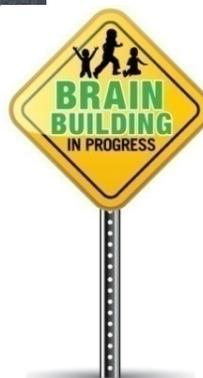


FY14 Annual Legislative Report



Confidential Draft - Not Final, Not for Distribution

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Comment [E1]: To complete when final

Glossary of Acronyms.....	XX
Introduction.....	XX
Mission of Department.....	XX
Governance.....	XX
Board of Early Education and Care.....	XX
Strategic Directions and Statutory Responsibilities.....	XX
Submission of Annual Report.....	XX
Operational Improvements in 2013.....	XX
Budget Overview.....	XX
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant.....	XX
Ongoing Educator and Program Quality Initiatives.....	XX
Additional Items of Note in 2013.....	XX
Looking Ahead.....	XX

List of Appendices

Comment [E2]: To complete when final

Glossary of Acronyms

ACF	Administration for Children and Families
AIM	Action, Implementation and Momentum
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
ASOST	After-school and out-of-school time
ASQ	Ages and Stages Questionnaire
BCM	Boston Children’s Museum
CBTI	Connected Beginnings Training Institute
CCDF	Child Care Development Fund
CCR&R	Child Care Resource and Referral Agency
CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers
CTF	Children’s Trust Fund
CEU	Continuing Education Unit
CFCE	Coordinated Family and Community Engagement
CLASS	Classroom Assessment Scoring System
CMHCC	Comprehensive Mental Health in Child Care Program
CSEFEL	Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
CSSP	Center for the Study of Social Policy
DCF	Department of Children and Families
DHCD	Department of Housing and Community Development
DHE	Department of Higher Education
DHS	Department of Human Services
DLL	Dual Language Learners
DMH	Department of Mental Health
DPH	Department of Public Health
DTA	Department of Transitional Assistance
DYS	Department of Youth Services
ECERS	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales
ECE	Early Childhood Educators
ECIS	Early Childhood Information System
ECMH	Early Childhood Mental Health
ECRC	Early Childhood Resource Center
EEC	Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
EEFI	Early Educators Fellowship Institute
EI	Early Intervention
ELL	English Language Learners
EOE	Executive Office of Education
EOHHS	Executive Office of Health and Human Services
EPS	Educator and Provider Support
ERS	Environmental Rating Scales
ESE	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FCC	Family Child Care

FCCERS	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales
HSSCO	Head Start State Collaboration Office
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IHE	Institute of Higher Education
IMLS	Institute of Museum and Library Services
ISA	Interagency Service Agreement
ITERS	Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scales
LEA	Lead Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MELD	Massachusetts Early Learning and Development Assessment System
MFLC	Massachusetts Family Literacy Consortium
MHVI	Massachusetts Home Visiting Initiative
MIECHV	Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Initiative
MKEA	Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRS	Market Rate Study
NIEER	National Institute for Early Education Research
ORI	Office of Refugees and Immigrants
OSFA	Office of Student Financial Assistance
PAC	Peer Assistance and Coaching
PCG	Public Consulting Group
PCHP	Parent Child Home Program
PIWI	Parents Interacting with Infants
PQR	Professional Qualifications Registry
PSCCE	Preschool Child Care and Education
QRIS	Quality Rating and Improvement System
RCP	Regional Consultation Program
RFR	Request for Responses
ROR	Reach Out and Read
RTTT-ELC	Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant
SAC	State Advisory Council
SACCRS	School Age Child Care Rating Scales
SASID	State Assigned Student Identification
SLT	State Leadership Team
SPP	State Performance Plan
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UPK	Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program
WEAVE	Web-based Analysis and Visualization Environment

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

Introduction

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is tasked with a single mission: To serve the children of the Commonwealth with high-quality education and care programs. Created in 2005 through the consolidation of early education and child care components of the former Department of Education (now Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) as well as the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, EEC was the first early childhood education and care-focused department of its kind in the nation. As part of the Education Secretariat here in the Commonwealth, EEC works to coordinate and develop programs that ensure that each child, no matter their background or zip code has access to the kind of high quality education that has made Massachusetts a world leader in student achievement. Governor Patrick highlighted this responsibility in his most recent State of the Commonwealth address:

"We invest in education because that's the single best way to prepare our people for work and for life....There are children here...whose future is still defined by the zip code of their birth...we have a duty to help them"

Today EEC oversees the administration of state and federal child care financial assistance to low-income and other at-risk families, and provides financial assistance for over 51,000 children to attend high-quality programs that support their growth, development and learning. EEC also regulates the licensure of early education and care and out-of-school time programs in Massachusetts, including residential programs, and adoption/foster care placement agencies, and over 10,000 family child care and group/school-age early education and care programs across the Commonwealth.

The past year has been one of positive transition for the Department. With a commitment of additional funds to serve children, the many projects funded by the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge Grant award, and a new Commissioner leading the Department, this has been a time of focus on the improvement of not only the quality, but also the delivery of our services.

Governor Patrick's bold budget proposal for EEC last year focused attention on the very real need for an additional investment in early education. The Legislature adopted portions of this proposal and made targeted investments that have helped to not only open up new opportunities for children to have access to high-quality childcare and education but also to allow the Department to study and improve on its service delivery. For the Department, this has meant a renewed focus on operational improvements that are designed to improve our system for parents, providers and most importantly, the children we serve.

The past year has seen the following improvements either implemented or prepared for implementation here at EEC:

- The implementation of the enhanced Background Record Check law; Cross-referencing of sex offender records with licensed early education and care providers;
- The development of a new system of differentiated licensing;
- Increased access to services and waitlist remediation with an investment of new funding;
- Development of ECIS including a data feed into the MA Longitudinal Data System called Edwin Analytics;
- Automation of waitlist record archiving and other enhanced functions of the Kinderwait Waitlist Application;
- Review and updating of the EEC Internal Control Plan; and
- Updating of EEC's Strategic Plan to guide the Department's next five years.

The Department of Early Education and Care has 5 regional office across the state that offer critical services for Massachusetts children and families, including licensing and monitoring early education and care and out of school time programs, technical assistance for individuals or programs seeking new licensure or approval, complaint investigation, educator professional development, and family and community engagement.

Mission of Department:

Starting with the Readiness Project in 2008, The Patrick Administration has consistently made increasing access to a high-quality education for every child in the Commonwealth a priority. This commitment has been realized through the implementation of a wide array of initiatives in early education, K-12, and postsecondary education to build a 21st Century public education system in Massachusetts. This system is one that creates seamless educational pathways from birth through postsecondary education and prepares the Commonwealth's residents for college, career, and lifelong beyond.

The Patrick Administration is focused on addressing the achievement gaps that disproportionately affect students from lower-income families, students who are English language learners, students of color, and students with disabilities and we are redefining what it means to support our children by providing them and their families academic and comprehensive support services. Through strategic planning, grounded in research, and an expansive, inclusive, statewide information gathering process, the state is taking charge to use what we know—and building on what we have done—to take the next leap forward in building a truly high-quality, birth to career system.

The beginning years of a child's life are critical for building the foundation needed for success later in school and in life. Statistics show that three-quarters of children who struggle with reading in 3rd grade will continue to struggle academically throughout their educational careers, greatly reducing their chances of graduating from high school, going to college or successfully participating in a 21st Century high-skill economy. Currently, only 57% of all 3rd graders, 33% of African-American 3rd graders and 31% of Hispanic 3rd graders are proficient in English Language Arts. Coupled with those numbers is the

staggering fact that there are over 40,000 children across the Commonwealth whose parent/guardian(s) requested state financial assistance for an early education and care program. [Not all families of these children on the waitlist may actually meet the eligibility requirements for a subsidy.]

The 2010 Census reported nearly four hundred and fifty thousand of Massachusetts' overall population of 6.5 million to be comprised of children from birth to age five. Close to one-third of all children in Massachusetts birth to five are low-income, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty. These children are at risk of developmental delays and are most likely to benefit from high-quality early learning and development experiences.

Strong evidence from recent brain development research has shown the long-term impact of high-quality early education and care, and its potential return on investment in terms of high-performing, successful students and citizens. Leading economists agree that high-quality early learning programs can help level the playing field for children from lower-income families on vocabulary, social and emotional development, while helping students to stay on track and stay engaged in the early elementary grades and progress to higher education. Children who attend these programs are more likely to do well in school, find good jobs, and succeed in their careers.

This Department is committed to leading the way and forging ahead by continuing to build a comprehensive early learning system that provides all our youngest residents with the best chance for a prosperous future. In his 2013 State of the Union Address, highlighting the need to invest more in early education, President Obama said:

"Every dollar we invest in high-quality early childhood education can save more than \$7 later on – by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, even reducing violent crime"

Governance:

The Department of Early Education and Care is part of the Governor's Executive Branch, specifically the Executive Office of Education under the direction of Secretary of Education Matthew H. Malone. Working with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Higher Education, EEC is part of what the Governor called "... a comprehensive, child-centered public education system beginning before kindergarten and continuing until they join the workforce, or from cradle to career."

EEC is governed by the 11 member Board of Early Education and Care, chaired by Jondavid "JD" Chesloff which meets ten times a year. The Department's day to day operations are managed by Commissioner Thomas L. Weber, who was appointed on an acting basis in March 2013 and approved and appointed by the Secretary of Education in September 2013, following the recommendation of the Board.

There is also a State Advisory Council (SAC) on early education and care, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 15D, §3A. The SAC members represent a geographic balance and reflect the diversity of the commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. All appointees have a special expertise or interest in high-quality early childhood education and care and represent a mix of representatives of the early childhood community, civic, labor, and business communities, academics, parents, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers. The SAC may review and offer comments on any rules or

regulations before promulgation by EEC's Board, and may, from time to time, make recommendations to the Board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services.

Board of Early Education and Care

The Department is governed by a Board of Early Education and Care. The Board consists of 11 members, including the secretary of education (ex-officio), the secretary of health and human services (ex-officio); and nine members appointed by the Governor.

EEC's Board members are as follows:

Jondavid "J.D." Chesloff, Chairperson
Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Appointed as business representative with demonstrated commitment in education

Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D.
Secretary, Executive Office of Education

Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D., Vice Chairperson
Lahey Medical Center
Appointed as a parent of a child receiving early education and care services

John Polanowicz (Designee: Kathleen Betts)
Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Elizabeth Childs, M.D., M.P.A.
Appointed as psychologist recognized for research in field of educational psychology

Joni Block
Grant Specialist, Brockton Public Schools
Appointed as an early education and care teacher

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.
Executive Vice President, Action for Boston Community Development
Appointed as early education and care provider with management & administrative experience

Mary Walachy
Executive Director of the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation; At-large Representative

Joan Wasser Gish, Esq.
Principal at Policy Progress; At-large Representative

Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Ph.D.
Chair of Elementary Education Department and Associate Professor at Wheelock College
Appointed as an expert in evaluation & assessment of pre-schools

Cheryl A. Stanley, Ed.D
Dean of Education, Westfield State University; At-large Representative

On April 8, 2013, John Polanowicz, Secretary of Health and Human Services, designated Kathleen Betts to perform his duties as a member of the Board of Early Education and Care, replacing Marilyn Anderson Chase, who retired from state service.

On July 1, 2013, Governor Patrick reappointed Eleonora Villegas-Reimers to the Board of Early Education and Care as the expert in evaluation and assessment of pre-schools.

On January 8, 2014, Matthew Malone, Secretary of Education, designated Bridget E. Rodríguez to perform his duties as a member of the Board of Early Education and Care, replacing Abby Weiss, who left to pursue a new position at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

The EEC Board meets monthly*, except in the summer months (July and August). The meetings are open to the public and 30 minutes is made available at the beginning of every meeting for public testimony. The Board holds most meetings in the EEC Boston office, however, this past year the Board also held meetings in Amherst (May 14, 2013) and Carver (December 10, 2013), to allow for greater participation of stakeholders across the state.

Board members also participate as members on three subcommittee; descriptions of the subcommittees' missions, membership and staffing are listed below:

Planning and Evaluation Committee

The Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Board of Early Education and Care provides an organized structure that facilitates greater Board engagement and input into relevant EEC planning and evaluation initiatives that are brought to the full Board for discussion and decision making.

