



**Board of Early Education and Care
Tuesday, December 10, 2019
12:00 PM – 3:00pm
Department of Early Education and Care
51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210**

MINUTES

EEC RECORDED THIS BOARD MEETING, THEREFORE THE MINUTES CONSTITUTE A SUMMARY OF THE BOARD ACTIVITY.

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Present

Nonie Lesaux, Ph.D., Chairperson
Mary Walachy, Vice Chairperson (remote)
Jim Peyser, Secretary of Education
Samantha L. Aigner-Treworgy, Commissioner of Early Education and Care (EEC) and Secretary to the Board
Carolyn Kain, J.D., Designee for HHS Secretary Marylou Sudders
David Cruise (remote)
Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Ph.D. (remote)
Joni Block
Joan Wasser Gish
Sheila Balboni
Nicki Ruiz de Luzuriaga

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Absent

Alison Schonwald, M.D.

The meeting was called to order at 12:09 P.M.

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chairperson Lesaux welcomed new Board Member, Nicki Ruiz de Luzuriaga, who is Vice President of institutional advancement for Economic Mobility Pathways, and will serve as the parent-representative on the board. She commented on the agenda noting that the Department is moving forward on priorities associated with the budget rather than line item recommended expenditures. There will also be a refresher on the status of the strategic planning, looking at an early 2020 set of strategic recommendations that will drive a lot of the Department's work. She mentioned that the Board retreat will likely be occurring in February 2020.

Comments from the Secretary

Secretary Peyser welcomed Board Member Ruiz de Luzuriaga to the Board.

Comments from the Commissioner

Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy also welcomed Board Member Ruiz de Luzuriaga. She thanked the Board for thoughtful conversation around the budget. She explained that most of the conversation during today's meeting will surround the strategy of the Department moving forward. She explained that there will be an opportunity to review this further during the Board Retreat. She noted that in addition to the external strategic planning process that is ongoing, Guidehouse has been supporting the agency with an internal assessment of the Department's capacity and identifying where investments are needed to achieve its goals with integrity. She expressed that she's excited about the energy that is being brought to the leadership team and noted that there are a number of changes in process. She will spend time during today's Board Meeting discussing specifics.

Chair Lesaux noted that Board Members Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Mary Walachy, and David Cruz are all on the phone.

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 Lesaux or Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy.

There were no statements from the public.

Routine Business:

- **Disclosures**

Board Member Joni Block submitted a written disclosure that her position as the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement ("CFCE") Coordinator with Brockton Public Schools that is funded by EEC. Sheila Balboni provided a disclosure that she is employed by Community Day Care d/b/a the Community Group, Inc., that receives EEC funding.

- **New Business**

There was no new business.

- **Routine Business**

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the minutes of the October 8, 2019 Board Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Committee Updates

Workforce Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Board Member Villegas-Riemers updated the Board on the latest Workforce Ad Hoc Committee Meeting. She explained that the meeting discussed today's Board Meeting topics, including the budget priorities. She explained that there was significant time spent discussing the strategic plan, the feedback received from the field, and how the field is utilizing such feedback.

Items for Discussion and Action:

1. *Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019 Section 92 – Discussion & Vote*

Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy and Sean Reynolds, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance, presented on the vote on the report filed pursuant to Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019, the Section 92 report. There was a report filed in October, and the language of the section requires that the Executive Office of Administration and Finance submit a second report addressing how the Department is meeting the objectives of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 ("CCDBG"). The present report provides much more detailed information about the caseload. Of note, the caseload expenditures will surpass the spending from FY19 by well over 10%. The \$30M in funding increase to the Child Care and Development Fund ("CCDF") will help sustain some of the growth in the caseload.

Board Member Joan Wasser Gish requested clarification about the caseload, noting that the numbers seemed to dip a little because slots are more expensive over time and asking for clarification on the relationship. Mr. Reynolds explained that the number served is somewhat stable and indicated that access typically stays open and the Department has voted on \$100M in rate increases.

Board Member Balboni asked whether income eligible spending is controlled by how access is opened up in the income eligible account, which the Commissioner responded yes.

