

A Plan to Assist Early Education State Funded Providers to Degree Attainment and Increased Compensation

Required by Sec. 4 of Public Act No. 15-134

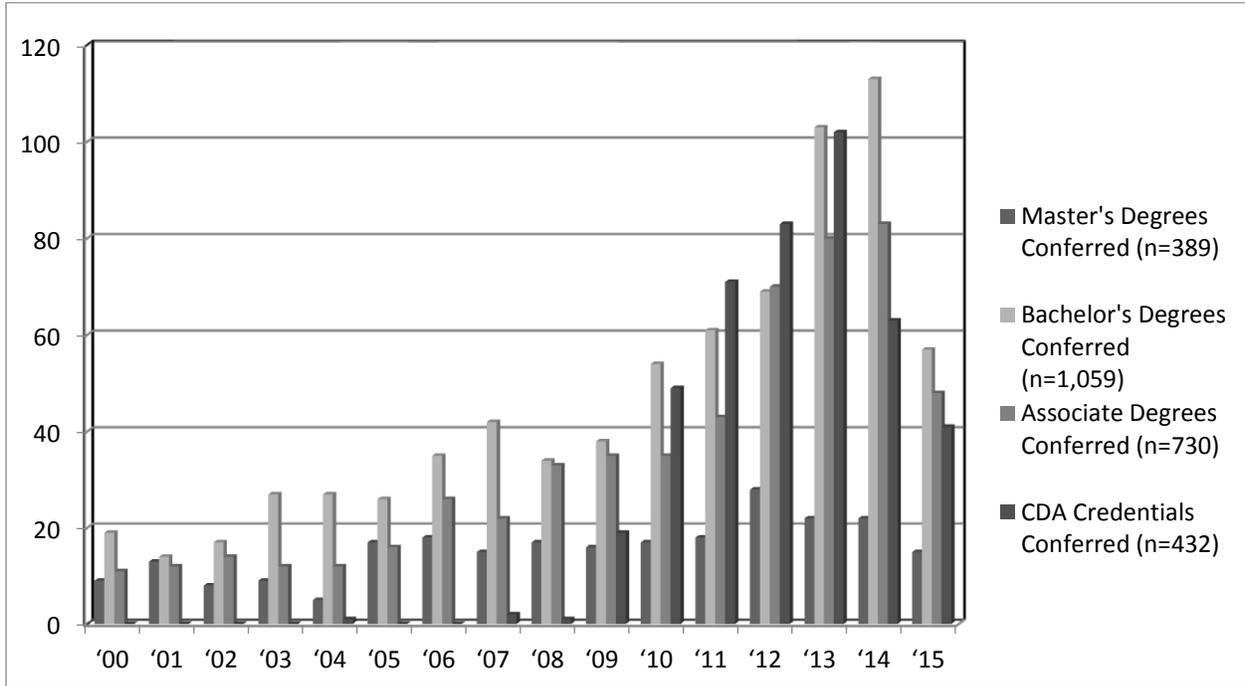
Introduction

For more than a decade, Connecticut statute has required lead teachers in School Readiness early care and education programs to hold an approved bachelor's degree. Connecticut has made significant progress in both recruiting new staff based on legislated education qualification, and supporting the degree advancement of its existing workforce. Although much progress has been made, further attention and resources are required to fully support the state-funded early childhood workforce.

In efforts to meet this state statute, Connecticut has implemented several incentive initiatives, most notably, dedicated scholarship funds to pay for college course credits, fees and textbooks for lead teachers in state-funded early care and education programs. Chart 1 below shows a timeline trending in a significantly positive direction toward degree completion directly related to scholarship incentives in our state. While the greatest increase is in the attainment of Bachelor's degrees, it is important to recognize the attainment of Associate degrees and Child Development Associate credentials (CDA) as these are stepping stones for many in the workforce toward a Bachelor's degree, and each attainment signifies great achievement for the currently working state-funded teacher.

Notably, in 2010, the Department of Social Services (DSS) provided funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) prioritizing professional development, including credit-based opportunities to state funded Child Day Care Centers. Most significant is the increase in graduates after 2012 when the use of School Readiness unspent funds was written into legislation to be used specifically to target attainment of the state-funded program degree requirements.

Chart 1: Degree and credential conferral dates for teaching staff in state-funded early childhood programs (Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry - January 2016)



Conferral Year	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15
Master's Degrees Conferred (n=389)	9	13	8	9	5	17	18	15	17	16	17	18	28	22	22	15
Bachelor's Degrees Conferred (n=1,059)	19	14	17	27	27	26	35	42	34	38	54	61	69	103	113	57
Associate Degrees Conferred (n=730)	11	12	14	12	12	16	26	22	33	35	35	43	70	80	83	48
CDA Credentials Conferred (n=432)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	19	49	71	83	102	63	41

(Light grey shading represents ARRA increase; darker grey represents availability of School Readiness carryover scholarship funding.)

With the increased investments in scholarship awards, there have been 2,464 individuals who have received scholarship funds. Seventy-two percent (1,794) of those individuals remain in the field today. Of those scholarship recipients still employed in state-funded early childhood programs:

- One hundred and five (105) have completed Bachelor's degrees (roughly 120 credits) and
- One hundred and twenty-four (124) have completed Associate's degrees (60 credits).

