MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

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RE: Report on Early Education and Care Cost Methodology

Dear Chairs and Members:

Pursuant to Outside Section 182 of Section 3 of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is pleased to submit its report detailing the proposed methodology to calculate and assess the cost of providing high-quality early education and care across the Commonwealth.

This report summarizes EEC's work to develop and refine a comprehensive cost methodology that accounts for the varying costs of delivering early education and care across geographic regions, provider types and sizes, and age groups served. It also considers the resources necessary to support children and families with additional needs, including staffing, professional development, mental health supports, interpreter services, and comprehensive family engagement.

The report highlights findings from EEC's initial cost study and subsequent refinement of its cost models, including notable increases in the cost of care between 2022 and 2024. It also describes how these findings have informed Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) rate adjustments and other funding decisions. In particular, the updated models found that the cost of center-based care increased between 14 and 26 percent, while the cost of family child care increased between 12 and 19 percent, depending on region and age group.

The report also outlines the next phase of EEC's work to further refine the methodology and strengthen its ability to inform future rate-setting, program funding, workforce stability, and quality improvement efforts.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support of the Commonwealth's early education and care system.