

Uncovering the Inner Workings of States' Early Childhood Policies: Results From a New Tool for Changemakers Focused on Transforming the Workforce

The Questionnaire

As part of a commitment to advancing a strong and diverse early childhood education (ECE) profession, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and New America are among a number of national, state, and local organizations who are engaged in the collective **Power to the Profession** initiative. This initiative aims to establish a shared framework of career pathways, knowledge and competencies, qualifications, standards, and compensation that unifies the entire profession across states and settings. As part of an effort to prepare for the implementation of a comprehensive policy and financing strategy based on the Power to the Profession recommendations, NAEYC and New America, with support from Child Care Aware of America, are working with states to identify and analyze their key policies, governance bodies, and decision-making processes and positions related to the birth through age 8 workforce.

Our project's goal, borne out of an identified need from state partners, is to help advocates prepare for, develop, and ultimately implement a process for achieving a strong, supported, and diverse early childhood education profession. Recognizing that each state has its own complexities, the first step is to delve deeply enough to uncover a state's internal systems, structures, power configurations, and regulations. We realize that to do this, advocates and policymakers will need a new tool, something akin to an MRI machine for scanning a state's policy and regulatory structures to understand who holds power to make or prevent change, and where that power is held. We developed a comprehensive questionnaire to serve this purpose. The answers that come from this questionnaire can help people spot where opportunities, gaps, and blockages exist and where infrastructure is strong and weak, while also helping

to establish paths for moving forward.

We piloted the questionnaire with support from the Alliance for Early Success in early 2017 with three states: Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin. The paper resulting from that pilot project was released in December 2017 and can be found on the websites of NAEYC and New America.

The questionnaire itself, which is being continually updated based on feedback from state-based participants, is available for all early childhood advocates to use as a tactical document to help advance workforce policies in their states. The question format includes yes/no questions; multiple choice questions; and open-ended questions, divided up into seven sections:

1. Governance
2. State Context / Environment
3. Competencies
4. Workforce / Educator Licensing
5. Preparation: Individual and Ongoing
6. Career Lattices and Registries
7. Compensation and Support

The questionnaire is available for downloading as a PDF on the following pages. If you are an advocate who would like assistance in utilizing and implementing this questionnaire in your state, please reach out to advocacy@naeyc.org. We will work with you, New America, and other partners to make it into a document that is accessible by multiple advocates who can work together to share their knowledge and expertise.

Happy uncovering!

Governance Section

Does your state have a single office that bears responsibility for the scope of early childhood education?

IF YES: (answer the questions below in this column)

- › What is the name of the office?
- › Is it inclusive of children birth through age 5 or birth through age 8?
- › In what agency is the office located?
- › What is the title of the individual who leads it?
- › Who does that individual report to?
- › Does the office exist in statute?

IF NO: (answer the questions below in this column)

- › What are the different offices that bear responsibility?
- › In which agencies are these offices located?
- › What are the titles of the individuals who bear the responsibilities for leading these offices?
- › Is there any kind of formal or informal inter-agency committee or taskforce to bring some or all of these individuals together?
- › If yes, who is responsible for leading this / these committees?

Does the governor's office have an early childhood advisor or advisory unit?

- › If yes, what are the office's or individual's priority responsibilities?
- › Do they connect with agencies?
 - If yes, which agencies? On a scale of 1-5, 1 being low and 5 being high, how well does this office connect with each of the other agencies? (example: HHS, 4)
 - Do they connect with ECE organizations (ie, AEYCs, CCRRs)? On a scale of 1-5, how well does this office connect with each external organization?

What are the active state level committees/commissions/councils related to or inclusive of children birth-to-age 8 (particularly adults working with children during that span)?

- › What is their authority? What is their defined scope? Who are the required participants? To whom is this group accountable?

State Context / Environment Section

What are the major advocacy organizations in the state that work on issues impacting early childhood education, birth through 8?

- › Which of these organizations, if any, only focus on children birth through age 5?
 - › Which of these organizations, if any, only focus on children preK-3rd grade?
 - › Do the “K-12” education advocacy organizations have ECE as part of their agendas?
 - If so, how?
 - › Are CCRRs in the state engaged to support and improve the ECE workforce? Does the resource and referral agency have a presence in the state as an advocacy organization? On a scale of 1-5, how strong would you say that presence is?
 - › Are AEYCs in the state engaged to support and improve the ECE workforce? Does the AEYC have a presence in the state as an advocacy organization? On a scale of 1-5, how strong would you say that presence is?
 - › Do the major advocacy organizations have a platform or coalition for shared advocacy activity?
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What is the political and philanthropic landscape in the state?

