



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**



Family Advisory Council Orientation

October 29, 2026

Agenda

- **Welcome**
- **Team Building Activity**
- **EEC Agency Overview**
- **Divisional Overview**
- **Next Steps and Wrap Up**

Welcome

- **Ayesha Rodriguez**
Family Engagement Program Manager
- **Tyreese Nicolas**
Deputy Commissioner, Family Access and Engagement Division
- **Commissioner Amy Kershaw**

Activity: From Many, One

Think and Type

1. One word describes what you bring to this experience.
2. One word describes what you hope to gain from this experience.

Bring _____ Gain _____

Read the Room

1. Read the responses
2. Use Zoom reactions for responses that resonate with you



3. Share out (name, region, and reflection)

One Group Question

Looking at everything we collectively bring and everything we're hoping to gain, what's one of the words you hope will describe this group by the end of the fiscal year?



EEC Agency Overview

Who We Are



Our Vision

EEC's vision is that children, youth, and families reach their full potential now and in the future.



Our Mission

EEC creates the conditions for children, youth, and families to thrive socially, academically, and economically.

We work to achieve our vision and mission by:

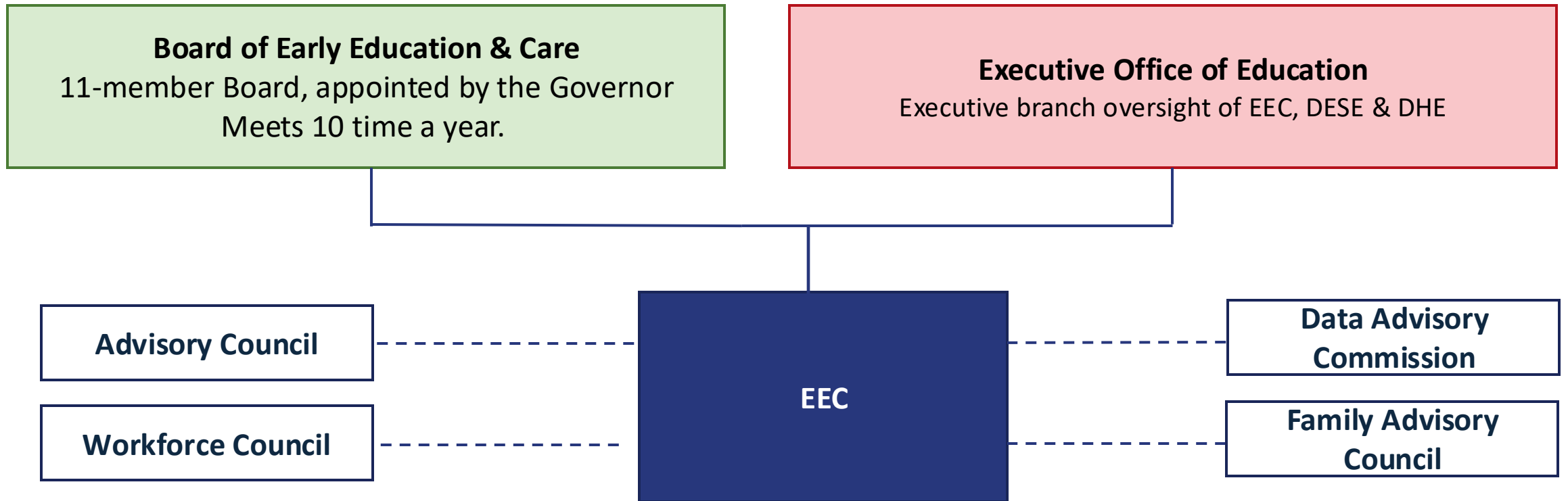
- Collaborating across organizations and sectors to build an equitable system of safe, affordable, high quality early education and care
- Supporting residential, placement, out of school and after school, and early education and care programs and educators in their essential work with children and youth
- Increasing opportunities for families to support their children and attain economic mobility.

