



EDUCATION  
POLICY

EARLY & ELEMENTARY  
EDUCATION POLICY

**naeyc**  
National Association for the  
Education of Young Children

LAURA BORNFREUND AND LAUREN HOGAN

# UNCOVERING THE INNER WORKINGS OF STATES' EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICIES

Results From a New Tool for Changemakers  
Focused on Transforming the Workforce

DECEMBER 2017

## About the Authors

**Laura Bornfreund** is director of early & elementary education policy with the Education Policy program at New America. She leads a team of writers and analysts working on new ideas for improving birth-through-third grade learning experiences. Previously, she worked with several policy organizations, including the Institute for Educational Leadership, the Forum for Education and Democracy, and Common Core (now Great Minds).

**Lauren Hogan** is the senior director of public policy and advocacy at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). She previously served as the vice president of program and policy at the National Black Child Development Institute, and focuses on early childhood education and educators with a lens of shared leadership, diversity, and equity.

## About the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC]

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. NAEYC advances a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. The association comprises nearly 60,000 individual members of the early childhood community and more than 50 Affiliates, all committed to delivering on the promise of high-quality early learning. Together, we work to achieve a collective vision: that all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.

## About New America

New America is committed to renewing American politics, prosperity, and purpose in the Digital Age. We generate big ideas, bridge the gap between technology and policy, and curate broad public conversation. We combine the best of a policy research institute, technology laboratory, public forum, media platform, and a venture capital fund for ideas. We are a distinctive community of thinkers, writers, researchers, technologists, and community activists who believe deeply in the possibility of American renewal.

Find out more at [newamerica.org/our-story](https://newamerica.org/our-story).

## About the Education Policy Program

New America's Education Policy program uses original research and policy analysis to solve the nation's critical education problems, serving as a trusted source of objective analysis and innovative ideas for policymakers, educators, and the public at large. We combine a steadfast concern for low-income and historically disadvantaged people with a belief that better information about education can vastly improve both the policies that govern educational institutions and the quality of learning itself. Our work encompasses the full range of educational opportunities, from early learning to primary and secondary education, college, and the workforce.

Our work is made possible through generous grants from the Alliance for Early Success; the Buffett Early Childhood Fund; the Annie E. Casey Foundation; the Foundation for Child Development; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Heising-Simons Foundation; the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; the Joyce Foundation; the George Kaiser Family Foundation; the JPMorgan Chase & Co.; the Kresge Foundation; Lumina Foundation; the McKnight Foundation; the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; the Siemens Foundation; the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation; and the Walton Family Foundation. The views expressed in this report are those of its authors and do not necessarily represent the views of foundations, their officers, or employees.

Find out more at [newamerica.org/education-policy](https://newamerica.org/education-policy).

## **Contents**

Introduction	2
Governance and Political Environment	4
Educator Competencies	7
Educator Preparation	10
Next Steps	15
Sample State Policy Adoption Mad Lib	16
Key References	18
Acknowledgments	19

# INTRODUCTION

---

When it comes to the early childhood workforce, American educators and advocates may know what their state's policies are. With their expertise and knowledge, and with support from research and leading organizations, they may be able to define what they want their state's policies to be, particularly for teachers of children from birth through age eight (B–8). But given each state's complex systems, it can be difficult for advocates and educators to realize their workforce goals. The political landscape can present a number of formidable challenges to knowing and acting on what policy levers to pull, with whom, for whom, and in what order.

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 B–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, 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. 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.

To ensure this questionnaire tool uncovered the most useful information, we piloted it in early 2017 with three states: Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin. This particular brief, the first of a series, uses answers from those states to illustrate what types of new information can emerge from such a scan, particularly in the areas of governance, competencies, and preparation policies. These states share distinct similarities

## Accompanying Resources

This report and the questionnaire tool were developed for early childhood advocates and policymakers who seek practical, state-specific advice on strategies for transforming the workforce to better serve young children. This report does not feature specific policy recommendations. For those, start with the seminal report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, from the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council;<sup>1</sup> the just-released *Transforming the Early Education Workforce: A Multimedia Guidebook* from New America; *Workforce Designs, A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems*; and *Build It Better: Indicators of Progress to Support Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* from NAEYC, which continue to define what a state's strong and supportive workforce and professional development system should have in place to be successful.

