



Dear Educator Provider Support Client,

EEC has recently announced the launch of [Massachusetts StrongStart](#), an integrated system for supporting early educators and programs in providing high quality early education and care for young children. Starting July 2019, EEC will provide workforce development supports through Massachusetts StrongStart. Activities currently supported by the Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grant will continue through June 2019. EEC is committed to minimizing potential gaps in service for the early childhood education and out-of-school time (ECE/OST) workforce while transitioning to the new system.

EEC recently released a new grant opportunity to deliver training and technical assistance, the [StrongStart Training and Technical Assistance Grant](#). The StrongStart Training and Technical Assistance Grant (SSTTA) will provide training and technical assistance to ECE/OST educators through regional Professional Development Centers (PDCs). EEC is in the process of acquiring a SSTA Grantee and identifying the regional PDCs. EEC will announce the new grantee upon award.

#### Transition Activities:

- ***Coaching:*** If your program is currently participating in coaching services through the EPS grant, you may be able to continue coaching services through the SSTTA Grant. The appropriate contact at your program will be provided documentation from the EPS grantee to support the continuation of coaching services. Existing programs interested in continuing coaching services will be prioritized to receive those services through the SSTTA Grant. Access to coaching services is not guaranteed, however. EPS grantees have provided EEC with a list of programs that are currently receiving coaching services, this list will be shared with the new vendor. Programs may also contract with the coach they are currently working with privately, if they so choose.
- ***College Coursework:*** In March 2019, EEC began contracting with all Massachusetts Community Colleges to promote and expand higher education certificate and degree attainment for the ECE/OST workforce. For EEC certification, college certificate, and college credit CDA programs of study, please contact the [Career Pathways Grantee](#) (public community college) in your area. Educators who are participating in college-level certification or certificate programs through the EPS grant that will not be completed by June 30, 2019 will be prioritized in the Career Pathways Grant. Contact information for affected educators has been provided to EEC by the EPS Grantees and will be shared with the appropriate Career Pathways Grantee.

The SSTTA Grant will not provide college-level coursework. If you are currently participating in college-level coursework through the EPS grant or are interested in participating in college-level courses, please contact the [Career Pathways Grantee](#) for your area or apply for the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship.

For support with associate and bachelor degree programs in early childhood education or a related field, educators must apply for the [Early Childhood Educators \(ECE\) Scholarship](#) program. The deadline to apply for the ECE Scholarship is **June 1, 2019 for the 2019 – 2020 academic year.**

- *Training and Technical Assistance*: The SSTA Grant will provide training opportunities for continuing education units (CEUs) and EEC professional development hours. In addition, the Grant will provide technical assistance opportunities, including consultation, coaching, and professional learning communities through regional PDCs. Once a grantee is in place for the SSTA Grant, EEC will notify the ECE/OST workforce and stakeholders through EEC's website and Commissioner Email notifications.

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** will be available on EEC's website and will be updated frequently to include questions submitted. A sample is included below.

1. How will my program access training and technical assistance beginning July 1, 2019?

Answer: Access to EEC funded (face to face) professional development opportunities may be limited during July and August 2019. EEC encourages educators to utilize the StrongStart Online Professional Development System, EEC's Online Learning Management System to access online trainings. In addition, training opportunities will continue to be available through independent professional development providers.

2. How will my program access coaching services beginning July 1, 2019?

Answer: Access to EEC funded technical assistance and coaching services may be limited in July and August 2019 during the transition to the StrongStart Training and Technical Assistance Grant. Programs referred by EEC licensing staff will receive priority for services. Programs currently participating in program-level coaching supports through the EPS grant will also be prioritized to receive services through the PDCs, upon implementation of services. Access to coaching services is not guaranteed. Programs may also contract with the coach they are currently working with privately.

3. What is the coaching referral process beginning July 1, 2019?

Answer: The StrongStart Training and Technical Assistance Grant will include a process for EEC staff to refer programs for services. EEC will work with the selected vendor to develop and implement consistent policies, processes, and procedures for programs to access services through the regional Professional Development Centers (PDCs).

EEC appreciates your support and understanding as we launch Massachusetts StrongStart and redesign the workforce development system to better support the ECE/OST workforce, enhance program quality, and best meet the needs of children and families across the Commonwealth. Programs or educators with questions should contact EEC at the information below:

- Katie DeVita ([Katie.DeVita@mass.gov](mailto:Katie.DeVita@mass.gov) or 617-988-7827)
- Jay Swanson ([John.Swanson2@mass.gov](mailto:John.Swanson2@mass.gov) or 617-988-7803)