

SARAH JACKSON, NATALIE ORENSTEIN, AND LAURA BORNFREUND

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL

The Need for Specialized Teacher
Licenses in the Early Grades

JUNE 2017



About the Authors

Sarah Jackson is a writer based in Berkeley, Ca. and partner at HiredPen Inc., where she covers education and social policy.

Natalie Orenstein is a staff writer at HiredPen Inc., where she writes about education and social welfare policy.

Laura Bornfreund is director of early & elementary education policy with the Education Policy program and co-director of the Family Centered Social Policy program at New America. She leads a team of writers and analysts working on new ideas for improving children's birth-through-third grade learning experiences.

About This Work

This paper was made possible through a K-3 partnership between New America and Education Commission of the States. Education Commission of the States serves as a partner to state policymakers by providing personalized support and helping education leaders come together and learn from one another. Through our programs and services, policymakers gain the insight and experience needed to create effective education policy. Visit www.ecs.org.

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Our work is made possible through generous grants from the Alliance for Early Success; the Buffett Early Childhood Fund; the Foundation for Child Development; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund; the Heising-Simons Foundation; the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; the Joyce Foundation; the George Kaiser Family Foundation; the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; the Kresge Foundation; Lumina Foundation; the McKnight Foundation; the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; the Pritzker Children's Initiative; the Smith Richardson Foundation; the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation; and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. The views expressed in this report are those of its author and do not necessarily represent the views of foundations, their officers, or employees.

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Contents

The Specialized Skills Needed to Teach Young Children	2
Why Teacher Licensing Matters	4
Narrowing Teacher Licenses to Better Prepare Young Learners	6
Pennsylvania	7
South Carolina	7
Ohio	8
Arkansas	8
Effects of Broad Licensing on Teacher Training	9
Final Thoughts	10
Recommendations for States	11
Resources	12
Interviews Conducted	12
Notes	13

THE SPECIALIZED SKILLS NEEDED TO TEACH YOUNG CHILDREN

Several years ago, Sherry Cleary was hired as a consultant by a Buffalo, NY school district. An early childhood education expert, her first task was to observe a new pre-kindergarten class of four-year-olds. When she got there, the teacher was nowhere to be seen.¹

The teacher's absence was a red flag, Cleary, executive director of the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, told us. Young children not only need constant supervision but also a teacher who is moving around the classroom, engaging in a hands-on way. Children of this age learn through relationships. How well they learn depends on the quality of the interactions they have with their teachers and caregivers.

When the teacher did arrive, she confessed to Cleary that she was out of her depth. She had taught fifth grade for her entire career. When she began to feel burned out, she made the switch to young children, expecting it would be an easier job than teaching more in-depth content to older students. But she found the opposite to be true in many respects.

Unfortunately, Cleary has watched the same scene play out in several different settings. Teaching in the early years is often dismissed as babysitting, or assumed to be indistinguishable

from teaching in other elementary grades. In reality, the job of an early childhood educator, a teacher working with children birth through third grade, is a complex and unique one.

In the course of a school year, PreK–third grade teachers should teach reading and early mathematical skills and develop lessons with hands-on activities so students do not have to sit still for long periods of time. Teachers will help students build specific social skills like relationship-building, communicating, taking turns, sharing, and understanding and regulating the strong feelings that arise when sharing a small space with many peers.

These competencies are different from those that teachers of older students need.² Research shows that by age nine, when children have entered middle childhood, they are more able to accomplish complex intellectual tasks, and the role of the teacher shifts as children begin to work more independently.³ Teaching effectively in the early grades requires a deep understanding of child development, knowing the ways five-year-olds think and behave and why.⁴ Without it, children will not build the critical foundation they need for all future learning.

