



Board of Early Education and Care

November 13, 2012
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

J.D. Chesloff, Chairperson
Paul Reville, Secretary of Education
Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D., Vice Chairperson
Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.
Elizabeth Childs, M.D.
Carol Craig O'Brien
Joan Wasser Gish, J.D.
Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Ph.D.
Cheryl A. Stanley, Ed.D
Mary Wallachy
Sherri Killins, Ed.D, Commissioner of the Department and Secretary to the Board

Members of the Board of Early Education Absent

Marilyn Anderson Chase, designee of JudyAnn Bigby, M.D., Secretary of EOHHS

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chairperson JD Chesloff began by commenting that he was “fired up” about today’s agenda items which focus on building the P-20 pipeline. He remarked that Secretary Paul Reville was temporarily detained, but would arrive shortly.

Comments from the Commissioner

Relevant document included in the Board materials:

- *Commissioner’s Report, dated November 13, 2012*

Commissioner Killins thanked everyone for attending the Board meeting and shared her morning’s experience of participating in a “Principal of the Day” event at an East Boston elementary school. She then highlighted the following topics included in her monthly Commissioner’s report:

- Family Literacy Month: Commissioner Killins reported that the Patrick-Murray Administration has declared November to be Family Literacy Month. As part of this celebration, she participated in the Wee Read PJ Night, a family literacy event at the Berkshire Museum in

Pittsfield. There were approximately 300 children and their parents in attendance; every child was provided with a book to take home a book.

- Interagency Partnerships: Commissioner Killins reported that a second Massachusetts Early Learning Plan retreat with state government partners was held on October 24, 2012. Professor Hiro Yoshikawa of Harvard University and Byron Garrett were speakers at the event. The retreat topics included opportunities for cross-training, professional development, and movement towards a single way to think about eligibility across state agencies. Commissioner Killins noted that the group planned to reconvene in May 2013.
- Early Childhood Mental Health Grant: On November 5, 2012, EEC and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) held a meeting with the current Mental Health Consultation Services grantees to discuss the strategic direction of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program. Commissioner Killins expressed her excitement about EEC's approach to mental health supports as a continuum of services for children and families and reported that EEC and DMH are collaborating to develop a central intake process and coaching/training efforts to build the skills of providers.
- Common Metric Update: Commissioner Killins reported that 22 local school districts are currently using kindergarten entry assessments. She confirmed that over 100 districts have been invited to participate next September. EEC has engaged a new vendor to determine what is needed to develop the common metric by reviewing and making judgments about the data received.
- Birth to Third Grade Alignment: Commissioner Killins lauded the recent legislation passed in Massachusetts, *An Act Relative to Third Grade Reading Proficiency*, as an excellent opportunity to move our work forward. She noted that Kristie Kauerz, Ed.D, provided information and counsel to current grantees. Commissioner Killins emphasized that this was now an opportunity for grantees to begin planning with other entities.
- Early Educators Fellowship Institute (EFFI): Commissioner Killins reported that EFFI learning opportunities that are being offered through the CAYL Institute will be funded with money from the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. Through this funding, EEC and CAYL will sponsor an opportunity for communities to send teams to participate in training with Louise Derman Sparks, Dr. Jacqueline Jones, Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan, and Dr. Karen Mapp. Applications for this unique learning opportunity are due by December 7, 2012.

FY13 Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Grant Amendment – Discussion and Vote

Commissioner Killins reported that EEC had received several qualifying responses from vendors seeking UPK funding through the second phase of the FY2013 UPK competitive grant program; however, the funding previously approved by the Board was insufficient to fund these proposals. For this reason, the Department is now asking the Board to amend the prior UPK vote and add an additional \$185,000 to allow EEC to fund these additional quality programs.

Chairperson Chesloff clarified that these additional funds were supported by the existing UPK appropriation. Board Member Carol Craig O'Brien stated that she was very excited about the number of high quality responses to the RFR because she was concerned that the Department would not have enough quality programs after the Board realigned the goals of the UPK program.

Board members suggested that the motion should be clarified to reflect that the total amount of available funding is “up to \$985,000.” EEC’s General Counsel Carmel Sullivan noted the change in the motion.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the Department’s proposed amendment to increase the funding associated with the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Open Competitive Grant in Fiscal Year 2013 from \$800,000 up to \$985,000, in accordance with the goals and the criteria described in the September 18, 2012 and November 13, 2012 board materials. The motion passed unanimously.