- › What have been the Governor’s most recent proposals related to ECE?
- › Have any of them focused on the ECE workforce? If so, what do they do?
- › What have been the legislators’ most recent proposals related to ECE?
 - Have any of them focused on the ECE workforce? If so, what do they do?
- › Who are the state legislative ECE champions?
 - Do they hold any leadership roles? What committees do they serve on?
- › In the state legislature, what committees have purview over ECE?
 - Who has jurisdiction over some or all teachers in birth-3rd settings?
 - What about teachers in K-12?
 - Do these committees handle all issues related to teachers?
- › Is there an ECE caucus?
 - What age group / programs / funding streams is it interested in?
- › Is the Chief State School Officer elected or appointed?

- › How many individuals sit on the School Board? State Board of Regents
 - Are they appointed or elected?
 - What issues are under their purview?
- › Who are the large scale ECE supporters in the state outside of the immediate early childhood field (higher education, business, law enforcement, etc)?
- › Are philanthropic organizations in the state engaged in efforts to support and improve the ECE workforce?
 - On a scale of 1-5, how would you classify the level of support?
 - Is the support directed primarily towards direct investment or towards advocacy?
- › What national or federal ECE efforts were recently or are currently underway in the state? Choices: RTT-ELC, PDG, TEACH, WAGES, EHS-CC Partnerships, TA from national organizations (inclusive of NAEYC, CEELO, NGA and others)

Competencies Section

Do competencies exist for the teaching role in early childhood education?

- › Is there one set of competencies for teachers of children birth through age 8?
 - If **yes**, are all teachers across all settings (licensed and unlicensed child care; family child care; state preK; elementary school) expected to meet them?
 - If **no**, what are the divisions?
 - infant/toddler?
 - Pre-K?
 - K-3?
 - 0-5?
 - Do they differ by setting; i.e., are there different competencies for family child care providers, licensed child care centers, QRIS participants, etc.?
- › When were the competencies established / updated? Is there a schedule for revision and updating?
- › What agenc(ies) created them?
- › Who approves, maintains, and conducts reviews?
- › What is involved in the “review” process?

Are there competencies for assistant teachers/paraprofessionals?

- › Who is expected to meet these competencies? Are those expectations monitored?
 - Assistant teachers/paraprofessionals in child care programs?
 - Assistant teachers/paraprofessionals in elementary schools?
 - Assistant teachers/paraprofessionals in family child care programs?

Are there competencies for program administrators?

- › Who is expected to meet these competencies? Are those expectations monitored?
 - Administrators in child care programs?
 - Administrators in elementary schools?
 - Administrators family child care programs?

How are these competencies implemented?

- › Are they aligned with state-based credentials or certificates?
- › Are they aligned with higher education degree coursework?
- › Are they embedded in the training or trainer approval process?
- › Are they embedded in the state higher education approval process?

Are there current or planned efforts in the state to revise competencies?

Workforce / Educator Licensing Section

Is an individual level licensing required for teachers?

- › For what settings?
 - Elementary
 - Licensed child care centers
 - Licensed family child care
 - Only for those receiving state preK funding? Or QRIS funding?
- › Is there an early childhood license for educators teaching in public / charter schools?
 - What age range or grades are covered in this license?
 - Are there specializations such as special ed or DLL?
 - What exam must applicants complete to earn this license?
 - What are the educational requirements for earning this license?
 - What agency (ies) is responsible for issuing individual license?
 - Is student teaching experience required?
 - For what setting?
 - For what age span?
 - Under what conditions can this license be revoked?
 - Is this data stored and tracked in a database?
 - Is some of this data public facing?
 - How often are requirements reviewed?
 - What is the review process?

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What, if any, other optional licenses/certifications/endorsements exist?

What role does QRIS play? *Example: Higher rating for licensed teachers?*

Does the state require an induction period? What does it entail? How long is it?

What agency(ies)/body(ies) have oversight of recertification?

PREPARATION SECTION

INITIAL PREPARATION

What is the minimum educational requirement for teachers in:

- › Licensed child care centers / with public PreK funding / in QRIS?
- › Elementary schools?
- › Family child care programs?

NOTE: Options may include, but are not limited to: Less than / more than 80 hours of training on specific topics; CDA / ECE state credentials; AA / BA (certain subject?)

How are education standards included and embedded in state policy beyond the minimum?

- › Is it embedded in the state's licensing system? In the QRIS?
 - › What are the incentives to participate?
 - › What is the proportion of individuals across settings who are at various levels within the QRIS?
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Which institutions in the state prepare teachers of children up through 3rd grade?

