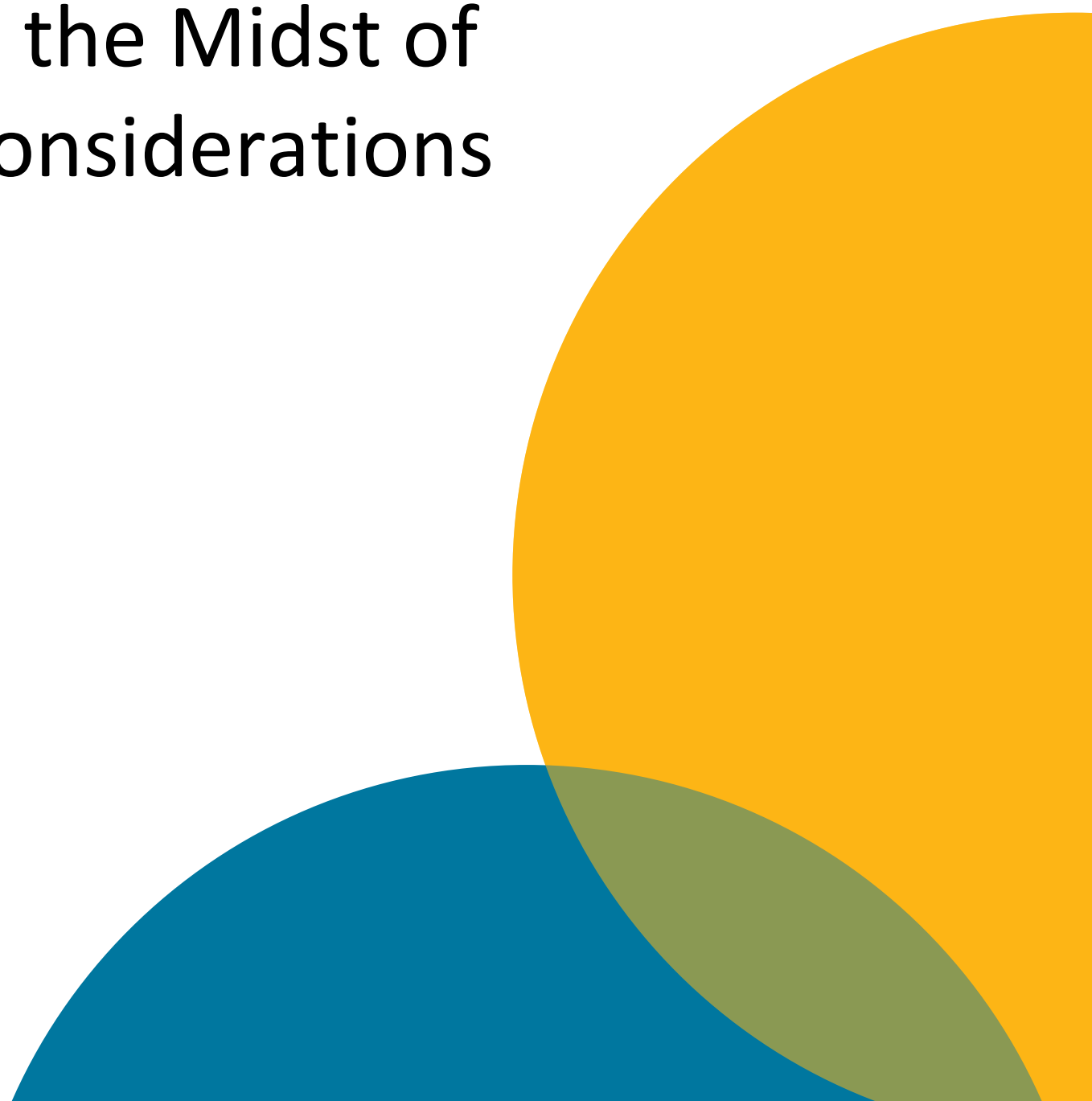


Preparing a Profession in the Midst of a Pandemic: Struggles, Considerations and Ways Forward

SEPTEMBER 2022

naeyc[®] National Association for the
Education of Young Children



Acknowledging the impact of the pandemic and living with long-COVID

Revisit the fundamentals of the *Unifying Framework*

Do a deeper dive into the educator pathways recommendations

NAEYC Updates and Resources

The link below includes access to reports and resources highlighted during this session

<https://wke.lt/w/s/Y4jc34>

Pulse Check: How are you doing?

<https://www.menti.com/aldxjtqvmw4j>

Go to **www.menti.com** and use the code **83989188**

- How are you feeling about the state of child care and the profession in OH right now?
- What are you proud of doing for your program this year?



