MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE DATA ADVISORY COMMISSION

Tuesday, August 4, 2026
1:00PM to 2:30PM
Virtual Meeting: Zoom Webinar
https://www.youtube.com/c/EECMass

Commission Member Attendees:

- Amy Kershaw–Commissioner of Early Education and Care, EEC
- Heidi Gold-Director of Policy for Data and Integrated Education & Human Services, EOE
- Kate Barrand–President and CEO, Horizons for Children
- Harold Blanco and Paula Echeverri Durango–Owner, Paula Barn Child Care, ECCHO-Latino
- Ellen Dickenson–Research Analytics and Planning, United Way of Massachusetts Bay
- Victoria Bergeron – Policy Researcher, Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation
- Laura Perille–President, CEO of Nurtury Early Education
- Adam Jones-Senior Policy Analyst, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center
- Andrea Howard-Vice Chair, Board of Directors, Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs as Designee of Jennifer Aldworth, Executive Director
- Tom Weber-Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education
- Elizabeth Leiwant, VP of Public Policy and Research, Neighborhood Villages
- Titus DosRemedios, Deputy Director, Strategies for Children as Designee of Amy O'Leary
- Jenn Aldworth, Executive Director, Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
- Emmalie Dropkin, Director of Data, Planning, and Evaluation, Head Start & Early Learning Programs Community Action Pioneer Valley
- Amaris Kinne, Director of Research, Neighborhood Villages
- Dr. Kimberly Lucas, EEC Board Member and Data Advisory Commission Liaison

EEC Staff Attendees:
Addison Koelle – Legislative Director, EEC
Amy Checkoway–Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Strategy and Research, EEC
Jocelyn Bowne – Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Program Support and Innovation, EEC
Tyrese Nicolas, Deputy Commissioner of Family Access and Engagement
Adrienne Murphy – Senior Director of Data Analytics, EEC
Ashley White – Director of Research, EEC
Christine McGrath – Legal Services Coordinator, EEC
Amanda Mullor – Senior Research Associate, EEC

Elyse Tibbets – Family Access Practice & Implementation Director, EEC
Eugenia Soiles – Chief of Strategic Partnerships, EEC
Jessi Murray – Chief Product Officer, EEC
Michelle Saulnier –Senior Data and Research Analyst, EEC
Arianna Burnham – Early Childhood Research & Policy Fellow, EEC
Rejina Tabay – Early Childhood External Engagement & Policy Fellow, EEC
Heather Valentine –Senior Policy and Strategy Resident, EEC
Justine Rogoff- Data Governance Manager, EEC

Minutes

1. Warm Up Activity

Amy Checkoway, EEC Deputy Commissioner of Policy, Strategy, and Research welcomed the Data Advisory Commission Members and provided a brief overview of the agenda. Commission members participated in an icebreaker activity.

2. Welcome from Commissioner

Commissioner Kershaw welcomed the Data Advisory Commission members and provided welcoming remarks. Commissioner Kershaw introduced Dr. Kim Lucas, EEC Board Member and Data Advisory Committee Liaison.

3. Data Advisory Commission FY26 Recommendations

Deputy Commissioner Checkoway welcomed Adrienne Murphy, EEC Senior Director of Data Analytics. Director Murphy provided a reminder of the FY26 recommendations that were included in the annual report to the Legislature and proposed that the group structure this meeting and future meetings around these recommendations.

4. FY26 Progress and Next Steps

Expanding Public Access to EEC Research, Data, and Analyses:

Director Murphy then transitioned the group to a discussion of updates on several of the Commission's FY26 recommendations, beginning with the Commission's recommendation around expanding and enhancing the agency's public-facing KPI dashboard. Director Murphy discussed recent updates to the EEC Key Performance Indicator ("KPI") dashboards and shared next steps.

Ashley White, EEC Research Director, then provided an overview of the newest data to be added to the KPI dashboards—data on private pay tuition. Director White began by proving insight into the purpose and high-level goals for EEC's collection of tuition data. Director White then detailed the analytic approach and methodology, shared potential questions for future inquiry related to the tuition data, and proposed discussion questions to Commission members.

Laura Perille, President, CEO of Nurtury Early Education, expressed gratitude for the analysis and sharing of this data. Member Perille recommended putting this tuition data alongside access data and family income data to understand affordability for families, especially those just beyond the Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) eligibility threshold.

Emmalie Dropkin, Director of Data, Planning, and Evaluation, Community Action Pioneer Valley, and Director Murphy discussed collecting data to better understand the effect of increased public pre-k access Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) expansion on private pay tuition rates.

Kate Barrand, President and CEO, Horizons for Children, provided positive feedback related to the publication of this tuition data. Member Barrand encouraged the agency to consider overlaying this tuition data with wage data to understand child care affordability for members of the early education and care workforce.

Member Perille suggested the possibility of using qualitative data to better understand the use of sliding fee scales, and Deputy Commissioner Checkoway emphasized the importance of integrating both qualitative data and quantitative data. Director White concluded the tuition discussion by sharing priorities and next steps for data collection related to tuition rates.

Director Murphy then discussed upcoming stakeholder engagement sessions to gather additional feedback on EEC's KPI dashboards and shared information about planned enhancements to the KPI dashboards. Deputy Commissioner Checkoway and Tom Weber, Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education, as well as Heidi Gold, Director of Policy for Data and Integrated Education & Human Services, EOE, Member Dropkin, and Director Murphy discussed the possibility of including additional geographic filters and maps in the dashboard. Amaris Kinne, Director of Research, Neighborhood Villages also encouraged EEC to think about dashboard content that supports users in understanding how they might interpret and use the data on the dashboard.

Director White shared updates about new and upcoming research and data briefs, including briefs related to EEC Capital Investments and updated Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) data. Director White also provided information related to research and data briefs that are currently in process.

Improving Data Quality and Streamlining Data Collection

Director Murphy welcomed Elyse Tibbets, EEC Family Access Practice and Implementation Director, to discuss recent initiatives that will improve data quality and streamline data collection. Director Tibbets provided an overview of the new EEC family portal, mychildcarema.gov. She detailed the intended user experience for families and for administrators and some of the information that is captured by the system. Director Tibbets detailed early implementation data collected as of mid-July 2026.

Kristyn Berry, EEC Family Experience Product Owner, discussed the impact of the new family portal on waitlist data quality. Product Owner Berry shared next steps for improvements and enhanced functionality of the family portal to benefit EEC, administrators, and families. Member Weber and Ms. Berry discussed how family and provider feedback is incorporated into enhancements. Ms. Berry, Director Tibbetts and Member Dropkin discussed feedback related to accessible information for families. Deputy Checkoway thanked the Commission members for their thoughtful input and feedback.

5. **Logistical Items**
    - Approval of minutes from April 2026
        - Member Weber moved to approve the minutes, and Member Perille seconded the motion.
        - The minutes were approved unanimously, with Member Leiwant from Neighborhood Villages abstaining.

    - FY27 meeting dates
      Deputy Commissioner Checkoway shared the upcoming dates for FY27 Data Advisory Committee meeting. The next meeting will take place on October 27, 2027.

6. **Closing**

Commissioner Kershaw provided closing remarks.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.