

Centering Quality, Centering Equity: Lessons Learned in Increasing Early Childhood Educator Credentials

A joint report of The Institute for College Access & Success and
the Georgetown University Center on Poverty and Inequality

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This report explores Early Childhood Education (ECE) credential requirements in California (CA) and Washington, D.C. (D.C.) for two key reasons: 1) both recently raised these requirements and 2) both are in the process of implementing the new changes.

This study does not seek to advocate in favor of or against the adoption of increased credential requirements. Rather, its purpose is to shed light on the need to center racial and economic equity in policy design and implementation—focusing on the impact of increased credential requirements on early childhood educators in states pursuing these changes.

Methodology

We conducted both qualitative analyses (literature review and focus groups) and quantitative analyses. The focus groups enabled us to center the experiences of ECE stakeholders most impacted by credential requirement policy changes. The quantitative data and literature analysis served to complement the perspectives stakeholders expressed firsthand in the focus groups. The framework for our protocol and participant recruitment is reflective of the quantitative data findings and existing research literature on ECE. (See *Appendices G and H for our focus group interview protocols for California and D.C., respectively.*)



Qualitative Analysis

The need to understand and uplift the experiences of early childhood educators navigating the changing credentialing requirements shaped our decision to conduct focus groups of racially and ethnically diverse early childhood educators in both California and Washington, D.C. Policymakers may not always know how proposed or enacted changes will impact children, educators, parents, and their

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communities. It is paramount to center voices of those who may be most impacted in policy design and implementation.

Protocol. We created a protocol to guide the focus groups and interviews conducted with 28 ECE stakeholders in both California and D.C. The protocol framed our approach to explore perspectives on credential requirements, barriers, and enablers to meeting raising credential requirements, defining ECE qualifications, employment and pay equity, and worker power. To analyze the qualitative data, we employed three rounds of qualitative coding. First, we utilized open coding to identify the main concepts across the focus group transcripts related to our research questions. Next, we employed axial coding to refine and merge the main concepts into themes and exemplary quotes. Last, we wrote analytical memos for each theme to highlight the main takeaways and varying perspectives among participants. While the overarching themes resonated similarly in both California and D.C., the specific takeaways varied. Appendix A contains the focus group protocol and research questions.

Participants. Respondents in both California and D.C. comprised a racially and ethnically diverse group of early childhood educators, child care and daycare operators, worker advocates (exclusive to D.C.), and policy leaders. While most interviews and focus groups were conducted in English, two were conducted in Spanish for California participants. All interviews and focus groups lasted 60 to 90 minutes, with the conversation following pre-set protocol questions and emerging topics that participants deemed significant.

In California, the twenty (20) focus group and interview participants included eleven (11) Latina women, six (6) Black women, one (1) Afro-Latina woman, one (1) Asian woman, and one (1) Latino man. The role composition consisted of eleven (11) early childhood educators, seven (7) child care and daycare operators, and two (2) policy leaders. Participants' professional experiences ranged from 2 to 10 plus years in the ECE field, with all but one participant still actively working in the profession.

In D.C., the eight (8) participants included three (3) Black women, three (3) white women, one (1) Asian woman, and one (1) Black man. The focus group participants comprised of three (3) ECE educators, two (2) childcare and daycare operators, two (2) policy experts, and one (1) worker advocate, all with a range of 5 to 10 plus years of experience in ECE. All D.C. participants were currently working in the ECE field.

In addition to the focus groups, we conducted informational interviews with policy advocates and experts who helped us learn about the policy landscape, recruit participants, and identify key anchor organizations in ECE. Their initial input was invaluable in shaping the focus group protocol, strengthening outreach efforts, and providing additional context into the California and D.C. ECE landscapes.

All names and identifying information are anonymized to protect the identity of the participants.



Quantitative Analysis

The Characteristics of the Early Childhood Education Workforce section of our report includes original quantitative data analysis conducted with public-use files from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care

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and Education (NSECE). This NSECE data is the basis for the figures in the report and appendices C through K.

More specifically, we used NSECE’s quick tabulation workforce data file, downloaded from the Child and Family Data Archive.ⁱ This file contains data from the NSECE workforce survey on teachers and caregivers who were randomly selected from completed center-based provider surveys. Data include work experiences, personal characteristics, and professional development activities.