Membership:

Committee Chair: Eleonora Villegas-Reimers
EEC Board Members: Cheryl Stanley, Joni Block
Ex-Officio Members: EEC Board Chair (J.D. Chesloff) and EEC Commissioner (Tom Weber)

Policy and Research Committee

The Policy and Research Committee works in concert with the Fiscal and Planning and Evaluation Committees of the Board to guide and support EEC's policy development and implementation of a system to improve and maintain program quality, accessibility, and affordability meeting the diverse needs of children and families statewide.

Membership:

Chair: Joan Wasser Gish, Esq.
Members: Sharon Scott-Chandler, Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D.
Ex-Officio Members: EEC Board Chair (J.D. Chesloff) and EEC Commissioner (Tom Weber)

Fiscal Committee

The Fiscal Committee reviews EEC budget related activities that are brought to the full Board for discussion and decision making, and supports EEC's efforts to implement a system to improve and support quality statewide and to offer an array of high quality, comprehensive, and affordable programs designed to meet the diverse, individual needs of children and families.

Membership:

Chair: Elizabeth Childs, M.D.
Members: Mary Walachy
Ex- Officio Members: EEC Board Chair (J. D. Chesloff) and EEC Commissioner (Tom Weber)

2013 EEC Board Retreat

The EEC Board held its yearly retreat on July 31, 2013 and focused the discussion on the strategic direction for the Department and refining the EEC Strategic Plan. The Board also discussed governance methods of checks and balances for the Commissioner and EEC Board. Also new at the 2013 retreat, the Board invited EEC's Senior Leadership Team and Regional Directors to participate in a separate discussion about shared responsibilities and the Department's strategic direction. In FY14 the Board is working to update the Department Strategic Plan. This process is being led by the Planning and Evaluation Committee, which provided its first report at the January 14, 2013 EEC Board meeting.

Strategic Directions and Statutory Responsibilities:

In February 2009, the EEC Board identified five Strategic Directions to help guide the Department's work. These strategic directions work together to achieve the Department's vision and guide our efforts in meeting legislative intent. The board has begun the work of updating our strategic plan for adoption later this Spring. This revised plan will include measureable goals and indicators of success to demonstrate to our stakeholders our success in meeting benchmarks and improving year over year.

The five strategic directions are as follows:

1. Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide;
2. Increase and promote family support, access and affordability;
3. 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;
4. 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; and
5. Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision.

In concert with the strategic goals outlines above, the Department has a wide range of statutory obligations for which it is responsible (some of which are listed below), which it carries out in addition to being the lead agency for all early education and care services and funding in the Commonwealth:

- Licensing or approval of early education and care programs, group care facilities, adoption and placement agencies, school-aged child care programs, and temporary shelter facilities;
- Establishment of provider rates and participant fees for EEC licensed programs;
- Implementation of the Universal Pre-Kindergarten program and administration of any related grants;
- Providing ongoing program monitoring to ensure quality as well as adherence to regulations and standards;

- Provides Technical Assistance to providers and potential providers;
- Facilitates development of the EEC workforce and, when appropriate, provides training and Professional Development;
- Maintains an educator database and comprehensive waitlist of children expressing interest in services;
- Provides family education in English and other, commonly spoken languages when available and;
- Addresses infant and toddler needs, including parental education, early literacy services, and informal developmental opportunities.

Submission of Annual Report:

This reports satisfies the Board’s legislative reporting mandates, as codified in M.G.L. c. 15D, §§ 3(g), 10 and 13(d), to submit an annual report describing its progress in achieving the goals and implementing the programs authorized under Chapter 15D of the General Laws of the Commonwealth. Specifically, EEC is required to submit an annual report, which includes, at a minimum, the following topics:

- Progress in achieving goals and implementing programs authorized by statute;1
- Progress towards universal early education and care for pre-school aged children;2
- Rules and regulations promulgated by the Board related to civil fines and sanctions, including the types of sanctions and the amount of the fines;3
- Progress in reducing expulsion rates through developmentally appropriate prevention and intervention services;4
- Behavioral health indicators:5
 - Estimates of annual rates of preschool suspensions and expulsions;
 - Types and prevalence of behavioral health needs of children served by the Department;
 - Racial and ethnic background of children with identified behavioral health needs;
 - Existing capacity to provide behavioral health services; and
 - Analysis of best intervention and prevention practices, including strategies to improve delivery of services and to improve collaboration of services.
- Findings and recommendations related to the study on the programmatic financing and phase-in options for the development and implementation of the Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program.6

In addition, this report satisfies the Board’s mandate to develop and annually update an implementation plan for a workforce development system, which is designed to support the education, training, and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, FCC, infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age providers. See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 5 (See Appendix XX for the Legislative reporting language).

Comment [E3]: finalize with appendix order

¹ See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3(g)
² See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3(g)
³ See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 10
⁴ See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3(g)
⁵ See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3(g)
⁶ See M.G.L. c. 15D, § 13(d)

Operational Improvements in 2013:

Upon his appointment as Acting Commissioner in March of 2013, Commissioner Weber began working with the Senior Leadership Team at the Department to update mission-critical policies and procedures as well as engage in a discussion regarding the long-term direction for the Department. This work was carried out in multiple domains: Licensing; Fiscal; Legal and Governance; Policy; and Communications. With recent investments, the Department has increased capacity in several key areas; fiscal monitoring, licensing, and the legal unit. The Department has worked hard to support a diverse workforce with 81% of the workforce women, 30% minorities, and 4% persons identifying themselves as having a disability.

The following are a number of ways that the Department has implemented or is implementing other improvements:

1. Licensing

A. Response to Office of the State Auditor (OSA) Report

On March 27, 2013, the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) issued a first-of-its kind audit of certain activities related to the department's oversight of child care providers. The audit contained seven findings, each of which has been addressed by the department with the oversight of its board. The most serious recommendation was related to the monitoring of reported addresses of registered sex offenders in relation to child care facilities. This recommendation was predicated on the OSA's concern that as many as 119 child care providers shared common addresses with registered sex offenders. The department's investigation, completed in advance of the OSA report's issuance, determined that only three such matches actually existed. The licenses of those three providers were immediately revoked. The department's goal, however, is to mitigate, as strongly as possible, against any direct exposure of children in care to sex offenders and subsequently we have taken significant measures to enhance safety:

- Requiring that programs applying for, or renewing, a license, provide EEC with the necessary information in order for EEC to conduct a SORI check for possible instances of registered sex offender affiliation with the program's address;
- Conducting monthly SORI checks of EEC's database of approximately 11,000 licensed programs; and
- In accordance with the law, sharing information about the SORI check system with parents and licensed providers, in recognition that informed parents and providers are essential to ensuring the safety of children in care.
- The department has partnered with the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPS) and Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) to use the SORB's Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check system in an effort to identify possible instances of sex offender affiliation with a licensed or other state licensed, approved or funded child care, residential, adoption and foster program that is not ascertained from the Department's current Criminal Offender Registry Information (CORI) and Department of Children and Families (DCF) background record check process. Specifically, the Department is now;

We continue to work with SORB and EOPSS to incorporate new tools and/or information into EEC procedures to protect children.

B. Comprehensive Review of Licensing Policies and Practices

EEC's licensing procedures currently involve both the regulatory function of ensuring compliance with applicable law, regulations, and policies as well as technical assistance to programs attempting to meet with the Department's program quality agenda. Due to the high caseloads that our staff must contend with, the Department has been preparing for the adoption of differentiated licensing practices, i.e. targeting licensing resources based on risk assessment.

As it is implemented, this system will require additional staff, the development of a risk assessment system, information technology upgrades, as well as substantial staff training in the assessment and quality support work. The result will be a stronger, safer, higher-quality system of early education and care.

The Department is already the recipient of intensive technical assistance from the Federal Administration for Children and Families - Office of Child Care regarding licensing policies. This technical assistance will be used to develop new licensing policies; specifically a risk instrument to better target staff resources and new licensing visit protocols based on a differential licensing model. Two larger goals of this technical assistance are to identify new ways to utilize scarce staff resources and to make more frequent visits to programs that require more licensing assistance. Twenty-six other states have already incorporated this system and have seen positive results from its adoption.

The model envisioned for Massachusetts would take a sample of twelve regulatory categories in each type of care that have been shown to be statistically significant in indicating regulatory compliance and quality child care. These regulatory categories would be utilized in guiding the visits of the Department's licensors. The utilization of this abbreviated regulatory list will result in shorter visits by EEC licensing staff at licensed programs. The shorter length of the visits will enable the licensors to conduct more visits on an annual basis and therefore will result in a higher number of programs seen.

The Department will also utilize this differential approach to spending more time with licensees who could benefit from it. This will result in a rise in the quality of licensed programs and a decrease in regulatory violations. The differential licensing initiative also includes an examination of the entire licensing process including the application process, paperwork processes, and utilization of technology resources as a means to increase efficiency.

2. Fiscal

A. Internal Control Plan - Review and Update

A top-to-bottom review of EEC's Internal Control Plan was instituted with the engagement of the Commonwealth's Office of the Comptroller; including:

- A review of 2009 and 2012 internal control plan with the Comptroller's Quality Assurance Bureau;
- Dissemination of the 2009 and 2012 Internal Control Plans to Unit Directors for review and revision;
- A directive to all Unit Directors to review or develop Policies and Procedures; and
- Internal audits and risk assessments on the Accounting Unit.

As a result of the efforts above, the Department's internal control plan was fully updated and approved by the Comptroller's Office with only a few additions remaining for it to be fully compliant. This plan adheres to the State Comptroller's Internal Control Guide which instructs state agencies to utilize the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework, a comprehensive risk identification process with checks and balances, when developing and/or revising their department's internal controls.

In turn, the EEC Unit Directors have updated and/or developed their specific Unit's policies and procedures. Those procedures were submitted to the EEC CFO and Director of Audit Resolution for risk assessment on May 17, 2013. The risk assessment process was guided by the following principles, which, when upheld can greatly reduce an organizations' exposure:

Goal #1 - Create and implement a system to improve and support quality statewide; explanation of risk associated with this goal;

Goal #2 - Increase and promote family support, access and affordability; explanation of risk associated with this goal;

Goal #3 - 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; explanation of risk associated with this goal; and

Goal #4 - Build the internal infrastructure to support achieving the vision; explanation of risk associated with this goal.

B. Audit Compliance and Resolution Unit (ACR) – Revisions to Policy and Procedures

The ACR Unit's policies, procedures, and forms were updated as part of the Policy and Procedures Manual. Updates included the processing of Transportation incidents, the recoupment process, monitoring of the RTTT-ELC Grant, execution of internal audits and collaboration with the IT Unit for trainings related to subsidy management.

The monitoring section of the document was also revised to include specific procedures monitoring Contract Providers, CCRRs, and Grants. The Department also ensured that all program integrity procedures and instructions followed those mandated by the Office of Child Care/Administration for Children and Families as of September 30, 2013. All applicable laws and regulation governing the monitoring process have been reviewed thoroughly and updated.

3. Legal and Governance

A. Fingerprinting

The Patrick Administration's current implementation goal for Chapter 459 of the Acts of 2012 (as amended by Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2013) requires the Department to conduct fingerprint-based checks of the national and state criminal history databases. As a result, the Department has revised its background record check regulations to include SORI checks and fingerprinting. The Department has developed a process for conditional hiring until the results of fingerprint-based check are received from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Massachusetts State Police. We have added a discretionary review process for individuals who have disqualifying criminal history backgrounds discovered through fingerprint-based checks. To ensure alignment of our comprehensive battery of background record checks, we will review our existing CORI and DCF processes in conjunction with the new SORI, and fingerprint check processes. Finally, the Department will work with EOE IT to enhance EEC's existing criminal history database so that it captures the disposition of all four background record checks.

The new fingerprint-based checks of national and state criminal history databases in conjunction with SORI checks demands that EEC's Background Record Check (BRC) unit to assume several new responsibilities. To ensure the Department's needs are met, the Legal Unit requires additional staff in the BRC unit.

B. Legal Orders

In 2013, the Department has received and processed an unprecedented number of licensing actions, a total of ninety-seven separate requests for legal orders and consults. (See Appendix XX.)

Comment [E4]: number?

C. Subsidy Financial Assistance

In 2013, the Department received and processed 888 of 974 requests for review and received an unparalleled ninety-four requests for hearing. The Department continues to work to improve accountability and transparency in the status of final agency decisions relative to subsidized child care financial assistance. We will continue to revise and improve processes for responding to requests for reviews and hearings. We will also offer opportunities for providers and systems on subsidy management through regular trainings and technical assistance.

