



## OVERVIEW OF INITIATIVE

### BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

**1984:** FKO founded to support working families with safe, affordable and engaging programming during the out-of-school time (OST) hours.

Over the course of four decades, FKO recognizes the critical role that the out-of-school time (OST) hours play in the development of school-aged children. Aware of its significant impact, FKO has always envisioned a future where OST education is regarded as an essential component of a child's holistic growth, and where OST educators are valued and respected as true professionals in the field.

**March, 2020:** Schools closed for the COVID pandemic; FKO programs temporarily close.

**2020-2021:** In recognition of OST's importance to children, working families and businesses and in response to a request from the Governor in April, 2020, FKO opens full-day emergency childcare programming. Throughout the pandemic, FKO ensured continuity of learning and care for children and families by offering full-day summer programming and remote learning programming during the 2020-2021 school year. FKO's part-time workforce transitions to full-time status overnight.

**September, 2021:** As schools reopen and FKO resumes afterschool programming, FKO is mindful of the risks of losing a workforce that the organization invested in over 18 months—professionals who had begun to see themselves as valued educators and receiving livable wages, full-time hours, and benefits. With the support of the Department of Early Education and Care's Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Stabilization grant funding and other public and private funders, FKO actively implemented changes that retained 33% of our OST educator positions in full-time roles. It quickly became clear that full-time OST positions not only helped retain staff but also created tremendous opportunities for organizational growth and workforce development. including:

- Increased planning time for educators, enhancing the quality of activities and outcomes for children;
- Time for professional development, collaboration with colleagues, and opportunities to observe school-day classrooms, further building educator competencies;
- A stable staff available to work full days during school closures (about 85 days a year, including school vacations, summers, and early release days); and
- Improved staff retention, morale, and reduced educator stress.

**June, 2024:** Building on the success of over two years piloting a full-time workforce and its positive impact on our staff, children, and programs, FKO proudly launches the first OST Educator Registered Apprenticeship program in Massachusetts (and first OST Educator Apprenticeship program with full-time, benefit employment in the country!) FKO registers a cohort of 25 Apprentices, over 80% of whom are from the community where they work, 40% who are multilingual, 56% who identify as female, and 40% who are BIPOC or Hispanic.

This milestone represents a significant step toward developing and growing a highly skilled and diverse out-of-school time workforce, reducing turnover, and fostering respect and appreciation for the field.

## FKO APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE - KEY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

FKO's 2024-2025 inaugural class of apprentices consist of 25 full-time (40 hour/week) OST Educators. FKO's registered OST Educator Apprenticeship program is an "Earn as you Learn" one-year program with the following components:

- **Related Technical Instruction (RTI)** – 150 total hours
  - 120 hours of competency-based learning developed and facilitated by The Institute for Education and Professional Development (IEPD)
  - FKO-led program orientation and ongoing training opportunities
- **Daily On-the-Job Learning (OJT)** – 2,000 total hours
- **Monthly Community of Practice**
- **1:1 Mentors**
  - Weekly informal check ins
  - Monthly competency check ins
  - Bi-annually assessments
- **Quality Curriculum Planning Time**
- **In-School Classroom Observations**
- **Progressive Wage Increases (mid-year and year end)** upon completion of RTI, OJT and competency assessments

To measure the impact of FKO's Apprenticeship initiative, an evaluation conducted by the **National Institute of Out-of-School Time** will examine the impact on program quality and child outcomes. Evaluation activities include:

- Fall and Spring Program Observations using the Assessing Program Practice Tool (APT)
- Fall and Spring Child Outcome Assessments using the Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes (SAYO)
- Focus Groups and Interviews held with apprentices

## PROJECT FUNDING

**This initiative would not be possible without the incredible support of the following project funders:**

- Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development - Expanded Apprenticeship Grant
- Department of Early Education and Care - Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Grant
- Massachusetts State Legislature - Dedicated Earmark in MA State Budget (FY2024, FY2025)
- Private Supporters - Amelia Peabody Foundation, Liberty Mutual, United Way of Massachusetts Bay

## THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