- › AA / BA / Masters programs / Doctoral programs
 - › In which departments are preparation programs located in these institutions?
-

Is a practicum or student teaching required for an AA? For a BA?

- › In what setting(s)? With what age span?
-

What agency(ies) / body(ies) approves ECE and elementary preparation programs that prepare graduates for the state teaching license?

- › Is there a governing board? If so, what is the name? What governance powers do they have, and over whom (universities, college, only public, including private?)
 - › What agency(ies) sets the content requirements?
 - Is higher education accreditation required for state approval? If so, what accreditors are approved by the state?
 - Does the state monitor preparation program effectiveness?
 - Is alignment with the ECE competencies a requirement for state approval?
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What agency(ies) or organizations approve early childhood or child development degree programs that DO NOT prepare graduates for the state teaching license?

- › Is there a governing board? If so, what is the name? What governance powers do they have, and over whom (universities, college, only public, including private?)
 - › What agency(ies) sets the content requirements?
 - › Is higher education accreditation required for state approval? If so, what accreditors are approved by the state?
 - › Does the state monitor preparation program effectiveness?
 - › Is alignment with the ECE competencies a requirement for state approval?
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Does the state require articulation agreements between 2-year and 4-year ECE degree programs in state colleges and universities? (Choose one option)

- › Yes, and it impacts all state funded 2-year and 4-year ECE degree programs
 - › Yes, and it impacts some 2-year and 4-year ECE degree programs
 - › No, this is not a state requirement
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Are there regularly scheduled collaboration opportunities for ECE faculty in the state?

Are there initiatives in the state to encourage teachers to increase their degree or educational attainment?

- › What do they look like? Who is responsible for administering those initiatives? Is there public funding to support it? How long has the initiative been in existence?

Are there efforts in the state specifically designed to support access to and completion of higher education degrees / credentials for a diverse group of early childhood educators?

- › What do they look like?
- › Do they include any of the following: Dual-enrollment programs? Cohort models? Guidance counselors? Scholarships and grants? Recognition of previous experience? Online or night-time courses?

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING

Does the state require teachers to provide evidence of ongoing specific professional development/training?

- › For how many hours? For what settings?

Does the state require teacher assistants to provide evidence of ongoing specific professional development/ongoing training?

- › For how many hours? For what settings?

Does the state require administrators to provide evidence of ongoing specific professional development/ongoing training?

- › For how many hours? For what settings?
- › For principals of elementary schools, is this PD specific to early childhood?

How often are the ongoing PD requirements reviewed? What is the review process?

Does the state manage a ECE trainer or training approval process?

- › What agency manages this process?
- › What are the criteria for approval? Do they have to demonstrate best practices in adult learning or PD? Do they have to show evidence of impact?
- › Do trainers for all sectors have to go through the approval process?

Who is required to seek training from an approved source?

Does the state provide professional development? For whom?

To what extent is coaching a part of professional development activities provided or supported by the state, and in which settings? (1 = non existent; 5 = significant)

Career Lattices / Registries Section

Does the state provide an ECE career pathways or lattice?

- › What roles are referenced in the ECE career pathway or lattice?
 - › What settings are referenced in the ECE career pathway or lattice?
 - › What age groups are referenced in the ECE career pathways or lattice?
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What agency(ies) is responsible for developing and maintaining the ECE career pathway or lattice?

Is there a certificate awarded for meeting the requirements for levels on the career pathway or lattice?

- › What agency(ies) issue these certificates?
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Is there a registry that tracks how the workforce is progressing through the levels on the career pathway?

- › What agency(ies) is responsible for supporting and sustaining the registry?
- › Who is required to participate in the registry?
- › Where does the funding for the registry come from?
- › What percentage of the workforce participates in the registry?
 - Professionals working in:
 - Licensed child care centers / with public PreK / participating in QRIS
 - Elementary schools
 - Family child care programs / participating in QRIS
- › What additional data does the registry track?
- › Do ECE teachers have access to guidance / counseling to help them advance along the career ladder?

Compensation and Supports Section

Is there any regulation or requirement from the state that narrows the salary gaps between professionals working in elementary schools and those who work elsewhere?

- › Which early childhood educators are the target (role and setting)?
 - › What is the source of this funding?
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Does the state participate in any salary supplement efforts?

Do the state standards attend to workplace conditions? (ie, paid planning and meeting time; dependable schedules; salary schedules; etc.)



The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. To learn more about the benefits of membership, please visit [NAEYC.org/membership](https://naeyc.org/membership).

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