---

<sup>1</sup> These two entities are known as the National Academy of Medicine, which is the authoring body we will refer to in subsequent references to this report.

as well as important differences in their political climate, demographic composition, and history with early childhood and K–12 education. This brief teases out some of those similarities and differences, providing important information to the three participating states, while drawing lessons for the others about the kinds of questions to ask and answer when mapping out priorities and strategies for change.

Advocates and state leaders, including NAEYC Affiliate leaders; child care resource and referral agency leaders; and others were involved in completing the questionnaire using a combination of written responses, phone, and in-person interviews. We reviewed state agency websites for additional information. While the long-term goal of this project is to work with state early childhood advocates to arrive at a clear and complete scan, diagnosis, and prescription for enacting workforce policy changes to support a strong and diverse profession, an intermediate goal is to provide the questionnaire tool itself to any state interested in using it. The three participating states who served as a pilot of our tool have helped to refine it, and the revised questionnaire is now available free on NAEYC's website ([www.naeyc.org/profession](http://www.naeyc.org/profession)) and in the resources and tools section of *Transforming the Early Education Workforce: A Multimedia Guidebook* released by New America ([www.newamerica.org/in-depth/transforming-early-education-workforce](http://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/transforming-early-education-workforce)). The complete data set from the piloted use of the questionnaire has also been returned to each state for its own and ongoing use.

# GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

---

Over the last several decades, governors and legislatures have provided critical attention to and investment in high-quality early childhood education. Ensuring that advocates understand and can plan for their state’s ever-changing leadership, governance structure, power centers, political winds, and policy environment is critical to helping them accomplish their goals.

Because early childhood education serves multiple policy purposes—advancing child care, early learning, health, and workforce development, among others—its oversight often lies in different departments, offices, and agencies. We note this reality to emphasize the complexity of advocacy and the need for coordination and ongoing relationship development.

## Indiana

In Indiana, there are two agencies that bear responsibility for B–8 early childhood education. The Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning in the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration is responsible for early childhood education for children birth through age five, as

well as for out-of-school time, and is led by an appointed secretary and director. The educational needs of children ages five through eight are addressed by the Indiana Department of Education, which is led by an elected superintendent of public instruction, who also serves by law as the chair of the state board of education. The board includes an additional ten members, eight appointed by the governor and two by the leaders of the house and senate. No more than six of the members may be from the same political party, and four must be licensed educators currently employed in an Indiana school. The board has authority over the adoption of content standards.

Although Barack Obama carried Indiana in 2008, the Republican Party is strong in the state, holding the governor’s office as well as one U.S. Senate seat and seven of nine U.S. House seats. Republicans also hold a supermajority in both the Indiana House of Representatives and Senate, where the House Education Committee and the House Family, Children, and Human Affairs Committee have purview over early childhood education, along with their counterparts in the Senate (Senate Committee on Family and Children Services and the Senate Committee on Education and Career Development).

**Table 1 | What We Learned about Governance and Politics in the Three States**

	Indiana	New York	Wisconsin
Governance structure	Two offices: Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning in the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, led by appointed secretary and director; and the department of education, led by elected superintendent [who chairs state board of education] for the educational needs of children ages 5–8	Three offices: Division of Child Care Services in New York State Office of Children and Family Services; Bureau of Child Care in NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; and Office of Early Learning in state education department; each is led by an appointed leader	Three agencies with multiple offices: Departments of Children and Families and Health Services, both led by secretaries appointed by the governor; and Department of Public Instruction (DPI), led by elected superintendent
State political context	Republicans hold supermajority in state house of representatives and senate; The House Education Committee and House Family, Children, and Human Affairs Committee are responsible for early childhood education, along with their Senate counterparts	Democratic stronghold, although Republicans hold a small majority in the senate, where members of the Independent Democratic Conference, who are elected as Democrats, but collaborate with Republicans, serve as early childhood champions	Considered a “purple” state, with closely contested elections; one Democratic and one Republican senator; Republicans control governorship and state legislature, both senate and assembly. B-3 issues fall under the jurisdiction of committees handling health, children, and families, while K-12 issues are covered by committees addressing education.

**New York**

In New York, there are three offices that bear responsibility for B–8 early childhood education, and they cross not only departments but also city and state lines: the Division of Child Care Services rests in the New York State Office of Children and Family Services; the Bureau of Child Care is in the New York City Department of Health and Mental

Hygiene; and the Office of Early Learning is in the New York State Education Department. (Given its size and influence, the New York City Department of Education plays a large role as well.)

