

**Board of Early Education and Care
Strategic Planning Retreat
August 28, 2024
9:30 AM – 4:00 PM**

**MassBay Community College
490 Franklin St, Classroom 312/313
Framingham, MA 01702**

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Present

Dr. Patrick Tutwiler, Secretary of Education
Amy Kershaw, Commissioner
Paul Belsito, Chair
Maria Gonzalez Moeller, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Kain, J.D., Designee for HHS Secretary Kate Walsh
Jamella Lee
Nikki Ruiz de Luzuriaga
George Atanasov
Dr. Kimberly D. Lucas
Jennifer James Price

Attendees:

Angela Peevy, EEC Regional Director
Eugenia Soiles, EEC Director of External Engagement
Neil Flynn, EEC Deputy General Counsel
Christine McGrath, EEC Paralegal
Jocelyn Bowne, EEC Deputy Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Supports
Tyreese Nicolas, EEC Deputy Commissioner of Family Access and Engagement
Joe Rucker, Jr., EEC Deputy Commissioner of Field Operations
Chris Power, EEC Chief of Staff
Renee Collyer, EEC Regional Director
Ian Cutler, EEC Director of Project Management & Strategy
Jesenia Burke, EEC Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Jessi Murray, EEC Chief Product Officer
Addison Koelle, EEC Legislative Director
Erin Craft, EEC Regional Director
Mark Reilly, EOE Undersecretary and Chief Operating Officer
Meaghan Blanton, EEC Deputy Commissioner for Internal Operations
Katherine Harvell, EEC Chief Operating Officer
Jackie Foley, EEC Executive Assistant to Commissioner
Amy Checkoway, EEC Senior Associate Commissioner for Policy, Research, & Data
Marisol Rosado-Ledeux, EEC Regional Director

MINUTES:

Welcome, Introductions & Meeting Overview

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Kershaw welcomed the Board and attendees. She provided an overview of the agenda and shared personnel updates. Commissioner Kershaw expressed gratitude to the Board

for their support and commitment to the Agency's work.

Chair Comments

Chair Belsito welcomed the recently sworn in Board members. Chair Belsito expressed excitement for the upcoming strategic planning.

Secretary Comments

Secretary Tutwiler welcomed the new Board members and echoed Chair Belsito's comments.

Team Building & Play

Board members and attendees participated in an ice breaker and team building activity.

Agency Updates: Since We Last Met

FY25 Budget

Commissioner Kershaw provided a status update regarding the procurement of contracted provider services. She shared the priorities EEC focused on when creating the procurement and detailed the outreach and communication to the field. Commissioner Kershaw highlighted that the procurement is flexible and adjustments can be made going forward.

Commissioner Kershaw provided an overview of the final FY25 budget. She stated that further discussions regarding the budget will occur at the September Board meeting but highlighted changes to funding and language. Chair Belsito commented on how the budget funding levels will affect system operations. Commissioner Kershaw provided a brief overview of the statutory outside sections included in the budget and discussed with Chair Belsito how the outside sections will impact and direct the agency's work. Board Member Ruiz de Luzuriaga, Co-Chair Moeller and Commissioner Kershaw discussed how the budget impacts accessibility and affordability for families.

Early Education and Child Care Interagency Task Force

- Listening Sessions

Secretary Tutwiler provided an overview of the Inter-Agency Task Force established by Governor Healey and explained the core values that guide the Task Force. Secretary Tutwiler detailed the Task Force priorities. Secretary Tutwiler provided an overview of the fourteen (14) listening sessions held across Massachusetts. Secretary Tutwiler provided a status update on the Task Force milestones and deliverables. Undersecretary Mark Reilly acknowledged the work and knowledge contributed by EEC. Commissioner Kershaw commented on the participation and commitment of the Task Force members and shared feedback received at the listening sessions. Board Member Dr. Lucas and Co-Chair Moeller shared their experiences attending the listening sessions. Secretary Tutwiler shared the themes that emerged from the feedback received at the listening sessions. Commissioner Kershaw shared next steps for the Task Force and the timeline for releasing reports and recommendations.

Break for Lunch

Executive Session

Look Back/Look Forward

- FY24 in Review

Commissioner Kershaw reviewed the EEC Strategic Objectives. Commissioner Kershaw highlighted program and policy accomplishments in FY24. Commissioner Kershaw detailed FY24 accomplishments related to agency capacity and infrastructure.

- FY25 Proposed Strategic Initiatives, Projects and Priorities
 - Board Meeting Agenda Topics – Preview

Commissioner Kershaw discussed proposed strategic initiatives, projects and priorities related to Family Access, Program Stability, Program Quality, Workforce Support and Agency Infrastructure. Commissioner Kershaw previewed the major topics for Board input and action that will be the focus of upcoming Board meeting agenda items in FY25. Chair Belsito added that information regarding the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative and Universal Pre-K should be a focus, and Deputy Commissioner Nicolas added that it is important to focus on the impact of Child Care Financial Assistance on Pre-K expansion. Co-Chair Moeller stated that it is important to be transparent by providing reporting on the impact of all changes, including accessibility and caseloads.

2026-2030 Strategic Action Planning

Commissioner Kershaw discussed statutory requirements related to the Strategic Plan and asked the Board for input and feedback on the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

Reflections, Wrap-up & Next Steps

Board Members shared their priorities and the work they are looking forward to undertaking for FY25.

Chair Belsito provided closing remarks.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30PM