



Board of Early Education and Care

January 11, 2011
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Department of Early Education and Care
51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210

MINUTES

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Present

J.D. Chesloff, Chairperson
Paul Reville, Secretary of EOE
Marilyn Anderson Chase, Designee of the Secretary of EOHHS
Elizabeth Childs, M.D.
Carol Craig O'Brien
Mary Pat Messmer
Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.
Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Ph.D.
Joan Wasser Gish, Esq.
Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D.

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

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 pm.

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Board Chairperson J.D. Chesloff called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

Comments from the Commissioner

Relevant document included in the Board materials

- Commissioner's Report, dated January 11, 2010 [sic]

Commissioner Killins welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished all a Happy New Year. The Commissioner submitted her monthly report to the Board and highlighted the following topics which are included in the Report:

- **QRIS Rating and Improvement System (QRIS):** The new Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) On-line application was launched, although staff were nervous that "A to Z" was not completed. She confirmed that EEC will post "Questions & Answers" a couple of time per month to address concerns and to assist the field in understanding this new process. The Commissioner also reminded Family Child Care Systems that although Systems may help their affiliated providers with

the QRIS with applications, the applications should be submitted at the individual program level. To be eligible for the forthcoming FY11 QRIS Grants, programs must be in the process of completing the self assessment and complete the process before the due date of the grant. The Commissioner reported that within 24 hours of the QRIS launch, at least 30 applications were started.

- **Income Eligible Financial Assistance Access Closing:** Due to the concerns about the projected deficit in the EEC financial assistance income eligible account, EEC will close current access to vouchers for new income eligible families on the wait list, and close access to vouchers for siblings of children currently receiving EEC financial assistance; appointments will be kept until on February 4, 2011, for families who have already received letters.
- **Supportive Transitional Child Care for former DCF families:** During the week of January 3, 2011, the Commissioner highlighted that EEC and DCF jointly issued a policy that allows children who are currently receiving Supportive Child Care to receive up to six additional months of DCF services upon closure of the family's DCF case.
- **Higher Education Transfer Compact:** The Commissioner reported on the revised Higher Education Transfer Compact, which now includes coursework towards bachelor's degrees in early education and care.
- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Initiatives:** Commissioner Killins reported that ARRA spending is on track, with approximately \$7.5 million spent to date. She noted that EEC will continue to advance the good decisions that were made by the Advisory Committee, the Board and other stakeholders, and that EEC is beginning to think about how to integrate the ARRA initiatives into normal practice. The Commissioner highlighted the fact that EEC has completed reviews of 100 of the 640 ARRA QRIS Program Improvement Grants issued to programs in FY10. She noted that all programs reported increased quality as a result of these funds, but raised concerns about the timing and deadlines for the expenditure of these funds.
- **Financial Literacy Training:** The Commissioner highlighted this training opportunity which is offered through the Head Start Collaboration Office, and builds upon the existing CAP model to think about staff and children, not just families.
- **Infant Toddler Guidelines:** The Guidelines have been posted, but they are quite voluminous. EEC will be requesting a handbook or summary document, whereby staff would only need to consult the comprehensive document if more detail was needed. The Commissioner also noted that an on-line course was being developed by Higher Education.
- **Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency Evaluation:** The CAYL Institute has been hired to conduct an evaluation of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs). In an effort to understand CCR&Rs in Massachusetts, several focus groups have been convened and a report has been issued. Overall, the CAYL report highlights the following: CCR&Rs are staffed with highly knowledgeable employees; EEC is focused on what is best for the children and families; national trends for CCR&Rs are changing; and CCR&Rs are not fully funded.
- **Room to Grow:** The Commissioner reported on the trainings conducted in furtherance of this facilities grant. In total, 123 centers and 144 family child care providers attended the trainings.

Grant applications were due on January 3, 2011 and eligible applicants must be serving infants and toddlers by April 15, 2011.

- **Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees:** The Commissioner highlighted efforts to have the CFCE grantees engage with the Center for Social Policy for purposes of completing the Strengthening Families assessment. She acknowledged that the goal was to figure out how these grantees are supporting and strengthening all families in the community.
- **Kindergarten Entry Enrichment Program (KEEP) update:** Commissioner Killins stated that she was very hopeful that the Department could continue the KEEP program in the Summer of 2011 through the same vendors, with the reserved option to expand if the program is underserved. She expected to have sufficient funds to serve up to 400 pre-school children through this program. The Commissioner also stressed that the focus would remain placing children off the waiting list, as opposed to identifying children currently served, but deemed educationally at risk.
- **Communications Campaign:** The Department is working on addressing the current website, which will include improving access to information.
- **Advisory Council:** The first full Advisory Council will occur on January 14, 2011.
- **Assessment Grants:** The Assessment grant has been awarded, which includes three levels of training. She noted that this was a critical component of the QRIS.
- **Professional Qualifications (PQ) Registry:** Commissioner Killins stressed the importance of getting educators enrolled in the PQ Registry. To date, 47% of centers and only 22% of family child care providers have enrolled.

