

DRAFT OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019
Prepared by Planning and Evaluation Committee
December 5, 2013

{For discussion in DEEC board committee meetings}

[Several sections and pieces of information come from the 2009 strategic plan]

Notes: Plan will begin with a letter of introduction (to be written by JD?), and a glossary of terms to explain how those terms are used in this document. The Glossary will include: programs, parents, families, mixed delivery system, workforce. Other??

GUIDE TO STRATEGIC PLAN *[Copied identical from the 2009 plan]*

Mission: Defines the purpose of the agency, who it serves and what it does

Vision: Defines what the agency aspires to do over a five-year period

Strategic direction: Names the strategic priorities over the next three years that will help move the agency towards its vision

Indicators of success: Measures used to mark the agency's progress within each of the strategic directions

EEC MISSION *[Copied identical from the 2009 plan]*

Mission: Defines the purpose of the agency, who it serves and what it does

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) provides the foundation that supports all children and their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers.

EEC VISION

Vision: Defines what the agency aspires to do over a five-year period

- EEC and the whole field of early education and care are highly regarded, publicly recognized and supported, and clearly understood to be a value to the Commonwealth

- EEC's system offers an array of high quality comprehensive and affordable early childhood, out of school, and residential programs as well as resources, materials and activities designed to meet the diverse, individual needs of children and families.

Feedback: In the fourth bullet under the Vision, I think it reads funny. EEC isn't a system, it's a Department, right? I realize this is probably just copied from the earlier version, but does this need clarification or am I reading it wrong? (JD)

- The early education and care workforce is respected, diverse, professional, qualified and fairly compensated
- EEC is an effective, responsive, efficient and resilient system which provides oversight and licensing to early childhood, out of school, residential and placement programs and agencies
- EEC has clear standards for accountability and evidence that those standards are being met
- Families are engaged as partners integral to the health development and learning of their children, and they have access to the necessary resources to do so.
- All children have access to high quality early childhood, out of school and residential programs that meet family needs
- Children and families experience seamless transitions throughout their early learning and later developmental experiences.

NEW / REVISED THREE YEAR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

[many are copied identical from the strategic plan of 2009, some are revised version of the 2009 goals, some are new]

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS / FIVE-YEAR GOALS *[new]*

1. All young children in the Commonwealth will be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful, and their families will be provided with opportunities to support their children's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical development.
2. Programs offered in early childhood, out of school, and residential settings under the supervision of the EEC will promote and support the education and healthy development of children so that all children are ready to be successful school members and citizens.
3. The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce who works with children and families in the Commonwealth is professionally prepared, adequately compensated, and diverse.
4. The Department and Board of Early Education and Care provide leadership, direction and resources to meet the mission of the agency with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of the Commonwealth

Feedback: I think that these three words are wonderful (integrity, transparency, and accountability) (Chi)

EACH OF THESE STRATEGIC GOALS WILL HAVE SUPPORTING GOALS ORGANIZED IN FOUR GROUPS:

- a. Quality
- b. Access
- c. Communication and advocacy
- d. Infra-structure and finance

Goal # 1 [Children and families]: All young children in the Commonwealth will be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful, and their families will be provided with opportunities to support their children's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical development.

1.1 Quality

- Children and families participate in high quality and safe programs that prepare children to enter the K-12 education system and be successful
- Families understand and use information about quality to make informed decisions about early childhood and out of school time programs
- All children and families experience seamless transitions throughout early learning and developmental experiences

1.2 Access

- Children and families have access to high quality and safe programs, resources and materials which promote the healthy development and learning necessary to be ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful
- Information on early education and care services is available to all families, including families with limited English proficiency

1.3 Communication and advocacy

- EEC provides families and communities with information about strategies, resources and services to support young children early education experiences and have them ready to enter the K-12 education system and succeed
- EEC provides information to legislators, partners and other stakeholders about the necessary resources and policies to enable young children to enter the K-12 education system and be successful

Feedback: I greatly appreciate this bullet point. I think that we were weaker in this area in the past. (Chi)

- Families are recognized and supported as full partners in the education of their children and are empowered by having access to information about child development and family support resources

1.4 Infra-structure and finance

- EEC will strengthen the infra-structure that will enable young children to enter the K-12 education system and be successful
- EEC is adequately financed to meet the needs of its constituents

Goal # 2 [Programs]: Programs offered in early childhood, out of school, and residential settings under the supervision of the EEC will promote and support the education and healthy development of children so that all children are ready to be successful as school members and citizens.

