



Board of Early Education and Care

November 10, 2009

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Department of Early Education and Care
51 Sleeper Street
Boston, MA 02210

MINUTES

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Present

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq., Chairperson

J.D. Chesloff, Vice-Chairperson

Paul Reville, Secretary of EOE

Julie P. Culhane, Ph.D.

Marilyn Anderson Chase, Designee of the Secretary of EOHHS

Elizabeth Childs, M.D.

Carol Craig O'Brien

Sherri Killins, Ed.D., Commissioner of the Department and Secretary to the Board

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Absent

Orlando Isaza

Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D.

Mary Pat Messmer

The meeting was called to order at 1:12 p.m.

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chairperson Sharon Scott-Chandler welcomed participants and provided a brief update on the recent Birth to School Age Taskforce event, which celebrated the work they have done over the last 10 months. The Taskforce provided recommendations for how the Commonwealth and EEC will focus on infants and toddlers going forward. Chairperson Scott-Chandler thanked the Taskforce participants for their hard work to date.

Comments from the Secretary

Secretary Paul Reville provided an update on the Commonwealth's current fiscal situation and addressed the recent 9C budget reductions. He reaffirmed that the actual revenues for the Commonwealth are down at least \$600 million and that significant action has been taken to come into line with these projections. Secretary Reville reiterated the Governor's continued commitment to early education and that this sector continues to fare much better than other sectors in terms of budget reductions. He acknowledged that this is cold comfort to those facing cuts and that he does not underestimate the degree of impact that the recent 9C reductions have had on CCR&R agencies. He added, however, that a cut to an administrative line item is a reform action that EEC has been pressed to take, in order to achieve efficiencies and to preserve direct services to low income families.

The Secretary also acknowledged the recent Birth to School Aged Taskforce event and emphasized the importance of integrating pre-K with the K through 12 system. He noted that Commissioner Killins is working closely with ESE in areas related to literacy and kindergarten readiness initiatives.

In addition, Secretary Reville stated that EOE is working on the Race to the Top application for ARRA funds and noted that the proposal will have features that connect with early childhood, particularly in the area of early literacy.

Secretary Reville stated that there will be an announcement regarding the Readiness Centers. He affirmed that these Readiness Centers represent an attempt by the Governor to create capacity to support and improve the quality of services available to young people. The Secretary noted that these Readiness Centers are a collaboration between and among all of the education agencies, including early education, K through 12, and higher education.

The Secretary also briefly discussed the recently issued "Dropout Report" and emphasized the interconnection between the three education agencies. He stated that the reduction in school drop outs is linked to the increased emphasis that the Governor is placing on early education, which provides young people with a foundation for readiness in school. He noted that this is one example of success and resilience in the seamless system of education from birth to career in the Commonwealth.

Agency Updates: Comments from the Commissioner

Commissioner Killins thanked everyone for attending today's Board meeting and highlighted the following topics included in her monthly Commissioner's report:

- **The Governor's Letter in Support of the Early Learning Challenge Grant**

The letter urged legislators to support this grant to provide an opportunity to advance our commitment to achieving a high-quality early education system from birth to school-age.

- **Legislative Briefing – November 5, 2009**

Commissioner Killins participated in a briefing to the legislature on the state of early education and care in Massachusetts. She noted that the legislators were interested in the waitlist. EEC estimates that it would cost \$214M to serve the full waiting list.

- **EEC Communication Regarding FY10 9C Reductions**

The Commissioner discussed the recent 9C reductions to EEC's access management account, and noted that the reduction was originally \$4.4 million, but \$1 million has been restored to this account. There will be a further discussion during today's Board meeting of using ARRA funding related to efficiency proposals that would support EEC's ongoing efforts to streamline the voucher management system. The Commissioner also discussed the \$12M reduction in the Income Eligible account, which is being managed through attrition.

- **Child Care Resource and Referral Centers**

The Commissioner noted that while it is difficult to change the functions of CCR&Rs at this point in the year, EEC has begun a process to refine the responsibilities of the CCR&Rs and align them with the direction of the agency to create more efficiency in this fiscal environment and to meet the requirements of upcoming federal opportunities. She then reviewed the options listed in the Commissioner's Report that the EEC was considering.