While Connecticut has made significant progress increasing access to higher education through scholarship assistance, retaining early childhood teachers in state-funded early care and education programs remains a concern. This document builds upon Connecticut's current efforts

and utilizes current research and national trends in order to shape Connecticut's next steps in order to build a well-qualified and adequately compensated early childhood workforce.

The following plan:

1. Outlines current research and national trends on staff qualifications in state-funded early childhood programs;
2. Describes the current status of Connecticut's incentives for degree attainment; and
3. Provides key activities to address early childhood education degree attainment and compensation.

Overview: Research and National Trends

In 2015, the Institute of Medicine and National Research Councils of the National Academies, (IOM &NRC) issued a report, "*Institute of Medicine Report and National Research Councils of the National Academies on Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation.*" The report recommends that policymakers undertake a number of actions to ensure that teachers have the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to support young children's education and development. The report recommends policymakers:

“Develop incentives and dedicate resources from existing and new funding streams and technical assistance programs to support individual, institutional, systems, and policy pathways for meeting this requirement in states and local communities; and

“Develop and implement comprehensive pathways and multiyear timelines at the individual, institutional, and policy levels for transitioning to a minimum bachelor's degree qualification requirement, with specialized knowledge and competencies, for all lead educators' working with children from birth through age 8.”

In addition, the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) provided the research and national trends content for Connecticut's workforce report through a technical assistance request made by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). The timing of the technical assistance coincided with CEELO's preparation of a Workforce Report of which Connecticut contributed with the co-development of a multi-state survey on workforce referenced in this report as well as in CEELO's work. Their technical assistance was critical to the development of this report, helping to outline the most current research and national trends and their relationship to the recommendations made at the end of this report.

Research has long demonstrated and recent studies now clearly report, that early care and education providers who hold at least a bachelor's degree are a strong predictor of high-quality early care and education (ECE) (Austin, Whitebook, Kipnis, Sakai, Abbasi & Amanta, 2015;

Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC), 2015; & Whitebook, 2003). The IOM & NRC recently recommended that all lead teachers of young children from infancy through third grade have at least a bachelor's degree.

Specifically, research has shown that:

- Classrooms in which teachers have at least a bachelor's degree are more likely to be of higher quality, including richer language environments, enhanced literacy environments and better teacher-child interactions (IOM, 2015; Barnett, 2003); and,
- Teachers with at least a bachelor's degree are more likely to appropriately approach instruction - they are more sensitive, less punitive and more engaged (IOM, 2015; Whitebook, 2003).

Studies suggest that a comprehensive professional development system for pre-service and in-service teachers is important to provide the knowledge, skills and supports for early childhood teachers and recommend that states take an active role in creating more cohesive and aligned systems of professional development (IOM & NRC, 2015).

Compensation

One of the major challenges faced in the recruitment and retention of early childhood teachers with bachelor's degrees and credentials is very low compensation (Whitebook, 2014). Nationally in 2014, early childhood teachers with bachelor's degrees were compensated 30 percent lower than teachers working in K-12 settings. The issue of low wages is one of many barriers that exist in reaching the IOM & NRC's recommendation of ensuring an educated early childhood workforce. Low wages make it difficult to retain teachers when they earn degrees as they are positioned to move into higher paying teaching jobs. The challenge of ensuring the education and retention of teachers is especially a concern among those teaching infants and toddlers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), the average compensation for child care workers is only \$10.44 per hour. Whitebook, Philips & Howes (2014) found that bachelor degreed teachers working with infants and toddlers earn less than half of the wages as a female elementary school teacher working in the civilian labor workforce. It is, therefore, not surprising that staff turnover among early childhood teachers is high. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), one important way to retain highly qualified early childhood teachers is to ensure teachers are adequately and appropriately compensated (NAEYC, n.d.).

Research examining K-12 education policies report that states have a number of options for compensating teachers at a level that will lead to retention and improved performance (Heneman & Kimball, 2008). Specifically, some states have developed innovative pay practices that include

increasing pay, providing financial incentives for teachers who have attained additional credentials or degrees, and compensating teachers differently when they are working in traditionally hard to fill positions. Nationally in the field of early childhood, a number of states have developed sustainability plans for pay parity that require teachers working in community-based and school-based pre-K programs to receive pay on parity with public school K-12 teachers.

A national model for implementing a state sponsored incentive program is the Child Care WAGE\$® Project. The project was developed in North Carolina by the Child Care Services Association (CCSA) in 1989 to address high turnover rates and inadequate teacher education. The pilot program awarded salary supplements to child care programs in one large county. Due to the success of the program in reducing staff turnover and increasing levels of teacher education, in 1999, North Carolina offered salary supplements to all early childhood programs statewide. Currently, Child Care WAGE\$® Project is offered in five states (Florida, Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico and North Carolina).

The Child Care WAGE\$® Project helps states administer a salary supplement program to early childhood teaching staff who have completed college coursework in early childhood. Funded by the administering state, the project provides technical assistance, policy and procedures for administration, and data analysis on trends associated with offering incentives. The project goals are to address compensation and staff retention through the incentives offered to participants; the first financial incentives are awarded to participants in two installments after six months of employment at the same child care program. Additional incentives are provided as further coursework is completed.

