

Keeping Our Eyes on the ECE Profession

“Our vision is that each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high quality, affordable early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce.”

- Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession



OH Early Childhood Higher
Education Summit

September 2025

Keeping our Eyes on the ECE Profession (*Even if we want to escape or look away sometimes*)



Let's face it.....Living in and navigating multiple, often conflicting, realities is really tough!

- > A Reality in Which ECE Profession Building is Progressing
- > A reality in which the ECE Profession is Threatened (Assessing the Current Federal/State Landscape)
- > Consideration of Messages, Strategies and Resources for Moving Through These Multiple Realities



A Reality: ECE Profession-Building in 2025

May 23, 2025

Advocates Celebrate Vermont Senate Advancing Bill to Recognize Early Childhood Educators as Professionals

New Mexico is first state in nation to offer universal child care

Sep 8, 2025 | Press Releases



Jobs in the Balance: The Two-Year Labor Market Impacts of Washington, DC’s Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund (PEF)

Published: May 28, 2024

montgomery
moving forward

mobilizing leaders to solve our biggest problems together
nonprofits / business / philanthropy / government / education / community

Call to Action:
Early Care and Education Workforce
Recommendations
2025

Michigan Adopts New Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

BIG NEWS FOR MICHIGAN’S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FIELD!

Higher Education

JULY 1, 2025 | Albany, NY

Governor Hochul Launches New York’s Free Community College Program for In-Demand Fields

A Reality: ECE Profession-Building Efforts Across the Country

Aligning to ECE I, II and III Designations

District of Columbia

Missouri

Vermont

Investing in Higher Ed (including Accreditation)

Alabama

Connecticut

District of Columbia

Indiana

Michigan

New Mexico

Pennsylvania

Attending to Wages

Connecticut

Delaware

District of Columbia

Louisiana

Minnesota

Rhode Island

Vermont

Attending to Benefits

Kentucky

Rhode Island

Vermont

Washington

Washington, DC

Adopting the Professional Standards and Competencies

Alabama

Iowa

Michigan

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Carolina

Washington

What does the Unifying Framework's Vision Mean?

A unified birth-age 8 ECE workforce

Early childhood educators at all professional designations (ECE I, II, and III) are valued, respected, and well-compensated from public funding across settings, funding streams, and age bands.

Centered on trust for educator expertise and autonomy

Early childhood educators are accountable to the *Professional Standards and Competencies* that they create, define, and revise.

Regulatory structures that support a professional workforce

Early childhood educators earn a license to practice that is portable and reciprocal, and work in settings with right-sized regulations that respect their expertise.

Fair and equitable professional compensation

Early childhood educators are compensated based on principles of parity, building on a floor of a living / thriving wage, and increasing with experience and expertise, regardless of age group or setting.