- **Grant Monitoring and Reporting**

The Commissioner reported that the Board approved proposal to use ARRA Funds for the development of Infant/Toddler Standards and Guidelines has been forwarded to the EOE

and the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF) for approval. With regard to the Longitudinal Data Systems Grant, EEC is working with ESE on this grant, to make sure that we are considered in the application.

- **EEC & DPH Collaboration to Assure Inclusion Services for Children w/ an IEP**

EEC is partnering with DPH around children who transition between Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education to ensure continuity.

- **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)**

EEC is continuing to work on the QRIS. A revised version of the Standards has 5 categories: Environment, Family Engagement, Curriculum and Learning, Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development, Leadership, Management and Administration.

- **Council of Chief State Schools Accountability Systems Grant**

The Commissioner is continuing to travel throughout the state to discuss how we measure the progress of children. EEC is also holding a meeting on November 16th as part of Chiefs Technical Assistance grant. Will be bringing people from around the country to build a proposal about what we might do in this area.

- **EEC's Recent Additional Efforts in the Field**

Through the agency's re-organization efforts, staff have been moved to the regional offices. There are now two critical positions in each regional office—one on Community Engagement, and one on Provider and Education Support. EEC is also continuing to work on its financial policies regarding access to subsidized care. The Commissioner has heard that our policies are complicated and have too many areas of gray. She expects to have the project done by December.

- **EEC and DCF Working to Finalize MOU**

Commissioner Killins met with Commissioner McLane to further their efforts on building a "bridge" between the two departments and developing an MOU that outlines the relationship. EEC will be moving forward with Supportive Child Care bid.

- **Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship Program**

EEC met with the Department of Higher Education to discuss the ECE Scholarship. By the July 1 deadline, 1732 applications were received, but only 500 have been funded. Of the total, 133 came in late. EEC is looking into understanding the status of the remaining 933.

- **ESE-EEC Data Sharing Project: Assignment of ESE's Student Identifier (the SASID) to EEC's Children**

The Commissioner is excited that the Department is moving forward with an agreement with ESE which will allow us to assign SASIDS. This is relevant to the Early Learning Challenge Grant. The Commissioner indicated that she expected to pilot this project by starting with teen parents and their children.

- **Unified Technology System**

The Department has a bidder for the Unified Technology System. EEC is moving forward with negotiations and will report on EEC's progress at the next Board meeting.

Statements from the Public

The Board of Early Education and Care makes up to 30 minutes available for persons in the audience to address the Board on specific agenda items. In order to hear as many speakers as possible, the Board limits individuals to three minutes, although written material of any length can be submitted to Chairperson Scott-Chandler or Commissioner Killins.