In 2014, the CCSA conducted a statewide study of early care and education providers in North Carolina, entitled “*Workforce Early Care and Education 2014: Workforce Study*”. The study reports data on salary supplements awarded to teachers and assistant teachers. The study used Child Care WAGE\$® data and found that the average mean six-month supplement for all participants in 2014 was \$931. Ninety-six percent of participants in the program indicated that WAGE\$ encouraged them to stay in their current program. Further, ninety-four percent stated the program helped them feel more satisfied with their job and ninety-eight percent said WAGE\$ supplements helped ease financial stress. Child Care WAGE\$® not only provides benefits for individuals participating in the program, but provides a benefit for the early care and education program as well. Directors also realized the benefits with seventy-seven percent indicating that the program increased morale and sixty-nine percent specifying that lower turnover is a benefit. Finally, seventy-two percent of directors cited Child Care WAGE\$® for encouraging staff to seek more education.

Degreed Teachers

Degree and credential requirements differ substantially across private child care, Head Start programs and state-funded pre-K. For the most part, degree requirements for state-funded pre-K programs are more rigorous than for Head Start and private child care (IOM & NRC, 2015). In fact, standards for training of educators in early childhood programs and private child care are even more variable than those for elementary teachers (IOM & NRC, 2015).

Education and credential requirements tend to be higher based on age range and grade level with infant and toddler teachers requiring less education than pre-K, which often requires more education or credentials. For example, a recent study on the characteristics of the early childhood workforce reported that forty-five percent of lead teachers working with preschool-aged children have at least a four-year degree compared with nineteen percent of those teaching infants and toddlers who have at least a four-year degree (Brandon et al, 2013).

Recent trends reveal that many states are in the process of requiring at least some pre-K teachers to hold a bachelor's degree, but the majority of states still allow pre-K teachers in some settings, such as private child care centers, to hold less than a bachelor's degree. According to Whitebook, Philips & Howes (2014), national survey results reveal that currently forty-two percent of all center-based teachers have a bachelor's degree which is higher than reported in prior studies. A majority (fifty-three percent) of center-based and almost a third (thirty percent) of home-based teachers and caregivers reported having college degrees – with almost a third reporting bachelor's or graduate/professional degrees (Brandon et al, 2013).

Higher Education Capacity

Since states use different definitions, databases and systems to track teacher education and competencies, there is limited national data available on the capacity of higher education to provide early childhood coursework (Kipnis & Whitebook, 2011). Research further suggests a number of challenges exist for states to ensure institutions of higher education have the capacity to offer courses and credentials to ensure early childhood teachers have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to support young children's development (Kapnis et al, 2012; IOM& NRC, 2015).

The Office of Early Childhood, with support from the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), developed and conducted a multi-state online survey to better understand nationally the capacity of higher education. A total of twelve states responded to the survey. Most participating in the survey reported there was sufficient capacity within the state to offer pre-K teachers courses in early childhood. However, many states reported that the locations and scheduling of courses was not sufficient. Below are specific findings of the survey.

- **Early childhood coursework:** Eleven states reported institutions of higher education had mostly or fully sufficient capacity.
- **Courses at locations that pre-K teachers can access:** Nine states reported that the courses were offered in locations that pre-K teachers can access.
- **Courses at times pre-K teachers can access:** Six states reported courses offered at convenient times.
- **Concentration in early childhood:** Seven states reported offering bachelor's degrees with a concentration in early childhood; eight states reported there was sufficient capacity to offer an early childhood education credential.
- **Stackable ECE certificate:** Four states offer stackable early childhood education certificates which provide a pathway for teachers pursuing education beyond an initial certificate such as a Child Development Associate certificate. The certificates are "stackable" in that they build on one another in a sequential manner and demonstrate deepening levels of learning along the way.
- **Articulation:** Four states have articulation agreements in place that would allow early childhood teachers to easily transfer credit from two-year to four-year institutes of higher education.

Workforce Development Systems Building

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) issued a public policy report entitled, "*Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems*". The Blueprint outlines four key principles and six policy areas for states to consider when designing an early childhood professional development system. This past year, NAEYC formed a workgroup, which Connecticut was a member of, to develop and pilot a companion survey to the Blueprint. The survey will assist states in examining their system in relation to the Blueprint. The final survey is scheduled to be ready for national distribution in the spring of 2016.

National professional preparation standards serve as the foundation early childhood planned program of study institution approval. The NAEYC created a set of professional development standards that are used for accrediting associate level colleges through the NAEYC system and these same standards are used by the Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP) as a basis for accrediting bachelor level teacher certification programs. Currently, there is not a comparable set of standards for bachelor degree programs offering general early childhood or child studies programs that do not lead to teacher certification but are often the program of choice for the early childhood workforce choosing to engage in community-based settings.

Connecticut's Current Status

Bachelor Degree

Connecticut has robust legislation in place that requires by 2020 that all state-funded programs have a lead teacher, referred to as the Designated Qualified Staff Member (DQSM), in each classroom, including infant, toddler and preschool classrooms, to hold a bachelor's degree with an early childhood concentration (see Appendix A: GP-A-01 State Funded Program Staff Qualifications). To support the degree attainment and increase program quality, earlier legislation (2011 and 2012) broadened the bachelor degree requirement to be implemented program wide and across all early childhood age groups. In order to support the broadened reach, additional scholarship funds were provided by the state to help teachers attain this goal.

