

**Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC)  
Administered State-Funded Program General Policy GP 15-04**

- OEC Child Day Care Contractors
- OEC Competitive School Readiness Municipalities (Replaces GP-13-04)
- OEC Priority School Readiness Districts (Replaces GP-13-04)
- 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 is designed to provide guidance on the implementation of legislation at each state-funded site receiving Child Day Care, School Readiness and/or State Head Start Supplement funds. For sites that receive multiple funding streams, the more stringent requirement to meet [staffing educational requirements](#) prevails.

The policy affects **each classroom in the program accepting state funds (as listed above) serving infants, toddlers and/or preschool children, not just classrooms with children supported by the various state funding streams listed above.**

The percentage of Qualified Staff Member (QSM) distribution described in the following chart applies to the entire program, at each site, serving infants, toddlers and/or preschool age children, regardless of specificity of funding. The QSM is the designation given by the program administrator to the one individual per classroom that meets the definition of Teacher and eligibility requirements. The director identifies this individual in the Registry.

- **For example:** if a program has three classrooms and only one classroom has children receiving state funds from School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts or State Supplemental Head Start, all three classrooms must have a QSM with an appropriate bachelor's degree by the year 2020. In the interim, on July 1, 2015, two of those three classrooms must have a QSM with a bachelor's degree and the third classroom can have a QSM with an associate's degree in order to meet the 50% rule.

Depending on the funding source, state-funded programs can be located in and administered by community-based settings, private schools or public schools. Regardless of setting or sponsorship, programs accepting state funds must identify a Qualified Staff Member that meets the definition of Teacher and requirements as noted below in each classroom or grouping of infants, toddlers and/or preschool age children. The QSM must be specifically identified as such by the program administrator in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry.

**Staff Qualifications**

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-16p is revised through Public Acts 11-54, 12-50 and 14-39. The following summarizes the legislation and provides information for individuals to meet the state-funded program staff qualification requirements:

Staff Role	Qualification options on July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015	Qualification options on July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020	Qualification options on and after July 1, 2020
Qualified Staff Member – (QSM)	Follow the guidance in accordance with your funding source (see below)	For all state-funded programs as described above, 50% of QSMs must have one of the following:  *A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)	For all state-funded programs as described above 100% of QSMs (one QSM per classroom as identified by Program Administrator) must have one of the following:

		<p>Appropriate Certification Endorsement, <b>OR</b></p> <p>*A Bachelor’s degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a>, <b>OR</b></p> <p>* A Bachelor’s degree in any other field <b>AND</b> 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development that has been reviewed by the OEC for approval through the Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route; <b>OR</b></p> <p>*On June 30, 2015 has been identified in the Registry as being grandfathered to meet the staff education qualifications.</p> <p>The remaining 50% of QSMs must have an Associate’s degree from an approved college on the list or have received approval through the Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route.</p>	<p>* A current CSDE Appropriate Certification Endorsement, <b>OR</b></p> <p>*A Bachelor’s degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a>, <b>OR</b></p> <p>* A Bachelor’s degree in any other field <b>AND</b> 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development that has been reviewed by the OEC for approval through the Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route; <b>OR</b></p> <p>*On June 30, 2015 has been identified in the Registry as being grandfathered to meet the staff qualifications.</p>
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### Evidence for Staff Requirements for Role of QSM

Timeline	Funding Source	Evidence for Role of QSM
July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015	SR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CSDE certification from the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a></li> <li>• CT Early Childhood Teacher Credential, Level A or B and endorsement as appropriate for the age the QSM is employed to serve</li> <li>• A Registry card indicating ladder level 7 or above with 12 early childhood credits verified by the Registry</li> </ul>
	CDC	<p>All of the above documentation as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents accepted by NAEYC or Head Start as meeting those system requirements for the role of the Teacher</li> </ul>
	SHS	<p>All the above documentation as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents accepted by NAEYC or Head Start as meeting those system requirements for the role of the Teacher</li> </ul>
July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020	SR, CDC, SHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CSDE certification from the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a></li> <li>• CT Early Childhood Teacher Credential, Level A or B and endorsement for the appropriate age in which the QSM is employed to serve</li> <li>• A Registry card indicating grandfather status</li> </ul>
July 1, 2020	SR, CDC, SHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CSDE certification from the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a></li> <li>• CT Early Childhood Teacher Credential, Level B and endorsement for the appropriate age in which the QSM is employed to serve</li> <li>• A Registry card indicating grandfather status</li> </ul>

