



Center for the Study of  
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2020 REPORT

# Early Educator Preparation Landscape



**EARLY EDUCATOR  
INVESTMENT COLLABORATIVE**

This report was commissioned by the  
Early Educator Investment Collaborative

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# Introduction

Early childhood higher education and preparation offerings within states mirror the complexity of each state's requirements for teachers working with children from birth to age eight, which in turn reflect the fragmentation of states' service delivery systems for young children, particularly children under age five. For the education of children age five and older, there is a nationwide agreement that teachers should obtain at least a bachelor's degree and that public school teachers of record should also obtain state licensure. By contrast, no consistent educational floor exists for practitioners who work with younger children and with the exception of state public prekindergarten programs, it is rare for teachers of preschool-age children to be individually licensed or certified. Programs with different funding streams and located in different settings typically establish different requirements, resulting in multiple sets of qualifications for teachers working with children from birth to age five, even for those working in similar roles and/or with children of the same age.

In response, higher education institutions have created degree programs designed to meet the varied requirements that apply to early educators, resulting in a mix of early childhood-related degree programs both within and across states, rather than a unified, streamlined, and aligned system of higher education offerings. Further, in addition to the ubiquitous "early childhood-related" label for the variety of degree programs widely accepted as educational preparation for teachers of young children in licensing and regulation systems, a demand has not been created for institutions of higher education to develop a cohesive system of high-quality preparation programs that focus on the specific knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to prepare early educators to be successful working with our nation's youngest children. As a consequence, too often, public policies assume that highly diverse higher education programs produce equivalent results.

In order to better understand the levers of change necessary to effect large-scale improvements in early educator preparation, we sought to understand the context around (1) the different requirements instituted by states for early educators, (2) the disparate governance and oversight structures in place for educator preparation programs, (3) the varied content, structures, and experiences present in current early childhood degree and credential offerings, and (4) promising strategies that states are implementing for improving early educator preparation. In addition to the 50-state data collected and analyzed for our scan of policies and practices impacting early educator preparation (see: Early Educator Investment Collaborative: 50-State Policy and Practice Research Memo), our team reviewed literature, including work on early childhood teacher preparation published and state teacher preparation systems by partner organizations; analyzed existing data from 13 state *Early Childhood Higher Education Inventory* studies; and, interviewed experts in the early childhood education and higher education fields to provide an in-depth picture of the current state of early educator preparation.

## State Requirements for Early Educators

To date, states universally enforce different initial preparation and ongoing professional development requirements for educators working in different settings and with different ages of children. Further, the overall approach to personnel credentials is split across multiple systems. First, every state has a system of state teacher certification and licensure that establishes initial preparation and ongoing

professional development requirements for teachers in the state’s public education system — which increasingly includes not just K-12 teachers but also state and district funded pre-K — and regulates the quality of approved teacher preparation programs in the state. Second, most states regulate qualifications of a broader range of birth-age 5 (B-5) educators, including those who work in child care and non-public preschools, through systems of child care licensure. And qualifications of some early childhood educators, such as those in license exempt family care homes, are not subject to any regulation, or are subject only to minimal requirements (e.g. CPR training).

## State systems of individual teacher licensure and certification

While state systems of teacher licensure and certification were developed primarily to regulate qualifications of K-12 teachers, nearly all of these systems also include some educators of children ages 0-5, including teachers of preschool special education, and, increasingly, teachers in state- and district-funded pre-K programs. The majority of states have developed teaching licenses or endorsements that cover at least part of the birth-five age group (see Appendix A).

As states have expanded publicly-funded pre-K programs over the past quarter century and sought to improve their quality, many relied on state teacher licensure systems to ensure the qualifications of pre-K teachers. Forty-five state pre-K programs (in 36 states) require at least some lead pre-K teachers to hold state certification or licensure. Of these, 27 states require all lead teachers in state-funded pre-K to hold a bachelor’s degree and state teaching license, and all 36 states require certification for pre-K teachers in public schools.

State teacher certification and licensure system requirements apply to *individual teachers*, rather than to programs or employers, and typically include:

- Completion of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university;<sup>1</sup>
- Completion of an approved teacher preparation program (or, for alternative pathways, enrollment in an approved alternative preparation program (see further description below);
- Passage of a licensure exam or multiple exams of basic skills, subject-area knowledge, and/or teaching skills; and,
- A character or background check.

While the core structures of teacher licensure, certification, and approved preparation program approval are similar across states, specific requirements of each can vary considerably between states, as does the extent to which pre-K and other early childhood teachers are covered by these systems.

Although most state teacher licensure systems cover at least some teachers in state funded pre-K programs, 11 states and Washington, D.C. do not require certification for pre-K teachers: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Florida, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

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<sup>1</sup> Most states offer some exceptions to this requirement for teachers in career and vocational education, ROTC, or other specialized subjects that require technical expertise and professional experience but not necessarily a bachelor’s degree. These exemptions are typically not relevant for early childhood educators.

In addition, two states, California and Louisiana, require at least some early childhood educators to hold credentials that are part of the state's teacher licensure and certification system but require less education than a bachelor's degree and traditional teacher certification programs. California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing, which oversees the state's teacher certification and licensure system for public school teachers, also issues Child Development Permits, which are required to teach in the state preschool program and require completion of a CDA or 12 hours of coursework in early childhood or child development. Louisiana's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, which oversees the state's teacher certification and licensure system for public school teachers, also oversees the Ancillary Early Childhood Certificate, which is required of lead teachers in all early childhood settings that receive public funds and is roughly comparable to a Child Development Associate (CDA).

These examples, though they require less preparation than a typical teaching certification, illustrate the potential for states to use existing systems of state teacher certification and licensure to raise credentials for and regulate preparation of a broader range of B-5 educators than they currently do.

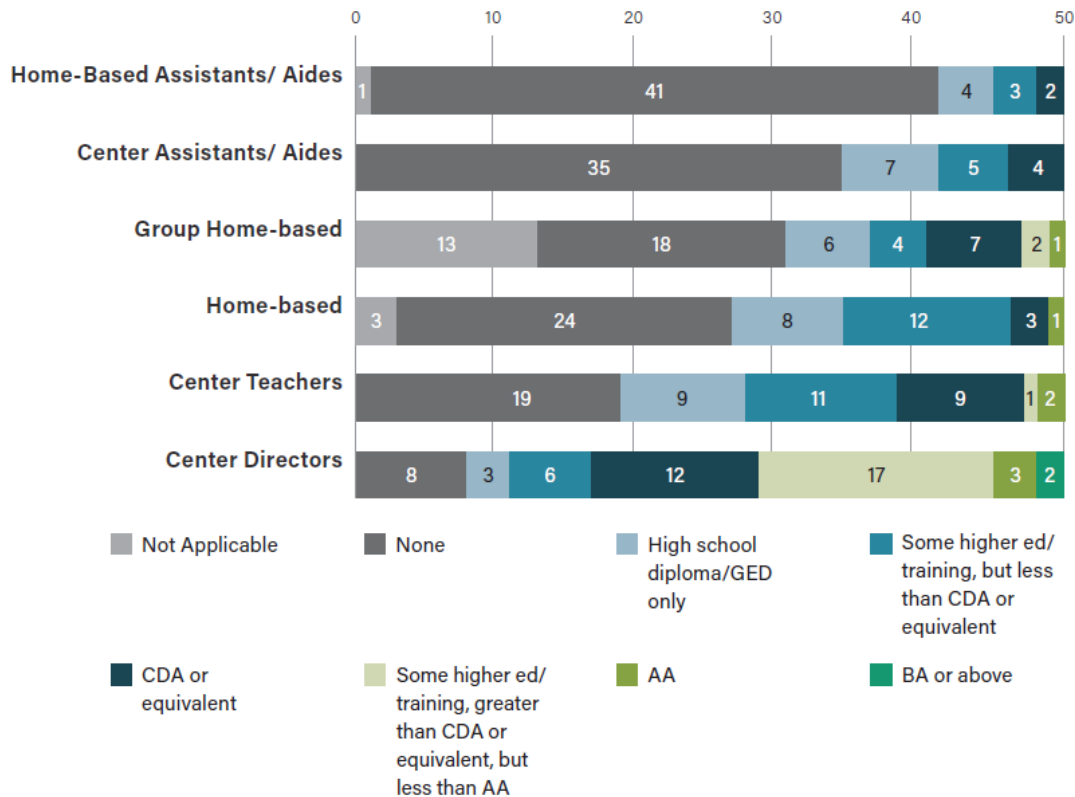
### Regulation of early educator qualifications through child care program licensure

Most B-5 early educators outside of state pre-K and special education preschool programs are not subject to state teacher certification and licensure systems. As a result, qualification requirements and preparation delivery, oversight, and governance for these educators look very different, and licensure in the B-5 landscape means something very different from in the state's teacher certification and licensure system. Whereas teacher licensure applies to *individuals*, licensure in the child care context typically applies to *programs, centers, or homes*. State child care licensure requirements typically include requirements for staff qualifications, but these requirements are usually not tied to specific degrees or certificates. Instead, child care staffing requirements typically offer a range of options for individuals to meet staff qualification requirements through different combinations of formal education, training, and experience. In addition, staffing requirements for licensure and Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) ratings are sometimes tied to the percentage of teaching staff who meet certain requirements, rather than setting a common requirement for all staff in the same role. Because of this variation, preparation of B-5 educators is in many respects a "non-system" with wide variation in preservice and ongoing credential requirements, a multiplicity of preparation and higher education pathways, and limited oversight of the quality of preparation providers.

Where minimum qualifications for child care teaching staff and administrators exist, they vary greatly both within and across states, but in general are quite low compared to pre-K and K-3 requirements. **Only New Jersey and Washington, D.C. require a bachelor's degree or higher for child care center directors, and no state requires this degree for lead teachers.** Only three states (Hawaii, Minnesota, and Vermont) and Washington, D.C. require a CDA for assistant or aides in center-based settings. Home-based educators are held to similarly low minimum requirements – just four states require a CDA or greater for home-based providers, and 41 states do not have any requirements at all

for home-based assistants or aides (see figure below, from the Early Childhood Workforce Index - 2018).<sup>2</sup>

### Minimum Qualification Requirements in State Licensing by ECE Role



Outside of public pre-K, other publicly funded B-5 programs, such as Head Start and Early Head Start, often require higher levels of preservice and/or ongoing preparation than other licensed child care settings, but require only some individual teachers to hold a specific certification. Head Start, for example, requires all lead teachers to hold an associate degree and 50% to hold a bachelor’s degree in early childhood or a related field. Assistant teachers in Head Start classrooms must have at least a CDA credential, as must all teachers in Early Head Start classrooms. Requirements for pre-K teachers also vary across the seven states that do not require teachers in their state pre-K programs to have a bachelor’s degree. For example, as of the 2017-18 school year, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research State Pre-K Yearbook:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Whitebook, M., McLean, C., Austin, L.J.E., & Edwards, B. (2018a). *Early Childhood Workforce Index – 2018*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/topic/early-childhood-workforce-index/2018/>.

<sup>3</sup> Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Garver, K. A., Hodges, K. S., Weisenfeld, G. G. & DiCrecchio, N. (2019). *The State of Preschool 2018: State Preschool Yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

- Arizona’s pre-K program requires 25% of lead teachers to have 12 post-secondary credits in early childhood education, a certificate of completion in early childhood or child development, or a CDA.
- California’s State Preschool Program requires lead teachers to hold a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit, which requires either 12 post-secondary credits in early childhood education or a CDA for initial award (with completion of additional credit required for renewal).
- Colorado, Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten school year program, and Oregon’s Preschool Promise requires state pre-K lead teachers to hold a CDA.
- Washington’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program and Ohio’s Early Childhood Education Program require an associate degree.

In addition to state pre-K programs that do not require a bachelor’s degree or licensure at all, 11 states require a bachelor’s degree and certification for state pre-K teachers only in some settings or programs. Specifically, Alaska, Delaware, Iowa’s Shared Visions program, Massachusetts Universal Pre-K, New Mexico, Pennsylvania’s Ready to Learn Program, South Carolina, and Virginia require public school pre-K teachers to hold a bachelor’s degree but have lower education requirements for pre-K teachers in community-based settings. Two of Connecticut’s three pre-K programs require lead teachers to have a CDA plus 12 credits in early childhood (the third, which is delivered primarily in public school settings, requires a BA). Arkansas and Vermont require some, but not all lead teachers in community-based state pre-K programs to have a bachelor’s degree.<sup>4</sup>

**This means that, out of 44 states nationally that have state-funded pre-K programs, 18 do not require a bachelor’s degree and certification for all lead teachers in the state’s publicly funded pre-K program.**

New York State requires a bachelor’s degree for lead pre-K teachers in community-based programs and a master’s degree for lead pre-K teachers in public school settings.