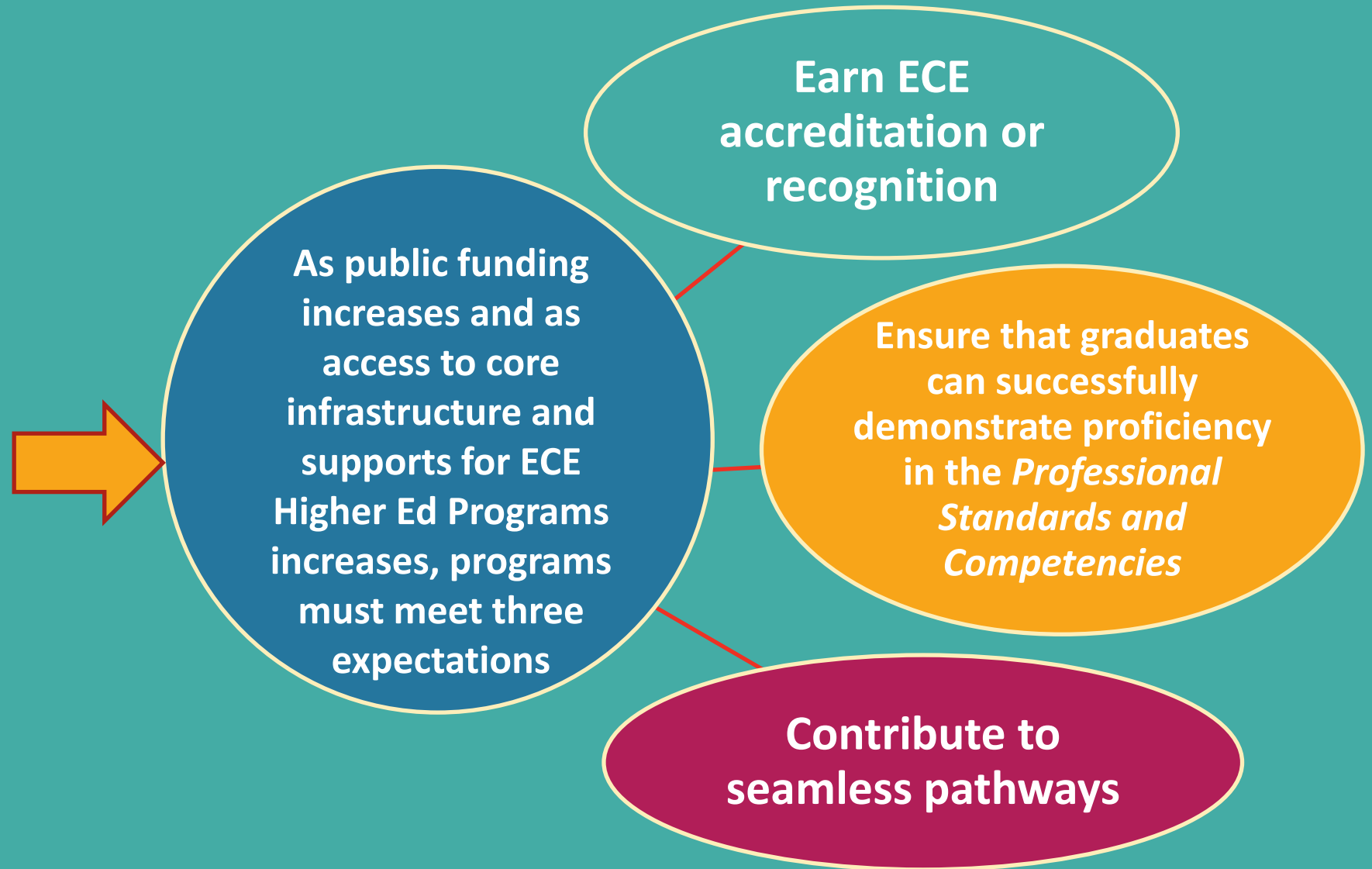
Well-supported, equitably accessible PD and higher education systems

Early childhood educators have equitable access to affordable, cohesive, and consistently high-quality professional preparation and development that leads to recognized early childhood degrees and credentials.

What Does the UF Say About ECE Professional Preparation Programs?

Necessary Supports and Infrastructure for ECE Professional Preparation Programs

- For Faculty
- For Programs
- For Students
- Investment from Higher Ed Leadership



More State Examples and Resources

Higher Education, Scholarships, and Career Pathways

The State of New Mexico offers an array of educational supports to New Mexicans seeking credentials in early childhood education. ECECD works in close collaboration with New Mexico's Higher Education Department, New Mexico Institutes of Higher Learning, and the New Mexico Early Childhood Higher Education Taskforce to help ensure that early childhood degree programs are accessible and meet the needs of current and future early educators.

The TEACH Early Childhood National Center specializes in creating a professional, educated and fairly compensated early childhood education workforce.

Michigan Adopts New Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

BIG NEWS FOR MICHIGAN'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FIELD!

naeyc National Association for the Education of Young Children



Credit Where Credit is Due

Expanding Credit for Prior Learning in
ECE Higher Education Programs

DECEMBER 2024

The Early Childhood Innovation Center (ECIC) at Delaware State University unapologetically advocates for the success of Early Childhood Education professionals. We strive to empower and cultivate a highly skilled, educated, and diverse workforce by providing holistic, comprehensive, and evidence-based supports.