D. Subsidy Regulation Revisions

In 2013, to both stay current with best practices here and across the country, the Department developed and promulgated new regulations related to our management of subsidies for qualified families and children. These new regulations were designed to maximize the reduced resources EEC had in recent years as well as addressing Federal and State oversight concerns and achieving efficiencies in the management of our subsidy programs.

In addition to technical changes designed to codify existing practice, the new regulations included a number of substantial changes, some of which are detailed below:

- Requiring verification of applicant's identity and residency, as well as the citizenship/immigration status of each child seeking assistance;
- Requiring children to regularly attend early education and care programs subsidized by the Commonwealth or risk termination and/or non-reimbursement;
- Imposing restrictions on certain work-related service need activities, in particular, "at home" self-employment;
- Changes methodology for calculating service need – total earnings divided by minimum wage to establish amount of care needed; and
- Development of a new definition of protective services to include parents and children with documented disability and/or special need; limits authorization period.

These regulations were discussed with stakeholders, further edited following a public comment period and were adopted on January 18, 2013.

4. Policy

The Policy Unit was heavily reorganized by the Commissioner upon his arrival; the EEC Policy Director and several policy supervisors will now oversee the Department's state and federal policy work with the Policy Director reporting directly to the Commissioner as part of the Senior Leadership Team. To support the Policy Director, there are now Policy unit Supervisors who help facilitate policy work and provide oversight on day to day policy initiatives such as the RTTT-ELC program manager, the QRIS Policy Lead and the Head Start State Collaboration Director. Therefore, the Department has initiated a comprehensive reorganization of the Policy Unit, providing greater clarity, coherence, and supervision.

5. Communications

With the understanding that a strong Communications plan, both internal and external is a key tool used in a successful organizations, both the Department and the Commissioner have worked on bolstering interactions between the Central Office in Boston and the Regional Offices across the state. The Commissioner holds regular calls with all Regional Directors to give them a chance to directly report on what is happening in the field and he attends monthly meetings at each of the five regional EEC offices on a rotating basis to ensure that the work the Department does is integrated at all locations. We have now also added a monthly All-EEC staff meeting at the Central Office that is used as an opportunity to not only report out significant news or policy changes but also to allow staff to present their work and accomplishments to their colleagues.

The Commissioner has renewed engagement with State Legislators to advocate on behalf of the Governor and the Board's priorities to increase the investment necessary to meet the department's mission. He has held meetings with Senate and House leadership and Education Chairs Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz and Representative Alice Peisch. These have proven invaluable in updating policymakers on the important work the Department does, discussing what the direction of the Department is and the resources needed to realize that vision.

Budget Overview

Governor Patrick has routinely demonstrated his commitment to early education in his budget recommendations despite challenging fiscal times. Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) saw a continuation of programs from FY13 but also increased support for caseload and an opportunity to implement some studies. Including the prior year funds in the Income Eligible Account as well as funds awarded for a rate reserve, the EEC FY14 total appropriation is approximately \$509 million.

FY14 EEC State Funded Budget: A Continuation of FY13 Programs

3000-1000 Administration

The administration account provides funding for the agency's administrative and operational expenses including payroll. This account was funded at \$12.1 million in FY13 (after \$210,000 in 9C cuts were imposed), and increased to \$12.8 million in FY14. The increase supports maintenance needs of the agency (collective bargaining increase for our NAGE and SEIU employees, annualize the CBA increases from FY13, and lease increases for several office locations). The FY14 appropriation also supports the beginning of rebuilding the EEC FTE infrastructure that was devastated over the past fiscal years.

3000-2000 Access Management

This account is for the regional administration and coordination of services provided by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies. The FY14 appropriation of \$5,873,862 is a \$60,000 reduction from FY13 levels. CCRRs must develop strong relationships with agencies serving children and families, such as the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees, and must also develop and support a varied provider workforce strengthened by their work with EEC's Educator Provider Support (EPS) grantees. Promoting quality care is a key component of a CCRR's work. The Massachusetts QRIS Standards are the base that CCRRs need to use when working with families, providers, and other constituents.

3000-3050 Supportive Childcare

Provides early education and care and afterschool services for children referred by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). This account is intended to provide immediate access to all eligible families and is funded at \$76.9 million in FY14, a decrease of \$300,000 when compared to the FY13 GAA appropriation. Funds from this appropriation contribute \$600,000 to a statewide mental health program which, in total, is funded at \$1.25 million (The other portion comes from 3000-6075). The statewide Mental Health Program offers a statewide consultation system of mental health supports for children and families to foster the healthy social-emotional development of all children.

3000-4050 DTA Related Childcare

This line item provides early education and care and after school services for children referred by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). This account is funded at \$128.1 million in FY14 which is an increase of \$2.6 million when compared to the FY13 GAA appropriation.

3000-4060 Income Eligible Childcare

Provides child care, early education, and afterschool financial assistance for children from low income and at-risk families through vouchers and contracts. This account is funded at \$214.3 million in FY14 which is a decrease of approximately \$17.6 million compared to the FY13 GAA appropriation. However, this account had approximately a \$10.6 million surplus at the conclusion of FY13 as a result of voucher access continuing to remain closed since February 2011, causing a serious reduction expenditures and service to children in the Commonwealth. This account enjoyed an \$8.5 million PAC from the FY13 surplus and has been used in FY14 to provide care to approximately 800 additional children.

Funds from 3000-4060 are also used to fund Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments programs. These funds, valued at \$9 million, (formerly known as Chapter 188/Phase I of CPC) are designed to support inclusive preschool learning environments for preschool children with disabilities with their typically developing peers. EEC funds ninety-seven programs with these funds

3000-5000 Grants to Head Start Programs

Provides state supplemental salary grants for twenty-nine federally funded Head Start agencies to support their programs. This account was funded at \$8 million in FY13 and increased to \$8.1 million in FY14. Grantees must provide services that support the development of a state-wide system of early education and care for children (birth to age eight) and families served by Head Start and Early Head Start in the Commonwealth.

3000-5075 Universal Pre-Kindergarten

Provides grants to preschool programs to promote school readiness and positive outcomes for children and to inform the longer term implementation of a program of universally accessible, high-quality early education. This account is funded at \$7.5 million in FY14. The purpose of the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Program is to:

- Promote the early learning guidelines to support school readiness and positive outcomes for children participating in UPK classrooms and homes;
- Support and enhance the quality of services for children in UPK classrooms and family child care homes, especially for high needs children and/or children living in underperforming school districts;
- Maximize parent choice by ensuring participation from all program types within a mixed public and private service delivery system;
- Use child evidence-based formative assessment systems/tools to ensure that programs are effectively measuring children's progress across all developmental domains and using this information to inform practice through individualized teaching; and
- Inform the longer-term implementation of a program of universally accessible, high-quality early childhood education.

3000-6075 Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Services

This account mainly funds grants for mental health consultation services to empower programs to manage children's mental health issues in order to reduce the number of expulsions and is funded at \$750,000 in FY14 which is the same level as FY13. Aside from \$100,000 dedicated to payroll and fringe, all other funds in this appropriation support the Mental Health Consultation Grant which also receives nearly half its support (\$600,000) from the 3000-3050 Supportive line items. As part of a broader comprehensive statewide system of mental health supports for children and families, EEC, in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health (DMH), aims to provide a statewide system of mental health consultation services.

3000-7050 Services for Infants and Parents/ Quality

This appropriation is funded at \$18,164,890 and primarily funds grants for a statewide system that provides families with access to comprehensive services and supports that strengthen families and promote optimal child development. The Services for Infants and Parents account is used to fund two grant programs: Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) and Educator and Provider Support (EPS), each of which is described below.

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE)

CFCE grantees act as a community-based information and resource hub for all families in order to increase knowledge of and accessibility to high-quality early education and care programs and services for families with children birth through age 8. In addition, the CFCE grant supports program quality by providing early education and out-of-school time programs with referrals to a range of locally available resources that meet the needs of children and families. Finally, CFCE grantees create linkages between educators and providers on the local level to professional development supports and opportunities available through EEC's statewide system of educator and provider support.

The following priorities of the CFCE grant directly align with the Indicators of Success under the Family Support, Access, and Affordability section of the EEC Strategic Plan.

- Actively identify and serve families that are the most socially isolated, “hard to reach,” and hence at greatest risk for developmental delays;
- Provide high-quality, accurate consumer information, and parent education based on science;
- Provide evidence-based early and family literacy programming;
- Support families through the continuum of services and supports needed for child development birth to 13, including intentional support into kindergarten, and
- Provide linkages to comprehensive services to support optimal child development for families and for early education and care programs.

Educator and Provider Support (EPS)

Through an FY14 competitive grant application, EEC awarded grants to five vendors who provide professional development opportunities and services for working adults in early education and out of school time field to increase their knowledge and skills, which can then be applied to practice. These professional development opportunities are aligned with the MA Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). The grant funding will be used to address three core areas: educator and provider pathways, coaching and mentoring in support of matriculation, and/or competency development. **The key principles of this grant are as follows:**

- Professional development is intended to transform practice. It is not designed to simply provide information which will not support improved or enhanced growth trajectories of young children;
- Professional development is a shared responsibility between educators and the providers that employ them, since increasing the competency of educators increases the level of quality of the programs in which they work;
- Professional development must meet the needs and address the diversity of the early education and care and out of school time workforce (i.e., race, language, hours of operation, learning styles, age of the learner), across EEC’s mixed delivery system;
- Opportunities for professional development should be designed to meet the needs of adult learners and include theory, research, and practice. All trainings shall include an opportunity for reflection with a focus on the behaviors individual educators and programs will integrate to improve and/or support practice;
- The professional development system will be aligned and comprehensive. Although opportunities may be developed regionally, they are open to educators and providers across the state;
- EPS grantees shall create and provide professional development opportunities and services, as well as provide access to training developed or offered by the state to educators and programs in their region; and
- Services provided through the grant should empower educators and providers to make informed and appropriate educational choices that advance professional growth and program quality. Providers should receive guidance that will assist them to make informed, intentional, and appropriate decisions linked to increased program quality.

There are five EPS providers across the Commonwealth funded at a total of \$3,167,999.

3000-7070 Reach Out and Read

Funded at \$800,000, Reach Out and Read is a research-proven, pediatric literacy intervention program which trains doctors and nurse practitioners to provide advice to parents on reading aloud to children and books for children living in poverty and in underperforming school districts through programs established

in community health centers, medical practices, and hospitals. The funds distributed through Reach Out and Read shall be contingent upon a match of not less than \$1 in private or corporate contributions for every \$1 in state grant funding.

FY14 EEC State Funded Budget: New Programs and Initiatives

The FY14 budget saw the addition of some new programs and initiative which EEC staff have already rolled out. Included among them are the following.

3000-3000 Innovative Curriculum in Pre School Programs

This is a new account funded at \$250,000 to support the implementation of a competitively bid grant program for the development of innovative curriculum in preschool programs for children from the age of 2 years and 9 months until they are kindergarten eligible. EEC began work on this effort almost immediately and assigned a staff person to write the RFR to hire a vendor or vendors to develop the innovative curriculum. The selected vendor had to have a strong in-depth understanding in curriculum development focusing on early education, particularly in the content areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The vendor also had to have the proven ability to design early childhood curriculum.

On 11/26/13, three teams reviewed and scored the STEM grant applicants. Eight grants were read and scored. The five selected vendors for grant awards are the following: Heritage Museum and Gardens, Mass. Audubon Society, Shed Children's Campus, The YMCA of Central MA and Clarendon Family Day Care, Inc. Each grant represents a different approach to Innovative STEM curriculum development. They all share the common element of a quality approach, child focused learning, and unique elements to their proposals that makes them stand out from the field of the other grants submissions.

3000-4065 Special Commission on Early Education Services Consultant

This new initiative provides \$150,000 to support consulting services in relation to the special commission established in outside section 168 of the FY14 budget to assess the funding and programming needed to enhance early education and care. EEC released a bid on August 21, 2013 to hire a professional individual or organization to conduct research for, and coordinate the preparation and implementation of, recommendations from the special commission. As a result of the bid, Public Consulting Group (PCG) was hired to carry out the mandated activities pursuant to Section 166 of the FY14 GAA working under the direction of the EEC Commissioner/Chair of the Commission and assigned EEC staff.

3000-4070: Waitlist Initiative

This is a new account funded at \$15 million to reduce the waitlist for income-eligible early education and care programs.

