THRIVEIN 5
Boston's promise to its children

Boston's School Readiness Roadmap

Executive Summary

Thrive in Five outlines the scientific, economic and ethical reasons to focus on the earliest years.

Dear Reader,

Our community, city and state leaders, public and private, should be proud to accept this roadmap for leveling the playing field for our youngest citizens and safeguarding our city's future. *Thrive in Five* outlines the scientific, economic and ethical reasons to focus on the earliest years, laying out powerful goals and thoughtfully considered strategies to be pursued in Boston.

The plan builds on Boston's many strengths and more than a decade of successful groundwork in early education and care, in our public schools, and throughout the larger Boston community. *Thrive in Five* would not have been possible without the dedication of so many Boston leaders and residents. I thank the planners for their work to date and their partnership to come. I especially thank United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley for providing strategic guidance throughout the planning process.

Thrive in Five is compelling to me as Mayor, and also as a father and grandfather, with six grandchildren growing up in Boston and attending the Boston Public Schools. Every day I meet young people who give me hope and inspiration for what we can achieve in this great city. Our youngest residents are our present and they are our future.

My administration is already aligning the work of our city government departments to support this plan and I encourage all leaders in the city, many of whom are recognized trailblazers, to join us in traveling along this essential path. Similarly, the continued partnerships and investment of our state government – which funds many of the vital services referenced in this plan – will be essential to our success moving forward.

As the planners state in *Thrive in Five's* conclusion, let us be clear and focused in our specific objectives, and yet let us also envision for all children what they can see from Boston's harbor: unlimited horizons.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston

A Message From the Co-Chairs of The School Readiness Action Planning Team

Sandra Fenwick

Jackie Jenkins-Scott

At the request of the Mayor, and using as a foundation what is known from cutting-edge science about the critical importance of early childhood development, the 65 members of our School Readiness Action Planning Team (APT) identified a framework from the beginning. Children are most likely to thrive in their first five years of life and be ready for sustained school success when they have:

- Families in a strong position to assist their learning and development;
- Early educators and caregivers of the highest quality;
- Pediatric providers and other professionals who can rapidly detect and address problems that threaten their healthy development and ability to learn; and
- A city that makes children a top priority.

Thrive in Five's roadmap defines and integrates these needs in an ambitious, yet realistic, agenda developed and endorsed by people who live and work across Boston.

We are deeply grateful that Mayor Menino asked us to spearhead this effort and for the opportunity it afforded to work with such an unusually diverse, committed, and thoughtful group of Boston leaders and residents. It is our hope that this roadmap will inspire and guide you, the reader, to participate in a *movement* that will reap profound benefits not only for Boston's children, but for the entire city.

Let us envision for all children what they can see from Boston's harbor: unlimited horizons.

Sandra Fenwick
Chief Operating Officer
Children's Hospital Boston

Jackie Jenkins-Scott
President
Wheelock College

Thrive in Five: Our Call to Action

Our Vision *Young children's healthy development and love of learning will be a top civic priority for our city. We will ensure that Boston's children have a strong foundation for educational success, essential for productive, satisfying and contributing lives. We will see them supported by families, educators, health care and human service providers, and communities that are well prepared for their unique and crucial roles in helping children reach their full potential, and that work together to achieve the best results for each child, from birth throughout the early years and early school grades, and then beyond.*

Children are born ready to learn. In fact they are born learning! What takes place between birth and school entry greatly determines whether they will enter school ready for sustained success, something we want for all children. Conversely, what takes place in these early years determines whether a gap in competencies – cognitive, social/emotional, and physical – will exist from the start of K-12 education, leading to a wide range of problems that are significantly more difficult, as well as more expensive, to address later on.

Understanding this, Mayor Thomas M. Menino, in partnership with United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, engaged a carefully constructed cross-section of leaders to identify what it would take for Boston's young children to enter school on a level playing field, ready to succeed. Our work, "Boston's School Readiness Strategic Planning Initiative," has resulted in this comprehensive school readiness roadmap: ***Thrive in Five – Boston's Promise to its Children.***

Why should we focus particular attention on our youngest citizens and on ensuring children's school readiness? The answer is clear: neuroscience and economics together reveal that no single strategy offers a greater return on investment. A moral and civic imperative exists as well.

With so many societal needs to be addressed, why should we focus particular attention on our youngest citizens and on ensuring children's school readiness? The answer is clear: neuroscience and economics together reveal that **no single strategy offers a greater return on investment.** A moral and civic imperative exists as well. The playing field for children entering school is far from level and this must change. The workplace today's children will enter upon high school or college graduation will demand capabilities that cannot be achieved without a strong groundwork laid in early childhood and early school years. When children thrive through their first five years, they are poised to be strong lifelong learners, earners and engaged citizens. It is not in

our city's fabric to give up on any resident at any age, and it is never too late to provide intervention and support for children, youth and adults. However, doing so earlier is most effective.[1]

Thrive in Five is a roadmap to strengthen existing child and family-serving systems, create new supports and alter systems where needed, coordinate our work across the city for greater impact, and measure and sustain progress over the long term. Detailed implementation plans, realignment of existing resources, and calculation of the full resources needed will be shaped and refined over the next year by the partnerships described in the plan. However, the framework for action provided in this document – the school readiness equation and the goals created by a diverse and extraordinarily committed group of Boston leaders and parents – will remain in place over the next decade so that its participants will know what they, that is we, are working toward, together.

The *Thrive in Five* approach is built on an extensive research base that illustrates our scientific, economic and moral imperative, including findings that:

- The human brain is the only organ that is not mature at birth. The brain develops more rapidly from birth through age three than at any other time of life – although brain development does continue throughout life.[1]
- **Children's earliest experiences actually shape the architecture of the brain** – the foundation of neural circuits upon which future learning, behavior and health depend; this does not pre-determine a child's future, but creates either a resilient or fragile foundation for learning and for health.[2]
- **The economic benefits of quality early childhood interventions are significant – producing a $14-$17 return for every dollar invested.**[3] The return includes savings from reduced special education and remedial education, welfare, and criminal justice costs, as well as increased tax revenue produced in the workforce.[4]
- A child growing up in poverty who has experienced high quality early education is 40% less likely to require special education or to be held back a grade, 30% more likely to graduate from high school, and twice as likely to go to college.[5]
- The average college graduate contributes 78% more in annual taxes than the average high school graduate. The average person who has not completed high school can expect to take home (net income) under $20,000 per year, while someone with a college diploma on up through an advanced professional degree can expect to take home an average of anywhere from $38,000 to $70,000.[6]
- Creating an environment that supports healthy development in early childhood is more effective programmatically than treating problems at a later age.[7]
- Learning is cumulative and basic early childhood skills are a necessary foundation for life long learning.[3]

[1] Shonkoff, J and Philips, D. (Eds.). (2000). *From Neurons To Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development.* Washington DC: National Academy Press.
[2] National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The Science of Early Childhood Development.* http://www.developingchild.net.
[3] Karoly, L.A., Kilburn, M.R., and Cannon, J.S. (2005). *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
[4] Rolnick, A. and Grunewald, R. (2003). *Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return.* http://www.minneapolisfed.org/pubs/fedgaz/03-03/opinion.cfm.
[5] Patrick, D. (January 24, 2008). Governor's State of the Commonwealth Address.
[6] Baum, S. and Payea, K. (2005) *The Benefits of Higher Education to Individuals and Society.* http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/press/cost04/EducationPays2004.pdf.
[7] Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2007). *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy: Using Evidence to Improve Outcomes in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children.* http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu.

