



Board of Early Education and Care

June 9, 2009
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Barnstable High School
Knight Auditorium
744 West Main Street
Hyannis, MA 02601

MINUTES

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Present

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Chairperson
Paul Reville, Secretary of EOE
J.D. Chesloff
Elizabeth Childs, M.D.
Carol Craig O'Brien
Julie P. Culhane, Ph.D., Vice-Chairperson
Chi-Cheng Huang, M.D.
Orlando Isaza
Mary Pat Messmer

Sherri Killins, Ed.D., Commissioner of the Department and Secretary to the Board

Members of the Board of Early Education and Care Absent

Lynson Moore Beaulieu
Marilyn Anderson Chase, Designee of the Secretary of EOHHS

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m.

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chairperson Scott Chandler welcomed participants to the June Board meeting, adding that she was excited to be at the Cape and noting that the Board is trying to hold Board meetings throughout the state. To date, meetings have been held in Western Massachusetts and the Cape, and she thanked both groups for their hospitality. Chairperson Scott Chandler also thanked the Barnstable High School Principal, Pat Graves, for hosting the meeting and thanked the providers and programs that hosted and met with the Board prior to today's meeting.

Comments from the Secretary

Secretary Reville joined the Chair in thanking the Cape constituency for their hospitality and noted that it was good have the opportunity to hear from the EEC community in Cape Cod.

Secretary Reville acknowledged that this would be Deputy Commissioner Amy Kershaw's last EEC Board meeting and he thanked Amy, on behalf of the Governor, for her amazing leadership to the Department in her several capacities. He added his personal appreciation for those efforts, and recognized her invaluable service.

Secretary Reville indicated that the Executive Office of Education (EOE) and the Executive Branch are working on budget issues while the budget is in the Conference Committee. The Governor issued a revised House 1 budget, which is seldom done, in which the Governor laid out his priorities in this conservative fiscal climate and indicated how he would respond if sales tax reforms are not included in the final budget. Secretary Reville stated that it became apparent early on in the budget process that the Commonwealth will have to rely on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) education stimulus funds in this budget cycle. The Governor was very active, along with a group of other key Governors, in securing ARRA funding for educational purposes. It is apparent that funds available for education stabilization will be used in FY10, and as such the "funding cliff" that we have warned against and attempted to avoid in FY11 is now an FY10 issue. As a result, and those that are relying on stabilization funds will need to plan accordingly.

Secretary Reville provided an update on the collaborative work occurring within the education sector. Commissioner Killins and Commissioner Chester are currently discussing kindergarten and school readiness and all three education Commissioners and Board Chairs are thinking about how we integrate and articulate together across systems. Secretary Reville stated that there will be opportunities for joint planning this summer.

Secretary Reville noted that the EOE agenda over the next few weeks and months includes a reform bill for higher education, regionalization of K-12 and Smart Start readiness schools. Proposals regarding these initiatives will be available in the next few months. The regional centers will aim to improve curriculum development for all teachers across the education system and centers will be launched this fall, within limited resources. Secretary Reville stated that he appreciated the Department's involvement in this work.

Agency Updates: Comments from the Commissioner

Commissioner Killins thanked everyone for attending today's Board meeting, and thanked those who hosted the Board at earlier meetings and program visits that morning. Commissioner Killins commented that the Barnstable Early Learning Center is a culmination of a partnership between and among public and private resources and Head Start. This partnership is a real lesson about how to collaborate and share resources in the system of early education and care.

Commissioner Killins added that she considers the field to be key partners. She is committed to traveling across the state, and has been supported by many people to be able to do so successfully.

• Staffing

- Michele Norman is on loan to the Department from EOE for 30 days to support the re-organization of the Department, to explore the ESE assignment of state education identification numbers to EEC funded children, and to complete the capacity report.
- As acknowledged earlier by Secretary Reville, Amy Kershaw resigned from her position as Deputy Commissioner of Programs to pursue other opportunities at the Department of Children and Families, and Commissioner Killins thanked her for her leadership and for staying on over the last several months to ensure a smooth transition.
- Anita Moeller, Associate Commissioner of Child and Family Support Services, was selected as a 2009 Governor Robert F. Bradford Fellow in the John F. Kennedy School of Government's Mid-Career MPA program at Harvard University. She will

take a leave of absence to complete the 10 month program, which begins in July. We are very excited for her and look forward to her return to the Department.