The NSECE data used are nationally representative of lead teachers, assistant teachers, instructors, and aides who worked at least five hours a week in a center-based provider with children from birth through age five, not yet in kindergarten, in the U.S. in 2019.

ⁱ For links to download the dataset and technical documentation see the study’s webpage on the Child and Family Data Archive: <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/archives/cfda/studies/37941/>

Appendix A:

Make-up of Early Care and Education Workforce

In 2019, there were 1.36 million center-based early childhood education (ECE) teachers, lead teachers, assistants, or aides, 1.05 million unlisted paid home-based child care providers, and 91,200 listed home-based child care providers in the United States according to the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE).¹

Listed home-based paid providers are individuals who appear on state or national lists of early care and education services and include licensed, regulated, license-exempt, or registered home-based providers.

Unlisted home-based providers refer to individuals who do not appear on state or national home-based provider lists, but were identified as such through a short household interview called a “screener” when someone reported getting paid to care for children that were not their own at least five hours per week in a home-based setting.²

A **center-based provider** is defined as an organization providing child care and early education services to children ages five and under and not yet in kindergarten in a single location.³ These centers may receive Head Start funding and Public Pre-K funding and may be independent or part of a chain, school district, or community-based setting.⁴

The data presented in this section comes from the 2019 NSECE workforce survey which is nationally representative of lead teachers, assistant teachers, instructors, and aides who worked at least five hours a week in a center-based provider with children from birth through age five, not yet in kindergarten, in the U.S. in 2019.

Appendix B:

Center-Based Early Educator Characteristics by Role

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	All Teachers
Total number of educators	507,000	836,000	1,343,000
Personal Characteristics			
Female	96%	97%	97%
Born outside the United States	13%	10%	11%
Race/Ethnicity			
White only, not Latino	56%	58%	58%
Black only, not Latino	14%	18%	17%
Latino (any race)	19%	15%	17%
Asian only, not Latino	3%	2%	3%
Another race or multi-racial, not Latino	3%	3%	3%
Age			
18-29	41%	26%	32%
30-39	20%	27%	24%
40-49	13%	20%	17%
50-59	12%	15%	14%
60 and over	9%	8%	9%
Professional Affiliations			
Member of a union	7%	7%	7%
Member of a professional association focused on caring for children.	20%	22%	21%

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to Don't Know and Refuse responses and records with absent data.
Source: Authors' analysis of 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Workforce Survey.

Appendix C:

Center-Based Early Educator Work Experience and Credentials by Role

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	All Teachers
Years of Paid Experience Caring for Children Under Age 13			
Less than 5 years	43%	26%	32%
More than 5 years, less than 10 years	27%	21%	23%
More than 10 years, less than 15 years	10%	18%	15%
More than 15 years, less than 20 years	8%	14%	12%
More than 20 years, less than 25 years	3%	7%	5%
More than 25 years	8%	13%	11%
Years Worked At Current Program			
1 year or less	48%	30%	36%
2-4 years	25%	27%	26%
5-7 years	9%	13%	12%
8-10 years	6%	9%	8%
More than 10 years	11%	21%	17%
Educational Attainment			
No high school degree	3%	1%	2%
High school degree only	25%	17%	20%
Some college credits, no degree	37%	26%	30%
AA degree, not ECE or ECE-related major	5%	5%	5%
AA degree, ECE or ECE-related major	7%	16%	13%
BA degree or higher, not ECE or ECE-related major	10%	8%	9%
BA degree or higher, ECE or ECE-related major	11%	27%	21%
State Certification or Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate			
Neither state certification nor CDA	60%	41%	49%
State certification only	15%	28%	23%
CDA only	12%	14%	13%
Both CDA and state certifications	9%	14%	12%

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to Don't Know and Refuse responses and records with absent data.

Source: Authors' analysis of 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Workforce Survey.