Goals:

The goals of *Thrive in Five* are both simple and urgent:

- **Parents will be able to obtain the accurate, culturally-appropriate information they seek on child development, parenting, and school readiness, as well as community resources that help to strengthen families.**
- **Boston will become the city with the highest quality early education and care system for all young children – infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners – in all settings: family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, and school-based early education.**
- **Health care, early intervention and other systems that serve young children will succeed in earlier detection and more effective responses to barriers to child development and school readiness, including earlier detection of family and environmental conditions that can create "toxic stress" in young children.**
- **The many sectors in Boston will work together to ensure children's school readiness becomes and remains a top priority.**
- ***Thrive in Five* will track and report on its success in ensuring universal school readiness.**

The name *Thrive in Five* reflects our commitment to ensuring that all children flourish in the first five years of life and beyond. It also reflects the importance of all five dimensions of a child's growth – language development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and physical and motor development. In short, successful outcomes for children require support and stimulation that must be consistent and comprehensive, and must begin at birth.

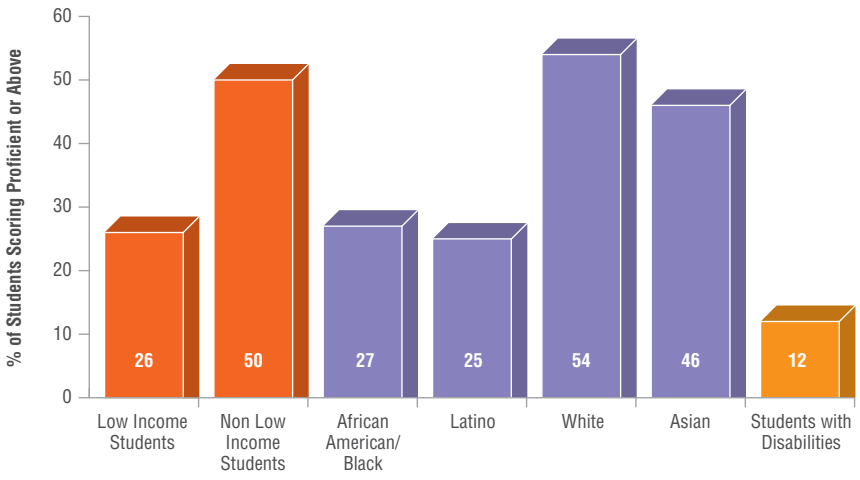
Preventing the Achievement Gap in our Next Generation By Promoting School Readiness and Ensuring the Healthy Development of Boston's Children

The link between school readiness and school achievement is well established. Gaps in children's ability not only show up early, but they stay relatively constant after age eight.[8] In fact, researchers now document **that half the academic achievement gap evidenced in grade 12 can be attributed to gaps that already existed in first grade.** [9]

Locally, statewide, and across the country, leaders are striving to ensure that all children succeed academically, which means bridging the gap between where ALL students need to be academically – to reach their full potential and compete in a global economy – and where they are now. In addition, school systems are struggling everywhere to deal with specific disparities in academic achievement – racial, economic and special education gaps.

While all students in the Boston Public Schools have demonstrated progress on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) at all grade levels, gaps persist – between low-income and middle-income students, between students who are Black or Latino and students who are White or Asian, and between special education and general education students. These gaps are evident early on. For example, there is more than a 20% gap on the third grade MCAS Reading scores between the performance of White and Asian students and the performance of Black and Latino students. The chart below illustrates a number of gaps.

2007 3rd Grade MCAS Reading Results



Source: Massachusetts Department of Education. 2007 MCAS Results by Subgroup – Boston. http://www.doe.mass.edu.
Note: "Low Income" is defined here as students whose family incomes makes them eligible for free or reduced meals, a federal income guideline.

Half the academic achievement gap evidenced in grade 12 can be attributed to gaps that already existed in first grade.

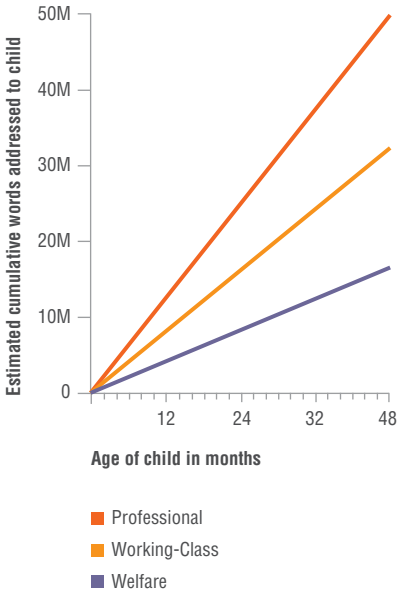
[8] Heckman, J. (Jan. 10, 2006). Catch 'Em Young. *Wall Street Journal.*
[9] Jencks, C. and Phillips, M. (1998). *The Black-White Test Score Gap.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Even school systems such as the Boston Public Schools that have made significant strides in addressing the academic achievement gap – bringing up the scores and overall performance of low income students, students with disabilities, and students who are Black and Latino – are finding it extraordinarily difficult to eliminate the gap or even to further narrow it. As documented in the groundbreaking report *From Neurons to Neighborhoods,* "Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter kindergarten… and they are predictive of subsequent academic performance."[10] It is clear that the best hope for eliminating the gap is prevention, that is starting our work *before* children enter kindergarten.

The most dramatic example of an early disparity is what has become known as the vocabulary gap – the number of *different* words a child knows at kindergarten entry. Talking to young children, starting at birth, helps them develop strong language and communication skills, which enables them to better express themselves, listen, read and learn. Children learning to read and write words they have never heard can be as challenging as learning a new language. Just hearing the *same words* over and over is important for children's brain development. Research indicates that low-income parents, on average, speak to and talk with their children much less than higher-income parents. The average low-income child has heard 30 million fewer words than his or her higher income peers by the age of four. Most strikingly, in one key study on this, the vocabulary gap at ***age three*** then predicted language scores in ***third grade.***[11]

Thrive in Five responds to these challenges by mobilizing Boston residents and resources to ensure that all children begin school with the strongest possible foundation for academic and lifelong success.

The Number of Words Addressed to Children Differs Across Income Groups



Source: Hart, B. and Risley, T.R. (2003). The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3. http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/spring2003/catastrophe.html

A Process of Inclusion, A Foundation of Science

Building on decades of exemplary work in Boston, a cross-sector 65-person team worked together throughout 2007 to produce *Thrive in Five*. (See pages 18-19 for a full listing of members across the eleven sectors represented.) That group, the School Readiness Action Planning Team ("the APT"), was selected by Mayor Menino from 250 nominees and included local leaders as well as representatives from the Massachusetts Departments of Education, Public Health, Early Education and Care, Social Services (child welfare), and Transitional Assistance (formerly called welfare). **APT members were asked to design a plan for which they would serve as ambassadors when the planning process ended – in their own organization, in their own professional sector, and throughout the city.** The APT was in turn informed by a diverse group of 40 parents, grandparents and guardians from all Boston neighborhoods, called "the Parents APT."

Initial guidance for the APT's planning process came from a 12-person team of top researchers and practitioners who developed a policy paper on early childhood development for the Mayor in the fall of 2006. Half of that team – chaired by

It is clear that the best hope for eliminating the gap is prevention, that is starting our work before children enter kindergarten.