These agencies, while separately situated, conduct some of their oversight functions and much of their workforce development and quality initiatives in partnership with other organizations

and stakeholders: the workforce registry and the Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) are administered by the Early Childhood Professional Development Institute at CUNY; state credentials are administered through New York State AEYC; and the registration of family child care programs is handled by contracts with child care resource and referral agencies.

Each of these efforts is also situated in a larger context: the state department of education itself is part of the University of the State of New York and is overseen by a commissioner appointed by the 17-member Board of Regents, each of whom is elected by the legislature for a five-year term. The Board of Regents, which serves as the state board of education, is responsible for the adoption of content standards and oversees the state's formidable higher education system. Additionally, the regents have oversight for more than half a million professionals practicing in 58 licensed professions, ranging from accountancy to architecture to massage therapy; their oversight also includes the state's B-2<sup>nd</sup> grade certificate, which is required for those teaching in some state pre-K programs.

When it comes to legislation, the chairs of the Children & Families and Social Services committees in the assembly and members of the Women's Caucus provide critical support. Also, New York is considered a Democratic stronghold, although Republicans currently hold a small majority in the senate, where the members of the Independent Democratic Conference, who are elected as Democrats but collaborate with Republicans to share leadership in the Chamber, serve as early childhood champions.

## Wisconsin

As in New York, Wisconsin has multiple responsible offices for early education within three agencies: the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Health Services, both of which are led by secretaries appointed by the governor; and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), led by an elected superintendent. Wisconsin has no state

board of education; the authority over the adoption of content standards is held by locally-elected school boards, which use state standards developed by DPI as a model.

Wisconsin is frequently considered a “purple” state, with closely contested elections and one Democratic and one Republican senator. As is the case in other “purple” states as well, however, “Wisconsin, politically, is more aptly understood as substantially Democratic in certain parts of the state, and substantially Republican in other parts of the state.”<sup>2</sup> Republicans control the governorship and both chambers of the legislature, within which there is a bipartisan, bicameral Children's Caucus, founded in 2015, which includes early childhood education champions. By jurisdiction, however, B-3 initiatives are handled by committees including the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services and the Assembly Committee on Children and Families, while K-12 issues are covered by the Senate Committee on Education and the Assembly Committee on Education.

• • • •

All three states have a state early childhood advisory council, brought into existence by requirements in the 2007 Head Start reauthorization to ensure statewide coordination and collaboration. When asked, however, if their governor's office has an “early childhood advisory or advisory unit,” state respondents assigned different levels of import to the role of the council, with one state answering “no” despite its existence, and the other two indicating that the council is actually serving in the role of the early childhood advisor to the governor's office, though that was not necessarily its originally intended role. The varied understanding of the role of the council is reflective of its differing power, influence, and authority; and the question of power and authority is significant. As one state

---

<sup>2</sup> Lilly Goren, “The Wisconsin Situation in 2016,” FIXGOV; Brookings, November 6, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2016/11/06/the-wisconsin-situation-in-2016/>.



advocate noted, “two years ago, power would have rested in the governor’s office, but it shifts.” Political headwinds, as influenced by elections and re-elections, primaries, and external factors, matter deeply in the pursuit of legislative change.

But questions of authority and jurisdiction over certain issues are also critically important, and tend to shift less than the political power centers. In New York, for example, the Board of Regents has jurisdiction over the adoption of content standards, higher education, and licensing. To pursue changes in higher education that better reflect content standards, which better reflect competencies and

that should inform any construct for individual licensing, the Board of Regents would be a key stakeholder. But this is a stakeholder typically undervalued by early childhood educators. As we consider the future, advocates in New York will be looking to develop relationships not only with the regents, but also with those who elect the regents, with an eye towards cultivating candidates with early childhood education expertise and experience. Fortunately, this process is underway: in October the regents formed a blue-ribbon committee on early learning focused on B–8, composed of a number of early childhood stakeholders, including several members of the Early Childhood Advisory Council.

## EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES

---

At the core of transforming the ECE workforce is a clearly articulated shared set of competencies that lay a foundation for what all B–8 teachers must know and be able to do in order to work effectively with young learners. Most states have competencies and expectations for professionals educating young children, but they tend to differ by age of child and program setting. While there is some agreement across states about what is included in their competencies, there are no shared early childhood competencies across the country. Additionally, early childhood educator competencies tend to not be required, and in some places they are neither well communicated nor integrated into systems.