2.1 Quality

- Programs offered to children and families in the Commonwealth meet high quality standards as measured by the QRIS system
- QRIS standards are research-based, broadly understood, culturally appropriate and aligned with local, state and national standards
- Community organizations and programs that are supported by EEC provide high quality resources for children and families
- EEC has a system that collects, analyzes and disseminates program *and child outcome data* to inform policy, program development, quality and implementation
- Comprehensive supports are embedded in the delivery of services for families and children
- Early education and care services are delivered through a seamless system that is responsive to the needs of all families
- EEC provides support and resources for transitioning children in and out of early education and care programs and services

2.2 Access

- Programs seeking to improve their quality have access to a range of initiatives, resources and supports.
- Families have access to high quality affordable programs that meet their needs in the mixed early education and care system.
- Children in residential and placement programs receive high quality services in appropriate settings so they are ready to join school communities and be successful

2.3 Communication and advocacy

- Families are knowledgeable of the mixed early education and care system in the Commonwealth.
- Families are recognized as their child's first teachers.
- Strong partnerships are established between families and educators to maximize high quality early education and care for all children.
- Parents and guardians of children in residential and placement programs are knowledgeable of appropriate placement and treatment options that are compatible with the needs of their children.
- Families seeking to adopt are knowledgeable of available adoption resources and state adoption policies.
- All stakeholders in the field and consumers are knowledgeable of EEC initiatives, policies and procedures and have access to information to facilitate advocacy.

2.4 Infra-structure and finance

- Programs and services are adequately funded so that children are ready to enter the K-12 education system and be successful.
- Services for children and families are delivered in a coordinated manner across state agencies

Goal # 3 [Workforce]: The workforce of early childhood educators and care professionals who work with children in the Commonwealth is professionally prepared, fairly compensated and diverse.

3.1 Quality

- The workforce has high quality ongoing professional development and technical assistance.
- The early education and care workforce has clearly defined education and professional development standards.
- The workforce has licensing regulations that reflect best practices.

3.2 Access

- The workforce has access to high quality and affordable education and professional development resources and technical assistance

3.3 Communication and advocacy

- Stakeholders will be knowledgeable of the field of early education and care in order to advocate for the workforce effectively.

- Licensing regulations that reflect best practices have been promulgated, translated, clearly communicated to the field, and enforced consistently throughout all regions.
- The early education and care workforce has education and professional development standards that are understood by the field.

3.4 Infra-structure and finance

- The early education and care workforce has a well-defined career-ladder that fairly compensates educators as professionals

Feedback: I don't know if we can achieve "fair compensation" with the current economic climate. (Chi)

- Educators are fairly compensated, and there is emphasis on increasing compensation.

Feedback: I don't know if we can achieve "fair compensation" with the current economic climate. (Chi)

Feedback: Under Goal #3 (Workforce), under either 3.1 or 3.3, maybe a bullet about professionalizing the profession. This has come up quite a bit in previous conversations, and I just had a long conversation about it yesterday with the CEO of Bright Horizons. Would something like this work, or is it too controversial: "Professionalize the profession of early childhood to help attract and retain talented teachers." Or something like that. The first bullet in 3.4 begins to get at it, with career ladder and fair compensation, but perhaps explicitly stating it would help. (JD)

Rather than "professionalize the profession. . .," may I suggest saying "Support and strengthen the profession. . ." For readability, it prevents us from using the same word twice in three sentences, but I also think it better recognizes that our field are already professionals, but that we need to do more to support them as we ask more of them. (Tom)

Goal # 4: [DEEC] The Department and Board of Early Education and Care provide leadership, direction and resources to meet the mission of the agency with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of the Commonwealth

4.1 Quality

- EEC is the state lead resource on early education and care in the Commonwealth as well as for leading developments in the field.
- EEC is known as a national education leader in the development and implementation of licensing regulations, quality standards and practices for all early education and care programs.

4.2 Access

- EEC provides services and resources in multiple languages.
- EEC provides access to information about initiatives, policies and procedures.

4.3 Communication and advocacy

- EEC communicates its mission and vision so that the public is knowledgeable of them.
- EEC communicates to state and local leaders and other stakeholders about EEC initiatives and how these initiatives benefit their communities and the Commonwealth.
- EEC has a communication system that responds to the type, style and nature of the information needed by external stakeholders and consumers.
- All EEC staff and community partners have comprehensive information about educators and early education and care programs.
- EEC provides information about early education and care issues in the State and leading developments in the field.

4.4 Infra-structure and finance

- All EEC staff members are knowledgeable of agency initiatives, operations, key staff functions, and the agency's community partners.
- The operational roles of EEC's community partners have been clearly defined, aligned to support the agency's mission.
- EEC has the staff, resources and stakeholder partnerships required to achieve the agency's mission.
- EEC continues to implement policy initiatives that are supported by research, developed through stakeholder collaboration and coordinated with agency operations.
- EEC staff is diverse, knowledgeable and adequately trained to perform assigned functions.
- EEC has developed effective relationships with other state agencies, community partners, public schools [question for Board members: do we list public schools separately?] and other stakeholder organizations to meet its mission.
- EEC's internal controls and management systems are updated and periodically reviewed to ensure they are current and meeting the highest [integrity? Ethical?](question for the board: do we include integrity or ethical or leave it with no qualifier?) standards.

Feedback: Regarding the last bullet in 4.4, I think you're right in suggesting that we leave out "integrity" or "ethical." The statement still works (at least it meets

my purposes) by ensuring that we are holding ourselves to high standards. (By the way, "endure" should be "ensure.") (JD)

I would include public schools and not do it separately. I would suggest that we do include the words integrity, ethics and accountability. (Chi)

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS WILL BE DESIGNED BY THE DEEC STAFF AS PART OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN