

The Boston Opportunity Agenda

A historic education partnership




Childcare during the pandemic and its implications for the future

Pratima Patil & Fernanda Campbell

Virtual Early Childhood Coffee & Conversation Series
When the Bough Breaks: Part Four
March 4th, 2022

The Boston Opportunity Agenda

A historic education partnership



The Boston Opportunity Agenda is dedicated to ensuring that all of Boston's residents have the opportunity to acquire the education they need to find work in the region's knowledge economy and to help them lead secure, fulfilling lives.

While Boston has many exciting programs and organizations that focus on providing opportunities for individuals, the Boston Opportunity Agenda is a long-term partnership focused on achieving systemic change that will ultimately affect all Boston residents. We fervently believe that by combining our resources, expertise and influence around a single agenda, we will have a greater impact on Boston's cradle-to-career educational pipeline.



What We Do

Data & Public Accountability

- ❑ Regular reporting progress on key metrics
- ❑ Use of common definitions, metrics and benchmarks to track Boston's progress toward achieving its education goals

Collective Action

- ❑ Convene diverse, cross-sector stakeholders
- ❑ Form networks that share data and best practices

Increase Investment

- ❑ Aligning efforts to ensure efficient, effective, equitable investment of resources across Boston's Education system

- **City of Boston (Mayor's Office of Women's Advancement & Office Economic Mobility Lab)**
- **United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley**
- **Strategies for Children**
- **Northeastern University**
- **Boston Public Schools**
- **Eastern Bank**
- **Wellesley Centers for Women**
- **Vital Villages**
- **Boston Children's Hospital**
- **Boston Public Health Commission**
- **Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care**
- **Boston Indicators**
- **Boston Planning and Development Agency**
- **The Boston Foundation**
- **Care Institute**
- **Education Development Center**
- **Boston Indicators**

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

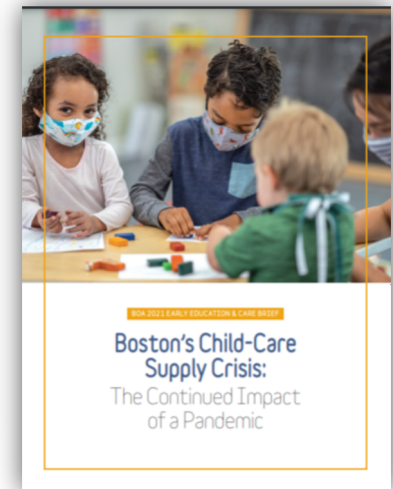
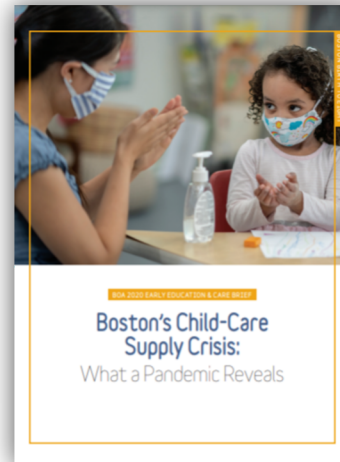
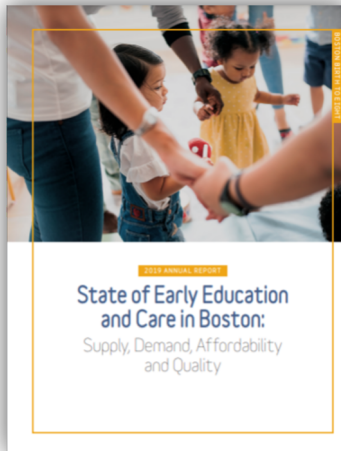
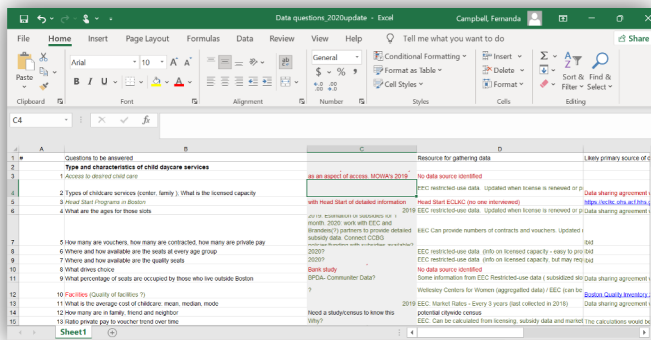
Data Committee
Developed 61
Questions