In this section, we wanted to understand the scope of a state’s competencies: whether they exist, and for whom; to what extent they are integrated into requirements such as higher education coursework; and who is responsible for the competencies.

### Indiana

The first edition of Indiana’s *Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood, School-Age and Youth Professionals* (CKCs) was released in 2013, following the formation in 2011 of the Indiana Professional Development Network (INPDN) by the

**Table 2 | What We Learned about Competencies in the Three States**

	Indiana	New York	Wisconsin
Do state ECE competencies exist?	Yes	Yes	Yes
When were they last revisited?	2016	2012	2014
Was the <i>Transforming the Workforce</i> report used in their formulation?	Yes	No	No
To whom do the competencies apply?	All adults working with children and families	All adults working with young children, plus those involved with training organizations; teacher education; policy and advocacy; professional development; and others working in ECE	All adults working with young children
Is meeting state ECE competencies required?	No	No	No

Indiana Family and Social Service Administration, the Bureau of Child Care, and the Indiana Head Start Collaboration Project. This network, which has become a collaboration of leaders from children- and youth-serving agencies, associations, and organizations, has been supported by Indiana’s Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL), which provided guidance and financial support for the development of the CKCs. In 2016, the INPDN revised the CKCs, making them more applicable to all adults, regardless of their role or position, who are working in programs such as child care, Early Head Start and Head Start, early intervention, home visiting, public and private schools, school-age and youth development organizations, professional development and training organizations, and higher education programs.

The revised competencies were designed using the latest research from the National Academy of Medicine’s *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8* as well as relevant federal, state, and local research and reports. They are also aligned with the *Indiana Early Learning Foundations*, the state’s early learning guidelines, which are themselves aligned with the Indiana academic standards. These were approved by the department of education under the leadership of the former state superintendent of public instruction when the role was filled by a Democrat. A Republican has since gained control of that seat.

## New York

New York’s early childhood competencies are laid out in *Core Body of Knowledge: New York State’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*, written for those who work directly with young children, including lead teachers, aides, paraprofessionals, classroom volunteers when applicable, family child care providers; directors and program administrators; those involved with training organizations; teacher education programs (college professors, field supervisors); those involved with policy and advocacy initiatives (local and state agencies, policymakers, early childhood advocates); those involved with professional development systems; and “any others working to elevate this field and improve the quality of early childhood education.”

The competencies were created in 1997 and last revised in 2012 by the Workforce Development Work Group, part of the Early Childhood Advisory Council, supported by the NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute at the City University of New York under a training and administrative services agreement with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation criteria and the Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices provided the foundation for their competencies, which have been aligned with the Office of Children and Family Services training priorities, and the NYS Teaching Standards, as approved by the Board of Regents in 2011.

New York also has an additional set of infant/toddler teacher competencies and an additional set of administrator competencies, both of which lead to a separate credential awarded by the New York Association for the Education of Young Children.

## Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Professional Development Initiative, a partnership among the Departments of Public Instruction, Children and Families, and Health Services, has authority over the early childhood competencies. These competencies, which apply to all adults working with young children across roles and settings, were updated in 2014 for the first time since 2007, and are aligned with K–12 teacher licensure, Head Start Performance Standards, early childhood technical college associate’s degree program outcomes, and Wisconsin Infant Mental Health competencies. The development of *Wisconsin Core Competencies for Professionals Working with Young Children & Their Families* was funded in part by the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge, which also supported the development of *Wisconsin’s Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) Competencies for Early Childhood and Related Professionals Working with Adults*.

• • • •

While Indiana’s recently updated competencies reflect the principles of the *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8* report, neither New York’s nor Wisconsin’s do so—and there are no indications that those states’ competencies will be revised again soon.

The competencies that New York and Wisconsin do have align with state credentials and higher education degrees and are embedded in trainings provided by state agencies. New York has sent a copy of the competencies to every licensed child care center and all early childhood education teacher preparation programs so that they may use them voluntarily. Critically, however, despite these efforts, none of these three states actually *require* their competencies to be used. Additionally, they do not have a way to hold early care and education professionals accountable for implementing the competencies that have been laid out. In other words, the competencies are not approved by any entity responsible for content standards, including those used in K–3 grade settings, nor are they part of

the approval process for higher education in any of the states. Indiana respondents in particular noted a challenge in getting the most recently revised competencies into the hands of those working in early care and education settings so they can, at a minimum, voluntarily use and apply them, as New York has done.