New NAEYC Resource: The Professional Standards and Competencies Resource Library



This site curates a variety of free, accessible, quality resources that are related to and align with the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*. It is designed to support all higher education faculty teaching early childhood education related coursework and those in the field providing training, mentoring and other professional development and technical assistance to early childhood educators serving our profession.

<https://www.eceprofstandards.org/resource-library>

New NAEYC Resource: The Professional Standards and Competencies Resource Library

Start Your Search--Resource Library * Start Yo

Sort quickly through the hundreds of available resources by using the filter tool on the left to populate the specific resources you need!

STANDARD	x	▼
KEY COMPETENCY	x	▼
TOPIC	x	▼
AGE RANGE	x	▼
RESOURCE TYPE	x	▼
LANGUAGE	x	▼
SEARCH		

Standard 4, Resource Type: Training, Topic: Children with Disabilities/Delays, Topic: Teaching Skills and Strategies • 3/2/25

Routines-Based Planning for Infants and Toddlers

[Routines-Based Planning for Infants and Toddlers](#)

The purpose of this module is to provide trainers and participants with information about using typical routines as the context for assessment and planning for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The module describes the practice of Routines-Based Assessment and Planning, the associated benefits, and step-by-step guidance for implementing routines-based assessment and planning.

Organization/Author: Head Start Center for Inclusion

<https://www.eceprofstandards.org/resource-library>

Indicators/Opportunities for Advancing the Unifying Framework's higher education recommendations – How are you faring at your institution? In Ohio?

Adopting Competencies

Policies and investments point to the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators* (PS&C) as the core competencies for the ECE profession.

Examples: PS&C are adopted as statewide ECE competencies. Higher education programs align curriculum (e.g., content, field experiences, and learning outcomes) to the PS&C. Job descriptions and performance evaluations in ECE settings are aligned to the PS&C. In all cases, resources are provided to support implementation.

Strengthening Professional Preparation Pathways

Policies and investments support strengthening ECE higher education programs' infrastructure and quality so that they can effectively prepare educators.

Examples: Investments are made in increasing the number of ECE faculty. Programs are supported to pursue NAEYC higher education accreditation. Faculty are supported to implement CPL. Resources are in place to support high quality field experiences; cohort programs; community-based classes; credit-based coursework in languages other than English

Implementing Articulation, Transfer, and Credit for Prior Learning

To address systemic barriers to higher education (related to cost, time and redundancy), policies and investments recognize within higher education pathways early childhood educators prior ECE credentials, education, and acquired competencies.

Example: Institutions utilize program to program rather than course to course articulation. Credit gained through dual enrollment, CPL and transfer are recognized as credit in the major, not as electives. CPL is expanded in ECE higher education programs.

More Realities for ECE Higher Ed

(Voices from a 2024 NAEYC ECE Higher Education Survey)



“We have created a non-credit-to-credit CDA pathway in English and Spanish for infants, toddlers, and Preschool. This innovated CDA program has been very successful.”

“I can no longer continue to be part of a system that is essentially ushering young women of color into poverty.”

“We have made all ECE courses Hyflex, so students can attend in-person or remotely at the same time. We have developed several ECE courses in Brazilian Portuguese.”

“We are collaborating with local early care and education organizations to provide cohort opportunities for employee attainment of the AAS in ECE, taking the core ECE courses to their site for delivery.”