- **Reorganization**

EEC's organizational structure is currently grouped by functions that serve a common purpose. However, given the many projects that the Department manages, there is an advantage to having an organizational structure that is cross-functional. As we move forward with a new structure, there will be further communication on how we plan to continue to support providers and educators and the children and families we serve within the new framework.

- **FY2010 Grant Planning**

The current economic situation calls for solid policy development and EEC has worked on moving initiatives forward that may realize cost savings and increase consolidation. The deadline for the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant was extended to June 22nd and we encourage grantees to apply in a consolidated fashion. As consolidation may not make sense for some grantees, EEC will post separate grants for Local Planning and Coordination for Massachusetts Family Network Programs (MFN) and Parent Child Home Programs (PCHP) later this week.

- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009**

The Board will discuss one agenda item relative to ARRA today, but it is likely that we will need to wait to move forward with other ARRA initiatives.

- **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)**

The development of the QRIS continues to move forward, however, with a slightly different tact. What will be piloted of the QRIS next year is the Standards and EEC will hold off on piloting the Ratings for 1-2 years. Based on feedback received over the past few months from EEC's Advisory Council and the Board's Policy and Programs Committee, we will continue to explore what other states are using as an alternative to NAEYC at the top levels of their QRIS. Also, in order to better understand the value of the Bachelor's degree at the top level of the QRIS Family Child Care Standards, EEC will research what other states have required at their top level for Family Child Care providers, identify research on this topic, and examine what role NAFCC has for Bachelors' degrees.

- **Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)**

Abt Associates is in the process of completing observations of a sample of 166 classrooms/homes located in 98 center-based and public school programs and 68 family child care homes to provide findings about key research questions regarding quality. In order to be informative it is hoped that there will be a high level of participation from all funded programs.

- **Regulation Reform**

The new regulations are posted and EEC expects to provide a statewide, high level review of implementation. We will partner with CCR&Rs, Building Careers Programs and CPCs through the professional development and accreditation grant to provide in-depth skills training. EEC wants to ensure that the field has what it needs to implement the new regulations.

- **Income Eligible Child Care Re-procurement**

EEC issued the Request for Responses (RFR) for Income Eligible contracts in March and received 267 on-line bid submissions, including 213 bids from licensed center-based programs, and 54 bids from family child care systems. Evaluation teams have been reading and scoring bids over the last two weeks, reviewing program practices that include screening, child assessment, curriculum, transitions, family engagement, professional

development, comprehensive services, and collaborations/shared services. The evaluation teams are expected finish their work by June 15 and final award recommendations are expected by July 1st.

EEC also issued an RFR in April for a demonstration project for public and private schools and an RFR for a limited number of independent family child care providers. EEC will host evening bidder's conferences in Springfield, Worcester and Boston from June 15th to 17th. The deadline for all RFR bids is July 15, 2009.

- **Supportive Child Care Expansion**

The demand for Supportive Child Care continues to exceed our current capacity, and the number of children on the DCF waiting or "placement" list has grown to nearly 1,200. We have reached out to current providers with capacity and hope to expand capacity; we are moving to immediately place new children with existing supportive providers who have capacity to serve additional children.

Beginning in July, EEC and DCF will "kick off" a procurement planning process to re-bid Supportive Child Care. The re-bid process will enable the two agencies to address on-going capacity and policy/procedure challenges within the Supportive Child Care System.

- **National Institute for School Leadership (NISL)**

EEC and NISL are in the process of collecting background information on the professional development needs of this sector of the field via a survey to key stakeholders (EEC Board, EEC Advisory, EEC Parent Advisory, CPCs, and CCR&Rs). EEC will meet with NISL leaders and Birth to 5 selected stakeholders on June 10th to discuss design and development of this idea.