It is estimated that as of December 2015, of the 399 state funded programs enrolled in the Office of Early Childhood's Professional Registry, 124 (thirty-two percent) of state-funded programs report meeting the 2020 DQSM legislative requirement. All programs receiving state funds must report a DQSM for each classroom in the Registry. However, data is incomplete as many programs have not been compliant with the reporting requirement. Due to the incomplete data, the OEC is not able to fully capture how many programs are on track to meet the 2020 legislative requirement at this time.

Salary Information

Connecticut has a mixed delivery service model that provides families with early care and education options in both public school and community-based programs. Chart 2 below shows that early childhood programs administered by public schools compensate teachers at a significantly higher average annual salary than community-based programs. Some noted differences that account for these higher salaries in the public schools are requirements such as teacher certification, benefit packages and membership in a union. Community-based programs have varied structures for employment; therefore making it difficult to provide comparisons with other systems.

Chart 2: Average annual salary based on program setting

Program Setting	School Readiness Funded	Child Day Care Contracts
Administered by a public school	\$53,045 (avg. annual salary)	Not available in public schools
Community-based provider	\$33,939 (avg. annual salary)	\$32,795 (avg. annual salary)

To better understand Connecticut's mixed service delivery system and related teacher compensation, the OEC is working with a national early childhood expert, Anne Mitchell, on a

Cost of Quality Study. The study will use the “Provider Cost of Quality Calculator”, a tool developed by Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates (APA) and Anne Mitchell funded by the U.S. Office of Child Care’s National Center for Child Care Quality Improvement. The study will collect information on the cost of operating high-quality early care and education programs and include data on wages, benefits and compensation offered in state-funded programs.

As a part of the mixed service delivery system, OEC is responsible for administering multiple sources of state and federal funds to support early care and education programs. These include: School Readiness, state Head Start, Child Day Care, Smart Start and the Preschool Development Grant. Since the inception of the OEC, integration of policies and program requirements has been a priority. To date, the OEC has streamlined fiscal and reporting requirements, however, much work needs to be done around utilization of funding to fully support program quality.

Incentives

Connecticut’s commitment to providing scholarship funds for degree attainment has increased over the years. There are two major funding sources, one of which is solely dedicated to state-funded programs, to support degree attainment to meet the requirements set forth in legislation for 2020. From Fiscal Year 2013 through December 2015, a total of \$1,743,370 has been spent for scholarships accounting for approximately 250 individuals awarded scholarships each year. In Fiscal Year 2015, legislation increased the amount of unspent School Readiness funds that can be carried forward for scholarships from \$500,000 to \$1 million annually. It should be noted, however, there is no certainty that this amount of funding will always be available each year. This is problematic for individuals who must apply on a semester basis with no guarantee of support.

Higher Education Capacity

In 2013, Connecticut developed an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) awarded at both the associate and bachelor degree levels. This credential ensures common programs of study among approved institutions ensuring that all graduates have similar knowledge, skills and competencies. Using the NAEYC bachelor level professional development standards, Connecticut created a system of state approval for programs of study in a non-state teaching licensure path.

Chart 3 shows Connecticut’s 4-year higher education institutions that offer either the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Early Childhood Teaching Endorsement or the approved ECTC or both. The chart demonstrates the wide variety of institutions and programs an individual can access. Both of these awards meet the mandate for state-funded programs for the Designated Qualified Staff Member (DQSM). There is only one institution, The University of St. Joseph,

that offers a child study degree, but no Early Childhood Endorsement or ECTC at the bachelor's level.

Chart 3: Early Childhood Bachelor Degree Programs

Bachelor Level Institutions	Approved to offer SDE Certification Early Childhood Endorsement	Approved to offer OEC Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)
Eastern CT State University	Pre-k/k to grade 3	General Studies Pre-k Endorsement Transfer Program only (must have an Associates Degree)
Southern CT State University	Pre-k/K to grade 3	---
University of CT	---	Human Development Infant, Toddler and Pre-k endorsements
University of Hartford	Birth to K Pre-k/K to grade 3	---
Post University	---	Child Studies Pre-K endorsement
Charter Oak State College	Alternative Route to Birth to K (must hold a bachelor's degree with 15 human development credits)	General Studies Infant, Toddler and Pre-k endorsements
Goodwin College	---	Child Studies Infant, Toddler and Pre-k endorsements
Mitchell College	Pre-k/k to grade 3	---
Notes:	Central CT State University is developing a program that combines the ECTC with the CT Infant Mental Health Level 1 endorsement. Expected 2017. Mitchell College has applied for the ECTC. University of Hartford has applied for the ECTC. Eastern CT State University is working with Western CT State University and Norwalk Community College to develop a cohort of students that could take ECSU courses in the Western part of the state. Southern CT State University is exploring options to deliver the ECTC and may apply in late 2016.	

The OEC also offers the Individual Review Route (IRR) as a path to earn the ECTC. Individuals who have a bachelor's degree and are working in the early childhood field can demonstrate meeting the ECTC competencies by submitting a college transcript and/or an individual portfolio for review. Chart 4 describes the number of ECTC awards as of November 2015.