Our Core Values

- Advance equity and inclusion
- Maintain a holistic perspective
- Embrace collaboration
- Champion innovation
- Center fulfillment

Organizational Structure

EEC Oversight



Councils and Commissions meet quarterly.

EEC Organizational Structure

Agency Divisions

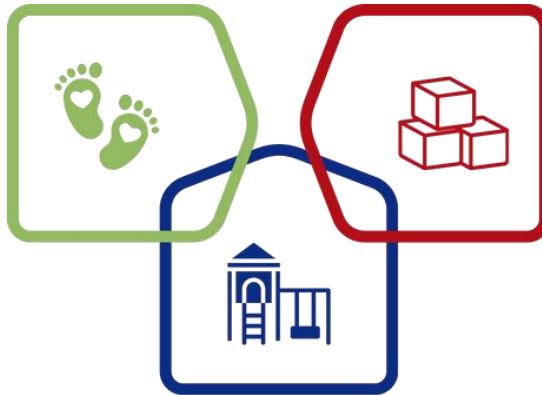
EEC has seven divisions

- Finance & Agency Operations
- Legal
- Field Operations
- Family Access & Engagement
- Workforce, Program Supports, & Innovation
- Research & Policy
- Commissioner's Office

EEC Programs and Services Overview

Support Directly to Families

- Child Care Financial Assistance
- Referrals to child care programs
- Family and community engagement
- Preschool access and affordability



Training and Support for Educators

- Professional learning opportunities
- Apprenticeship programs
- Educator credentialing and certification
- Educator supports, training, coaching
- Higher Education Scholarships

Oversight and Support to Early Education and Care, Out of School Time, and Residential and Placement Programs

- Licensing, monitoring and investigations
- Safety and quality standards
- Workforce Background Record Checks
- Operational grants (Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3))
- Early Education and Out of School Time Capital Grant (EEOST)
- Support for ongoing continuous quality improvement (CQI)

EEC at-a-Glance

Oversight

- EEC was created in 2005 when the Office of Child Care Services and Early Learning Services Office merged to form the Department of Early Education and Care
- EEC is overseen by an 11-member board. EEC has monthly board meetings that are open to members of the public
- EEC is an agency within the Education Secretariat
- [EEC Statute](#) [EEC Regulations](#)

By the Numbers

- EEC has ~290 employees distributed across 1 central and 5 regional offices
- EEC licenses over 9,000 programs, supports over 40,000 professionals working in programs, and can subsidize up to ~70,000 children
- Through EEC's mix delivery system, programs have the capacity to serve ~267,000 children across the Commonwealth

Funding

- EEC's budget in FY27 is comprised of approximately \$1.844 billion in state and federal investments.

EEC's Strategic Objectives



FAMILY ACCESS

Families have equitable access to quality and affordable early education and care in the communities in which they live, learn, and work.



PROGRAM QUALITY

Programs licensed or funded by EEC support children's health and safety and provide high quality environments that are culturally responsive, inclusive, and support children's learning and development in partnership with families.



WORKFORCE SUPPORTS

A diverse field of educators, leaders, and program staff is competitively compensated and supported by clear professional pathways that promote quality, retention, and advancement.



PROGRAM STABILITY

Programs licensed or funded by EEC are operationally stable and financially sustainable.



AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE

EEC has sufficient internal capacity, organizational structures, and diverse perspectives and expertise to carry out its mission and strategic objectives.



Divisional Overview

Family Access & Engagement

The Family Access and Engagement team ensures that families have access to timely and dignified services and supports that help children thrive and families work.

Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA)

- Administer and oversee CCFA
- Work with CCR&Rs and contracted providers to assist families with:
 - applying for child care assistance (vouchers, contracted slots)
 - Locating child care, resources, and referrals
- Help families navigate the child care system and resolve challenges
- Provide CCFA policy and procedural guidance and support across EEC units, and with families and stakeholders (including responding to inquiries)
- Provide technical assistance, oversight, and monitoring to CCR&Rs and contracted providers

Community and Family Supports

- Promote family engagement principles, practices and framework across EEC and stakeholders
- Administration of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement programs, ParentChild+ and Reach Out and Read grants
- Coordinate with community organizations to provide families with services to promote healthy child development and increase school readiness
- Build capacity among communities to help families identify quality programs and access resources

Head Start Collaboration Office

- Administer State Head Start Collaboration Office grants
- Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start programs and other appropriate programs, services and initiatives
- Assist in building early childhood systems
- Facilitate the involvement of Head Start programs in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions affecting target populations and other families with low income
- Communicate with stakeholder groups for information sharing, planning, and partnering and serve as a conduit of information between regional offices, the State and local early childhood systems.

Workforce Development, Program Supports & Innovation

The Workforce Development, Program Supports & Innovation team is focused on developing and supporting the early education and care workforce by administering programs with resources, professional learning, and quality supports; and investing in approaches that strengthen program stability, capacity, and quality.

Workforce Development

- Career Pathways and Educator Scholarships
- Apprenticeships & workforce pipelines
- ECE Scholarship
- Professional Learning & Career Advancement
- Educator Credentialing & Certifications
- Community & statewide workforce partnerships
- ECE Student Loan repayment

Program & Quality Supports

- EEC regional technical assistance (Program Quality and Behavioral Health)
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Statewide Professional Development Academy
- Professional Development Centers
- Early Childhood Support Organizations (ECOs)
- Pyramid Model
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMH)
- Curriculum review and resources

Program & System Infrastructure

- Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)
- Capital Grant & Facility Improvements
- Family Child Care Supports
- Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)

Innovation

- Employer Child Care Innovation Fund and Business Front Door
- Data-informed improvement & evaluation
- Pilot, learn, and scale promising approaches

Field Operations – Licensing & Investigations

EEC licenses over 8,000 child care programs across the state. This includes both family child care (FCC) and group/school age (GSA) programs. As part of our duty to ensure health and safety within programs, EEC has an investigations team that reviews potential matters of regulatory non-compliance.

Family Child Care (FCC) – Child care program that cares for up to 10 children within an individual’s home

Group/School Age (GSA) – Also referred to as center-based; a program at a dedicated facility usually with a larger capacity

Licensing:

EEC’s child care licensors are often the primary point of contact for many programs. They spend a lot of time visiting programs and providing technical support to ensure success.

Licensors also ensure that programs are meeting the standards set by EEC so children are well-cared for. This includes:

- Having all appropriate permits
- Background Records Checks for all staff
- Educators are qualified for the roles they hold
- Meeting educator-to-child ratios
- Following health and safety requirements (safe sleep, naptime, termination, mandated reporting, evacuation and much more)

Investigations:

As part of maintaining programs' health and safety standards, EEC investigates complaints of potential non-compliance. Some investigations will be handled by the licensing team whereas more serious matters will be escalated to the investigations unit for review.

Results of investigations can include:

- Finding of non-compliance
- Offers of technical assistance for support
- Corrective action response

Investigators will work closely with licensors and often other agencies (particularly the Department of Children and Families (DCF)) throughout their review.

Policy, Strategy, & Research

Data Analytics & Research

- Support data-driven decision making by conducting analyses and supporting research that examines participation in, implementation, and/or effectiveness of EEC investments, supports, services, programs, and policies
- Improve accessibility of EEC data and research

Policy Development

- Lead and support development of new and revised policies, working in collaboration with colleagues across the agency
- Ongoing refinement of agency-wide policy development, approval, and implementation processes with attention to incorporating internal and external stakeholder perspectives and input
- Support EEC regulatory revisions through developing policies and contributing to implementation plans

Strategy & Project Management

- Support strategic prioritization of projects and resources
- Manage interdivisional projects to deliver on agency priorities
- Build EEC's muscle to effectively lead and participate in project-based work

Grant Development & Management Support

- Work with grant/contract managers and procurement team to help support and coordinate consistent processes and procedures



Thank you!

View Agency KPI Dashboards (updated monthly) [here](#).