DESE’s Playful Learning Institute (PLI) is designed to provide tools and strategies to district and school administrators and PK–3 classroom educators who teach all students, including English Learners and those with disabilities, to intentionally design and embed playful learning experiences.

Developed in collaboration with the Boston Public Schools Early Childhood Department, the PLI began in the 2023-24 school year and included coaches working with educators, preschool through 3rd grade.

Find more information at https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/pli.html

Findings

Mindsets and Beliefs
More than 1/3 of teachers had some reservations about whether playful learning would make certain goals easier to achieve.

Practices
Only 1/3 of teachers were partially or fully implementing playful learning practices prior to the PLI, meaning most teachers have room to grow with coaching support.

Barriers and Supports
Teachers and staff anticipated needing support planning lessons which incorporate playful practices. About 85% of teachers anticipated needing a "moderate" to "great deal" of support.

Equitable Access
Most teachers anticipated needing support in implementing playful learning strategies for English learners and/or students with disabilities.