

# A Strong Start for Family Engagement in Massachusetts



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**The Role of Organizations in Anywhere, Anytime Learning**

From high-quality statewide home visitation models to robust communications and outreach systems, the state of Massachusetts has long been a leader in high-quality family engagement. But the state's Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge award in 2011 has allowed the state to accelerate and enhance its family engagement efforts and strengthen the infrastructure that would allow these efforts to flourish statewide. Unlike other states that used Race to the Top funding to pilot and evaluate a range of new programs, Massachusetts leveraged the windfall of federal dollars in order to deepen and sustain its existing, widely recognized initiatives and to selectively innovate projects. Thus, Massachusetts's dynamic and growing statewide family engagement system presents valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners. The state's successes demonstrate how to maximize the opportunity that Race to the Top offers for sustaining quality family engagement in early childhood.

The key to Massachusetts's success in early childhood family engagement lies in committed executive leadership, engaged stakeholders from a variety of sectors, and a thoughtful strategic plan that can guide stakeholders but also be adapted to suit shifting priorities. Massachusetts's Race to the Top application, known as the Massachusetts Early Learning Plan, articulates the objective of closing the achievement gap starting in early childhood, and explicitly prioritizes family engagement as a crucial lever for achieving this goal.<sup>1</sup>

This policy brief explores the implementation of Massachusetts's Early Learning Plan built around four key objectives:<sup>2</sup>

1. Expanding, supporting, and sustaining Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) programs that work directly with families;
2. leveraging Head Start resources in order to train 320 people in family engagement by 2014;
3. promoting statewide public awareness campaigns for early childhood, including communicating in multiple languages; and
4. building a network across the state to develop and deliver training to family engagement providers using a train-the-trainers model.

## AT A GLANCE:

### Massachusetts's Race to the Top— Early Learning Challenge Award

*Year of Award:* 2011 (Phase 1)

*Total Race to the Top Early Learning  
Challenge Award:* \$50,000,000

*Massachusetts Department of Early  
Education and Care Budget:*  
\$534,600,000 (FY 2015)

*Selected Family Engagement Partners:*  
Boston Children's Museum, Head  
Start, Coordinated Family and  
Community Engagement programs,  
Children's Trust, United Way of  
Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack  
Valley.

## The Role of Organizations in Anywhere, Anytime Learning

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The brief begins with the collaborative planning process and then examines the efforts to build a sustainable infrastructure by carrying out the plan’s four objectives. It describes evaluation and accountability processes and ends with reflections about future directions.

## THE EARLY LEARNING PLAN: A GRANT APPLICATION SERVING AS STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN

### ***Developing a Statewide Family Engagement Plan Collaboratively***

A diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) programs, the state’s Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), the United Way, the public television station WGBH, and Boston Children’s Museum, partnered in the development of the Early Learning Plan. Thomas Weber, commissioner of the Department of Early Education and Care, explains:

*The process was intentionally collaborative, involving a number of efforts to engage stakeholders. These included town hall meetings and forums across the state, structured in such a way that we could engage principal funders, the business community, the school-age community, and also our sister agencies in government around a shared vision for children and families. All of these stakeholders were engaged in the process of fleshing out the application.<sup>3</sup>*

This collaboration was important because it allowed contributions and thought leadership from representatives of various sectors. However, this communal approach would not be able to effectively drive efforts to close the achievement gap if it were not directed by a strong, unifying strategy. For this reason, Commissioner Weber stresses that, ultimately, strategic alignment was the most important element of the process:

*First and foremost, the Early Learning Plan was developed in a manner consistent with the strategic plan that the Board of Early Education and Care had already adopted. Existing elements, including program quality, educator quality, and family and community engagement, therefore became focal points for development of the plan.<sup>4</sup>*

Thus, the family engagement components of the Early Learning Plan represent an attempt to strategically embed quality family engagement across the state. (Read Commissioner Weber’s reflections on p. 10.)