Appendix D:

Center-Based Early Educator Time Worked, Income, and Wages by Role

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	All Teachers
Hourly Wage Before Taxes and Deductions			
25th Percentile	\$9.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
50th Percentile (Median)	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$12.00
75th Percentile	\$13.00	\$17.00	\$15.45
Hours Worked Per Week			
20 hours or less	17%	6%	10%
21 to 35 hours	29%	16%	21%
36 hours or more	53%	77%	68%
Months Worked in Past Year at a Child Care Program			
6 months or less	18%	9%	12%
7-9 months	20%	12%	15%
10-11 months	13%	12%	13%
12 months	48%	66%	59%
Household Income in 2018			
Less than \$15,000	20%	14%	16%
\$15,001 to \$30,000	24%	24%	24%
\$30,001 to \$45,000	13%	11%	12%
\$45,001 to \$60,000	9%	12%	11%
\$60,001 or more	17%	26%	22%
Portion of Household Income in 2018 That Came From Working With Children			
All or almost all	34%	39%	37%
More than half	4%	6%	5%
About half	6%	11%	9%
Less than half	15%	20%	18%
Very little or none	32%	17%	23%

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	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	All Teachers
Job Search in Past 3 Months			
Looked for a new job or an additional job in the past three months	25%	26%	26%
Main reason for looking for a new job (Percents are of those who looked for a job in the past 3 months)			
To find a job that pays more	50%	50%	50%
To find a second job	8%	16%	13%
To find improved work conditions in program	6%	8%	8%
To find job for prof growth and/or career advancement within child care	4%	6%	5%
Other reason	30%	18%	22%

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to Don't Know and Refuse responses and records with absent data.

Source: Authors' analysis of 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Workforce Survey.

Appendix E:

Lead Teachers' Work Experience and Credentials by Race and Ethnicity

	White	Black	Latino
Years of Paid Experience Caring for Children Under Age 13			
Less than 5 years	25%	26%	32%
More than 5 years, less than 10 years	20%	21%	25%
More than 10 years, less than 15 years	20%	13%	20%
More than 15 years, less than 20 years	14%	16%	11%
More than 20 years, less than 25 years	6%	8%	5%
More than 25 years	14%	15%	6%
Years Worked At Current Program			
1 year or less	31%	28%	32%
2-4 years	26%	30%	27%
5-7 years	13%	11%	17%
8-10 years	9%	9%	8%
More than 10 years	20%	22%	17%
Educational Attainment			
No high school degree	0%	1%	1%
High school degree only	15%	22%	23%
Some college credits, no degree	24%	29%	31%
AA degree, not ECE or ECE-related major	6%	5%	3%
AA degree, ECE or ECE-related major	15%	16%	16%
BA degree or higher, not ECE or ECE-related major	9%	9%	5%
BA degree or higher, ECE or ECE-related major	31%	18%	21%
State Certification or Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate			
Neither state certification nor CDA	42%	39%	40%
State certification only	32%	25%	20%
CDA only	13%	18%	13%
Both CDA and state certifications	11%	16%	26%

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to Don't Know and Refuse responses and records with absent data.

Source: Authors' analysis of 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Workforce Survey.

Appendix F:

Lead Teachers Without a Postsecondary Degree, Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity

	White	Black	Latino	All
Total number of educators	189,741	81,120	69,248	363,012
Hourly Wage Before Taxes and Deductions				
25th Percentile	\$9.00	\$8.75	\$9.02	\$9.00
50th Percentile (Median)	\$11.00	\$10.00	\$11.25	\$10.75
75th Percentile	\$13.24	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$13.00
Hours Worked Per Week				
20 hours or less	5%	6%	5%	6%
21 to 35 hours	19%	15%	15%	17%
36 hours or more	75%	79%	79%	76%
Months Worked in Past Year at a Child Care Program				
6 months or less	11%	13%	17%	12%
7-9 months	10%	5%	7%	8%
10-11 months	6%	8%	5%	6%
12 months	71%	74%	69%	71%
Household Income in 2018				
Less than \$15,000	15%	34%	26%	22%
\$15,001 to \$30,000	24%	36%	32%	29%
\$30,001 to \$45,000	11%	9%	11%	11%
\$45,001 to \$60,000	11%	5%	8%	8%
\$60,001 or more	23%	6%	15%	16%
Portion of Household Income in 2018 That Came From Working With Children				
All or almost all	35%	58%	39%	41%
More than half	4%	7%	4%	5%
About half	6%	10%	9%	8%
Less than half	21%	10%	27%	19%
Very little or none	23%	8%	16%	18%