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.

- **Alison Corning Clarke, Program Director of the Massachusetts Office of Reach Out and Read (ROR)**, shared that ROR works in conjunction with pediatricians in approximately 275 clinics and practices to encourage early language development by getting children to read. She noted that ROR has a strong presence in EEC’s designated high needs communities. Ms. Corning Clarke also stated that by the end of 2012, with the support of EEC funding, ROR will have held four “Journey to Literacy” conferences. The final conference will be held on Saturday, December 1st, will target family child care providers, and Commissioner Killins will be speaking at this event.
- **Leo Delaney, Chief Executive Officer of Ellis Memorial and President of the Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care**, reiterated the need for investment in the field of early education and expressed his hope that the vote for this investment will come today. He said that he and his colleagues appreciated the Board’s support and mentioned that he met with Secretary Reville and Undersecretary Tom Weber to encourage the Secretariat to support investment in early education. Mr. Delaney noted his concern about any potential 9C cuts because the field cannot absorb more funding reductions.
- **Gail Brown, Director of Enable, Inc.**, complimented the Board and Commissioner Killins for their work. She stated that that her program serves over 700 children, 75% of whom receive subsidized child care, and many of whom have high needs. She expressed her appreciation for the financial literacy information posted by the Department and for the STEM focus in early education and out of school time. She reported that 30 family child care providers affiliated with Enable meet every Thursday night to pursue their BA degree through an off - campus model. Ms. Brown concluded that it takes a lot of work and handholding, but it is a worthwhile effort.
- **Mary Reed, President of the Bessie Tart Wilson Initiative for Children**, congratulated the Board on this “phenomenal” budget request proposal. She noted that the K to 12 and Higher Education budgets are significantly higher than early childhood education budget which has belittled the stature and importance of this program area.

End of Public Comment period.

Routine Business:

- **Approval of October 16, 2012 Board Minutes – Vote**

Board Member Joan Wasser Gish requested one minor edit to the Board Minutes on page 7, asking that the record reflect that the Policy and Research and Fiscal Committees felt that EEC was ready to invest in quality because of the infrastructure investments made by the field.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the minutes of the October 16, 2012 Board Minutes, as revised. The motion passed.

- **Board Committee and Advisory Reports:**

Joint Meeting – Policy and Research Committee and Fiscal Committee

Board Member Wasser Gish reported that the Policy and Research and Fiscal Committees met jointly to review the proposal for the FY2014 budget. She commended Commissioner Killins, Deputy Commissioner William Concannon, and his staff for their hard work to develop and prepare this budget proposal. Board Member Wasser Gish expressed that all Board members that participated in the meeting gave substantial input and that this effort will provide the foundation for a strong discussion.

Board Member Beth Childs thanked Board Member Wasser Gish for her work. She then provided an update on the FY2013 budget, reporting that there is currently an \$11.6 million surplus in the Income Eligible account, which includes the Infant/Toddler increase and Summer Only for this year. The DTA account remains unchanged with a \$3.5 deficit while the Supportive account remains volatile, showing a \$600,000 surplus. EEC is working with DCF to further understand the volatility and under-utilization. In conclusion, Board Member Childs reported that the waitlist continues to grow and is currently over 47,000.

Planning and Evaluation Committee

Board Member Craig O'Brien stated that she would share the Planning and Evaluation Committee report later in the agenda.

Advisory Council

Board Member Eleonora Villegas-Reimers reported that the Advisory Council had not met since the October Board meeting.

- **Disclosures:**

Board Member Villegas-Reimers submitted a written disclosure that she works for Wheelock College who is a recipient of EEC grant funds. Board Member Craig O'Brien submitted a written disclosure that she contracts with Westwood Public Schools and it receives funding from EEC.

New Business:

No new business was raised.

Items for Discussion and Action:

I. FY2014 State Budget – Discussion and Vote

Relevant resource included in Board Materials:

- *Creating a Policy Framework and FY14 Proposed Budget, PowerPoint, dated November 13, 2012*

William Concannon, EEC Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance, began the discussion by sharing that the FY2014 budget was built with values, not spreadsheets. Everything in the proposed budget is tied the Strategic Plan and Mission of the Department. He explained that a holistic approach had been utilized to create this budget, focusing on quality, workforce, access, transportation and infrastructure. Deputy Commissioner Concannon highlighted that the Department's overall budget has decreased by \$66 million since 2009; however, these reductions did not impede EEC's substantial progress over the past three years.

