



# Building a Foundation for Success: Boston's Progress Toward High- Quality Universal Pre-K



# Understanding Boston's Pre-K Context

## Boston's UPK Strategy

## Testing Our Ability to Connect Community Providers + Schools

## Mayor Walsh's Charge

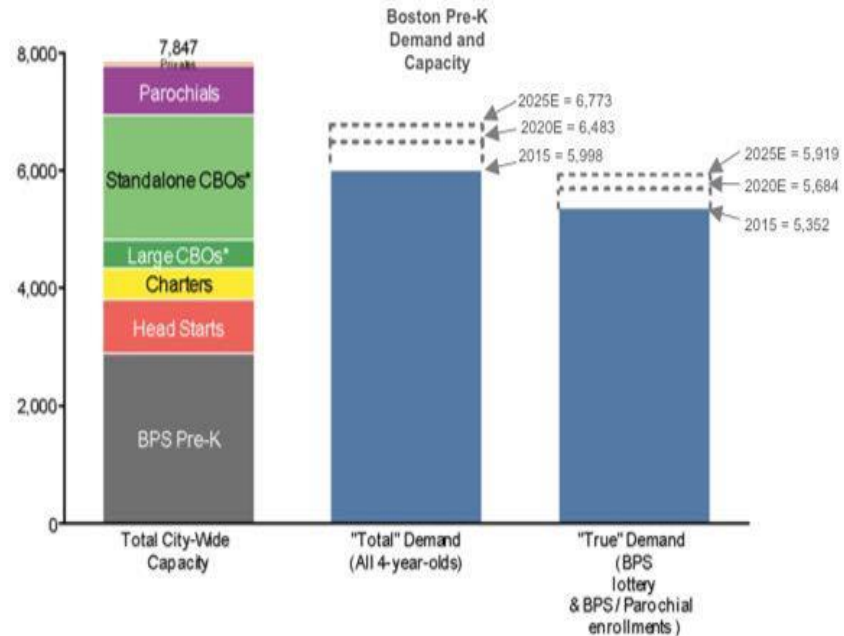
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Create a city-wide, mixed delivery system with school-based programs and community-based centers that guarantees every four-year-old in Boston a high-quality Pre-K experience in a broad range of the settings that their families desire and that meet their children's developmental needs.

# Children + Early Learning in Boston

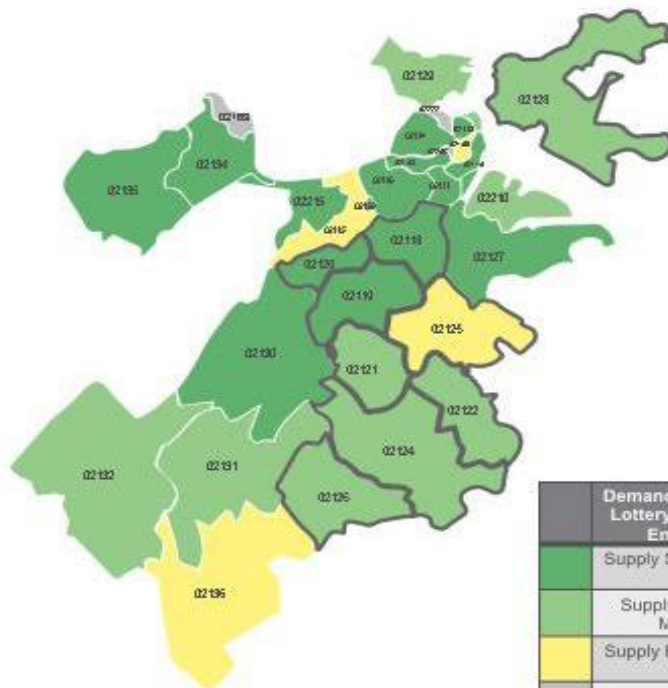
- **Birth to 5 child population:**  
38,089
- **Number of four-year olds:**  
Approx. 6,000
- **Four-year olds enrolled in formal Pre-K:**  
Approx. 90%
- **Pre-K enrollment by provider-type:**  
55% Boston Public Schools  
45% Community-Based Settings





# UPK: Boston Is Not Solving for Access...

Neighborhood Alignment	Zip	Demand (BPS & Parochial Data)	Capacity	% of Demand Met
ALLSTON	02134	75	154	205%
ALLSTON	02163	-	16	No Demand
BRIGHTON	02135	234	379	162%
BOSTON	02116	47	153	326%
BOSTON	02215	19	123	647%
BOSTON	02108	12	101	842%
BOSTON	02111	49	140	286%
BOSTON	02113	43	137	319%
BOSTON	02114	17	63	371%
BOSTON	02203	-	14	No Demand
BOSTON	02201	-	11	No Demand
BOSTON	02110	5	7	140%
BOSTON	02222	-	9	No Demand
BOSTON	02199	3	9	300%
BOSTON	02115	32	5	16%
BOSTON	02109	10	-	0%
CHARLESTOWN	02129	165	239	144%
DORCHESTER	02124	570	647	113%
DORCHESTER	02121	456	614	135%
DORCHESTER	02125	364	350	96%
DORCHESTER	02122	298	335	112%
EAST BOSTON	02128	578	642	111%
HYDE PARK	02136	357	336	94%
JAMAICA PLAIN	02130	255	562	220%
MATTAPAN	02126	296	438	148%
ROSLINDALE	02131	310	364	117%
ROXBURY	02119	354	610	172%
ROXBURY	02118	171	328	192%
ROXBURY	02120	107	245	228%
SOUTH BOSTON	02127	171	295	172%
SOUTH BOSTON	02210	4	26	650%
WEST ROXBURY	02132	347	495	147%
Overall	-	5352	7847	147%