The result of these varying standards is that qualification requirements for B-5 early educators vary widely across role and setting and there is no clear mandate for the delivery of early education preparation. This is true even as states have adopted common early childhood workforce competencies. This makes it difficult if not impossible to develop a coherent state system.

### **Early Educator Competencies**

The National Academy of Sciences’ *Transforming the Workforce* report identified a set of essential competencies that all educators working with young children should demonstrate. Every state in the country, with the exception of Mississippi, has created or adopted statewide ECE competencies. These competencies serve three primary purposes: to define the content, skills, and dispositions for effective ECE professionals; to structure professional development across institutions; and, to create high-quality learning environments for children. Currently, at least 19 states have aligned the curriculum in early childhood degree programs with their state-defined competencies, according to state Child Care and

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A in Friedman-Krauss et al., 2019.

Development Fund (CCDF) plans.<sup>5</sup> Data from the 13 states participating in the *Higher Education Inventories*, however, suggests quite a bit of variation in whether or how degree programs integrate competencies into their early childhood coursework. For instance, Washington state reports in its CCDF plan that competencies are integrated into coursework at institutions of higher education (IHEs). Of the degree programs participating in the *Inventory*, 94% of associate degree programs report aligning their curriculum with the Washington State Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals; however, only 42% of bachelor's degree programs report doing so. The high degree of integration at the associate degree level may be a reflection of education requirements for most early educators in the state being set at or below the associate degree, thus, driving more educators into community college than bachelor's degree programs.

States that have yet to align curriculum, or have done so inconsistently, are well-positioned to do so, since the vast majority have already defined these competencies for their ECE professionals. In the event that a more cohesive structure of early educator certification is developed in these states (or nationally) and resources are made available for the effort involved in such alignment, states have already done the work of detailing and prioritizing competencies for their workforce and can work with early educator preparation providers and systems to structure coursework and credentials accordingly.

## Delivery, Governance, and Oversight of Educator Preparation

### Preparation in state systems of teacher licensure and certification

The most common way to become a licensed teacher is by completing a state-approved teacher preparation program, either as part of a bachelor's degree, or through a post-baccalaureate program after completing a bachelor's degree. The majority of approved preparation programs are offered by higher education institutions. In 2016-2017, there were 2,141 higher education institutions in the United States offering a total of 26,229 approved teacher preparation program at either the undergraduate or graduate level.<sup>6</sup> Not all of these institutions offer preparation programs in early childhood, however.

Over the past 35 years, many states have created "alternative routes to certification" (often referred to as "alternative certification programs"), which provide an expedited pathway to teaching. Approved alternative preparation programs typically enroll individuals who have already completed a bachelor's degree in a field other than education, provide them with streamlined introductory coursework, and then allow them to enter the classroom and teach as teachers of record while completing additional coursework and receiving mentoring or coaching over a certain period of time. Some may also offer expedited or streamlined course requirements. Some alternative preparation programs award a graduate degree upon completion, while others result in a certificate only.

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix B includes 50-state data on competencies, alignment with standards and curriculum, and other ways in which states are utilizing competencies.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. (2018). *Higher Education Act 2018 Title II Reports, National Teacher Preparation Data*. Retrieved from <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx>



Forty-seven states and Washington, D.C. currently allow alternative routes to certification,<sup>7</sup> and as of the 2015-16 school year, 18% of teachers working in public schools had obtained their preparation via an alternative preparation program.<sup>8</sup> Most of these programs are operated by the same institutions of higher education that operate traditional preparation programs, but 42 states also allow other organizations, such as school districts, non-profit organizations, and community colleges to operate approved alternative teacher preparation programs.<sup>9</sup>

## **Oversight and Governance of State Teacher Licensure and Certification Systems**

Preparation program approval is the primary vehicle through which states oversee teacher preparation. In order to recommend individuals to the state for teacher certification, a higher education institution or other alternative route provider must first become a state-approved preparation institution. Approved preparation providers (both higher education institutions and other providers) must undergo periodic reviews to renew their approval (typically every 5-10 years), and institutions that wish to add new preparation programs must also obtain state approval for those programs.

### *Approval Processes*

Expert interviews underscore the importance of states' program approval processes as a lever for ensuring preparation program quality. Strong professional teaching standards and requirements for preparation programs may have little impact on preparation program practices if the state's program approval process does not hold preparation programs accountable for meeting requirements, ensure that candidates master professional teaching standards, and impose real consequences for underperforming programs. At the same time, some states may have program approval processes that are rigorous but do not necessarily focus on the most important factors for improving the quality of educator preparation in a state — and some requirements may in fact impede innovation or transformation of preparation. Although an in-depth assessment of each state's preparation program approval processes is beyond the scope of the current analysis, how these processes operate is an important factor to consider in assessing the readiness of states to engage in and support transformation.

### *Governance*

In a majority of states, primary responsibility for governance and oversight of K-12 teacher preparation rests with the State Education Agency (SEA) and/or State Board of Education. Higher Education Agencies are responsible for preparation program approval in only two states (Arkansas and Ohio).

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<sup>7</sup> The three states that do not allow alternative routes to certification are Alaska, Oregon, and Wyoming. See National Council on Teacher Quality. (2017). Providers national results. *State Teacher Policy Database*. [Data set]. Retrieved from: <https://www.nctq.org/yearbook/national/Providers-76>

<sup>8</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2018) *Characteristics of Public School Teachers Who Completed Alternative Route to Certification Programs*. The Condition of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_tlc.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tlc.asp)

<sup>9</sup> Of these, however, only 31 states actually have a diversity of organizations offering alternative preparation programs. See National Council on Teacher Quality, 2017.

Thirty-three states also have Professional Standards Boards with at least some responsibilities related to teacher preparation. Most Professional Standards Boards were created after World War II as part of a movement to professionalize the teaching profession by shifting control of and standards for entry into the profession from state-level bureaucrats to the profession itself. These boards are typically composed of appointees representing various professional constituencies, including public school teachers, administrators, and representatives of teacher preparation programs.<sup>10</sup> Roles of Professional Standards Boards vary by state.

- In 14 states, the Professional Standards Board's role is primarily an advisory one to the state agencies responsible for teacher preparation, certification, and licensure (Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin);
- Seven additional states (Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas) have semi-independent boards or commissions that share some responsibilities with the State Board of Education and/or Chief State School Officer;<sup>11</sup>
- Ten states have Professional Standards Boards that are independent and have substantial responsibility for governance and oversight of teacher licensure, certification, and/or preparation program approval.<sup>12</sup> At least one of these independent Professional Standards Boards, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, also has responsibilities related to certificates for individuals working in community-based child development programs.<sup>13</sup>
- Two states (Alaska and Pennsylvania) have independent Professional Standards Boards that do not have authority related to licensure, certification, and preparation.

State legislators also have substantial authority to enact laws changing policies related to teacher certification, licensure, and preparation, as well as the authority of various state agencies related to teacher preparation. In practice, however, state legislatures often delegate details of teacher preparation policies to state agencies, boards of education, or professional standards boards, and rely on them to initiate recommendations for changes to existing requirements, structure, and content.

In addition to agencies responsible for governing teacher preparation, preparation programs that are located within institutions of higher education are also subject to the state's higher education governance and oversight structures. As discussed further below, these structures, policies, and the incentives they create can also influence the practice of preparation programs.

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<sup>10</sup> Specific membership and responsibilities for nominating or appointing members are typically defined in the enabling statutes.

<sup>11</sup> Chamberlain, V. (2017). *2017 Educator Standards Board Report*. Washington, D.C.: Professional Educator Standards Boards. Retrieved from [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nasdtdec.net/resource/collection/97608343-51F6-44F1-B39D-093A3B2F930F/ISB\\_Report\\_2017\\_Update\\_\(Final\\_Edition\).pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nasdtdec.net/resource/collection/97608343-51F6-44F1-B39D-093A3B2F930F/ISB_Report_2017_Update_(Final_Edition).pdf)

<sup>12</sup> These states include California, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Wyoming. Two additional states (Alaska and Pennsylvania) have independent Professional Standards Boards that do not have authority related to licensure, certification, and preparation program approval. Chamberlain, V. (2017)

<sup>13</sup> State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2016). *Child Development Permits*. Sacramento, CA: Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Retrieved from <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl797.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

In addition to states, the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) offers national accreditation of teacher preparation institutions. CAEP was created in 2010 through the merger of two previously existing accreditation agencies — the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). CAEP's standards, adopted in 2013 following extensive expert and field engagement, serve as the basis for accreditation reviews.

States may choose to enter into formal partnership agreements with CAEP that range from concurrent state/CAEP reviews of preparation programs, to allowing CAEP's review to serve as the primary source of information for a state's program approval decisions. Currently 36 states and Washington, D.C. have entered into partnership agreements with CAEP.<sup>14</sup> The specifics of these agreements, and how they are implemented in a state, may be important to understanding and assessing these states' readiness to engage in and support the transformation of early educator preparation.

CAEP accredits teacher preparation at the institution-level (e.g., Rhode Island College) rather than the program-level (e.g., the Early Childhood Teacher Preparation program at Rhode Island College), but the first of its five review standards (standard 1),<sup>15</sup> which focuses on content and pedagogical knowledge, reviews the extent to which programs' curricula prepare candidates to master competencies aligned with state or national subject area standards. For early childhood programs, this could be either their state's early childhood competencies, or the competencies developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for early childhood educators. Until recently CAEP partnered with NAEYC to serve as the specialized professional association (SPA) for early childhood education programs, meaning that early childhood programs seeking CAEP accreditation could have NAEYC review them for content and pedagogical knowledge, and could use NAEYC's review as evidence for CAEP's assessment of standard 1. As of February 2020, however, NAEYC is discontinuing its partnership with CAEP to provide SPA program review with national recognition, meaning that early childhood preparation programs will no longer be able to select NAEYC review for standard 1. Depending on their state's partnership agreement with NAEYC, early childhood programs will now be reviewed for standard 1 by either a CAEP volunteer team, state review team, or both state and CAEP reviewers working concurrently, using either NAEYC or state standards. Other content area SPAs have also discontinued partnerships with CAEP in recent years. NAEYC chose to discontinue its relationship with CAEP in part because it is seeking approval from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, the agency that accredits higher education accreditors, to become a higher education accreditor itself.

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<sup>14</sup> State partners: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming. See Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (n.d.). *State Partners: State Partnership Agreements*. Retrieved from <http://caepnet.org/working-together/state-partners>

<sup>15</sup> 1. Content and Pedagogical Knowledge, 2. Clinical Partnerships and Practice, 3. Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity; 4. Program Impact; and 5. Program Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement.

The variation in licensed teacher preparation governance structures across states is an important consideration for efforts to elevate and transform early educator preparation, and the involvement of multiple entities with different roles and responsibilities in some states may be a complicating factor for transformation efforts. It is not clear whether some teacher preparation governance structures are more likely to support innovation and the inclusion of early educators into the system than others, and likely depends on unique political dynamics within individual states. In addition, where state governance arrangements give K-12 teachers, their unions, and administrators substantial control over licensure policies and their implementation (as in states with independent professional standards boards), these interests may be unwilling to support policy changes to improve early childhood preparation or bring early educators into the state licensure system if they perceive that these changes might conflict with the interests of K-12 constituencies they represent (for example, by directing state funding to early childhood rather than K-12 teacher compensation), or undermine their control of entry into the teaching profession in their states (for example, by adopting national certification).

### **Other Implications of Higher Education Governance**

In addition to specific state policies, the structure of higher education governance in a state can have implications for efforts to improve both preparation for licensed teachers and the broader B-5 workforce. The policies and institutional incentives created by state higher education systems influence the resources available to early childhood programs located in public higher education institutions, the types of programs they offer, the incentives for program faculty, and how programs operate. In addition, new programs offered by institutions of higher education must be approved by university governance structures. As a result, these broader governance structures can create barriers or enabling conditions for innovation in early educator preparation. For example, it may be easier to create common, statewide articulation pathways from two- to four-year institutions in states where all community colleges are part of a common system, rather than states where each community college is under separate governance. More broadly, understanding how higher education is governed in a state is important to determine the levers available to influence early childhood workforce preparation and where barriers may exist.