At the conclusion of the Commissioner's Statement, Board Chairperson Chesloff acknowledged the tremendous amount of work that has occurred.

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 Chesloff or Commissioner Killins.

Leslie Lee, Co-President of MACPC: Ms. Lee commented on the strengthened role of family and community engagement in the Board's Strategic plan. Ms. Lee offered an example of the use of CFCE funding, where a story walking tour engaged 277 children through interactive community-based literacy activities throughout Fitchburg. In addition, Ms. Lee stated that she hoped EEC would reconsider the current CFCE allocation methodology because it was based on an old formula and distribution allocation.

Ada Rosmann, former CPC Coordinator, and Chair of the MACPC Legislative Committee: Ms. Rosmann commented on the critical role of family and community partnerships in children's education. She shared how the CFCE grantee collaborated with the Milton Public Schools (CTF funds) to address the diverse needs of families in Milton community. Ms. Rosmann commented on the need for increased

CFCE funding and requested that the Board consider the consolidation of CFCE funding into one line item.

End of public comment period.

Routine Business:

Approval of December 14, 2010 Board Minutes – Vote

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the minutes of the December 14, 2010 Board meeting, as presented by the Commissioner. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Committee and Advisory Reports:

- **Policy and Fiscal Committee Update**

Board Member Childs stated that the Policy and Fiscal Committee last met on January 3rd, at which time the Committee reviewed the Department’s budget and updated caseload projections. She acknowledged that the Committee had an extensive discussion about the projected deficiency in the Department’s access accounts, the closure to access and how transferability would help, if approved by legislature. Board Member Childs added that Committee began preliminary discussions about Subsidy Regulation Change, in order to get the Committee aware of the issues to be discussed next month. The next meeting of the Policy and Fiscal Committee will be February 7, 2011.

- **Planning and Evaluation Committee Update**

Board Member Craig O’Brien reported that the Planning and Evaluation Committee last met in December 2010, at which time it made refinements to the QRIS initiative. She acknowledged that the next meeting had a packed agenda, including QRIS and the annual report to the Legislature, which is a comprehensive report of all of the Department’s achievements – “a real shout out to EEC staff.” Board Member Craig O’Brien also reported that Commissioner’s evaluation will be discussed and that the formal evaluation remains on track for February. Finally, she confirmed that the Career ladder will also be on the agenda for the next Committee meeting, which is scheduled for tomorrow, January 13, 2011.

- **Research and Outreach Committee Update**

Board Member Joan Wasser-Gish reported that the Research and Outreach Committee last met on December 2, 2010. She noted that the recently released Bessie Tart Foundation report related to compensation reform was the major topic of discussion. Board Member Wasser-Gish noted that the Committee has been working to reconfigure the roles and responsibilities of the Committee, as it is in the process of merging with the Ad Hoc Committee. She stated that the Committee will report to the full Board their recommendations for this merger.

- **Ad Hoc Committee on Board Operations Update**

Board Member Sharon Scott-Chandler updated the Board on the outcomes of Ad Hoc Committee, which held two full meetings to address themes and issues raised at the July 2010 Board retreat including: meeting preparation process; the public comment period; and Board Committee. Board Member Scott-Chandler then reported on the outcomes/recommendations related to each theme:

Meeting Preparation Process: The Committee recommends changes to the “role of the Board Binder” at Board meetings to reduce the waste of paper. As a result of these recommendations, each Board Member should bring their own materials, which are made available online prior to the meeting date. In addition, EEC will provide the following materials for the day of meeting: a copy of the agenda, the Commissioner’s Report and materials reflecting changes, and finalized Board Motions. Any Board Member should contact EEC when difficulty arises in accessing the printed materials.

Public Comment: The Committee recognizes the importance to have procedural process to ensure the public has a voice and an opportunity to be heard. In order to improve efficiency in the process, the Committee recommends individuals seeking to testify identify the relevant agenda topic on the signup sheet. In addition, the Committee stressed the importance to keep to time limits.

