



Promoting excellence in early childhood education

**naeyc**

National Association for the Education of Young Children

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July 29, 2008

Dear Member of Congress:

NAEYC is pleased that the conference bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act includes many critical provisions for improving the early childhood education workforce. Improving the preparation, ongoing professional development and retention of high quality early childhood educators working in child care, Head Start and Early Head Start, and schools is key to ensuring that young children will have positive early learning and development experiences that will prepare them for school and life successes. As federal and state early childhood programs raise the requirements for teachers to have postsecondary degrees, it is critical that early childhood educator preparation and professional development programs are high quality and that high quality early childhood educators can afford to remain in their chosen field.

In particular, we are pleased that the conference bill expands higher education loan forgiveness for early childhood educators, provides grants to states to help them establish and enhance integrated, cross-sector and comprehensive professional development systems for early childhood educators, and includes early childhood education programs in the teacher quality partnerships to improve teacher preparation and retention.

Again, thank you for recognizing the importance of the work of early childhood educators and their professional and career development in this legislation.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Ginsberg, Ph.D  
Executive Director