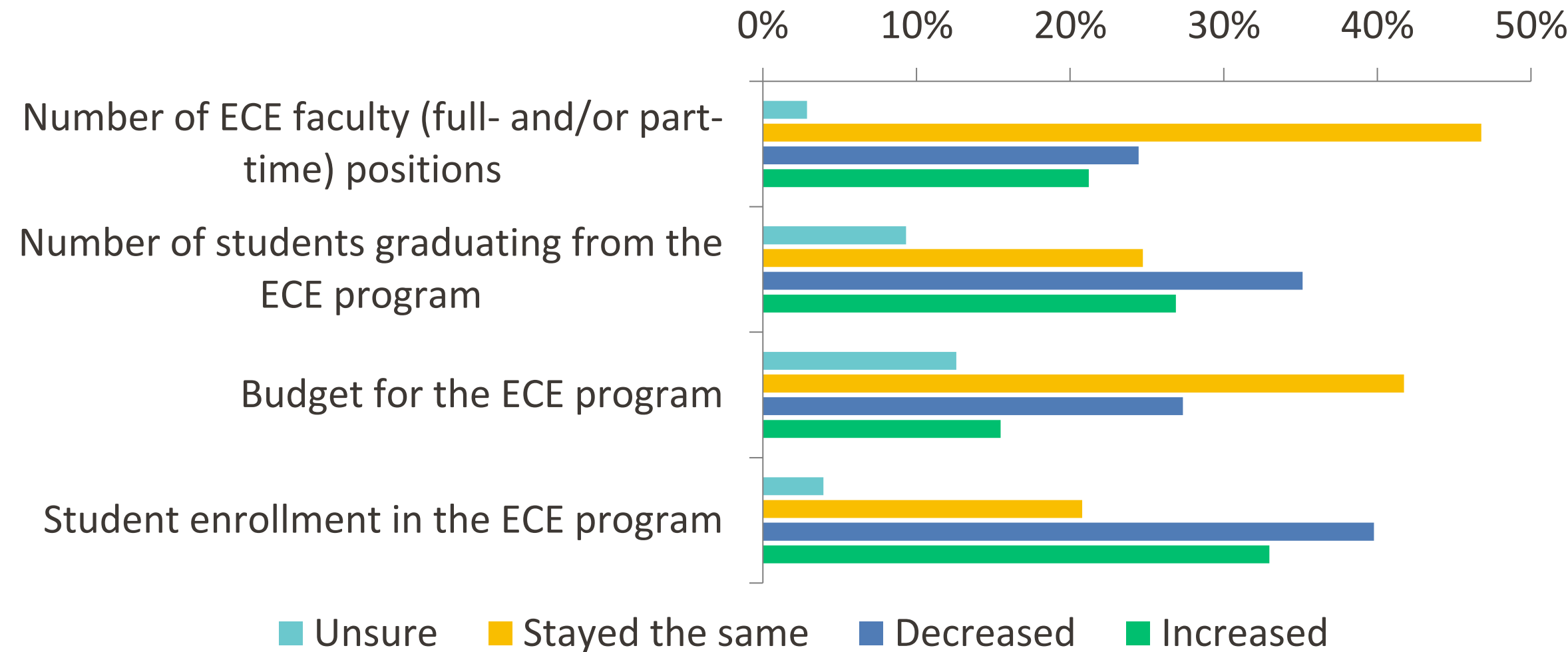
“As a result of a grant, we started several initiatives including various ways to credit students for prior learning, a mentor program (for field practicums), teaching others about adult learning, and an apprenticeship program.”

“Our leadership doesn't even respect us as faculty and a program. They have no regard for our work and are turning our lab school into a daycare center for the campus staff.”

More Realities for ECE Higher Ed

(Data from a 2024 NAEYC ECE Higher Education Survey)

2024 State of Programs Compared to Pre-Pandemic (March 2020)



The Reality of our Federal/State Policy and Funding Landscape



- Many policymakers have deep skepticism about the value of higher education.
- Many policymakers are concerned about the cost of college education.
- Many policymakers are concerned that students are taking on more debt than they can afford.
- Many policymakers are skeptical about what is taught in higher education classrooms.
- Many policymakers view higher education as a monolithic enterprise.
- Many policy makers do not understand higher education's role in preparing skilled workforces for essential public service functions in areas of education, social work, and health (wherein wages often do not reflect the skilled nature of the work).

These perspectives result in higher education policies such as those in the federal reconciliation legislation (or Ohio's SB 1)



Provision	Effective Date
Consolidates existing income-driven federal student loan repayment programs into two programs	Borrowers seeking loans after 7/1/26 must use the new repayment plans
Increases the number of years before a loan can be forgiven in the repayment assistance program	7/1/26
Eliminates the GRAD Plus Program	7/1/26
Sets lifetime cap on the amount that parents can borrow in the parent PLUS program	7/1/26
Establishes the "low earning outcomes" requirement	7/1/26
Reduces loan limits for part-time students	Immediately

What is the low earning outcomes provision?