Board Member Chesloff noted that over the last few months, QRIS has often been referenced as the answer to a lot of questions or issues, such as outcome measurements. He asked whether this work is being delayed. Commissioner Killins responded that the standards are the basis of the QRIS, and we need to make sure that the standards are the correct ones before we start validating and moving forward.

Statements from the Public

The Board of Early Education and Care makes up to 30 minutes available for persons in the audience to address the Board on specific agenda items. In order to hear as many speakers as possible, the Board limits individuals to three minutes, although written material of any length can be submitted to Chairperson Scott-Chandler or Commissioner Killins.

Brad Kramer - Horizons for Homeless Children – commented in support of using Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds to support homeless children. He noted that in the past EEC prioritized this population but beginning in November, access to financial assistance was restricted and families have lost vouchers. He suggested that ARRA funds be used to address the problems of homeless children and their families by extending job search from 8 weeks to 26 weeks for all homeless families.

Ruth Provost – Boys and Girls Club of Cape Cod – commented that fifty percent of Cape Cod households consist of low income families and stated that while decisions are often made to support the major cities in the Commonwealth, the children on the Cape are living in poverty as well. She shared that the Boys and Girls Club provides free after school care for children during ten months of the school year, allowing parents to give up their vouchers in order to free up funds for other children, noting that each year they get the vouchers back for summer care, but that this year parents were informed that they will not

get their voucher back for summer. She requested that summer camp vouchers be made available this year for Cape children.

Debbie Milne - Martha's Vineyard Community Services – commented on the importance of UPK, MFN and Income Eligible funding to the island, and urged continuation for this support; she stated that many programs hold Income Eligible contracts but as of July 1st, most providers have decided not to accept vouchers.

Anne Scott - Cape Cod Child Development - commented that EEC should continue summer only care, noting that without this funding, there are going to be many children left home alone this summer.

Lauren Robinson- Sandwich Public Library – commented that the library serves as a place where children and parents can meet and participate in play groups funded through both the CPC and MFN. She noted that library staff sit on the CPC and MFN advisory council and have helped to develop early childhood materials for children, all of which benefit the community by providing stronger services. Ms. Robinson suggested enhancing this model and library services across the state.

Marcia Galazzi – The Family School, Brewster - testified that the Family School is an accredited private preschool and summer camp with the mission of supporting families. She noted that it presently has 23 children, ages 6-12, waiting for summer only vouchers for Brewster day camp. She suggested that if half the rate could be provided through EEC funds, the other half could be matched and recommended that EEC consider offering some funding for all children. Ms. Galazzi also shared her concern about the new regulation that eliminates swings on playgrounds, commenting that an Occupational Therapist who had visited her campus recommended a swing for every child as the experience of swinging and walking are key to development. Commissioner Killins clarified that EEC is not eliminating the use of swings but will require fall zones under all play equipment.

Monica Keefe-Hess – Cape Cod Children's Place, Parent –commented in support of the Cape Cod Children's Place, from her perspective as a parent, and stated that EEC funding makes a big difference in people's lives. She and her children accessed play groups and story times at the library, allowing her children to thrive and become part of the community. She discussed the personal benefits that she received from parenting programs funded by CPC grants that helped her to become a better parent and from EEC Building Careers funding which allowed her to graduate from Cape Cod Community College with an early childhood education degree.

Leslie Dean – Upper Cape Family Network (UCFN), Parent – testified that her husband is in the military and her children attend the UCFN groups at the Bourne public library, which offers many military families a safe place for children to play and participate in reading, music and movement classes.

Martina Mehl – Upper Cape Family Network, EC Facilitator and Parent – spoke of her personal experience in MFN playgroups, which led to her current position in which she runs an intergenerational group, where young children and seniors work together in the community. Ms. Mehl requested that the Board reconsider the 72.5% reduction to MFN in order for these programs to continue to provide quality programming and to consider areas of duplication in programs across the state before making cuts.

Heather Perin – Families United Program, Parent- commented upon last week's Massachusetts Family Network (MFN) funding cuts, pointing out that many families rely on these programs and that she and her son have personally benefited from their local

program. Ms. Perin addressed Secretary Reville, informing him that she is also a teacher and that these programs help parents get their own children ready for school and are a "bargain for the price."