In response to budgetary limitations, voucher access was closed on February 16, 2011. Limited voucher access was made available in April 2013, but had minimal impact reducing the surplus. With voucher access closed and minimal continuity of care in place, the waitlist has increased significantly. EEC decided to issue only vouchers to implement the waitlist initiative; all vouchers would be issued by the CCRRs. The allocation to each CCRR was proportionally distributed by region in relation to the number of each child on the waitlist by region. For example, if we had 1000 vouchers to distribute and Region 1 has 2000 children on the waitlist and the waitlist total is 8000, Region 1 received 250 vouchers or 25%.

Administrative Supports: Over the past few years the CCRRs' management fee had been reduced and with voucher access closed, CCRRs had downsized staff. A small portion (\$700,000) of the \$15 million was used to increase the management fee to ensure the CCRRs were staffed appropriately to handle the increased volume for placements and monitoring the backfilling and reassessment process.

Using the average Income Eligible cost per child, and starting October 1, 2013, EEC estimated that we could serve 2,367 additional children. We are happy to report that 2,367 children had received vouchers by the EEC-imposed deadline of December 20, 2013.

1599-0500: Study of Child Care Reserve

The FY14 budget sets aside \$500,000 in a reserve account for "a 2-year assessment of the provision of childcare supports funded in items 3000-3050, 3000-4050, 3000-4060, and 3000-4070; provided, that the assessment shall be directed by a nonprofit research organization with demonstrated experience assessing the business practices, service delivery and financial systems of state-subsidized childcare programs..."

While EEC had the expertise to have written the SOW, we had neither the manpower nor the time to write it and organize a competitive process to select the successful vendor "not later than October 1, 2013." Consequently, EEC released on August 14, 2013 a SOW to hire a consultant to write the RFR seeking the nonprofit research organization. All proposals had to be received by August 20, 2013. Only one agency, the Urban Institute, responded to the RFR, but their proposal was excellent. Work has begun on the assessment. As of January 20, 2014, Urban Institute had finished all interviews (15 in total), held internal meeting on stakeholder interviews to discuss key themes and takeaways and plans for refining research design, circulated first drafts of research design components for internal edits, and scheduled internal meeting to discuss edits and finalized plan for review process and submission.

Federal Funds

EEC has been fortunate to enjoy the support of numerous federally funded programs.

SAC Funds: The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 required the Governor of each State to designate or establish a council to serve as the State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry. To be eligible to receive a grant, a state had to prepare and submit an application for a three-year period that addressed select criteria. MA received \$1,301,837 in SAC funds to be fully liquidated by July 31, 2013. We are happy to report that EEC spent all awarded funds. SAC activities included programs that aligned with our mission and focused on

- Needs Assessment;
- B-8 Community Planning and PreK-3 Partnerships;
- Early Education/Higher Education Workforce Preparation Partnership;
- Policy and Best Practices for Children & Families with Limited English Proficiency and/or Developmental Delays or Multiagency Involvement; and
- ARRA Council Implementation Support and Accountability.

Head Start State Collaboration Project: This is a five-year grant awarded by the Department of Health & Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that is renewed annually during the grant period. We are now in the third year of a five-year grant cycle. The total grant amount varies State to State and is based on the number of federally funded Head Start children in the State; Massachusetts receives \$175,000 annually. The work of the Head Start Collaboration project highlights the importance of the work and commitment to all children and families in the Commonwealth. The HSSCO's goals, key

priority areas, and activities are aligned with EEC's enabling legislation and include school transitions, professional development with higher education, and early childhood systems development and coordination.

Board of Early Education and Care FY15 Aspirational Budget

The FY15 budget originates in the EEC mission to provide "the foundation that supports all children in their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers." .” In light of this, the EEC Board voted to make recommendations in two significant areas: in investment in access for our children and families and an investment in quality.

An Investment in Quality

Additional Funding: \$19,479,628

Aligned with our mission and our Strategic Plan, the Board voted to invest in quality through and by the categories presented below.

- Investment in Workforce Quality: A rate increase of 3% (\$13,657,652) supports an increase in salaries, benefits, and stipends for child care workers. As applied to each of the child care accounts, the 3% increase is as follows:
 - 3000-3050: \$2,351,311
 - 3000-4050: \$4,031,960
 - 3000-4060: \$7,274,381
- Investment in Quality Program Sustainability / Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS): A set-aside of \$5 million in its own appropriation supports our investment in QRIS and helps sustain program improvements supporting children in care.
- Quality Infrastructure: The addition of thirteen positions at a value of \$821,976 will support staffing which, among other things, holds child care providers accountable for health and safety, quality care, and quality programs. These funds would be added to 3000-1000.

An Investment in Access for Our Children and Families

Additional Funding: \$74,205,523

EEC seeks to ensure that parents have access to high-quality early education and care experiences. We seek to serve as many children as possible through our caseload accounts, and to provide access through transportation:

- Investment in DCF: The creation of a pilot to provide vouchers for 500 children at a cost of \$6,618,810 will provide access for children on the waitlist with a strong emphasis in rural areas;
- Investment in IE: An additional \$50 million will remove no fewer than 5,784 children from the waitlist; and
- Transportation: The request for \$17,586,713 affirms the Board's vote in June 2012 to increase the rate paid for transportation to support improvements in the system and the addition of one adult monitor on all vehicles carrying infants, toddlers, and preschool children.

FY14 EEC State Funded Budget: Budget Concerns

There are several areas of concern that could adversely impact cost projections and EEC's ability to carry out its mission, most particularly in the caseload accounts. The main areas of concern are:

- *Fingerprinting:* Chapter 459 of the Acts of 2012, "AN ACT RELATIVE TO BACKGROUND CHECKS" closed an existing criminal history background checks loophole by requiring the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and school districts to conduct fingerprint-supported state and national criminal history background checks on all teachers, school employees, and early education educators and licensees in Massachusetts. However, the legislation required an amendment to comply with federal law as to who can be fingerprinted and for what purposes. Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2013, also entitled "AN ACT RELATIVE TO BACKGROUND CHECKS", aligned the legislation with federal authority and added an additional requirement that EEC check the MA Sex Offender Registry database. EEC is now required to conduct fingerprint-based checks and Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) checks of all new applicants and current licensees, regular volunteers, and employees of programs licensed or approved by EEC, family child care assistants, household members, and individuals regularly on the premises of family child care homes, foster and adoptive parents, transportation providers, and in-home non-relative caregivers funded by EEC. The fingerprint results will be returned to EEC by the Massachusetts State Police's database AFIS-R. In order to review and approve the SORI checks and fingerprint results, we will effectively be adding a new unit to the department. To properly equip the unit for the mandated tasks we estimate that we will need as many as eleven staff persons to handle this responsibility. The request for eleven additional individuals reflects EEC's legal inability to disseminate fingerprint results to programs, which it can now do for CORI and BRC results so that programs are then responsible for conducting discretionary reviews. The estimated full year cost for this could be as much as \$929,443. Included in the cost estimate are the following staff positions :
 - 3 Volume Trackers (\$45K per - \$135K): People who track the volume of applications; tied to BRC applicants;
 - 2 Clerks (\$45K per - \$90K): Responses must be tracked in database and letters must be mailed;
 - 5 Reviewers (\$60K per - \$300K): Review discretionary applications and review rationales for decisions.
- *Sequestration:* As a result of the federal government's inability to come to a budget agreement in Federal Fiscal Year 2013 (FFY13), an automatic budgetary reduction measure called sequestration was initiated that reduced certain discretionary funds. Among these funds was the CCDF Discretionary budget, which provides low income families with subsidized child care in Massachusetts. The impact of the reduction was 3.5% or \$959,643 when compared to FFY12. The anticipated reduction was 5% (ACF issued notice March 4, 2013, the reduction was prorated in FFY13, and the sequestered funds began March 1, 2013). ACF at this time cannot provide any additional information for the impact to FFY14. The FFY14 anticipated impact is up to 7.2% or approximately an additional \$1.0M. When compared to FFY12 funding this represents \$1.9M reduction. EEC typically spends an award received in October in November of the following year.

The federal Head Start Program also had a reduction of 5.27%. The impact of this on Massachusetts has been the reduction of 2,015 children in Head Start Programs across the Commonwealth. While this reduction does not have a direct impact on the state funded Head Start program, the elimination of funds impacts the Massachusetts grantees overall and can lead, in addition to a loss of services to children in need who desperately need this service, to an elimination of positions

Governor Patrick's Education Investment Plan

When Governor Patrick released his FY14 budget recommendation, the Board of Early Education and Care was pleased to see its alignment with their FY14 aspirational budget request for the Department.

The Governor has recommended a FY15 budget for EEC of \$531.7 million which is \$22.3 million more than the FY14 total available funding level of \$509.4 million. The Governor's budget proposal provides maintenance or level-funding for most accounts but also includes a few notable increased investments: \$15 million for Birth through Pre-School access expansion; \$2 million for a K1 Classroom Grant Program; and \$2.5 million for QRIS IT funding through the EOE/IT line item.

Race To The Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant

In late Summer 2011, the Obama Administration released the application for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTTT-ELC) to provide \$500 million in state-level competitive grants to improve early learning and development programs. The goal of the RTTT-ELC is to better prepare more children with high needs for kindergarten because children from birth to age 5, including those from low-income families, need a strong foundation for success in school and beyond. In their applications, states had to demonstrate a commitment to building coordinated systems, aligning resources and policies, and increasing access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children who need them most. Massachusetts submitted an application which received the second-highest score in the nation and was awarded \$50M for four years beginning January 1, 2012. We have successfully created twelve projects being delivered through 51 activities with approximately \$24.1M devoted to statewide infrastructure investment programs and \$25.8M directed toward direct community investment programs. These funds are managed by a network of sister state agencies, institutions of higher education, non-profit agencies, and training and research firms. In FY2012 EEC utilized \$1M from the Race To The Top Early Learning Challenge Grant to support a deficiency in scholarship funds for the Spring and Summer 2012 semesters. These funds were used to support educators who had their scholarship awarded reduced, and were available to 269 educators who met the eligibility requirement of working in a program that was currently or planning to participate in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

The following is a brief summary of the projects funded through the RTTT-ELC initiative.

- ***Project 1 - Systems Infrastructure:*** This funds administration of the grant (EEC payroll, travel, Computer and database, fringe & indirect) and RTTT-ELC mandated technical assistance facilitated by US DOE or HHS.
- ***Project 2 - Tiered Quality, Rating, and Improvement System (QRIS): Universal participation and Quality Improvement:*** Massachusetts is using the QRIS to ensure that all children with high needs are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs. To support this goal, this project is designed to increase the number of programs participating in the State's tiered QRIS and the number of programs rated in the top tiers. These activities provide programs and educators with resources needed to meet QRIS standards. Additionally, Project 2 supports Project 8 as a means of increasing content offered to Early Childhood Educators.

Key Performance Measures:

1. Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System;

2. Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
3. Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

- ***Project 3 - Measuring Growth Through the Massachusetts Early Learning and Development Assessment System (MELD) from Birth to Grade Three:*** The design and implementation of the MELD Assessment System will measure, influence, and improve a child's growth and development outcomes from birth to grade three. Massachusetts' Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees, early education programs, and public school classrooms will support the alignment of a seamless assessment system and the healthy development of children and their families at different points along the assessment continuum.

Key Performance Measure:

1. Engage 306 public school districts in Kindergarten Entry Assessment, assess 67,496 children in one of three formative assessments, and train 3,041 teachers in the use of one of the three format assessments tools by year four.

- ***Project 4 - Family Engagement Evidence Based Practice:*** EEC seeks to increase school readiness by strengthening partnerships with families and communities and engaging with them specifically relative to the appropriate development of children. Families are the single most influential individuals in a child's development. EEC recognizes that when families and communities are fully engaged, supported, and informed of the appropriate development of children, school readiness goals promoted and successful. With a focus on reaching families of children with high needs, this project will support communities in a variety of approaches to form strong partnerships with families.

Key Performance Measures:

1. Strengthen the statewide network of Consolidated Family Community Engagement Grantees to support families of children with high need by incorporating the use of evidence based models.
2. Share information in multiple languages on children's learning and development and available state resources through a statewide public awareness campaign aimed at the families with children from birth to age 5.
3. Establish a cohort of trainers in each of the six state regions defined by EEC to provide ongoing coaching and guidance to frontline practitioners working with diverse families. In partnership with the national Head Start training center, train 320 individuals in parent, family and community engagement by 2014.

