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**Governor Patrick Appoints Mary E. Walachy to Board of Early Education and Care**

BOSTON – Friday, November 16, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today announced the appointment of Mary E. Walachy to the Board of Early Education and Care.

"Ms. Walachy's experience and dedication to education in Massachusetts makes her an excellent addition to the Board of Early Education and Care," said Governor Patrick. "I am confident she will continue to be a great partner in our efforts to ensure our youngest citizens have a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success, and I thank her for her willingness to serve in this capacity."

Ms. Walachy currently serves as the Executive Director of The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation in Springfield where she has directed the management of this family foundation for over fifteen years. During her time as Executive Director, Ms. Walachy has been a driving force for the organization's agenda, including the creation of the Cherish Every Child initiative in Springfield, an initiative that focused the foundation's resources and leadership on a range of early childhood issues. The Cherish Every Child initiative has been a critical ally in the successful passage of universal Pre-K legislation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and has successfully engaged the workforce development and family literacy establishment in recognizing the long-term return on investments in early education.

In 2009, under Ms. Walachy's direction, the foundation narrowed its education focus to the achievement of reading proficiency by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The resultant community-wide initiative, Reading Success by 4<sup>th</sup> Grade (RS4G), has brought the Springfield community together to support children's reading proficiency and the plan created, **RS4G: Blueprint for Springfield**, was recognized with an All America City Award by the National League of Cities and Springfield's work with a Pacesetter Community award by The Campaign for Grade Level Reading.

"I am so thankful to Governor Patrick and Secretary Reville for this opportunity to serve on the board responsible for the early education and care of the Commonwealth's youngest children," said Ms. Walachy. "The research is clear that providing high quality early learning experiences provides the foundation for a child's future success. I am honored to play a role in assisting EEC in supporting Massachusetts' children and their families."

"Massachusetts has made great strides in advancing a high-quality system of early learning opportunities for children and families statewide, and the Board of Early Education and Care plays a critical role in this endeavor," said Department of Early Education and Care Commissioner Sherri Killins. "Mary has long been a partner in the work of early education in Massachusetts, both in Springfield and across the state, and is well-respected in the community for her passion and experience. As she furthers her commitment by joining the Board, I look forward to working with her on increasing positive outcomes for the children and families of the Commonwealth."

"Mary's work in Western Massachusetts on behalf of young children is unmatched," said JD Chesloff, Chair of the Board of Early Education and Care. "She is a tireless, completely committed, knowledgeable leader in the state's philanthropic community, and has an expertise and passion for early childhood and the Department's work that will make her an excellent addition to the board."

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