

**Budget Update, October 17, 2009**  
**Governor Patrick Announces 9c cuts to the FY09 State Budget**

On Wednesday, October 15, 2008, Governor Patrick announced his plan to address the current fiscal crisis facing the Commonwealth. Faced with a budget deficit even worse than the worst projections a few months ago (**over \$1.4 billion**), Patrick initiated a series of spending reductions and other initiatives—including 1000 state job cuts and a \$200 million transfer from the state’s Stabilization Fund—to close the budget gap. While cuts were significant to education and youth serving organizations, clearly the situation could have been worse. Early care advocates, for instance, were expecting more than \$30 million in reduced spending, but according to the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, early care programs were reduced by \$17.1 million. Significant cuts include:

- \$3.5 million reduction in funding for low income child care payments to eligible early education and care providers
- \$3.5 million reduction in funding for early education and care services for children in the Department of Social Services system.
- \$1.6 reduction in funding for professional development grants.
- \$3 million reduction to the early education and care rate reserve for providers.

Reductions in allocations for elementary and secondary education total more than \$30 million dollars and include cuts to special education (\$13.5 million), targeted interventions for under performing schools, full day kindergartens (\$3 million), and programs to reduce class sizes in K-3 grade. The **Expanded Learning Time Initiative**, initially funded at \$17.5 million was reduced by only \$86,250. Cuts totaling \$213,600 were made to the **After School and Out-of-School Time Quality Grants**. To see the cut list, [click here](#)). The Department of Public Health Youth Violence Prevention Program was not reduced as part of the Governor’s 9c cuts.

However, because the 9c cuts targeted many earmarks there has been a significant reduction in allocations for many youth programs statewide. Under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, for instance, \$2.9 million in matching grants for youth violence prevention services through the YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs and other non-profit organizations were cut. Reductions in youth work programs and school-to-career programs also eliminated much needed funding for youth serving organizations. In a recent article in the *Jamaica Plain Gazette*, Jesus Gerena of the Hyde Square Task Force noted, “We are on the front lines and often the first effected by the economic problems of the nation.” The Task Force is experiencing a 10 percent cut in public funding it receives for afterschool programs and school-to-career programs. More significantly, the Latino After School Initiative (LASI) must adjust to a 50 percent cut in public funding, much of it used for afterschool programs, including one the Hyde Square Task Force operates at the Kennedy Elementary School in JP.

Time will tell how these cuts will impact services to children and youth over the coming year. Clearly, the situation will not be positive. Approximately 1/3 of the proposed cuts will require some form of legislative action. The Governor is also scaling back plans for

the “Readiness Project” set to launch in January. Beyond cuts to current programs, we anticipate that the economic situation will be the dominant force shaping the development of the FY10 budget. As we begin that process, we will have to think long and hard about how best to mobilize our advocacy efforts over the next 10 months. As Representative Marie St. Fleur said at our recent *All Means All* Conference, we will need to stop thinking of expanding new programs and focus more on saving the programs we currently run.