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	White	Black	Latino	All
Job Search in Past 3 Months				
Looked for a new job or an additional job in the past three months	22%	30%	27%	25%
Main reason for looking for a new job (Percents are of those who looked for a job in the past 3 months)				
To find a job that pays more	35%	57%	63%	48%
To find a second job	16%	31%	13%	18%
To find improved work conditions in program	13%	1%	6%	8%
To find job for prof growth and/or career advancement within child care	11%	3%	1%	6%
Other reason	24%	5%	16%	16%
Household Composition				
Single, child under age 13	14%	31%	25%	21%
Married or living with a partner, child under age 13	25%	12%	21%	20%
Single, no child under age 13	25%	41%	27%	29%
Married or living with a partner, no child under age 13	31%	13%	25%	25%

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to Don't Know and Refuse responses and records with absent data.

Source: Authors' analysis of 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Workforce Survey.

Appendix G:

Focus Group Interview Protocol for California

Start Interview Here: Thank you for agreeing to participate in our Credential and Early Childhood Education study. We are exploring how credential requirements are impacting the field of early childhood education, particularly workers. We will record the interview and only keep the audio file. All answers will be kept anonymous.

So, here are the rules for the focus group:

1. Please say your name first before speaking so the transcriber can track who is speaking. I will remind you if you forget.
2. Think of this as all of us having a conversation, so it is okay to respond to each other's points and discuss topics not directly covered by a question. I will do my best to move the conversation forward as needed.
3. We will ask a series of questions, and you can end the interview at any time or skip a question if you do not want to answer.

Any questions for me before we get started? **I will record now.** *[Make sure you hit record!]*

Early Childhood Workers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field. What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. There are several ways to become eligible to teach transitional kindergarten. There is a multiple-subject credential requirement for TK teachers. Now, there is a new requirement that credentialed TK teachers must have one of the following by 2025 to qualify: 24 units of early childhood development, equivalent classroom experience, or a child development permit. In addition, the state has waiver pathways to qualify and is also developing a new credential called The PK-3 credential. How do you feel about California's new requirements (coursework, classroom experience, or permit) to be a TK teacher?
 - a. Have you recently had to obtain any additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours)? Please explain why or why not.
 - b. How does/would this requirement impact your job choices? What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?
 - c. Will you continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - d. Does your life circumstances/financial reality allow you or your colleagues to go back to school to stay a worker in ECE?
 - i. What are some barriers?

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3. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a credential requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?
 - b. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach TK (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.
4. **Share screen and show this image.**
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. Do you think more pay is necessary if increased credentials/permits are required?
5. How can ECE workers, across the field, build worker power to advocate for what they need?
 - a. Can you explain the role of different unions, organizations, or coalitions that build worker power? How important are they?
6. How do you see credential requirements impacting the ECE field in the future?
 - a. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - b. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in preschool and TK, can more teachers be recruited from the ECE professionals who have experience and units but no credentials? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color who could help address the teacher shortage?
7. Please share any other perspectives on California and increased credentials for TK?
 - a. [Interviewer can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Early Childhood Employers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field as an ECE operator. How many years have you worked in an ECE classroom or setting?
 - a. What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. There are several ways to become eligible to teach transitional kindergarten. There is a multiple-subject credential requirement for TK teachers. Now, there is a new requirement that credentialed TK teachers must have one of the following by 2025 to qualify: 24 units of early childhood development, equivalent classroom experience, or a child development permit. In addition, the state has waiver pathways to qualify and is also developing a new credential called The PK-3 credential. How do you feel about California's new requirements (coursework, classroom experience, or permit) to be a TK teacher?
 - a. How does/would this requirement impact your hiring choices?
 - b. How will/does this policy requirement impact your current employees? Will they continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - c. Does your employees' circumstances/financial reality allow them to meet additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours) to stay a worker in ECE?
 - i. What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?