### ***Implementing the Funds to Scale Up and Enhance Family Engagement***

Because the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge funds supported Massachusetts in scaling up and enhancing its many existing high-quality family engagement initiatives, the state did not require substantial revisions to its existing family engagement policy. Essentially, Race to the Top’s major contribution has been to allow EEC to build out and grow its strategies for leveraging informal providers and other state partners in reaching and supporting families within their communities. This plan has become so internalized across state agencies that it has taken on the resonance of a set of deeply held beliefs: in the words of Commissioner Weber, “a value statement that we try to live.”<sup>5</sup>

The Early Learning Plan asserts that “families are the single most influential individuals in a child’s development,” and, as such, articulates the following specific goal for family engagement: “to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to families, especially families of children with high needs, to promote school readiness.”<sup>6</sup> More than just a goal, this declaration serves as a statement of values that guides the work of stakeholders attempting to meaningfully engage with families in order to improve student achievement.

## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

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Massachusetts is working to build a sustainable family engagement infrastructure through its cross-agency and cross-sector collaborations and by developing a comprehensive network of providers, promoting statewide accountability, and evaluating its work.

### ***Cross-Agency Collaboration: Capacity-Building Trainings for Practitioners and Families***

As the agency charged with overseeing early childhood policy, programs, and interventions across the state of Massachusetts, EEC plays a critical role in executing the Early Learning Plan. EEC officials oversee CFCEs; partnerships with cross-sector organizations, including Boston Children’s Museum and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley; and implementation of interventions, including home visiting and a public awareness campaign.

One critical component of EEC’s work is its focus on professional development that emphasizes cultural and linguistic competence “and is guided by the 2008 findings of the National Early Literacy Panel.”<sup>7</sup> In addition to covering a range of topics reflective of Massachusetts’s cultural and linguistic diversity, the professional development is also broadly aimed at practitioners from a wide variety of sectors. According to Gail DeRiggi, EEC senior policy analyst, Family and Community Engagement, “We really try to integrate our trainings so that not only early childhood professionals but people who work in public health and other departments have a shared common language around child development and early childhood and systems building.”<sup>8</sup> This coordinated cross-sector capacity building has allowed Massachusetts to establish a strong system of supports for young children and their families, from home visitors to museum staff.



Three curious infants and their teacher enjoy reading together.

EEC staff members recognize that not only educators require thoughtful professional development to build their skills and competencies in working with diverse families. Across the state, family members themselves can also benefit greatly from education, training, and support. As a result of Race to the Top, parents can access financial literacy and early childhood development trainings, the Brazelton Touchpoints curriculum, refugee services, and multilingual supports via both in-person trainings and an online portal.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, these parent trainings are also marked by innovative efforts to promote collaboration across agencies. For example, the Massachusetts State Treasurer’s Office played a critical role in the development of a recent financial-literacy program for families.

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***Cross-Sector Collaborations: Reaching Families for Anywhere, Anytime Learning***

Family engagement efforts in Massachusetts bring statewide agencies and the private sector together to offer a continuum of services to families. Strategic partnerships aim to reach as many families as possible and to encourage children’s learning anywhere, anytime.

**Boston Children’s Museum**

An innovative partnership between EEC and Boston Children’s Museum extends learning opportunities beyond the boundaries of the traditional public education sector. The museum partnership offers parents of young children a wide range of resources to instill a love of learning and an early appreciation for reading in their children. As the Boston Children’s Museum’s literature states: “BCM exists to help children and their families understand and enjoy the world in which they live. . . We want all children to grow up as creative, curious learners who live healthy lives in sustainable communities.”<sup>10</sup> In pursuit of these goals, Boston Children’s Museum tries to ensure that children have the opportunity to learn not only within a school building, an early education and care setting, or the museum itself, but also beyond these settings—that children are exposed to learning opportunities at any time, and anywhere. The museum’s website asserts, “Some of the best learning happens on the walk to school, in the park, or even waiting for the bus.”<sup>11</sup>

The role of Boston Children’s Museum as lead provider of technical assistance to museums and libraries across the state reflects the Museum’s strong relationship with statewide education officials and its reputation for high-quality, strategic initiatives. As outlined in the Early Learning Plan, Boston Children’s Museum’s role is to develop a statewide framework and resources focused on four areas in supporting family and community engagement: early literacy; school readiness; STEM; and public awareness of the importance of early education.<sup>12</sup>