VOTED that that the Board of Early Education and Care hereby approves, pursuant to Section 92 of Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019, the Executive Office for Administration and Finance report describing CCDBG expenditures as mandated within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' FY 2020 State Budget.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. *Strategic Plan & Roadmap – Update & Discussion*

Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy updated the Board on the strategic planning process explaining that the Department is about 35-40% finished with the process. She explained that there have been a number of community meetings and there is a path to a March meeting where the planning will be discussed in more detail. She explained that there are specific concerns and challenges and a discussion of solutions. One of the significant issues being raised is salaries for early educator staff. She noted that there is complexity around salaries as the Department does not set the salaries, and noted that this is a complex national issue. This has been an area that has been rich in conversation. She has spent time with the Department staff in thinking about how this will work internally and what it means. From here, the Department will pivot to reviewing its internal design and processes and to spend time within the organization to identify how the Department can be structured to meet its needs. Guidehouse was brought in to supplement the impact on the Department and the structure, who will work in parallel to the work of Aim and Arrow.

3. *Recommendation of FY21 Budget Priorities – Discussion & Vote*

Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy provided an update on the FY21 budget planning, and the ongoing, multi-month engagement process that has been going on both internally and externally to plan processes and budgeting for the upcoming fiscal year. She outlined the first page of the memo, that was posted online, and thinking about engaging external partners and the Board in a meaningful way. She outlined the process that has been going on and will continue through March. Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy highlighted that there is a new approach for the Board Budget Planning, which includes priority setting, evolving as strategic planning continues, dialogue with external and internal stakeholders, and providing specific points for the Board to use throughout the budget process. She highlighted that this will be a multiyear process. She detailed what the Board priorities are, which include building the foundational data collection and tools for revising EEC financing mechanisms, adjusting parent fee schedule to better support low income families' access to quality child care, and updating EEC regulations to ensure consistent support for quality. Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy continued to detail the Board priorities, including investing in the EEC infrastructure to support communities and providers, which includes creating a staffing model that supports customer engagement (approximately \$5.2M for staff salaries) and investing in technology that responds to the user needs of the field and to EEC needs effectively (approximately \$8M investment). The priorities also include the ability to sustain these programmatic investments and explore key areas in which coordination can be increased. Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy ended the presentation by providing a timeline of what is to come, including the Governor's Budget Address in January, Board Retreat in February, Strategic Road Map finalized in March, and the expected Legislative Budget Discussion in March-May. Secretary Peyser stated that he appreciates the process. Board Member Kain asked for clarity on the vote, and whether it's about the priorities or not, to which Chairperson Lesaux stated that the vote is on the priorities.

VOTED that that the Board of Early Education and Care hereby approves The Department of Early Education and Care FY21 Budget Priorities.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. *Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG-5) Overview – Discussion*

Ann Reale and Kate Roper from the Executive Office of Education and Health and Human Services, respectively, led a conversation about the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG-5). Ms. Reale provided a brief history about system building surrounding early education, and the evolution of the agencies that support early education and care. Ms. Roper also provided a brief background on how HHS brings together mental health and early education and care, and the relational health of children and early education and care. She provided a background on the system building over the years, and how the systems looked at universal care and family outcomes. Ms. Roper read a quote from the PDG, and clarified that it goes beyond the mixed delivery system to include early intervention and other programs in the state, to facilitate better partnerships, and increasing family involvement. Ms. Roper detailed the Project Management structure, indicating the agencies that are involved, which include the Executive Office of Education, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Children's Trust, and Department of Early

Education and Care. The vision of the grant was highlighted, which is to provide all families of B-5 children with equitable access to coordinated and quality care that creates lifelong learners and contributors of society, while the goal is to increase the number of children entering kindergarten with the competencies to succeed academically and social-emotionally. Ms. Roper indicated that the Board has been involved in these initiatives over the past few years. They detailed the PDG-5 Needs Assessment and what was found. They also discussed the sustainability of the grant and next steps, which include engaging families and stakeholders through Massachusetts Partnerships for Infants and Toddlers survey, focus groups and forums. Additionally, the Initial PDG-5 will be submitted to USHHS, and the work that's being done will be shared with stakeholders and incorporate feedback, drafting the PDG B-5 Strategic Plan, working with EEC to ensure continued alignment with EEC Strategic Planning, receiving feedback on PDG B-5 Strategic Plan from EEC Board and other stakeholder groups and incorporate feedback, developing project plan and governance structure for renewal grant, pending award.

There was discussion amongst the Board to ensure that there is cross-agency collaboration and that we are building off of existing infrastructure, including the current ASQ. Ms. Reale discussed a scope of work with the intent of creating a process for connecting existing systems. EEC would like to implement new technologies and resources in coordination with community coalitions. Ms. Reale discussed the need for data analytics to improve the quality of data.

Meeting adjourned at 2:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Samantha L. Aigner-Treworgy
Commissioner of the Department and
Secretary to the Board