Mapped the
availability and quality
of existing data

State of EEC
Report

State of EEC Brief
(Pandemic I)

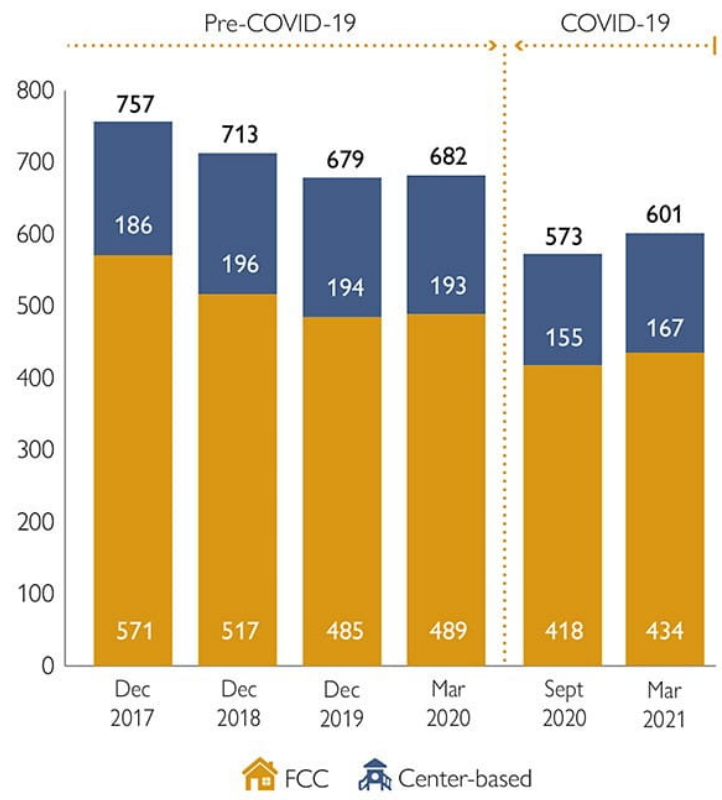
State of EEC Brief
(Pandemic II)



As of March 2021, Boston lost **21%** of its programs between December 2017-March 2021

Loss by Program type
FCC: 24%
Center-based: 10%

FIGURE 1
Number of Licensed Childcare Programs
(Boston, Dec 2017 - Mar 2021)



Source: MA Department of Early Education and Care, December 2017 to March 2021 data. Boston Opportunity Agenda Analysis, 2021.

Supported City and State partners to create policies and advocate for funding and resources

Informed Boston Resiliency Fund allocation of over \$500,000 to emergency early educators

Impact of State of Early Education and Care Report & Briefs

Some Boston neighborhoods face severe shortage of child care — and it's unaffordable almost everywhere

By Kay Lazar Globe Staff, Updated November 5, 2020, 12:01 a.m.



Elydia Williams kisses her daughter Nehemiah James, 3, as she got off of the bus so wide in some Boston neighborhoods that there aren't enough spots for many. Agenda (Jessica Rinaldi/Globe Staff) JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Child-care crisis deepened in Boston during pandemic, report says

By Tonya Alavez Globe Staff, Updated July 23, 2021, 6:12 p.m.



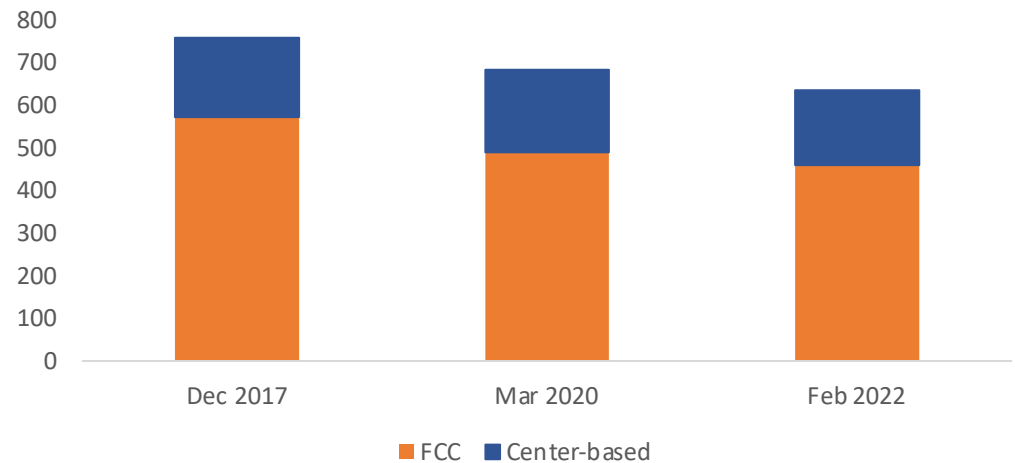
Bright Horizons in the Seaport District. The child-care center was one of scores in Boston forced to close amid the pandemic. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