- ***Project 5 - Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades:*** Provide communities support to enhance children's third grade reading and math proficiency skills, social and emotional development, and the alignment of birth to grade 3 instructional and assessment training and implementation opportunities. Informed by evidenced based research, EEC has embraced birth to third grade alignment as a comprehensive strategy that seeks to sustain student learning gains in the early elementary school years.

Key Performance Measure:

1. Enhance the state's learning and development system throughout the early elementary school years by building on the successful practices already in place.

- **Project 6 - Standards: Validation and Alignment:** This project is intended to establish a seamless system of developmentally appropriate learning and development standards for all children from birth to kindergarten. Through translation, development of English Language Development Standards, and the study of the QRIS Validation and alignment of the Standards, EEC hopes to take a comprehensive look at the system of quality and standards to ensure we are promoting positive child outcomes.

Key Performance Measures:

1. Determine if current standards and the tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System provide positive child outcomes to high needs children and prepare children for school readiness; and
2. Understand the relationship between positive child outcomes and the standards and Tiered QRIS.

- **Project 7 - Interagency Partnerships:** EEC plans to build up the state infrastructure to support interagency collaboration on programs and services for high needs children from birth to age 5. MA plans to achieve this goal by working with other agencies to provide staff training and professional development for workers in the field, support for personnel with expertise in child development and early education, learning collaborative on key issues (e.g. children's mental health), and support for successful programs at participating state agencies. This work has been agreed to across agencies.

Key Performance Measures:

1. Policies and procedures through agencies that serve children are aligned;
2. Families and Children entering the state system through different agencies will receive the same level of supports and information.

- **Project 8 - Ensuring Competency through Workforce Knowledge, Skills, and Practice-Based Support:** Validation of core competencies in areas of social emotional, literacy, and numeracy; model for transitioning ELL educators to college courses in English; post-masters certificate program; and infrastructure for coaching and mentoring educators. These activities connect knowledge to classroom practice (competency). Validation of competency is focused on three critical areas of children's academic success. Strengthening the diversity and recognizing the competency ELL educators bring to early education requires enabling their access to higher education. Fostering leadership that connects research, policy, and classroom practice requires credentials in early education beyond a Masters degree. A reliable and predictable system of coaching and mentoring services is essential to support educators in the intentional planning for their professional growth.

Key Performance Measure:

1. Improve and measure the education and training effectiveness at the classroom and program level.

- **Project 9 - Measuring Growth by Developing a Common Measure for Kindergarten Entry Assessment:** As part of the Massachusetts Early Learning and Development (MELD) Assessment System, which includes the KEA, Massachusetts will measure a child from birth to grade three, to measure and improve the outcomes for children. Programs serving children birth to 5 years of age will be expected to use formative assessment to measure growth and learning, individual teaching and curriculum design, and communicate with parents on the child's progress. Programs have a choice of using 1 of 3 formative assessment tools. A common metric will be developed for the 3 assessment tools that will allow one set of data on a child to be assessed to determine school readiness.

Key Performance Measure:

1. Develop and use a Common Metric in the EEC mixed delivery system to administer screen and formative assessment to approximately 135,000 high needs children, complete training on formative assessment to at least 1,200 educators, and build the capacity of the Early Childhood Information System.

- **Project 10 - Implementing the Early Childhood Information System:** Development of robust early childhood information system to collect and report on children/family/program level data. This is the development of a comprehensive early childhood information system (ECIS) incorporating all essential data elements is essential for the need for data-driven decision making across state agencies responsible for ensuring children's healthy development, readiness, and success for school. Furthermore, the system will be fully inter-operable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), while other data systems from health, child welfare, and other systems can be linked and made interoperable.

Key Performance Measures:

1. Collect children's demographic data (such as birth date, gender, race, ethnicity, language, disability status, etc.);
2. Report on the status of children across ages and over time, encompassing data on home and community environments;
3. Document child outcomes across developmental domains (including health, early literacy, and social-emotional development) that can be linked across sectors, agencies, and programs (e.g. infants/toddlers, preschool, Early Intervention, family childcare etc.);
4. Assist in the identification of early warning indicators at the pre-school level;
5. Ensure confidentiality of child and family data, adhering to the privacy requirements of both HIPAA and FERPA, and seeking parental consent when necessary;
6. Support geographic analysis useful to EEC, other state agencies, and communities that are engaged in Birth-(strategic planning, resource management, program improvement, and accountability;
7. Provide internal and external policy makers, EEC staff, researchers, and other stakeholders with early childhood data in diverse formats; and
8. Link parents to state and local community resources and opportunities.

- **Project 11 - Pre-K to Grade Three Alignment for Educational Success - Communications:** The Brain Building in Progress campaign is a public/private partnership of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and a growing community of early education and child care providers, academic researchers, business leaders and individuals. Our mission is to raise awareness of the critical importance of fostering the cognitive, social, and emotional development of young children by emphasizing future impact on economic development and prosperity for everyone in Massachusetts. We welcome the business, education, and policy-making communities, as well as members of the media, to be part of this crucial venture. By giving a strong start to our youngest citizens, we create a stronger, more prosperous future for all.

Key Performance Measure:

1. Strengthen collaboration and partnerships with Higher Education and the private section and effectively communicate with families and the public the value of early education.

- **Project 12 - Pre-K to Grade Three Alignment for Educational Success - Content Based Media Partnership:** Targeted support for specific gaps in knowledge and skills to increase educator competencies in social emotional development; supporting children with high needs; Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); using formative assessments and the tiered Quality, Rating and Improvement System standards. Provide on-line down loadable curriculum and materials to increase knowledge and skills. The state's media partnership with WGBH Public Broadcasting will create an online curriculum hub for early educators and a "School Readiness" website for parents. This work will link to the standards from infants and toddlers and preschool.

Key Performance Measure:

1. In-kind support from the private section to support research, evaluation, communications and business expertise for the Massachusetts Early Learning and Development Plan (MELD).

Selected RTTT-ELC Project Updates:

As detailed above, the RTTT-ELC Grant has allowed the Department to engage in a wide variety of projects, all with the goal of improving the quality of education and care for children in the Commonwealth. These projects have allowed us to enter into partnerships with local institutions of higher education, media outlets, private and public organizations, and our fellow state agencies. The grant has helped to bring together this wide variety of sectors around a common goal of investing in our future.

The following are a number of updates on individual projects the Department is currently engaged in:

RTTT-ELC - Interagency Partnerships

EEC has built partnerships with many of the Commonwealth's health and human services and economic development agencies that share in our mission to support young children and their families. As we enter the final two years of this grant cycle we are working with our partners to develop sustainability plans to ensure that the work and investments that we have all worked so hard to build will survive past the life of this funding source.

The following is a summary of 2013 accomplishments in EEC's Interagency Partnerships with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI).

Department of Children and Families (DCF)

An interagency partnership with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) was established to promote early childhood and child development within the child welfare system. We worked with DCF to hire staff focused on embedding child development into the policies and practices of the agency through professional development, the revision of policies as needed, and by offering technical assistance to the field. To build the relationship between the work our Departments do, we helped to establish a new, required full day in-service training day for new DCF Social Workers on the Foundations of Health and Well-Being in Child Welfare, which has a primary focus on early childhood education, brain development, school readiness and success, and trauma informed care. Our departments also established a new Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program for social workers that will increase their expertise in meeting the social and emotional needs of young children and their families.

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

The interagency partnership between EEC and The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is in a unique position to help some of the most vulnerable children and families in the state. Due to the transient nature of their client population, it is important to make sure that these children receive quality supports no matter where they are staying. Our approach with DHCD ranges from the dispersal of bilingual information on local early education resources, staff trainings for homelessness agencies on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire developmental screening tool as well as distribution of over 2,000 donated books for children living in hotels, motels, and shelters.

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

Our work with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) has been designed to strengthen the comprehensive statewide system of mental health supports for children and families that are available throughout the Commonwealth. By Working together, we have implemented new professional development opportunities that model teamwork between the early childhood mental health consultation service providers and early childhood educators in addressing prevention and intervention with emotional and behavioral challenges. We have also developed an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with EOHHS and its Medicaid office to expand the capacity of a major mental health state system for children to address the unique needs of the early childhood population.

Department of Public Health (DPH)

The interagency partnership between EEC and the Department of Public Health (DPH) is focused on building a system of health supports for young children and their families through professional development training, technical assistance, and policy development to promote healthy social-emotional development of children. Registered Nurse Health Advisors, part of our QRIS initiative provided 196 trainings on medication administration in child care (MACC) modules to 99 programs, reaching 1,310 educators statewide. We also helped lead a Cross Training workgroup with EEC, DPH, DMH, DCF, ORI, DHCD, and DTA representatives to coordinate and align training and resources across RTTT and other grants to reduce gaps and duplication of efforts.

Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)

EEC has partnered with the Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI) to support early learning and school readiness for immigrant and refugee children and their families. In collaboration with the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) and the Multilingual Action Council (MAC) at Wheelock College, ORI sponsored a series of trainings on “*New Start: Supporting Multilingual Young Children and Immigrant and Refugee Families*”, for the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grantees (CFCE), Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), MASS 2-1-1, Family Child Care (FCC) System Providers, Head Start and ORI’s service providers. The trainings offered knowledge on immigration policy as it impacts children and families, cultural competency, and child development and educational principles in the context of multilingual homes and multicultural environments to over 300 participants.

RTTT-ELC – Family and Parental Supports

The following initiatives align with EEC’s focus on building the capacity of adults to promote child development across all domains, with a particular focus on Kindergarten readiness.

Family and Community Engagement

The Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant is EEC's investment in a statewide network of ninety-six school districts and community agencies focused on strengthening the capacity of families to promote optimal development in their children. The primary goals of the grant are:

- Universal and Targeted Outreach Strategies -Reaching and meeting the needs of children, especially those with multiple risk factors and/or are hard to reach;
- Linkages to Comprehensive Services – ensuring that families have access to services that support their families well being and children’s optimal development;
- Family Education – strengthening the capacity of families as their child’s first teacher through:
 - Child development education across all domains;
 - Evidence-based early literacy and family literacy opportunities;
- Transition Supports - Coordinating activities and resources that maximize families’ access to supports promoting successful birth to eight transitions, with specific focus on Kindergarten.

Museums/Libraries

One of the most successful programs to be supported by the RTTT grant has been our partnership with the Boston Children’s Museum) to engage with over one hundred libraries and museums across the Commonwealth to provide family engagement activities and early learning opportunities. We have developed and provided a shared framework and set of resources that will increase their capacity to support the development of all children. The partnership is focused on four key areas in supporting family and community engagement in child development. They are early literacy, Kindergarten readiness, STEM, and child development, leveraging the research behind the state’s *Brain Building in Progress* communications initiative. This is another program that allows children and their families to engage in activities that are not limited by where they live.

Evidence-based Literacy programs

Use of evidence-based early literacy curriculum enhances the capacity of CFCE grantees to help parents promote early literacy skills development in their children. By focusing on a small number of effective literacy practices/models, EEC has created more consistency in the strategies that CFCE grantees use to help families cultivate their children’s literacy skills before they enter elementary school. This initiative is enhancing the existing literacy programming of twenty-four of our CFCE grantees.

Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA)

As of December 2013, there are seventy-seven school districts participating in MKEA, which represents a 74% increase from 2012. Over 20,000 kindergarten children have been assessed. In October 2013, over 450 individuals participated in a statewide MKEA conference on formative assessment. The conference was a success as participants came away with a better understanding of the practice of authentic observations and how it can be used as an assessment tool. The keynote speaker was Stephanie Cox Suarez from Wheelock College, a known expert on early childhood assessment. The conference had five breakout sessions.

The Department has utilized the funding available from the RTTT-ELC budget to provide more resources for professional development. In December of 2013, EEC contracted with a new vendor to provide assessment training in collaboration with the state’s existing workforce infrastructure. This infrastructure includes the five Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grantees that provide regional professional development, as well as the six Readiness Centers that provide comprehensive support to educators from

birth to higher education. In 2014, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will be established in each region to support ongoing work in assessment practices. We are currently in the process of planning the next MKEA conference for Cohort 3 in Spring 2014.

Media-Based Literacy Support for Families and Educators

In September 2013 EEC, in partnership with the WGBH Educational Foundation, unveiled Phase 1 of **Resources for Early Learning**, a media-rich digital hub featuring educational resources, developed by a team of experts, educators, and parents. Content for educators of preschoolers (ages 3-5) includes a nine-unit, comprehensive STEM and English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum (based on the MA Early Learning Curriculum), that provides a media-based approach to help children develop their academic, social, and emotional skills.

