RE: Early Education and Care FY24 EEC Capital Grant Programs Report

Honorable Members of the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means and the Joint Committee on Education:

Dear Chairs and Members:

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is pleased to submit the FY24 EEC Capital Grant Programs Report, pursuant to line item 1596-2429 of Section 2E of Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023.

The report provides an overview of EEC's efforts to distribute $15 million in capital investments to expand access to early education and care by supporting facility improvements, increasing program capacity, and ensuring safe, accessible, and inclusive learning environments for children and families across the Commonwealth.

The funding was divided equally between two initiatives: the Early Education and Care Provider Capital Grant (EECPCG), which allocated $7.5 million to support capital improvements at community-based, for-profit child care centers serving a significant proportion of low-income families, and the Family Child Care Capital Program (FCCCP), which dedicated the remaining $7.5 million to addressing the unique capital needs of family child care providers.

During FY24, EEC awarded five EECPCG grants ranging from $370,000 to $500,000 to providers in Peabody, Dorchester, New Bedford, and Medway. These grants support critical facility improvements, including outdoor play spaces, HVAC systems, emergency repairs, physical environment modifications, and security enhancements. The Department also identified opportunities to provide additional technical assistance to applicants and reinvest remaining funds in a second round of funding in FY25 to strengthen applications and maximize the impact of the program.

Additionally, EEC advanced development of the Family Child Care Capital Program through a partnership with MassDevelopment, established in June 2024. This partnership will support program design and administration, with applications accepted through September 13, 2024, to help ensure family child care providers have access to capital resources tailored to their needs.

Through these investments, EEC continues to advance the Healey-Driscoll Administration's commitment to increasing the availability of affordable, high-quality early education and care by strengthening the facilities and infrastructure that support providers, children, and families throughout Massachusetts.