



Early Education and Care Small Businesses Innovation Center

Introduction

The Bessie Tartt Wilson Initiative for Children, the University of Massachusetts Boston, and Tech Goes Home, in partnership with the City of Boston, will launch an Early Education and Care Small Business Innovation Center in the Greater Roxbury/Dudley community in October 2015. The Center will work to strengthen the financial viability of local early education and care businesses and provide an opportunity to leverage shared networks and better understand the systemic challenges facing these small businesses. There are over 154 primarily women-run early education and care businesses (early education centers, family/home-based child care programs) located in Greater Roxbury.

The Problem

- Early education and care businesses in the Greater Roxbury community are under extreme financial pressures, threatening their viability
- There is insufficient small business support for early education and care businesses and a need to customize interventions that are inclusive of the unique characteristics of this industry

The Solution

The establishment of a center for training and innovation dedicated to the early education and care business sector, the first of its kind in Massachusetts. The Center will:

1. **Provide customized business support to entrepreneurs** through access to technology and a business curriculum based on the assessed needs of the small business owners including training on topics such as business plans, accounting, budgeting, management practices, leadership, and marketing.
2. **Provide a place for providers to network and co-create innovative shared services solutions** such as shared bulk purchasing, administrative functions, and professional development.
3. **Explore the creation of an early education and care vocational track** at Madison Park High School

Expected Outcomes

- Improve the financial viability of local early education and care businesses (increase enrollment, increase revenue, reduce staff turnover, reduce expenses, and improve financial controls and practices)
- Implementation of best business practices for shared services
- Slow the trend of early education and care programs in the community going out of business