- **Jane Sanders – Executive Director of Community Action, Franklin, Hampshire, North Quabbin-** commented on the impact the recent 9C budget reductions will have on CCR&R functions, and expressed concern about losing the local footprint by closing and consolidating offices. Ms. Sanders also commented on the upcoming procurement stating that she was concerned about having one vendor for the CCR&R contract, which covers such a big area; rural areas will be neglected.
- **Kathy Splaine – Community Action of Cape Cod and the Islands / Child Care Network of Cape Cod and the Islands-** commented on the negative impact the recent 9C budget reductions will have on CCR&R functions, noting that while she understands the necessity of cuts during these tough economic times, the scope and severity of this particular cut was concerning as it will cause a delay in serving families and providers and will dismantle what has been built.
- **Cheryl I tiri – South Boston Neighborhood House-** stated that she came to show support for Child Care Choices of Boston (CCCB), noting that CCCB has great impact on the families and providers in the Boston area in terms of voucher management and professional development. She stated that programs are already understaffed now, and taking on additional paper management would be a burden.
- **Jesus Nater – Parent in voucher programs, speaking on behalf of Child Care Choices of Boston-** stated that he was notified last week of the CCCB budget cut while renewing his voucher and he came to the Board meeting to connect these cuts with a “story and a face.” He stated that CCCB helped connect him to resources such as child care and WIC, which helped him keep his job and care for his son.
- **Evelis Nasquez – Parent in voucher program, speaking on behalf of Child Care Choices of Boston-** commented in support of CCCB, stating that she is a single mother and CCCB helped her get aide for my son, and helped her find a good child care program for him.
- **Kim Moran – Senior Director of Child Care Services, Old Colony YMCA-** commented on the impact the recent 9C budget reductions will have on CCR&R functions, stating that her program has 337 contracted income eligible and supportive slots, and 211 children on vouchers from 3 different CCR&Rs. She stated that she is concerned about families’ ability to maintain vouchers without the work of the CCR&Rs. She stated that a family’s circumstances may change 4-6 times a year, which mean 848 voucher changes, and that the Old Colony Y cannot take on the voucher management function without taking work away from the classroom.
- **Beth Ann Strollo – Executive Director, QCAP and MassCAP representative-** commented on the severe impact the recent 9C budget reductions will have on CCR&R functions, stating that most CCR&Rs have been providing services for 25 years, and it is that expertise that that keeps the state in compliance with state and federal requirements, but maintaining fiscal accountability costs money. The state cannot decrease funding without having a severe impact on fiscal accountability. Ms. Strollo stated that the CCR&Rs are in discussions with the Commissioner about how to manage the cuts, but the cost savings of the proposed changes to CCR&R functions do not match the cuts the CCR&Rs are being asked to make. Ms. Strollo asked the Board to rethink this cut, and do everything possible to restore funding. Ms. Strollo also commented on the upcoming CCR&R procurement, and asked the Board not to limit it to one bidder per EOHHS region, as this would not amount to anything meaningful for communities.

- **Pam Kuechler – President, Mass CCR&R Network-** commented on the upcoming CCR&R procurement and the 9C cuts, and asked the Board to keep in mind that voucher management is tied to compliance with state and federal policies and accountability. She stated that Massachusetts can achieve efficiencies over time by fixing current policies and improving information technology, but that the current system must be maintained while such improvements are implemented. Ms. Kuechler stated that managing subsidies is an interactive process with parents, and families deserve to be well served, and that the state cannot adequately serve families with \$6.4 million. Ms. Kuechler agreed that the state must expect efficient business practices, but stated that EEC and the Board must make the necessary investment of time and planning to move forward with transition.
- **Brenda Montgomery – New England Farmworkers (NEFWC)-** commented on the recent 9C reductions, stating that their Holyoke office will be closed and that they are reducing the staff by 60%. She is worried about effect of this budget cut on small and minority owned businesses.
- **Kelty Kelly – MACPC, Coordinator of Charles River CPC-** submitted written testimony from the association and letters from councils across the state and testified in support of the Community Family and Engagement grants. Ms. Kelly stated that she appreciates that the Board is making tough budget decisions, but urged the Board to remember its enabling legislation that talks about having a footprint at local level.
- **Cindy Rimbaud – MOC CPC-** supported continuing funding for Coordinated Family and Community Engagement and public preschool grants, and noted the value of workforce development in supporting providers' professional growth.
- **Laurie Glassman – Director, Child Care Choices of Boston-** commented on the severe impact of the recent budget cuts on CCR&R functions, noting that the parents and providers said it best, so she is not going to rehash testimony that has already been heard. Ms. Glassman stated that CCCB has always been a great team player for parents, providers, EEC, and has historically assumed additional functions without additional dollars— during the CPC transition of slots, recoupment rollout, NACCRAware assurance, etc.—but, she added that this budget cut is so deep that CCR&Rs just don't know how they are going to be able to maintain core services, which include helping families navigate subsidy system and find quality child care, getting new providers into the subsidy system and billing for vouchers. CCB is trying to figure out how to make it work, but the cut is just too deep.
- **Carol Rubin – Mass Parent Child Home Program-** supported continuing funding for PCHP programs and welcomed Board members to visit any of the sites.
- **Maliede Gucine- IBA–** commented in support of the CCR&Rs stating that without the Child Care Resource Center's (CCRC) professional development support she could not have completed her Bachelor's Degree; she now the Director of a bi-lingual preschool in Boston and Child Care Choices of Boston provides invaluable support.
- **Fran Roznowski – CCPC–** stated that she is the Early Childhood Specialist for a CPC Partnership and submitted two letters in support of the quality line item.
- **Connie Martin – Community Teamwork Inc.–** stated that she manages Child Care Search which is located in Concord, and commented on the upcoming CCR&R procurement. She stated that she is concerned that EEC is dismantling a system

that has operated well for many years, providing translation and other support services for families and providers.

