SECTION 32. There shall be an Early Education and Care Workforce Council, the members of which shall make recommendations on improving and enhancing professional development and higher education opportunities necessary for the growth and stability of a high quality early education and care workforce in the Commonwealth.

The workforce council shall include, at minimum: 3 members to be appointed by the speaker of the house; 1 member to be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 3 members to be appointed by the president of the senate; 1 member to be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; the commissioner of higher education, or a designee; and 1 person from each of the following organizations: Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care, the executive office of community colleges, the president of a community college or a designee, the Massachusetts Head Start Association, Inc., the Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc., the Massachusetts Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Inc., Strategies for Children, Inc., the Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs, Inc., the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Inc., the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, the Alliance for Business Leadership, Inc., a representative of SEIU Local 509, and a representative of a family child care provider chosen by the commissioner of early education and care.

Additional council members may be added to the workforce council upon the recommendation of the commissioner of early education and care and approval by the board of early education and care. All additional appointees shall have a special expertise or interest in early childhood education and workforce training and professional development and shall include a mix of representatives of the early childhood community, the civic, labor, and business communities, academics, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers.

Members shall not, by virtue of their membership, be considered state employees under chapter 268A. The members of the council shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to appropriation, for expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred in the performance of their responsibilities. Members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. No member shall serve for more than 2 consecutive terms. The council shall hold its first meeting not later than 60 days after the effective date of this act and shall meet not fewer than 4 times annually.

The commissioner of early education and care shall consult with the council on the establishment of professional development and higher education opportunities for early educators that focuses on the unique needs and challenges of providing career advancement and support for the early education and care workforce.

The council may review and offer comments on any rules or regulations before promulgation by the board, and may, from time to time, make recommendations to the board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care professional development, training, and career support.