All but three states (Delaware, Michigan, and New Jersey) have some kind of state-wide coordinating or governance agency for higher education:

- Eight states have a single, statewide higher education governance agency;<sup>16</sup>
- Twenty have a single statewide coordinating agency;<sup>17</sup>
- Fourteen states have multiple system governing boards (typically because the state has multiple public university systems and/or separate governing boards for two- and four-year institutions);<sup>18</sup> and,
- Four states have other arrangements: Mississippi, South Dakota, and Wisconsin have a system-wide governing board for four-year institutions and a coordinating board for two-year institutions. Wyoming has a coordinating board for two-year institutions and a separate governing board for its single, public four-year institution.<sup>19</sup>

## Preparation of birth-5 educators

Given the fragmentation in the qualifications of educators working with children from birth to age five, it should not be surprising that preparation pathways for this workforce are also highly fragmented. Even defining what constitutes an “early educator preparation pathway” is difficult, since there is no common definition of what an early childhood degree or certificate should cover. Higher education institutions may offer a variety of majors that contain some early childhood content — including majors in early childhood education, child development, and child and family studies — but these programs are often not designed primarily to prepare individuals for teaching roles.

The variation in requirements for the B-5 workforce allows a variety of higher education and non-higher education providers to offer different types of training and ongoing professional development. Community colleges, bachelor’s and graduate degree-granting colleges and universities, and non-credit bearing professional development providers all play important roles in preparation and ongoing professional development of B-5 educators.

Community colleges play an important role in delivering both preparation and ongoing professional development for the early childhood workforce. They offer associate degree options for current and future early educators, serve as entry points for students hoping to pursue a bachelor’s degree, provide mid-career early childhood workers with training, and often provide professional development and other services to meet local ECE community needs. Over 75% of the nation’s 1,047 public community

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<sup>16</sup> Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and Rhode Island.

<sup>17</sup> Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. In addition to these 20 states, West Virginia has separate coordinating agencies for two- and four-year institutions.

<sup>18</sup> Arizona, California (3), Connecticut, Florida (2), Georgia (2), Iowa (2), Maine (2), Minnesota (2), New Hampshire (2), New York (2), North Carolina (2), Pennsylvania, Utah (2), and Vermont.

<sup>19</sup> Fulton, M. (2019). *High-Level Analysis of State Postsecondary Governance Structures*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from [https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/PS-Gov-Structures-50\\_State-Analysis\\_Compacts\\_Other-States\\_May2019.pdf](https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/PS-Gov-Structures-50_State-Analysis_Compacts_Other-States_May2019.pdf)

colleges offer some type of early childhood or family studies program.<sup>20</sup> Most community colleges offer at least one of three distinct courses of study relevant to early childhood educators:

- Non-degree certificates focused on preparing professionals for specific roles (including CDAs, state-recognized early childhood certificates, and certificates created by the institution itself; 80% of community colleges with early childhood associate degree programs also offer the CDA or another non-degree certificate<sup>21</sup>);
- Terminal associate degrees in early childhood education (typically the Associate of Arts in Science); and,
- Associate degrees that allow students to transfer into a four-year child development or elementary education teaching program (typically the Associate of Arts in Teaching).

Some community colleges also offer applied bachelor's degrees and post-baccalaureate or alternative certification programs, although these are much less common than certificates and associate degrees. Over the past decade, an increasing number of states have allowed all or some community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in specific fields or courses of study in response to state or local workforce needs. Twenty-five states now allow at least some community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in at least some fields;<sup>22</sup> of those, at least eight allow community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in early childhood education (Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia).<sup>23</sup>

Institutions of higher education offering bachelor's and graduate degrees are another crucial piece of the puzzle in the pipeline of preparation for B-5 educators. In addition to accepting students transferring or articulating in from an associate degree earned at a community college, bachelor's degree-granting institutions such as private colleges and public, private, or tribal universities also offer standalone bachelor's degrees in a range of early childhood-related fields, as well as graduate degrees that are typically required for educators aiming to become faculty in higher education programs. Degrees designed for early educators typically are housed in one of two entities at colleges and universities — colleges or schools of education, or departments related to child/human development and/or family studies.

This variety of preparation providers, credentials, and degrees can create a challenging landscape for current and prospective early childhood educators to navigate. In an effort to address this, many states have sought to establish articulated career pathways or sequences of portable, stackable credentials that align with the state's competencies for early educators and enable individuals working in early care and education to progressively build skills, knowledge, and credentials. Accompanied by supports for advancement, articulated career pathways can be part of a systems strategy to advance the

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<sup>20</sup> Kaplan, M. (2018). *It Takes a Community: Leveraging Community College Capacity to Transform the Early Childhood Workforce*. Bellwether Education Partners. Retrieved from [https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Bellwether\\_CommunityCollege\\_JPK\\_Final.pdf](https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Bellwether_CommunityCollege_JPK_Final.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Palmer, I. (2019) *Four-Year Degrees at the Community College Haven't Scaled. Why?* New America. Retrieved from <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/four-year-at-the-community-college-havent-scaled-why/>

<sup>23</sup> Kaplan, 2018.

competencies of the early childhood workforce by providing multiple entry points to professional advancement, and to enable individuals to identify and access the appropriate educational pathways and opportunities to reach career goals.

### **Oversight and Governance of Birth-Five Educator Programs**

The myriad pathways and providers involved in preparing B-5 educators often are regulated by a similarly varied and complex set of institutions, agencies, and/or departments. Early educator preparation programs may adhere to guidelines set by any number of governing bodies. In Connecticut, for example, early childhood educators can meet credential requirements by completing either an approved teacher preparation program overseen by the State Department of Education, or a bachelor's degree with a concentration from a program approved by the Office of Early Childhood. In addition, many states use CCDF quality set-aside funds to contract with higher education providers to offer coursework or credential pathways (such as CDA programs) to early childhood educators, and programs that receive these funds must adhere to expectations set by the state agency responsible for CCDF in their contracts. But outside of state approval of educator preparation programs, which cover only a small portion of early childhood educators, early childhood education and related degree programs experience limited public oversight of program content, requirements for graduation, and quality. **Programs at all levels (associate through doctorate) may voluntarily pursue accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), but only a fraction of programs have done so.** Degree programs at 203 institutions in 40 states have earned the NAEYC Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs. The majority of NAEYC accredited programs (195) are associate degree programs. Seven institutions are accredited for bachelor's degree programs and one has a master's degree program.<sup>24</sup>

## **Characteristics of Current Degree Program Offerings**

As noted above, a lack of external public oversight and clearly defined pathways for early educators creates a situation in which it is difficult to get uniform data about degree programs across the 50 states. However, there exists a wealth of data on higher education programs from the 13 *Early Childhood Higher Education Inventory* state-level studies conducted by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE), from which we have learned a great deal about the current status of higher education offerings for early educators. Note that the *Inventory* studies encompass both approved teacher preparation programs that lead to a state teaching license and are part of the state's system of teacher licensure and certification, and early childhood associate degree, bachelor's degree, and graduate degree programs that do not lead to licensure.

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<sup>24</sup> National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2019). *NAEYC Accredited Higher Education Programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation/higher-ed/accredited-programs#C>; Accreditation for associate degree programs has been offered since 2006, while bachelor's and master's degree accreditation has been available since 2016.

## Varied Purposes, Content, and Required Experiences

### Program goals

Across the associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs participating in *Inventory* studies in 13 states, just over half (55%) noted that their primary goal was to prepare students for teaching or administrative roles in early or elementary education. As one might expect from a difference in stated goals or purpose, the content and experiences involved in these programs differed significantly. Programs dedicated to preparing teachers were more likely than general "early childhood-related" programs to require students to take coursework on 28 of 37 specific topics covered in the *Inventory*, including content in supporting early math skill development, working with dual language learners, and pedagogical skills.

### Program content and age-group focus

*Transforming the Workforce* outlined a core knowledge base that all practitioners working with young children should possess.

#### **Core Knowledge Base for Care and Education Practitioners**

- Knowledge of the developmental science that underlies important domains of early learning and child development, including cognitive development, specific content knowledge and skills, general learning competencies, socioemotional development, and physical development and health.
- Knowledge of how these domains interact to facilitate learning and development.
- Knowledge of content and concepts that are important in early learning of major subject-matter areas, including language and literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering, arts, and social studies.
- Knowledge of the learning trajectories (goals, developmental progressions, and instructional tasks and strategies) of how children learn and become proficient in each of the domains and specific subject-matter areas.
- Knowledge of the science that elucidates the interactions among biological and environmental factors that influence children's development and learning, including the positive effects of consistent, nurturing interactions that facilitate development and learning, as well as the negative effects of chronic stress and exposure to trauma and adversity that can impede development and learning.
- Knowledge of principles for assessing children that are developmentally appropriate; culturally sensitive; and relevant, reliable, and valid across a variety of populations, domains, and assessment purposes.<sup>25</sup>

As such, evaluating degree programs on content required across these areas provides one indicator of program quality. Degree programs surveyed in the *Inventory* generally required students to complete coursework in the majority of topics under the content areas; however, there was variation on topics

<sup>25</sup> IOM & NRC, 2015. pp. 328-329.



related to working with children and families who have experienced trauma, working with dual language learners, and working with children with special needs.

Programs also varied in their inclusion of content focused on infants and toddlers, with associate degree programs more likely to cover these topics than bachelor's degree programs. Overall, however, all degree programs (regardless of level) noted that they were more likely to require students to take coursework covering development and learning of preschool-age children or older children as compared with children under the age of three.

## Field experiences

There is widespread agreement that field-based learning experiences for teachers working with children of all ages are critically important for developing new teaching skills or improving existing ones.<sup>26</sup> In the K-12 community, this recognition has led to efforts to increase the length of student teaching, introduce it earlier into a program of study, and strengthen student supervision during field experiences.<sup>27</sup> In early childhood, however, there is no widely implemented standard of field experience, such as student teaching and the growth of residency programs (discussed further below).<sup>28</sup> This structural divide in educator preparation runs counter to the call by many ECE experts, policymakers, and other stakeholders for a more integrated birth-to-age-eight educational system.<sup>29</sup>

*Inventory* data show great variation within and across states in terms of the clinical or field-based experiences that students are required or able to participate in. Although nearly every program participating in the studies required at least one short-term practicum experience in order for students to graduate, the required duration and number of practicum courses varied greatly, as did the number and length of student teaching experiences, for programs that required them. Of note, programs designated as educator preparation were twice as likely to require a student teaching experience than general early childhood programs.

Quality of field experience is more than a matter of duration, however. The quality of sites where students complete field experiences is also important, as is the quality of supervision they receive from site-based mentor teachers and program clinical faculty. A quarter of programs participating in the *Inventory* indicated that access to high-quality early childhood programs where students can participate

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<sup>26</sup> National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). (2010b). *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/pdf/NCATECR.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE). (2017). *Comparison of Personnel Systems for K-12 and Early Childhood Teachers: Qualifications and Compensation*. Berkeley, CA, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2017/Comparison-of-Personnel-Systems-K12-and-Early-Childhood-Teachers.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Whitebook, M., Phillips, D., & Howes, C. (2014). *Worthy Work, STILL Unlivable Wages: The Early Childhood Workforce 25 Years after the National Child Care Staffing Study*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2014/ReportFINAL.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> IOM & NRC, 2015.

in field-based experiences was a significant challenge. This issue was more salient in some states (e.g., New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Washington) than in others.

## Characteristics of Faculty

### Background, knowledge, and expertise

Faculty teaching in early childhood education degree programs are simultaneously the conduits of evidence-based curriculum, instructors of sound pedagogical practice, advisors, mentors, and evaluators of performance both in the higher education classroom and often in the early childhood classroom, when tasked with supervising field-based experiences. The quality of instruction and content delivery of degree programs is inextricably linked to the knowledge, experience, and preparation of faculty teaching in these programs, and so it is crucial to examine data on faculty — including their background in ECE, their training, knowledge base, and demographic characteristics.