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As most experts agree, high-quality instruction is too often lacking in PreK–3 classrooms.⁵ State policy on teacher licensing and training is partly to blame as we have previously written.⁶ People like Cleary who study young children say it is imperative that licensing structures align with developmental science. As outlined in the report *Getting in Sync: Revamping Licensure and Preparation for Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and the Early Grades*, narrower state teacher licensing spans may be one way to help steer preparation programs to equip teaching candidates with the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of young learners.⁷

States have different licensing rules that guide what, when, and how early childhood teachers are trained and the grade levels they are permitted to teach.⁸ Teacher licenses frequently span several different ages often corresponding to grade structures within school buildings. For example, a state may offer a PreK–3 license and a K–5 or K–6 license; a license for 4–8 or 5–9; as well as licenses for teaching specific subjects in high school. Licensing overlap is common—Birth–K and K–8—for example. Broad spans like K–6 license teachers for any grade level within an elementary school building. By contrast, narrower licenses offered by some states, like a Birth–K or P–3 (pre-K through third grade), permit teachers to teach only in the early grades.

In this brief, we take a closer look at teacher licensing laws and practices for elementary age students in four states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, South Carolina, and Arkansas) to better understand how policy is affecting hiring, instruction, teacher practice, and young children themselves. These four states came to our attention in research for *Getting in Sync*.⁹

These states did not have the typical overlapping PreK–3 and K–5 licenses that exist in most states. New America reviewed current licensing requirements and endorsements in the four states, including whether and how that structure may have changed in the past five years. We also conducted interviews with state experts, researchers, faculty members from higher education institutions, elementary school principals, and policy analysts at state departments of education to better understand how policy is made and its consequences, both intended and unintended.

All four states we examined face a push and pull between designing a system that trains teachers in ways that science shows are best for young children and responding to the needs of a large bureaucratic system that demands flexibility in hiring and classroom demands. We find that in too many cases, the needs of the bureaucracy win out over children’s developmental needs.

WHY TEACHER LICENSING MATTERS

Licensing rules can affect how teachers are trained and which children they teach. In our 2011 report, *Getting in Sync*, we found that licensing rules can spur teachers to forgo specialized instruction in early childhood development and pedagogy.¹⁰

Teacher training programs typically focus on preparation for a state teaching license. If there is a choice between a PreK–3 and a K–8 license, for example, prospective teachers may decide to earn the broader license to be more marketable to school administrators looking for flexibility in moving teachers between grade levels as needed or because they fear being locked into the lower salaries of pre-K positions. Because they have to cover so much ground, elementary teacher training programs, we found, too often fail to offer in-depth coursework in early childhood development or in instructional strategies specific to young children.¹¹

State licensing structures can also affect whether teachers with specific expertise and training in early childhood development and pedagogy are in fact placed in PreK–3 classrooms. Broad licensing structures like K–6, for example, grant lots of flexibility to principals and school district hiring managers to move teachers around as needed. *Getting in Sync* points to stories of principals

moving weak teachers to an early elementary grade from an upper elementary grade because they want stronger teachers in grades that are the focus of state tests and school accountability.¹² This was also an issue raised in focus groups with elementary school principals conducted in 2015 by New America. Narrower license structures like PreK–3 require principals and hiring managers to keep teachers with more specialized knowledge in PreK–3 classrooms because they are not licensed to teach elsewhere.¹³ There are, however, endorsement options in some states that enable teachers to expand on which grades they are certified to teach by taking a test or additional coursework.

The four states we examined approach licensing differently, driven by different staffing and policy demands (see **Table 1**).

Narrower license structures like PreK–3 require principals and hiring managers to keep teachers with more specialized knowledge in PreK–3 classrooms because they are not licensed to teach elsewhere.

Table 1 | Elementary Teacher Licensing in Four States

State	Current License Structure	Options	Changed in Past 10 Years?	Direction of Change
Arkansas ^a	Birth–K K–6	K–6 licensees can take additional coursework to earn endorsement to teach three- and four-year-olds.	Yes. Until 2012 there was P–4 and 4–8	Toward a broader band
Pennsylvania ^b	PreK–4 4–8	Holders of either license can take a test (no additional coursework) to become dually certified.	Yes. Until 2007 there was N–3, K–6	Toward a narrower band
Ohio	P–3 4–9	P–3 licensees can add Early Childhood Generalist endorsement (grades 4–5) with additional coursework in curriculum. A pre-K endorsement is available but rarely offered.	No	N/A
South Carolina ^c	PreK–3 2–6 5–8	Both PreK-3 and 2-6 licenses include coursework for prospective early grade teachers.	No	N/A

^a Although there is now an early childhood (Birth–K) license, few universities offer it because of its lack of popularity and marketability.

