

FAQ

1. Will the EOE Undersecretary and Chief Operating Officer serve as the primary point of contact for the project?

Response: Yes

2. There is a large gap in time between the submission of the interim report (8/30/24) and the final report submission (12/31/24.) What do you envision those interim milestones, activities, and deliverables from 9/1-12/30 to consist of?

Response: The interim report will describe the strengths and weaknesses of the current policy strategies being employed and summarize the feedback and suggestions gathered in the stakeholder listening sessions. With that grounding, the Task Force and its working groups will then spend the fall period focused on policy solution development. The selected vendor will help facilitate their progress in those meetings and begin drafting the final report which will present those policy solutions to the Governor.

3. Please distinguish between 'Stakeholder Engagement Sessions' (five requested) and the 'Working Group Meetings' (cadence not defined). Who is the audience for each and how frequently do you envision Working Group Meetings occurring? Will these run concurrent to the Monthly Task Force and the five Stakeholder Engagement Sessions?

Response: The Task Force has already established its working groups, which include both Task Force members and additional state level staff with expertise to support the topics of the given working group. The Stakeholder Engagement Sessions (being planned as 5 in-person events and 5 virtual sessions) will be hosted by Task Force and working group members and are intended to gather information on challenges, opportunities, and potential recommendations from those who are directly engaged in the early education and child care system every day: parents and caregivers, early education and care providers, educators, and other interested parties.

4. Have the attendees already been selected/identified for participation in the Task Force and Working Group Sessions? Or will the Task Force consist solely of the Co-Chairs named in page 1 of the solicitation?

Response: Yes, the Task Force and each working group has been formed and meetings have commenced. The Task Force includes the three co-chair secretaries and designees from every other secretariat. The selected vendor will be introduced at Task Force and working group meetings and will be provided those membership lists. Applicants should refrain from contacting any Task Force or working group members until after the RFP is closed on May 10. All information about this RFP will be posted in this FAQ so that all applicants have equal access.

5. Are the strategies currently deployed by the Commonwealth for growth in the five strategy areas (as referenced in Deliverables 5.b of the Solicitation) written or publicly available for review?

Response: There is no single document or website that captures all that information in one place. The interim report contemplated by this RFP will be such a document. Yet, there are

some publicly available resources that set forth the current strategies, including the Governor's budget proposal relating to education, Fair Share, and workforce (see briefs [here](#)) and the many slide decks (available through the meeting links [here](#)) and recorded videos of the meetings of the Board of Early Education & Care (see past live streams [here](#)). EOE and EEC staff will also provide additional resources to the selected vendor.

6. The RFP specifies that any recommendations with a budget implication must be shared with the Governor's Office in November 2024. Would the Foundation have any concern with a vendor providing the Final Report in November 2024? If not, would there be any additional activities needed during the month of December?

Response: If the policy solutions developed by the Task Force and its working groups can be prepared into a report by November, then all the better. In such a case, any December activities will likely be limited, such as helping to respond to follow up questions from the Governor's Office and preparing for the public release of the report.

7. May the vendor propose additional deliverables (beyond the interim and final reports?)

Response: While not required, yes, applicants may do so.

8. The RFP references consultant collaboration with the Foundation's resources on communication and administrative support of the task force. What level of resources does the Foundation anticipate providing for this engagement?

Response: Commonwealth Corporation Foundation will be providing support to the Task Force in the form of fundraising, funder stewardship, vendor contract management, and other administrative functions.

9. For the purposes of redacting certain information, will the vendor's submitted proposal be posted or circulated publicly?

Response: While Commonwealth Corporation Foundation does not plan to share proposals publicly at this time, we cannot guarantee that they will never be shared in the future. To the extent that you are concerned about posting personal or confidential information (e.g., trade secrets or confidential financial information for private employers), please mark those documents as confidential and we will do our best to maintain their confidentiality.

10. What additional reporting requirements do you anticipate including for this initial engagement, as referenced in 5.d. of the Deliverables Section of the RFP? As written, this is open-ended, and we want to ensure we are appropriately estimating resources to support.

Response: While there are no known additional reporting requirements at this time, there may be additional (reasonable) reporting requirements imposed by either donors or by the Task Force as work progresses. The Apparent Successful Bidder will be expected to support the Foundation in providing related updates or progress reporting, if required.

11. Is there a limit to the number of distinct quals that can be used to answer the questions related to demonstrating previous projects in project management and early education, workforce, and intergovernmental experiences?

Response: Please provide information about up to 5 projects that most closely relate to the work described in this RFP. You may also include the total number of projects that meet the specified experience criteria.