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3. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a new credential/permit requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?
 - b. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach TK (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.
4. **Share screen and show this image.**
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. What changes, if any, are necessary?
 - c. Is more pay necessary if more credentials/permits are required?
 - d. How will credential/permit requirements impact ECE costs for your families?
 - e. Will you increase tuition? Please explain.
5. Do you have any worries around equity and inclusion in ECE?
 - a. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - b. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in preschool and TK, can more teachers be recruited from the ECE professionals who have experience and units but no credentials? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color who could help address the teacher shortage?
6. How do you see credential requirements impacting ECE field in the future?
 - a. [Interviewer can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Advocates/Policy makers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field as an ECE expert/advocate. Do you have experience working in an ECE classroom/work setting? What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. How do you feel about California's new requirements (coursework, classroom experience, or permit) to be a teacher?
 - a. How does/would this requirement impact hiring in ECE?
 - b. How will/does this policy requirement impact current employees? Do you think they continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - c. Does employees' circumstances/financial reality allow them to meet additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours) to stay a worker in ECE?
 - ii. What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?
3. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a new credential/permit requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?
 - b. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.

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4. Share screen and show this image.
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. What changes, if any, are necessary?
 - c. Is more pay necessary if more credentials/permits are required?
 - d. How will credential/permit requirements impact ECE costs for your families?
 - e. Will you increase tuition? Please explain.
5. Do you have any worries around equity and inclusion in ECE?
 - a. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - b. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in ECE. How will the credential requirement impact this focus area? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color? What support do professionals of color need in ECE?
6. How do you see credential requirements impacting ECE field in the future?
 - a. [Interviewer can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Appendix H:

Focus Group Interview Protocol for Washington, D.C.

Start Interview Here: Thank you for agreeing to participate in our Credential and Early Childhood Education study. We are exploring how credential requirements are impacting the field of early childhood education, particularly workers. We will record the interview and only keep the audio file. All answers will be kept anonymous.

So, here are the rules for the focus group:

1. Please say your name first before speaking so the transcriber can track who is speaking. I will remind you if you forget.
2. Think of this as all of us having a conversation, so it is okay to respond to each other's points and discuss topics not directly covered by a question. I will do my best to move the conversation forward as needed.
3. We will ask a series of questions, and you can end the interview at any time or skip a question if you do not want to answer.

Any questions for me before we get started? **I will record now.** *[Make sure you hit record!]*

Early Childhood Workers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field. What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. Show the credential requirements for DC and explain the teacher row in particular.
 - a. How do you feel about DC's new requirement that ECE teachers must have a credential by 2023 (be it coursework, classroom experience, or permit)?
 - b. Have you recently had to obtain any additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours)? Please explain why or why not.
3. How does/would this requirement impact your job choices? What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?
 - a. Will you continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - b. Does your life circumstances/financial reality allow you or your colleagues to go back to school to stay a worker in ECE?
 - c. What are some barriers?
4. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a credential requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?

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5. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.
 - a. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in preschool and ECE, can more teachers be recruited from the ECE professionals who have experience and units but no credentials? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color who could help address the teacher shortage?
6. **Share screen and show this image.**
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. Do you think more pay is necessary if increased credentials/permits are required?
7. How can ECE workers, across the field, build worker power to advocate for what they need?
 - a. Can you explain the role of different unions, organizations, or coalitions that build worker power? How important are they?
8. How do you see credential requirements impacting the ECE field in the future?
 - a. Do you have any worries about equity and inclusion in ECE?
 - b. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - c. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in ECE. How will the credential requirement impact this focus area? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color? What support do professionals of color need in ECE?
9. Please share any other perspectives on DC and increased credentials for ECE?
 - a. [Interview can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Early Childhood Employers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field as an ECE operator. How many years have you worked in an ECE classroom or setting? What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. How do you feel about DC's new requirements (coursework, classroom experience, or permit) to be a teacher?
 - a. How does/would this requirement impact your hiring choices?
 - b. How will/does this policy requirement impact your current employees? Will they continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - c. Does your employees' circumstances/financial reality allow them to meet additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours) to stay a worker in ECE?
 - i. What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?
3. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a new credential/permit requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?
 - b. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.