Teachers of adults, like those who teach children, require appropriate preparation as well as ongoing opportunities to refine their knowledge and skills.<sup>30</sup> Based on a review of existing research, the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council has called for early childhood higher education faculty to be versed in the foundational theories of development and learning, subject matter content, and methods of pedagogy that comprise the basic competencies expected of ECE practitioners working with young children.<sup>31</sup> A commitment by states to hire and retain faculty members in their early childhood higher education programs that are well prepared and supported may represent an understanding of the importance of and commitment to faculty members as they impact the next generation of early childhood practitioners.

Data from states participating in the *Inventory* indicate that the background and experience of ECE faculty members can vary widely, both across states and within, based on degree level. For example, associate degree programs offered in Tennessee have the highest level of faculty (75%) who have earned at least a master's degree in ECE. New York bachelor's degree programs have the lowest rate of faculty (19%) with a master's degree in ECE.

### Demographics

Data from the 13 *Inventory* studies reveal that 81% of early childhood higher education faculty identified as Caucasian/White, 6% as Black/African American, 4% as Asian, 5% as Hispanic or Latinx, 2% as multiracial, and 2% as other. Even in diverse states like California and New York, these patterns persist. Notably, faculty members participating in the Mississippi *Inventory* were more representative of the state overall, with 59% of faculty identifying as white and 32% identifying as black, compared to the

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<sup>30</sup> Whitebook, M., & Ryan, S. (2011). *Degrees in Context: Asking the Right Questions About Preparing Skilled and Effective Teachers of Young Children*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research & Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from [http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2011/DegreesinContext\\_2011.pdf](http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2011/DegreesinContext_2011.pdf)

<sup>31</sup>IOM & NRC, 2015.

general population which is 59% white and 38% black. *Inventory* data are consistent with national data on the demographics of higher education faculty across fields and institutions,<sup>32</sup> but reflect a higher education faculty population much less diverse than the early childhood workforce or children served in early childhood programs.

The well-documented absence of racial and ethnic minorities among early childhood higher education faculty — in contrast to their adult students and the child populations that these ECE professionals will serve — has implications for the degree of focus on diversity in coursework and the availability of role models for students.<sup>33</sup> Evidence suggests that a racially and ethnically diverse faculty is more likely to recognize the need to respond to a diverse student body and child population and is more likely to address issues of diversity in course curriculum.<sup>34</sup>

## Employment status and advising

Program content and the background of faculty are not the only concerns when considering the quality of teacher preparation programs. Research supports the idea that faculty status can impact the quality of education college students are receiving. High rates of part-time faculty create numerous challenges because these faculty are often less integrated into their departments and may not engage as deeply with curriculum planning.<sup>35</sup> Part-time faculty members are typically paid to teach particular courses and

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<sup>32</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2018) *Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty*. The Condition of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_csc.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_csc.asp)

<sup>33</sup> Bornfreund, L.A. (2011). *Getting in Sync: Revamping Licensing and Preparation for Teachers in pre-K, Kindergarten, and the Early Grades*. Washington, DC: New America. Retrieved from <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/getting-in-sync/>

Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001). Preparing the workforce: Early childhood teacher preparation at 2- and 4- year institutes of higher education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 16, 285-306.

Maxwell, K.L., Lim, C-I., & Early, D.M. (2006). *Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States: National Report*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

Ray, A., Bowman, B., & Robbins, J. (2006). *Preparing Early Childhood Teachers to Successfully Educate All Children: The Contribution of Four-Year Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Programs*. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development & Chicago, IL: Erikson Institute.

Whitebook, M., Bellm, D., Lee, Y., & Sakai, L. (2005). *Time to Revamp and Expand: Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Programs in California's Institutions of Higher Education*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment.

<sup>34</sup> Lim, C., Maxwell, K.L., Able-Boone, H., & Zimmer, C.R. (2009). Cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood teacher preparation: The impact of contextual characteristics on coursework and practica. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 24(1), 64-76.

<sup>35</sup> Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE). (2014). *Contingent Commitments: Bringing Part-time Faculty Into Focus (A Special Report from the Center for Community College Student Engagement)*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin, Program in Higher Education Leadership. Retrieved from [http://www.ccsse.org/docs/PTF\\_Special\\_Report.pdf](http://www.ccsse.org/docs/PTF_Special_Report.pdf)

Curtis, J.W., & Thornton, S. (2014). *Losing Focus: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2013-14*. Washington, DC: American Association of University Professors. Retrieved from <https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/2013-14salarysurvey>

Copeman Petig, A., Montoya, E., Austin, L.J.E., & Edwards, B. (2018). *Teaching the Teachers of Our Youngest Children: The State of Early Childhood Higher Education in Washington*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

are not paid for additional responsibilities, such as student advising or program evaluation.<sup>36</sup> This situation can lead to full-time faculty taking on a greater share of administrative, institutional, and student-advising responsibilities in addition to their teaching load.<sup>37</sup>

Nationally, part-time faculty members constitute two-thirds or more of faculty in colleges and universities.<sup>38</sup> Associate degree programs examined through the *Inventory* far exceed this number, though bachelor's and graduate programs in the *Inventory* had lower percentages of part-time faculty than the national average. This is true for five the seven *Inventory* states for which we have information disaggregated by degree. All surveyed states other than Tennessee reporting having a part-time faculty rate of between 70-77%. This rate varies more for bachelor's degree programs, with a part-time faculty proportion of 25-71%. Only in California and Florida do bachelor's degree programs have more part-time than full-time faculty.

Whether it is officially in their job description or not, faculty members are frequently the first people that students approach with their questions and concerns regarding their degree program and other academic concerns. There are many advantages to using faculty as academic advisors, such as “their program and course knowledge, their knowledge of related career fields, the respect they hold within the institution, the cost to the institution, and the fact that research shows a clear relationship between student interaction with faculty and student retention.”<sup>39</sup> Because of the impact that academic advising has on student outcomes and the likelihood that faculty will continue assuming greater roles in academic advising across all types of institutions, it is vital that colleges have the appropriate level of resources to provide faculty members with the capacity to provide high-quality advising.

The NACADA Clearinghouse is a resource based out of Kansas State University that serves as a hub for research and resources on academic advising. In the *2011 NACADA National Survey* (N=349) of higher education institutions across the U.S., the median number of students advised per faculty advisor was 25. For small schools, this number was 25, for medium schools the median was 45, and for large schools 62.5. For two-year programs, this median was 35. Public four-year institutions reported a median of 35 students, while for private institutions this was 20 students.

Faculty participating in the *Inventory* were asked about their “average student advising in a typical academic year.” The *Inventory* data closely mirrors the national data; the average (not median) advising caseload across *Inventory* states was 29.7. The highest mean advising load is for California bachelor's degree programs, where faculty average 79 students. California stands out as being the state with the overall highest advising load, with 60 students for the associate degree and 62 for the master's degree faculty. The lowest mean advising load is Florida BA programs, where the average is six students.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), 2014.

<sup>37</sup> Maxwell et al., 2006.

<sup>38</sup> Curtis & Thornton, 2014.

<sup>39</sup> King, M., & Kerr, T. (2005). Academic advising. In M. L. Upcraft, J. Gardner, & B. O. Barefoot (Eds.), *Challenging & supporting the first-year student: A handbook for improving the first year of college* (pp. 320–338). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>40</sup> The mean advising load is unavailable for New Jersey, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.

## Current Challenges

Higher education program administrators are intimately familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the early childhood degree programs in their state (as well as faculty members and students). As such, their perspective is vital in understanding the reality of teacher preparation. And challenges identified by higher education program administrators are an obvious place to begin when considering if and where opportunities exist to invest in improving a state's teacher preparation system.

Program administrators' impressions of challenges to improvement vary across and within states. Not surprisingly, the challenge most readily identified by program administrators was "difficulty recruiting or retaining students related to the low pay of the ECE field." This question was only asked in five states, but almost all identified this as a problem. For example, 89% of Florida's associate degree programs and 86% of Oregon's associate degree programs noted this challenge.

*Inventory* data also indicate that students who are English language learners are disadvantaged in the higher education system. The "need for additional faculty expertise in working with college students who are English learners" was commonly identified as a challenge to program improvement across states. Especially notable are Tennessee associate degree programs (64%), as well as programs across degree levels in both Arkansas (56%) and Oregon (50%). The "need for additional faculty expertise in teaching young children who are dual language learners" was also highly identified, with Nebraska, New York, and Indiana having the highest rates. Between 70% and 80% of programs in these states noted this as a challenge. A lack of expertise in preparing educators to work with children who are dual language learners (DLLs) was also identified by faculty themselves, who noted that they were less well-equipped in this area than in other topic areas included on the survey.

The convergence of these data around the need for additional faculty expertise in preparing early educators to support DLLs is a directive that (1) faculty professional development focused on DLL/ELL and/or (2) hiring new faculty that have DLL/ELL experience would be a valuable investment for many ECE programs.

## Other Contextual Factors Impacting Early Educator Preparation

In addition to state governance, delivery, and oversight systems for teacher licensure and B-5 educator preparation, a variety of other state policies and contextual factors also shape the preparation landscape and opportunities to transform preparation for early childhood educators. These include policies and contextual factors related to college access and completion, K-12 teacher preparation reform efforts, and context related to supply, demand, and diversity of teachers in the state. Understanding this broader context is essential to assess the readiness of a state and its institutions to engage in transformation of early educator preparation.

# Policies to Support Degree Access and Completion

## Articulation agreements and transfer policies

Research shows that an increasing number of students are entering the higher education system as community college students with the intent to transfer to four-year colleges and universities.<sup>41</sup> Articulation agreements are formal agreements between two or more colleges and universities that document the transfer policies for a specific academic program or for degrees in general. Because many early childhood educators, particularly those already working in the field, begin pursuing post-secondary education at two-year colleges and universities, institution-level articulation agreements and state-level articulation policies and infrastructure that reduce barriers to transfer from two- to four-year institutions are particularly important to efforts to increase the number of early childhood educators with bachelor’s degrees. These policies and infrastructure supports are associated with greater-than-average success in helping students achieve their educational goals in a timely fashion (e.g., transferring to a four-year institution or completing a degree).<sup>42</sup>

Using information found in the state CCDF plans, we categorized each state into one of four categories.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>States</b>
Statewide Agreement	There is a statewide/universal degree articulation agreement/plan in place (i.e., all associate degrees in ECE in the state articulate into a bachelor’s degrees in ECE at any institution).	CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, MD, MS, NH, NM, NC, PA, SC
Statewide for Certain Courses	There is statewide/universal articulation across certain courses/credits.	AK, GA, IN, LA
Some Articulation	There is articulation of courses/credits among some (but not all) associate degree programs and	AL, AZ, AR, FL, HI, IL, IA, KY, MA, MI,

<sup>41</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center (2015). *Early Childhood Articulation Project Compendium*. Retrieved from <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Articulation-Compendium-Update-10-20-15.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Chu, M., Martinez-Griego, B., & Cronin, S. (2010). A Head Start/college partnership: Using a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to help working teachers earn degrees. *Young Children* 65(4), 24-29.  
 Kipnis, F., Whitebook, M., Almaraz, M., Sakai, L., & Austin, L.J.E. (2012). *Learning Together: A Study of Six B.A. Completion Cohort Programs in Early Care and Education. Year 4*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.  
 Sakai, L., Kipnis, F., Whitebook M., & Schaack, D. (2014). Yes they can: Supporting bachelor degree attainment for early childhood practitioners. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* 16(1-2).  
 Whitebook, M., Schaak, D., Kipnis F., Austin, L., & Sakai L. (2013). *From Aspiration to Attainment: Practices That Support Educational Success, Los Angeles Universal Preschool’s Child Development Workforce Initiative*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

	bachelor's degree programs.	MN, MT, NE, NV, NJ, NY, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WY
No Articulation	There is no articulation of ECE courses/credits in the state.	ID, KS, ME, MO, ND, OH, OK, OR, RI, WV

While the existence of such agreements is an indicator of alignment within and between higher education systems in a state, the practice and perception of articulation agreements between two- and four-year institutions remains highly inconsistent across and within states. CSCCE surveyed ECE higher education program administrators in ten states<sup>43</sup> regarding whether or not their program was part of an articulation agreement and whether or not they believed that inconsistent articulation was a challenge facing their degree program. *Inventory* data shows that at least 50% of associate degree programs report having a specific articulation agreement with a four-year college. In seven of the ten states at least 70% of associate degree programs report articulation agreements. This rate is similar for bachelor's degree programs, with 70% of programs in all but one state (Oregon) reporting articulation agreements.