- **Joanne Russo – YMCA Greater Boston**– commented in support of the CCR&RS and against the recent budget cuts, stating she wanted to validate the concerns that have been expressed so far and noted that these budget cuts may be leading us towards a latch key system where children are babysitting. She stated that the YMCAs are in strong support of the CCR&Rs.

Routine Business:

- **Disclosures:**

Chairperson Scott-Chandler verbally disclosed that her employer is an EEC grant and contract recipient, and submitted a written disclosure that her employer has or may have an interest in the CCR&R procurement and the State Budget agenda items. Board Member Carol Craig O'Brien verbally disclosed that her employer, Westwood Public Schools, currently receives EEC funding and has a potential interest in receiving additional funding.

- **Approval of October 13, 2009 Minutes**

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked Board Members to review and approve the minutes.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the minutes of the October 13, 2009 Board meeting, as presented by the Commissioner. The motion passed with one abstention. Board Member Anderson Chase abstained.

Board Committee Reports

In the interest of time, Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked the Board Committee Chairs to report on the work of the respective committees within the discussions of the agenda items.

Items for Discussion and Action:

I. FY2011 Budget – Discussion and Vote

EEC Budget Director Sean Reynolds provided the Board with an update on the Department's FY2010 budget, including the recent 9C cuts, and with FY2011 Budget recommendations.

Mr. Reynolds affirmed that the 9C reductions to EEC's budget totaled approximately \$16 million, which represented approximately 3% of the Department's total appropriation for FY10. He noted that the most significant reductions were to the income eligible and the access management line items. With regard to FY11, EEC is submitting its recommended budget for FY11 to the Board with capped growth at \$487M, in accordance with the ANF spending caps. This recommendation represents a reduction of over 7% from the initial FY10 budget, which includes an additional 4% reduction from EEC's current operating budget, after the most recent round of 9C cuts. Mr. Reynolds stated that EEC used guidance from the Board in determining how/where to make the necessary cuts, and thereby looked at attrition rate of children from the income eligible account. Based on estimated caseload projections for FY11, EEC anticipates a reduction of \$28 million in direct services to low income families through attrition. Mr. Reynolds emphasized that the projected reduction through attrition is a tight number and that any small uptick in caseload could impact the projection.

Mr. Reynolds also highlighted proposed line-item language changes to allow for greater flexibility and improve efficiencies between and among funded programs, and to allow EEC to align funding initiatives with the goals of QRIS. Mr. Reynolds concluded by stating that if the Board approves the Department's Budget Recommendations for FY11, these recommendations will be forwarded to EOE for submission to the appropriate committees of the Legislature and the Secretary of ANF.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler opened the floor for discussion and questions. Board Member Chesloff commented that the Board is faced with deciding between bad decisions and worse decisions. He stated that the Fiscal and Budget and the Program and Policy Committees have met jointly to discuss the budget and the Committee members asked the Department to look at attrition numbers and come up with a budget recommendation that does not throw current kids out of care. He acknowledged the testimony the Board heard today on the 9C cuts, but stated that he did not see a lot of wiggle room in the numbers, so the conversation going forward has to be focused on how to help manage this, now that the money is gone. Board Member Childs agreed and added that in this bleak fiscal environment the Board needs to focus its decisions on efforts to balance access and quality, rather than choosing between one or the other. With respect to the Department's recommendation to achieve ANF's spending cap through attrition, Board Member Childs stated that it was the best option among bad choices. She confirmed that the attrition projection is very tight and that the Board must understand that even slight fluctuations could throw this projection off.