For two out of three years, the median wages of a cohort of graduates from associate and baccalaureate programs (*the Department will likely pull this data*) must be more than the median wages of a working adult (25-34 years old) who hold solely a high school diploma. (*Wage data for the “working adult” will be pulled from the Census Bureau.*)

Similar requirement for those in graduate degree programs (wages will be compared to those of working adults holding solely a baccalaureate degree in the same occupation).

Students in programs that fail to meet this metric will not be eligible for federal student loans.

There will be an appeals process for programs.

How might this work?

Negotiated Rulemaking – What is it? What are the Opportunities to Weigh in?



What is it?

- The U.S. Department of Education is required to use this rulemaking process for provisions related to Title IV of the Higher Education Act.
- A negotiated rulemaking committee (comprised of stakeholders) meets to create regulations. There must be full consensus for a draft of regulations to move forward to the public for comment.

How does the public weigh in?

- August 7 – Public Hearing
- August 25th – Submit public comments
- August 25th – submit nominations for the committees
- **December 8-12 and January 5-9 – Negotiated Rulemaking Committee meetings**
- Public Comment Period after draft regulations are released

NAEYC's Preliminary Recommendations/Concerns



Low Earning Outcome Provision

- Define “program” at the two- or four-digit CIP code level
- Ensure that wage data (both data used to set the comparison threshold and graduates’ wage data) is accurate reflects fair wage comparisons
- Exempt programs preparing professionals in fields of national need – as defined by the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program – from the low earning outcome provision.
- Extend the enactment of the provision to at least July 1, 2028

Other Provisions

- Ensure that there is at least one or two seats on the negotiated rulemaking committees that includes representation from professions
- Expand the professional programs exempted from federal loan limits to include early childhood education and public education preparation programs.

Gathering Data to Prepare: *Do You Know.....?*



- If your institution participates in the federal student loan program? Most do, but some institutions choose not to.
- The 2-, 4- and 6- digit CIP code for your ECE program? For example.....
 - 19 is a broad CIP Code for “Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences”
 - 19.07 “Human Development, Family Studies and Related Services” is one of nine sub-CIP codes within 19
 - 19.0706 “Child Development” is one of eleven sub-CIP codes within 19.07
- The number of enrolled ECE degree students who use federal student loans?
- Of the most recent cohort of graduates, the number who held federal student loans?
 - The average amount of student loan debt they held?
- The average wage of your graduates?
- If most of your graduates remain in the state?

About CCAMPIS

CCAMPIS award delays, cancellations

- 13 grants cancelled
- New award opportunity not issued
- Sen. Tammy Duckworth (IL) requested GAO investigation
- Survey and action alert

Is your institution a CCAMPIS Grantee? If so, there's still time for your institution to take this survey to help us advocate for the program.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B6NMN2T>

Gathering and Sharing Impact Data and Experiences

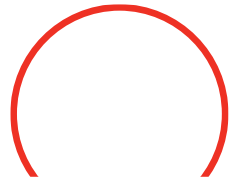
- What has been the impact on student well-being, enrollment, retention, graduation?
- How many parenting student are served by your program?
- How many do you anticipate will have to drop out if funding is discontinued?
- Will your institution be able to cover the funding gap?

**Let's Consider some
Principles, Key Messages, and
Strategies for Moving Forward**



Principles for Navigating These Terrains

- **Committed:** we hold fast to our mission, vision, and values.
- **Flexible:** we support and allow adaptations needed by programs, Affiliates, and states.
- **Calm:** we react, but we don't overreact.
- **Clear:** we respond in ways that are fact-based and focused on impact.
- **Connected:** we work with colleagues/allies within and outside ECE to respond/navigate



Messages and Strategies to Consider

A Message Focus: **Cultural competency is part of professional competency.**

“Students should be prepared to engage safely and effectively with individuals and communities from many different backgrounds. Regardless of the profession, it is essential that practitioners possess professional and cultural competence to be successful in a heterogeneous and global society. Curriculum content that includes learning about different ethnic and societal groups and their characteristics is not racism or discrimination, rather it is critical to providing expert care and services to specific populations. For example, healthcare workers must know that certain diseases disproportionately affect different demographic groups, and business professionals must recognize how cultural norms influence consumer preferences, communication styles, and ethical considerations in a global marketplace.”