As with competencies, it is important to understand how policies translate into practice and experiences for degree programs. Even when articulation agreements exist on paper, students may still face barriers in transferring credits (1) from a two-year institution to a four-year institution, (2) between institutions at the same level (e.g., transferring from one community college to another), and (3) between programs at the same institution. In addition, due to gaps in advising support students may take duplicative or unnecessary courses even when strong articulation policies exist. Data from the *Inventory* suggests that community colleges experience or perceive more challenges regarding articulation than four-year programs. Across states participating in the *Inventory*, an average of 42% of associate degree program administrators reported that inconsistent articulation was a problem, compared to an average of only 14% of bachelor's degree programs who noted that this was a problem.

In some cases, the multiplicity of non-degree credential and degree programs and pathways for early childhood educators creates further barriers to articulation and transfer. Many states, for example, have established Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) programs that articulate to approved teacher preparation programs at the state's four-year colleges and universities. This provides an efficient pathway for AAT graduates to earn bachelor's degrees and certification but does little to help students who complete other early childhood associate degrees, such as Associate of Arts in Science (AAS) degrees in early childhood. This means that students who enroll in two-year colleges to study early childhood and only later realize they want to become certified teachers may need to go back and repeat coursework in order to do so. Further, because the Associate of Arts in Science was originally created as a terminal degree for early childhood workers, there is no articulation pathway for AAS graduates to

<sup>43</sup> Arkansas, California, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington.

earn four-year degrees in some geographies. Although this is changing, and more states and institutions are creating four-year articulation options for AAS graduates, AAS graduates continue to face barriers to articulating in bachelor's degree programs that lead to a teaching certificate. And the perception of the AAS as a terminal degree may lead high school and higher education faculty to counsel students away from AAS programs.

Important considerations for advancing higher education systems reform include understanding how articulation agreements are acting in practice and whether or not there is a capacity for change regarding articulation between two- and four-year institutions (for those states who do not currently have a statewide articulation agreement). Can leaders at different institutions work together and are there mechanisms in place or that can be developed to facilitate this necessary partnership? If not, there is little hope that articulation can be improved.

The following are recommendations that states should consider for promising practices and policies regarding articulation agreements:

- Increasing the number of articulation agreements between institutions that grant associate and bachelor's degrees;
- Providing dedicated personnel at community colleges for student advising to ensure that students have adequate information and guidance for seamless transfer between institutions;
- Ensuring that articulation agreements are comprehensive and that coursework is aligned across institutions so that students may realize the maximum benefits of the agreements;
- Expanding the availability of and access to portable and stackable certificates that articulate and lead to degree completion across higher education systems; and,
- Developing agreements whereby students at community colleges have dual enrollment for their final 15 credits and take specific courses at the four-year institution (similar to pre-professional dual enrollment status for students who are pursuing medical or law degrees, for example).

States that have made meaningful progress on articulation include Illinois, New Mexico, and North Carolina.

- ★ Illinois used Race to the Top funds to award innovation grants to partnerships of two- and four-year institutions. These grants catalyzed higher education institutions to work together in innovative ways to reduce barriers to successful transfer and advancement for students, and ultimately that led to the development of a competency-based framework that supports articulation statewide.
- ★ New Mexico has been working since 1995 to build a fully inclusive, fully articulated, and competency-based system, starting with a competency-based career lattice for early childhood education roles. Subsequently, the state developed a common course catalog, course numbers, curriculum, and syllabi for early childhood courses aligned to its competencies, which has since been adopted by at least 20 two- and four-year institutions in the state. This in turn facilitated the development of a 64- to 65-credit transfer model from two- to four-year institutions and passage of legislation mandating transfer of 64 credits from two- to four-year institutions.



- ★ In North Carolina, all 58 community colleges share a common course catalog for early childhood courses, which makes credits transferable across institutions within the state, and facilitates articulation for students from two- to four-year colleges. North Carolina’s Early Childhood Education Articulation Agreement is a statewide academic progression agreement that promotes educational advancement opportunities for early childhood education (ECE) students matriculating from the North Carolina Community College System to the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina in order to complete a Bachelor’s Degree in Birth-Kindergarten teaching licensure program or a Bachelor’s Degree in a related Early Education non-licensure program.<sup>44</sup>

## Higher education policies across disciplines

In addition to policies focused on teacher preparation and the B-5 workforce, a variety of broader state and national higher education policies influence access to and affordability of higher education, or the incentives facing higher education institutions, in ways that may affect access to and quality of early childhood workforce preparation.

### **Allowing Community Colleges to Offer Bachelor’s Degrees**

As noted above, a growing number of states allow at least some community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees, including at least eight that allow community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees in early childhood education.<sup>45</sup> Although a number of community colleges and early childhood leaders support such policies, their impacts on early childhood workforce preparation are unclear: community college bachelor’s degree programs can make preparations more affordable and accessible for current and prospective teachers, and reduce the barriers that many students face in transferring from a two- to four-year-college — even in states with strong articulation policies. However, if certain populations of candidates, such as those already in the workforce or from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionately directed into community colleges rather than other four-year options, this may exacerbate stratification and inequity within the profession, or undermine efforts to increase the prestige of early childhood degrees. Nevertheless, as more states seek to meet workforce needs for a variety of high-need occupations by allowing community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees,<sup>46</sup> the chance to

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<sup>44</sup> University of North Carolina & North Carolina Community College System. (2018). Uniform Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina Baccalaureate of Birth-Kindergarten and Early Childhood Related Programs and North Carolina Community College System Applied Associate in Early Childhood Education Programs. Retrieved from [http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/sites/default/files/basic-pages/academic-programs/attachments/early\\_childhood\\_articulation\\_agreementecaa\\_05.25.18.pdf](http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/sites/default/files/basic-pages/academic-programs/attachments/early_childhood_articulation_agreementecaa_05.25.18.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Kaplan, 2018.

<sup>46</sup> Bragg, D., and I. Love. (2019). *At the Tipping Point: The Evolving—and Growing—Landscape of the Community College Baccalaureate*. New America. Retrieved from <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/at-the-tipping-point/>

create new bachelor’s programs in community colleges may create opportunities to build innovative or high-quality preparation options from the ground up.

### Higher Education Affordability and Financial Aid policies

Free community college or similar programs designed by states to support access to post-secondary education are another higher education policy receiving considerable attention. “Promise” programs that make two-year college free for all high school graduates — like those in Tennessee and New York — have drawn national attention. At least 32 states have some type of “free college” program. Given the prominent role that community colleges play in preparing the early childhood workforce, such programs can be a considerable asset in increasing access to early childhood workforce preparation. But design details matter — and eligibility and funding vary considerably across states (see figure below).

Nationally, the number of states that offer...

<b>True “free community college for all” programs</b>	<b>2</b>	New York, Tennessee
<b>Tuition assistance for a limited number of high-demand and STEM fields</b>	<b>5</b>	Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, South Dakota
<b>Merit-based programs</b>	<b>7</b>	Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, West Virginia, Wyoming
<b>“Last dollar,” FAFSA-required programs</b>	<b>7</b>	Delaware, Hawaii, Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, Rhode Island, West Virginia
<b>Programs for nontraditional students</b>	<b>15</b>	Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia
<b>Other restricted programs (e.g., limited to certain regions, partial grants or scholarships based on specific criteria)</b>	<b>7</b>	Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington
<b>Pilot programs (not fully funded)</b>	<b>2</b>	Montana, New Jersey

Free community colleges can play an important role in supporting post-secondary education for the current and prospective early childhood workforce. But these design choices determine the extent to which free community college or college access programs reach the current and prospective early childhood educators, as well as who they benefit. Even well-designed programs may create barriers to access. Programs that require students to attend school full-time in order to receive the benefit, or limit the number of years for which students can receive tuition support, can limit their benefits for individuals currently working full time in early childhood. Further, many free community college programs are restricted to recent high school graduates, limiting access for current early childhood workers; this includes California which recently approved funding for two years of tuition-free community college for high school graduates. But “Reconnect” programs in Tennessee and Minnesota, as well as Hawaii’s Promise program, have developed their requirements to allow flexibility for older, already working, adults.

In addition to state higher education affordability initiatives, federal financial aid is an important component in paying for post-secondary education that can be leveraged to elevate credentials of the early childhood workforce. Even in states without free community college programs, some community colleges may be essentially free for students who are eligible for federal Pell grants. But early childhood educators sometimes face barriers in accessing federal student aid, including completing the FAFSA form and meeting minimum course loads required to access student loans.

### **To and Through College Efforts**

Increasing recognition of the disparities in outcomes for low-income students and students of color in institutions of higher education has spurred federal, state, and philanthropic efforts to improve support for college success and completion — particularly for underserved student populations. These policies and programs have the potential to improve access for the early childhood workforce, because current early childhood workers face many of the same barriers to post-secondary access and completion that contribute to disparities in higher education outcomes for other low-income and racial/ethnic minority students.

At the same time, some efforts to improve college success and completion outcomes, such as gainful employment rules and performance-based financing systems, also affect early childhood education preparation programs. Federal “gainful employment” rules, designed to ensure that non-degree “career oriented” postsecondary programs and for-profit postsecondary institutions are worthwhile investments for students, track data on graduation, debt, and earnings of program graduates and discontinue federal aid eligibility for programs that fall below certain thresholds for multiple years. In addition, 32 states have adopted performance-based or outcomes-based funding policies for their public institutions of higher education, and 26 adopted performance-based funding at community colleges. Under a performance-based funding scheme, states allocate a portion of funding based on performance indicators such as course completion, time to degree, transfer rates, the number of degrees awarded, or the number of low-income and minority graduates.

Both gainful employment and performance-based funding policies that focus on student wages or labor outcomes are likely to make programs that prepare students for socially important but currently low-paid careers such as early childhood seem like a liability due to their low labor market returns. There is some evidence that adoption of performance-based funding in Ohio led to reduced funding for institutions offering early childhood degree programs, closed individual ECE degree programs, and reduced credit hours for ECE associate degree programs; similar results may also be happening in other states.<sup>47</sup> Research also suggests that performance-based funding may encourage resource-dependent colleges to enroll students who are more likely to graduate and may ultimately decrease the percent enrollment of underserved minority students. Moreover, as with the policymakers and advocates who seek to increase the qualifications of early educators and improve the quality of their preparation must be aware of these policy trends and the incentives they create for institutions.

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<sup>47</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center, 2015.

## Access, supply, and diversity of teacher candidates

### Teacher Shortages

In addition to federal, state, and philanthropic policies, trends, and initiatives, other contextual features related to supply and demand can influence state and program-level preparation policies and practices. Put simply, during times of teacher shortages — as currently exist in many parts of the country — states are less likely to take actions to improve teacher preparation that may also restrict supply. In addition, shortages of K-12 teachers can also exacerbate workforce shortages in the early childhood workforce or reduce policymakers' willingness to raise standards for or investment in B-5 educators.

In assessing states for potential partnership and investment, the Early Educator Investment Collaborative may wish to consider data regarding teacher supply and demand in a state. It is important to apply a nuanced lens, however: nationally, schools have little trouble filling elementary teaching positions, but struggle to fill math, science, computer science, and special education vacancies.<sup>48</sup> And even states that have shortages of teachers in certain communities — such as high-cost urban areas or rural regions — may not suffer from an overall teacher shortage.

In order to encourage a supply of qualified teachers, many states have invested in scholarships, loan forgiveness, or other programs for prospective or current teachers. Currently all states except New Jersey have some type of incentives for licensed teachers in high-need areas, including, in some states, certified early childhood teachers.<sup>49</sup>

- Eight states participate in an early childhood incentive program, but do not provide general K-12 pipeline or high-need incentives.<sup>50</sup>
- Five states offer incentives for the general teacher pipeline and high-need areas, but not early childhood.<sup>51</sup>
- Four states offer K-12 general and early childhood pipeline incentives, but not incentives in high-need areas.<sup>52</sup>
- 32 states offer all three types of incentive programs to potential educators.

The most common early childhood teacher assistance program, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps)<sup>53</sup>, is a scholarship program that was developed to increase the level of education and effectiveness of early learning professionals by making the educational process more affordable, increasing wages, and reducing staff turnover rates. Twenty-one states and Washington, D.C. participate in this program which provides both financial, mentoring, and advocacy supports for aspiring early childhood workforce participants. Outside of the T.E.A.C.H. program, some

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<sup>48</sup> McVey, K.P., and J. Trinidad. (2019) *Nuance in the Noise: The Complex Reality of Teacher Shortages*. Bellwether Education Partners. Retrieved from <https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/nuance-noise-complex-reality-teacher-shortages>

<sup>49</sup> Author research based on state education websites and program participant websites.