[10] Shonkoff, J and Philips, D. (Eds.). (2000). *From Neurons To Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development.* Washington DC: National Academy Press.
[11] Hart, B. and Risley, T.R. (2003). *The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3.* http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/spring2003/catastrophe.html.

Sectors Represented on the APT

Early Education and Care
(family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, school-based early education, and State agencies)

Early Childhood Advocacy

Research and Higher Education

K-12 Education

Health and Mental Health

Community-based, Immigrant and Multi-Service Organizations

Parenting Education, Family Support, Family Literacy, and Early Intervention

Basic Needs and Human Services
(food, housing, safety)

Parent Advocacy and Parent/Family Engagement

Faith, Arts, Culture and Recreation

Foundation and Private Sector

Professor Richard Weissbourd, PhD, of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Jason Sachs, PhD, the head of the Boston Public Schools Early Education Department – were able to continue on to serve on the APT.

The APT plan was informed throughout by the science of early childhood development, particularly by the work of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, which analyzes results of national and international research on neuroscience, child development, pediatrics and economics. The Center's work documents the profound importance of children's relationships with adults in shaping their overall development. It also illustrates the different levels of stress that affect children – from "normal stress" to "tolerable stress" to "toxic stress," which is the level of sustained anxiety that "can damage developing brain architecture and create a short fuse for the body's stress response systems that leads to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health."[12]

This work argues for a focus on the stability and strength of children's relationships with the adults in their lives and on re-examining the systems that impact children – such as early education and health care – in order to achieve deep, lasting change to promote healthy development and prevent or quickly treat toxic stress.

In response, the APT and its working groups developed a strategic roadmap for action to ensure Boston children's school readiness, based on the following equation:

Boston's School Readiness Equation

The formulation of this equation signifies that while the focus must always be on each child, it is what we adults bring to the equation that ensures success. No element alone can deliver the citywide results we need, nor can the results be achieved if one element is missing. But if all elements are focused on a single goal and guided by a roadmap to keep us on a coordinated path, we as a community of parents and caring adults have the potential to reach the ambitious goal of universal school readiness.

No one element alone can deliver the citywide results we need, nor can the results be achieved if one element is missing.

While each component of *Thrive in Five* will have individual measures of success, one step the APT undertook, guided by the Data and Research Team, was to develop a list of community level indicators that would document improvement across sectors and across strategies, aligned with this equation. (See page 16 for the Progress Indicators.)

[12] National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2005). *Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain.* http://www.developingchild.net/reports.shtml.

How We Will Succeed

Thrive in Five is unique in that it ambitiously addresses all dimensions of children's development and learning through the early years and into the early grades while building realistic partnerships between public and private sector institutions to advance clear strategies over the next 10 years through near-term (2008-2009), medium-term (2010-2012) and long-term (2013-2018) actions.

Thrive in Five draws on Boston's considerable strengths, including a wide array of early education and care programs; extensive community services for children and families, including an outstanding health system of hospitals and community health centers, many effective neighborhood-based and faith-based organizations and coalitions, and a United Way that is extraordinarily engaged, investing more than $5M annually in children birth to six; extensive City services for families with young children (libraries, community centers, housing developments, schools, and public health programs, pre-natal and beyond); a diverse population of parents who are deeply devoted to their children; and public and private sector leaders who are making children's school readiness a top priority.

The plan also addresses Boston's challenges, such as the need to help children and families better navigate and benefit from services that can be confusing, complex, and poorly coordinated; strengthen an under-resourced early education and care system; promote not just more services, but high quality and coordinated services for children and families; support families facing serious issues (such as substance abuse, domestic violence and parental depression) that produce levels of "toxic stress" in children; and create solutions that are responsive to the racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of Boston.

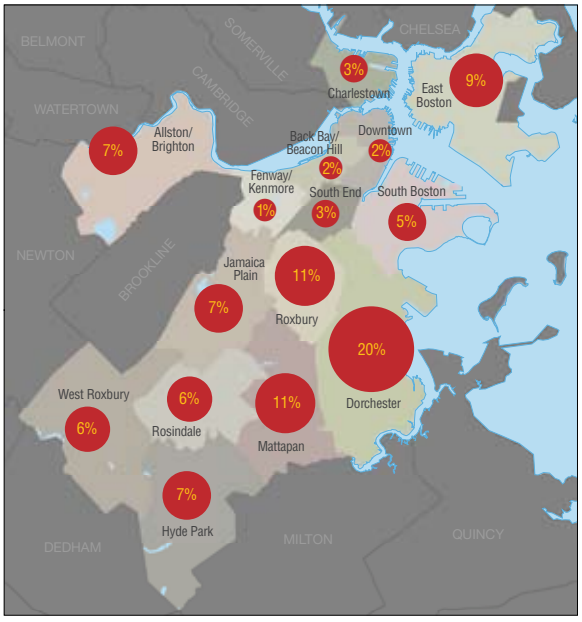
Thrive in Five will build on the momentum already achieved during the planning stage. We have:

- Created a team of Boston leaders across sectors who will continue to serve as drivers to help other leaders prioritize young children's school readiness.
- Developed a method to conduct planning that consistently engages parents across cultures and neighborhoods. (In addition to the on-going Parents APT, the planners held focus groups with parents facing the most tenacious challenges, such as domestic

violence and the experience of immigrating from a country for cultures that do not yet have support systems in Boston).

- Reached agreement on a definition of school readiness, the key goals to promote universal school readiness, strategies to reach those goals, and outcomes that indicate children are developing appropriately toward school readiness in early education settings.
- Briefed and garnered input from 420 community leaders over the course of the past year, including 80 funders – corporate, foundation and government.
- Incorporated into the planning process new family and educator support and citywide engagement efforts:
  - *United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley* launched the Mind in the Making training program for early educators, using video modules that illustrate effective practice based on thescience of early childhood.
  - *ReadBoston* launched the *"Early Words"* campaign to address the most concrete gap evident upon school entry for low-income students: the vocabulary gap.
  - *Countdown to Kindergarten* created an *"I'm Ready!"* DVD in 6 languages to help families understand what takes place in kindergarten and simple ways in daily life to prepare their children; expanded *play-to-learn groups* that bring 1-3 year olds and their parents, especially low-income and immigrant parents, into school buildings to support early learning; and developed a new *"milestones" product* to help all parents understand child development.
  - Multiple public and private partners created *Smart from the Start,* a new collaboration to serve the lowest-income families in the city with school readiness support, through a community-mobilization approach that was developed to pilot some of the strategies of the APT.

Children Ages Birth through Five by Neighborhood

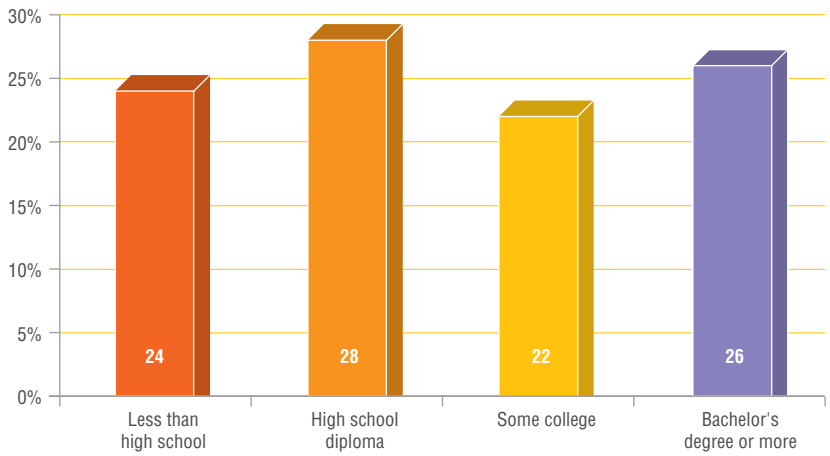


% Percentage of Children Ages Birth through Five by Neighborhood
Total Number of Children Ages Birth to Five in Boston: 37,947
Source: U.S. Census 2000

Boston can and will succeed at safeguarding the future of our youngest citizens for many reasons, one of which is the size of the target population. Our city is home to approximately 38,000 children ages 0-5 in 31,500 homes. Not all of our strategies will be universal, but even those that are, can be achieved with a population of this size. As noted above, the devotion of Boston parents to their children is a strength upon which to build.