Kristen Wilson- Plymouth PCHP, MFN and CPC – testified that her programs are all under the same lead agency and work well together as three different programs. She shared her concerns that the PCHP programs would now have to pick which children to serve due to lack of funding. She noted that 37% of children in Plymouth are not attending preschool and Head Start is unable to serve all children due transportation costs, and as a result many children can only be served by PCHP programs by going into children's homes.

Marianne Murphy- Wareham PCHP- testified that the Wareham PCHP was serving 29 children and now with a 65% cut, they are serving only 8 families and have had to reduce six home visitors to just one. She shared stories of parents who have been positively affected by their interactions with the Wareham PCHP, including the story of one father who could not read, but began learning to read with his son during home visits from the PCHP.

Elizabeth Aldrech- Cape Cod Children's Place- represented parents not in attendance that are bringing their children to work, are losing seasonal housing and living in tents, do not have a car or public transportation options, are single parents and have no access to child care vouchers and, as a result, have no care for their children. The only services available are through MFN and PCHP local programs that produce resources for such families in crisis.

Nora Richards – The Sandpiper Nursery School – thanked the Board and EEC for UPK support, commenting that her program is NAEYC accredited and is a three year UPK grant recipient. She stated her hopes that continued funding be made available to provide universal access to high quality.

Alison Corning-Clarke – Reach Out and Read (ROR) - provided an update on ROR activities on the Cape and its collaboration with the Cape Cod Library Association and the Cape Cod Literacy Council. ROR is currently trying to identify underserved populations and has partnered with MFN and PCHP programs to advocate for all three programs in legislative language and for an increase in the one line item.

Leah Curtis – Town Counselor- stated that the Cape Cod Times article brought her to today's meeting to lend her support. She testified that she has worked in Early Intervention programs and testified that the importance of the early childhood population is paramount in the Commonwealth.

End of public comment period.

Routine Business:

- **Approval of May 12, 2009 Minutes**

Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked Board Members to review the minutes and called for a motion to approve the minutes, as presented.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the minutes of the May 12, 2009 Board meeting, as presented by the Commissioner. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Fiscal Year 2010 Board Meeting Schedule**

Chairperson Scott-Chandler noted that under EEC's enabling legislation, the Board is required to meet no fewer than ten times annually. For state fiscal year 2010, the following dates were proposed by the Commissioner:

- September 8, 2009 (day after Labor Day)
- October 13, 2009 (day after Columbus Day)
- November 10, 2009 (day before Veteran's Day)
- December 8, 2009
- January 12, 2010
- February 9, 2010
- March 9, 2010
- April 13, 2010
- May 11, 2010
- June 8, 2010

It was noted that September 8th date would be problematic for several Board members as it is the day after Labor Day. Accordingly, September 15th was proposed as an alternate date, and so moved.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the Fiscal Year 2010 meeting dates, as proposed by the Commissioner, with the exception that the Board's September meeting be held on September 15, 2009. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Annual Evaluation Committee and Board Retreat**

In furtherance of the Board's statutory responsibility to set the Commissioner's annual salary and evaluate her performance, Chairperson Scott-Chandler stated that she is establishing a Committee to fulfill that requirement. The first meeting will be held in July. Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked for volunteers and noted that this would be a time limited commitment. However, she did ask that all volunteers commit to participation on this Committee for each year that they serve as a member of the Board.

Board Members Culhane, Chesloff, Craig-O'Brien and Childs volunteered. Chairperson Scott-Chandler stated that all Board members will be notified of the July meeting date once it is set, should other Board members want to participate.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler added that the Board Members will soon be notified of a half-day retreat which will provide an opportunity to reflect on the Board's work over the past year, and to evaluate how well that work aligned with the strategic plan.

- **Board Committee Reports**

- Policy and Program Committee Report

Board Member Childs extended her sincere thanks to Deputy Commissioner Kershaw for her contribution and support to the Committee. She also wanted to recognize Deputy Commissioner Kershaw's invaluable contributions to the agency in general, specifically the focus she brought on the importance of quality early education and care, and her attention to using research and data to inform deliberate policy development.