^b Impact will not necessarily be obvious for some time; K–6 licensees were grandfathered into the system.

^c South Carolina is the only state with a 2–6 license. There were recent initial attempts by the state to change it to 1–6, but SC backtracked due to concern from higher education and early childhood advocates.

Source: New America interviews with state education officials and review of state websites.

NARROWING TEACHER LICENSES TO BETTER PREPARE YOUNG LEARNERS

There is growing awareness of the importance of an early childhood workforce that is well trained, well compensated, and ready to meet the challenges today's young people face. The [National Academy of Medicine \(NAM; formerly Institute of Medicine\)](#) and the National Research Council in 2015 released a seminal report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, on building a qualified early childhood workforce. The researchers recommended that over time the field should move to requiring teachers of children from birth to age eight have bachelor's degrees with specialized training.¹⁴

Since the report was released, NAM—through its Innovation to Incubation program—launched the [B8 State Pathways to Implementation Project](#). NAM has convened eight state and regional teams to develop independent implementation plans. Several early childhood education funders are supporting this work.¹⁵ The states—California, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, Virginia, Washington, and a regional team representing Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington, DC—selected the specific recommendations to focus on. NAM provides opportunities for the states to come together and learn from one another as

well as from experts in the field. Several state and national advocacy and policy organizations are also focusing on improving the birth-through-eight workforce; this work includes technical assistance offerings and policy convenings.

Amid this growing attention to early learning and the early learning workforce, some states are considering licensing changes to ensure that all students in early childhood have teachers with this specialized training. But other states are moving in the opposite direction, proposing to relax licensing requirements and create wider grade level bands in response to teacher shortages. Wider grade level bands could result in new teachers of students in pre-K and the early grades possessing less specialized knowledge and skills, instead of more.

What follows are stories of teacher licensing in four states. Pennsylvania has reduced the overlap between its early childhood and elementary teaching licenses. South Carolina has long had PreK–3 and 2–6 licenses. Ohio has PreK–3 and 4–9 licenses. Prior to 2012, Arkansas had teaching licenses that reduced overlap, but the state eliminated them for broader K–6 and 7–12 licenses.

Pennsylvania

In 2007, Pennsylvania switched from N-3 (nursery through third grade) and K-6 licenses to PK-4 (pre-K through fourth grade) and 4-8 licenses.

Previously, early childhood advocates there say, many teachers pursued the K-6 license, and ended up teaching a kindergarten class without specialized knowledge of young children.¹⁶

The PK-4 license was designed to build a stronger pre-K workforce, but also to create a greater understanding of the needs and experiences of early learners in the elementary grades.¹⁷ “Partly what we’re trying to do here is say that children ages 3 to 8 learn differently than other age cohorts,” said Joan Benso, president and CEO of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children. “So the large number of children in our K-3 classrooms should benefit from teachers that have had an education background focused in early childhood,” she said.

The change in Pennsylvania coincided with the passage of Pre-K Counts, a large state-funded pre-K program whose lead teachers must be certified. “Our state was in a serious conversation about the quality of our workforce,” Benso said. “Early learning advocates were saying, ‘That applies to us too.’”

But some, including Sherry Cleary, a former teacher and early childhood professor in Pennsylvania, see fourth grade as an arbitrary dividing line. She says the licensure structure in the state does not go far enough. The policy also allows holders of either the PK-4 or 4-8 licenses to take a test and become dually certified. That means a teacher could land in an early childhood classroom without any coursework or field experience with that age group.

“If you’re going to say children need teachers with specialized training,” Cleary said, “then the licensure should respond to that. At what point are we going to be brave enough and smart enough to hold ourselves to a really high standard and then deliver?”

South Carolina

South Carolina is unusual in that it is the only state with a 2-6 license. Those interested in teaching young children earn a PK-3 (pre-K through third grade) license. Teaching candidates interested in the later elementary grades earn a 2-6 license.