**Progress Toward Meeting the Program Staff Requirements**

In July 2011, Connecticut legislated state-funded early childhood programs to meet state educator requirements for each classroom across the program by July 2015, and to meet full compliance with a QSM who holds a bachelor’s degree in each classroom by July 1, 2020. Significant progress has been made by early childhood staff and state systems in meeting the 2015 and 2020 legislative requirements. The supports in place to assist with progress include higher education and credentialing opportunities, more robust state-level workforce data collection to inform decision making, scholarship funds to continue degree attainment, higher education institutions alignment of curricula with an approval for delivery of the ECTC and programs looking to the future by hiring teachers who hold degrees as openings become available.

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

The OEC recognizes there may be extenuating circumstances where additional time is needed to meet and maintain staff qualification requirements. An example includes resignation of a QSM or a staff member with a final semester of coursework to complete a degree to be designated as a QSM, but who is just short of the July 1, 2015 date. To address these circumstances, the OEC will work with programs on an individual basis to determine an extension of time to meet the requirement before examining the program’s funding status. The following outlines the process for submitting a request for review for an extension of time:

1. Programs must notify their primary funding contact:
  - School Readiness programs must contact their liaisons, who in turn will contact the OEC Program Manager.
  - Child Day Care Contracted Sites must contact contractor if applicable, and then the OEC Program Manager.
  - State Head Start recipients must contact the OEC Program Manager.

Provide the following details in writing to your contact:

- Reason for request
  - Description of extenuating circumstance
  - Steps the program has made toward compliance with the requirements
  - Impact on program if requirement can’t be met, including summary of QSM data (access through the Registry)
  - Proposed solution and timeframe to meet compliance
2. The OEC Program Manager will review the request and confirm program staff data with the Registry. 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.

It is expected that all staff in state-funded programs continue to engage in educational opportunities that promote advancement of knowledge, understanding and effective practices in early childhood education to meet the state’s educational requirements for 2015 and 2020. The individual and the Program Director should keep records of staff progress toward meeting the 2015 and 2020 educational requirements. Scholarship assistance is dependent upon available state funds.

**Questions concerning this GENERAL POLICY should be directed to:**

<b>Child Day Care</b>	<b>School Readiness</b>	<b>State Head Start</b>
Michelle Levy 860 713-6756 <a href="mailto:Michelle.Levy@ct.gov">Michelle.Levy@ct.gov</a>	Gerri Rowell 860 713-6774 <a href="mailto:Gerri.Rowell@ct.gov">Gerri.Rowell@ct.gov</a>	Andrea Brinnel 860 713-6771 <a href="mailto:Andrea.Brinnel@ct.gov">Andrea.Brinnel@ct.gov</a>

### Glossary of Terms for GP 15-04

This glossary reflects the terms used in General Policy 15-04 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.

