additional comprehensive services, teacher compensation, family support specialists and comprehensive coaching mode based on the CLASS Tool, mental health support, and additional playgroups.

Elements:

- ✓ Increase educator salary
- ✓ Add coaching model using Head Start or Master Teacher/Coaching for Change Model & CLASS
- ✓ Add Family Support Specialists
- ✓ Pilot common curriculum – BPS Focus on K1 with some modification
- ✓ Use common assessment tool – TSG
- ✓ Increase number of culturally-sensitive WFP Playgroups
- ✓ Increase early childhood mental health services

Enhanced Classroom Snapshot	
Number of Children Served	144
Total Cost per child in Enhanced Classroom	\$12,000
Total Cost	\$1.66 M
Contract Subsidy	9,100 per slot
PEG Enhance Dollars	2,900 per slot

Funding Supports

Funding support would come through (1) new funding from state and (2) alignment of existing activities and funding, with high levels of in-kind support from APC organizations, and through project-based grant funding through local foundations and the application to other granting opportunities.

- DEEC - New Preschool Expansion/Enhancement funding; ability to count local contract dollars as community match.
- Worcester Head Start (Coaching model support; CLASS TA)
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation (current funding partner & collaborator)
- The Health Foundation (future application; current collaborator)
- Project HOPE Funding (in application)
- Worcester Regional Research Bureau (new collaborator)

(3) Preschool Enrichment – Alignment and Quality Supports

This scenario assumes that no new funding is available from the state and that for small one-time or short-term capacity building projects local funds could be realized through grant opportunities. This would not create conditions for sustainability in term of new slots or programs, but with some careful and creative alignment we hope to enhance quality in a subset of existing programs who are committed to grow and develop their programs. Alignment and support would be sought across all four strategic areas in Worcester’s Early Learning Framework – (1) Early Learning, (2) Family Engagement, (3) Health, and (4) Behavioral Health.

Elements:

- ✓ Coach with CLASS Tool– Identify 2 rooms per program (voluntary) that would be trained on CLASS and coached with data from CLASS Tool.
- ✓ Expand Playgroup opportunities in concert with CFCE funding.
- ✓ Expand Parent Child Home Program FCC Model to Worcester providers with CFCE funding
- ✓ Seek funding to support and expand Summer Boost programming for rising kindergarteners
- ✓ Participate in GWCF's early childhood pilot planning and subsequent implementation – School Hub Model.
- ✓ Transition to Kindergarten enhancement – Transfer of preschool experience data from center-based providers using TSGOLD reports (with appropriate permission)
- ✓ Explore TSGOLD as possible tool for WPS Preschool. If adopted, Head Start would transition to TSGOLD.
- ✓ Participate in planning with TFK Coalition additional funding – SAMSHA national grant– to support training of more early childhood mental health clinicians.
- ✓ Drive data hub planning with local data partners and foundations.
- ✓ Activate educator support and professional development plan and pipeline in concert with EEC's new IHE EPS model (to be developed in 2018).

Funding Support

Most funding support would come through alignment of existing activities and funding, with high levels of in-kind support from APC organizations, and through project-based grant funding through local foundations and the application to other granting opportunities.

- WPS Special Education Funding (preschool assessment tool)
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation (current funding partner & collaborator)
- The Health Foundation (future application; current collaborator)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Funding (in application)
- Project HOPE Funding (in application)
- Worcester Regional Research Bureau (new collaborator)
- Worcester Family Partnership (CFCE funding and PCHP FCC Model – application in process)

Cost Overview

Estimated Costs for New PEG Classrooms

Full PEG New Classrooms			
	Base Cost	Quantity	Extended Cost
Staffing			
Executive Dir. Early Learning	120,000	0.6	\$72,000
Program Administrators	63,149	2	\$126,298
Lead Teachers	55,000	8	\$440,000
Teacher	40,000	8	\$320,000
Assistant Teacher	35,000	8	\$280,000
Family Engagement Specialist	50,000	1	\$50,000
Family Advocate	35,880	3	\$107,640
Master Teacher	60,237	1	\$60,237
Curriculum/CLASS Coaches	56,048	2	\$112,096
Nurse	50,000	1	\$50,000
Behavioral Health Clinician	70,000	1	\$70,000
Custodian	80,000	1	\$80,000
Bus Monitors	31,200	2	\$62,400
QCC Workforce Faculty	52,800	0.5	\$26,400
Staffing Subtotal			\$1,857,071
Fringe	20%		\$371,414.20
Total Personnel			\$2,228,485.20
Professional Development			
Cost Share College Courses	22,500	1	\$22,500
BPS Training Team			
Year 1: BPS			
Year 2: PD Consultant (tbd)	8,000	1	\$8,000
Total PD			\$30,500
Materials			
Classroom Furnishings & Supplies	22,000	8	\$176,000
TSG Licenses	9.95	80	\$796
OWL Premium Kits	2170.47	8	\$17,364
Trade Books	500	8	\$4,000
Printing	250	8	\$2,000
Total Materials			\$200,160

Food			
(5.75 per child per day)	2070	50	\$103,500
Total Food			\$103,500
Tranportation			
a) <i>WPS Contract Expansion</i>	3500	50	\$175,000
WPS Extension Cost			\$175,000
OR			
b) <i>Private Fleet Expasion</i>			
Cost per day (\$17/child*72)	1224	250	\$306,000
Vehicles & Maintanence	100000	2	\$200,000
Transportation Coordinator (1/2 FTE)	35000	0.5	\$17,500
Fleet Cost			\$523,500
Cultural Playgroups	15,000	2	\$30,000
Playgroup Cost			\$30,000
PEG Subtotal WPS Trans			\$2,767,645
PEG Subtotal Fleet			\$3,116,145
Indirect			
Indirect WPS Trans	10%		\$276,764
Indirect Fleet	10%		\$311,614
Grand Total WPS Trans			\$3,044,409
Grand Total Fleet			\$3,427,759
Cost per child			
WPS Transports			\$19,027.56
Private Transports			\$21,423.50

Estimated Costs for Enhanced Classrooms

Enhanced Classroom Scenario Estimate			
	Base Cost	Quantity	Extended Cost
Staffing			
Executive Dir. Early Learning	120,000	0.6	\$72,000
Lead Teachers	55,000	6	\$330,000
Teacher	40,000	6	\$240,000
Assistant Teacher	35,000	5	\$175,000
Family Engagement Specialist	50,000	1	\$50,000
Family Advocate	35,880	1	\$35,880
Master Teacher	60,237	1	\$60,237
Curriculum/CLASS Coaches	56,048	2	\$112,096
Behavioral Health Clinician	70,000	1	\$70,000
Staffing Subtotal			\$1,145,213
Fringe	20%		\$229,042.60
Total Personnel			\$1,374,255.60
Professional Development			
CLASS Training	9,500	1	\$9,500
BPS Training Team			
Year 1: BPS			
Year 2: PD Consultant (tbd)	8,000	1	\$8,000
Total PD			\$17,500
Materials			
Classroom Furnishings & Supplies	12,000	6	\$72,000
TSG Licenses	10.95	120	\$1,314
OWL Premium Kits	2170.47	6	\$13,023
Trade Books	500	6	\$3,000
Printing	250	6	\$1,500
Total Materials			\$90,837
Cultural Playgroups	15,000	2	\$30,000
Playgroup Cost			\$30,000
Enhanced Subtotal			\$1,512,592

Indirect			
	Indirect WPS	10%	\$151,259
	Grand Total		\$1,663,852
	Cost per child		\$11,554.53