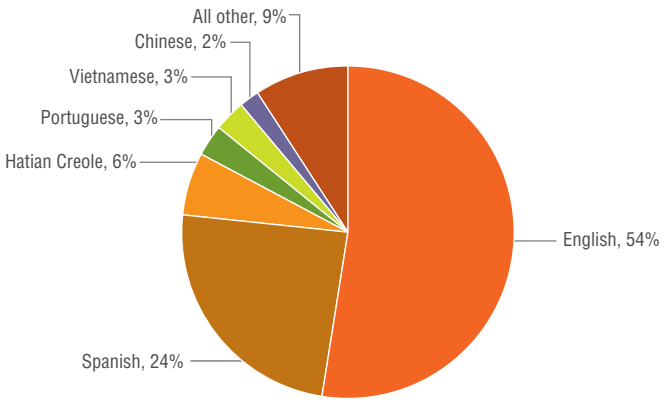
The charts here illustrate some important factors about our young children: they live throughout the city, and their parents face significant challenges, such as not being proficient in English or not having the benefit themselves of a high school or college degree. In addition, 25% of the adults raising children ages 0-5 in the city (8,000 families) are living at or below the poverty line, creating challenges and barriers for even the most loving families. This data illustrates the importance of our multi-generation approach to school readiness – our focus on the whole family.

Educational Attainment of Householders with Children Birth to Five



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, Public Use Microdata (PUMS) 5% Sample, BRA Research Division Analysis

Languages Spoken by Householders with Children Ages Birth to Five



- 43% of the adults raising 0-5 year olds are foreign-born, while only 26% of Bostonians overall are foreign-born.
- English is not the native language for 47% of 0-5 householders, although some indicate they speak English well as their 2nd or 3rd language.
- Summary: 8300 people raising young children in Boston speak little or no English.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, Public Use Microdata (PUMS) 5% Sample, BRA Research Division Analysis

Thrive in Five builds from a common framework for understanding and supporting children's school readiness, using the following as Boston's first citywide School Readiness Definition:

Boston's School Readiness Definition

School readiness **is the state of early development that enables an individual child to engage in and benefit from kindergarten learning experiences, which is a stepping stone for sustained school success. Early development encompasses a child's capacity in language development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, physical well being and motor development.**

Thrive in Five: Goals and Strategies

These strategies include strengthening and expanding existing work, ensuring better coordination of existing work, and developing new initiatives and programs as needed. The APT meticulously avoided what are known as "unfunded mandates," and instead have chosen to lay out the goals and strategies, backed by extensive research, that will ensure success in each part of the school readiness equation. The APT examined a wide range of goals and strategies before choosing those below. However, they also agreed – and welcomed knowing – that this work will continue to be shaped over the coming year by implementation partners, many of whom will be APT members continuing on to support school readiness.

Ready Families

Goal: Parents will be able to obtain the accurate, culturally-appropriate information they seek on child development, parenting, and school readiness, as well as community resources that help to strengthen families.

Strategies:

1. Pilot "Community School Readiness Wiring," a new process that builds on existing neighborhood leadership in order to integrate into parents' daily lives – through the workplace, grocery stores, hair salons, playgrounds, etc. – key information on how to support children's healthy development and school readiness. Partner with the formal organizations and also community leaders and neighbors with whom families interact daily to ensure that the information reaches those who need it most and is useful, culturally responsive, and high quality.

2. Coordinate and integrate new and existing public education campaigns that provide parents, caregivers and others who work with children and families updated information about early childhood development, school readiness, and parenting.

3. Select and promote an on-line screening information tool that providers can use to guide families and that families can use themselves to obtain health care, housing, food security, income security, and other needed services.

4. Ensure access to Boston's wealth of cultural institutions for young children and families through specific programming at the institutions and in the community to support young children's learning and development, as well as resources to make admission more affordable and accessible for all families.

Strategies:

1. Across all early education and care settings, pursue universal accreditation, the nationally agreed-upon determinant of high quality for early education and care.

2. Create a collaboration across the four types of early education and care settings to promote joint planning, foster stability of high-quality programs, and promote alignment in curriculum, standards and assessment as children move from infant and toddler care, to pre-school, to kindergarten.

3. Enhance professional development for early educators to ensure high quality teaching and learning across settings, focusing on curriculum, assessment and best practices to promote early learning and healthy child development.

4. Improve early education and care facilities to ensure safe, stimulating learning environments for all children.

5. Improve compensation to support recruitment and retention of highly-qualified and well prepared early educators.

6. Improve access to early education and care for all children and families by decreasing financial barriers and ensuring adequate supply of services to meet demand at the infant, toddler, pre-school and kindergarten stages.

7. Further analyze for potential application to Boston existing models that provide high quality early education to children while integrating health, social services and high-level family engagement.

Ready Educators

Goal: Boston will become the city with the highest quality early education and care system for all young children – infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners – in all settings: family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, and school-based early education.

Strategies:

1. Conduct pilots in pediatric settings to:
   - expand and coordinate current efforts to achieve universal "welcome newborn" visits (in a location chosen by the new parents);
   - conduct universal screening for physical, behavioral, developmental, and environmental and family risk factors;
   - provide parents with information about child development and parenting;
   - offer coordination services to ensure that children and families access and benefit from existing services to support children's growth and development.

Prioritize methods that incorporate infant and early childhood specialists into pediatric settings, including paraprofessionals to support pediatric providers and engage and educate parents.

Ready Systems

Goal: Health care, early intervention and other systems that serve young children will succeed in earlier detection and more effective responses to barriers to child development and school readiness, including earlier detection of family and environmental conditions that can create "toxic stress" in young children.

2 Enhance the various systems of early intervention to expand and align eligibility for services, ensuring smooth transitions between services in the infant, toddler, pre-school and kindergarten stages, and include a greater focus on identifying and responding to social, emotional and behavioral issues.

Ready City

Goal: The many sectors in Boston will work together to ensure children's school readiness becomes and remains a top priority.

Strategies:

1 Track and analyze all existing public and private funding streams for early childhood in Boston, and promote comprehensive evaluation results among public and private funders to ensure long-term sustainability.

2 Create a public-private governance and operational structure to oversee the success of *Thrive in Five* and help fuel a broader movement to support Boston's youngest children. This will include:

- a leadership team/board for oversight, funding alignment and fundraising, and plan accountability, which will include a cross-section of Boston leadership as well as State representation;
- an Executive Director and 1-2 additional staff housed at United Way;
- a lead organization for each of the plan's components that will convene (and provide staff for) a diverse set of "implementation partners" who will refine and implement each strategy;
- a continued DART (data and research team) to serve all the partnerships and report on the indicators of success; and
- a parent advisory group.

