

Power to the Profession

There are more than 40 million children birth through age 8 in America. One of the best things our country can do to support and improve outcomes for these children and their families is to make significant, substantial, and sustained investments in high-quality early childhood education. And because positive relationships are at the core of quality, investing specifically in early childhood educators is the best thing we can do to improve early childhood education.

Yet in order to receive the significant and sustained public investments that would allow all children to benefit from high-quality early childhood education, early childhood educators and stakeholders must agree on some clear, foundational elements of the diverse, effective, equitable, and well-compensated profession we all need.

Since January 2017, a broad-based Task Force of leaders from 15 national membership organizations has been working in partnership with the early childhood education field and stakeholders to define the early childhood education profession for children birth through age 8 by establishing a unifying framework for career pathways, knowledge, competencies, qualifications, standards, and compensation across states and settings.

Where is P2P now?

Building on the tireless efforts of allies and advocates across the decades, the eight Power to the Profession Decision Cycles have been completed, and have laid the groundwork for the future early childhood education profession by making recommendations on the name and the responsibilities of the profession (Decision Cycle 1), the competencies of early childhood educators (Decision Cycle 2), professional pathways, and compensation (Decision Cycle 3-6) and the supports, resources, accountability, and infrastructure (Decision Cycle 7+8) that form the core of the *Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession*.

Who is engaged in P2P?

The P2P process has been built on multiple, iterative rounds of English and Spanish-language feedback, engaging more than 11,000 early childhood educators. Forty-seven states and territories have hosted events, including information sessions, conference keynotes, focus groups, and webinars. Our work has been especially informed by surveys completed by more than 6,300 individuals, 42 written comments from partner organizations, and 175 focus groups reaching more than 3,400 individuals. Intentional outreach and engagement with educators from communities of color, educators who speak Spanish, and educators living in rural communities has resulted in 21 focus and discussion groups reaching more than 440 individuals across 12 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Where is P2P going?

Power to the Profession has embraced a vision in which each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high-quality early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce across all states and settings. Among other specific recommendations, this Framework elevates early childhood educators at multiple designations (Early Childhood Educator I, Early Childhood Educator II, and Early Childhood Educator III). These designations are intentionally connected to and informed by the agreed-upon *Standards and Competencies for the Early Childhood Education Profession*, and have been developed so that each and every person in this profession can play a valuable and essential role in the development and education of young children. Early Childhood Educators at each designation will be supported by interrelated and interdependent resources and infrastructure in order to ensure meaningful and collective accountability to one another, and to children across states and settings.

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How are we getting there?

Implementation of the *Unifying Framework* will ultimately build a bridge from the present to the future. We must both honor and include our existing field of those working across early learning settings, recognizing their diversity, dedication, and experience. Supported by a set of implementation guidelines, we will advocate for appropriate new education and qualification requirements being phased in over time, accompanied by additional public investments and extensive supports that result in increased compensation. In addition, we will rely on the power of the collective to stand firm together, speaking with a unified voice to policymakers on behalf of children, families, and early childhood educators.

How can you help advance P2P?

Your voice is critical and powerful. To engage in this initiative, and make your voice heard, you can:

- **Read the draft and check out more resources at www.powertotheprofession.org**
 - Recorded webinars and slides
 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Recursos en Español (Materials in Spanish)
- **Share the drafts and resources with others.**
 - Host a Power to the Profession discussion group with your colleagues (facilitator guides and supports are available upon request!)
 - Partner with your Affiliate and other ECE partners to host a conversation.
 - Post on social media and encourage your followers to weigh in—#PowerToTheProfession.
- **Prepare for implementation.**
 - Look for the release of the *Unifying Framework* on March 9, 2020. RSVP at www.powertotheprofession.org. Plan a party to watch the livestream with your colleagues!
 - Invite the members of key state and Congressional committees to visit high-quality early childhood settings to talk with educators and families.
 - [Uncover the Inner Workings](#) with NAEYC and New America to help further your understanding of who holds power to make or prevent change in your state, and where that power is held.
 - Review “[Increasing Qualifications, Centering Equity](#)” from NAEYC in partnership with The Education Trust to read experiences, advice, and recommendations from educators in communities of color.

This is your profession, and there is a place for you here. We invite you to contribute your expertise and passion, and hope you will join us to learn more about how to help build the movement.

Sign up for Virtual Office Hours online or email p2p@naeyc.org.

February 2020