Board Member Childs reported that the Policy and Program Committee met on Monday, June 1, 2009. During this meeting, the Committee reviewed feedback received from the

public, as well as the Advisory Team regarding the QRIS Standards. Board Member Childs noted that three persistent issues remain and require additional analysis by EEC:

- Reciprocity with Head Start blue or gold ratings with level 5 of the QRIS;
- Equivalents/Substitutions for the NAEYC accreditation requirement at the top levels of the QRIS; and
- Equivalents/Substitutions for educational degree requirements for family child care providers at the top level of QRIS.

On the last two items, the Committee directed EEC to conduct additional research for discussion and policy development for the next committee meeting in September, including: identifying how other states with QRIS incorporate NAEYC and educational degrees into quality ratings; confirming whether the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) utilizes educational degrees for purposes of accreditation; and providing data related to the impact of bachelor's degrees on educators in family child care settings. The Committee anticipates that this information will inform best practices and possibly develop an alternative method to achieve a Level 5 QRIS rating in the Commonwealth.

The Committee reviewed the current status of grants and the impact of FY2010 budget recommendations from the House and Senate. The Committee concurred with agency recommendations that where possible the reductions should be applied proportionately or "across-the-board" in order to maintain the existing infrastructure.

The Committee also discussed proposals for use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, but Board Member Childs noted that ARRA is on today's agenda and as such, she reserved comment on ARRA recommendations for later in the agenda.

- Fiscal and Budget Committee Report
Board Member Chesloff reported that the Fiscal and Budget Committee met on May 15, 2009 and that Andy Bagley of the Massachusetts Taxpayer's Foundation (MTF) presented the Committee with the MTF's analysis of the Commonwealth's long term fiscal challenges given the state of the economy. While the presentation was very sobering, Board Member Chesloff asserted that it reminded the Committee of the importance of implementing a 5-year budget plan in order to deal with much less revenue in the future.
- Planning and Evaluation Committee Report
Board Member Culhane wished Deputy Commissioner Kershaw well and commented on the value her skills and unique knowledge brought to the table during her tenure at EEC. Board Member Culhane reported that the Planning and Evaluation Committee met on May 14, 2009. Topics discussed included:
 - UPK evaluation;
 - ARRA funding, accountability measures and outcome measurements;
 - the Legislative Capacity Report, which although due June 15, 2009, an extension until September 15, 2009 would be sought, in order to provide a higher quality report to the Legislature; and
 - EEC's Market Rate Study.

In addition, Board Member Culhane note that the first statewide meetings on Child Outcomes and Assessment will be held on June 10th in Brockton.

- **Advisory Council Report**

On behalf of Board Member Beaulieu, Commissioner Killins reported on the Advisory Council meeting held on May 29, 2009. Discussion topics at this meeting included: QRIS Standards; and efforts to identify outcomes that are key predictors of future success. Feedback from the Advisory Council included:

- EEC should be clear about the purpose of assessment (not a baby MCAS);
- EEC should disseminate a clear message to families that child assessment is about progress, not parental failure;
- reminding stakeholders that Kindergarten teachers are a useful resource;
- noting the usefulness of formative assessment for purposes of policy development when it has a timeframe;
- emphasizing the importance of child assessment data; and
- recognizing the value of national data, but emphasizing a need to collect baseline data on residents of the Commonwealth.

Disclosures:

Chairperson Scott-Chandler submitted a written disclosure that her employer is an EEC grant and contract recipient, and her employer has or may have an interest in the ARRA, State Plan, FY2010 State Budget and Market Price Study agenda items. Board Member Mary Pat Messmer also disclosed in writing that her agency receives EEC funding and has or may have an interest in the ARRA, State Plan, FY2010 State Budget and Market Price Study agenda items. Board Member Chi -Cheng Huang verbally disclosed that his employer, Gary Zuckerman is the founder of Reach Out and Read. Board Member Carol Craig-O'Brien verbally disclosed that her employer, Westwood Public Schools, currently receives EEC funding and has a potential interest in receiving additional funding.