Board Member Childs also discussed her concern about further reductions to the child and family engagement line item by noting that this area was already reduced by over 45% when we consolidated efforts and changed the billing practices. Board Member Childs noted that the Board has made an investment in a very innovative approach and questioned whether the Board would undermine its past achievements by making additional cuts to this line item. Commissioner Killins stated that this is the first year we have looked at the caseload for purposes of achieving cost savings and noted that EEC is making decisions on immature historical data going into a future that remains uncertain.

Board Member Craig-O'Brien directed Mr. Reynold's attention to page 6 of the budget presentation and asked whether EEC is referring to preschool inclusive learning when it talks about restructuring family engagement and supplemental services? Mr. Reynolds responded that EEC budgets approximately \$1.3 million for supplemental services for pre-school learning, which Commissioner Killins noted is in the income eligible line item.

Board Member Craig-O'Brien wanted to clarify that discussions by the committees of the Board are not equivalent to Board approvals, which require a formal vote. She also recommended that EEC needs to be intentional in how it labels/describes its line items. For example, EEC and the Board understand that the family support line item includes community supports, but this may not be readily apparent to interested parties. Board Member Craig-O'Brien added that this is the fifth year of EEC's existence, and the agency has lost ground every year. She stated that the recommended budget and spending caps are insufficient to meet the needs of all children, which requires EEC to cut vital organs. She reminded the Board that it is charged with advocating for the Commonwealth's youngest residents.

Board Member Chesloff acknowledged board members' stated concerns to the proposed reductions to family and community engagement but asked where else could cost savings be realized? He also noted that that this cut retains the program and does not eliminate it. He reminded the Board that had we not pushed on attrition, the FY11 cuts could have been worse for infrastructure.

Secretary Reville stated that he will be abstaining on the FY11 Budget vote because the budget will ultimately come back to him, however, he reminded the Board that this is early stage budget work and that their role is advisory today; the Board will have other opportunities down the road to weigh in and influence the final budget for FY11.

Board Member Culhane appreciated that the Department's recommended budget for FY11 does not reference specific programs because, as the Secretary said, we will have the opportunity to define and refine the final FY11 budget in the future and grantees will look for their programs in budget recommendations to plan ahead if funding will not continue.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked if the group was prepared to vote on the FY11 Budget.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care adopt the Commissioner's proposed fiscal year 2011 budget as its budget recommendations for FY11 and further authorizes the Commissioner to submit the Board's final budget recommendations to the Secretary of Education. The vote was 4 in favor, 2 abstentions and 1 opposed. The motion did not carry. Chairperson Scott-Chandler and Secretary Reville abstained. Board Member Craig-O'Brien opposed the motion.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler stated that the Board will forward the Commissioner's proposed FY2011 budget recommendations to EOE and will note that the proposal did not receive the necessary six votes; the Board will forward the commentary from this discussion to EOE, as well, to help advise the budget process.

II. Re-Procurement of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Commissioner Killins introduced the presentation, explaining that it contained two parts with Pam Roux, an EEC Educator Provider Support Specialist addressing the re-procurement process and Commissioner Killins presenting an ARRA proposal in the second part. Ms. Roux began by updating the Board on the Re-Procurement of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and referred to the presentation materials included in the Board binders.

Ms. Roux reviewed the re-procurement goals and described the three levels of services that EEC has identified as integral to a voucher management and information and referral system. Voucher management administration represents the first level, consisting of core services such as:

- initial eligibility visits and determinations for families seeking subsidized care;
- reassessment and change of status visits and determinations for families who are serviced through a partnership with Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), families who may continue to qualify for a voucher, or families who have had a change in circumstances;
- recoupment of funds in conjunction with EEC; and
- billing and management of above functions.

The second level represents information and referral whereby CCR&Rs would be expected to provide high quality information about child care options and maintenance of the NACCRA Provider Database. The third level consists of consumer education whereby CCR&Rs will identify each family's need for early education and care services, and refer families accordingly, and engage in NACCRA Quality Assurance process and QRIS Education. EEC may purchase all three levels, or may purchase an administrative function and/or other functions, as funding allows.