12. How often are the task force meetings and committee meetings, and is there an expectation that the consultants would be required to be in person for all those meetings? Are you expecting the meetings to be held virtually, in-person, or a combination of the two? Is there a goal for the cadence/total number of the Working Group meetings, or will that be determined with the selected vendor?

Response: Task Force meetings are held monthly and each working group typically meets once between each Task Force meeting. Together, this is on average 6 total meetings per month. There are a mix of in-person and virtual meetings. The selected vendor will be expected to be present for in-person meetings.

13. Is there an estimated amount of hours per week?

Response: We have not made such an estimate and believe that this will depend greatly on the skills, speed, and productivity of each applicant. Suffice it to say that this is a complex project to coordinate with every secretariat, manage multiple working groups, draft and edit two reports, and facilitate public engagement—all in a fairly aggressive 7 to 8-month timeline. It will require extensive effort and attention to deliver quality results to transform the early education and care system for the Commonwealth.

14. Will there be travel required?

Response: Yes, the selected vendor will need to be present at each of the 5 in-person Stakeholder Engagement Sessions geographically dispersed through the Commonwealth and should expect to travel to those Task Force and working group meetings that are in-person, which are held routinely in Boston.

15. If a consultant serves as the board chair, or other close affiliation to an early education facility, would that disqualify them?

Response: Please disclose any such affiliation for awareness and further review to determine conflicts of interest, but we do not anticipate such an affiliation to lead to disqualification since the Task Force, its working groups, and the stakeholders will be driving what is ultimately recommended to the Governor.

16. How is the Governor defining success for this task force? How are its findings and recommendations expected to be different from those laid out in the Common Start framework?

Response: The Task Force will be successful if it brings forth a set of innovative, child-centered, equitable, and results-oriented policy solutions that the Governor can consider for inclusion as early as in her FY26 budget proposal and going forward. The Task Force will review and build upon all previous analyses and proposals that have been developed in the past and bring in new ideas to augment its recommendations. There is also no expectation at the outset about what those final policy recommendations will be. We are confident that following the process laid

out—including stakeholder engagement and novel analysis from every vantage point across state government—will lead to the strongest set of recommendations.

17. Who holds decision rights over the recommendations of the task force? For each working group? Across working groups? What role is the consultant expected to play in supporting these decisions?

Response: The Task Force body has the decision rights. Informed by stakeholder input during the listening sessions, each working group will develop recommendations relative to their topic area. Those recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the full Task Force before they are advanced to the Governor. Depending on their particular skills, knowledge, and abilities, the selected vendor will facilitate this process, draft the key reports, and may also contribute ideas to include for consideration by the working groups and Task Force.

18. Is there another task force that this work has been modeled after? Are there examples of a “best case” task force that this task force is looking to as a model of success?

Response: While the design of this Task Force takes the best parts of other similar models within Massachusetts and elsewhere, there is no one model that we would lift up as the “best case.” We fully expect this model to deliver excellent results and look forward to identifying the selected vendor who will partner alongside us to reach this goal.

19. What analysis is expected/required from the consultant? What analysis are working group members expected to conduct?

Response: We expect Task Force members, working group members, and the selected vendor to each bring their unique skills, knowledge, and perspective to every meeting, be inquisitive and open to learning especially during the stakeholder listening sessions, and ultimately to analyze and propose solutions consistent with these Task Force values: Innovative, Child-Centered, Equitable, and Results-Oriented.

20. Realistically, what do you expect can get done over the summer months, especially August?

Response: Neither early education providers and educators nor the Executive Branch has the luxury of taking summers off. Thus, the schedule calls for continuing Task Force and working group meetings, as well as stakeholder listening sessions in May, June, and July. The workplan in August focuses on the drafting and refinement of the Interim Report. We understand that scheduling may be a little more challenging for those months as we manage around vacations, but the work can and must continue in order to remain on track.

21. What other events or milestones that these agencies are working towards that will influence the workflow?

Response: The secretariats and agencies will be involved in FY25 budget review this summer and FY26 budget development this fall and into the winter. That analysis will likely influence the workflow and inform the development of the recommendations by the Task Force.

22. Who will be responsible for scheduling the task force meetings, working group meetings and stakeholder meetings? The consultant or will there be a single coordinator on the state side?

Response: Currently the schedulers for the three secretary co-chairs drive the scheduling of the Task Force meetings, the working group leaders (senior leaders from EOLWD, EOED, and EOE) drive the scheduling of their meetings, and the stakeholder meetings will be scheduled collaboratively with the selected vendor. For all these meetings going forward, the schedule of the selected vendor will now be taken into account and responsibilities for scheduling will likely become more shared over time.