[2. Early Childhood Educator Compensation Schedule]

**S.B. No. 935 (RAISED) EDUCATION. ‘AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE’, to require the Office of Early Childhood to develop an early childhood educator compensation schedule and for early childhood program providers to implement such compensation schedule.**

I am in full 100% in support of creating a pay scale according to teacher qualifications for our youngest children. During my 41 years of practice in the early childhood field, I have seen the difference that qualified lead teachers make in the classroom. Although it is clear this is not to say that just qualifications alone do not make the total difference, they do account for increased quality. It is acknowledged that also takes a person with tremendous patience and respect for children and families are essential to be successful as an overall professional in this field.

We need to first determine if there is a difference between child care providers or early childhood educators. Several key questions must be addressed: Are they one in the same? If not then how do we distinguish between them? Will it be by teacher qualifications according to the registry scale? Proposed Even when I look at the bills proposed they alternate between using both terms which confuses the issue. It is important to decide on a common nomenclature if we want to present ourselves clearly as professionals to the general public. Early childhood teachers need to know that they are respected. Therefore, when discussing appropriate payment, the appropriate terminology must be used, distinguishing between So will pay address the question on whether they are child care providers and or early childhood teachers? We cannot attract the best people if we do not address the appropriate title and inequity of pay throughout the field.

In closing, Libby Doggett, the former Education Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning, summarizes the issue best, "A teacher's salary level reflects how the work is valued by society. To maximize the potential of our young children and the educators and programs that serve them, we must do more to support and lift up preschool teachers," said Libby Doggett, the Education Department's deputy assistant secretary for Policy and Early Learning. "I have met many teachers in states like New Jersey and North Carolina who were provided the incentives and supports to get a college degree in early learning. The improvements they made in their instructional methods, classroom management and more told the story. As a nation, we must do better to honor early childhood educators as professionals." (Fact Sheet: Troubling Pay Gap for Early Childhood Teachers, 2016)

Reference


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