Chart 4: ECTC Awards

Route	A level			B level			Total Approved
	IT	PS	ITPS	IT	PS	ITPS	
Individual Review Route	4	12	5	3	32	15	71
Approved College Route	3	104	48	0	23	24	202
Total	176			97			273
IT = Infant and Toddler PS= Preschool ITPS = Infant through Preschool A level = associate degree level B level = bachelor degree level							

Higher Education Articulation

Articulation is key to supporting the early childhood workforce in degree attainment. Articulation agreements allow individuals to transfer coursework from one institution to another. Currently, the OEC and the Connecticut's State Department of Education (SDE) have policies in place to assist colleges in developing articulation agreements. However, each institution establishes their own policies for accepting transfer credits, thus creating difficulties for individuals transferring earned credits.

A promising practice under development in Connecticut is the addition of early childhood education to the Board of Regents Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP), whereby associate and bachelor level granting institutions examine their programs of study to align standards so students do not lose credits when transferring from one participating institution to another.

Workforce Development Systems Building

As mentioned earlier, Connecticut engaged with NAEYC to develop a national survey to assist states in examining their workforce development system. A cross-sector group of early childhood professionals provided feedback and conducted a pilot test to determine if there were gaps in the principles and policies that address compensation, standards integration and quality assurance monitoring. Based on the survey results, Connecticut's ECTC approval system was considered a strong practice for higher education articulation.

Conclusion

Connecticut has made great progress providing scholarships, strengthening higher education early childhood course content and engaging in workforce development systems building. Given the new research from the Institute of Medicine and national trends toward requiring Bachelor degree attainment, our state is ready for the next phase of a financed system that supports the retention of a qualified workforce that is adequately compensated. The next steps are to investigate fiscal implications of the proposed key activities below.

As directed by Section 4 of Public Act No. 15-134, Connecticut's plan to assist early education state funded providers to degree attainment and increased compensation must include the following three actions:

<i>Action I: Secure funds to ensure state funded early childhood programs can recruit and retain an adequately and appropriately compensated workforce.</i>
Key Activities
Utilize the results of the Cost of Quality Study to develop a standardized salary schedule and incentive package for early childhood teachers and administrators.
Integrate state and federal funding and develop partnerships with philanthropy for early care and education programs to support workforce compensation and retention.
Implement the Child Care WAGE\$® Project to address compensation and staff retention through financial incentives to include bonuses for degree and/or course completion.
<i>Action II. Strengthen statewide access to higher education programs that adhere to common early childhood workforce preparation standards.</i>
Key Activities
Adopt a statewide set of early childhood knowledge and content standards that apply to all early childhood credentials and certificates.
Ensure higher education institutions meet early childhood educator preparation standards for state and national accreditation and certification processes.
Increase capacity in the Connecticut State University system to deliver the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) to allow greater statewide access to a more flexible program of study that meets the needs of the workforce.

Action III. Fully implement a workforce development system to ensure degree attainment to meet the 2020 legislative mandate.

Key Activities

Restructure Connecticut's early childhood scholarship program so individuals receive multi-year support aligned to their program of study timeline.

Provide accurate information on degree attainment to meet state benchmarks through enhanced career counseling and technical assistance.

Link all early childhood endorsements, credentials, and certifications to increase efficiency of degree attainment and avoid duplicating efforts.

Formalize reciprocity agreements with New England states to increase recruitment and retention of staff from neighboring states.

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Appendix A:



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Connecticut Administered State-Funded Program General Policy

A-01

- OEC Child Day Care Contractors
- OEC Competitive School Readiness Municipalities
- OEC Priority School Readiness Districts
- OEC State Head Start Supplement

TO: Mayors, Superintendents, School Readiness Council Chairs/Co-Chairs and Liaisons, Child Day Care Contractors, State Head Start Supplement Grantees

FROM: Harriet Feldlaufer, Director
Early Care and Education
Office of Early Childhood

SUBJECT: State-Funded Program Staff Qualifications

This GENERAL POLICY now includes guidance on the implementation of legislation at each state-funded site receiving Child Day Care, School Readiness, Smart Start and/or State Head Start Supplement funds. All state funded programs must meet CT legislative requirements for staff education qualifications.

The policy affects each classroom in the programs noted above serving infants, toddlers and/or preschool children, rather than only the specific classrooms with the children supported by the state funding streams noted above.

The percentage of designated Qualified Staff Member (QSM) distribution described in the following Staff Qualifications chart applies to the entire program. The designated QSM is assigned by the program administrator to the one individual per classroom that meets the definition of Teacher and eligibility requirements. The program administrator identifies this individual in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry.

- **For example:** if a program has three classrooms and only one classroom has children receiving state funds from any of the sources noted above, all three classrooms must have a designated QSM with a qualifying bachelor degree by the year 2020. In the interim, on July 1, 2017, two of those three classrooms must have a designated QSM with a qualifying bachelor degree and the third classroom can have a designated QSM with an associate degree in order to meet the 50% rule.