3 Align the work of City departments that serve families with young children to collaborate with one another and to support the goals and strategies of this plan. Coordinate all programming and initiatives of *Thrive in Five* with existing neighborhood-based work.

4 Develop citywide campaigns to help the general public understand the importance of early childhood and concrete roles for various people, organizations and sectors to support young children's school readiness.

5 Strengthen linkages with efforts to address broader community needs that impact the stability of families: transportation, housing, safety, adult education, employment, substance abuse and economic security.

Strategies:

1. Choose and implement with Boston Public Schools (BPS) kindergarten classrooms a comprehensive, age-appropriate assessment of children's readiness upon school entry. Align the chosen assessment with early education and care assessments, and with other current and new BPS K-12 assessments, ensuring all BPS assessments provide information to teachers, to parents, to the school system and city as a whole. Annually aggregate and report school readiness results.

2. Create city-wide understanding of Boston's School Readiness Definition and *Thrive in Five's* goals and strategies among parents, early education and care providers and others working with young children and families.

3. Regularly measure, track and report on Boston's broader School Readiness Progress Indicators to understand the impact of *Thrive in Five*. (These are listed on the following page.)

4. In years 2, 4, 7 and 10 of the plan, hold an early childhood summit to ensure accountability and report on *Thrive in Five's* progress.

Children Ready for Sustained School Success

Goal: *Thrive in Five* will track and report on Boston's success in ensuring universal school readiness.

Boston's School Readiness Progress Indicators

In addition to benchmarks and performance measures to ensure accountability for each component of *Thrive in Five*, these are a sampling of broader progress indicators that will be tracked over time, demonstrating overall progress and providing a picture of the state of school readiness in Boston.

Ready Families

Adults Reading to Young Children
% of parents who report that they or someone else reads to their 0 to 5 year old child at least once a day

Well Child Visits
% of children ages 0 to 5 who have had all of their recommended well-child visits and are fully immunized by Kindergarten entry

On-Time Kindergarten Registration
% of families who register their child for Kindergarten by the end of first round registration

Access to Information
% of parents who report accessing information and resources they need to support their child's development

Social Connections
% of Boston residents who say that they could rely on a nearby neighbor for help

+ Ready Educators

High Quality Early Care and Education
a. % of nationally accredited programs/providers
b. % of programs meeting the Good benchmark (5 or above) on the Boston Quality Inventories

Qualified Early Educators
a. % of early childhood educators with at least a BA
b. % of BPS kindergarten teachers with early childhood training/experience

Strong Parent Engagement
% of early childhood educators who report that they communicate with parents of children in their classroom/program at least once a week

Stable Relationships
Turnover rate of early childhood educators

Ready Schools
Indicator(s) to be determined

+ Ready Systems

Adequate Prenatal Care
% of mothers with adequate prenatal care

Welcome Newborn Visits
% of families with newborns in Boston who are offered/accept a newborn visit

Preventive Screening
% of children ages 0 to 5 screened for developmental delays, behavior issues, and environmental/family risk factors

Communication/Coordination between Providers
Indicator(s) to be determined

+ Ready City

Library Usage
Circulation rate of picture books in Boston Public Library by branch/neighborhood

Parents Civically Engaged
% of parents of children ages 0 to 5 who are registered to vote/voted in the last election

Safe, Age-Appropriate Playgrounds
% of playgrounds that meet set safety and quality standards

Corporate and Funder Engagement and Investment
Indicator(s) to be determined

Accountability for Results
% of *Thrive in Five* benchmarks met

= Children Ready for Sustained School Success

Ready at School Entry
a. Data from BPS Fall Kindergarten Assessment
b. Data from Longitudinal Studies
- *Thrive in Five*
- *Smart from the Start*

Sustained School Success
a. 3rd and 4th grade English Language Arts and Math MCAS scores
b. Stanford 9 scores in 3rd and 4th grade

Regular School Attendance
Attendance rate for Kindergarten and grades 1-12

"If you want to know the end, look at the beginning."
- African Proverb

Conclusion

"The biggest gap we are facing is the gap between what we know and what we do."
- Dr. Jack P. Shonkoff, Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, guest lecture at the April 2007 APT meeting

This roadmap serves to clarify what we *know* – about the early years and about the needs and strengths of children, families, educators and communities – and what we must *do* to ensure children are ready for school entry and for sustained school success.

Why will this roadmap lead us to the right place? We have come together across sectors and jointly set out a plan of action. We have come to understand the costs – economic and moral – of inaction. Boston has a wealth of assets on which to draw and committed partners who will move forward together, including:

- Parents who want the best for their children;
- Effective community-based organizations that are committed to reaching families most in need of supports;
- Early educators who are prepared to mount a multi-year campaign toward universal accreditation;
- Innovative health care providers and their community partners who are ready to pilot sustainable comprehensive models to support children's healthy development;
- University researchers who are enhancing workforce development and assessing program quality;
- Strong leadership at our school department and in our early education and care community;
- A City government that is aligning across departments to improve support for young children and families;
- A State government that is soon to report on its Readiness effort, which should align state agency efforts and articulate a method for sustained early childhood investment; and
- Private funders who are increasingly interested in prevention and early childhood.

We aim to achieve more than just successful execution of a strategic plan. We will build a long-term movement on behalf of children that benefits the entire city. Let us be clear and focused in our specific objectives, yet let us also envision for all children what they can see from Boston's harbor: unlimited horizons.

We have come to understand the costs – economic and moral – of inaction.

Boston's School Readiness Action Planning Team Members by sector

Co-Chairs: Jackie Jenkins-Scott, Wheelock College President, and Sandra Fenwick, Children's Hospital Boston Chief Operating Officer

	Early Education and Care (family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, school-based early education, and State agencies)	**Early Childhood Advocacy**	**Research and Higher Education**	**K-12 Education**	**Health and Mental Health**
TOTAL #	**10**	**4**	**2**	**4**	**6**
Criteria for APT membership: *In a position to* ***implement*** *the developed plan* *and* *will contribute significantly as* ***thinker*** *or as well-respected* ***leader*** *in his/her field of expertise or community* . . . . . . *Representative of the diversity of Boston's children and families.* *Significant representation from Boston residents & people considered new/ emerging leaders.*	**Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.** ABCD Head Start and Children's Services **Doug Baird, BS** and **Wayne Ysaguirre, MPM** Associated Early Care and Education **Mary Dooley** Boston Community Partnerships Council **Jason Sachs, PhD** Boston Public Schools **Mary Grace Casey** Shattuck Child Care Center **Gail DeRiggi** MA Department of Early Education and Care **Min-Hua Chen, EdD** MA Department of Education **Lourdes Sariol** Child Care Project/ Associated Early Care and Education **Mary Kinsella, BS** Colonel Daniel Marr Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester	**Margaret Blood** Strategies for Children/Early Education for All **Sandra Fenwick** Children's Hospital Boston **Mary Reed, MEd** Bessie Tartt Wilson Children's Foundation **Pat Xavier, MA** Boston Child Care Alliance	**Jackie Jenkins-Scott** Wheelock College **Hiro Yoshikawa, PhD** Harvard Graduate School of Education	**Valerie Gumes** Haynes Early Education Center **Mayra Cuevas, MEd** Boston Public Schools **Marchelle Raynor, MSW, LCSW** Boston School Committee/ Gertrude Townsend Head Start **Carolyn Riley,MEd** Boston Public Schools	**Enrico Mezzacappa, MD** Children's Hospital Boston **Roderick King, MD** Harvard Medical School/ Massachusetts General Hospital Disparities Solutions Center **Margot Kaplan-Sanoff, EdD** Boston University School of Medicine **Beth Burlingame, LICSW** Bayview Associates/ MA Association of Family Centered Service Providers **Alexy Boudreau, MD** Massachusetts General Hospital **Michelle Bordeu, MPH** and **Patricia Whitworth, RN, BS** Boston Public Health Commission