Jeri Robinson, the Museum’s vice-president for Education and Family Learning, reflects, “We went to our first meetings eager to meet our librarian and museum partners. . . . as we move into the final year, we have on record 51 committed museums and 100 libraries.”<sup>13</sup>

Boston Children’s Museum is developing a toolkit of high-quality learning materials for parents. The goal is for museums and libraries to use a sustainable toolkit of learning and literacy resources to promote anywhere, anytime learning for young children in innovative ways. As Jeri Robinson explains, “What we will have at the end is an opportunity to package all of our PowerPoints and training materials so that if we want to do it again, or if someone wants to try in their own community, they can do so. That’s why we are trying to make materials available on the Web.”<sup>14</sup> EEC has already translated the museum’s parent tip sheets and resources into multiple languages, making them accessible to the majority of the families living in the state. Thus, Boston Children’s Museum’s foray into offering high-quality learning materials for parents not only reflects innovative cross-sector collaboration, but also demonstrates Massachusetts’s commitment to a sustainable pedagogical infrastructure for the parents of young children.

## The Digital Connection: WGBH

In the rapidly changing digital world, television continues to be the medium that young children (ages 0–8) use most frequently. Nearly 6 out of 10 children watch TV at least once a day.<sup>15</sup> Against this backdrop, the public television station WGBH has served as an important partner with EEC to offer parents and caregivers the tools to promote early learning. As Mary Haggerty, outreach manager for WGBH, explains, “The EEC was interested in finding resources that were well researched, accessible, and sustainable. We offered an online resource library that could be sustained free of charge, with a focus on quality, developmentally appropriate activities for parents.”<sup>16</sup> WGBH’s “digital hub” of parent resources was conceptualized in two phases, with Phase 1 focusing on digital infrastructure and content development, and Phase 2 focusing on the implementation of outreach—text messaging, two-way communications, translation into additional languages, and refining resources.<sup>17</sup> Like Boston Children’s Museum, WGBH was asked to contribute to the early learning effort because of its reputation for developing quality curricula.<sup>18</sup> The public television station’s existing successes in engaging families and building digital content made it a natural partner for EEC in this work.

## Brain Building in Progress Campaign

In 2010, EEC established a partnership with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to launch the “Brain Building in Progress” campaign to communicate the importance of early learning in a child’s development. The campaign’s message is based on research that establishes how positive and engaging interactions build children’s brains and provide them with a strong foundation for learning. Brain Building in Progress is a multifaceted campaign that is composed of targeted messages that align with the components of quality early learning experiences and programs, engagement of key stakeholders and communities, and resources for families. Brain Building in Progress is engaging early education providers, parents and families, museums, libraries, and legislators across the state. Important partners are the nearly 100 Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) networks across the state that have direct access to families through programs such as playgroups, literacy hours, and home visits. The support of the Early Learning Challenge grant allowed the state to strengthen this campaign by developing core messages about Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) components, expanding partnership efforts, and increasing the resources available to families.

Examples of the enhancements to the Brain Building in Progress campaign through the Early Learning Challenge grant include:

- Development of targeted messages and associated supports aligned with components of quality early learning
- Development of informational materials
- Enhancement of the Brain Building in Progress website (<http://www.brainbuildinginprogress.org>)
- Expansion of the Brain Building in Progress Facebook page
- #IAmABrainBuilder social media effort on Twitter and Facebook, to turn everyday moments with children into engaging interactions that support brain development
- Development of an “I am a Brain Builder” parent workshop

### Examples of Campaign Messages

- “Lead so that young children succeed”
- “Make the connections that build young brains”
- “Look for brain-building zones”
- “Build your knowledge: the more we know, the more we will help children grow”
- “Make any moment a brain-building moment”

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By extending the partnership with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) during the summer of 2014, a “Build your child’s brain on the train” ad campaign was launched on the subway and bus lines. The 10-week campaign provided ideas for teachable moments between parents and children while they ride public transit together.<sup>19</sup> “The time parents and children spend together on the MBTA can be more than just getting from point A to point B,” says Dr. Beverly Scott, MBTA’s general manager. “Programs like this help both parents and children boost their bonding time and build their brain power, all while on a train or bus.”<sup>20</sup>



The “I am a Brain Builder” ad and the Brain Building in Progress campaign direct the public to an online hub of resources that are available to support families and caregivers. Specific to the I am a Brain Builder ad launch, the website includes brain-building activities related to riding the MBTA, at: [www.brainbuildinginprogress.org/ontheT](http://www.brainbuildinginprogress.org/ontheT).