Results

<https://www.mentimeter.com/app/presentation/98d82c020ecf781be80edbc7a46d1ec0/170aae1754f1>

Look Back

- Where were we even before the pandemic?
 - **Misunderstood, undervalued, underfunded, inequitable** (both educators and ECE higher ed programs)
 - **Compensation so low** that nearly half of early childhood educators live in families accessing public benefits to help them make ends meet
 - **Inconsistent professional development** and professional preparation with **uneven quality**
 - Lack of consensus that **reinforces fragmentation**

But what about COVID?

Creating challenges

- ✓ Permanent, widespread closure of child care programs and classrooms
- ✓ Staffing crisis exacerbating a lack of supply
- ✓ Increased calls for looser regulatory environments & lowered standards
- ✓ Widening of the gap between birth through five and K-3 spaces

The Impact on ECE Higher Ed Programs

- Almost two-thirds of ECE degree programs have experienced decreases in student enrollment.
- Over one-third of programs have seen a decrease in ECE candidates graduating.
- 30% of programs have experienced budget cuts.
- 18% of programs have experienced faculty and staff cuts.
- 20% of faculty reported experiencing food/housing/employment insecurity
- 25% of ECE faculty indicated they plan to retire or switch careers in the next three years
- 13% of programs indicated they are worried that their program is in danger of closing over the next 12-18 months.
- 2% of programs have closed during the pandemic.

What about COVID?

Creating opportunities

- ✓ Billions of dollars invested in child care relief with potential for hundreds of billions of dollars in substantial, sustainable funding
- ✓ Recognition of the underlying vulnerabilities in ECE and the need to move away from the status quo
- ✓ Innovative responses from higher education faculty and PD specialists
- ✓ Renewed understanding of child care as essential
- ✓ Increased (temporary) compensation for some educators
- ✓ Increased appreciation for value of family child care settings

Some Silver Linings...

Being primarily online increased access for many students to pursue their studies

Increased recognition of the humanity in teaching and learning

Virtual office hours increased interactions with students

All course content is now able to be adapted to online*

While the quick shift to online was jarring and challenging, most faculty reported feeling supported in the transition

Identified varied and meaningful videos of young children to supplement field experiences

Struggles, Successes, and Silver Linings: The Impact of the Pandemic on ECE Postsecondary Programs

September 2021

In early spring 2020, college campuses across the country had to quickly shift all of their in-person classes online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For programs preparing graduates for clinical professions, such as early childhood education (ECE), this was particularly challenging given that field experiences are central to the curriculum. The quick pivot required faculty to find creative ways to supplement classroom observations and field experiences and to implement and expand necessary supports for students.

In an effort to better understand the ECE higher education landscape during the initial period of the pandemic, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) conducted a survey with respondents from 43 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Between April 16 and May 6, 2020, the survey was sent to over 300 programs in NAEYC's higher education accreditation system and to over 250 NAEYC nationally recognized programs. In all, 263 faculty members from 232 institutions responded.

According to that survey, the vast majority of respondents (92 percent) indicated that their institutions had shifted classes from in-person to online for the spring semester. Additionally, **56%** of respondents reported they had to make significant modifications to ECE course content for online learning, while **40%** were able to move online with few to no modifications. Increases in student attrition coupled with a decline in the number of students graduating created difficulties for program faculty and staff. Last, but certainly not least, respondents found it

difficult to maintain their own as well as their students' emotional health, especially when navigating the challenges associated with online learning.

As of September 2021, we are approximately 18 months into the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout, NAEYC has carefully monitored, assessed, and reported on the pandemic's impact on the ECE field. As part of this work, from April 9 to May 3, 2021, NAEYC conducted a follow-up survey asking ECE faculty and ECE higher education administrators about the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their institutions, their early childhood education programs, their students, and themselves. The findings from this survey, as reflected in the broader early childhood field, reveal significant devastation and challenges as well as silver linings and many positive lessons learned. This brief provides a snapshot of the ECE higher education landscape heading into a third academic year in which programs, faculty, and students will feel the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ <https://www.naeyc.org/pandemic-surveys>

You can find updated statements and recommendations on [NAEYC's COVID-19 resources page](#) and can always reach out via email to highered@NAEYC.org with questions and to share your stories.

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Preparing a Profession Perspectives of Higher Education Leaders on the Future of the Early Childhood Education Workforce



Fall 2021

There's No Going Back

The impact of the pandemic is devastating...

...and we have to look ahead.

- We can't go from this crisis back to the crisis that was already defining our child care, early learning, and professional preparation systems.
- Power to the Profession, in creating **Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession** with 15 national organizations standing together, has developed a roadmap for an inclusive, equitable future that values this essential profession for its skilled and important work.

Educators Are Central

- Investing specifically in **early childhood educators** is the best thing we can do to improve early childhood education.
- When our current systems cause harm to educators, they can also harm children and their families.