Community-based, Immigrant and Multi-Service Organizations	Parenting Education, Family Support, Family Literacy, and Early Intervention	Basic Needs and Human Services (food, housing, safety)	Parent Advocacy and Parent/Family Engagement	Faith, Arts, Culture and Recreation	Foundation and Private Sector
8	6	6	5	5	9
Rev. Cheng Imm Tan Mayor's Office of New Bostonians **Yvette Rodriguez, BA** Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción **Nicole St. Victor, MA** Yawkey Center/ Haitian Multi Service Center **Wendy Luk, MEd** Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center **Randal Rucker, MCP** Family Service of Greater Boston **Denise Gonsalves** Cape Verdean Community UNIDO **Pam Ogletree, MBA** Children's Services of Roxbury, Inc. **Farrell Gonsalves, MSW, LICSW** Greater Boston Catholic Charities	**Crista Martinez, MSW, MBA** Families First Parenting Programs **Matt LiPuma, LICSW** Family Nurturing Center of MA **Erin Cox Weinberg, BA** Jumpstart for Young Children **Sharon Goldstein, LICSW, MA** The Home for Little Wanderers **John Lippitt, PhD** MA Department of Public Health **Laurel Burnham Deacon, MA** MA Children's Trust Fund	**Deborah Collins-Gousby** Casa Myrna Vasquez **Doris Brown, MEd** Crittenton Women's Union **Christine Araujo** and **Janet Fender, MS** MA Department of Transitional Assistance **Barbara Curley, MSW, LICSW** MA Department of Social Services **Sandra Henriquez, BA** Boston Housing Authority **Brad Kramer** Horizons for Homeless Children	**Caprice Taylor Mendez, MEd** Boston Parent Organizing Network **Deborah Gray, MSHS** Boston Public Schools **Charlotte Spinkston, MEd** Urban PRIDE **Parents APT Representatives:** **Gloria Weekes, BA** Parent **Andrea Lesser-Gonzalez, MEd** Parent/Panda's Playcare Family Childcare	**Nia Alimayu, BS** The Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston **Wendy Zinn** YMCA of Greater Boston **Rubi Simon, MLIS** Boston Public Library **Jeri Robinson, MS** Boston Children's Museum **Jóse Massó, BA** WBUR 90.0 FM	**Peg Sprague, MS** United Way of MA Bay and Merrimack Valley **Nicholas Donohue, MEd** and **Lynn D'Ambrose, MPS, MEd** Nellie Mae Education Foundation **Carol Fulp** John Hancock **Nishith Acharya** The Deshpande Foundation **Richard Ward** and **Elizabeth Pauley, MEd** The Boston Foundation **Charles Desmond, PhD** Trefler Foundation **Kimberly Haskins** Barr Foundation

Parents APT

Tieteasha Adderley
Jamaica Plain

Dynell Andrews-Blake
Dorchester

Ivette Arias
Mattapan

Crystal Beck
South End

Paulo De Barros
Dorchester

Arnita DeJesus
Dorchester

Loyna DeJesus
Roxbury

Christy dela Paz
Brighton

Heather Duverna
Dorchester

George Ejim
South End

Heidi Fritz
South Boston

Michael Harrington
Dorchester

Tra'neal Holloman
Roxbury

Kacy Hughes
Jamaica Plain

Janet Iraola
South Boston

Krista Kett
Brighton

Andrea Lesser-Gonzalez*
Roslindale

Alicia Lopes
Mission Hill

Mary McFadden
Dorchester

Colleen McGuire
Allston

Heather Mook
Roslindale

Yajaira Moore
Allston

Ming Nagasawa
Dorchester

Kelly Pellagrini
Charlestown

Gina Prantil
Fenway

Clare Reilly
Jamaica Plain

Odaliza Rivera
South Boston

Kristin Shapiro
Jamaica Plain

Kalda Smith
Dorchester

Melinda Stewart
Roxbury

Ann Walsh
Dorchester

Zina Ward
West Roxbury

Gloria Weekes*
Hyde Park

Julie Ann Williams
East Boston

*Served as Parents APT Representatives on the APT.

Staff

Steve Greeley
APT Facilitator/ Strategic Planner
President
DCA, Inc.

Laurie Sherman, MMHS, Project Director
Mayoral Advisor for Education, Health, and Human Services
Office of Mayor Thomas M. Menino

Cassandra Baxter
Policy Specialist, Aide to Jackie Jenkins-Scott
Wheelock College

Katie Britton, MSW
Senior Assistant for 0 to 5 Strategic Planning
Office of Mayor Thomas M. Menino

Katey Connaghan, PhD
Senior Research Associate
Boston EQUIP at Associated Early Care and Education

Christine Robinson
DCA Consultant
Stillwaters Consultation

Denise Snyder
Director
Countdown to Kindergarten

Mary Waldron
Project Assistant
DCA, Inc.

Kate Weldon LeBlanc, MSPA
City and Community Relations Manager Aide to Sandra Fenwick
Children's Hospital Boston

John Williams, MPA
Lead Facilitator
DCA, Inc.

Laura Yenchman
Project Assistant
DCA, Inc.

Corey Zimmerman
Research and Policy Director
Boston EQUIP at Associated Early Care and Education

Next Steps

As noted earlier, some of the APT's strategies involve strengthening and expanding existing work, some ensure better coordination of existing work, and some represent new initiatives. *Thrive in Five* will ensure far more effective use of Boston's existing resources, but will also require new investment in order to succeed.

Included in the Ready City strategies is a summary of the *Thrive in Five* governance and leadership structure moving forward, which includes an implementation partnership for each component. The Responsible Entities listed in the chart below refers to those partnerships, each of which will have a convener. Already organizations are stepping forward to offer to lead and/or be part of those partnerships. The APT developed criteria for each of these important roles, which will be filled by mid-2008.

Ready Families

Goal: Parents will be able to obtain the accurate, culturally-appropriate information they seek on child development, parenting, and school readiness, as well as community resources that help to strengthen families.