- The digital hub content also includes twelve professional development video-based trainings to explore essential best practices for early childhood education, and offers instruction for both individuals and facilitated groups.
- For parents of infants and toddlers, the website includes parent activities and parenting education videos. These quick, easy, and fun activities for families of children ages birth to three provide exciting, everyday learning experiences. The parenting education videos, designed for parents of infants and toddlers, offer advice, tips, and suggestions on how to enhance children's learning, for individuals and facilitated groups.
- For children, the website contains playlists of videos and other media that corresponds to each curriculum unit and week. Educators can choose to have children watch or listen to the media on their own or as part of a group activity.
- In November 2013, WGBH began Phase 2 of the digital hub, which focused on: developing content for educators of infants and toddlers (birth-3) and resources for parents of preschoolers (3- to 5-years-old); raising awareness about the website through presentations and trainings; and planning for the text message campaign to begin in 2014.

Post Master's Certificate Program

In Spring 2012, EEC partnered with an institution of higher education (IHE) to develop a Post Master's Certificate in Early Education Research, Policy, and Leadership (PMC) to launch a new generation of early childhood leaders in Massachusetts. The purpose of the PMC is to improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of early childhood educators from public and private programs, specifically in the areas of data, research, policy, and leadership. The courses provide advanced study in early education research methods, policy, leadership, organizational change, and the science of child development and early learning. The intention of the PMC is to support early childhood educators with Master's degrees currently working in EEC-licensed or license-exempt programs with the means to further their own knowledge, skills, and abilities while working to inform policy at the local, regional, and state level. The coursework designed for the PMC is in alignment with EEC's Core Competency Areas, QRIS Standards, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Advanced Standards (AS) within NAEYC's Six Professional Preparation Standards, and Division of Early Childhood Advanced Personnel Preparation Standards.

Through the RTTT-ELC grant, EEC intends to fund three cohorts (15 students each) for the PMC program, which is delivered in a blended format and covers the full cost of student tuition and fees, books, and a stipend. The schedule for the PMC cohorts is as follows:

- Cohort 1: January 2013 - November 2013;

- Cohort 2: September 2013 - August 2014;
- Cohort 3: September 2014 - August 2015;

The PMC program will continue to be offered at the local IHE beyond the life of the RTTT-ELC grant. Getting students with regional representation may be difficult if courses are offered solely at the Boston campus (currently face to face courses are held at a partner institution in central Massachusetts). The replication of the PMC program at other colleges or universities across the Commonwealth would help to make the program accessible to a greater number of educators. The anticipated cost of the program without RTTT-ELC grant funds is approximately \$8,000 per student. To help sustain this initiative, there needs to be a greater number of doctoral and CAGS programs across the state that will accept the PMC. One hundred and sixty-eight educators started the application process for Cohort 2; 55 applications were reviewed to select 15 candidates for Cohort 2.

In addition, educators are offered a wide range of support services, including the development of an individualized professional development plan, academic and career advising, mentoring, and individualized tutoring and academic supports.

The following describes progress made with the PMC program since 2012.

- There was an overwhelming response for the first cohort of students. With an applicant pool of fifty candidates, only 15 were chosen. All but two candidates did not complete the certificate program with their cohort. One candidate deferred completion of the certificate for personal reasons and will finish their remaining courses with Cohort 2. One candidate was accepted into a doctoral program. Two out of 13 candidates are intending to apply to doctoral programs in the future.
- PMC graduates have been and will continue to be encouraged to participate on EEC working groups closely related to their own interests and PMC research projects. Two of the Cohort 1 graduates will be participating on the QRIS Professional Development Working Group.
- The IHE hosted a Leadership Forum on November 2, 2013 to honor the first cohort of PMC graduates. The Forum, where EEC Commissioner Thomas Weber and early childhood expert Stacie Goffin were keynote speakers, was well received. Each of the graduating candidates presented their research project. Cohort 2 candidates were also invited to participate in the Leadership Forum. Classes for Cohort 2 began in September 2013.

The implementation of the PMC program has been very positive. The next steps for this program will be to get more institutions of higher education to both offer the PMC program in the future as well as to accept an articulation of the PMC into their doctoral or CAGS

Ongoing Educator and Program Quality Initiatives

In 2013 the Department continued to develop and implement a number of programs related to educator and program quality improvement, engagement and student screening. These investments are designed to ensure that the quality of programs that children are attending in the Commonwealth continues to grow each year. Each of these projects, through separate from one another are integral to our overall goal of world class education and care.

Program Quality

- A total of 631 programs received over \$1.5M in QRIS Program Improvement Grants.
- Completion of the MA Alignment Study with a clear road map for how the state can improve its standards.
- Completion of guidelines for Early English Language Development Standards, which were approved by the EEC Board in December 2013.

Educator Quality

- Launch of the *Resources for Early Learning* website, the state's first digital hub of early education resources for families and educators.
- The first cohort of students in the Post Master's Certificate Program graduated in December 2013.
- 151 individuals from across the state participated in the 2012-2013 Early Educators Fellowship Initiative (EEFI).

Family and Community Engagement

- Massachusetts has received national recognition for its RTTT-ELC initiative to engage statewide museums and libraries in STEM early education .
- Over \$800K was awarded to local communities to support evidence-based literacy programs and over 7,000 children received evidence based literacy programming in 2013.
- Over 1,200 families have received financial literacy education to improve their financial skills.
- EEC, in partnership with United Way of Massachusetts Bay, continued to advance the *Brain Building in Progress* communications initiative, with key messages on leadership, connections, knowledge, moments, and environments; the Department also built a two key online tools for parents and families -- a *Brain Building* calendar and *Brain Building* "zones" search tools (visit www.brainbuildinginprogress.org).

Screening and Assessment

- Over 400 public school kindergarten teachers and administrators attended a Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA) conference in October 2013 to learn more about formative assessment.
- There are seventy-seven school districts participating in MKEA, an increase of 74% from 2012.
- 1,160 children have received a developmental screening through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ).

Some particular programmatic highlights from the past year include:

Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Grant

One of the many grant programs the department uses to improve the quality of programming for children in the Commonwealth is the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Grant. It is a grant that is awarded to programs across the mixed-delivery system and aids in our efforts to improve the quality of child care programs regardless of zip code.

This annual grant is awarded to pre-school programs who continue to:

- Promote the early learning guidelines to support school readiness and positive outcomes for children participating in UPK classrooms and homes;
- Support and enhance the quality of services for children in UPK classrooms and family child care homes, especially for high needs children and/or children living in underperforming school districts;

- Maximize parent choice by ensuring participation from all program types within a mixed public and private service delivery system;
- Use child evidence-based formative assessment systems/tools to ensure that programs are effectively measuring children's progress across all developmental domains and using this information to inform practice through individualized teaching; and
- Inform the longer-term implementation of a program of universally accessible, high-quality early childhood education.

For FY14, there were two UPK grants issued: (1) a renewal grant and (2) an open competitive grant. The renewal grant was posted on May 13, 2013 and approximately \$5.6 million was allocated to fund the 208 existing UPK programs. The open competitive grant was posted on November 21, 2013 and approximately \$692,000 was allocated to fund preschool programs that are not currently participating in UPK.

Ages and Stages Questionnaire

In support of finding new ways to identify children and families who could benefit from additional resources to succeed, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees have been deploying the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) developmental screening tool. These ninety-six grantees, located throughout the Commonwealth, use this tool as a way to have a meaningful conversation with parents and families about their child's progress across five developmental domains. If the child's ASQ scores are below the cutoff, CFCE staff provide the family with information and referrals to other supports, such as developmental assessment and evaluation, Early Intervention, public preschool special education, and any other resources to support the parent and child. Additionally, the ASQ kit includes activities that parents and families can do to support their child's progress in any of the developmental domains.

All ninety-six CFCEs have received training on how to use the ASQ and the ASQ-Social Emotional screening tools, as well as individualized trainings on how to use the ASQ Online data entry system. Since July 2011, approximately 2,219 ASQ and ASQ-SE screenings have been entered into the online system, representing approximately 2,007 children.

Use of evidence-based early literacy curriculum enhances the capacity of CFCE grantees to help parents promote early literacy skills development in their children. By focusing on a small number of effective literacy practices/models, EEC has created more consistency in the strategies that CFCE grantees use to help families cultivate their children's literacy skills before they enter elementary school. This initiative is enhancing the existing literacy programming of twenty-four of our CFCE grantees.

Birth to Grade Three Strategy Development

Massachusetts has embraced birth to grade 3 alignment as a comprehensive strategy that seeks to improve young children's access to high-quality birth to grade three programs and strengthens the capacity of elementary schools to sustain student learning gains in the early elementary school years. By integrating these two efforts, the State aims to enable children to be proficient in reading and math, and to develop the social and emotional skills that support academic success by the end of third grade.

In order to ensure that transition planning occurs for children moving from early learning and development programs to elementary schools, Massachusetts is focusing on building and enhancing partnerships between community early education, school-age programs, and public schools to ensure

alignment of curriculum, assessment, professional development and transitions for children and their families. EEC is collaborating with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) to link the work being done in public schools to maximize the investment in our children.

EEC has invested RTTT-ELC funds to help communities improve child outcomes through a comprehensive birth to third grade strategy. The Birth to Grade Three Community Implementation/Planning grants focus on strengthening the existing birth to third grade infrastructure within targeted local communities (i.e., low-performing school districts, Gateway cities, and Home Visiting communities).

In 2012, EEC awarded the Birth to Grade Three Community Implementation/Planning grant to five communities: Lowell, Boston, Springfield, Somerville, and Pittsfield. EEC also provided state funding to assist several communities to improve their local infrastructure, to ensure they would be better positioned to receive the Birth to Grade 3 grant in the future; these communities include Gill-Montague, Fall River, Lynn, New Bedford, and Barnstable.

EEC has partnered with non-profit organizations to assist with the implementation of the state's birth to third grade strategy. This non-profit is analyzing the early learning partnerships between public and private organizations that support children birth to grade three, such as public schools, private early education and care programs, and business leaders within a community who are interested in the early education agenda. They will also identify the ways that changes in the partnerships are impacting programs, educators and children.

Early Childhood Education Workforce

Recognizing the importance of continuing to support our early education workforce who are seeking to continue their education and grow professionally, the Department continues to engage institutions and professional development providers to provide professional development opportunities that align with the common statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. The two primary infrastructure vehicles for delivering these professional development opportunities are through the Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grantees and the Readiness Centers.

Educator and Provider Support (EPS) Grantees

The 5 regional Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grant recipients continue to be the main infrastructure in which the state delivers professional development to early educators. The EPS grantees are required to function as a partnership. Partnerships must include local Child Care Resource and Referral contractors, Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees, Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and other training entities. Although the grantees are regional based, the members of their partnerships represent local, regional, and statewide needs of educators and providers in EEC's mixed delivery system. The EPS grantees also work in collaboration with the Readiness Centers, and EEC's Assessment and QRIS Measurement Tools Grantees.

The grant focuses on three areas of engagement: educator and provider planning, competency development, and coaching and mentoring. Grantees are required to provide opportunities and support services to all educators and providers working in the mixed delivery system including educators in family child care, center-based, and school age programs. Opportunities must align with EEC Regulations, Preschool Guidelines, QRIS, and/or Infant and Toddler Guidelines. Grantees must also identify the Core Competency Area(s) addressed. Grantees report on services provided through the grant on a monthly basis.

Readiness Centers

The 6 regional Readiness Centers were established by the Executive Office of Education (EOE) in 2009 to help create a more unified and coherent public education system in the Commonwealth. These education partnership centers focus on convening stakeholders across the education spectrum, coordinating teacher development offerings, and increasing communication between local educators and state agency staff. EEC has allocated RTTT-ELC funding to the Readiness Centers to expand regional capacity for:

- Academic advising and career counseling for early educators;
- Professional development related to the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS);
- Data sharing regarding early educator preparation; and
- Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA) implementation.

The Readiness Centers play a pivotal role in Massachusetts representing the birth through college continuum. They have been especially instrumental in working with the local school districts that are currently implementing or planning to implement MKEA. Readiness Centers act as conduits of information on MKEA progress, successes, and challenges with local school districts. Many school districts have reported how supportive the Readiness Center Grantees have been implementation. Representatives from all of the Readiness Centers have participated in training provided by the formative assessment publishers, Pearson and Teaching Strategies, so that they are able to provide technical assistance to MKEA school districts.