Where We Are Going: Audacious Vision

- Each and every child is supported by ECEs with recognized early childhood degrees and credentials;
- Early childhood educators at all levels of the profession are valued, respected, and well-compensated;
- Educators with lead responsibilities across settings and age bands have bachelor's degree in early childhood education at a minimum;
- ECEs have equitable access to affordable, high-quality professional preparation and development; and
- ECEs at all levels are well compensated from public funding

In a Nutshell, What is the Unifying Framework Driving Toward?

Creating a birth-age 8 ECE Workforce

- Breaking down the division of K-3 and 0-5 (implications for governance, licensing, professional preparation, etc.)

All components of the ECE System are centered on

- The *Professional Standards and Competencies* – No more 50+ sets of state standards
- The early childhood educator (as defined by the UF) and the ECE designations

Every early childhood educator is licensed to practice

- Every early childhood educator has professional preparation prior to practicing
- A birth-age 8 license – No more 50+ sets of state requirements for credentialing and licensing
- Reworking/simplifying career lattices

Fair and equitable compensation for all early childhood educators

- K-12 compensation is the floor for ECE compensation
- Compensation (salary and benefits) is based on ECE designations, not based on age groups being served or settings in which individuals practice

Higher education is well-supported

- More cohesiveness in the curriculum within and across degree levels
- More infrastructure and supports for program quality and for students
- Consistency in the quality of ECE professional preparation programs

An ECE Profession Centered on the Professional Standards and Competencies

ECE Employer Hiring and Evaluation Requirements

ECE Teacher Licensing Requirements

State Program Approval for ECE Professional Preparation Programs

ECE Professional Preparation Program Curriculum

National Accreditation

State Professional Development Systems

State Early Childhood Educator Competencies

One License: 3 Credential Designations

Birth through Age 8 License

ECE I Designation

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Scope of Practice: Serve in a support role in birth-age 8 settings. Cannot serve as lead teacher or teacher of record.

Education Requirement: Completion of (at least) 120 clock hours of an ECE preparation program

ECE II Designation

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Scope of Practice: Serve as the lead educator or teacher of record in birth through age five settings. Serve in a support role in K-3 settings.*

Education Requirement: ECE Associate Degree

ECE III Designation

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Scope of Practice: Serve as lead educator or teacher of record in birth through age 8 settings

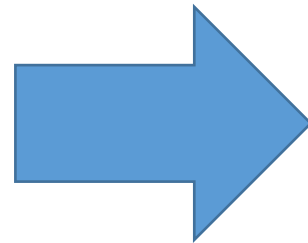
Education Requirement: ECE Baccalaureate Degree or ECE Initial Master's Degree

*In alignment with the *Unifying Framework* recommendations, for states that already require an individual to have a bachelor's degree to serve as the lead educator/teacher of record in public PreK settings this scope of practice will be adjusted to reflect that the ECE II designation allows the individual to serve as lead educator/teacher of record in birth through age five settings, with the exception of public PreK settings.

Supports and Accountability for ECE Professional Preparation Programs

Necessary Supports and Infrastructure for ECE Professional Preparation Programs

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



As public funding increases and as access to core infrastructure and supports for ECE Higher Ed Programs increases, programs must meet three expectations

Earn accreditation or recognition from an early childhood professional preparation accreditation or recognition

Ensure that graduates can successfully demonstrate proficiency in the *Professional Standards and Competencies*

Advance seamless articulation strategies

What does this mean for education pathways?

- The Unifying Framework sets an ambitious vision (every early childhood educator with lead responsibilities holds an ECE baccalaureate degree) with near-term recommendations rooted in the realities of the current ECE workforce and ECE pathways landscape (ECE I, II and III designations).
- The work we do as states must attend to both the current ECE workforce and building a system for the future workforce.

Rebuilding/Revising the ECE Pathways in States Requires a...

- Clear understanding of the current ECE workforce demographics as they relate to ECE education credentials
- Clear understanding of the current ECE pathways as they relate to programs that prepare individuals for ECE I, II and III designations

When We Talk About an ECE Workforce in Which Everyone Holds an Education Credential, the Following Needs to be Part of that Conversation

- Supports for the current/prospective early childhood educator
- Supports for the employers of current early childhood educators
- Supports for the ECE professional preparation programs
- Time for the current/prospective early childhood educator to obtain the credential
- Meaningful bump in compensation when that credential is obtained
- Exemption/transition policies for the current ECE workforce

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Developmentally Appropriate Practice

in Early Childhood Programs

Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8

FOURTH EDITION

Appendix A: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Action: Educator Snapshots and Reflections

Appendix B: Digging Deeper into Knowledge

[Appendix C: Changes to the Position Statement, Changes to the Book: Resources and Strategies for Faculty](#)