Subcommittee Structure: The Committee recognized that the current structure has resulted in one or more Committees becoming overwhelmed (i.e., Policy and Fiscal). Therefore, the Committee recommends transferring some of the delegated topics to the Research and Outreach Committee, such as the Birth to 8 Task Force and Educator Compensation.

At the conclusion of the Ad Hoc Committee’s presentation, Commissioner Killins stated that all data and limited printings will be available at each Board Meeting.

Board Chairperson J.D. Chesloff thanked the Ad Hoc Committee for their recommendations, made mention of the survey for the 2011 Board retreat, then officially disbanded the Ad Hoc Committee.

- **Advisory Council Report**

Board Member Eleonora Villegas-Reimers reported that the Advisory Council did not meet since the last Board meeting.

Disclosures:

Board Member Craig O’Brien disclosed verbally and in writing that her employer, Westwood Public Schools, currently is a recipient of CFCE and 262 grant funding and has an interest in receiving additional funding. She disclosed that she has a personal financial interest in the CFCE agenda item and therefore she would refrain from discussing and abstain from voting on that agenda item. Board Member Mary Pat Messmer disclosed in writing that her employer receives EEC funding and has or may have a financial interest in today’s Community and Strategic Planning, Educator Compensation and Legislative agenda items. Board Member Sharon Scott-Chandler disclosed in writing that her employer receives EEC funding and has or may have a financial interest in today’s Community and Strategic Planning, Educator Compensation and Legislative agenda items. Board Member Eleonora Villegas-Reimers disclosed in writing that her employer receives EEC funding and has or may have a financial interest in today’s Community and Strategic Planning agenda item.

Items for Discussion and Action:

I. Educator Compensation – Panel Discussion

Relevant documents included in Board materials:

- Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children, *Blueprint for Early Education Compensation Reform*– PowerPoint presentation dated January, 2011
- Educator Compensation Panel Biographies dated January 11, 2011

Board Member Wasser-Gish introduced the panel discussion, noting that today’s conversation is a beginning point to discuss how to pay for quality early education and care that will impact children in school and in life. She introduced the panelists who included Mary Reed, President and Chief Executive of the Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children (BTWIC), Jed Swan, Founder and Manager of Drydock Ventures, who provides a business perspective as a Board member to BTWIC, Dr. Neeta Fogg, Research Professor at Drexel University’s Center for Labor Markets and Policy, and Eugenia Hutchins, who performed the primary research on behalf of BTWIC. Secretary Reville arrived at the meeting as the Educator Compensation Panel Discussion began.

Ms. Reed outlined the four recommendations made by the Task Force and discussed how these recommendations could be implemented. The Task Force’s recommendations consist of:

- Development of a career ladder that requires increased compensation accompanied by incremental wage increases and annual bonuses for achieving performance benchmarks and obtaining additional education;
- Creation of an early education endowment fund that provides monetary support for the career ladder and supplements the market rate for high quality programs;
- Creation of a refundable 15% earned income tax credit for educators; and
- Development of a loan forgiveness program that requires a commitment to the field.

Ms. Reed explained that the proposed career ladder would not include job titles so that it would be applicable across all types of child care programs. A career ladder modeled on that of Washington State would cost Massachusetts approximately \$13.4 million annually. Ms. Reed then went on to discuss the proposed endowment fund and how it would be funded. Further analysis would be done by BTWIC regarding sustainability of such a fund, with input from successful programs established in Nebraska and Minnesota. BTWIC is in the process of developing a bill for filing with the legislature to establish the proposed tax credit. This would be similar to the state’s existing earned income tax credit and would provide an average benefit of \$255 per year. Lastly, Ms. Reed explained how the loan forgiveness program would benefit educators.

Mr. Swan discussed the need for public/private business’ co-ownership, and outlined how businesses could become involved, particularly at the grassroots level. Dr. Fogg commented on the four recommendations, voicing her support for the endowment fund and its involvement with both the public and private sectors. She noted that there were only 255 degrees awarded in early education in Massachusetts. Most of these individuals chose to work in public schools where they can be better compensated; only 1 in 6 of these individuals actually works in the field. She further explained that parents have two sets of choices– the first being high quality early education and care for their children and the second being the convenience, reliability, and affordability of such care. Dr. Fogg opined that perhaps there should be a tax credit for consumers in order to boost demand. She concluded by reiterating that the recommendations need to be tied to quality.

