



## WHAT'S IN THE FY 2010 BUDGET FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION?

Early education and child care services are provided in the District through two main sources. The Early Care and Education Administration funds and facilitates early child care and education services for children from birth through 12 years of age, and to age 19 for those with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> These programs are supported with both local and federal funds and primarily support child care subsidies for low- and moderate-income families. ECEA also supports out-of-school time programs. In addition to ECEA, the District began implementing a universal Pre-K effort in FY 2009, with the goal of achieving access to pre-K education for all young children in the District over 5 years.

### Summary of the Mayor's Budget Proposal

The proposed FY 2010 budget for services provided by the Early Care and Education Administration is \$89 million. This includes \$39 million in local funds and \$51 million in federal funds, including the federal child care block grant and federal TANF funds.<sup>2</sup> According to the budget, this includes \$1.3 million in federal stimulus funds for the child care block grant.

The proposed funding level represents a decrease of \$4.5 million or 4.8 percent, from the FY 2009 budget when adjusted for inflation. The FY 2009 child care budget was reduced in the middle of FY 2009. When the proposed funding level for FY 2010 is compared with the original FY 2009 budget, the reduction is nearly \$12 million after adjusting for inflation.

Funding for child care in the District has been falling since FY 2007. The decline totals \$22 million, or 20 percent, after adjusting for inflation.

<sup>1</sup> Until FY 2009, this program was called the Early Childhood Development program and was housed in the Department of Human Services (DHS). In fiscal year 2009, administration for this program, as well as funding, was transferred to the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE).

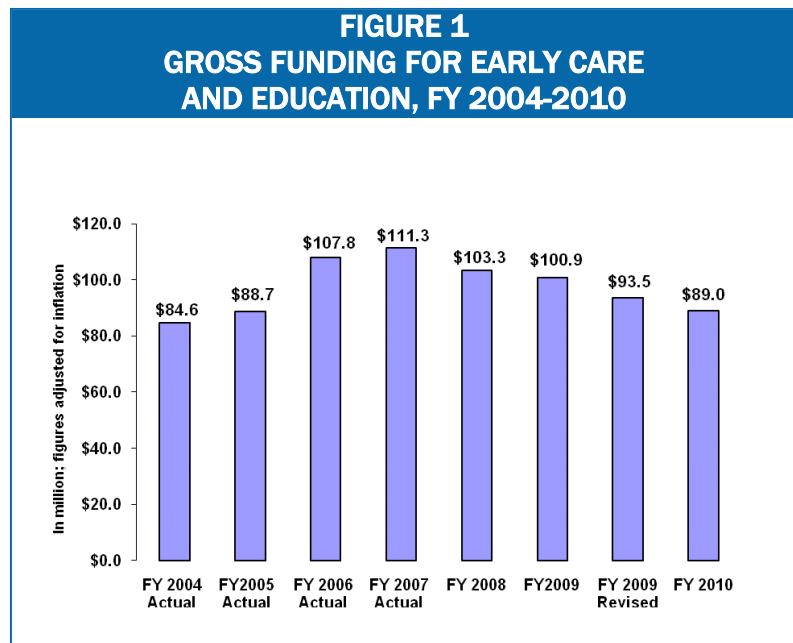
<sup>2</sup> These figures include proposed funding for the "early care and education administration" and the "childcare program development" lines in the OSSE "Teaching and Learning" program area.

### SUMMARY

#### MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET

- The proposed FY 2010 gross budget for the Early Care and Education (including both local and federal funds) is \$89 million a 4.8 percent reduction from the FY 2009 budget, after adjusting for inflation.
- The number of children served by child care programs in 2009 — 21,100 — is 1,300 lower than in FY 2007. The number of children expected to be served in FY 2010 is not available
- Proposed FY 2010 funding for the Pre-K for all initiative is \$5.1 million. The initiative was originally funded at \$9.5 million in FY 2009, but roughly \$3 million was cut mid-year. The proposed FY2010 level will not support a program expansion that had been planned when the program was created.

The impact of these reductions is not entirely clear. According to OSSE, the number of children that will be served in the city's child care programs — which include a child care voucher program, the DC Public School After School for All program, and other smaller programs — will be 21,100 in 2009. This is 1,300, or 6 percent, lower than the 22,400 served in FY 2007. This decline in children served is less than the decline in funding. Figures are not available on the number of children that are expected to be served in FY 2010. In any case, the available data suggest that funding reductions have resulted in a program cuts.



The FY 2010 budget proposes to eliminate OSSE funding of child care programs operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation, a \$5.1 million reduction. As the DPR programs are eliminated, those funds would remain within OSSE's to support its other child care programs. According to the budget, this shift in funds will not result in a net reduction in child care funding. Yet as noted, the proposed child budget for FY 2010 is five percent lower than the revised FY 2009 budget. It thus is not clear what impact this will have on the number of children served in DC's child care programs.

## Pre-K for All Funding

The DC Council passed legislation in 2008 to make preschool programs available to all DC children by 2014. The FY 2009 budget included \$9.5 million in local funding to begin implementing the Pre-K for All initiative. The expansion plan called for an increase of at least 15 percent in the number of children enrolled in a Pre-K program under this initiative in FY 2010.<sup>3</sup> However, the Pre-K for All budget was reduced by about \$3 million in the middle of FY 2009, and the Mayor's proposed budget for FY 2010 includes only \$5.1 million for the initiative in FY 2010. This is unlikely to support any expansion.

**Other Issues to Track:** When child care programs were administered by the Department of Human Services, Early Childhood Development was listed in the budget as a program comprising six activities.<sup>4</sup> Under OSSE, child care is listed as two activities under a larger

<sup>3</sup> Pre-K for All DC, "Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Act of 2008: Overview," May 2008, [http://www.prekforalldc.org/storage/prekforalldc/documents/prek\\_legbrief\\_forweb.pdf](http://www.prekforalldc.org/storage/prekforalldc/documents/prek_legbrief_forweb.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> These activities included Eligibility Re-determination Services, Child Care Services, Child Development Provider Services, Early Intervention Services, Case Management Services, and Quality Assurance.

program — the Teaching and Learning program. This means that detail on spending for each of the six child care activities is no longer available.

## **Performance Measures in the FY 2010 Budget for Early Care and Education**

The budget for each government agency includes a number of performance measures tied to specific agency objectives. The performance measures are intended to provide an indication of how well the agencies are using funds to meet their goals. Unfortunately, the quality of performance measures in the District's uneven. In many cases, performance measures are unclear or cover aspects of an agency's functions that do not seem tied to the agency's core functions.<sup>5</sup>

The following two performance measures in the OSSE budget are listed in the budget as measures tied to special education, but they appear to relate to early care and education.

- One measure is the percentage of pre-K classrooms deemed “exemplary,” with a goal of 80 percent. While this seems to be a useful indicator, the budget does not describe how pre-K classrooms are assessed, what an “exemplary” rating means, or which pre-K classrooms are included in the assessment. Without this information, the indicator is not particularly useful.
- The second measure is the “percentage of providers meeting national accreditation standards,” with a goal of 50 percent. The budget does not explain which providers are included in this figure or why the target accreditation rate is 50 percent.

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<sup>5</sup> The issues related to DC's performance measurement are discussed further in a DCFPI 2009 report, [\*Ten Ways to Improve the Transparency of the DC Budget\*](#).