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**PACE Head Start in New Bedford Receives \$250,000 Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Fund (EEOST) Award**

*Funding Will Address Key Covid-19-related Health and Safety Upgrades*

**BOSTON (September 8, 2021)** – The Baker-Polito Administration, along with the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC) and its affiliate Children’s Investment Fund (CIF), recently announced \$7.5 million in Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Fund (EEOST) capital improvement grants. Lt. Governor Polito joined Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) Commissioner Samantha Aigner-Treworgy at East Boston Social Centers to announce the 36 organizations that received grant awards to fund expenses for key COVID-19-related facility challenges, emergency repairs, and/or accessibility upgrades.

EEC, CIF, and CEDAC manage the EEOST Capital Fund. The program traditionally provides grants of up to \$1 million to non-profit childcare centers seeking to renovate or develop new high-quality learning spaces for children living in low-income communities. The FY21 EEOST funding round was modified to award grants between \$100,000 and \$250,000 to provide early childhood education and out-of-school time programs with the resources they need to make improvements and emergency repairs that address health and safety issues.

“Childcare providers face tremendous strain because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many families rely on these essential services to return to work,” said Theresa Jordan, Children’s Investment Fund’s director. “This critical funding will benefit providers across the state while strengthening the Commonwealth’s childcare infrastructure. These grant awards also recognize the enormous effort undertaken by childcare providers over the past year to create safe environments for children.”

“We are grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration’s dedication to ensuring that children across the Commonwealth have access to safe, high-quality learning environments,” said Roger Herzog, CEDAC’s executive director. “These grants enable health and safety upgrades that are critical to the wellbeing of the children, parents, and staff alike.”

One of the funded projects, PACE Head Start in New Bedford, received a \$250,000 grant award. PACE Head Start serves infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and is licensed for up to 184 children

at its Madison Street location. PACE will renovate worn and outdated children's bathrooms and construct a new bathroom to accommodate infants and toddlers served by the program's new Early Head Start component. The organization will also replace 40-year-old inoperable windows with more energy-efficient windows that can be opened to allow fresh air to circulate throughout the center. PACE Head Start is a program of P.A.C.E. Inc. (People Acting In Community Endeavors), a non-profit, community action agency serving the Greater New Bedford area.

"PACE Head Start is proud to provide a family-centered child development program in an environment that promotes respect, fosters inclusion, and celebrates diversity among children, families, and staff," said Pam Kuechler, PACE's executive director. "This funding will allow us to make critical facility upgrades so that we can best meet the individual needs and interests of the children we serve."

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#### **About CEDAC**

CEDAC is a public-private community development finance institution that provides financial resources and technical expertise for community-based and other non-profit organizations engaged in effective community development in Massachusetts. CEDAC's work supports two key building blocks of community development: affordable housing and early care and education. CEDAC is also active in state and national housing preservation policy research and development and is widely recognized as a leader in the non-profit community development industry. For additional information on CEDAC and its current projects, please visit [www.cedac.org](http://www.cedac.org).

#### **About Children's Investment Fund**

Children's Investment Fund's (CIF) mission is to improve the quality of and expand access to early childhood education and out-of-school-time programs for children from low- and moderate-income families. In order to broaden the impact of its work, CIF also seeks to support affordable housing for low-income families through place-based, two-generation, and other strategies that result in safer, healthier, and more stable environments in which to raise young children. The organization is affiliated with the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC). For additional information on CIF, please visit [www.cedac.org/cif](http://www.cedac.org/cif).

#### **About PACE - People Acting in Community Endeavors, Inc.**

PACE, Inc. delivers innovative and effective services to members of the Greater New Bedford Community in their pursuit of brighter futures.

PACE programs include: Child Care Works, YouthBuild - New Bedford, Head Start, Housing Opportunity Center, Fuel Assistance, Lead Program, Clemente Course, Tax Preparation, Health Access and Food Bank. For more information: [www.paceinfo.org](http://www.paceinfo.org)