

## Care That Works

Thank you, Julie, and thank you everyone for being here. The Care That Works Pilot is a demonstration program to invest in women of color as child care providers, so they can then provide the child care for mothers of color to enter Boston's unionized building trades, particularly through Building Pathways—the top Trades pre-apprenticeship program in MA.

These are some of the top-paying jobs in Boston that don't require a college degree, but you have to be onsite at 5:45 or even earlier, and most programs don't open until 6 or later. So early-hour care is a major support for parents to pursue these careers, especially single parents, many of whom in Boston are single Black and brown mothers in poverty.

As Julie prompted, I'll talk about how we are funded, and also how the Pilot deploys that funding through equity-driven design.

Over time we've put together six different types of funding. In total we hope to reach 1.3 million before the year ends. There are three types of private funding.

First, through our close partnership with the Building Trades, some of our earliest grants came directly from individual trades unions. Second, also through union partners early on, we got funds through two Project Labor Agreements that were negotiated on the larger developments in our city. And third, after operating for about a year, with more of a track record—we secured a more traditional foundation grant.

We also have two public grants and a third in the works. All three are through the City of Boston. One grant was through our city's Office of Women's Advancement. This is a relatively new office. Our coalition engaged them early on to encourage their focus on child care specifically. So they requested grant proposals for projects to build the supply of child care in the city. A second grant was jointly offered by that same office and our Planning and Development Agency.

The backstory is, years ago we learned of a requirement in the zoning code for certain developers to either build child care facilities or contribute to a child care fund. It's called the Inclusion of Daycare Facilities provision, established in the late 80s. There were actually funds that had been collected but not yet allocated. So we secured some of those funds. AND on top of that, Mayor Wu is now working to strengthen and expand this zoning requirement so the City will soon have even more resources to work with.

Third, and most recently, we applied for funding from our city's brand new Office of Early Childhood. Earlier this year, Mayor Wu and the City Council passed a spending package funded by the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). We worked with Councilor Julia Mejia to include \$1 million dollars to fund child care for nonstandard schedules. This was just put out to grant last month, and we are crossing our fingers right now.

Very simply: We get the word out. Parents contact us. We match them with a provider. And we give the provider a stipend.

On the face: Straightforward. What keeps us up is the work to design and redesign everything, to best center low-income women of color as both parents and providers. We beta-launched two years ago at a small scale. And we work with outside evaluators to capture key lessons toward that end.

One lesson for parents is that, to reach the hardest-to-reach parents, we really must depend on the partners with deep and trusted relationships in those marginalized communities: for example, Brookview House, which serves families transitioning from homelessness. We also quickly learned that, for parents, coordination is full-time work even at a small scale.

Parents really benefit from regular and frequent touch points as they navigate the many stages of a training pathway. And relatedly, we're now designing a flexible-use scholarship for parents. It can't cover the full cost of care. But it can offset costs temporarily. And it can serve in emergencies if they arise—and we learned they definitely do.

For providers: First of all, our model is built around home-based providers, because, even within the care workforce they are disproportionately Black, brown, and immigrant women, because they are severely under resourced, and because they are embedded in the same communities as the parents we want to reach. So many providers are highly motivated to help their neighbors—many already do as much as they can, even without compensation, and even at a net cost to themselves. These are the women that we want to recognize and resource.

We work through SEIU Local 509 to identify providers. The monthly stipend is a supplement on top of what the parent pays. It doesn't make care a good job, but it makes it a bit better. A key lesson is how crucial assistants are for providers to make the early hours work—and right now, as with so many other jobs, it's really difficult to find assistants.

This brings me to one of our biggest priorities right now, being led by our partner New England United for Justice: We need to build a pipeline, interlocking with the parent pipeline, focused on workforce development for home-based assistants and providers. We envision a development pathway designed for Black and brown and immigrant women who already provide care but are not paid for it. Communities we think of as child care deserts are full of these informal caregivers.

The pipeline will, of course, help build the size and capacity of our Pilot's provider network. But even more, this is an opportunity to model an equitable, even a reparative approach, to child care workforce development. So when we win fuller funding for child care, and make those care jobs into good jobs, we can ensure women of color aren't left out again.

That's where we are. I'm really grateful to share what Care That Works has done and learned. With a historic opportunity, like we face now, I am really heartened to be in conversation with folks today who know the work ahead of us must be: not only fast but also just. Thank you.