Camille Catlett, Eva Horn, and Florianna J. Thompson

Appendix D: Creating and Implementing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: A Guide for Public School Audiences

Jason Sachs and Chris Bucco

Appendix E: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Early Learning Setting: Tips and Resources for Early Childhood Educators

Video Overview of the Resources Associated with the Book -

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/bKVRtLUFxRk>

For higher education faculty:

- Suggested activities, assignments, and reflections that correspond to specific content in the book, key areas of practice in NAEYC's position statement on developmentally appropriate practice, and the professional standards and competencies
- A test bank to create quick quizzes

For K-3 leaders:

- Considerations for incorporating developmentally appropriate practice into K-3 schools and programs, including those that provide pre-K, to foster children's joyful learning and maximize learning opportunities for all children

For early childhood educators:

- Tips and resources for engaging with content in the book, extending learning with additional resources, and collaborating with others in the early childhood learning community

- Preparing Equitable and Inclusive Early Childhood Educators: Three Evidence-based Strategies
- Identify, Apply and Reflect: Supporting Early Childhood Teacher Candidates through Innovative Field Experiences
- Baby Steps: Advancing Art Education, Diversity Awareness, and Reflection for Preservice ECE Teachers
- The Power of Video Analysis: Developing Professional Vision
- Toward Pro-Black Early Childhood Teacher Education
- Diversifying the Workforce: Increasing the Number of Asian Americans in ECE

Guidelines for Quality Early Childhood Education Professional Preparation Programs

NAEYC's Early Childhood Higher
Education Accreditation Standards



Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

Effective early childhood educators are critical for realizing the early childhood profession's vision that each and every young child, birth through age 8, have equitable access to high-quality learning and care environments. As such, there is a core body of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions early childhood educators must demonstrate to effectively promote the development, learning, and well-being of all young children.

[Disponible en Español: NAEYC.org/competencias](https://naeyc.org/competencias)

A Position Statement Held on Behalf of the Early Childhood Education Profession
Adopted by the NAEYC National Governing Board November 2019

Taken Together, These New Guidelines (whether programs participate in accreditation or not)

- Were developed by the profession and vetted with the field
- Articulate expectations for quality professional preparation
- Articulate the expected competencies of graduates of ECE professional preparation programs
- Reflect the higher education recommendations in the *Unifying Framework* (both the infrastructure needs and responsibilities of professional preparation programs)

Accreditation Standards

Standard A:

Program
Identity,
Candidates,
Organization
and Resources

Standard B:

Faculty
Characteristics
and Quality,
Professional
Responsibilities
and
Professional
Development

Standard C:

Program
Design and
Evaluation

Standard D:

Developing
Candidate
Proficiency in
the
*Professional
Standards and
Competencies*

Standard E:

Assuring
Candidate
Proficiency in
the
*Professional
Standards and
Competencies*

Standard F:

Field
Experience
Quality

Resources for Advocacy and Implementing the Unifying Framework

- [NAEYC Child Care & the Pandemic Field Surveys](#): From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, NAEYC has utilized these surveys to understand and share the breadth of the crisis and the challenges child care programs are facing across states and settings, as well as the solutions to address those
- [Preparing a Profession: Perspectives of Higher Education Leaders on the Future of the Early Childhood Education Workforce](#) (Fall 2021) - Summarizes 30 interviews with leaders in institutions of higher education and national higher education organizations and provides recommendations for how to strengthen higher ed leadership engagement in the early childhood education sphere.
- [NAEYC's Higher Education Accreditation Standards](#) (Fall 2021) - These serve both as NAEYC's higher ed accreditation standards as well as NAEYC's position on quality ECE professional preparation programs.
- [Struggles, Successes and Silver Linings: The Impact of the Pandemic on ECE Professional Preparation Programs](#) (Fall 2021) - This summarizes results from the second survey we did of ECE higher ed programs.
- [Compensation Matters Most: Why and How States Should Use Child Care Relief Funding to Increase Compensation for the Early Childhood Education Workforce](#) (June 2021)

More Resources

- New 2-piece resource: *Deregulation Won't Solve Child Care...But It Will Decrease Safety and Supply*. We developed one brief specifically for policymakers and another for advocates. Both resources can be downloaded [here](#) and [here](#).
- Upcoming Policy brief on credit for prior learning
- State Peer Learning Cohorts focused on a) Compensation and Salary Scales b) Credit for Prior Learning and c) Professional Licensure.
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=UOOyH0vrBkiNgZyATrtPNJGTgzxuHSZPi6d9rTL632xURDRWUDcxRjJQOEVGTUJaWIZDSkpZSIRDry4u>
- Model state legislation and regulations for implementing the Unifying Framework

**As always, thank you
for all that you do to
support your students
and the young children
and families in your
communities**