Items for Discussion and Action:

I. FY2010 State Budget - Discussion

- **House and Senate Budget Recommendations - Discussion**
- **Board Preferences Conference Committee – Vote**

FY2010 State Budget - Discussion

Alda Rego, Deputy Commissioner for Administration, presented the Board with an update on the Fiscal Year 2010 state budget process, which included a presentation of the Commonwealth's budget cycle and a presentation documenting EEC's funding history from Fiscal Year 2008 through the pending budget for Fiscal Year 2010.

Additionally, Deputy Commissioner Rego presented the Board with a summary of all line items currently pending before the Conference Committee of the Legislature. She noted that all of EEC's line items all are "conferencable" (i.e., having some differences in either language or funding amounts), and therefore, must be reconciled in the Conference Committee.

Deputy Commissioner Rego also sought the Board's authorization to submit a letter issued through EOE to the members of the Conference Committee, in order to articulate EEC's preference for flexibility in the final budget through line item language as well as account structure. Specific recommendations by line item are as follows:

- Support the consolidation of the three financial child care financial assistance accounts, i.e. Supportive (3000-3050) TANF related (3000-4050), and Income

Eligible (3000-4060) into a single account which will allow flexibility to ensure funds are maximized and targeted to the most vulnerable families. The Department further recommends that the House's final budget line item language be supported to allow for children in supportive child care to have a year of transitional care after their supportive case with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) closes:

- *provided further, that funds may be used to provide services during a transition period for families involved with the department of children and families upon closure of their case*
- Support House line item language to allow existing Universal Pre-Kindergarten funding to be expended on emerging programs (3000-5075):
 - *provided further, that remaining funds available after grants are made to eligible programs may be expended on programs working towards the designation of being a Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program participant*
- Support efforts to include new line item language within the new consolidated Quality account (3000-6000) to allow funding to be expended on new Local Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grants to maximize access to high-quality child care and family supports in communities across the Commonwealth:
 - *provided further, that funds from this item shall be expended to support locally based family and community engagement activities in coordination with programs funded through line item 3000-7050*
- Support the House's final budget line item language within the Family Support and Engagement account (3000-7050) to allow for coordination between the new consolidated Quality account (3000-6000) to maximize access to high-quality child care and family supports in communities across the Commonwealth:
 - *and provided further, that the department shall, to the maximum extent feasible, coordinate services provided through this item with services provided through items 3000-6000 and 3000-7000 in order to ensure that parents receiving services through this item are aware of all opportunities available to them and their children through the department*
- Encourage the allocation of ARRA funds, as already approved and designated by the Board, in the amount of \$3 million (e.g., the summer-only voucher initiative and the out-of-school time literacy and learning promotion grant program) within FY2010 funding. Appropriation of ARRA funding, particularly the amounts proposed in the Senate budget, must be done with the recognition that it is one-time money supporting ongoing spending commitments.

EEC plans to work with the Secretary of Education and the Executive Office for Administration & Finance (ANF) to submit Board approved Conference Committee report preferences to the Joint House-Senate Conference Committee before the Joint House-Senate Conference Committee reconvenes to reconcile their respective budgets.

Board Member Chesloff asked that the Conference Committee letter specifically include language indicating that using ARRA funds in FY10 versus FY11 will create a budget deficit. He also requested that the letter acknowledge and recognize that the Board-approved uses for ARRA funds are for one-time funding initiatives, which do not build on the base of the budget. Finally, Board member Chesloff asked that the letter stress the importance of not using ARRA funds for on-going expenses, but for one-time initiatives only.

In response, Deputy Commissioner Rego noted that the Senate budget proposal cut the available ARRA funding in half and anticipates using half of the funding in each of FY2010 and FY2011. However, we do not want to miss opportunity to support 1,200 children for the summer-only initiative which has been approved by the Board, EOE and ANF.