A grandmother helps her grandson identify the pictures in a children's book about transportation, while riding the "T" subway in Boston.

**Talk!** Ask lots of questions and engage in back and forth conversation. This builds children's language skills and helps them learn to read.

**Use numbers!** Count the number of stops on the ride, or the number of times you can find the T logo.

**Look around!** Notice your surroundings. Point out whether it is sunny or cloudy, hot or cold. Point out objects and ask what they are.

**Discover letters!** Go on an alphabet hunt. Choose a letter and see where you spot it in ads or signs.

**Read!** Share a book together. Describe what is happening in the pictures. It is never too early to read to a child.

**Share your Brain Building moment!**

Tell us how you are Brain Building and learn other ideas on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/IamABrainBuilder) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/IamABrainBuilder) using #IamABrainBuilder

Follow us! We're on Twitter [@MassEarlyEdCare](https://twitter.com/MassEarlyEdCare) and [@SpeakUnited](https://twitter.com/SpeakUnited). Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/IamABrainBuilder). - See more at:

<http://www.brainbuildinginprogress.org/ontheT#sthash.1mzSf2dW.dpuf>

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## A Comprehensive Network of Providers: The CFCE Grantees

EEC recognized that a much more vigorous, on-the-ground presence would be required to ensure that

families were constantly engaged with this learning content, able to access it, and continuously using it to help their children. For this reason, CFCEs—child-serving organizations throughout the state—have emerged as a key component of the statewide family engagement strategy. The exact nature of these organizations varies, and includes school districts and community-based organizations.<sup>21</sup> However, all CFCEs are awarded monetary support and technical assistance as part of an open bidding process organized by state officials.

CFCEs were launched as the merger of three grant programs in 2010: an evidence-based, literacy-focused home-visitation program, a prenatal through age-3 program known as the Massachusetts Family Network, and a set of community partnerships focused on supporting preschoolers.<sup>22</sup> Thus, CFCEs have been a part of Massachusetts’s strategy in some form for several years. However, the Race to the Top grant allowed the state to provide additional targeted assistance to the state’s CFCE networks.<sup>23</sup> Since the Race to the Top award, CFCEs have become on-the-ground hubs, with a particular focus on serving high-need families. As with many components of Massachusetts’s early childhood strategy, CFCEs provide coordinated linkages from families to comprehensive services by connecting early childhood special education with child development education, financial literacy training, evidence-based literacy models, and supports during transitions.<sup>24</sup>

Because each CFCE is different in its focus and its approach, the grantees can each learn from one another when connected in a network. At the same time, the state’s primary strategy is to offer each grantee in the network the same high-quality technical assistance and capacity building. As Gail DeRiggi states: “We have four family and community engagement quality specialists to provide technical assistance and monitoring, bringing grantees together, elevating those who are really excelling to

### Coordinated Family and Community Engagement<sup>25</sup>

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) programs are locally based efforts serving families with children from birth through school age.

#### CFCE PRIORITIES

- **Universal and Targeted Outreach**—Reaching and meeting the needs of children, especially those with multiple risk factors and/or those who are hard to reach
- **Linkages to Comprehensive Services**—Ensuring that families have access to services that support their families’ well-being and children’s optimal development
- **Family Education**—Strengthening the capacity of families as their child’s first teacher through:
  - Child development education (all domains, including social emotional)
  - Evidence-based early literacy and family literacy opportunities
- **Transition Supports**—Coordinating activities and resources that maximize families’ access to supports promoting successful birth to age 8 transitions, with a specific focus on kindergarten transitions

#### CFCE SERVICES

##### Providing families access to:

- child development information;
- transition information and supports;
- assistance with meeting basic needs;
- timely support in periods of family crisis;
- high-quality, specific, and up-to-date information and referrals;
- family literacy and school readiness activities;
- family and community events;
- parent leadership opportunities; and
- information about early education and care opportunities and other community resources that support parents in their role as their child’s first teacher.

