

---

*Massachusetts Department of Early  
Education and Care*

*Commissioners Evaluation  
FY2012*

*Submitted (February 0, 2012)*



---

## Introduction

---

The primary task of the Office of the Commissioner has been to continue to develop a comprehensive system of early education and care. This system shall include governance, regulations, workforce and professional development, standards, assessment and accountability, finance and inform public and consumers. Each of these parts of the system does not stand alone. In addition, the development of a system from a set of partners that do not have shared governance, association or systems such as our mix delivery system further enhances the challenge of the work. However, it is important to operate with transparency and a set of shared values.

As Commissioner I have several overarching objectives that guide my decision making:

- Take projects to scale, including long term pilots
- Developed funding formulas with a focus on communities, children and families at educational risk
- Create predictable statewide access to resources for providers and families with core functions while allowing for local differentiation
- Use data to make decisions to focus on children at educational risk and manage the budget
- Provide regular monitoring of the budget and its expenses to the board and Policy and Fiscal Committee
- Increase the level of transparency in the department through use of the commissioner mail box and having quarterly provider meetings
- Increase the shared knowledge of all staff and the responsibility for attaining the vision
- Learn the experience of members of the field through first hand interactions
- Ensure full stakeholder involvement in the design of strategic directions

Accomplishments and activities which have been accomplished are included in detail in the legislative report for the time period February 2010 – February 2011. As requested by the evaluation committee I will use this report to describe leadership efforts.

## FY2012 Context

---

The primary task listed in the Commissioner's job description was to integrate the strategic plan into the operations of the department. The strategic plan document was officially approved in March of 2009, and provides a three (3) year strategic direction and the road map for organizational activities since that time. As the second year of this three year plans draws closed, the primary challenges and opportunities continue to exist for the Commissioner. However key areas now include either advancement in new considerations that strengthen the foundation for early education and care or have

had actions taken that more robustly addresses the strategic direction. To provide the context for the remainder of this evaluation, I have once again included these opportunities:

- *Unify the agency into one well-integrated, high-performing system that offers an array of high quality, comprehensive and affordable services designed to meet the diverse, individual needs of children and families.*
- *Build on a solid foundation that will lead to the highest quality of programs and services going forward.*
- *Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children.*
- *Strive to become known as the cutting-edge leader in early education and care so that it is highly regarded, publically recognized and supported, and clearly understood to be of value to the Commonwealth.*

## EEC Board Retreat

---

On **Date**, EEC's Board gathered at a retreat to set priorities for the upcoming year and discussed prioritizing the Board/Department's Strategic Directions; **update and add information for this year's retreat.**

**Review the key areas to determine if they still apply and determine actions taken that support the key areas.**

*Other key areas include:*

### **Quality**

- Universal Pre-K resources should be aimed at aligning activities, the instructional goals and requirements.
- To support closing the achievement gap, the Department engaged in strategic efforts to link the extended learning time provided by out-of-school time providers to the public school efforts to close the learning gap.
- What role should the Department play in specific communities for the development of an educational system from PreK to 3? Should we target a Commissioner's District to support closing the proficiency gap?
- How do we balance the tension between pilots and statewide efforts to ensure there are not disparities of how and where resources are allocated? How will we address the needs of rural communities and smaller districts?
- Develop a strategy for building the skills of family child care providers as a method to increase the quality of care for infants and toddlers and anticipatory guidance for families.

### **Infrastructure**

- Develop specific roles based on best practices for the local, regional, and state infrastructure to support families, providers, and a mixed delivery system. <br><br>

### **Workforce**

Develop a model in the state of professional development support which is easy to communicate and includes the core competencies, early learning and out-of-school time guidelines and standards, attainment of higher education for educators, and has local, state and regional roles to support increasing quality and measurable outcomes for children. <br><br>

How do we develop instructional leadership (supports for directors and master teachers) within the early childhood field, within programs for sustainable growth and continuous improvement regarding early learning strategies and program development in specific providers? <br><br>

### **Family Access and Affordability**

- What is the scale of comprehensive services required to support whole child development in early care and education programs as single institutions (single providers with their own capacity) and through partnerships. What is essential in the definition of comprehensive services for all children? For targeted children? <br><br>
- Evaluate the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement consolidated model and identify strategies and lessons learned to promote and strengthen families in communities by using the Strengthening Families model for early education using the strengthening families self assessment. <br><br>