In addition, although the broad-based nature of the competencies is critical to ensure that everyone working with young children shares a common understanding of what they need to know and be able to do, the lack of differentiation across roles or settings may unwittingly contribute to the external confusion about who we are talking about when we use the term *early childhood education professionals*, and what it is that that group does.

Finally, as we think about future iterations of state competencies as influenced by the Power to the Profession initiative, it does not appear that any one agency is responsible for revising, encouraging, or requiring the use of these competencies. Instead, this work is done through partnership across agencies or, as in New York's case, a subcommittee of the Early Childhood Advisory Council. While collaboration is critical to the development of this kind of rich content, when it comes to implementation, such structures, with differing levels of support from state agencies, can make it more challenging to bring ECE competencies more in line with research recommendations, or to hold professionals accountable for meeting the competencies.

## EDUCATOR PREPARATION

---

We know from research that high-quality early childhood education depends on high-quality early childhood educators who ensure that children, supported by families, have the early experiences they need for a strong foundation. We also know that having specialized knowledge of and professional development in how young children develop and learn is critical to ensure that ECE professionals are able to provide high-quality care and education to children from birth through

age eight. This research is part of the reason why the early childhood competencies in these three states, and others, are currently designed to apply universally—to define what everyone who works with young children should know and be able to do. Yet the preparation that states require and support, which should be helping educators achieve and implement said competencies, varies dramatically by setting, by role, and by the age of the children with whom the adult is working.

**Table 3 | What We Learned about Educator Preparation Policies in the Three States**

	Indiana	New York	Wisconsin
<b>Minimum requirements for entry into ECE</b>	High school diploma or equivalent in center- and home-based settings; certification for public school settings	Vary based on role, setting, funding stream, and location; multiple levels of requirements, pathways, and waivers to meeting the requirements	Lead teacher in licensed child care centers and family child care homes must complete 80 hours of ECE training; teachers in public pre-K must have license and 4-year degree
<b>Approval of ECE higher education programs</b>	Indiana Department of Education; final decision-making up to state board of education	State education department approves all degree programs	Department of Public Instruction approves programs that prepare graduates for state teaching license; programs reviewed annually by the Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing team
<b>Articulation agreements between ECE programs</b>	Single articulation pathway from any Ivy Tech community college to a corresponding baccalaureate program without loss of credit hours; Child Development Associate (CDA) credential articulates into an AA for 9 credit hours	The state requires articulation agreements between publicly-funded 2-year and 4-year ECE degree programs	When a 4-year program develops an articulation agreement with a single AA program, the agreement operates on behalf of the entire WI Technical College System; the agreement does not extend beyond the single 4-year program
<b>Incentives for ECE practitioners to increase educational attainment</b>	T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program, funded primarily through the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning using Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) dollars; private philanthropic funds have allowed short-term expansion of the program	NY covers tuition for some individuals working on educational attainment through a program called Quality Scholars, connected to QUALITYstarsNY, the state QRIS	All adults working with young children
<b>Initiatives supporting diversity and equitable access to further ECE training</b>	Community-based CDA trainings offered at night and on weekends; T.E.A.C.H. scholarships with counselors		Credit for prior learning; T.E.A.C.H. scholarships with counselors

In order to delve into the complex issues surrounding the preparation of early childhood educators, we separated preparation itself into two categories: initial preparation and ongoing professional learning and development. This allowed us to explore issues such as the minimum requirements for entry and ongoing development for professionals across settings; the roles and responsibilities of higher education; and the ways in which preparation beyond the minimum is supported, encouraged, or required.

## Indiana

In Indiana, the minimum requirement for professionals working with children B–5 in center-based settings is a high school diploma or equivalent; lead teachers must also have a minimum of a CDA. Family child care providers, who must become licensed if they have more than five unrelated children in the home, must have a high school diploma or equivalent, and they have three years in which to earn a CDA after initial licensing. The state also requires that educators participate in at least 12 hours of training annually to maintain a license. To move up in the state’s QRIS, Paths to Quality, providers must increase their levels of professional development.