Deputy Commissioner Concannon shared that the requests for FY2014 funding are framed in the context of long held and firmly developed policies to support: (1) Quality Investment, (2) Access for High Needs Children, (3) Quality Programs, (4) Transportation, and (5) Accountability. The following recommendations were presented to and supported by the both the Fiscal and the Policy and Research Committees of the Board:

- An Investment in Quality: \$15,594,821
- An Investment in our Children and Families: \$36,209,423
- An Investment in Transportation: \$17,586,713
- Total Funding Request: \$69,390,957

Board Member Mary Wallachy complimented Deputy Commissioner Concannon on his remarkable work to blend in the most salient points made during the committees' meetings. Deputy Commissioner Concannon in turn thanked the Board Committee members and Commissioner Killins for their work on the budget.

Chairperson Chesloff shared his belief that EEC is ready for this budget as a Board and a department. He applauded the tie-in of the budget to the Strategic Plan, citing that the work of Board retreat lives on and is a valid and valuable document. He applauded the process by which this budget was developed, including the back and forth to ensure that the right questions were being asked. Chairperson Chesloff concluded by stating that he was very pleased with the Department's progress, yet recognized that there was still much work to do.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 15D, § 4, hereby adopts the Commissioner's proposed Fiscal Year 2014 annual budget as its budget recommendation, and further authorizes the Commissioner to submit the Board's final budget recommendation to the Secretary of Education. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Early Education and Care Strategic Plan Review: Part I – Discussion

Relevant resource included in Board Materials:

- *Strategic Plan Review, PowerPoint, dated November 13, 2012*

Board Member Craig O'Brien outlined that the Planning and Evaluation Committee was tasked with pulling together information on the Strategic Plan (Plan) from the July 2012 Board Retreat. She set out the Committee's schedule to review and update the existing Strategic Directions over the next four months, which will culminate in a Board vote in March 2013. The directions to be addressed will include: Finance and Governance (October 2012); Governance, Standards, Accountability and Regulations (November 2012); Workforce (December 2012); and Families and Linkages (January 2012). Chairperson Chesloff summarized the Plan's development and creation for those less familiar with the process. He explained that EEC underwent a Strategic Planning process three years ago, which resulted in the current Five Year Strategic Plan, and that the Board is now updating and refreshing the Strategic Directions for the final two years.

Board members discussed the similarities and differences between the current planning process and the prior process. They were prompted to focus on the broader goals associated with the Strategic Directions rather than spending time word-smithing. In addition, it was re-affirmed that conversations to update the existing Plan are occurring at the committee level and all are welcome to attend. Board Member Childs emphasized the importance of the Board's participation in developing the Plan, as she felt that it helped EEC move forward with a clear direction. She remarked that this is the time to clarify the Plan through discussion, as opposed to waiting until the March vote.

Board Member Craig O'Brien reported on the work of the Planning and Evaluation Committee to review and refresh the Plan, noting that the Committee had developed nine goals under the Finance Strategic Direction. She then discussed the goals identified. In response to this presentation, some Board members raised concerns that these nine goals were too specific and did not establish broad-based outcome statements. Board Members Craig O'Brien and Villegas-Reimers reminded the Board that the Planning and Evaluation Committee was charged with identifying action items for the final two years of the Plan, and as a result, the goals presented today are intentionally specific.

Board Member Wasser Gish opined that it is hard to develop a strategic plan and inquired if the Board would benefit by engaging a third party with strategic plan experience to work with the Board to complete this work. Chairperson Chesloff indicated that he did not think the Board needed a consultant at this point. He added that if the subcommittee conversations are not working, the Board needs to consider an alternative approach. Board Member Scott-Chandler suggested that there might be a way for each committee to put aside time in their respective meetings to move this work forward.

Board Member Craig O'Brien noted that future discussions will present the Plan in a format familiar to Board members to avoid any further confusion.

III. Draft Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Standards for Early Education and Care and Update from State Summit – Discussion

Relevant resource included in Board Materials:

- *2012 Pre-STEM and STEM Summit, PowerPoint, dated November 13, 2012*

Commissioner Killins proudly reported that over seventy individuals attended the Pre-STEM meeting held October 17, 2012 at Intel in Hudson, MA. These individuals represented CFCE or EPS grantees, EEC staff and staff from Wheelock College. Commissioner Killins then introduced the panel for today's discussion, which included Katie DeVita and Eric Lieberman, EEC Educator and Provider Support Specialists and Karen Worth, Elementary Education Professor at Wheelock College.

