Department of Early Education and Care

DATA ADVISORY COMMISSION ON EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE

Tuesday, February 24, 2026
1:00PM to 2:30PM
Virtual Meeting: Zoom Webinar
https://www.youtube.com/c/EECMass

Minutes

Commission Member Attendees:
Amy Kershaw–Commissioner of Early Education and Care, EEC
Heidi Gold-Director of Policy for Data and Integrated Education & Human Services, Executive Office of Education
Kate Barrand–President and CEO, Horizons for Homeless Children
Harold Blanco–Owner, Paula Barn Child Care
Ellen Dickenson– Senior Vice President for Research, Analytics, and Planning, United Way of Massachusetts Bay
Michelle Haimowitz–Executive Director, Massachusetts Head Start Association
Kate-Marie Roycroft–CEO, Alliance of MA YMCAs
Victoria Bergeron – Policy Researcher, Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation
Marisa Fear–Director of Policy, Strategies for Children
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
Amaris Kinne–Director of Research, Neighborhood Villages
Patrick Stanton-Executive Director, Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
JD Chesloff-President and CEO, Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Tom Weber-Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education

EEC Staff Attendees:
Amy Checkoway–Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Strategy, and Research, EEC
Addison Koelle – Legislative Director, EEC
Jocelyn Bowne – Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Program Support and Innovation, EEC
Jessi Murray, Chief Product Officer, EEC

Adrienne Murphy – Senior Director of Data Analytics, EEC
Ashley White – Director of Research, EEC

Minutes

1. Welcome

Addison Koelle, EEC's Legislative Director and Commissioner Kershaw provided welcoming comments. Commissioner Kershaw and Amy Checkoway, EEC's Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Strategy, and Research, provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

2. Workforce Data and Research:

Review of Current EEC Educator Data Sources

Adrienne Murphy, EEC's Senior Director of Data Analytics, detailed the current EEC workforce data sources. She explained the data contained in each system, as well as the challenges and limitations of each.

Overview of New EEC Professional Portal

Jessi Murray, EEC's Chief Product Officer, provided an overview of the new Professional Portal, a centralized, user-facing digital platform that will streamline how early education and care providers, educators, and other professionals interact with EEC systems. She explained the goals of the new portal and how the portal will address the challenges and limitations of the current workforce data systems. Chief Product Officer Murray shared the status of the portal and detailed next steps towards implementation. She walked through the user experience that is planned for the new portal. Director Murphy shared examples of the types of questions that the new portal will allow EEC and the field to explore.

Research Agenda: Workforce Questions

Ashley White, EEC's Director of Research, shared an overview of EEC's research agenda and explained how it aligns with EEC's strategic objectives. She provided an overview of recent updates to the research agenda. Director White then shared the questions on the research agenda related to educator characteristics and experiences and invited the Commission to provide feedback.

Michelle Haimowitz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Head Start Association, and Director White discussed potential analysis around the relationship between degree attainment and retention. Amaris Kinne, Director of Research at Neighborhood Villages, and Director Murphy discussed the ways in which the new Professional Portal will allow for stronger data collection related to educator attrition. Marisa Fear, Director of Policy at Strategies for Children, Jocelyn Bowne, EEC's Deputy Commissioner for Workforce,

Program Support, and Innovation, and Director Murphy discussed current and future collection of educator compensation data. Victoria Bergeron, Policy Researcher at the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Andrea Howard, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors at the Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, Member White, and Deputy Commissioner Checkoway discussed potential analysis to better understand how the EEC workforce compares with K-12 educators and out-of-school time educators, especially in regard to better understanding levers for attrition and retention. Member Fear and Director White discussed further research on educator characteristics that influence compensation. Ellen Dickenson, Senior Vice President for Research, Analytics, and Planning, at the United Way of Massachusetts Bay also discussed the importance of tracking data related to entry points into the workforce for family child care educators. Heidi Gold, EOE's Director of Policy for Data and Integrated Education & Human Services, and Deputy Commissioner Checkoway discussed the importance of research to better understand aspects of job quality that affect attrition and retention, such as self-efficacy and autonomy. Adam Jones, Senior Policy Analyst at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, and Director White discussed tracking data on workforce pipelines, including tacking promotion within a child care setting and movement across child care settings.

3. Preparing the Commission's FY26 Legislative Report

Deputy Commissioner Checkoway provided background information regarding the FY26 Legislative Report and provided an overview of the timeline for the report drafting and approval.

Report Outline and Draft Recommendations

Director Murphy detailed the contents of the FY26 Legislative Report and provided an overview of the research and data strategy areas on which the report is focused including: identifying key data and analysis needed, expanding public access to EEC data and research, improving data quality, and streamlining data collection. Director Murphy then shared draft recommendations aligned with each strategy area and asked for feedback. Member Kinne, Member Roycroft, and Director Murphy discussed the importance of being attentive to administrative burden when crafting these recommendations. Member Fear and Director Murphy discussed the possibility of highlighting future opportunities for data collection to directly impact funding allocations and policy decisions. Member Barrand, Director Murphy, and Deputy Commissioner Checkoway discussed the importance of data collection related to child outcomes and the need to include reference in the report to data around impact on children's learning. Tom Weber, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education, discussed using this report as a communication tool and opportunities for public private partnerships. Director Gold and Director Murphy discussed analysis that would be helpful to understand the impact of EEC initiatives on K-12 experiences and later learning.

4. Next Steps and Approval of Minutes

Deputy Commissioner Checkoway shared the future meeting schedule and proposed topics.

Member Weber moved to approve the Commission meeting minutes from October 21, 2025, and Member Howard seconded the motion. The Commission voted to approve the minutes, with Heidi Gold and Amaris Kinne abstaining.

Deputy Commissioner Checkoway provided closing remarks.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15PM.