**Note: Classrooms receiving Smart Start funds are obligated to meet the requirement for SDE certified teachers. For general information, Smart Start programs should read the entire GP and meet specific requirements for Smart Start sites are outlined on page 4 of this document.*

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Staff Qualifications

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-16p is revised through Public Acts 11-54, 12-50 and 14-39 and 15-134. The following summarizes the legislation and provides information for individuals to meet state-funded program staff qualification requirements. Degrees and credits must be from regionally accredited higher education institutions; all education documentation must be on file in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry.

Qualifying options until June 30, 2017	Qualifying options July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020	Qualifying options July 1, 2020 and after
<p>A current CDA credential plus 12 early childhood credits, OR One of the options in the next column.</p>	<p>50% or more of the designated QSMS must have one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement, OR *A Bachelor degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, OR *A Bachelor degree in any other field AND 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development from any college not listed on the approved list; AND successful completion of the Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route; OR *On June 30, 2015 was identified in the Registry at ladder level 11 or higher and employed at a state-funded program; therefore was grandfathered to meet the bachelor degree level staff education qualifications OR On June 30, 2015 was identified in the Registry at ladder level 9 or 10 and as having been employed at the same state-funded program since 1995 or before; therefore, was grandfathered as meeting the bachelor’s degree requirement until June 30, 2025. <p>The remaining % of designated QSMS must have either an Associate degree in early childhood or an associate degree in any field and 12 early childhood credits.</p>	<p>100% of the designated QSMS must have one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement, OR *A Bachelor’s degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, OR *A Bachelor’s degree in any other field AND 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development from any college not listed on the approved list; AND successful completion of the Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route; OR *On June 30, 2015 was identified in the Registry at ladder level 11 or higher and employed at a state-funded program; therefore was grandfathered to meet the bachelor degree level staff education qualifications OR On June 30, 2015 was identified in the Registry at ladder level 9 or 10 and as having been employed at the same state-funded program since 1995 or before; therefore, was grandfathered as meeting the bachelor’s degree requirement until June 30, 2025.

Evidence for Staff Requirements for Role of QSM

Timeline	Funding Source	Evidence for Role of Designated QSM
Through June 30, 2017	School Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Registry card or report indicating ladder level 7 or above
	Child Day Care and State Head Start	The above documentation as well as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents accepted by NAEYC or Head Start as meeting those system requirements for the role of the Teacher
	Smart Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Registry card or report indicating as meeting Smart Start staff qualifications
July 1, 2017 on	All state-funded programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Registry card or report indicating QSM eligibility and appropriate expiration date

Process for Requesting an Extension of Timeline for Meeting Staff Qualifications:

If a program is not be able to meet and maintain the designated QSM requirements, the program is considered in default of the state-funding contract. The OEC recognizes that a program may have compelling reasons to apply for an extension. The program will initiate an extension request application on behalf of any staff member under the following circumstances.

- (1) If the newly hired bachelor degreed staff member does not have the required documentation to meet one of the qualifying options, the staff member shall initiate the Individual Review Route (IRR) toward the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) within one calendar month of employment. The staff member will have one year to attain the ECTC through the Individual Review Route outlined in GP 15-04 (see **Glossary of Terms** section). The program must submit the extension request application documenting this plan and timeline (see below).
- (2) If a staff member has serious extenuating circumstances delaying the attainment of a degree, the program can submit an extension request application (see below).

Extension requests are considered on a case by case basis and require documentation. Some examples of appropriate use of the request process are:

- A Designated QSM has suddenly resigned and the program is in the hiring process but has temporarily placed an existing staff member in a classroom or group that does not meet the QSM definition. The program may submit an extension request application for that non-qualifying individual to be considered as the designated QSM for a defined period of time for the search.
- The program has a staff member that will be designated as the QSM who is in the final stage of completing a qualifying degree but will not attain the degree by one of the benchmark deadlines. The program may submit an extension request application for that individual to be considered as meeting the designated QSM for a defined period of time

The application for extension requests and instructions are located on the OEC website with the General Policies. Incomplete applications will be returned.

An appointed OEC committee will review the request, confirm program staff data within the Registry, and consider program history in the deliberation of the request. Decisions regarding an extension of time to meet the educator requirements are at the discretion of the OEC. Failure for any state-funded program to meet the requirements may result in a reduction of funding, loss of funding and/or designation of program not in good standing.

Smart Start

Each classroom with children enrolled through Smart Start must be taught by an individual who is an employee of the local board of education and holds certification pursuant Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 10- 145b, with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education as follows:

- 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K
- 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through grade 3
- 01 PreK-Grade 8
- 02 PreK-Grade 6
- 03 PreK-Grade 3
- 08 PreK-K
- 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK-Grade 12

Teachers holding 113, 112, 065 teacher certifications are required for classrooms in which a child's Individual Education Program (IEP) requires special education instruction.