##### Providing the early education and care community with:

- support in identifying program quality needs and accessing training and other professional development opportunities;
- opportunities to share best practices and coordinate resources; and
- linkages to technical assistance and local resources to assist them in meeting quality standards.

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share best practices, and bringing in those with expertise to do training.”<sup>26</sup> This technical assistance has produced a cohort of CFCEs that are well respected across sectors and around the entire state. For example, Jeri Robinson of Boston Children’s Museum points to the CFCEs as singularly essential to the state’s family engagement efforts because the CFCEs are so skilled at earning the trust and relationships with both families and educational institutions: “Their goal and responsibilities are really to work with families and help them to connect with resources—they had access to families, as well as existing relationships with museums and libraries in some cases. This gave us an opportunity to bring everyone to the table.”<sup>27</sup> The capacity and cultural competence of the CFCEs has ensured that they will serve as a linchpin of Massachusetts’s statewide family engagement strategy for a long time to come.

## EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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### ***Building Statewide Accountability: The Quality Rating and Improvement System***

The majority of Massachusetts’s strategy focuses on building the capacity of various stakeholders: child-serving organizations, parents, children, museums, and libraries. However, the state has built in a meaningful accountability system as well. One key component of the Early Learning Plan is the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), designed to rate early childcare providers on a set of objective, measurable standards. The goal is for early childhood–serving organizations to publicize information about their areas of strength and areas for growth, both so that the organizations will be enticed to continuously improve and so that parents have the opportunity to make informed choices about which organizations to choose. Promisingly, the QRIS has included family engagement as a central metric in its rating system.<sup>28</sup> The Massachusetts QRIS rates the quality of providers’ family engagement practices in three ways: reviewing documentation, including both policies and practices for engaging families; assessing the strength of family engagement-focused professional development; and implementing measurement tools to assess the satisfaction of families and stakeholders.<sup>29</sup>

Plans for engaging families in using information about program quality available through the QRIS are well under way: EEC is in the process of building an online community of supports and information for parents and providers, and building parent working groups to discuss what program quality means to them.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Building the Evidence Base for the Early Childhood Field: Future Plans for Evaluation***

The policy framework of the Early Learning Plan, the infrastructure innovations of the QRIS, the CFCEs, professional development, museum partnerships, WGBH Digital Hub, and the Brain Building in Progress campaign all leave Massachusetts well positioned to be a leader in family engagement. But in order to ensure that these innovations are having their desired effect on families, students, and educators, comprehensive, ongoing evaluations will be needed. Some of the initiatives described here have already begun their evaluation efforts. Researchers at Brandeis University are evaluating EEC’s professional development partnership with Head Start.<sup>31</sup> And EEC is actively engaged in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the work of the CFCE grantees.<sup>32</sup>

However, in many cases, evaluation efforts have not yet begun in earnest. Once the content development and piloting phases are completed in 2014, the Massachusetts EEC will begin to devote a significant amount of time and energy to designing and implementing a practical and meaningful evaluation. EEC is currently working with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute on a validation study of the state’s QRIS standards.



## REFLECTIONS AND CHALLENGES

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Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge funds have created an innovative and exciting opportunity for states to improve their early childhood systems. Massachusetts’s efforts to utilize its funds to scale up and enhance its many existing high-quality family engagement initiatives bring about a variety of opportunities and challenges. Attempts to streamline the many data-collection processes and produce concise, actionable, and coherent recommendations from a number of different evaluations will constitute one challenge for early childhood officials in Massachusetts as they seek to implement and perfect the state’s family engagement infrastructure. But the test that appears most prevalent in officials’ minds is one of sustainability. While the state’s Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant presents a compelling opportunity to improve quality early learning opportunities, it also offers a finite amount of funding. Therefore, the onus is on the state to figure out how to sustain the high-quality infrastructure building efforts to continue beyond the life of the grant.