While the state does not manage an early childhood education trainer or training approval process, the approval of higher education preparation programs is controlled by the Indiana Department of Education, with final decision-making granted to the Indiana State Board of Education (the leader of these two institutions is the same individual, who serves in an elected position). The IDOE also develops and monitors the state’s Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability, which are aligned with state and national standards. They are also the standards upon which the assessment blueprints for all fields, including early childhood education, are based (the assessment blueprints define the content that is *eligible* to be included on a test). The

department of education notes that “the alignment of the assessment blueprints will be re-examined if changes are made to Indiana and/or national standards,” which opens up a line of possible implementation based on recommendations from the Power to the Profession initiative.

The state only authorizes early childhood degree programs that lead to teacher certification. Being certified is, however, required when it comes to public school settings, and Indiana does require practicums for those teaching in public school settings, though there is no requirement relative to grade spans. Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana is the statewide community college system supporting the early childhood associate’s degree. The Career and Technical Child Development high school program in Indiana allows a high school student to complete and obtain a CDA and articulate into the associate’s program at the community college for nine credit hours. The national CDA credential articulates into the associate’s degree at the community college for nine credit hours. A statewide articulation agreement is in place—the CDA to the associate’s to the bachelor’s in early childhood/child development—at multiple four-year institutions.

To help encourage professionals working in early care and education settings advance their education, Indiana’s AEYC administers the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program, funded primarily through the Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning using CCDBG dollars. Private philanthropic dollars have allowed for a short-term expansion of this program. Support for the advancement of a diverse workforce includes community-based CDA training programs that occur during evening and weekend hours, as well as counselors associated with the T.E.A.C.H. program. Other ways of maintaining and supporting diversity, such as cohort models, counselors and mentors, and recognition of prior experience, are in some places being implemented, and work on others is underway.

## New York

In New York, minimum qualifications vary by setting, funding stream, and location (i.e., New York City vs. the rest of the state). In New York City, for example, public pre-K teachers must be certified. In licensed child care centers, child care regulations require preschool teachers to hold an associate's degree and appropriate teacher certificate; however, a significant number of individuals have waivers with study plans to meet that requirement. Across the rest of the state, for individuals working in center-based programs, lead teachers must have a minimum of an associate's degree in early childhood, child development, or a related field; a CDA or other credential with one year of experience; or nine college credits in early childhood, child development, or a related field, with a plan of study leading to a CDA or an associate's degree. For family child care, where programs are registered, not licensed, the minimum qualification is a high school diploma or the equivalent, and it is consistent throughout the state. In addition, New York State has one of the highest percentages of license-exempt care; in 2015, nearly 68 percent of providers caring for one or more children with child care subsidies in a family, family home, or group environment across the state were legally-exempt, which means they were not required to be licensed or registered, but were required to meet minimum health and safety standards.

There are limited incentives for teachers in New York to increase their educational attainment. In one of the state funded pre-K programs operating in New York City, it is possible for programs to be reimbursed at a higher rate when there is a certified teacher, so the program is incentivized to hire a certified teacher. But this incentive is not built into QUALITYstarsNY, the state's QRIS, nor is it systemic in the majority of the state funded pre-K programs.

When it comes to ongoing professional learning, there are requirements based on setting and the type of certificate a teacher holds. For example, teachers in school-based state pre-K programs who have a professional certificate must complete

175 hours of professional development and those with a Level III teaching assistant certificate must complete 75 hours every five years in order to maintain certification. Providers working in licensed center-based care and registered family-based care have the same ongoing professional development requirements: all staff must complete 15 hours within the first six months of employment, and must engage in a total of 30 hours of training every two years, covering nine required topic areas. Yet those who are working in center-based child care who hold a teaching certificate are not subject to additional ongoing professional requirements, and their engagement in ongoing professional development is not monitored by any state agency.

New York has a B-2<sup>nd</sup> grade license, which is required for some pre-K teachers and kindergarten teachers. There is an overlapping 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade license for elementary school teachers. Prospective teachers are not required to have a student teaching experience in a particular setting. The New York State Education Department approves all degree programs, whether they are teaching degrees or other degrees. Higher education accreditation is required for state approval, and the state does monitor program effectiveness. It is, however, only recommended and not required that the early childhood education competencies are used. The state requires articulation agreements between publicly-funded two-year and four-year ECE degree programs. A program called Quality Scholars, which is carved out from a general scholarship program called the Educational Incentive Program (EIP) funded through the Child Care Development Fund, covers tuition costs for individuals working on educational attainment through QUALITYstarsNY.