Ms. Roux explained that twelve CCR&Rs currently hold 14 contracts for voucher management throughout the state. Two agencies hold contracts in more than one region. In addition, one entity receives funding for information and referral services, but does provide voucher management. As part of the re-procurement, entities must include a plan to ensure access statewide or to a portion therein.

EEC recommends a coordinating network model for CCR&Rs whereby participating entities must show how they will work together to:

- develop local CCR&R best practices and standards;
- provide training and support for partner CCR&R staff;
- offer statewide child care consumer education and referrals for families;
- collect, analyze, and report data from local CCR&Rs and other sources;
- build child care supply and quality; and
- manage special project grants.

Ms. Roux discussed funding allocations. She explained that the procurement formula utilized in 1998 was comprised of seven categories and a weighting system. The upcoming re-procurement would be based on three factors: voucher caseload, number of licensed providers, and children at or below poverty.

Ms. Roux then reviewed the procurement timeline. Following a Board vote, EEC will develop and post the RFR sometime in January, 2010. Responses will be analyzed and awards made in March and April, 2010. In May and June, agencies who are awarded new contracts will be provided transition time, with implementation effective July 1, 2010.

Board members then discussed the weight given to the number of licensed providers in a region, with Board Member Culhane stating that she did not want to penalize counties that have few programs and/or few children.

Board Member Chase commented that the public comments indicated that \$6.4 million is not sufficient, and that, although she recognized that this bid changed the services requested of the CCR&Rs, there will be lower expectations of what is to be performed. She asked whether the factors change how money will be allocated. Ms. Roux responded that there is a difference between awarding contracts and determining allocations. Commissioner Killins emphasized that this is an important difference; in March, EEC will not know how much money it has available for the next fiscal year. She added that EEC is not recommending a regional strategy.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked how EEC will guarantee that all areas will be covered and noted that she was worried that there might be areas of the state that are not covered and a service area may be overlooked. Commissioner Killins replied that EEC will undertake an analysis of the bids, and if there is an area not covered, EEC may go back and ask a potential vendor to pick it up. EEC will also schedule bidders' conferences where people can come together and have this discussion.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked how the last procurement was conducted. Commissioner Killins responded that in 1998, when the bids came in, sometimes there were multiple bids in one regional area and compromises were made in that particular region.

Board Member Childs reported that the Policy and Programs Committee had a robust conversation about this with some CCR&Rs attending the meeting, which was helpful. She noted that it was important to align our policies with the amount of work that can be done for this amount of money and questioned whether we can do the policy work in this

timeframe, with assistance from the IT system. Commissioner Killins reassured the Board that the policy work will get done. She further noted that the reason the proposal was broken into levels was that EEC wanted to obtain budget amounts for each of these. EEC has made investments in its IT system, which have gotten us some efficiencies but EEC is still merging the two systems that the agency inherited.

Board Member Chesloff asked whether the re-procurement addressed concerns voiced by the CCR&Rs to Board committees. Commissioner Killins explained that two different things are being managed here, the future and the 9c cuts. The challenge is that 9C cuts have come mid-year. She stated that the real role of CCR&Rs is not voucher management but instead is information and referral and consumer education. In the short-term, we have emphasized voucher management, because we need it. We will build up the other two areas as we come out of this fiscal crisis. Chairperson Scott-Chandler added that EEC needs to be clear about what we want from a system and what can we pay for, by clearly articulating what we want from this procurement.

Board Member Craig O'Brien asked whether we have left ourselves enough time to create a model for information and referral and consumer education, if the proposals come back differently. Commissioner Killins responded that it is as Chairperson Scott-Chandler said: we're trying to articulate what we want to buy. EEC would have liked to have done this in July, but we are where we are. EEC can request that a prospective vendor respond to all three levels, or explain how much it would cost to do provide each of these three levels or describe how they would partner with others in the community. If we get bidder responses back in March and they all just bid for voucher management, we would go to the Committee and request a new plan.

Commissioner Killins explained that the timeframe for the reprocurement is an initial term of three years, with a two-year renewal option, similar to the Income Eligible bid.