<b>Administrative Staff</b>	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.
<b>Classroom</b>	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.
<b>Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)</b>	The ECTC is issued through the Office of Early Childhood which validates that an individual meets teacher competencies in six standards. Many Connecticut institutions of higher education offer a path to the ECTC (please see <a href="#">OEC College Approval Listing</a> ). Higher education institutions on the <a href="#">OEC Approved College Listing</a> 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. Individuals applying for the credential through an approved institution’s path to the ECTC can find the application at <a href="http://www.ccacregistry.org">www.ccacregistry.org</a> .
<b>Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC)</b>	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 <a href="mailto:IRRECTC@ctaeyc.org">IRRECTC@ctaeyc.org</a> .
<b>Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member (G-QSM)</b>	A G-QSM is any individual, regardless of role, who holds a bachelor’s degree or higher of any kind AND has 12 early childhood credits AND who is employed in a state-funded program on June 30, 2015. The OEC Professional Registry will identify individuals enrolled in the Registry on June 30, 2015 who meet this status. A code will be added to each individual’s Registry ID card indicating grandfather status. This designation indicates that the individual is able to change their employment after June 30, 2015 and be hired as a 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.
<b>NAEYC</b>	National Association for the Education of Young Children
<b>OEC Approved CSDE Certification Endorsement</b>	<p><b>Approved Certification Endorsements</b></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"> <li>• 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through Grade 3</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K</li> <li>• 001 PreK – Grade 8</li> <li>• 002 PreK – Grade 6</li> <li>• 003 PreK – Grade 3</li> <li>• 008 PreK – K</li> <li>• 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK – Grade 12</li> </ul>
<b>Qualified Staff Member(QSM)</b>	Designation given by the program administrator to the one individual per classroom that meets the definition of Teacher and eligibility requirements. This individual must be identified by the director in the Registry.
<b>The Registry</b>	The Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry at <a href="http://www.ccacregistry.org">www.ccacregistry.org</a> .
<b>State-Funded Program</b>	<p>(a) refers to any setting receiving School Readiness, Child Day Care 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>
<b>Teacher</b>	<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"> <li>1. An <b>“individual with primary responsibility for a classroom of children”</b> 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.</li> </ol> <p>The “Teacher’s” responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>b. coordinating and engaging in the observation and documentation of children’s progress;</li> <li>c. making informed decisions, using multiple sources of information, about children’s progress across all domains of learning;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>f. engaging in on-going professional learning opportunities to remain current with early childhood research and best practices; and</li> <li>g. maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment.</li> </ol> <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>

## Legislative Language Supporting the General Policy 15-04

The following legislative language reflects the foundations of General Policy 15-04 for Connecticut Office of Early Childhood administered state-funded programs. Its purpose is to provide statutory language for individuals who may need such references when describing the policy.

### Public Act 14-39

**As it pertains to School Readiness Classrooms:** “Prior to July 1, 2015, “staff qualifications” means there is in each classroom an individual who as at least the following: (i) A childhood development associate credential issued by an organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education , after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally accredited; (ii) and associate’s degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the commissioner, from such and institution (III) a four-year degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an institution; or (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or special education.”

**As it pertains to individuals with primary responsibility for a classroom in a state-funded program:** “From July 1, 2015, until June 30, 2020, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program’s child day care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent of those individuals with primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold (I) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, or (II) a bachelor’s degree with a concentration in early childhood education, including, but not limited to, a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, child study, child development or human growth and development, from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and regionally accredited, State Board of Education, and regionally accredited, provided such bachelor’s degree program is approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education and the Office of Early Childhood, and (ii) such remaining individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold an associate’s degree with a concentration in early childhood education, including, but not limited to, and associate’s degree in early childhood education, child study, child development or human growth and development, from an institution of higher education (1) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education and (II) regionally accredited, provided such associate’s degree program is approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education and the Office of Early Childhood.”

**As it pertains to individuals with primary responsibility for a classroom in a state-funded program:** “On and after July 1, 2020, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program’s child day care program or school readiness program, one hundred per cent of those individuals with primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold (I) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, or (II) a bachelor’s degree with a concentration in early childhood education, including, but not limited to, a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, child study, child development or human growth and development, from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and regionally accredited, State Board of Education, and regionally accredited, provided such bachelor’s degree program is approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education and the Office of Early Childhood.”

**As it pertains to individuals in state funded programs who did not graduate from an approved institution or with degrees not listed:** “Any individual with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or child development or a bachelor’s degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, other than those bachelor’s degrees specified in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection, may submit documentation concerning such degree for review and assessment by the office as to whether such degree has a sufficient concentration in early childhood education so as to satisfy the requirements set forth in said subparagraphs (B) and (C).”

*As it pertains to individuals in state funded programs who are eligible to be grandfathered:* “Any individual with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or child development or a bachelor’s degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, who, on or before June 30, 2015, is employed by an early childhood education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program’s child day care program or school readiness program shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. No such early childhood education program shall terminate any such individual from employment for purposes of meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.”