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Pilot Community School Readiness Wiring, a new process that integrates into parents' daily lives key information on how to support children's healthy development and school readiness.	Pilot and evaluate Community School Readiness Wiring in three neighborhoods.	Ready Families Partnership	2008 – 2010	$
	Evaluate and expand Community School Readiness Wiring to all neighborhoods throughout Boston, integrating with other neighborhood-based initiatives.	Ready Families Partnership	2011 – 2018	$$
Coordinate and integrate existing and planned public education and engagement campaigns about early childhood development, school readiness, and parenting.	Regularly convene organizations leading early childhood public engagement and information campaigns.	Countdown to Kindergarten	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Finish development of and implement Countdown to Kindergarten's "milestones" and "You Are Your Child's First Teacher" campaigns.	Countdown to Kindergarten	2008 – 2012	$
	Distribute information from ReadBoston's Early Words campaign to support early childhood vocabulary development.	ReadBoston	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None

Key to Anticipated Annual Cost of Strategies: Modest/None = $0 - 50,000; $ = $50,000 - 250,000; $$ = $250,000 - 500,000; $$$ = $500,000 - 1,000,000; $$$$ = Over $1,000,000; TBD = to be determined

Ready Families Continued

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
	Expand Countdown to Kindergarten's Play to Learn groups in Boston Public Schools elementary schools.	Countdown to Kindergarten	2008 – 2012	$ - $$
	Develop new campaigns and tools as needed, including a parent peer-to-peer video.	Ready Families Partnership	2010 – 2012	$
Select and promote an on-line screening information tool that providers can use to guide families and that families can use themselves to obtain health care, housing, food security, income security, and other needed services.	Select and pilot an online screening and information tool.	Ready Families and Systems Partnerships	2008 – 2009	$
	Evaluate and expand access to the online screening and information tool.	Ready Families and Systems Partnerships	2010 – 2012	$
	Make online screening and information tool available citywide.	Ready Families and Systems Partnerships	2013 – 2018	$$
Improve access to Boston's cultural organizations and other community resources.	Convene local cultural institutions and develop strategies to better disseminate information about programs and services to families with young children.	Ready Families Partnership	2008 – 2009	Modest/ None
	Offer technical assistance to help cultural organizations develop programming for young children and families.	Ready Families Partnership	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None
	Develop partnerships between cultural institutions and neighborhood-based organizations to bring activities out to Boston communities.	Ready Families Partnership	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None
	Develop and implement a cultural access card that allows reduced price entry for Boston families at cultural institutions.	Ready Families Partnership	2010 – 2018	$

Ready Educators

Goal: Boston will become the city with the highest quality early education and care system for all young children – infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners – in all settings: family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/ Early Head Start, and school-based early education.

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Across all early education and care settings, pursue universal accreditation (granted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association for Family Child Care, or Child Development Associate [CDA] credentialing).	Provide information about accreditation/CDA attainment to early education and care providers.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	$
	Convene Boston's accreditation and CDA facilitation organizations to better coordinate their work.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Match Boston's accreditation and CDA facilitation organizations to early education and care providers.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Secure and maintain accreditation-related financial aid through the public and private sectors.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	$$$$
	Support accreditation throughout Boston Public Schools elementary schools.	Boston Public Schools	2008 – 2018	$$

Key to Anticipated Annual Cost of Strategies: Modest/None = $0 - 50,000; $ = $50,000 - 250,000; $$ = $250,000 - 500,000; $$$ = $500,000 - 1,000,000; $$$$ = Over $1,000,000; TBD = to be determined

Ready Educators Continued

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
	Annually recognize and reward providers, programs and schools that have achieved accreditation or CDA.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
Create a collaboration across the four types of early education and care settings to promote joint planning, foster stability of high-quality programs, and promote alignment in curriculum, standards and assessment.	Create a Ready Educators subcommittee for citywide planning to support stability, improve alignment, and link planning with State agencies.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
Enhance professional development for early educators.	Coordinate support for professional development with accreditation technical assistance.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	$
	Provide training for Boston Public Schools early childhood teachers and para-professionals in early childhood education best practices, curricula and assessment.	Boston Public Schools	2008 – 2018	$
	Strengthen partnerships with local adult basic education and GED programs to support the learning needs of early childhood educators.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Develop with the State a comprehensive professional development plan that offers a variety of pathways to strengthen educational attainment for all early childhood educators.	Ready Educators Partnership	2010 – 2012	Modest/ None
	Advocate with the State for significant increases in the Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators Scholarship Program.	Ready Educators Partnership, *Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Determine and obtain sustainable public and private sector funding sources to support professional and career development.	Ready Educators Partnership, *Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	TBD
Improve early education and care facilities to ensure safe, stimulating learning environments for all children.	Oversee a capital inventory of facilities in Boston's early education and care field, as well as the Boston Parks Department, Boston Public Library, and Boston Public Schools.	Ready Educators Partnership, City of Boston	2008 – 2009	$
	Develop, in partnership with the State, standards for early childhood indoor and outdoor settings.	Ready Educators Partnership, City of Boston	2008 – 2009	Modest/ None
	Identify and advocate for public and private sector funding to address the costs of facility improvements.	Ready Educators Partnership, *Thrive in Five* Leadership	2010 – 2018	Modest/ None
Improve compensation to support recruitment and retention of highly-qualified and well prepared early educators.	Develop a viable compensation initiative that can provide near-term benefit to Boston early educators.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2012	TBD
	Develop an equitable pay scale across the field (encompassing infant, toddler, and pre-k providers in all community and school-based settings).	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2012	TBD
	Examine loan forgiveness as an option for early childhood educators who earn degrees and maintain employment with the same provider for a period of time.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None

Ready Educators Continued

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Improve access to early education and care for all children and families by decreasing financial barriers and ensuring adequate supply of services to meet demand at the infant, toddler, pre-school and kindergarten stages.	Advocate for changes to State funding – reimbursement and vouchers – for early education and care.	Ready Educators Partnership, *Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None
	Assess and adjust supply and demand for various types of early education and care.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2012	Modest/ None
	Explore public and private sector funding sources to ensure universal access to high-quality early education and care for all Boston children birth to five.	Ready Educators Partnership, *Thrive in Five* Leadership	2013 – 2018	Modest/ None
Further analyze existing models that provide high quality early education to children while integrating health, social services and high-level family engagement.	Explore opportunities to implement comprehensive models throughout Boston's early education and care system to improve services and incorporate best practices.	Ready Educators Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None

Ready Systems

Goal: Health care, early intervention and other systems that serve young children will succeed in earlier detection and more effective responses to barriers to child development and school readiness, including earlier detection of family and environmental conditions that can create "toxic stress" in young children.

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Conduct pilots in pediatric settings to: - expand and coordinate current efforts to achieve universal "welcome newborn" visits; - conduct universal screening for physical, behavioral, developmental, and environmental and family risk factors; - provide parents with information about child development and parenting; - offer coordination services to ensure that children and families access and benefit from services.	Pilot and evaluate models to implement welcome newborn visits, universal screening, parent information, and coordination services in a minimum of two community health centers in Boston. Prioritize methods that incorporate infant and early childhood specialists into pediatric settings, including para-professionals to support pediatric providers and engage and educate parents.	Ready Systems Partnership	2008 – 2010	$$
	Evaluate and expand piloted models as appropriate throughout Boston.	Ready Systems Partnership	2011 – 2018	TBD
Enhance the various systems of early intervention to expand and align eligibility for services.	Convene systems of early intervention in Boston to establish an ongoing forum to address transition and alignment issues and promote increased coordination and collaboration.	Ready Systems Partnership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Select an Early Intervention (EI) program and preschool special education program(s) to pilot expanded eligibility requirements and increased staff training on infant and early childhood social, emotional and behavioral issues.	Ready Systems Partnership	2008 – 2009	$$
	Evaluate pilot results and provide increased eligibility to EI and preschool special education throughout Boston.	Ready Systems Partnership	2010 – 2018	TBD
	Offer training, support and consultation on infant and early childhood social, emotional, and behavioral issues to early education and care providers.	Ready Systems Partnership	2008 – 2018	$

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Ready City

Goal: The many sectors in Boston will work together to ensure children's school readiness becomes and remains a top priority.