Several Board members then discussed other aspects that they wished to see included in the re-procurement process: engagement with and meeting the needs of families on a local level; outposting of CCR&R staff to build community-program connections; a recognition that information and referral and consumer education services are inherent to voucher management; and interagency collaboration.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked Commissioner Killins or Ms. Roux to explain EEC's expectations of NACCRA accreditation for the consumer education piece. Ms. Roux replied that it will be similar to how EEC asks a program to undergo NAEYC accreditation.

Board member Chesloff then asked what was the process that led up to this procurement proposal? Commissioner Killins responded that the Advisory Committee discussed this twice, once alone, and then a second time with the Parents' Advisory Committee. These groups asked EEC to do a few things, including focus groups, which were completed and included in our thinking.

Board Member Culhane read the motion; Board Member Craig O'Brien asked whether the motion included consumer education. EEC General Counsel Constantia Papanikolaou confirmed that it does.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:
VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the Department's budget, goals and criteria as described in its November 10, 2009 Board Presentation for the procurement of Voucher Management, Information and Referral and Consumer Education Services in fiscal year 2010 through a**

competitive Request for Responses. The motion passed with six votes in favor and one abstention; Chairperson Scott-Chandler abstained.

Commissioner Killins then presented a three part proposal for spending \$2.27 million in ARRA funding which would 1) support a pilot program transferring voucher reassessment to Contracted Providers and Family Child Care Systems, 2) promote efficiencies by the CCR&Rs within the voucher management system, and 3) develop IT enhancements to support the new pilot program. She explained that many Contracted Providers and Family Child Care Systems were asked last spring through the Income Eligible RFR if they would be interested in undertaking voucher reassessment for children in their programs. Of the 194 contracted providers that responded to the bid, approximately 147 expressed interest. Based on first quarter caseload data, EEC estimates that approximately 5,514 voucher children are enrolled with these providers. EEC proposes awarding \$1.12 million in one-time administrative stipends to these programs for assuming the voucher reassessment process. EEC also proposes \$1 million to support CCR&Rs to streamline voucher management while providing technical assistance and transitional services to the Contracted Providers/Family Child Care Systems participating in the pilot program and to create system efficiencies. Lastly, EEC seeks \$150,000 for development of short-term and long-term enhancements to EEC's IT system to support this new business model.

Secretary Reville stated that in light of the testimony heard today and that we are encouraged to use ARRA money for one-time expenses to transition to longer-term efficient solutions, he supported the intent of this proposal.

Board Member Chesloff asked for an accounting of ARRA funding at the next Fiscal Committee meeting, including: what has been spent to date, what is left, and what are the limitations. Board members asked for more detail on the proposed use of ARRA money for IT needs. Commissioner Killins explained that EEC does not have a Unified IT System contractor as of yet. This proposal of \$150,000 would allow us to make immediate short term fixes to get this proposal up and running. She added that the bond money allocated to EEC for the Unified IT System is not enough to accomplish all what we want to do.

Board Member Culhane asked whether independent family child care providers could be considered for this proposal. Commissioner Killins responded that Contracted Providers and Family Child Care Systems are already managing contracts and are familiar with EEC's financial assistance policy. EEC has received feedback from the CCR&Rs that it takes a lot to do this and we want to start with those who already know how to do this.

Board Member Craig O'Brien inquired whether the proposal was for all income eligible providers. Commissioner Killins explained that the proposal is directed to income eligible providers who have expressed an interest through the procurement survey. General Counsel Papanikolaou further explained that the proposal includes school age providers, if they expressed an interest.