## Wisconsin

To become a lead teacher in licensed child care centers and family child care homes in Wisconsin, individuals must complete 80 hours of early childhood training. An assistant teacher must complete 40 hours within six months of hire. As programs participate in Wisconsin's QRIS,

YoungStar, the minimum qualification requirements increase, according to the scale in the registry. There are 17 registry levels in all, based on combinations of approved trainings, non-credit credentials, credit-based credentials, degrees, and licenses. Teachers in public pre-K must have a license and four-year degree. While the state is considering a restructuring of teacher licensing to allow more flexibility, an early childhood teacher license is currently required to work with the state's youngest children. There are two licenses that cover early childhood education. There are also a wide range of requirements for ongoing professional development, depending on setting.

An associate's degree in early childhood education can be earned from any one of the 16 technical colleges that make up the Wisconsin Technical College System, which uses common course titles and competencies. In order to earn the degree, students must complete four practicums. The AA degree, however, does not lead directly to the licensure exam. For a BA that does lead to teacher licensure, a semester of student teaching must be completed.

The Department of Public Instruction, led by an elected superintendent, both sets the content requirement standards (although institutions have the freedom to set curricula) and approves the programs that prepare graduates for the state teaching license. Programs are reviewed annually by the Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing Team, and approval is granted on a

five-year basis. Accreditation is required for state approval, but alignment with the state's early childhood education competencies is not required.

Articulation agreements are similarly not required by the state, though there is a significant effort to improve articulation. This effort has resulted in the fact that when a four-year institute of higher education develops an articulation agreement with a single AA program, the finalized agreement operates for all Wisconsin technical college early childhood associate's degree programs. That same agreement does not, however, extend beyond the single four-year institute of higher education.

In order to improve access to all degrees, the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association administers the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship program. Funding for T.E.A.C.H. primarily comes from CCDBG dollars administered by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. Additionally, WECA administers the REWARD Stipend program, which provides stipends to individuals who have completed some credit-based education, have been in the early childhood field and/or their position for three to six years, and meet the income threshold. In order to support access to and completion of higher education degrees and credentials for the most diverse group of early childhood educators possible, Wisconsin awards credit for prior learning, offers free professional development counseling, and makes evening courses available.



# NEXT STEPS

---

Given the nature of the early childhood field, it is unsurprising to note that while there are some commonalities across these three states, workforce standards, competencies, governance, funding, policies and requirements—particularly those around preparation—vary tremendously. This is the case nationally as well.

The fragmentation in our advocacy universe is a particular challenge, which presented itself even in the course of administering this policy and regulatory scan, when we found that many questions were difficult to answer, or that different advocates answered them differently. This indicates significant work ahead to ensure that advocates share an understanding of and commitment to which policy levers need to be moved when, and which advocates are best suited to take the lead at any given time, based in part on the relationships they have or can develop and strengthen. We hope

simple (and sometimes fun) tools, such as the Policy Adoption Mad Lib on the following page, can help advocates have productive and meaningful conversations that allow them to more easily analyze the comprehensive data they have gathered in these “MRI” scans, and turn that data into immediate and strategic action.

NAEYC, Child Care Aware, and New America will continue to develop resources such as these, improving and refining the clarity and depth of the scan, and linking the results to the critical diagnoses and prescriptions that result from a reading of the scan itself. NAEYC plans to continue working with Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin, as well as other states deeply invested in the Power to the Profession initiative, and over the next several months New America will conduct the scan in a new set of states.

## Sample State Policy Adoption Mad Lib!

This is designed to be a fun tool for state advocates who are working together to help jump-start the implementation of the tactical “how-to” strategies, ideas, and choices discussed in this brief. The early childhood education policy and political context can get complex; something simple can help clarify the way forward. As you consider filling out this Mad Lib, remember that neither it nor this brief address content. The “what” and the “why” of early childhood policy are part of other state and national conversations and initiatives, including other parts of Power to the Profession. Engage with those initiatives to help clarify, prioritize, and align state policy goals and messages. As for this tool: adapt, enjoy, and have fun with it!

### **What is our state's goal?**

\_\_\_\_\_ [state] wants to \_\_\_\_\_ [verb] its \_\_\_\_\_ [choose one: governance, competencies, preparation] structure so that early childhood educators gain increased \_\_\_\_\_ [noun: suggestions include compensation, skills, education, respect].

