

# Supporting a diverse, qualified early educator workforce: Aligning policy with research and realities <sup>[1]</sup>

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**Source:** Center for the Study of Child Care Employment

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 4 Dec 2019

## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

Excerpted from the article

### Minimum Qualification Expectations Are Out of Line With Child Development Research

Research is clear that early educators play a central role in facilitating learning and development among children birth to age five. Yet a gap exists between our understanding of the skills it takes to educate and care for children in their most critical stage of development and the codified expectations of early educators' knowledge and abilities.

In K-12 education, there is well-established consensus that teachers should obtain at least a bachelor's degree plus a grade- or subject-specific certification, reflected in state teacher licensure requirements. A similar view has been growing in early care and education (ECE) circles: experts recommend that lead teachers and program administrators acquire degrees and specialization equivalent to those working in elementary schools and that others working with young children, like assistant teachers or aides, attain foundational knowledge, such as a Child Development Associate Credential.

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