



Connecticut Administered State-Funded Program General Policy

A-01

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

TO: Mayors, Superintendents, School Readiness Council Chairs/Co-Chairs and Liaisons

FROM: Harriet Feldlaufer, Director
Division of Early Care and Education



SUBJECT: State-Funded Program Staff Qualifications

This general policy (GP) now includes guidance on the implementation of legislation at each 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, not only the 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.

Classrooms receiving Smart Start funds are obligated to meet the requirement for Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) certified teachers. For general information on Smart Start read the entire GP. Specific requirements for Smart Start sites are outlined on page 4 of this document.

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 chart below summarizes the legislation and provides information regarding state-funded program staff qualification requirements. Degrees and credits must be from a regionally accredited

higher education institution; all education documentation must be on file in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry. <http://www.ccacregistry.org/>

Qualifying Options		
Until June 30, 2017	July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020	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> <p>A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement, OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, OR</p> <p>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 (ECTC) Individual Review Route; OR</p> <p>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</p> <p>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 degree requirement until June 30, 2025.</p> <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> <p>A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement, OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, OR</p> <p>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 ECTC Individual Review Route; OR</p> <p>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</p> <p>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 degree requirement until June 30, 2025.</p>

Evidence for Staff Requirements for Role of QSM

Timeline	Funding Source	Evidence for Designated QSM
Through June 30, 2017	School Readiness	A Registry card or report indicating ladder level 7 or above
	Child Day Care and State Head Start	The above documentation, as well as: Documents accepted by NAEYC or Head Start as meeting those system requirements for the role of Teacher
	Smart Start	A Registry card or report indicating having met Smart Start staff qualifications
On and after July 1, 2017	All state-funded programs	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 able to meet and maintain the designated QSM requirements, the program is considered in default of the state-funding requirements. The OEC recognizes that a program may have compelling reasons to apply for an extension. The program should initiate an extension request application on behalf of any staff member under the following circumstances.

- 1) If a newly hired staff member with a Bachelor degree 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 ECTC. This must be done 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 may 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 are:

- A designated QSM has suddenly resigned and the program is in the hiring process but has temporarily assigned an existing staff member to a classroom or group that does not meet the QSM definition. The program should submit an extension request for that non-qualifying staff member to be considered as the designated QSM for a defined period of time to complete the search and hiring.
- 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 should submit an extension request for that individual to be considered as meeting the designated QSM for the defined period of time it will take for the degree to be conferred.

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

The OEC will review the extension request, confirm program staff data in the Registry, and consider program history when considering approvals. Decisions about extensions to meet educator requirements are at the discretion of the OEC. Failure of any state-funded program to meet requirements may result in a reduction of funding, loss of funding and/or designation as a program not in good standing for future funding opportunities.

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 C.G.S. 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

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

The following web links are related to this policy:

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

For further information concerning this general policy please contact:

CHILD DAY CARE	SCHOOL READINESS and SMART START	STATE HEAD START
<p>Deb Flis Program Manager 860-713-6982 Deb.Flis@ct.gov</p>	<p>Andrea Brinnel Program Manager 860-713-6771 Andrea.Brinnel@ct.gov</p>	<p>Amparo Garcia Program Manager 860-713-6783 Amparo.Garcia@ct.gov</p>

Glossary of Terms for GP A-01

This glossary reflects the terms used in GP A-01 for the OEC administered state-funded programs.

<p><i>Administrative Staff</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>Classroom</i></p>	<p>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 OEC 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.</p>
<p><i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)</i></p>	<p>The ECTC is issued through the OEC 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.</p>
<p><i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC)</i></p>	<p>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.</p>

<p>Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</p>	<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 the requirements detailed below. These were one-time functions, not on-going.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual, regardless of role, who held a Bachelor 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 degree with an expiration of 12/31/2099. • 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 degree with an expiration of 06/30/2025. Should this individual achieve a higher ladder level, the designation is removed. <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 QSM 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>
<p>NAEYC</p>	<p>National Association for the Education of Young Children</p>
<p>OEC Approved CSDE Teacher Certification Endorsements</p>	<p>Approved Certification Endorsements</p> <p>Below is the list of the CSDE’s teacher certifications with early childhood endorsements, in accordance with C.G.S. 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
<p>Designated Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</p>	<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>
<p>The Registry</p>	<p>The Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry at www.ccacregistry.org.</p>

State-Funded Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to any setting receiving School Readiness, Child Day Care, Smart Start, or State Head Start funds; and • Includes ALL classrooms or groups regardless of the funding supporting the individual child, group or program.
Teacher	<p>The following definition was established in 2012 and is a combination of essential criteria found in the definitions by Head Start and the NAEYC:</p> <p>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> <p>The “Teacher’s” responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • coordinating and engaging in the observation and documentation of children’s progress; • making informed decisions, using multiple sources of information, about children’s progress across all domains of learning; • 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; • 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; • engaging in on-going professional learning opportunities to remain current with early childhood research and best practices; and • 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 state funds (School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, Smart Start, and/or State Head Start Supplement) must meet all legislated educator requirements. These 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, as well as required timelines.

	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 good standing 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) • Work to 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 6.A.05 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 degree or equivalent; at least 25% of teachers have a minimum of a Bachelor degree or equivalent; and all must have or be enrolled in an Associate or Bachelor degree program (annual reports must show continuous progress).</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 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 degree.</p>

		<p><i>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</i></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	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>Program must meet candidacy requirements and continue to work on established goals as outlined below.</p> <p>Program Goal 2015- 2019:</p> <p>NAEYC criterion 6.A.05 establishes a program goal of 50% of teachers in an NAEYC Accredited site hold a minimum of a Bachelor degree* or equivalent, and all teachers hold a minimum of an Associate 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><i>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</i></p>	
On and after July 1, 2020	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>Program must meet candidacy requirements and continue to work on established goals as outlined below.</p> <p>Program Goal 2020:</p> <p>NAEYC criterion 6.A.05 establishes a program goal of 75% of teachers in an NAEYC Accredited site hold a minimum of a Bachelor degree* or equivalent, and all teachers hold a minimum of an Associate 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><i>Criterion 6.A.05 is always assessed but is not a required criterion.</i></p>	