***-Professional Competence Includes Cultural Competence
(March 2025) –Association of Specialized and Professional
Accreditors’ Position Statement***

Potential Strategies/Action Steps

- Connect with colleagues in the social work, criminal justice, K-12 education, and allied health professions to strategize on addressing course content
- Consider the many ways we can teach/describe our professional competencies

Messages and Strategies to Consider



A Message Focus: **Our curriculum content is grounded in the core guidelines of our ECE profession.** These articulate:

- the knowledge, skills, dispositions for essential professional competencies
- expectations for ethical practice
- expectations for appropriate care
- standards for safe, high quality early learning settings that support children's development and learning

A Message Focus: **Our profession prepares people for an essential service to the public.**

Strategies/Action Steps

- Connect with colleagues in the social work, criminal justice, K-12 education, and allied health professions to elevate professional autonomy
- Partner with ECE employers and graduates to tell the impact of being prepared to meet professional expectations
- Advocate for exemptions based on providing essential services to the public

Themes of Messages to Consider



A Message Focus: **Connect the dots between competencies, credentials and compensation**

A Message Focus: **Push back on the myth that deregulation increases the supply of early childhood educators and access to child care.**

A Message Focus: **Obtaining an ECE degree should be a debt-free endeavor**

Strategies/Action Steps

- Use the research summarized in NAEYC's resources on deregulation (and OH-ize it)
- Draw on evidence bearing out from the DC Pay Equity Fund
- Use OH TEACH evidence to document the impact of providing supports on the recruitment/retention/completion of ECE higher ed credentials. (the "hard" data and voices are equally important!)
- Expand CPL and articulation/transfer (Calculate the savings these bring to students. CAEL has great data on the impact on students and revenue generation CPL brings to institutions)

Messages and Strategies to Consider



A Message Focus: **Our ECE program(s) contributes to the institution's revenue.**

A Message Focus: **Our ECE program is vital to the supply and quality of child care in our community.**

Strategies/Action Steps

- Gather data on the \$ your program brings in via enrollment, graduate, course completion, retention
- Activate your advisory boards (and their programs' families) and students/graduates to meet with your presidents/provosts/policymakers

Advocating to Protect and Grow Public Investments in Compensation and ECE higher education pathways

- **Does your state/community have compensation initiatives in place (or proposed) that are moving the needle on increasing compensation?**
 - Would the wages in this initiative ensure that your program passes the low-earning outcomes “test”?
 - How protected is funding for this initiative in the coming year? In the next three years?
- **Does your state/community offer TEACH scholarships or another scholarship/grant for ECE students?**
 - How many of your students use this scholarship?
 - Do students using this scholarship use federal student loans?
 - Is there funding available to increase the number of students who use the scholarship at your institution?
 - How protected is funding for this initiative in the coming year? In the next three years?



In this time, it's important to be in community. Join Your Professional Membership Associations for Resources and Support!

Join NAEYC and your local Affiliates!

Join ACCESS, NAECTE and DEC!

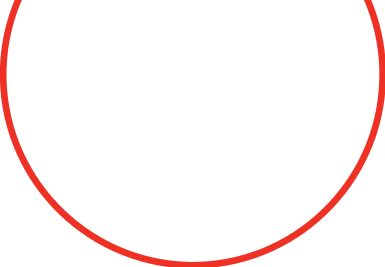
Participate in TEACH!

Stay part of this OH ECE Higher Education Community and continue to be part of convenings like this!



National Association for the Education of Young Children





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“As awful as things can get, I believe in this country. I believe in the people here. And I know education makes the difference...Don't you dare allow the toxicity of some people to leave you hopeless.”

Freeman Hrabowski III, President Emeritus, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Closing Speech at American Council on Education 2025 Conference