Ms. DeVita stated that the Pre-STEM meeting provided participants with an opportunity to discuss the draft standards for early childhood, as well as with a hands-on opportunity to engage in STEM activities for infants through school-age children. She also reported on the goals and over-arching questions for the early childhood strand at the STEM Summit.

Chairperson Chesloff noted that he is not aware of other states intentionally linking STEM with early childhood education and asked the panelists if the STEM sessions were designed using models from other states or from a national model. Ms. DeVita responded that the sessions were developed by the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in conjunction with input from other local colleges and professors.

Ms. Worth then provided an overview of the development of the draft Pre-School Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE) Standards, noting that the development of the Pr-School STE standards are not to be viewed separately but must align and correlate with existing standards and frameworks. She emphasized that the standards are a work in progress, which are intended to align with the K-12 standards. She then shared the timeline for the completing the project by the end of June 2013 and noted that Massachusetts is doing something unique, as very few states have substantial STEM standards for Pre-K.

Board Member Villegas-Reimers stressed the importance of working with educators to understand the importance of STEM in early childhood. Ms. Worth agreed that we must change the teacher's lens from dramatic play to science and math.

Board Member Huang shared his enthusiasm about the Pre-School STE standards and asked how Massachusetts compares globally, in relation to Singapore or other countries. Ms. Worth responded that the United States is behind many countries in its efforts to link STEM to early childhood, but we are ahead in the intentionality of our efforts.

Comments from the Secretary

Before moving to the next agenda item, Secretary Reville welcomed his colleagues, Commissioner Mitchell Chester and Chairperson Maura Banta from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and Kristie Kauerz from the University of Washington, who are present to discuss efforts to align Pre-K to 3rd Grade education. He noted that their presence is a manifestation of the notion of a seamless education system from birth through higher education in Massachusetts.

Secretary Reville commented on the FY2014 budget and shared that he is passionate about the need for funding in early education. He acknowledged that Massachusetts is currently facing revenue shortfalls in FY2013, which may require the Governor to make adjustments, and as a result, the FY2014 budget outlook remains tight. He too highlighted that the new law, *An Act Relative to Third Grade Reading Proficiency*, focuses on five areas: comprehensive curricula; effective instructional practices; professional development and training; assessment; and family partnership strategies. This law establishes an Early Literacy Expert Panel to make recommendations to the Commonwealth's three education departments and the Executive Office of Education. Secretary Reville noted that they are currently accepting nominations for the panel. He added that all levels of the Education Secretariat are doing outreach to the field to learn what it takes to be an effective teacher in the 21st century and what the Commonwealth needs to do to support teacher preparation.

Secretary Reville congratulated Board Member Wallachy on her appointment.

IV. Pre-K to 3rd Grade Alignment – Panel Discussion

Relevant resource included in Board Materials:

- *Pre-school through 3rd Grade (P-3): Planning, Implementing and Evaluating, PowerPoint, dated November 13, 2012*
- *Panelist Biographies dated November 13, 2012*

Commissioner Killins introduced the panelists for the Pre-School to 3rd Grade discussion: Kristie Kauerz, Ed.D. from the University of Washington; Mitchell Chester, Commissioner for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and Maura Banta, Chairperson to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Ms. Kauerz thanked the Commissioner and the Board for inviting her to speak today and remarked that this is the first time that she has had the opportunity to speak to two Commissioners, two Board Chairs and one Secretary of Education at the same time. Ms. Kauerz reviewed the existing education governance structure in Massachusetts, noting its advantages and disadvantages. On the positive end, the structure creates governmental bodies with authority to act; however, it also creates independent bodies with authority to create their own rules and procedures to satisfy their legislative mandates.

Ms. Kauerz highlighted the national movement towards creating high quality learning opportunities at each level of the PreK-3rd grade continuum and noted that the “magic sauce” is alignment across each level, which has intentionality, is flexible, and makes sense to children, families and educators. She then shared her thoughts on three essentials for PreK-3rd grade alignment:

- High quality pre-school learning opportunities;
- High quality Full-Day Kindergarten; and
- High quality early learning opportunities in grades 1-3 to sustain the gains and lay the foundation for later learning.