The following information is related to this policy:

OEC Approved College Listing, http://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/earlycare/workforce/approved_colleges_certifications.pdf
OEC Approved College/Teacher Certifications, http://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/earlycare/workforce/approved_colleges_certifications.pdf
Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry, http://www.ccacregistry.org/
Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC) IRRECTC@ctaeyc.org

For further information concerning this general policy please contact:

CHILD DAY CARE	SCHOOL READINESS	STATE HEAD START and SMART START
<p data-bbox="402 468 571 558">Michelle Levy Program Manager 860-713-6756 Michelle.Levy@ct.gov</p>	<p data-bbox="727 468 896 558">Gerri Rowell Program Manager 860-713-6774 Gerri.Rowell@ct.gov</p>	<p data-bbox="1052 468 1221 558">Andrea Brinnel Program Manager 860-713-6771 Andrea.Brinnel@ct.gov</p>

Glossary of Terms for GP A-01

This glossary reflects the terms used in General Policy A-01 for the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood administered state-funded programs. Its purpose is to define and clarify the terms as they pertain to the educator requirements for state-funded programs.

<i>Administrative Staff</i>	Those individuals responsible for “planning, implementing and evaluating” a program for young children; “the role of the administrator covers both leadership and management functions (NAEYC).” This may include, but is not limited to, the following administrative team members: executive director, director, assistant director, principal, curriculum coordinator, education coordinator, site manager.
<i>Classroom</i>	A “classroom” is considered a group of children not to exceed the recommended group sizes outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Federal Head Start and the Office of Early Childhood Child Day Care Licensing Regulations. The OEC recommends class sizes of 18 children or less. Smart Start classrooms may not have classrooms with more than 18 children.
<i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)</i>	The ECTC is issued through the Office of Early Childhood which validates that an individual meets teacher competencies in six standards. See OEC Approved College/Teacher Certifications for a comprehensive listing . Higher education institutions on the OEC Approved College Listing have aligned their programs with national and Connecticut standards for early childhood preparation programs. Depending on the coursework associated with the degree, individuals can apply for an Infant/Toddler ECTC, a Preschool ECTC or both, and at the associate and/or bachelor degree levels. Individuals applying for the credential through an approved institution’s path to the ECTC can find the application at www.ccacregistry.org .
<i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC)</i>	For individuals graduating from non-approved institutions of higher education, an individual review process is available. The OEC contracts with the Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children (CTAEYC) to coordinate the IRR ECTC process. Documentation submitted to CTAEYC will be assessed against the ECTC criteria. Individuals may be asked to provide additional documentation in a portfolio to determine if all ECTC standards are met. The portfolio is reviewed by two trained reviewers using a standard rubric. If the evidence submitted meets the criteria, the ECTC will be offered through an application. If evidence submitted requires further clarification or if the recommendation by the reviewers is to seek further professional learning opportunities, the individual may resubmit evidence for a second review after making improvements. Once the approval is granted by the IRR ECTC Coordinator, the individual may formally apply to receive the ECTC through their Registry account. Inquiries regarding the IRR ECTC can be directed to IRRECTC@ctaeyc.org .

Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member	<p>“Grandfathered QSM” refers to an individual who, on June 30, 2015 had confirmed employment in the Registry in a state-funded program and met requirements detailed below. These were one-time functions, not on-going.</p> <p>(1) An individual, regardless of role, who held a bachelor’s degree or higher of any type AND had 12 or more early childhood credits (ladder level 11 or higher) AND who was employed in a state-funded program on June 30, 2015 was grandfathered as meeting the qualifying bachelor’s degree with an expiration of 12/31/2099.</p> <p>(2) An individual, regardless of role, who held an associate degree or higher of any type AND had 12 or more early childhood credits (ladder level 9 or 10) AND who was employed in that same state-funded program since 1995 or before was grandfathered as meeting the qualifying bachelor’s degree with an expiration of 06/30/2025. Should this individual achieve a higher ladder level, the designation is removed.</p> <p>Grandfathering is noted in the Registry on the individual’s profile, membership card, and Education and Training Report, as well as on the program’s Staff Qualifications Detail Report. This designation allows the individual to change their employment after June 30, 2015 and be hired as a designated Qualified Staff Member in any other state-funded program. Individual employment requirements may vary and employers may choose to require specific degrees, credentials or certifications as long as the requirements meet the minimum state guidelines.</p>
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
OEC Approved CSDE Certification Endorsement	<p>Approved Certification Endorsements</p> <p>Below is the list of the Connecticut State Department of Education teacher certifications with early childhood endorsements, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-145b, that are accepted as meeting the state-funded staff requirement. The individual’s certification must be current, not expired, and the individual must keep the certification current in order to be considered as meeting the educational requirements. If the certification is expired, individuals can apply to be reviewed under the IRR ECTC process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through Grade 3 • 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K • 001 PreK – Grade 8 • 002 PreK – Grade 6 • 003 PreK – Grade 3 • 008 PreK – K • 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK – Grade 12
Designated Qualified Staff Member(QSM)	<p>Designation given by the program administrator to the one individual per classroom that meets the definition of Teacher and QSM education requirements. This individual must be identified by the director in the Registry (see QSM Instructions under Program Administration after admin access log in). The Registry auto-calculates eligible QSMs and indicates the relevant expiration dates on the Staff Qualifications Detail Report. Only eligible QSMs assigned to a specific room are made available to be chosen in the Registry in the drop down menu for that room / group.</p>
The Registry	The Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry at www.ccacregistry.org .