Estimated total loss of programs (2017 –2022): approx. **16%**

Estimates do NOT take into account individual closed classrooms

Data source: MA EEC, 2017 – 2022. BOA preliminary analysis.

**Preliminary Estimates:
Number of Licensed Childcare Programs
(Boston, Dec 2017 - Feb 2022)**



Thank you, Paula Gavrria Vilarreal!

A key driver of the current childcare crisis is the limited early care workforce

&

A robust early educator workforce is a key driver for an accessible, high quality childcare ecosystem



Past BOA Reports and Briefs have clearly defined the problem of access, affordability, and quality across Boston's neighborhoods, particularly for infants and toddlers

Current Survey

What data is needed to address the main workforce crisis through policy, practice, and funding?

Which data can help early educators in advocacy, professional development, and business decisions?

What do we know?

The Massachusetts Early Education and Care Workforce Survey 2019

KEY FINDINGS

A Research Brief Prepared for the Massachusetts
Department of Early Education and Care

JUNE 30, 2020

Anne Douglass, PhD
Christa Kelleher, PhD
Songtian Zeng, PhD
Vishakha Agarwal, MPP
Brian Beauregard, MBA
Arazeliz Reyes, MEd
Susan R. Crandall, PhD



Representative sample across MA

- Conducted pre-pandemic

Variability among early educators

- Sociodemographics (race, ethnicity, language, age, gender identity)
- Education attainment and PD

Common across early educators

- Economic concerns (not able to pay bills, not having enough food, reliance on government assistance, little to no benefits)

What do we still need to know?

Region-specific data
Boston: Neighborhood-specific data
Disaggregation of data to surface specific
inequities

What data is needed to address the early educator workforce crisis through state and local policy, practice, and funding?

- System Indicators

Which data can help early educators in advocacy, professional development, and business decisions?

- Spoke with stakeholders across sectors: providers, system leaders, directors, professional organizations, researchers, funders, policymakers

Knowledge Translation/Participatory Research

- Instead of translating findings later, begin with the questions the field needs answered



- Current pay and benefits
- Preferred pay and benefits
- Years of Experience
- Higher ed institutions attended
- Higher ed institutions and training preferred
- Career pathways to date
- Future career aspirations
- Which sectors of the economy are supported by providers
- Staffing shortages/ Closed classrooms
- Professional Supports, Program and Business Supports

Professionally Translated into 7 Languages

- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Chinese
- Haitian Creole
- Cape Verdean
- Arabic
- Vietnamese

Thank you, Diana Tran!

- Any early educator, assistant or administrator who has worked or is working in a center or family childcare
- **SURVEY RAFFLE:** All participants will be entered into a raffle to win one of five VISA gift cards worth \$150 EACH

Democratize Data

- As investments in data infrastructure increase at local and state levels, increased capacity to collect, understand, and use data at all levels will be more important
- Share data reports with stakeholders, including FCC and Center-based educators
- Collect more questions from the field. Create a network of early educator professionals who use data for reporting AND continuous improvement.
- “...Centrality of early educators and childcare in our civic infrastructure...”
(Making Childcare Work, 2022: Mayor’s Office of Women’s Advancement and Economic Mobility Lab)



Take part in our early education research!

The Boston Opportunity Agenda seeks members of the early education workforce to take the **Massachusetts Early Educator Survey** and share it with their networks of early education and care administrators, educators, and assistants in your center or family childcare. Your responses will improve our understanding of the field and inform critical decisions about early education and care practice, policy, and funding.

The survey takes about 20 minutes and every participant will be entered into a lottery to win **one of five \$150 Visa Gift cards**.

The results will be shared publicly in a future report.

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

- Link: <https://www.bostonopportunityagenda.org/research>

Thank You!