Ms. Kauerz then identified some of the challenges to aligning high quality educational opportunities across educational sectors, including lack of shared metrics, creation of cylinders of excellence (i.e. QRIS versus Common Core), the need to establish a common vocabulary, and divergent governance structures. In sum, Ms. Kauerz offered eight elements of a comprehensive PreK-3rd grade approach that may assist states in finding common ground: (1) Resources for Cross-Sector work; (2) Administrator Quality and Capacity; (3) Teacher Quality; (4) Instructional Tools; (5) Learning Environment; (6) Data Driven Improvement and Access; (7) Engaged Families; and (8) Pathways for Children.

Chairperson Chesloff thanked Ms. Kauerz for her presentation and introduced ESE Board Chairperson Banta. He noted that she works at IBM and that she was instrumental in EEC having access to IBM resources when Massachusetts was awarded funds through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. Chairperson Banta thanked Commissioner Killins and the Board for inviting her to participate in this important panel. She affirmed much of Ms. Kauerz’s presentation, addressed the challenges raised by the different levels of authority between the Massachusetts education agencies, and emphasized the importance of credentials, including the creation of a K-8 license.

Commissioner Chester thanked Chairperson Chesloff for including ESE in today’s conversation. He also praised Commissioner Killins and highlighted her savvy, persistence, and tenacity to ensure that the PreK- 3rd grade continuum is included in all conversations. He began by noting that we have limited time with children and we have to strive to ensure that that time is purposeful and impactful. Commissioner Chester shared that Massachusetts has a long history of setting curriculum standards, including Pre-K, as evidenced by the fact that Massachusetts is the only state to incorporate STE standards for pre-school children. Commissioner Chester also reported that the Commonwealth has recently revised its English Language Arts and Mathematics standards to include early childhood. He took the opportunity to discuss teacher/administrator evaluation, commenting that if done well, evaluations should be deliberate conversations to identify what is working and to support teacher growth.

Board Member Childs asked about K-12 attention to social emotional development, adding that it seems more challenging in the K-12 and asked how EEC and ESE could work together on this. Commissioner Chester responded that social emotional development never stops and that this is a hugely important area. However, he expressed concern about the trade-off between being careful and kind to students versus holding students to high standards. Secretary Reville asked Ms. Kauerz to share her ideas on this subject, acknowledging that he believes we have to do a better job at figuring out what the indicators are and taking a balanced approach as Commissioner Chester suggested. Ms. Kauerz replied that high quality instruction includes creating relationships. She offered that the CLASS tool, which has been validated for PreK-5th grade classrooms, offers an assessment system that looks at instructional quality, emotional quality and classroom management. She opined that high quality instruction is both careful and kind and ensures adequate curriculum – it is not an either/or choice. Commissioner Killins added that EEC is currently using the CLASS assessment tool in a pre-school pilot project in Springfield. Board Member Cheryl Stanley clarified that teacher quality is not just about knowledge, but also about the disposition of teachers. Board Member Villegas-Reimers suggested that any discussion on social emotional development should pay attention to executive function.

Board Member Scott-Chandler asked Commissioner Chester to address ESE’s approach to English Language Learners. Commissioner Chester responded that it is all about language development and that we need to provide language rich environments for all children, regardless of their primary language. Board Member Wasser Gish inquired as to what EEC can learn as it moves forward with STEM, Common Core and other standards, to support educators in early childhood programs. Commissioner Chester expressed concern about the widely held notion that education prior to Kindergarten is considered play and that children’s knowledge and skills are not stretched. He emphasized the importance of having intentional conversations about curriculum in early childhood.

Board Member Chi-Cheng Huang asked about the engagement of low income, single parents in the K-12 and how ESE measures it. Chairperson Banta replied that family engagement happens on a school level and that ESE’s role in this area is limited to encouragement. Commissioner Chester added that there have been interesting conversations on the state board level about family engagement and how to measure it. He noted that ESE has resources that districts can use but stated that there is a limit to ESE’s reach. Ms. Kauerz commented that state level authorities set the context for what is important at the local level. She noted that some of her favorite family engagement strategies are in Boston and shared that K-3 teachers were doing home visits to families who were stressed. She also shared an example from the Seattle public schools whereby family engagement brochures are available in 28 languages for use at the local level.

Chairperson Chesloff concluded by stressing the importance of quality leadership and thanked the panelists for their input.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the meeting adjourn at 4:09 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