<sup>50</sup> Alaska, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

<sup>51</sup> Arkansas, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

<sup>52</sup> Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska, and Wyoming.

<sup>53</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center (2019). *About the Center*. Retrieved from <https://teachecnationalcenter.org/about-the-center/>

states have developed their own scholarship initiatives for early educators which may offer tuition assistance for college coursework, the CDA or equivalent credential, or a degree.<sup>54</sup>

Two federal programs also provide financial assistance to current and prospective teachers: the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program and the TEACH Grant Program (distinct from the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> program). The Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program allows teachers to receive up to \$17,500 on Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans in exchange for five consecutive academic years in low-income schools. The TEACH Grant Program provides grants of up to \$4,000 per year for students enrolled in coursework leading to a career in teaching.<sup>55</sup> Roughly 40 states also provide loan forgiveness programs for teachers, especially if those teachers serve in high-need areas.<sup>56</sup> However, these programs often exclude early educators, most of whom do not work in school settings, but rather in small center and home-based programs. An exception is the Educators for Maine program, which is explicitly open to child care providers.<sup>57</sup> Further, without a guarantee of a high wage and an assurance of total loan forgiveness, current ECE workforce are often reluctant to assume student loan debt given their expected wages.

### Teacher Diversity

States, school districts, and other education leaders are also working to increase the diversity of the teacher workforce by recruiting and supporting more candidates from racial, ethnic, and minority backgrounds to enroll in and complete teacher preparation programs. The current K-12 teacher workforce is far less diverse than either the K-12 student population or the early childhood workforce. Even with an increase in overall diversity among teachers, recent research finds that the teacher workforce is becoming less representative of the general population, which is diversifying at a more rapid pace. The research, done by the Brookings Institution, found that the teaching profession is “growing comparatively *less diverse* than the population of college-educated workers from which it draws talent.”<sup>58</sup> While nearly half of all K-12 students in 2015 were not white, less than a quarter of teachers were people of color.<sup>59</sup> The Urban Institute traces this gap back to when potential candidates of color were students themselves: a more diverse pipeline of teachers requires more black and Hispanic students completing high school and college.<sup>60</sup>

Efforts to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce include alternative certification (discussed above), teacher residency programs (discussed below), and “grow your own” teacher preparation

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<sup>54</sup> Whitebook et al., 2018a.

<sup>55</sup> McVey et al., 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) (2019). *Educators for Maine Program*. Retrieved from [https://www.famemaine.com/maine\\_grants\\_loans/educators-for-maine-program-2/](https://www.famemaine.com/maine_grants_loans/educators-for-maine-program-2/)

<sup>58</sup> Hansen, M., and D. Quintero (2019). *The Diversity Gap for Public School Teachers Is Actually Growing across Generations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2019/03/07/the-diversity-gap-for-public-school-teachers-is-actually-growing-across-generations/>

<sup>59</sup> Based on data from the American Community Survey. Lindsay, C., and E. Blom. (2017). *Diversifying the Classroom: Examining the Teacher Pipeline*. Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/features/diversifying-classroom-examining-teacher-pipeline>

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

programs designed to recruit and support high school students to pursue teaching careers or enable paraprofessionals to work toward full licensure (see below).<sup>61</sup>

The early education workforce does not suffer from the same diversity problems as does K-12. However, while nearly 40 percent of early educators are women of color, there is evidence of racial stratification, with Black women and Latinas in particular having attained college degrees at a lower rate than their white counterparts and experiencing the lowest wages and lowest status positions in the field. While some of the efforts utilized to expand the diversity of the K-12 workforce will be instructive for ECE preparation reform, there is a unique challenge of disrupting the existing stratification while maintaining, if not expanding, the diversity of the early education workforce. In addition to tuition assistance, a host of resource-intensive supports have been demonstrated to aid in degree completion among women of color in ECE. A series of cohort models were initiated in California, which combined scholarships with academic and structural supports (e.g., cohort models, courses offered in community locations, courses offered in Spanish, coordination with employers to allow for schedule flexibility) to great success. Seventy-six percent of the participants were women of color, 40% had previously attended to complete a bachelor's degree, and 81% graduated. Like many of the aforementioned efforts, these were operating with limited funds and the programs were never replicated.<sup>62</sup>

## Teacher preparation reform efforts

Criticisms of preparation of public school teachers are as old as public education in the United States. Over the past half century multiple waves of reform efforts have sought to improve the quality of teacher preparation. While these efforts have focused primarily on K-12 teachers, not early childhood educators, they offer important lessons that can inform efforts to transform early childhood educator preparation.

From the end of World War II through the 1970s, teachers and professional organizations representing them sought to shift control over the teaching profession from state bureaucrats to the profession itself, and to elevate the teaching profession by increasing formal education and training requirements, compensation, and esteem for teachers. This “professional standards movement” emphasized teachers’ unique knowledge and skills, and its influence remains visible today in the predominance of “approved program” routes to certification, the professional standards boards that exist in most states and institutions such as CAEP, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future<sup>63</sup>, and the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> McVey et al., 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Kipnis et al., 2012.

<sup>63</sup> NCTAF, founded by former North Carolina Gov. Jim Hunt and Stanford Professor Linda Darling-Hammond in 1994, ceased operation in 2017 and merged with Learning Forward, but had considerable influence on teacher preparation policies from 1994 through the 2000s.

<sup>64</sup> Andrew Rotherham and Sara Mead (2004). “Back to the Future,” in Frederick M. Hess, Andrew J. Rotherham, and Kate Walsh, eds, *A Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Starting in the 1980s, the standards movement in K-12 education launched a new “teacher professionalism” movement that advanced many components of the prior “professional standards” agenda, but with greater attention to teachers’ subject matter content knowledge. This movement led to creation of INTASC and adoption of Professional Teaching Standards in most states.

Starting in the 1990s, a parallel (and sometimes competing) policy movement sought to reduce barriers to entry into the teaching profession and allow the growth of alternative certification programs, in part to address widespread teacher shortages, and in part because proponents questioned the effectiveness of existing teacher preparation programs. These successive waves of reform reflect four schools of thought that have shaped efforts to improve teacher preparation in the United States over the past decade.

**“Raising the bar”** calls for increasing requirements (typically GPAs and licensure exam pass rates) for candidates to enter teacher preparation programs or be recommended for state licensure. These policies, which are designed to improve the quality of preparation program graduates by increasing program selectivity, are based on research that shows some correlation between teachers’ test scores and student learning. But this correlation is modest, and these policies have also been criticized because of the potential to screen out candidates who would be effective teachers or negatively impact teacher diversity.

**“Preparation transformation”** efforts seek to improve the design and content of preparation programs, either through changing state standards for preparation programs, or supporting individuals or groups of preparation programs to improve their practices. Such efforts seek to increase student teaching and clinical field requirements for prospective teachers; improve integration of coursework and clinical practice; ensure that preparation programs provide candidates instruction in certain content or evidence-based pedagogical techniques; and/or redesign preparation to reflect the science of learning.

**“Accountability”** efforts seek to use administrative data to hold programs publicly accountable for their completers’ performance, often measured via licensure exam pass rates, employment outcomes, and effectiveness as classroom teachers. The Obama administration’s Race to the Top program incentivized this approach, and a variety of states adopted teacher preparation accountability policies between 2009-2012. In 2016, the Obama administration proposed a regulation on the federal Higher Education Act that would require all preparation programs to report on certain completer outcomes (though the Trump administration scrapped it shortly after). These changes coincided with other changes in state policy that sought to link teacher evaluation to student test scores and sought to integrate teacher evaluation or student learning data into accountability for preparation programs. These approaches, however, typically ignore the disparate conditions under which teachers work and the economic and social factors that children experience and that can interfere with learning.

**“Alternative pathway”** efforts seek to create new alternatives to existing teacher preparation programs, both through alternative certification and the creation of new models, such as residency programs. Due in part to these efforts, 43 states now allow some form of alternative paths to certification. Whereas the first three strategies listed above seek to improve the existing teacher preparation system and institutions, the alternative pathway reflects a belief that change is more likely to occur by working outside the existing system. It is important to note that alternative pathways still assume the teacher will have completed — at a minimum — a bachelor’s degree.

These approaches are not mutually exclusive, and many organizations and initiatives that seek to improve teacher preparation employ components of several schools of thought. For example, the National Council on Teacher Quality, a think tank founded in 2000 to advocate for improved teacher preparation and state teacher effectiveness policies, advocates for increasing selectivity of preparation program entry requirements (raising the bar), lengthening student teaching requirements (program transformation), and allowing the growth of high-quality alternative certification programs (alternative pathways). Similarly, the Obama administration's Race to the Top initiative encouraged states to support the growth of alternative certification programs, while also promoting increased preparation program accountability for graduates' employment outcomes and effectiveness in the classroom.

### **Outcomes of Reform**

These approaches have a mixed track record, however. "Preparation transformation" standards have not driven significant changes in programs' actual quality and practices, and states that adopted them do not have better preparation outcomes than other states. States that experimented with outcomes-based accountability have had similarly limited success because of both practical challenges collecting and analyzing data on outcomes of program completers, limited variation in completer outcomes across (as opposed to within) programs, and political barriers to holding programs accountable for their performance.

One reason that preparation policies have not led to larger changes in program-level practice or design is that preparation programs within institutions of higher education face institutional constraints and incentives that can limit their willingness or ability to make substantial changes in program practice. Unless states are willing to put teeth behind policies — such as by publicly identify low-performing programs or denying approval for persistent low-performers — it is difficult to create real incentives for changes in practice. And holding programs to account in this way requires political will. Experts identify Tennessee and Louisiana as two states that have successfully leveraged policy to shift teacher preparation practice, through a combination of collaboration and stakeholder engagement, savvy application of the state's regulatory toolkits, and public accountability for teacher preparation programs.

### **Philanthropic Efforts to Advance Reform**

Over the past decade, numerous philanthropic funders have also sought to advance changes in teacher preparation policy and practice aligned with one or more of these agendas. The Joyce Foundation, for example, invested in state and national policy and advocacy work focused on teacher preparation that was instrumental in enacting teacher preparation accountability policies in several Midwestern states, and also funds teacher residency programs and policy work. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded policy and advocacy related to teacher preparation in the 2000s, and its Teacher Preparation Transformation Centers initiative funded five networks of teacher preparation programs (including both residencies and traditional preparation models) that seek to improve preparation by building educator competency through practice, using data about candidate performance to make decisions, ensuring effective preparation faculty, and being more responsive to



K-12 schools and communities they serve.<sup>65</sup> The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Foundation invests in innovative preparation programs (both traditional and alternative models) that provide content-rich and practice-based teacher preparation, as well as technical assistance providers working to improve traditional preparation programs, and organizations that build the pipeline of high-quality, diverse candidates entering the profession, and convenes a community of practice for innovative preparation programs. Local and regional philanthropic funders have also made significant investments in teacher preparation, including supporting the growth of alternative and residency models in their communities.

Philanthropic efforts to improve teacher preparation have also faced challenges. In 2009, the Bush Foundation, a regional foundation based in Minnesota, launched a 10-year, multi-million-dollar initiative to improve teacher preparation by partnering with 14 Minnesota and North Dakota preparation programs to build their capacity to use data for continuous improvement and transform their approach around four key pillars — recruitment, preparation, employment, and support. This initiative, known as NEXt, encountered substantial barriers, however, including lack of data capacity within institutions, failure to gain faculty trust and support, resistance to sharing data across institutions, and a lack of clear accountability commitments from institutional partners. As a result of these barriers, the initiative was unable to fully achieve its goals, and was terminated before the end of the 10-year commitment. This is just one illustrative example of challenges that philanthropic funders have faced in seeking to improve the quality of teacher preparation programs. One expert interviewed stated, based on this experience, that grants to collaboratives of higher ed institutions to improve teacher preparation are unlikely to work. In response to these and other challenges, a number of philanthropic funders have chosen to shift focus away from efforts to improve traditional teacher preparation programs and policies and instead focus on strategies that work outside the existing system, such as funding alternative certification and new teacher residency programs. Conversely, other funders, frustrated with the costs of “outside the system” models, have sought opportunities to partner with traditional higher education preparation programs.