## UPK: ... *Boston Is Solving for Quality!*

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- **Highly-trained and well-compensated teachers** who hold early childhood degrees.
- Use of **evidence-based curriculum** with a focus on literacy and math as well as supports for students with additional needs (English Language, Special Education, etc)
- **Environments that are safe and age-appropriate** to promote learning
- Maximum **teacher-child ratios** of 2:22 for BPS and 2:20 for community-based centers
- **Accreditation** by National Association for the Education of Young Children and/or assessment as Level 3 or higher in MA's Quality Rating Improvement System
- Ongoing **coaching and professional development** for teaching staff
- Strong communication and support to **engage families**
- Ongoing **assessment and evaluation** of the program to promote continuous improvement

# UPK: Quality in Boston Varies by Neighborhood

Relative Size of Quality Seat Gap	
	<b>Large Gap</b> (Current quality seats <50% of demand)
	<b>Medium Gap</b> (Current quality seats 50% - 75% of demand)
	<b>Small Gap</b> (Current quality seats 75% - 100% of demand)
	<b>No Gap</b> (Current surplus of quality seats)

Neighborhood	Demand	Quality Seat Shortage	Quality Seats as % of Demand
Allston	75	(19)	125%
Brighton	235	21	91%
D.T. Boston	237	(93)	139%
Charlestown	165	12	93%
<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>1688</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>East Boston</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>70%</b>
Hyde Park	357	235	34%
Jamaica Plain	255	(66)	126%
Mattapan	296	18	94%
Roslindale	311	121	61%
<b>Roxbury</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>72%</b>
South Boston	175	28	84%
West Roxbury	347	179	48%
<b>Net Total*</b>	<b>5352</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Absolute Total*</b>	<b>5352</b>	<b>1528</b>	<b>71%</b>

( ) implies a surplus

The highest concentration of young children are in Dorchester, Roxbury, and East Boston (bold outline)



## UPK: *Primary Program + System Elements*

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- **Free** school day, school year programming
- **Delivery through a mix of providers**, including school-based programs and community-based centers, to meet the range of family needs, including home language, special needs, feeder systems (or more succinctly, access to quality elementary seats)
- **Quality elevated across all providers** so that there is no “wrong door” for families
- **Optimizing existing resources and finding new sources**, to pay for high-quality programming
- **Family engagement** to understand their needs and promote program quality and child learning



## UPK: Next Steps

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- Establish a UPK [governance and staffing model](#)
- Advance [Professional Development](#) for early childhood teachers
- Increase access by community-based early childhood centers at a program level to [BPS curriculum and instructional practice](#)
- Build [system supports](#) to ensure UPK works for all Boston's children and families
- Work with MA Department of Early Care and Education (EEC), BPS and community partners to address [out of school time and summer programming needs](#) for Pre-K children

## Testing Our Ability to Connecting Community Providers + Schools

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- The UPK Connector System Pilot is a partnership between two K1 Preschool Expansion Grant programs currently being supported by BPS and two K2 BPS schools.
- The pilot will transition 40 K1 children currently being served in the two community based PEG classrooms into the two K2 pilot school for the fall 2018.
- Students qualify for this connector by: being enrolled in the CBO PEG K1 classrooms, demonstrating Boston residency at time of BPS enrollment, age 4 before 9/1/17, and families fall below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- Data from the UPK Connector System Pilot will be gathered and the findings will be used to build a formal partnership between community based K1 programs and BPS K2.

# Testing Our Ability to Connecting Community Providers + Schools

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## Why connect CBO K1 to BPS K2?

- Students should have smooth transitions from K1 to K2, whether they attend a BPS or Community K1 program
- Offering K1 in a variety of settings ensures that families can choose the options that fit their needs and, regardless of their choice, their student will receive a high-quality educational experience
- By offering optional, guaranteed seats to Community K1 students, families in CBOs can choose to move as a cohort and get engaged early in their students' elementary school
- By offering a guaranteed K2 space, we preserve families' pre-K and K-12 choices while mitigating potential economic impacts on community provider partners.
- To test our ability to connect community providers + schools prior to scale.