These licensing bands influence how higher education trains teachers, according to Sally McClellan, professor of early childhood education at the University of South Carolina–Aiken and executive director of the South Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children. For example, the program at Aiken is designed to qualify students for the state’s PreK-3 license by covering child development and instruction for those grades, she told us.¹⁸

Fielding concerns over the lack of flexibility from school districts, state officials recently considered changing to a 1-6 license, which existed years ago, said Mary Hipp, director of the Office of Educator Services for the South Carolina Department of Education. But once they heard the trepidations of early childhood educators and advocates, they slowed the process and decided to discuss all possibilities further. The state officials were sensitive to the worry that shifting to a broader license would weaken teacher training.¹⁹

“Ultimately,” Hipp said, “if we’re just focusing on this to help staffing or align our span with that of other states—if we’re not focused on what’s in the best interest of kids—we’re kind of missing the boat.”

While licensing changes have the potential to make important shifts in building a skilled teacher workforce with in-depth knowledge of child development, they do not come without challenges for school administrators and hiring managers.

In a 2016 brief, *Tradeoffs: Elementary Principals on Hiring and Staffing in the Early Grades*, New

America's Shayna Cook found that principals preferred candidates with broader licenses because of the inherent staffing flexibility,²⁰ since they can easily move teachers with broad licenses to fill vacancies. Interviews with principals in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Arkansas uncovered similar preferences. Administrators in these states said that specialized licensure structures have made hiring challenging.²¹

Ohio

Ohio has issued P-3 (pre-K through third grade) licenses since the late 1990s. Early childhood teachers there can take additional coursework for an endorsement to teach fourth and fifth grade.²²

But Mark Jones, executive director of the Ohio Association of Elementary Administrators, and a former middle and elementary school principal, said the lack of flexibility in licensing structures is problematic. "Way back when, in the early days, we had a K-6, or 1-6 license," he said. "For many years that offered the building administrator a lot of flexibility on where to place staff. As the years progressed, and they shifted to the P-3 and then the 4-9 license, it became much more important, if you had an elementary school that crossed over those grade levels, to be very careful about who you were interviewing and who you were placing where."

Jones describes an administrator's job in staffing as akin to a Rubik's Cube, finding the appropriate teacher to fill each vacancy and moving corresponding teachers around to make sure each hole is filled. Teachers who were licensed broadly, Jones said, became his "utility players." He needed those teachers who could be placed in any available spot to complete a grade level team, for example, as opposed to teachers who were more narrowly licensed and could not, legally, be asked to teach a higher grade level.²³

Arkansas

Administrators stressed the need to balance what is good for students with the practical needs of the entire school community. Several principals we interviewed believe that fundamentals of good pedagogy and instructional practices are universal.²⁴ Many administrators we interviewed believe it is an individual teacher's personality and temperament more than his or her training or license that makes for success in the classroom, regardless of the students' ages.²⁵ In *Tradeoffs*, Cook reported similar findings.²⁶

"Certainly there are some things that are more effective with younger kids or older kids, but that's just the devil in the details," said Julie Davis, executive director of the Ohio Association of Elementary School Principals. "The bottom line [of good teaching] is how to establish rapport, relationships, and a good climate in your classroom no matter what the age."

Observations such as these caused policymakers in Arkansas to shift back to a broad licensure structure. In 2012, Arkansas did away with the P-4, 4-8, and 9-12 certifications in favor of broader K-6 and 7-12 licenses. The state also added a Birth-K license for early childhood educators. (Teachers certified for K-6 can take additional coursework to earn an endorsement to teach three- and four-year-olds.) The state moved back to a broader K-6 license to give principals more flexibility in hiring, which had become a problem for school administrators looking to fill spots in fifth and sixth grade.²⁷

Under the old structure, administrators "were just bombarded with P-4s but didn't have jobs for them," said Richard Abernathy, director of the Arkansas Association of Elementary Administrators. On the other hand, they faced a shortage of teachers certified for fifth and sixth grades. Many elementary school administrators have applauded the change, which will produce candidates qualified to teach all grades on their campuses.²⁸

EFFECTS OF BROAD LICENSING ON TEACHER TRAINING

Some early childhood education experts worry that the broader licensing structure will eliminate age-appropriate training for teachers of students in the younger grades. Their concerns are founded, as K–6 training programs tend to emphasize teaching in the older grades.²⁹ This could lead to sacrificing the child development training necessary for younger children.³⁰

Professors in teacher training programs report that broader licenses lead to programs that cover too much ground and cannot adequately focus on the developmental needs of younger children.³¹ “Then you have graduates who quite frankly wouldn’t be competent in early childhood education and they’ll enter classrooms and not be effective,” said Marica Cox Mitchell, deputy executive director for early learning systems at the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

At Arkansas State, the P–4 program previously included up to 12 credit hours focused on birth through pre-K as well as field experience in pre-K classrooms. Those elements have been eliminated from the new K–6 curriculum, said Joanna Grymes, associate professor of early childhood education.³² New Birth–K licensees will undergo intensive training focused on young children. But advocates

fear the low marketability of that degree will make it unpopular because candidates will pursue broader degrees that make them more flexible job candidates. Others say the employment challenges early childhood education graduates face can reflect poorly on their higher education institutions, potentially dissuading universities from offering the degree. Arkansas State has no current plans to offer Birth–K as an undergraduate degree because of low interest among students, Grymes said.

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Jody Veit-Edrington, early childhood coordinator at the North Little Rock School District and former kindergarten teacher, worries that the new licensure structure will lead to a shortage of teachers certified for pre-K. Arkansas Better

Chance (ABC), the state’s public pre-K program, requires lead teachers on public school campuses and in educational cooperatives to be licensed.

A program in Veit-Edrington’s district will preempt the possible shortage by making it easier for existing teacher assistants to become certified to teach pre-K, thereby building a home-grown supply of teachers qualified for the early years. Under a new partnership with

the local campus of Harding University—a rare school that offers a Birth–K program—North Little Rock’s ABC teachers will become certified while continuing to work in classrooms.³³

But that kind of solution will not be possible in most places, especially in Arkansas’ many rural communities, where there are no preparation programs nearby.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Under the current system, as we have seen, a number of outside influences—staffing challenges, teacher shortages, and budget cuts—determine a state’s licensing structures. Administrators often favor broader licensing spans that produce more flexible employees. Educators often acquire the broadest license available so they will be appealing job candidates. Sometimes, licensing structures are changed to satisfy an urgent need. During budget shortfalls, states often sacrifice adequate preparation in favor of practicality. “These are the challenges we have because we don’t value financing education for children from birth to adulthood in the ways we should,” said Joan Benso, president and CEO of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children. “That’s the conundrum.”

Advocates and experts say education policy is losing sight of its purpose if bureaucratic needs alone drive policy. Licensing must respond to needs of children. “That’s where the heart of this discussion ought to start and end,” Cleary told us. “What’s best for children, and why would we dilute that ever?”

Last fall, the Education Commission of the States (ECS) released its *K–3 Policymakers’ Guide to Action*. The ECS guide calls attention to the need for elementary teachers to have specialized knowledge in the areas of child development; the science of reading and math; and early brain development, cognitive function, and social emotional skills.³⁴ The guide also notes that early grade teachers need to be equipped with strategies for delivering instruction and designing activities

in the ways that young children learn best, which is different from older elementary students. For pre-K, kindergarten, and first through third grade teachers to be ready to lay the learning foundation that young students need, specialized training is imperative. The recommendations below offer actions states can take to help put better equipped teachers in pre-K and early grade classrooms.

That's where the heart of this discussion ought to start and end. What's best for children, and why would we dilute that ever?