Currently, many philanthropic funders and state policymakers who want to improve the quality of teacher preparation are struggling to identify effective levers or strategies to do so.

Although the above-mentioned policy and philanthropic efforts focused on K-12 teacher preparation, many of the challenges they have encountered stem from institutional factors within higher education institutions that may also apply to efforts to transform early childhood workforce preparation. The Early Educator Investment Collaborative and other efforts to improve early educator preparation may wish to consider examples of past and current philanthropic efforts in the K-12 preparation space, to learn from their successes and avoid replicating their mistakes. In addition, in selecting states or institutions with whom to partner, the Early Educator Investment Collaborative should consider the track record of recent state policy changes or philanthropic efforts to improve preparation in the state, and the implications they may have for state leaders’ and programs’ willingness or capacity to engage in new

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<sup>65</sup> For more information see Towne, L., Nawi T., Rubalcaba C., and Sanghani, P. (2017) *Teacher Preparation Transformation Centers Learning Series: Introduction*. Seattle, WA: Education First. Retrieved from [https://education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Education-First\\_Teacher-Preparation-Transformation-Centers-Learning-Series\\_Introduction\\_July-2017.pdf](https://education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Education-First_Teacher-Preparation-Transformation-Centers-Learning-Series_Introduction_July-2017.pdf)

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2017). *Educator Preparation: Equipping Educators for Success from Day One*. Retrieved from <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/what-we-do/educator-preparation/>

transformation efforts focused on early childhood workforce. For example, as part of a statewide effort to attract, train, and retain more teachers, Virginia recently approved new bachelor's degree teacher preparation programs, stimulating the creation of a number of new degree programs, including a new bachelor's degree in early childhood teaching, that may create an opening for adoption of innovative, high-quality approaches to early childhood workforce preparation.

In addition to these broad trends in teacher preparation policies and initiatives, states have also adopted policies focused on improving the quality of early childhood and elementary teacher preparation. Most notably, a number of states have adopted policies designed to improve the quality of preparation that future teachers receive to develop young children's language and emerging literacy skills and ensure that candidates receive training in scientifically based reading instruction, sometimes in the context of 3rd grade reading laws. At least 31 states require all K-3 teacher preparation programs to include content in their curricula focused on reading instruction.<sup>66</sup> Florida, for example, explicitly requires that preparation programs' curricula include "scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional strategies."<sup>67</sup> And in 2003, Mississippi mandated that every teacher preparation program in the state require two courses in early literacy aligned with the National Reading Panel recommendations. Starting in 2016, the state also requires teacher candidates to pass a test of reading science. And, to ensure they are able to, it invested in training teacher preparation faculty in the science of early literacy. This multifaceted approach — combining course requirements, accountability for candidate mastery, and training for higher education faculty — has resulted in changes in preparation practice at teacher preparation institutions in the state.<sup>68</sup>

In addition, some states have revamped licensure requirements to improve preparation of teachers for children in grades pre-K-3rd. Pennsylvania, for example, eliminated its K-6 license and replaced it with a PK-4 license, which all early educators in publicly funded settings in those grades must have.<sup>69</sup>

## Examples of Innovative and Promising Efforts

Many of the challenges facing early childhood workforce preparation in the United States today stem from systemic issues, including fragmentation of the larger early childhood field and standards for educators in different settings or roles, insufficient public investment in early childhood education and low compensation of early educators, lack of a common definition of what early childhood educator preparation programs should do, and fragmented or lacking oversight or quality control of early educator preparation offerings. Addressing these issues will require larger structural and systemic changes.

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<sup>66</sup> Education Commission of the States. (2018). *State Kindergarten-Through-Third-Grade Policies: What are the requirements for teacher training and professional development in reading*. Education Commission of the States 50-State Comparison. Retrieved from <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/MBQuest2RTanw?rep=KK3Q1808>

<sup>67</sup> Florida Department of Education (2018). *Rule 6A-5.066: Approval of Teacher Preparation Programs*. Florida Department of State. Retrieved from <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleno.asp?id=6A-5.066&Section=0>

<sup>68</sup> Hanford, E. (2018). *Hard Words: Why aren't kids being taught to read?* Retrieved from <https://www.apmreports.org/story/2018/09/10/hard-words-why-american-kids-arent-being-taught-to-read>

<sup>69</sup> Bornfreund, 2011.

At the same time, however, improving the preparation of early educators will also require changes in individual program-level practices. While structural and systemic changes can create incentives for or remove barriers to those changes, structural and systemic changes alone are unlikely to drive the magnitude of practice changes needed. Further, even in the current fragmented system, some preparation programs and initiatives are already moving forward with innovative models and promising practices that can offer models for broader change.

Many innovative and promising efforts in early childhood workforce preparation can be grouped into one of four categories:

- Innovations and models that seek to increase access to post-secondary education for current and future early childhood educators and support candidates to successfully complete credentials;
- Innovations that seek to improve the quality of post-secondary training for early childhood educators or establish common standards of quality where they are currently lacking;
- Innovations that adapt strategies that have supported workforce training and postsecondary success in other sectors to meet the needs of the early childhood workforce; and,
- Innovations in K-12 educator preparation that offer potential models for improving preparation for the B-5 workforce.

These approaches are not mutually exclusive: cohort models, for example, seek to improve access to and success in post-secondary education for early educators, but can also lead to better quality preparation. Apprenticeship models adopted from workforce training can also make training more accessible to currently working early educators. But this framework may provide a helpful lens for thinking about different innovations that exist in the field — as well as where other fields can help inform further innovation.

## Increasing Access to and Success in Post-secondary Education

### Apprenticeship programs

Apprenticeships combine classroom-based learning and on-the-job training to facilitate acquisition of the knowledge and skills ECE workers need in order to know how to implement effective practices in their early education roles.<sup>70</sup> The apprenticeship model allows workers to pursue higher education while continuing to earn wages and incurring little out-of-pocket expense, as the majority of the costs are incurred by the employer or covered by federal or state grant funding. Additionally, apprenticeship programs typically require increased wages upon achievement of certain criteria or milestones. However, structural issues within current financing of ECE programs often prevent meaningful raises in line with qualifications, which is one of the reasons there has historically been reluctance for labor agencies to work with the ECE industry to provide apprenticeships.

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<sup>70</sup> Lerman, R.I. (2013). *Skill development in middle level occupations: The role of apprenticeship training* (IZA Policy Paper, No. 61). Bonn, Germany: Institute for Labor Economics (IZA). Retrieved from <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/91768/1/pp61.pdf>

The fact that a state supports apprenticeships in ECE is an important signal of effort to fund improvements to early educator preparation, but like scholarship programs, apprenticeship programs differ in their ability to improve teacher preparation and compensation and the extent of their impact on the early educator population. Apprenticeships (across fields and occupations) are currently under consideration at the federal level as well, with Congress deliberating on changes to the Registered Apprenticeship program (EARNs Act) and the Trump administration attempting to develop a parallel system of industry-recognized apprenticeship programs (IRAPs).<sup>71</sup> Apprenticeship programs under IRAP would not be subject to the same wage standards as current Registered Apprenticeships, though the status of this program is unclear.<sup>72</sup>

### Overview of Early Educator Apprenticeship Programs

We identified 20 states with at least one apprenticeship program for early educators based on CSCCE Early Childhood Workforce Index survey data and other sources.<sup>73</sup> The majority of these programs are US DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs that explicitly include early educators (see Table 2). Due to a lack of available data, it is difficult to say how many of these states with US DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs actually have any active apprentices in ECE currently.

<b>Table 2 Early Educator Apprenticeship Program Status</b>		
<b>DOL/Registered Apprenticeship (may/may not operate statewide)</b>	<b>Statewide Non-DOL/RA Apprenticeships</b>	<b>Regional/Local Non-DOL/RA Apprenticeships</b>
Alaska California Florida Idaho Iowa Kansas Kentucky Maine* Montana New Hampshire New Jersey West Virginia Vermont Virginia	Washington, D.C.	California Missouri Oregon Pennsylvania Washington* Wisconsin

<sup>71</sup> Prebil, M. (2019). *What's next for apprenticeship in 2019?* Retrieved from <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/whats-new-for-apprenticeship-2019/>

<sup>72</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. (2019). Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program. Retrieved from <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/industry-recognized-apprenticeship-program>

<sup>73</sup> Lutton, A. (2018). Apprenticeship as a degree attainment strategy for the early childhood workforce. Philadelphia, PA: District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund. Author search of US DOL RA sites.

\*Maine's status is somewhat unclear, but the program is run by their state DOL and appears to follow at least some of the specifications of Registered Apprenticeships (e.g., regarding wages). Washington's status also unclear, given operation by state DOL.

Early educators in US DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs are referred to as "child care development specialists." This is the top occupation for female apprentices: 18% of all female apprentices participating in Registered Apprenticeships are child care development specialists.<sup>74</sup> However, women are extremely underrepresented in Registered Apprenticeships overall, making up only 7.3% of the overall share of registered apprentices in 2017.<sup>75</sup> The median journey person wage for a child care development specialist was \$9.75 per hour over the period 2008-2017.<sup>76</sup>

## Stackable credentials

To support matriculation and student success, some states and institutions across the country are employing the strategy of "stackable credentials." Stackable credentials are a sequence of ascending credentials that can be earned over time, allowing students to move along a career pathway and progress to higher education degrees. If they are portable, these credentials are also verified and can be transferred from one institution to another.<sup>77</sup> For example, in Washington state, 93% of associate degree programs participating in the *Inventory* reported both offering these certificates and accepting certificates that students have earned elsewhere. In contrast, fewer than one-half (44%) of bachelor's degree programs either offer or accept these certificates and one-third (33%) reported they have no plans to do so in the future.

## Workforce Training Strategies

### Basic skills training

Efforts to improve access to and success in preparation for early childhood educators can also learn from models that have worked to support access to post-secondary career and training in other fields. Integrated Basic Skills Training, or I-BEST, is one such model designed to reduce the barrier that remedial education coursework can pose to adults seeking post-secondary, career-focused training. Most colleges require students who lack proficiency in math, English language arts, or other basic skills to take remedial courses prior to taking credit-bearing coursework, and 60% of community college students take at least one remedial course. This can be a particular barrier for older adults seeking career-focused training and delays progress towards their educational goals. I-BEST is a model, developed by the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBTC) to accelerate coursework and increase success rates for low-skilled adults by integrating adult basic education and

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<sup>74</sup> Hanks, A., McGrew, A., & Zessoules, D. (2018). *The Apprenticeship Wage and Participation Gap*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/07/11/453321/apprenticeship-wage-participation-gap>

<sup>75</sup> Ibid

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

<sup>77</sup> Austin, Mellow, Rosin, & Seltzer, 2012.

career technical education through team-taught classes. In Washington, I-BEST students focused on early education can take coursework to progress on a number of career pathways, including a CDA, the state's stackable certificates, and early childhood education associate degrees. The model was initially piloted with career-oriented programs (including early childhood programs) at ten Washington community colleges in 2004 and has since been expanded to all 34 colleges in the Washington community college and technical system as well as colleges in New Mexico and Rhode Island. An examination of I-BEST students in Washington found that I-BEST students earned substantially more college credits than their peers, were much more likely to earn an award, and were moderately more likely to achieve a basic skills gain.<sup>78</sup>

Oregon's Pathways for Adult Basic Skills Transition to Education and Work Initiative (OPABS) offers a similar model that integrates adult basic education/ESL bridge curricula into 15 new career pathway programs, including early childhood education. Wisconsin's Technical College System has developed a similar approach for offering blended or contextualized early childhood education courses that are team-taught by early childhood education (ECE) instructors and Adult Basic Education (ABE) instructors.

## Innovations to Improve the Quality of Postsecondary Training

A few promising models and initiatives have developed new approaches to preparing early educators or have sought to raise the bar for quality across existing preparation options.

EarlyEdU Alliance offers a set of early childhood courses grounded in research about effective early childhood teaching. Coursework is competency-based, aligned to NAEYC competencies, and practice-focused. All courses integrate video of effective classroom practice, as well as the Coaching Companion, a video sharing and feedback app that allows students and instructors to share and discuss videos of their own practice in early childhood settings. By providing high-quality, already developed course content and integrating the Coaching Companion, EarlyEdU Alliance's approach transforms the focus of the instructor's role from creating and delivering course content to become a job-embedded coach helping early childhood educators enrolled in degree programs to integrate what they are learning in their own classrooms and improve their practice. In doing so, it incorporates lessons from extensive research on in-service professional development, training, and coaching models that result in improved early childhood teaching practices and customizes delivery for a postsecondary context.

