

Board of Early Education and Care
May 14, 2025
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Department of Early Education and Care, Central Office
50 Milk Street, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02109
<https://www.youtube.com/c/EECMass>

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
Dr. Kimberly D. Lucas
Carolyn Kain, J.D., Designee for HHS Secretary Kate Walsh
Cheryl Travers
Jamella Lee
George Atanasov
Nikki Ruiz de Luzuriaga
Jennifer James Price (via phone)

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Not Present

Linda D. Sagor, M.D., M.P.H.

MINUTES

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chair Belsito provided welcoming comments. He recognized Teacher Appreciation Week. Chair Belsito provided an overview of the agenda.

Comments from the Secretary

Secretary Tutwiler welcomed the Board and attendees. He acknowledged Teacher Appreciation Week and Child Care Appreciation Day. Secretary Tutwiler highlighted that Massachusetts was recently named the best state for working mothers and discussed the metrics to determine the distinction. Secretary Tutwiler provided an update regarding Governor Healey's recent initiative, Literacy Launch. Secretary Tutwiler discussed the impact of funding for the initiative, and announced the Literacy Launch Institutes. Secretary Tutwiler provided an update on the STEM Summit and acknowledged Commissioner Kershaw's participation.

Chair Belsito acknowledged that Board Member Price joined the meeting remotely.

Comments from the Commissioner

Commissioner Kershaw discussed her participation on the STEM Advisory Council. She acknowledged Teacher Appreciation Week and Educator Provider Appreciation Day. Commissioner Kershaw provided an update regarding apprenticeship programs. Commissioner Kershaw acknowledged the recognition of Massachusetts as the best state for working mothers. Commissioner Kershaw provided an update regarding the supplemental FY25 budget and funding for Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA). Commissioner Kershaw provided a status update related to the Early Educator Scholarship program. Commissioner Kershaw provided an update to the Gateway to Pre-K Initiative. Commissioner Kershaw provided personnel updates.

Statements from the Public

Chair Belsito acknowledged that public comment was received by email and distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. He shared that much of the public comment was in support of the leadership of the Northampton Preschool Partnership.

Laura Frogameni-Northampton Preschool Partnership Coordinator, provided comment in support of funding for Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) and workforce supports. Susan Stillinger-Educator and Accessibility Advocate at New Village shared how CPPI funding has impacted and improved early education services in her community. She shared examples of how services funded by CPPI have positively impacted students and families.

Will Layer, Director of Policy at United Way Massachusetts Bay provided public comment to advocate for funding for CPPI as a high priority for the Board and Legislature. He highlighted the impacts of CPPI funding for families, children and the community. He shared feedback from parents who benefit from CPPI funding.

Routine Business:

- Approval of Minutes from the April 9, 2025 Meeting – VOTE
 - Approved unanimously

Items for Discussion and Action:

- FY26 State Budget Development Updates

Commissioner Kershaw invited Eric Hansson-EEC Chief Financial Officer and Acting Chief Operating Officer, and Chrystel Lantin-EEC Budget Director, to provide updates regarding the FY26 budget. Mr. Hansson provided an overview of the state budget process. Mr. Hansson discussed highlights from the House Ways and Means (HWM) budget and compared it with the budget released by Governor Healey. Commissioner Kershaw discussed areas of concern for the agency and the impacts of proposed reductions in funding. Mr. Hansson explained the outside sections contained in the HWM budget. Commissioner Kershaw commented on the effect of the outside sections related to Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) contracts. Mr. Hansson compared specific line items to the final FY25 budget and the FY26 budgets released by the Governor, HWM, and Senate Ways and Means (SWM). Commissioner Kershaw discussed the impacts of the funding levels in the three budget proposals. Commissioner Kershaw discussed line

items funded through Fair Share Amendment revenues. Mr. Hansson discussed funding allocated by HWM, SWM, and the Governor in the FY25 Fair Share Supplemental Budget.