## **Connector school proposal was based on a set of guiding principles developed from BPS' core values**

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### **Coherence**

Community K1 seats should be comparable to BPS K1 seats → families should know where they will go for K2 at the start of K1

All K1 students should be set up for a smooth transition into K2

### **Equity**

Participation in Community K1 should enhance academic trajectory

Families gain access to schools according to general BPS criteria

Reaching high need families being currently served under the preschool expansion grant.

### **Innovation**

Connectors should offer the opportunity for innovation, early family engagement in elementary school to improve schools programmatically

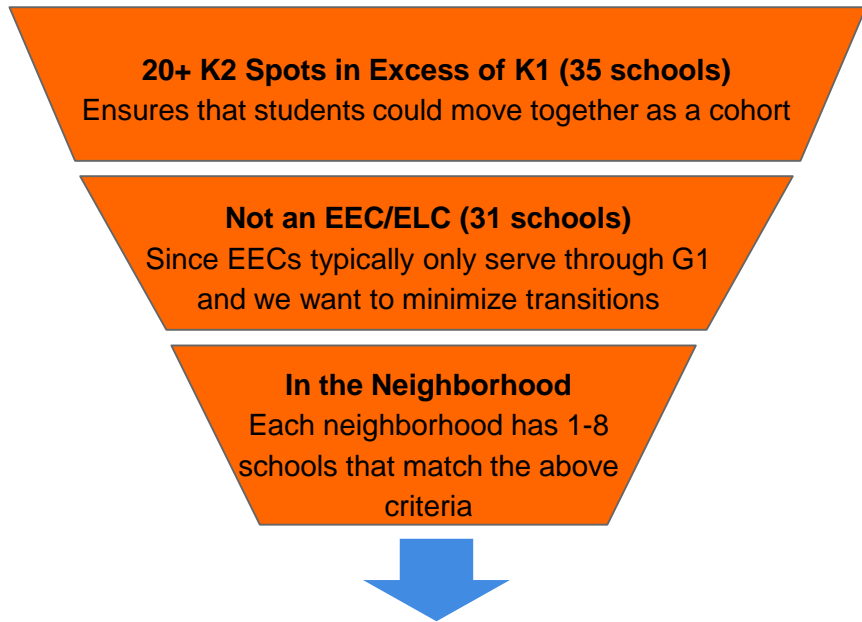
Provides BPS access to families who might not otherwise choose BPS

# Testing Our Ability to Connecting Community Providers + Schools

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Criteria to qualify as a BPS Connector School

## 82 BPS Schools that Serve K2+



**Candidate for BPS Connector School**

### BPS Connector School Characteristics

- K2 Classroom Configuration (dual language, etc.)
- Historical waitlist
- DESE Tier (strong school to att
- MCAS Level
- Programming offered can meet needs of ELLs & SWD
- % of students in poverty
- Race, Ethnicity, Home Language, Gender

### CBO Connector Program Characteristics

- CBO students qualify for school in DiscoverBPS
- Historical selection of BPS schools by CBO students
- ELL status/language program preferences
- Race, Ethnicity, Home Language, Gender
- Feedback from CBO families



# Testing Our Ability to Connecting Community Providers + Schools

## YMCA East Boston

215 Bremen St, East  
Boston, MA 02128

**McKay**  
122 Cottage St.  
East Boston, MA 02128

The McKay is an MCAS Tier 1 school located .5 mile from the Y. For K2, the school has both general ed and Spanish SEI available for the Y students. Other schools considered: Umana; since this is a pilot program, we chose not to start with a dual language program .

Students who need a special ed placement will have a school proposed through the IEP placement process. Students may also need to take language test in March if they are limited English proficiency and need SEI seat.

## Boys & Girls Club Dorchester

1135 Dorchester Ave  
Dorchester 02125

**Everett**  
71 Pleasant St.  
Dorchester, MA 02125

The Everett meets most criteria, but other schools considered: Murphy & UP Holland. B&G students have chosen Murphy in the past, but school has a long wait-list. UP is level 5 & few students live in area.

Each year, not all B&G students will have access to the school as per their address. LT, could have impacts BuildBPS proposal involving Everett. Everett K2 inclusion seats projected for current K1 students.

# Testing Our Ability to Connecting Community Providers + Schools

*Families will have the **option to confirm their guaranteed K2 seat** in their BPS Connector School OR elect to rank from their home-based list. Connector School option will expire after the 1st round of K2 registration (March 23, 2018)*

## Prior to Connector Approval

## K1 School Year

### Apr. -Nov. 2017

- School committee approval
- Notified K2 schools and community based
- Notified UPK steering committee
- First meeting with C2K

### Dec. 2017

- Connect K2 school with PEG community based program
- Notify community based families
- Follow the BPS pre-registration requirements
- Memorandum of Understanding signed

### Jan. - Mar. 23, 2018

- Update School Committee
- Pre registration event for families
- 1/2018 based on appt families register for K2
- Families accept or decline guaranteed K2 spot in BPS Connector School
- Registration end March 23, 2018

### Apr. -Sept 2018

- Follow Countdown to Kindergarten provider kit: transition support and events
- Families attend an event at the K2 school
- gather lessons learned discuss next steps and potential for sustainability