### **Communication**

- Build a statewide internal and external communication strategy that includes the role of families (and partnerships with families) in the development of children as infants, toddlers, preschoolers and out-of-school time, and connection to public schools. Frame communications to align with the strategic plan and Governor's Readiness Action Agenda report. Ensure that the internal strategy addresses interagency, intra-Secretariat, and connects regions with main office and the Board. <br><br>
- Develop a regular report on the status of the early education and care field tracking specific provider and child outcomes, as a mechanism to improve communication with EEC's stakeholders. A childhood information system is required by the Early Learning Challenge grant. <br><br>

## Education Commissioners Retreat

---

Add information about this for 2011

### *Three Year Strategic Direction:*

---

*Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide*

---

Indicators of Success:

---

MA QRIS has been developed, validated, funded and implemented with full involvement of EEC's community partners and EEC staff.<br><br>

Finalize standards MA has standards for quality in early education and care programs research-based, broadly understood, successfully implemented, culturally appropriate, and aligned with a quality-building support system. Programs seeking to improve their quality have access to a range of resources and supports.<br><br>

Programs seeking to improve their quality have access to a range of resources and supports.<br><br>

Parents understand and use information about quality to make informed decisions about early education and care programs. <br><br>

MA has a system that collects, analyzes and disseminates program quality and child outcome data to inform policy and program development and implementation. <br><br>

Licensing regulations that reflect best practices have been promulgated, translated, clearly communicated to the field, and enforced consistently throughout all regions. <br><br>

Comprehensive services, including mental health consultations, are embedded in the delivery of services for families and children. <br><br>

Children in residential and placement programs receive quality and appropriate services and are placed in the least restrictive settings. <br><br>

Rating:

Below Expectations

Satisfactory

Successful Performer

Highly Effective

Exceptional

Comments:

---

## Three Year Strategic Direction:

### **Increase and promote family support, access and affordability.**

---

#### Indicators of Success

---

**Families are aware of the mixed early education and care system and have access to affordable, high-quality early education and care services. <br><br>**

**Families are recognized as full partners in the education of their children and are empowered to be involved with the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of their children. <br><br>**

**Families are informed about child development and aware of family support resources. <br><br>**

**Early education and care services are delivered through a seamless system that is responsive to the needs of all families and provides supports and resources for transitioning children in and out of early education and care programs and services. <br><br>**

**Families of infants have access to programs and services that support the development of healthy attachment between babies and their primary caregivers and promote early brain development. <br><br>**

**Parents are recognized as their child's first teacher and have access to literacy supports that build skills among children and parents. <br><br>**

**All families experience seamless transitions throughout their child's early learning and developmental experiences <br><br>**

**Families that are limited or non-English speaking have access to information about early education and care and the services available. Strong partnerships are established between families (parent/caregiver) and educators to maximize high quality early education and care for all children.<br><br>**

**Strong partnerships are established between families (parent/caregiver) and educators to maximize high quality early education and care for all children.**

**Parents of children in residential and placement programs are aware of and knowledgeable about appropriate placement and treatment options that are compatible with the needs of their children. <br><br>**

**Parents seeking to adopt are aware of and knowledgeable of available adoption resources and state adoption policies. <br><br>**

**Family services are integrated and delivered in a coordinated manner across state agencies. <br><br>**

**Rating:**

**Below Expectations**

**Satisfactory**

**Successful Performer**

**Highly Effective**

**Exceptional**

**Comments:**

---

### THREE YEAR Strategic Direction:

**Create a workforce system that maintains worker diversity and provides resources, supports, expectations, and core competencies that lead to the outcomes we want for children**

---

#### Indicators of Success

---

**The early education and care workforce has clearly defined education and professional development standards that are understood and embraced by the field. <br><br>**

**The early education workforce has access to affordable education and professional development resources that support core competencies. <br><br>**

**The early education and care workforce has a well-defined career ladder that adequately and fairly compensates educators as professionals.<br><br>**

**Educators are adequately compensated to assure equitable access to high-quality care in all areas of the state, with emphasis on increasing compensation in communities with greatest need. <br><br>**

**Early education and care professionals are respected and complete their professional responsibilities with confidence and competence. <br><br>**

**The early education and care workforce has broad diversity that allows families and children to feel welcomed and comfortable to address the changing landscape and needs of the families and children <br><br>**

