
I am honored to be presenting testimony on the issue of S.B. No. 935 AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE.

This is an issue that is very important to me. I have worked as a PreK teacher for the last five and a half years. During this time, I have been faced with struggles associated with the low and insulting pay that comes from working in the Early Childhood Field. To be subject to such low wages takes away from the important jobs that Early Childhood Educators have, and belittle us to being the equivalent of teenage babysitters. To be told that the degrees and countless hours of trainings and professional development we hold are meaningless is disrespectful to the development of the Early Childhood Field, and the education of young children across the state.

The Office Of Early Childhood (OEC) needs to develop a compensation schedule similar to that of the Teachers Union. The issue currently at hand is that child care centers across the state can pay as much or as little as they want, making the turn over rates jump and staff instability a problem in all centers. If S.B. No 935 is approved and put into place, Early Childhood Educators will get the compensation they deserve, based on their certification status, continued education and years of dedication to young children. Also, knowing a schedule of pay can motivate young teachers to complete their degrees and stay in the field.

This is an issue that will impact the educational well-being and future of Connecticut’s young children, and requires immediate action. A "win" in this policy issue would look like a schedule locked into place for the next five years. Just like Teaching Unions, it would be negotiated every five or so years, and adjusted based on the number of teachers in the field, their education growth and years of experience. The schedule would need to be public knowledge and enforced at ALL child care centers in the state. This allows for staff to find the center that best fits their ethical and personal beliefs, and not worry about the pay they will receive. By implementing a
compensation schedule, centers won't struggle to find qualified teachers, have issues with staff turnover, or worry about the educational and background knowledge their teachers hold.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify about S.B. No. 935 AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE. Thank you for your consideration.