Board Member Childs asked what might EEC do to assist the middle class who struggle greatly and may have to make a choice whereby their entire salary goes to child care. Dr. Fogg responded that families

typically choose care based upon what they can afford, which in some cases results in families compromising on quality. She added that using incentives to improve quality can help families make a stronger connection to the concept of quality care, which in turn increases the demand. Dr. Fogg noted that child care is the only form of education where parents pay the highest share of out of pocket costs, at approximately 25-30%.

Secretary Reville thanked the panel for their leadership on this issue, stating that it makes a real contribution to the Board's on-going conversation. He asked who the career ladder applies to and how would the endowment funds be used. Ms. Reed replied that the career ladder is still in development. She noted that while Head Start and private, for-profit centers have their own career ladders, the state at large does not have a model that fits all prototypes--out-of-school time, family child care and center-based programs. In addition, Ms. Reed stated that the career ladder can be used as a guide to meet the needs of those employed in both license and license-exempt programs. Ms. Hawkins added that the career ladder is intended as a guide for those who are working directly with children who are focused on working and staying in the field. Commissioner Killins commented that this career ladder is designed to keep the front-line educators teaching, by nurturing and coaching them. Mr. Swan then responded to the endowment questions posed by Secretary Reville. He explained that various models for creating endowment funds have been successfully employed in other states and the state collaborative partners who serve in an advisory capacity set the criteria for how the funds should be used.

Chairperson Chesloff commented that other states have been successful in getting the business community engaged in early childhood but Massachusetts has not been so active in this engagement. He reported that a conference for business leaders will occur this summer and would be a wonderful opportunity to present information like this to the broader business community. Board Member Huang stated that he is fascinated by business collaboration and would like to further discuss how to get the business community involved. Mr. Swan stated that he would be pleased to do so, adding that it is a matter of marketing to raise awareness and understanding of this work.

Ms. Reed stated that she would like to see a member of EEC participate in the endowment fund discussions.

Board Member Wasser Gish thanked BTWIC for its work and the panelist for their participation in today's discussion. Commissioner Killins added that EEC is appreciative of its partnership with BTWIC.

II. Community and Strategic Planning (Professional Development, Mental Health, CCR&R, and Community & Family Engagement Systems) – Discussion and Vote

Relevant documents included in Board materials:

- *A Strategic Plan for Linking EEC Funding Systems into a Coordinated System of Support for Children, Families and the ECE/OST Workforce* – PowerPoint presentation, dated January 11, 2011
- Draft Motion to Approve Policy Objectives and Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2012, Coordinated Family and Community Engagement, Educator and Provider Support, and Mental Health Consultation Services Grants

Director of Interagency Partnerships Anita Moeller presented the Board with information regarding four programs, Educator Provider Support (EPS), Early Mental Health Coordination (EMH), Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies, and Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) and referred Board Members to the PowerPoint presentation and related materials included in their Board

binders. She began with a description that outlined the linkages between these programs and EEC's strategic plan and its mission to serve all children and all providers. Ms. Moeller articulated the key assumption that education begins at birth and explained that research points to a need for local collaboration and parent involvement. She then addressed how to develop an integrated system, with EPS, EMH, CCR&R and CFCE having their own pathways but sharing common designs and common goals. Ms. Moeller offered a brief description of each program's purpose, method of delivery, and FY11 pathway and outcomes, followed by the proposed changes in FY12 to each of these programs. She reminded the Board that they were being asked to vote on the proposed changes to the EPS, EMH, and CFCE grants for FY12.

Board Member Wasser Gish expressed concern that EEC is moving away from a classroom level support and asked about access to third party billing for individual children. Commissioner Killins replied that the focus for the mental health grantees is to serve children and families through the development of long-term relationships with educators that can place an emphasis on early identification and classroom supports. Grantees will work to foster collaboration for improved access to supportive services for children and their families that maximize available resources.

Board Member Chi-Cheng Huang commented on the shortage of mental health providers as well as approved practicum opportunities. He inquired whether it may be possible for EEC and the mental health grantees to mentor and supervise PhD candidates in the classroom to address the behavioral health needs of children. Board Member Marilyn Anderson Chase added that there is a critical shortage of mental health providers in the community at large and, in particular, to assist children in this age group. She noted there was a need to engage and train professionals and improve curriculum.

Chairperson Chesloff thanked Ms. Moeller for this tremendous piece of work. This presentation offered a very clear picture of what a system would look like, and clearly demonstrates how the system is being built.