Officials in EEC are cautiously optimistic even as they express some concerns about sustainability. Jennifer Amaya-Thompson, Head Start State Collaboration Office assistant director, is “fully aware that Race to the Top will be finalized in a year or so,” but she prefers to think of that challenge as “an opportunity . . . It allows us to think strategically in terms of maintaining and enhancing our future work.”<sup>33</sup> Her enthusiasm for carrying the work forward is shared throughout the Department of Early Education and Care—most of all at the top. The commissioner’s commitment to families, coupled with dynamic leadership, forms a strong impetus to sustain gains and build momentum for further innovation. In the end, the sustainability of commitment among multiple partners is a powerful driver to realize the long-term benefits of family engagement.

### Thomas Weber, Commissioner of the Department of Early Education and Care



Early Education and Care Commissioner Tom Weber participates in the Clinton Community Partnerships for Children's singing and storytime hour for young children and their families.



*I joined this department 15 months ago, and have found this [family engagement] work to be among the most exciting out of everything I have done. It has shown the most promise. I meet many mothers in programs who have really figured out a way to structure full-time early childhood education opportunities for their children through various activities: museums, libraries, playgrounds. So, they may visit a library on Monday and go to a museum on Tuesday then go to a play group at a community-based operator on Wednesday, and so on and so on. And sometimes, those are actually families that are sort of stuck in the middle. They are families that don't qualify for a subsidy but don't have the private resources for a formal early education program. They have shown me that we are really creating a continuum of learning for families. That is so meaningful to see—the enormous value this has for families.<sup>34</sup>*

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*Photos were provided by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley.*

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<sup>1</sup> State of Massachusetts (2011). *From birth to school readiness: The Massachusetts early learning plan 2012-2015. Granter proposal: Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge*. Retrieved from [http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/board\\_materials/20111017-rttt-ele.pdf](http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/board_materials/20111017-rttt-ele.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> State of Massachusetts, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> T. Weber (personal communication, June 18, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> State of Massachusetts, 2011, p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> State of Massachusetts, 2011, p. 159.

<sup>8</sup> G. DeRiggi (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> J. Amaya-Thompson (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Charnow, C. (2011). Letter of support for Massachusetts's grant application to the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge. In *From birth to school readiness: The Massachusetts early learning framework—Appendix LL*.

<sup>11</sup> Boston Children's Museum (2014). *Our community*. Retrieved from <http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/community>

<sup>12</sup> State of Massachusetts, 2011, p. 175.

<sup>13</sup> J. Robinson (personal communications, May 7, 2014 and October 25, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Common Sense Media (2013). *Zero to eight: Children's media use in America 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.common Sense Media.org/research/zero-to-eight-childrens-media-use-in-america-2013>

<sup>16</sup> M. Haggerty (personal communication, May 27, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.facebook.com/BrainBuildingInProgress>; <http://www.brainbuildinginprogress.org/ontheT>

<sup>20</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Education. (2014). *Patrick administration emphasizes importance of brain building in early education*. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/departments-of-early-education-and-care/press-releases/2014/importance-of-brain-building-in-early-education-.html>

<sup>21</sup> G. DeRiggi (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> In the Early Learning Plan, \$14 million was budgeted to 107 grantees; this number has since expanded (State of Massachusetts, 2011, p. 154; G. DeRiggi [personal communication, May 12, 2014]).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (2014). *Coordinated family and community engagement grantees*. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/financial-assistance/funding-opportunities/open-competitive-grants/fy-2015-coordinated-family-and-community-engagement-.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> J. Robinson (personal communication May 7, 2014).

<sup>28</sup> State of Massachusetts, 2011, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> G. Alexander (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> J. Amaya-Thompson (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>32</sup> G. DeRiggi (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>33</sup> J. Amaya-Thompson (personal communication, May 12, 2014).

<sup>34</sup> T. Weber (personal communication, June 18, 2014).