<i>State-Funded Program</i>	<p>(a) refers to any setting receiving School Readiness, Child Day Care, Smart Start, or State Head Start funds; and</p> <p>(b) includes ALL classrooms or groups regardless of the funding supporting the individual child, group or program.</p>
<i>Teacher</i>	<p>The following definition was established in 2012 and is a combination of essential criteria found in the definitions by Head Start and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An “individual with primary responsibility for a classroom of children” is most commonly referred to as the “Teacher”. It is expected that the “Teacher” of infants, toddlers and/or preschoolers knows, understands and applies theories of child development, content knowledge across multiple domains (such as math, language and literacy (including support of dual language learners), science, creative arts, social and emotional, physical, approaches to learning, etc.). The “Teacher” also demonstrates commitment to continual professional learning performing their responsibilities consistent with the field’s ethical principles. <p>The “Teacher’s” responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. coordinating and engaging in the planning and implementation of experiences for young children using Connecticut’s Early Learning and Development Standards and other standards or frameworks as applicable to funding, such as Head Start; b. coordinating and engaging in the observation and documentation of children’s progress; c. making informed decisions, using multiple sources of information, about children’s progress across all domains of learning; d. partnering with families in meaningful ways to support the development of relationships between children and their families, and sharing and gaining information pertaining to each child’s approach to learning, progress, and general health and well-being; e. working with a team of professionals, such as assistant teachers, administrators, public school personnel (e.g., special education teachers, therapists, etc.) to coordinate information about children’s progress and adjust teaching practices to meet the needs of all children; f. engaging in on-going professional learning opportunities to remain current with early childhood research and best practices; and g. maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment. <p>All state-funded programs must maintain a schedule for all classrooms at each site that provide for a Teacher to be present in each classroom for the majority of the classroom’s operating hours.</p>

**Connecticut State-Funded Program Educator Requirements
Comparison with NAEYC and Head Start**

Programs accepting Connecticut state funds (School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, Smart Start, and/or State Head Start Supplement) are required to meet the Connecticut legislation for educator requirements. These same state funded programs are required to hold NAEYC accreditation and/or Head Start approval. The chart below outlines the educator requirements for Connecticut, NAEYC and Head Start. The chart below outlines these expectations according to the timelines established by CT legislation.

	CT State Legislation	NAEYC	Head Start
Through June 30, 2017	Each state -funded program follows current legislation and the OEC policy, as well as national approval system (NAEYC and/or Head Start)	<p>Program must meet candidacy requirements. To be accepted as a candidate for NAEYC Accreditation, Step 3: Candidacy, a program must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain <u>good standing</u> in its licensing or regulatory status within the last year or since its last inspection • Provide a description of the collaborative process used to complete its Candidacy Materials, which has actively engaged the program administrator, the teaching staff, families, and the program’s governing body (when applicable) • Believe that it can meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and that it can document satisfactory performance on at least 80 percent of the NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for each standard • Demonstrate necessary early childhood, management and leadership expertise among members of its teaching and leadership staff by meeting the Candidacy Requirements for Educational Qualifications of Program Administrators and Teaching Staff <p>Program Goal 2010 – 2014:</p> <p>NAEYC criterion 6A05 establishes a program goal in each NAEYC Accredited sites of 100% of teachers hold a minimum of a CDA or equivalent*; at least 50% of teachers hold a minimum of an associate’s degree or equivalent*; at least 25% of teachers have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree or equivalent*; and all must have or be enrolled in an</p>	<p>Current requirement is national, not site specific: Progress toward every classroom having a teacher with an associate or bachelor degree in an early childhood education or related field.</p> <p>By September 30, 2013, 50% of teachers across the nation must have a bachelor’s degree in an early childhood education or related field.</p> <p>Head Start expects each grantee to increase the numbers of teachers with a bachelor’s degree.</p>

		<p>associate's or bachelor's degree program (annual reports must show continuous progress).</p> <p>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</p> <p>Programs must meet and maintain Candidacy requirements throughout their NAEYC Accreditation term. If programs fail to meet Candidacy requirements, additional verification may be required by NAEYC.</p>	
July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020	<p>At least 50% of designated QSMs at each site receiving state funding (School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, Smart Start, and Head Start state supplement) must have a qualifying bachelor degree and the remaining % of designated QSMs must hold an associate degree in early childhood OR an associate degree in any field and 12 early childhood credits.</p>	<p>Program must meet candidacy requirements and continue to work on established goals as outlined below.</p> <p>Program Goal 2015- 2019: NAEYC criterion 6A05 establishes a program goal of 50% of teachers in an NAEYC Accredited site hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree* or equivalent, and all teachers hold a minimum of an associate's degree* or equivalent.</p> <p>*degrees should be in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education. See http://www.naeyc.org/academy/degreeequivalents</p> <p>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</p>	
July 1, 2020 and after	<p>100% of designated QSMs at each site receiving state funding (School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, Smart Start, and Head Start state supplement) must have a qualifying bachelor degree.</p>	<p>Program must meet candidacy requirements and continue to work on established goals as outlined below.</p> <p>Program Goal 2020: NAEYC criterion 6A05 establishes a program goal of 75% of teachers in an NAEYC Accredited site hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree* or equivalent, and all teachers hold a minimum of an associate's degree or equivalent.</p> <p>*degrees should be in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education. See http://www.naeyc.org/academy/degreeequivalents.</p> <p>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</p>	