Board Member Atanasov, Mr. Hansson, and Commissioner Kershaw discussed projected Stabilization Funds.

- Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI): Overview and FY26 Grant Cycle

Commissioner Kershaw invited Jocelyn Bowne-EEC Deputy Commissioner for Workforce, Program Support & Innovation, Kathy Lange-EEC Program Support Specialist, Amy Smith-Zeoli-EEC Special Education Support Specialist, and Kyla McSweeney-EEC Director of Comprehensive System Supports, to provide an overview of Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) and discuss proposed changes to the program for FY26. Deputy Commissioner Bowne shared the CPPI objectives and priorities. Commissioner Kershaw discussed the theory of change for the CPPI program within a mixed delivery system. Deputy Commissioner Bowne explained the CPPI grant structure and provided a history of CPPI funding. Deputy Commissioner Bowne detailed the updates and expectations for the FY26 new grant cycle. Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed the updated leadership requirements and future program staffing requirements. Ms. McSweeney, Ms. Lange, and Ms. Smith-Zeoli explained the defined levels of implementation and the related priorities. Ms. McSweeney and Ms. Lange shared recent examples of CPPI goals in action. Deputy Commissioner Bowne detailed next steps for the CPPI grant. Chair Belsito and Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed the proposed updated cycle for procurement and supports for program leadership. Commissioner Kershaw, Chair Belsito, and Deputy Commissioner Bowne further discussed how funding can affect the expansion of CPPI. Commissioner Kershaw, Board Member Ruiz de Luzuriaga, and Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed current data collection points. Board Member Lucas and Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed systematic quality data and collaboration with DESE to collect data regarding access and the impact of CPPI programs. Board Member Lucas, Commissioner Kershaw, and Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed how future program staffing requirements and the CPPI model apply to family child care programs and current child care programs participating in CPPI. Secretary Tutwiler expressed appreciation for the partnership of the different municipalities and agencies that make CPPI a success.

- New Educator Credential: Development Process and Status

Commissioner Kershaw provided an overview of the process to develop a new educator credential. She welcomed Deputy Commissioner Bowne and Ellen Grondine-EEC Senior Associate Commissioner for Workforce Development.

Deputy Commissioner Bowne discussed EEC's efforts to transition to a credentialing system for educators to support professional advancement in the field. Deputy Commissioner Bowne recognized the importance of educational leadership as an essential component to drive the processes and create the conditions that facilitate quality educator practice. Senior Associate Commissioner Grondine detailed the two pathways to earn a credential. Senior Associate Commissioner Grondine explained the plan for stakeholder engagement. Deputy Commissioner Bowne explained the development process and status of the new educator credential. Deputy

Commissioner Bowne shared feedback received from the field and the Workforce Advisory Group and explained how that feedback influenced the draft credential.

Commissioner Kershaw welcomed the members of the Workforce Working Group, Harold Blanco-Co-Owner of Paula's Barn, Paula Andrea Echeverri Durango- Co-Owner of Paula's Barn, Briana Flannery-Deputy Director of the For Kids Only Preschool, and Heidi Osgood-Kaufman-Social Impact and Government Relations Officer for MetroWest YMCA

The members of the Workforce Working Group introduced themselves and explained their roles in the working group. Mr. Blanco and Ms. Echeverria Durango provided an overview of the work and discussions to date of the Workforce Working Group. They provided feedback on the draft credentialing pathway from the family child care perspective. Ms. Flannery provided an overview of the services provided by her out of school time program and provided feedback on the draft credentialing pathway system from the school age and out of school time perspective. Ms. Osgood Kaufman provided feedback on the draft credentialing pathway system. Mr. Blanco provided additional feedback regarding the benefits of the credentialing system to support family child care programs, educators, and families. Deputy Commissioner Bowne provided an overview of the timeline to implement the new credentialing pathway system and discussed next steps.

Commissioner Kershaw shared information regarding the June Board meeting.

Co Chair Moeller provided closing comments.

Meeting Adjourned 3:50PM