**The early education and care workforce functions collaboratively and effectively among all aspects of the early education and care system. <br><br>**

**A Professional Development Registry and Workforce Management System are in place to observe and measure the efficacy of the workforce and measure the impact of the workforce system on child outcomes. <br><br>**

**Rating:**

**Below Expectations**

**Satisfactory**

**Successful Performer**

**Highly Effective**

**Exceptional**

**Comments:**

---

**Three year Strategic Direction:**

**Create and implement an external and internal communications strategy that advocates for and conveys the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public**

---

**Indicators of Success**

---

**The public understands and values the purpose of EEC. <br><br>**

**Families of all languages understand the services and resources offered by EEC**

**All stakeholders in the field and consumers are aware of EEC initiatives, policies and procedures and have access to information to facilitate advocacy <br><br>**

**State and local leaders understand how EEC initiatives serve and benefit their communities. <br><br>**

**EEC is fully aware of and responds to the type, style and nature of the information needed by external stakeholders and consumers. <br><br>**

**All EEC staff members are knowledgeable of agency initiatives, operations, key staff functions, and the agency's community partners. <br><br>**

**EEC is known among major press outlets and institutions of higher education as the authoritative resource on early education and care issues in the state and for leading developments in the field <br><br>**

**EEC is known as a national education leader, at the forefront of Universal Pre-Kindergarten and unrivaled in the development of quality standards for all early education and care programs. <br><br>**

**Rating:**

**Below Expectations**

**Satisfactory**

**Successful Performer**

**Highly Effective**

**Exceptional**

**Comments:**

---

## THREE YEAR Strategic Direction:

Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision

---

### Indicators of Success

---

- **With user input and involvement, EEC has transformed the existing technology infrastructure into a state-of-the-art, unified and comprehensive system. <br><br>**

- EEC regions have the staff, resources and stakeholder partnerships required to achieve the breadth of the agency’s readiness vision. <br><br>
- EEC continues to implement policy initiatives that are backed up by research developed through stakeholder collaboration and coordinated with agency operations.<br><br>
- All EEC staff, community partners and families have comprehensive information about educators and early education and care programs. <br><br>
- EEC staff is diverse, knowledgeable and adequately trained to perform assigned functions and to understand the operations of the agency and its community partners in the field. <br><br>
- EEC has developed active relationships with other state agencies, community partners, public schools and other stakeholder organizations to meet its mission.<br><br>

**Rating:**

**Below Expectations**

**Satisfactory**

**Successful Performer**

**Highly Effective**

**Exceptional**

**Comments:**

CORE COMPETENCIES

Communication / Interpersonal Skills

- Demonstrates effective oral communication skills (including facilitation, formal presentations, etc. if applicable.)

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Demonstrates effective written communication skills (including complex or technical reports/memos if applicable.)

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Encourages collaboration and ensures sense of ownership of goals. Creates understanding of individual contribution and strong team morale.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Handles difficult people well by using good listening skills and diffusing conflict.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Receives constructive criticism well and responds by changing behavior or taking other appropriate action.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

#### Decision-Making Skills

- Anticipates and adjusts to change; is flexible and open-minded about doing things in a new or different way. Willingly accepts new assignments. Openly expresses support and/or concerns about proposed changes.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Makes sound decisions in difficult, confusing, and/or highly complex situations under tight timeframes and pressure. Involves supervisor and staff as appropriate.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Takes calculated risks, considering consequences for all parties. Willing to step outside "comfort zone" in making some decisions or suggesting new ideas.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

#### Supervisory Skills

- Delegates decision-making authority appropriately.

1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior

2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior

3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior

4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

- Manages and allocates budget and staffing resources in an effective and efficient manner.  
1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior  
2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior  
3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior  
4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior
- Promotes candid and open atmosphere by being accessible to all employees and directly communicating with employees on a regular basis.  
1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior  
2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior  
3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior  
4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior
- Provides timely and valuable performance feedback including constructive criticism when applicable on ACES and EPRS forms for staff. Fosters employee development and career growth.  
1= Seldom Demonstrated this behavior  
2= Occasionally Demonstrated this behavior  
3= Frequently Demonstrates this behavior  
4= Consistently Demonstrates this behavior

**Overall Comments:**