Board Member Craig O'Brien commented that she understands that we want to move the system forward, but our practice has been to discuss and vote the next month. She questioned what would be the cost benefit of voting now as opposed to delaying and gathering more information. Commissioner Killins replied that because this is ARRA money, all approved Board proposals go to EOE and then to ANF for final approval which is at least a four-week process. If we wait until December, then approval will not occur until at least February. Secretary Reville stated that he supported moving forward with the initiative and he felt compelled to make a motion to approve the proposal.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve that up to \$2.27 million of the CCDF Discretionary funds received by the Commonwealth through ARRA be used in FY2010 and FY2011 for the following three purposes as described in the November 10, 2009 Board Presentation, and as summarized in the Board materials: (1) up to \$1.12 million to assist contracted providers, including both center-based providers and family child care systems, in assuming the voucher assessment process; (2) up to \$1 million to reimburse Child Care Resource and Referral agencies for the purpose of providing transitional support and technical assistance services to contracted providers and to fund efficiency proposals on creative ways to streamline the voucher management process; and (3) up to \$150,000 for informational technology consultant services to perform both short term and long term enhancements to the Department's IT systems, subject to the Department securing the necessary state and federal oversight approvals. The motion passed with six votes in favor and one abstention; Chairperson Scott-Chandler abstained.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler stated that, in the interest of time, the next two agenda items, Alignment of Assessment and Instructional Practice, and Promoting Early Literacy with a Focus on Infants and Toddlers and Family Child Care Providers would be tabled.

III. What We Know About Children in Massachusetts – Discussion

Dr. Janice M. Gruendel, Senior Policy Advisor on Children and Youth for Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell, presented the Board with an analysis of what we currently know about Massachusetts children and how we can build a K through 12 Early Childhood Outcomes and Tracking System. Ms. Gruendel began by reviewing EEC's statutory obligations to establish a comprehensive system for measuring the performance and effectiveness of its early education and out of school time care programs. She highlighted four key points from the Massachusetts Readiness Cabinet's vision for the role of data in the Massachusetts Readiness System:

- Data should be shared from birth to college entry or workforce entry
- Data sharing should occur for all children, not just at risk children
- Data sharing should respect individual privacy rights, while providing key information to improve outcomes for children
- Data sharing should be used to create meaningful, coordinated prevention and intervention strategies

Ms. Gruendel presented a visual representation of the Massachusetts Cabinet's "readiness" system that tracks risks and appropriately intervenes to improve child, youth and family outcomes. She stated that the "brilliance of the system" is not that it collects and tracks data through higher education, but that it begins with babies and children. Ms. Gruendel noted that nationally, and in Massachusetts, people are moving forward with building a Pre-K to Grade 12 data systems. She noted that Massachusetts received a State Longitudinal Data System grant in FY09, but the question remains how a K-12 data system becomes P-20 data system. She noted that "P" means preschool for purposes of the federal government, but in Massachusetts it could mean Prenatal. She said that if you develop the data system correctly, it will position the Commonwealth for additional federal grants.

Ms. Gruendel stated that nationally folks are having a discussion about an Early Childhood Data Consortium, which is looking to build an Early Childhood Information System to collect high-quality early childhood data on inputs and specific outcomes. In the eyes of the Consortium, the data system would:

- have the ability to track children across ages and over time, encompassing data on home and community environments;
- include children’s demographic data (such as birth date, gender, race, ethnicity, language) and include special populations (e.g., ELL, special needs) and children not in service systems;
- encompass child outputs in at least four developmental domains and data on children can be linked across sectors (e.g., ECE, health);
- include program and fiscal data (e.g., teacher/workforce characteristics, program quality, and service costs); and
- allow for analysis by geography (e.g., give you fiscal and administrative data and disaggregate to as small a level as it will tolerate).

In addition the data system must have three core components: unique student identifiers; unique identifiers for teachers and staff; and a way to identify programs at the classroom level (e.g., to help get at duration and dosage).

Secretary Reveille commended Ms. Gruendel on the presentation and noted that he wished the Board had more time to discuss the important issues that she raised. He appreciated the accommodation of the Readiness Report. Secretary Reveille noted that EOE is trying to bring together agencies, but noted that there are real barriers, with FERPA and HIPPA, and policy decisions that need to be figured out (e.g., where we would draw the line?).

Ms. Gruendel responded that some states have begun figuring out how to streamline information and data sharing. For example, she noted that Connecticut passed four pieces of legislation that made it easier for data flow between and among agencies.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the meeting adjourn at 4:11 pm, subject to the call of the Chairperson.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
 Sherri Killins, Ed.D.
 Commissioner of the Department and
 Secretary to the Board