



Early Childhood Education Endowment Advisory Board

July 24, 2026

Office of the Treasurer, 165 Capitol Avenue, Conference Rooms G006D and G007E

Meeting-In-Person and Virtual Platform

In Attendance:

Senator Ceci Maher, Commissioner Elena Trueworthy, Representative Kate Farrar (virtual), Holly Williams (OPM), Casey Dimaria (virtual), Lafayette (Jay) Atkinson, Jr., Dr. Monette Ferguson, Treasurer Erick Russell, Allyx Shiavone, Suzanne Slater (virtual), Sandra Dill (virtual), Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker, Robert Woytowich (virtua), Cristopher Jimenez-Porrata (virtual)

Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Sen. Maher, followed by greetings from Rep. Kate Farrar and Commissioner Trueworthy.

Approval of April 10, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes and June 23, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes:

- Commissioner Russell-Tucker noted that she was in attendance at the April 10th meeting.
- Motion to approve with correction by Commissioner Tucker; seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy; approved unanimously.

June 23, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes:

- No corrections proposed.
- Motion to approve by Holly Williams; seconded by Allyx Schiavone; approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report Presentation and Discussion

Treasurer Russell presented an overview of the Endowment's performance:

- Market value as of June 30, 2026: approx. \$735.6 million (estimated 15% return).
- \$12.6 million in unspent FY26 funds will carry forward due to revised statutory authority.
- FY27 release amount determined at \$86.8 million plus the carry forward, totaling \$99.4 million available to OEC.
- Funds are reimbursed to OEC monthly to maximize investment earnings.

Treasurer emphasized sustainability and strategic long-term planning for release and carry-forward funds.

Bipartisan Policy Center Video

A video created by the Bipartisan Policy Center was shown regarding the Endowment and Connecticut's childcare landscape.

FY26 Reflection

Tri-chairs reviewed accomplishments:

- Launch of the endowment with the initial \$300 million investment.
- Appointment of all advisory board members per statute.
- First public meeting held December 10, 2025.
- Strong investment returns and strengthened board–Treasurer partnership.
- Over 1,000 new Early Start CT and Smart Start spaces; 94% offering full-time care.
- Workforce investments including 8% rate increases, \$10 million in program operations grants, and expansion of scholarships.
- Launch of 48 Local Governance Partners across 89 towns for community-level needs assessments.
- Significant increases in demand for quality supports (training, accreditation, coaching).
- Approval of \$10 million health insurance subsidy for early childhood educators.

Board members discussed progress, remaining gaps, and the need for better communication, more real-time data, and clarity on new versus existing slots.

Members raised several key reflections and concerns:

- **Systemic Underfunding & Rate Gaps:** Recognition that recent rate increases do not match the true cost of care; calls for tracking “new slots” vs. existing slots now funded.
- **Field Communication:** Need for more consistent updates, better transparency about pace of implementation, and proactive outreach.
- **Stabilization Funds:**
 - Question raised why only \$5M of the \$10M program operations grants were spent. OEC explained short turnaround and eligibility constraints limited uptake, with remaining amounts carried forward and to be expanded in FY27.
 - The board requested categories of provider needs and geographic analysis.
- **National Recognition:** Board members shared pride in CT’s leadership following national presentations by OEC leadership.
- **Data Requests:**
 - Need for clearer data on workforce programs (apprenticeships, scholarships), inclusion/special needs, and family survey usage.
 - Interest in statewide breakdowns of children served in public schools vs. centers vs. family childcare.

FY 27 Spending Plan Overview

OEC presented the detailed FY27 spending plan aligned with the five Blue Ribbon Panel policy goals. Key components include:

- **Access & Affordability**
 - Additional 1,000 Early Start CT spaces, with a 4% rate increase.
 - Expansion of Smart Start classrooms.
- **Workforce Supports**
 - Health insurance subsidy implementation (\$10M).
 - Continued program operations grants, scholarships, apprenticeships.
 - Licensing and regulatory modernization supports.
- **Quality & Inclusion**
 - Increased demand for quality supports; continued investment in coaching, training, accreditation.
 - Expanded special needs and inclusion supports.
- **Infrastructure & Community Systems**
 - Support for new statewide one-portal entry system.
 - Local Governance Partner expansion.
 - UConn parent/caregiver survey continuation.
 - Data systems and evaluation capacity.

- Innovation (One-Time Funding)
 - Targeted workforce development (multilingual supports, culturally responsive training, Spanish-language CDA).
 - Technology supports for providers.
 - Strategies to address childcare deserts.
 - Board members suggested renaming this category and splitting it into true innovation versus ongoing program supports.

Remaining unbudgeted funds total approximately \$1 million, with discussions about carry-forward strategy and sustainability.

Health Insurance Subsidy Update

Access Health CT and OEC continue work on:

- Business rules
- IT integration
- Communication and outreach planning
- Program expected to launch during the October open enrollment period.

Next Meetings & Calendar

Rep. Farrar outlined upcoming meetings:

- September 11, 2026 at 11:00 AM
- October 21, 2026 4:00 PM meeting; 5:00 PM public hearing
- December 18, 2026 10:00 AM (annual report vote)

Proposed 2027 dates (pending Treasurer's confirmation):

- February 19, 2027
- April 23, 2027
- June 25, 2027

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made and approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned shortly after 11:40am.