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4. Share screen and show this image.
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. How do you feel about pay in ECE? What changes, if any, are necessary?
 - c. Is more pay necessary if more credentials/permits are required?
 - d. How will credential/permit requirements impact ECE costs for your families?
 - e. Will you increase tuition? Please explain.
5. Do you have any worries around equity and inclusion in ECE?
 - a. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - b. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in ECE. How will the credential requirement impact this focus area? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color? What support do professionals of color need in ECE?
6. How do you see credential requirements impacting ECE field in the future?
 - a. [Interview can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Advocates/Polymakers

1. Please explain your pathway to and through working in the early childhood education field as an ECE expert/advocate. Do you have experience working in an ECE classroom/work setting? What credentials and/or units have you earned?
2. How do you feel about DC's new requirements (coursework, classroom experience, or permit) to be a teacher?
 - a. How does/would this requirement impact hiring in ECE?
 - b. How will/does this policy requirement impact current employees? Do you think they continue or exit the field? Please explain.
 - c. Does employees' circumstances/financial reality allow them to meet additional work requirements (credentials, permits, work hours) to stay a worker in ECE?
 - i. What are some barriers to pursuing additional teacher requirements?
3. Based on your experience, what are some pros and cons of having a new credential/permit requirement for ECE?
 - a. How should we value on-the-job experience vs. having a credential when it comes to working in ECE?
 - b. Are there workers in early childhood education who do not have the credentials but are qualified to teach (e.g., teacher aids, assistant teachers)? Please explain.
4. **Share screen and show this image.**
 - a. How do you feel about pay in ECE? Is the salary enough to justify going to earn a credential and/or completing more coursework?
 - b. How does the equity pay fund aim to address this topic? Please explain?
 - c. How do you feel about pay in ECE? What changes, if any, are necessary?
 - d. Is more pay necessary if more credentials/permits are required?
 - e. How will credential/permit requirements impact ECE costs for your families?
 - f. Will you increase tuition? Please explain.

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5. How can ECE workers, across the field, build worker power to advocate for what they need?
 - a. Can you explain the role of different unions, organizations, or coalitions that build worker power? How important are they?
6. Do you have any worries around equity and inclusion in ECE?
 - a. How do credential requirements impact workers of color, particularly Black and Latinx ECE workers?
 - b. Some argue there is a teacher shortage in ECE. How will the credential requirement impact this focus area? In your experience, are pre-credential ECE professionals more likely to be teachers of color? What support do professionals of color need in ECE?
7. How do you see credential requirements impacting ECE field in the future?
 - a. [Interview can ask any follow-up questions here as well]

Appendix I:

Hourly Wages for Early Childhood Educators

	Hourly mean wages May 2022			Hourly median wages May 2022		
	National	California	DC	National	California	DC
Child Care Workers	\$14.22	\$18.00	\$19.41	\$13.71	\$17.19	\$17.28
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	\$18.58	\$23.28	\$28.42	\$16.99	\$18.77	\$23.40

Source: BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics Query System. <https://data.bls.gov/oes/#/home>; (See "Top paying states for Childcare Workers" table here: [39-9011 Childcare Workers](#).) (See Top paying states for Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education" table here: [25-2011 Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education](#).)

Appendix J:

Comparison of D.C. Teacher Salaries in 2022 and Minimum Salaries Required in Fiscal Year 2024 for Programs Receiving Pay Equity Funds

Role	Average Annual Salary in 2022	Credentials	Number of educators		Fiscal Year 2024 minimum salaries	Difference between 2022 average salary & 2024 minimum salaries
			As of December 2022	Projected after new requirements are in effect		
Assistant Teacher or Associate Home Caregiver	\$41,536	Less than CDA	958	--	\$43,865	--
		CDA	384	1,342	\$51,006	\$9,470
		Associate's Degree or higher	246	246	\$54,262	\$12,726
Lead Teacher, or Expanded Home Caregiver	\$45,759	CDA	1,193	42	\$54,262	\$8,503
		Associate's Degree	464	1,615	\$63,838	\$18,079
		Bachelor's Degree or higher	263	263	\$75,103	\$29,344
Total			3,508	3,508		

Source: (Mar. 2023). *Modeling the Cost of Child Care in the District of Columbia, 2023*. District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/Modeling%20the%20Cost%20of%20Care%20in%20the%20District%20of%20Columbia%202023.pdf