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Track and analyze public and private funding streams for early childhood and promote comprehensive evaluation results among public and private funders.	Identify, analyze, and develop recommendations to better align and coordinate public and private funding streams to support *Thrive in Five* strategies.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership, DART	2008 – 2009	$
	Coordinate evaluation throughout *Thrive in Five's* components and report results to increase accountability and support.	DART	2008 – 2018	$
Create a public-private governance and operational structure to oversee the success of *Thrive in Five* and help fuel a broader movement to support Boston's youngest children.	Establish a strong private-public sector managing partnership, known as *Thrive in Five*, between the Mayor's Office and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, staffed by an Executive Director and 1 to 2 additional staff.	United Way of MA Bay and Merrimack Valley, City of Boston	2008 – 2009	$
	Recruit a cross-sector Leadership Team to serve as a governing board for *Thrive in Five*, providing general oversight and leadership on resource development and policy and advocacy.	United Way of MA Bay and Merrimack Valley, City of Boston	2008 – 2009	Modest/ None
	Select lead organization for each of the plan's components to convene (and staff) a diverse set of "implementation partners" who will refine and implement each strategy.	United Way of MA Bay and Merrimack Valley, City of Boston	2008 – 2009	Modest/ None
	Support the Data and Research Team, co-managed by the Mayor's Office and Boston EQUIP, to collect and report data, oversee evaluation and original research, and report results.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	$
	Implement a Parent Advisory Group as part of the *Thrive in Five* leadership to facilitate ongoing parent involvement.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
Align and coordinate new and existing work of City departments to support *Thrive in Five*.	Regularly convene City departments and services to align and coordinate their existing work with *Thrive in Five*.	City of Boston	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Provide technical assistance and support to City departments to align existing work and develop new activities as needed to further the goals of *Thrive in Five*.	City of Boston	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Coordinate City strategies and initiatives with projects implemented by *Thrive in Five* whenever possible.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership, City of Boston	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
	Connect with State and private sector initiatives to align and support the work of *Thrive in Five*.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None
Develop citywide campaigns to help the general public understand the importance of and take part in supporting young children's school readiness.	Develop a campaign that highlights the roles all members of the community can play in promoting children's school readiness (possibly integrated into the Ready Families work).	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2009	$

Ready City Continued

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
	Develop and implement a program that encourages employers and major Boston institutions to publicly support school readiness through specific actions that benefit employees.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2010 – 2018	TBD
Strengthen linkages with initiatives to address broader community needs that impact the stability of families.	Partner with initiatives that address transportation, housing, safety, adult education, employment, substance abuse and economic security.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2008 – 2018	Modest/ None

Children Ready for Sustained School Success

Goal: *Thrive in Five* will track and report on Boston's success in ensuring universal school readiness.

Strategy	Next Steps	Responsible Entity	Time Frame	Anticipated Level of Investment
Choose and implement within BPS kindergarten classrooms a comprehensive, age-appropriate assessment. Align the chosen assessment with other current and new K-12 assessments and annually aggregate and report school readiness results.	Train all kindergarten teachers to use the assessment chosen to inform instruction and provide citywide data about children's readiness upon school entry.	Boston Public Schools	2008 – 2018	$$
	Conduct assessments multiple times during each child's kindergarten year in order to gain a clear, ongoing understanding of each child's progress and respond accordingly.	Boston Public Schools	2008 – 2018	$
	Analyze and report aggregate data from the assessment chosen.	DART, Boston Public Schools	2010 – 2018	$
Create city-wide understanding of Boston's School Readiness Definition and *Thrive in Five's* goals and strategies.	Bring early education and care providers and administrators from all settings together for joint briefings on the school readiness definition and sharing of best practices.	Ready Educators Partnership, Boston Public Schools	2008 – 2009	$
	Incorporate Boston's School Readiness Definition and related indicators into information for parents and training and professional development for professionals.	Ready Families, Educators, and Systems Partnerships	2008 – 2009	$
Regularly measure, track and report on Boston's broader School Readiness Progress Indicators to understand the impact of *Thrive in Five*.	Further refine existing sources and develop new tools and sources to gather information for Boston's School Readiness Progress Indicators and/or context data.	DART	2008 – 2012	$
	Produce an annual report to measure and track Boston's School Readiness Progress Indicators, context data, and the activities undertaken by *Thrive in Five*.	DART	2008 – 2018	$
Hold an early childhood summit to ensure accountability and report on the plan's progress as a whole.	Hold a *Thrive in Five* School Readiness Summit in 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2018.	*Thrive in Five* Leadership	2010 – 2018	$

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Acknowledgments from the APT Co-Chairs

We offer special thanks to:

Mayor Thomas M. Menino and **United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley,** now under the leadership of Michael Durkin, for jointly undertaking this ambitious and crucial planning process.

The Co-Chairs of each APT workgroup. Thank you for your deep commitment to an inclusive and effective plan:

- Ready Families – **Charlotte Spinkston** of Urban PRIDE and **Wendy Zinn** of YMCA of Greater Boston
- Ready Educators – **Marchelle Raynor** of the Boston School Committee and Head Start and **Pat Xavier** of the Boston Child Care Alliance
- Ready Systems – **Dr. Alexy Arauz Boudreau** of Massachusetts General Hospital and **John Lippitt** of the Mass. Department of Public Health
- Ready City – **Charles Desmond** of the Trefler Foundation and **Peg Sprague** of United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley

The **Boston Children's Museum, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, South End Head Start, the central YMCA, and Catholic Charities,** each of which provided extensive use of space for planning and community meetings; and **John Hancock,** which provided funding to cover meeting costs.

Corey Zimmerman and **Katey Connaghan** from Boston EQUIP for co-managing the data and research team (DART) that provided essential tools for all the planning groups.

Katie Britton from the Mayor's Office for co-managing the DART and providing vital support and top-notch input on every segment of this planning process.

Children's Hospital Boston for "loaning" the talented **Kate Weldon LeBlanc** for seven months in 2006 to conduct research on Boston's families and social services that provided a groundwork for this planning process.

Jack Shonkoff of the Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University, and **Judith Kurland** and **Barbara Berke** of the Mayor's Office. We could not have asked for more insightful and provocative strategic thinkers.

Doug Baird, formerly of Associated Early Care and Education, and **Pat Xavier** of the Boston Child Care Alliance, who launched conversations with their early care and education peers and with the foundation that eventually subsidized the costs of this extensive planning. We thank you for your vision and your lifelong commitment to children and families.

Kim Haskins and the **Barr Foundation** for thoughtful input every step of the way.

Peg Sprague, the lead staff person on the APT of United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, for your unique ability to bring people together around complex, common goals.

Steve Greeley, President of DCA Boston, who has, with great intelligence and humor, led the team that facilitated the APT and Parents APT and created this roadmap. We thank Steve and his colleagues from DCA: **John Williams, Christine Robinson, Mary Waldron** and **Laura Yenchman.**

Laurie Sherman, Mayor Menino's policy advisor for education, health and human services, and the project director for this planning process. Thank you, Laurie, for your wisdom, skill and passion – and for being the consummate taskmaster!

Plan writers: Steve Greeley, Katie Britton, Laurie Sherman

THRIVE IN 5

Boston's promise to its children

For a copy of the complete Boston School Readiness Roadmap visit:

www.thrivein5boston.org

The full plan features further data on Boston's children, families and services; the research and reasoning behind each goal and strategy; greater detail on implementation steps for each component of the plan; a visual roadmap of the plan's timeline; a listing of the members on each subcommittee; and a summary of existing school readiness initiatives.

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston

United Way
of Massachusetts Bay
and Merrimack Valley

Designed by ARGUS, Boston

Published March 2008