Readiness Center Grantees have been working with EEC's EPS and Assessment Grantees to coordinate professional development opportunities regionally. Through the Readiness Center grant nearly 900 educators across the state have participated in credit bearing professional development opportunities.

Below is a description of RTTT-ELC grant funded initiatives that support the workforce and furthers their knowledge, skills and competencies in providing high quality early education services.

Early Childhood Educator Scholarships

In collaboration with the Department of Higher Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), EEC supports an annual scholarship to early education and out-of-school-time providers working in an EEC-licensed or license-exempt program that are also earning an associate's or bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field at a Massachusetts college or university. Since its inception in 2006, the demand for the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship has grown each year. For the past few years, approximately \$3.2 million in state funds has been allocated for the scholarship program.

Peer Assistance and Coaching

The goal of the Peer Assistance and Coaching (PAC) project is to combine the promise of coaching as an effective strategy and the reality that the existing early childhood teachers and directors may be well-equipped to support one another's practices. Massachusetts PAC is promoting the use of training and coaching methods that give teachers opportunities to see and try out effective practices, and receive feedback about these efforts to improve those educator competencies. Research has shown the

importance of teacher- or caregiver-child interactions that are emotionally supportive, responsive to children's individual and developmental needs, and rich in their provision of support for children's exploration and understanding of new concepts. This initiative aims to promote career advancement, professionalization, and accessible professional development opportunities in the field of early education. Additionally they are intended to improve the education, training, and compensation of early childhood educators to promote effective practice and alignment with EEC's workforce core competencies, increase workforce retention, and strengthen adult-child interactions, especially among high-needs children.

The PAC model involves collaboration among Consultant Teachers (CTs), Mentees, and the Mentees' Program/Instructional Leaders. Mentees are expected to have supervision and/or support to promote ongoing growth. The CTs all participate in intensive training to improve their content and coaching skills. This includes pre-service training and ongoing development through the formation of regional CT professional learning communities (PLCs). The Mentee receives support from both the Program/Instructional Leader and the CT, resulting in improvement in practice. The program will, in turn, have educators who are better able to meet the needs of children and families, and staff who are motivated to implement changes in practice.

Early Educators Fellowship Initiative (EEFI)

The Early Educators Fellowship Initiative (EEFI), which started in 2010, is a community-based leadership series for early education and care providers in public and private programs from birth to grade three. The purpose of EEFI is to organize, equip and empower Massachusetts educators who will then build high-quality learning environments for our earliest school-ready children, in partnership with families and communities. This Fellowship facilitates:

- System building among early educators for the benefit of all young children;
- Working relationships among early educators;
- A shared knowledge base among early educators;
- Bridges that deepen our understanding of the needs of young learners; and
- Action in local communities.

EEC contracted with a vendor to manage EEFI from 2010 to 2013. Embedded in EEFI are seven specific strategies:

1. A focus on building community;
2. Attention to the impact and use of knowledge;
3. Building partnerships by constructing network links for organizations;
4. Providing web-based resources;
5. Research and evidence-based learning experiences;
6. Embedded opportunities for reflection; and
7. Access to national leaders and key experts who serve as models and mentors as Boston builds its system and professional capacity of its workforce.

The 2012-2013 EEFI Cohort consisted of twenty cross-sector teams of 151 individuals from communities across the state. Teams worked together throughout the Fellowship, in and outside the scheduled meetings, to address specific needs and concerns that were pertinent and relevant to their individual communities and programs and create an action plan that would enable them to address their stated issues as a community of early educators. Teams were provided tools to facilitate and guide their community-based meetings in-between fellowship sessions.

Additional Items of Note in 2013:

In 2013, the Department was also engaged in a number of initiatives and exercises related both to organization improvements and legislative mandates. The following items help illustrate the types of special projects that EEC staff are diligently attending to in addition to their day to day tasks. While they vary in terms of how they impact our work, each one is important in improving our delivery of services for the children of the Commonwealth.

Special Commission on Early Education:

In the FY14 Budget, the Legislature included in Outside Section 166 the establishment of a Special Commission "...to make an investigation and study of the cost of administering early education and care services in the commonwealth and make recommendations to enhance said services where appropriate and necessary." The Special Commission was created in response to the Legislature's interest in learning more about the operations of the department in the wake of its leadership transition and a state audit report on EEC's licensing and background checks.

The Commission's mandate provided the opportunity to build off of new operational improvements and reforms established under the leadership of Secretary Malone and Commissioner Weber.

- These reforms included, among other things:
 - Cross checks of child care providers' addresses against the Commonwealth's sex offender database;
 - A comprehensive update of the EEC Internal Control Plan in consultation with the Office of the Comptroller;
 - A new waitlist management system and better estimations of true demand in the Income-Eligible Waitlist; and
 - Managing subsidy caseload to mitigate against either a deficit or reversion.

The Commission was chaired by Commissioner Weber and its membership included legislators⁷, representatives from the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), the Child Advocate as well as representatives from the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), EEC Providers, and Mass Head Start. The group reviewed state practices related to health and safety, access and quality, and rates and workforce. The Commission reviewed state practices related to program quality, health and safety; workforce development and retention; and financing and submitted its findings and recommendations to the legislature on time on December 31st, 2013.

The Department sees the recommendations of the Commission as key action steps that will further advance system improvements in areas such as licensing and monitoring, child care subsidy reimbursements, QRIS and transportation.

⁷ Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, Representative Kay Khan, Senator Sal DiDomenico, Senator Michael Barrett, Representative Marjorie Decker, and Representative David Vieira (for Representative Kimberly Ferguson).

Best practices from other states and national standards were also included as benchmarks where appropriate. For instance the Commission addressed the state's capacity for oversight of health and safety standards for licensed early education and care programs.

- o 2013 Health and Safety progress:
 - EEC reduced its program-to-licensor ratios through the addition of five new licensors; and
 - EEC implemented cross checks of sex offender addresses with licensed providers' addresses.
- o 2014 Health and Safety plans:
 - EEC will begin conducting state and national fingerprint checks as part of its background records check process in January 2014; and
 - The Commission also endorsed EEC's plan to modernize its licensing practices through the development of a Differential Monitoring System, which will utilize enhanced risk assessment.

The following are the major recommendations made by the Commission:

A. Health and Safety

1. Continue progress toward program to licensor caseload ratios in line with national standards (75:1 for family child care providers; 50:1 for center based providers) EEC's program-licensor ratios will be 273:1 for family child care providers and 90:1 for center based providers in 2014.
2. Appropriate resources to support EEC's investigation and Background Record Checks units to ensure that licensed programs are operating in compliance with the law and regulations.
3. Implement a system of assessing risk level for licensed programs and monitoring based on common risk factors, in order to maximize limited resources and achieve efficiency gains.
4. Make statutory changes to allow the sharing of data between the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) and EEC to improve the efficiency of the background record checks process.

B. Access and Quality

1. Appropriate resources to allow access to subsidized early education and care to remain open to income eligible children in FY15. The waitlist for these subsidies includes over 40,000 children in the state.
2. Provide resources to EEC and DCF to manage and provide access to high-quality Supportive Child Care for DCF-involved children to support their safety and cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development.
3. Appropriate resources to incentivize early education and care programs to participate in the state's quality improvement efforts (Quality Rating and Improvement System, or QRIS) by developing a tiered reimbursement structure for subsidized providers based on their rating.

C. Rates and Workforce

1. Restructure rate reimbursements to consider the benchmark set by through the federal Child Care Development Fund, and the true cost of care; also, consider annual adjustments to the reimbursement rate.
2. Structure early educators' compensation to support quality including linking increased compensation to education attainment, and aligning salaries with comparable positions in public school systems.
3. Invest in the demand for early educators' scholarships which continues to grow annually and exceeds the availability of funding.

EEC is including a debrief on the Special Commission review and recommendations at its upcoming Advisory Council meeting at the State House on February 20, 2014.

The Commission's full report can be found here:

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/2014/20140113-eec-special-commission-rpt.pdf>

Family Child Care Provider Collective Bargaining Contract

On September 14, 2012 Governor Patrick signed into law House Bill 3986, "An Act Relative to Early Education and Care by Family Child Care Providers." This law gave nearly 4,000 qualified family child care (FCC) providers who offer subsidized early education and child care services to low-income and other at-risk children through the state the ability to unionize and collectively bargain with the Department of Early Education and Care over the rate structure for voucher and contracted payments, reimbursement and payment procedures, recruitment/retention of providers and professional development opportunities.

The Department has been engaged in negotiations with Service Employees International Union (SEIU)/ Local 509 since the bill's enactment and continued to discuss possible terms of the agreement throughout 2013. On November 26th, 2013 the Department and SEIU reached a tentative three-year contract agreement which was then ratified by the FCC providers on January 30, 2014.

The agreement terms include the following:

- A 10% rate increase over the three-year span of the contract – 4% this fiscal year and 3% each in FY 2015 and FY 2016;
- The part-time reimbursement rate will be increased to reflect 60% of the full-time reimbursement rate;
- Family child care providers will receive ten paid holidays, two paid professional days, and two paid days to be used to advance in MA Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS);
- Family child care providers will have improved access to QRIS training materials and other professional development opportunities;
- EEC will establish a committee to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss such matters as education and training, recruitment and retention of qualified providers, issues related to EEC programs, and QRIS;
- Family child care providers will have the right to a formal grievance procedure;
- The Department will conduct a study, with cooperation from SEIU, a review and assessment of subsidized children who have special needs and whether EEC should amend its subsidy contracts or take other measures to target resources to this particular population; and

- The Department will conduct a study, with cooperation from SEIU, to review and assess the demand for care during non-standard hours by FCC providers, i.e. before 7:00 AM or after 5:00 PM.

Urban Institute Study:

Pursuant to Chapter 38 of the Acts of 2013, the Department of Early Education and Care has contracted with the Urban Institute to complete a two-year assessment of the childcare supports funded through items 3000-3050 (Supporting Childcare), 3000-4050 (DTA Related Childcare), 3000-4060 (Income Eligible Childcare), and 3000-4070 (Waitlist Remediation). This funding and study is designed to: (a) study ways to improve the regional and statewide efficiency of the distribution of state-supported childcare; (b) analyze the childcare needs of eligible families with regard to the availability of childcare vouchers or contracted childcare slots in different geographic regions of the commonwealth; and (c) to evaluate the balance of providing quality early childhood education with providing workforce support for guardians. The Urban Institute is currently in the initial planning stage, including many stakeholder interviews to help establish the scope of the assessment. They will have completed this planning stage by January 31, 2014 when they submit their scope of inquiry and research design to the Department of Early Education and Care. The assessment is on track to submit a progress report to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means no later than March 3, 2014 as required by legislative language. The Urban Institute currently projects that they will complete and submit the final assessment report by March 1, 2015.

Single State Audit:

KPMG conducted a Single State Audit on the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) granted to EEC utilizing the OMB A-133 CCDF Audit Supplement for the review of State Fiscal Year 2013. This audit began in May of 2013 and concluded in August of 2013. The areas of review consisted of Allowable Costs/Cost Principles, Eligibility, Matching, Period of Availability of Federal Funds, Reporting, Sub recipient Monitoring, Cash Management, Health and Safety, and Fraud Detection and Repayment. Sample requests consisted of selected documentation and EEC's internal controls related to each review area. EEC's Administration and Finance Unit was very responsive in KPMG's request for additional information and further explanations, where necessary. This Audit resulted in two findings within the Subrecipient Monitoring and Fraud Detection and Repayment review areas. EEC immediately put the necessary controls in place to mitigate risk in future transactions. It was noted by KPMG that EEC staff were very professional and very helpful in completed the audit.

Child Care Resource and Referral Improved Services to Families and Providers in Massachusetts:

The Department of Early Education and Care has contracted with Child Care Aware of America, (formerly known by its legal name -- NACCRRRA, the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies since January 2012. Child Care Aware of America (CCAA) has more than 12 years experience in providing management and transition supports to Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs). CCAA has trained and mentored the seven CCR&R agencies in Massachusetts to enhance their supports to families and child providers.

Highlights of the significant improvements include the CCR&Rs:

- speaking in one voice;
- working together toward solutions;

- providing consistent service delivery for families with statewide forms, policies and procedures;
- implementing a single statewide database with staff trained to ensure data is accurate complete and up-to-date; and
- creating a statewide database manual to ensure consistent use across all CCR&Rs.

These improvements have lead to CCR&Rs serving families by educating parents and placing their children in appropriate child care quickly and efficiently.

