

## *National Governors Association Policy Academy*

### *Building a Foundation for Student Success: State Strategies to Improve Learning Outcomes from Early Childhood through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade*

#### **Overview**

The National Governors Association (NGA) is a bipartisan organization through which governors can share best practices, speak with a collective voice with regard to national policy, and develop innovative solutions that improve state government. The NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), a research and development entity that provides direct support to governors, supports the development of solutions to public policy issues.

In April 2013, the NGA Center issued a Request for Proposals for a national policy academy – *Building a Foundation for Student Success: State Strategies to Improve Learning Outcomes from Early Childhood through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade*.

Massachusetts submitted a proposal in May, and in June, the NGA Center announced that Massachusetts and five other states (Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, and Pennsylvania) had been accepted to participate in this academy.

In addition to receiving a grant award of \$25,000, we are receiving technical assistance from the NGA Center to support the development and implementation of new strategies in the early education and K-12 sectors.

#### **Goals**

The goals of this policy academy are as follows:

- Build awareness and commitment across key stakeholders to support a continuum of high-quality early learning opportunities from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; and
- Develop and begin to implement a state-specific action plan to implement aligned birth to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade learning standards by: 1) strengthening the effectiveness of early childhood and early elementary educators; or 2) developing and appropriately using assessments across the birth to grade 3 continuum.

For purposes of this policy academy, Massachusetts is focusing on the development and implementation of a robust birth to grade 3 standards and assessment *system*, and we are accelerating our efforts to enhance our early learning standards and develop new assessments for the early education sector that are aligned with our K-12 assessments.

Massachusetts is a national leader with regard to the development and implementation of rigorous standards and assessments. As a result of participating in this policy academy, we are building upon the implementation of our Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge and K-12 Race to the Top plans, and developing strategies that will enable us to reach our goals of building a healthy foundation for learning, increasing school readiness, increasing levels of reading proficiency by grade 3, and increasing college and career readiness for all children across the Commonwealth.

### **Members of the State Team**

The members of our state team – representing different agencies, organizations, and networks – are as follows.

- Anna Bradfield, Readiness Centers Network (RCN)
- Mary Jane Crotty, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)
- Winnie Hagan, Department of Higher Education
- Sarah Harding, Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)
- Stacey Kaminski, RCN
- Saeyun Lee, Executive Office of Education (EOE)
- Chau Ly, EEC
- Douglas McNally, RCN
- Carol Nolan, EEC
- Amy O’Leary, Strategies for Children
- Bridget Rodríguez, EOE
- Donna Traynham, ESE

### **Presentation on Monday, January 27, 2013**

At the joint meeting of the Board of Early Education and Care and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, members of the state team will provide detailed information about our specific action items and strategies, our efforts to engage multiple stakeholders in discussions about building a birth to grade 3 standards and assessment system, and potential short- and longer-term implications of our work.