Board Member Craig O'Brien commended the Governor for his commitment to Family Support and Engagement in his revised budget. Board Member Culhane asked that the Department consider reversing any of the "damage" being done to the MFN funding by restoring funding. Secretary Reville expressed his appreciation of the Department's framing of the Conference Committee recommendations, and the spirit in which the recommendations were made.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler called for a vote on the Department's proposal. Board Member Chesloff moved to amend the proposal to require that the Department's letter include language regarding the importance of not using ARRA funds for on-going expenses, but for one-time initiatives only. Chairperson Scott-Chandler noted Board Member Chesloff's request and asked for a vote, subject to Board Member Chesloff's amendment.

Secretary Reville stated that he will be abstaining from the vote, as this letter would have to come through his office for final approval.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care approve the budget recommendations of the Department of Early Education and Care for FY2010, as detailed in the presentation to the Board on June 9, 2009, to be presented to the Joint Conference Committee, subject to ensuring that the letter include language regarding the importance of not using ARRA funds for on-going expenses, but for one-time initiatives only. The motion passed with 8 in favor and one abstention; Secretary Reville abstained.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler requested that the State Plan agenda item be addressed next, in order to ensure that there was enough time for a vote. No objections were noted.

II. Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) State Plan

General Counsel Papanikolaou presented the CCDBG State Plan to the Board for their approval. She noted that at the last meeting, the Board had authorized the Department to put the document out for public comment, as required by the CCDBG regulations. General Counsel Papanikolaou summarized the public comment process, stating that EEC held two hearings and accepted written comments through June 5th. General Counsel Papanikolaou directed Board Members to Attachment A in their binders, which contained a summary of public comments received, and noted that this document is also a required attachment to the State Plan, and as such it will be submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) along with the Plan and the several other attachments.

General Counsel Papanikolaou stated that in addition to conducting public hearings, over the past month the Department has been diligently working on proof reading and further streamlining the document. The Board binders contain a "red-lined" version of the Plan to note any propose changes made to the document since the May Board meeting

General Counsel Papanikolaou confirmed that the State Plan is not intended to serve as the means for creating new policy initiatives, and as such there should be no "surprises" in the State Plan. Chairperson Scott-Chandler asked if there is an amendment process should there be future decisions that change the way EEC will be spending CCDBG funding through

FY2011. General Counsel Papanikolaou stated that any substantial changes to the State Plan must be submitted within 60 days of the effective date of the change. General Counsel Papanikolaou noted that the Plan is intentionally drafted very broadly to accommodate non-substantial changes, as there are very few federal regulations that restrict funding.

General Counsel Papanikolaou concluded by requesting that the Board authorize the Plan to be submitted to ACF, as presented. Chairperson Scott-Chandler thanked General Counsel Papanikolaou and her team for all their work on the Plan, and called for a vote. Commissioner Killins added that the current draft is a much stronger version than where it started and she appreciated all the work that has gone in to improving the document. General Counsel Papanikolaou acknowledged that a lot of staff time and effort was spent reworking and streamlining the document, and she acknowledged the efforts of Assistant General Counsel Tom Weierman, Deputy Commissioner Amy Kershaw and Erika Werner in this regard.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the Board of Early Education and Care, in accordance with M.G. L. c. 15D and 45 C.F.R. Part 98, approve the Department's CCDF State Plan for federal fiscal years 2010-2011 and further authorize the Commissioner of Early Education and Care to submit the plan to the Administration for Children and Families. The motion passed unanimously.

III. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

o Job Retention

Commissioner Killins prefaced the ARRA presentation by stating that the Board would not be voting on this agenda item at this time because the proposed Senate budget included ARRA funds within the core line-item structure. EEC will ask for Board action on new ARRA proposals when the budget is final. Deputy Commissioner Kershaw reiterated some of the key ARRA requirements and funding allocations from the last Board meeting and reviewed the process for developing ideas for ARRA expenditures.

Deputy Commissioner Kershaw then presented an update to EEC's previous proposal to use a portion of the ARRA Access funds to implement a Job Retention Policy for families currently enrolled in early education and care with EEC Financial Assistance, referring Board members to the presentation included in the Board binders. She reminded the Board that this item had been sent to the Policy and Programs Committee for further discussion and refinement.