Springfield Office Move:

On December 16, 2013 the Department successfully completed the move of the Springfield Regional Office to 1441 Main Street in Springfield. Since 2003 the Springfield Office had been co-located with the Department of Transitional Assistance at 75 Liberty Street. This original space sharing occurred when the Department was then known as the Office of Child Care Services and was placed within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The Department worked with the Department of Capital Asset and Maintenance issued an RFR for new space in October of 2012. In February of 2013 the Department executed an agreement with Colebrook Realty Inc to lease space at 1441 Main Street for the next five years. Over the ensuing ten months the Department worked with the landlord to design and build out the space to meet the needs of the agency and the early education community in Springfield. In addition to a pleasant and state of the art working environment, the office provides for much needed 1,200 square feet of meeting space with the option of use as a computer laboratory. The site also includes conference room space for up to 50 persons that will be available to area organizations for community meetings or other services which benefit the early education and care field, local children, and their families.

Placement Regulations:

EEC, as the state agency statutorily responsible for the licensing of agencies that place children in foster care homes or provide for the adoption of children either domestically or internationally must develop and enforce a regulatory structure to provide for this activity to occur in a manner that assures the rights and safety of the children and adults involved. Last updated in 1998, the Department has been working on revising the regulations since 2010 and engaging stakeholders to review the current regulations and make recommendations on changes. To facilitate and aid this work, the Department also utilized an existing contract with Hanover Research Incorporated to conduct an analysis of state of the art practices for foster care and adoption in other states. The Department also contracted with the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, a nationally renowned authority on best practices in adoption, to review research and conduct an analysis of the draft regulations. The Institute performed this analysis and made recommendations that have been incorporated into the draft regulations. The Department has completed the revision of the regulations and will be conducting public hearings for comment in the Spring of 2014 with the anticipated promulgation of the regulations in September of 2014.

Waitlist Management

In 2011, EEC adopted an online self-serve waitlist program (KinderWait) for families to update and track their request for access directly. In an effort to protect families, EEC temporarily stayed its waitlist removal procedure for “inactive” records (i.e., 12 or more months of no applicant activity) during this transition. This past July, the automated archive timer built into the system will start running daily, ensuring that the EEC waitlist is maintained consistent with our financial assistance procedures and is comprised only of families who continue to want and need a child care subsidy. EEC issues notice letters to those families whose records are identified for archiving. Removed (“archived”) families will have six

months to request their previous position on the waitlist. After that period they will be placed back on the waitlist effective the date of their request.

This archiving procedure resulted in a significant decrease to the overall total number of records in the system, but as detailed above was done with safeguards in place to ensure that those still seeking services would not be adversely affected. In preparation for the reinstatement of archiving, EEC engaged in a broad outreach effort with our Waitlist Agents – the CCR&Rs, Mass 211, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement networks, and the Massachusetts Head Start Association – as well as MADCA and the YMCAs about the steps we are taking to enhance our waitlist management and keep records current. The Department continues to study ways we can improve our waitlist management and access management.

Early Childhood Information System (ECIS)

In 2013 work continued on the Early Childhood Information System (ECIS) to (1) create a single, high-quality source of data for reporting (ECIS data warehouse), (2) build a reporting platform which reduces the time required to generate reports and (3) to support outside agencies, such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (ESE) Longitudinal Data System (LDS) in providing better data on child outcomes ensuring compliance with existing federal and state privacy laws.

ECIS is EEC's new enterprise data warehouse designed to:

- Serve as a single source of information for EEC business reporting for areas such as child demographics, program funding, program quality and workforce data;
- To incorporate all essential data elements to support data-driven decision making; and
- Provide a critical early childhood data feed for the state's Longitudinal Data System (LDS).

2013 Project Highlights/Successes

- ECIS went into production as an enterprise data system in June 2013.
- ECIS data feed to ESE/EOE went live in July 2013, enabling a flow of early childhood education and program data into the state's longitudinal data system (SLDS) - also referred to as EDWin Analytics managed by the Executive Office of Education (EOE).
- The ECIS report development team added 37 new reports in 2013 on child, program and workforce data, including early warning indicators, workforce demographics, program quality trends, child waitlist and licensing, building further on the demographics and funding source reports created in 2012.

ECIS child- and program-level data will be shared across agencies to improve child outcomes and support school readiness initiatives. The reports generated by the ECIS inform decision makers by providing insight into children in subsidized care, the quality of the programs which serve them, and how the agency is meeting its goals.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Legislative Reporting Requirements

Annual Legislative Report Language:

- (g) The board shall submit an annual report to the secretary of education, the secretary of administration and finance, and the clerks of the House of Representatives and senate, who shall forward the same to the joint committee on education, describing its progress in achieving the goals and implementing the programs authorized in this chapter. The report shall evaluate the progress made toward universal early education and care for preschool-aged children and toward reducing expulsion rates through developmentally appropriate prevention and intervention services.
- The department shall include an annual report on behavioral health indicators that includes estimates of the annual rates of preschool suspensions and expulsions, the types and prevalence of behavioral health needs of children served by the department, the racial and ethnic background of the children with identified behavioral health needs, the existing capacity to provide behavioral health services, and an analysis of the best intervention and prevention practices, including strategies to improve the delivery of comprehensive services and to improve collaboration between and among early education and care and human services providers. The report and any recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes shall be submitted by February 15th to the secretary of health and human services, the secretary of administration and finance, the children's behavioral health advisory council, the child advocate, and the general court by filing it with the house committee on ways and means, the senate committee on ways and means, the joint committee on education, the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, the clerk of the house and the clerk of the senate.

G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 10:

- The board shall include in its annual report rules and regulations promulgated by the board relative to the use of civil fines and sanctions, the types of sanctions, and the amount of those fines.

G.L.c. 15D, Sec. 13(d):

- The department of early education and care, with the approval of the board and in consultation with the state advisory committee on early education and care established in [section 3A](#), shall study and present any additional recommendations on the programmatic, financing, and phase-in options for the development and universal implementation of the Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program. This study shall include an estimate of the need for full-day, full-year care that meets the needs of parents who work full-time and shall include the number of pre-school aged children in the commonwealth who may be at risk due to family poverty, TAFDC status, special needs, or other risk factors.
- The department shall include its findings and recommendations, and any updates of its findings, in the annual report required under [section 3](#).

Effective: November 18, 2008

Massachusetts General Laws Annotated Currentness

Part I. Administration of the Government (Ch. 1-182)

Title II. Executive and Administrative Officers of the Commonwealth (Ch. 6-28A)

Chapter 15D. Department of Early Education and Care (Refs & Annos)

Workforce System Update Legislative Report Language:

§ 5. Workforce development system; implementation plan

The board shall develop and annually update an implementation plan for a workforce development system designed to support the education, training and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, FCC, infant, toddler, preschool and school-age providers. The board shall solicit input from organizations and agencies that represent a diverse spectrum of expertise, knowledge and understanding of broader workforce development issues and of the professional development needs of the early childhood and care workforce. In order to inform the plan, the board shall conduct:

(1) an inventory and assessment of the current resources and strategies available for workforce and professional development in the commonwealth, including but not limited to Head Start trainings, community-based trainings, higher

education programs, child care resource and referral agency trainings, state and federally funded workforce development trainings/programs, public school system trainings/credentialing, and other trainings that address the needs of those who work with children and make recommendations for coordinating the use of those existing resources and strategies;

- (2) analyses using current data on the status of the early education and care workforce, including work experience, certifications, education, training opportunities, salaries, benefits and workplace standards; and
- (3) an assessment of the workforce capacity necessary to meet the state's early education and care needs in the future.

In the development of the plan, the board shall consider:

- (1) core competencies, a common and shared body of knowledge, for all those working in the early education and care fields;
- (2) streamlined and coordinated state certification, credentialing, and licensing within the early education and care fields including teacher and provider certification and licensing, the child development associate, public school teacher certification, and other program standards as appropriate for director, teacher and provider credentialing requirements;
- (3) a mandatory and regularly updated professional development and qualification registry;
- (4) agreements among IHEs for an articulated system of education, training, and professional development in early education and care;
- (5) approval of early education and care training programs and academic coursework, incentives for associates and bachelors programs to meet best practices and to modify curricula to reflect current child development research, and certification of trainers and teachers;
- (6) coordination of existing workforce resources among public agencies, including establishing regional workforce support resources in coordination with child care resource and referral agencies;
- (7) a range of professional development and educational opportunities that provide appropriate coursework and degree pathways for FCC as well as center-based providers at all levels of the career ladder that are available in locations, days, and times that are accessible;
- (8) credit for prior learning experiences, development of equivalencies to 2 and 4 year degrees, and the inclusion of strategies for multiple pathways for entry into the field of early education and care;
- (9) recruitment and retention of individuals into the early education and care workforce who reflect the ethnic, racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Massachusetts families based on the current census data;
- (10) incentives and supports for early education and care professionals to seek additional training and education, such as scholarships, stipends, loan forgiveness connected to a term of service in the field, career counseling and mentoring, release time and substitutes;
- (11) guidelines for a career ladder or career lattice representing salaries and benefits that suitably compensate professionals for increases in educational attainment and with incentives for advancement, including a salary enhancement program;
- (12) public and private resources to support the workforce development system;
- (13) a data collection and evaluation system to determine whether the workforce and professional development activities established pursuant to this chapter are achieving recruitment, retention and quality of the workforce goals;
- (14) ways to recognize and honor advancement in educational attainment among early educational and care professionals;
- (15) professional development opportunities that are provided in languages other than English, and incorporation of these opportunities into any broader, articulated system that is developed; and
- (16) alignment of the core competencies, course offerings and other professional development opportunities, where appropriate, with the program quality standards established under section 11.
- (17) training to identify and address infant toddler and early childhood behavioral health needs.

CREDIT(S)

Added by St.2004, c. 205, § 1, eff. Mar. 1, 2005. Amended by St.2008, c. 215, § 35, eff. July 31, 2008; St.2008, c. 321, § 5, eff. Nov. 18, 2008.

HISTORICAL AND STATUTORY NOTES

2009 Electronic Update; 2004 Legislation; St.2004, c. 205, § 1, an emergency act, was approved July 23, 2004, and by § 2 made effective Mar. 1, 2005.; 2008 Legislation; St.2008, c. 215, § 35, an emergency act, approved July 31, 2008, effective July 31, 2008, in the second paragraph, in cl. (13), deleted "and" from the end; in cl. (14), substituted "advancement" for "advancements" and added "; and" to the end; and added cls. (15) and (16).

St.2008, c. 321, § 5, approved Aug. 20, 2008, effective Nov. 18, 2008, added cl. (17).

(c) 2009 Thomson Reuters.

Link to last year's report: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/fy12-legis-rpt/fy12-legis-rpt.pdf>

DRAFT

Appendix B: Licensing Activity by Calendar Year 2009 through 2013

New Licensing Enforcement Actions	# in 2009	# in 2010	# in 2011	# in 2012	# in 2013
Sanctions	7	6	10	5	17
Acknowledgment of Vol. Surrender	2	3	1	13	31
Revocation (license and TQ)	10	5	9	17	6
Cease and Desist	9	8	12	9	24
C&D w/ Civ. Injunc.	0	1	2	0	1
C&D w/ Crim. Pen.	0	0	0	0	0
Refusal to Renew/Issue	4	1	5	3	4
Emergency Suspension	6	3	7	8	4
Legal Agreement	1	2	3	4	1
Legal Consult	1	2	1	2	4
Appeal of CORI/DCF denial	3	1	2	0	4
Enforcement Mtg.	2	0	1	3	0
Fine	1	0	1	1	1
Correction Order	0	0	2	0	0
TOTAL:	46	32	56	65	97

*NOTE: Many licensing legal referrals require multiple actions (i.e. emergency suspension/revocation, sanctions and fine, etc.)

VARIANCE REQUESTS CALENDAR 2013

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		A
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	
Immediate Access - Critical Family Issue Voucher	3		1		3		3		2		3	1	5		5		4		5		7	1	2
Immediate Access - Critical Family Issue Contract				1	1			1															
Continuity of Care - Critical Family Issue Voucher			1						3								1						1
Continuity of Care - Critical Family Issue Contract	1		1		1							1	1	1	1					1			
Break in Care - Critical Family Issue Voucher			1																				
Break in Care - Critical Family Issue Contract																							
Continuity of Care - Contract to Voucher											1		1								1	1	
Re-entry Kinship Care Voucher									1														1