EarlyEdU Alliance is operated by Cultivate Learning, a center within the University of Washington, but is not itself a degree program or institution of higher education. Rather, EarlyEdU Alliance courses are offered through a network of two- and four-year higher education institutions that have chosen to partner with EarlyEdU Alliance to deliver their courses. Members may choose to offer just one or a few

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<sup>78</sup> Wachen, J., Jenkins, D., & Van Noy, M. (2010). *How I-BEST Works: Findings from a Field Study of Washington State's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program*. NY, NY: Community College Research Center. Retrieve from <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/how-i-best-works-findings.pdf>

EarlyEdU Alliance courses or the full set. Participating Institutions receive access to the courses and supporting materials, which were developed with a combination of Head Start and philanthropic funding, free of charge. This approach results in a scalable model for expanding access to high-quality post-secondary early childhood coursework. Currently, over 50 higher education institutions and numerous state and local government and nonprofit agencies are members of the EarlyEdU Alliance.

In New Jersey, the Early Learning Improvement Consortium (ELIC), comprised of faculty across state four-year institutions of higher education, was formed with two goals in mind: (1) to fund faculty to learn how to be research partners and collect data related to early childhood outcomes, and (2) to facilitate a common understanding of ECE learning goals and quality practices. The ELIC assisted the NJ DOE to develop a common child assessment system to measure progress toward the early learning language and literacy standards to be used to inform teaching.

## Innovations in K-12 Teacher Preparation

### Residency models

Over the past 15 years, preparation programs have gradually adopted a more “clinical” approach to teacher training. Similar to the medical profession, teacher candidates spend increasingly less of their time in a university lecture hall and more in a PK-12 classroom. Teacher residencies are the latest and one of the better-regarded iterations of this shift.

In a residency model, teacher candidates receive almost all of their training in their future job site: They spend at least a year in a pre-K through 12 classroom under the guidance of a highly effective mentor teacher. This on-the-job experience is complemented by coursework that is tightly linked to and builds upon their experiences in the classroom. At the end of the residency, residents have deep theoretical and practical knowledge that equips them to become a teacher of record in their own classroom.

Residency programs are an innovation within teacher preparation that address several concerns with the traditional program model. The year-long, co-teaching experience effectively serves as a year-long interview, giving candidates and schools the opportunity to assess fit before making a long-term commitment. Most residency programs provide a stipend or salary, which lowers the opportunity cost for candidates and creates a pathway into teaching for candidates who could otherwise not afford to do so. And the early research on residencies is promising. Residency graduates, on average, come from more diverse backgrounds, have higher retention rates, receive higher marks on principal satisfaction, and are more likely to teach in shortage subject areas than teachers from traditional preparation programs.<sup>79</sup>

To date, the majority of residency programs prepare K-12 teachers. But there is increasing interest in developing similar pathways into teaching for early educators based on early adopters’ success.

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<sup>79</sup> LiBetti, A. and Trinidad, J. (2018). *Trading Coursework for Classroom Realizing the Potential of Teacher Residencies*. Washington, DC: Bellwether Education Partners. Retrieved from [https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/TeacherResidencies\\_Bellwether.pdf](https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/TeacherResidencies_Bellwether.pdf)

AppleTree Early Learning Teacher Residency in Washington, D.C., for example, has prepared early educators for the charter network's three- and four-year-old classrooms for more than a decade.

### “Grow your own” models

Many states and districts have created “grow your own” programs designed to attract a more diverse candidate pool for the teacher workforce and support these candidates through a teacher preparation program. New Mexico recently funded a grow your own program targeted to current education assistants, who are overall more likely to be people of color, bilingual, and born outside of the U.S. than current teachers.<sup>80</sup>

Clemson University has a program designed to combine the strengths and resources of its large university with the individualized programs offered by other two- and four-year college programs in South Carolina. In particular it helps students who begin their teacher preparation at a two-year institution seamlessly transfer to a four-year institution to complete their bachelor's degree.<sup>81</sup>

## Implications for Efforts to Transform Early Childhood Educator Preparation

The fragmented current structure of early educator preparation delivery, oversight, and governance has clear implications for efforts to transform early educator preparation.

First, because preparation is currently delivered and overseen through two distinct systems, efforts to transform early educator preparation across the birth-8 continuum must either a) work across and drive simultaneous and aligned changes to both these systems, or b) substantially overhaul existing structural arrangements to bring oversight and governance of early educator preparation into a common system. Either is a daunting task, both politically and practically, and the presence of multiple state agencies or commissions with overlapping oversight and governance responsibilities for state teacher licensure and/or B-5 preparation further complicates matters in many states.

In addition, building a more unified and consistent approach to early educator preparation will require reconciling differences in the values and assumptions that underlie both systems. Within the B-5 system, qualification requirements and preparation pathways are designed in ways that:

- Value experience working with young children as much as or over formal education credentials;
- Seek to provide a multiplicity of entry points and pathways to credentials; and,
- Limit distinctions between preservice training and ongoing professional development.

State teacher certification and licensure systems, in contrast, tend to:

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<sup>80</sup> New Mexico Higher Education Department (n.d.) *Grow Your Own Teachers*. Retrieved from <https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/scholarships/grow-your-own-teachers>

<sup>81</sup> Clemson College of Education (n.d.) *Call Me MISTER® Participating Colleges*. Retrieved from <https://www.clemson.edu/education/research/programs/callmemister/colleges/index.html>



- Value formal educational credentials over experience working with children;
- Define a limited number of pathways for entry into the profession designed to ensure that all new teachers meet certain minimum standards; and,
- Draw sharp distinctions between preservice preparation and ongoing professional development.

These different values and priorities also mean that the two different systems also have different challenges related to early educator preparation: In the B-5 system/non-system, the primary challenges are inconsistent and often too low standards for formal preparation; fragmentation and variation in standards across roles, settings, funding streams, and ages of children served; wide variation in the quality and content of preparation programs; and, a lack of oversight of preparation program quality. The state teacher licensure system, in contrast, has more consistent entry requirements for teachers and oversight of preparation program quality, but there is evidence that many programs do not provide sufficient coverage of content and pedagogical skills related to young children's development and learning. To the extent that programs in the state teacher licensure system do focus on young children, many focus primarily on the early elementary grades, with less attention to pre-K.<sup>82</sup> Even programs intended to prepare individuals for birth-5 or birth-8 endorsements often focus primarily on the pre-K (and, where applicable, early elementary years) with limited coursework and clinical experience focused on infants and toddlers.<sup>83</sup> Any successful effort to transform early educator preparation will need to address both sets of concerns.

Finally, a collection of data on state B-5 and teacher licensure systems, policies, oversight, and governance highlights wide variation across states in policies and the structure of teacher licensure and B-5 systems. This means that any strategy to transform preparation of early educators must be highly customized to the individual state's systems, policies, and political context. The selection process of states for investment should include a careful review of this context as well as levers available for change in a state.

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<sup>82</sup> Putman, H., Walsh, K., Moorer, A. (2016). *Some Assembly Required: Piecing together the Preparation Preschool Teachers Need*. Washington, DC: National Council on Teacher Quality. Retrieved from <https://www.nctq.org/publications/Some-Assembly-Required:-Piecing-together-the-preparation-preschool-teachers-need>

Ross, E., et al. (2017). *State Teacher Policy Yearbook: National Summary*. Washington, DC: National Council on Teacher Quality. Retrieved from [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ\\_2017\\_State\\_Teacher\\_Policy\\_Yearbook](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ_2017_State_Teacher_Policy_Yearbook), p 32.

<sup>83</sup> Copeman Petig, A., Austin, L.J.E., & Dean, A. (2018). *Understanding Many Languages: Preparing Early Educators to Teach Dual Language Learners*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/understanding-many-languages-preparing-early-educators-to-teach-dual-language-learners/>

# APPENDIX A: State Early Childhood Credential/License(s) for B-8, Equivalent to K-12 Teaching Credential/License

Alabama	Yes, B-4th and P-3rd		Montana	No
Alaska	Yes, B-3rd and P-3rd		Nebraska	Yes, B-3rd
Arizona	Yes, B-8		Nevada	Yes, B-2nd
Arkansas	Yes, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) B-K		New Hampshire	Yes, B-8 (N-3rd)
California	No		New Jersey	No
Colorado	Yes, B-8		New Mexico	Yes, B-PreK and P-3rd
Connecticut	Yes, B-K and N (Nursery)-3rd		New York	Yes, B-2nd
Delaware	Yes, B-8		North Carolina	Yes, B-K
Washington, D.C.	No		North Dakota	Yes, B-3rd
Florida	Yes, B-4th and P-3rd		Ohio	No
Georgia	Yes, B-K		Oklahoma	No
Hawaii	No		Oregon	No
Idaho	Yes, B-3rd		Pennsylvania	No (endorsement PK-4th and ECSE PK-8)
Illinois	Yes, B-3rd		Rhode Island	Yes, ECSE B-2nd
Indiana	No		South Carolina	No
Iowa	No		South Dakota	Yes, B-3rd
Kansas	Yes, B-K and B-3rd		Tennessee	No
Kentucky	Yes, B-primary		Texas	No
Louisiana	No		Utah	No
Maine	Yes, B-5 and K-3rd		Vermont	Yes, B-5 and B-8
Maryland	Yes, ECSE B-3rd		Virginia	Yes, ECSE B-5
Massachusetts	No		Washington	No
Michigan	Yes, B-8		West Virginia	Yes, B-PreK
Minnesota	Yes, B-8		Wisconsin	Yes, B-8
Mississippi	Yes, ECSE B-5		Wyoming	Yes, B-5 and B-8
Missouri	Yes, B-3rd			

## APPENDIX B: State Competencies

STATE	Does the state have competencies?	Do they vary by child age?	Are they aligned to the CDA?	Are they aligned to the higher education system?	Are they aligned to a state credential?
Alabama	Yes	No	No	No	No
Alaska	Yes	No	No	No	No
Arizona	Yes	No	No	No	No
Arkansas	Yes	No	No	No	No
California	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Colorado	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Delaware	Yes	No	No	No	No
Washington, D.C.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Florida	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	No	No	No	No
Hawaii	Yes	No	No	No	No
Idaho	Yes	No	No	No	No
Illinois	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Indiana	Yes	No	No	No	No
Iowa	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Kansas	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Kentucky	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Louisiana	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Maine	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	No	No	No	No
Michigan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Mississippi	No	No	No	No	No

STATE	Does the state have competencies?	Do they vary by child age?	Are they aligned to the CDA?	Are they aligned to the higher education system?	Are they aligned to a state credential?
Missouri	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Montana	Yes	No	No	No	No
Nebraska	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Nevada	Yes	No	No	No	No
New Hampshire	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
New Jersey	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
New Mexico	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
New York	Yes	No	No	No	No
North Carolina	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Dakota	Yes	No	No	No	No
Ohio	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Oklahoma	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Oregon	Yes	No	No	Yes, at some institutions	No
Pennsylvania	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, at some institutions	No
Rhode Island	Yes	No	No	Yes, at some institutions	No
South Carolina	Yes	No	No	No	No
South Dakota	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Unclear
Tennessee	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, at some institutions	Yes
Texas	Yes	No	No	No	No
Utah	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Vermont	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Virginia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Washington	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	Yes	No	No	No	No
Wisconsin	Yes	No	No	No	No
Wyoming	Yes	No	No	No	No



Center for the Study of  
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The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment conducts research and proposes policy solutions aimed at improving how our nation prepares, supports, and rewards the early care and education workforce since 1999.

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Bellwether Education Partners is a national nonprofit focused on dramatically changing education and life outcomes for underserved children. We do this by helping education organizations accelerate their impact and by working to improve policy and practice. Bellwether envisions a world in which race, ethnicity, and income no longer predict opportunities for students, and the American education system affords all individuals the ability to determine their own path and lead a productive and fulfilling life.

[bellwethereducation.org](http://bellwethereducation.org)

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The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) conducts academic research to inform policy supporting high-quality, early education for all young children, promoting the physical, cognitive, and social development children need to succeed in school and later life. NIEER provides independent, research-based analysis and technical assistance to policymakers, journalists, researchers, and educators.

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