Board Member Childs reported that the Policy and Fiscal Committee felt strongly that this was a helpful overall framework and summarized the Committee's comments on the three proposed procurements. The Committee felt that EEC's ability to reallocate EPS funds based on data to address local need was important and responsive, as the dollars need to go where needs are identified. The Committee recognized the value added through the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment, where grantees were able to identify areas of strength and deficiencies and thought it would also be helpful to get a consumer perspective at the family level. Lastly, Board Member Childs noted that the Committee appreciated the feedback loop with K-12 regarding the mental health grants. These opportunities provide early identification and intervention that address the public health outcomes of victims of bullying as well as bullies, by offering supports that can help children modify and regulate their behaviors that will assist with successful integration into K-12.

Board Member Craig O'Brien expressed her support and felt that the proposed framework outlines the steps needed to move toward integration.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve, subject to appropriation, the Department's proposal for procuring in Fiscal Year 2012 coordinated family and community engagement services as described in the Board Presentation. The motion passed with one abstention; Board Member Craig O'Brien abstained.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve, subject to appropriation, the Department's proposal for procuring educator and provider support services in Fiscal Year 2012, as described in the Board Presentation. The motion passed unanimously.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve subject to appropriation, the Department's proposal for procuring in Fiscal Year 2012, a statewide consultation system of mental health supports for children and families, as described in the Board Presentation. The motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Secretary

Secretary Reville opened his remarks by wishing all a Happy New Year and shared three updates. First, education continues to be a top priority in the second term of the Patrick-Murray Administration. He noted that the Governor's Budget, scheduled for release on January 26th, calls for aggressive cuts statewide. Next, he reported that the results on the Grade 3 MCAS Reading test were near record high this year with improvements across the board. Finally, the PK-20 Council has identified early literacy proficiency as a top priority and has assembled members of all education Boards and the Commissioners of EEC, ESE, and Higher Education to oversee these initiatives. Secretary Reville stated that this initiative will take the collaborative work to a new level of intensity, and he is looking forward to working with Commissioner Killins and her team.

III. Legislative Agenda – Discussion

Relevant documents included in Board materials:

- *Early Childhood Data Systems: Establishing a Policy and Legislative Context* – PowerPoint presentation dated January, 11, 2011

Commissioner Killins began the presentation of Early Childhood Data Systems by explaining that this overall process will take two years to complete. She referred Board members to the PowerPoint presentation included in their board binders. Commissioner Killins provided a brief overview of the background of early childhood data systems and EEC's research to implement a system. She identified the ten core elements and reviewed five states that had recently enacted legislation to support such a data system. She summarized Massachusetts' policies and EEC's enabling statute which provides for a childhood data system, explaining that not all children and not all programs are specifically included in statutory authorization. The existing legislation addresses only the data needs of the children and programs that are funded or licensed by the Department. The exclusion of other data creates issues of:

- mismatch of information;
- compatibility;
- identification and structure; and
- real-time data.

The proposed legislative changes would request the broadest authority so that all children and programs would be included. Commissioner Killins reviewed the Advisory Council feedback and recommendations and concluded by reviewing the proposed legislative amendment language.

Board Chairperson Chesloff inquired about the next steps. Commissioner Killins replied that the legislative language would be taken back to the Board committee to read closely. EEC would then work with EOE to review and file. Secretary Reville remarked that the data system would provide a portfolio for children – where they are going, where they have been and how to serve them.

IV. FY2011 Legislative Report Framework – Discussion

Relevant documents included in Board materials:

- *EEC Annual Legislative Report* – PowerPoint presentation dated January, 2011

Commissioner Killins introduced the discussion about the framework for the legislative report and acknowledged EEC Educator/Provider Support Specialist Pam Roux for her work on the report. She remarked that the draft report is over 100 pages in length and will be brought back to the Board for a vote in February, prior to its submission date of February 15th. Commissioner Killins reviewed the outline and structure of the report, discussing its alignment with the Board’s five strategic directions of quality, workforce, family, communications and infrastructure. She noted that the Frameworks Institute will produce an Executive Summary to accompany the report.

Various suggestions were offered by board members to improve the report. Due to the importance of QRIS, it was suggested that QRIS be a stand-alone section through which EEC can educate legislators on this initiative. Goals and concerns that are directly responsive to the legislature should be flagged and highlighted in the executive summary to ensure that they are effectively addressed. Appendices should be intentional so that the information contained therein is responsive and accessible. Commissioner Killins thanked board members for their feedback/

On motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the meeting adjourn at 3:53 p.m., 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