### **Who holds the power to effect or prevent change?**

\_\_\_\_\_ [individual or board name 1] at \_\_\_\_\_ [name of office] in \_\_\_\_\_ [department] is ultimately responsible for signing off on any changes to the \_\_\_\_\_ [governance, competencies, preparation] structure.

But \_\_\_\_\_ [individual or board name 2] at \_\_\_\_\_ [name of office] in \_\_\_\_\_ [department] is also deeply involved with this work.

\_\_\_\_\_ [individual 1] and \_\_\_\_\_ [individual 2] have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ [adjective] working relationship.

In addition, \_\_\_\_\_ (*individual 1*) is responsive to pressure from \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun: a few suggestions include primary voters; donors; her boss; the speaker of the house; business groups; local op-eds; media mentions; union leaders; etc.*) Therefore, our strategy must include engagement with these pressure points.

\_\_\_\_\_ (*name of advocate/organization*) has a relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ (*someone connected to the pressure point*), so he/she/it is going to meet with him/her within the next \_\_\_\_ (*number*) \_\_\_\_ (*days/weeks/months, etc.*) to ask him/her to \_\_\_\_\_ (*verb*) the \_\_\_\_\_ (*original goal: governance, competencies, preparation*) structure by \_\_\_\_\_ (*verb in -ing form*) the \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*).

In addition, \_\_\_\_\_ (*name of advocate/organization*) is going to \_\_\_\_\_ (*verb*) with \_\_\_\_\_ (*name of another advocate/organization*) in order to begin to influence the decision-making of \_\_\_\_\_ (*individual 1 or 2*).

**What are our next steps?**

This group will reconvene in \_\_\_\_ (*number*) of \_\_\_\_\_ (*period of time*) to \_\_\_\_\_ (*verb*) next steps.

## Key References

Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC), *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015), 514-515, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/19401/transforming-theworkforce-for-children-birth-through-age-8-a>.

Marcy Whitebook, Caitlin McLean, and Lea J.E. Austin, *The Early Childhood Workforce Index* (Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2016), <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/early-childhood-workforce-index/>

Indiana Professional Development Network, *Indiana Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood, School-Age and Youth Professionals*, <http://s3.amazonaws.com/iyi-website/other/INPDN-Indiana-Core-Knowledge-and-Competencies.pdf>

NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Initiative, *Core Body of Knowledge New York State's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*, <http://www.earlychildhood.org/pdfs/corebody.pdf>

New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, <http://www.earlychildhoodny.org/>

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners, *Wisconsin Core Competencies for Professionals Working with Young Children & Their Families*, [http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WI\\_EC\\_Core\\_Competencies\\_2014.pdf](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WI_EC_Core_Competencies_2014.pdf)

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners, *Wisconsin Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) Competencies*, [https://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WI\\_TTAP\\_Competenciesfinal5\\_1\\_15.pdf](https://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WI_TTAP_Competenciesfinal5_1_15.pdf)

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center, <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/>

Council for Professional Recognition, <https://www.cdacouncil.org/>

Power to the Profession, <https://www.naeyc.org/profession>

## **Acknowledgments**

This brief would not have been possible without support from the Alliance for Early Success and the Foundation for Child Development. In addition to our gratitude to these foundations, the authors thank our colleagues at the National Association for the Education of Young Children, New America, and Child Care Aware of America for their contributions to and review of previous drafts of this report, with particular thanks to Emily Workman for her research. We also thank the NAEYC Affiliate Leaders and others who shared with us their time and expertise to answer the comprehensive questionnaire, including: Dianna Wallace, Kristen Kerr, Jeanette Paulson, Ruth Schmidt, and Sherry Cleary. Finally, we extend our appreciation to those who contributed their insight, advice and feedback on both the questionnaire and the resulting brief, including Albert Wat, Sue Russell, and Caitlin McLean.

Cover photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash.



This report carries a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license, which permits re-use of New America content when proper attribution is provided. This means you are free to share and adapt New America's work, or include our content in derivative works, under the following conditions:

- **Attribution.** You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

For the full legal code of this Creative Commons license, please visit [creativecommons.org](https://creativecommons.org).

If you have any questions about citing or reusing New America content, please visit [www.newamerica.org](https://www.newamerica.org).

All photos in this report are supplied by, and licensed to, [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com) unless otherwise stated. Photos from federal government sources are used under section 105 of the Copyright Act.