Deputy Commissioner Kershaw summarized some of the research which connects this proposal to the overall ARRA goals:

- Families with access to high quality stable child care are more productive and less likely to miss work.
- Lack of stable child care has been identified as a barrier to employment and a primary cause of absenteeism that may lead to termination.
- Access to regular and stable child care is associated with greater job stability and retention for low income families.

She emphasized that the purpose of the proposed new policy was to support working families currently receiving EEC financial assistance to find and/or retain work by providing continuity of care for their children for up to 2 years. This continuity would occur only in the following circumstances:

- Summer Only care;
- A sibling of children already enrolled;
- A child “aging up” of a current program; and/or
- A family who loses their job or has a reduction in hours below current minimum eligibility (e.g., extend child care provided during job search/ work hour reduction up to 26 weeks total).

The proposed allocation for this initiative would be approximately \$5 million and it would be implemented through vouchers for ARRA tracking purposes. However, existing demand (i.e., children on the waiting list already known to fall into the above categories) indicates that \$5 million would not be sufficient funding.

Deputy Commissioner Kershaw reviewed how the proposal relates to the current income eligible access limits for families and how it is aligned with existing policy for “continuity of care” for families. This did not include the \$1M in funding needed to cover the “Summer Only” children currently on the EEC centralized waiting list. She noted that the “Summer Only” voucher initiative previously approved by the Board was only to serve school-age siblings statewide, and other school-age children in underperforming school districts designated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE).

Board Member Chesloff requested that EEC take a closer look at the number of children in need of “Summer Only” care that do not fall within the suggested proposal, and to report back on available options to provide them with services.

Deputy Commission Kershaw summarized comments received from the Advisory Council, Operations Working Group and Policy and Programs Committee regarding the proposed Job Retention Policy. These comments included:

- Focus on the most vulnerable population in terms of job loss:
 - Prioritize children already in care (aging-up);
 - Prioritize families already in care (siblings); and/or
 - Prioritize age-groups with highest waiting list numbers (infants/school-age).
- Support job reduction (still actually working) before job search; fund job search as “break in service” (prioritize them to come back into system once they leave)

Board Member Chesloff questioned EEC’s rationale for the \$5 million allocation, given the Senate’s appropriation of ARRA funds, and that it does not match the estimated demand. Deputy Commissioner Kershaw responded that it was better to think about the job retention policy as something the Board may want to pursue if ARRA or other funding becomes available.

Board Member Messmer commented on how important it is for the Board and the agency to be thinking about the population of children who will “age up” in September, as this is a time of year when many children will move into new classes. She added that without a plan to provide continuity of care through ARRA or other funds, many children will lose access to care. Chairperson Scott-Chandler noted that funding is actually saved when preschoolers “age-up” to school age because the cost of care is lower.

Board members asked if EEC could review caseload trends by age and month in order to better understand the potential impact on children and families. The Commissioner mentioned that data on the flex pool would also be important for the Board to review. Board Member Huang asked if the data represented the entire demand. Deputy Commissioner Kershaw responded that the data includes only known children. It does not

include families who 1) are about to have a new baby, 2) have a child "aging-up," or 3) lose a job. She further explained that the data comes from the EEC centralized waiting list, which is not always up-to-date, particularly when there is so little movement. Board Member Huang then suggested that priority be placed on children aging-up and their siblings, which would focus resources on helping the whole family. Board Member Culhane asked if there were variations in demand by age or circumstance, based upon the state's regional differences. Deputy Commissioner Kershaw responded that EEC could look at regional variations by examining the waitlist data.

Chairperson Scott-Chandler thanked Deputy Commissioner Kershaw and Commissioner Killins for their work on this issue and stated that she looked forward to further discussions of ARRA funding through the Committee work this summer and at the next Board meeting.

IV. Provider Market Price Study - Discussion

Chairperson Scott-Chandler stated that due to time constraints this agenda item will be tabled until the September 15, 2009 Board meeting. No objections were voiced.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED that the meeting adjourn at 4:00 pm, subject to the call of the Chairperson.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherri Killins, Ed.D.
Commissioner of the Department and
Secretary to the Board