— Sherry Cleary,
Former Teacher & Early Childhood Professor, PA

Recommendations for States

- Establish an early childhood educator license—PreK–3 or a variation—if one does not already exist. State-level policies governing teacher preparation and licensure should account for the unique needs of PreK–3 teachers who are laying the foundation for children's success in school and later in life. This means prioritizing specialized training for teachers over and above the grade levels housed inside school buildings. At the very least, the early childhood educator license should emphasize training in early childhood development and strategies, including how to incorporate play, child-directed activities, and exploration into learning; how to teach new and emerging readers; how to use screenings and assessments; how to engage families; and math, science, and social studies content areas.
- Review early childhood and elementary teaching licenses and consider reducing the overlap across these licenses. Understandably, teachers often choose to pursue the broadest license available. It makes them more marketable to school districts and principals who often prefer staffing flexibility. But this approach is not best for ensuring young children receive what they need. A better structure would separate licenses according to developmental spans. If implemented well, this new structure could be developed in tandem with new state preparation program standards that align with the competencies educators need to teach young children. Changing licensing practices *and* improving preparation programs would put teachers with knowledge and expertise in how young children learn best in PreK–3 classrooms.
- Provide professional learning opportunities (both pre-service and in-service) for principals and other district leaders to prepare them as stronger pre-K, K, and early grade leaders. In order for school and district leaders to truly support early learners and their teachers, principals should graduate from preparation programs and begin their positions well-versed in child development, early childhood curriculum, developmentally appropriate practices, and methods for family and community engagement. More states should follow Illinois's lead and specifically incorporate early childhood content into the principal licensure and accreditation process. Another way for prospective principals to gain valuable preparation is to participate in an internship or some other type of clinical experience as well as in ongoing professional learning opportunities. States can use, and encourage districts to use, ESSA and Title II dollars to support such training and internship programs for principals and district leaders.

Resources

Getting in Sync: Revamping Licensure and Preparation for Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and the Early grades, New America

From Crawling to Walking: Ranking States on Birth-3rd Grade Policies that Support Strong Readers, New America

A Tale of Two Pre-K Leaders: How State Policies for Center Directors and Principals Leading Pre-K Programs Differ, and Why They Shouldn't, New America

Thriving Workforce: Thriving Early Learners, New America

K-3 Policymakers' Guide to Action: Making the Early Years Count, Education Commission of the States

Early Education [P-3], Education Commission of the States

Interviews Conducted

Richard Abernathy—executive director, Arkansas Association of Education Administrators

Joan Benso—president and CEO, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Sherry Cleary—executive director, New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute at the City University of New York

Julie Davis—executive director, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators

Peg Foster—principal, Fairview Elementary School in Mountain Top, PA

Joanna Grymes—associate professor of Early Childhood Education, Arkansas State University

Paul Healey—president, Pennsylvania Principals Association

Mary Hipp—director, Office of Educator Services at the South Carolina Department of Education

Mark Jones—associate executive director, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators

Sonya Launius—principal, Bearden Elementary in Bearden, AR

Toby Lichtle—assistant director of communications and outreach, Ohio Department of Education

Marica Cox Mitchell—deputy executive director of early learning systems for the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Sally McClellan—South Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children

Nicole Reigelman—press secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Education

Cheryl Reinhart—director, Office of Educator Licensure at the Arkansas Department of Education

Dino Teppara—director, Public Information Office at the South Carolina Department of Education

Jody Veit-Edrington—coordinator of early childhood, North Little Rock School District in North Little Rock, AR

Notes

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⁶ Laura Bornfreund, *Getting in Sync: Revamping the Preparation of Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten and the Early Grades* (Washington, DC: New America, March 2011), <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/getting-in-sync/>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ National Association for the Education of Young Children, “Early Childhood Teacher Certification: The current state policies landscape and opportunities,” <https://www.naeyc.org/publicpolicy/early-childhood-teacher-certification>.

⁹ For more see Laura Bornfreund, *Getting in Sync: Revamping the Preparation of Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten and the Early Grades* (Washington, DC: New

America, March 2011), <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/getting-in-sync/>.

¹⁰ Laura Bornfreund, *Getting in Sync: Revamping the Preparation of Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten and the Early Grades* (Washington, DC: New America, March 2011), <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/getting-in-sync/>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Aaron Loewenberg, Shayna Cook, Laura Bornfreund and Abbie Lieberman, *Principal’s Corner: Perspectives on Teaching and Learning in PreK–3rd Grade* (Washington, DC: New America, May 2016), <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/principals-corner/>.

¹⁴ LaRue Allen and Bridget B. Kelly, eds., *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015).

¹⁵ National Academy of Medicine, “Innovation to Incubation,” https://nam.edu/programs/innovation-to-incubation/#ert_panel1-1.

¹⁶ Joan Benso, phone interview, April 28, 2016; Paul Healey, phone interview, May 31, 2016; Nicole Reigelman, e-mail correspondence, April 26, 2016–June 3, 2016.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Sally McClellan, phone interview, August 4, 2016.

¹⁹ Mary Hipp, phone interview, June 21, 2016.

²⁰ Shayna Cook, *Tradeoffs: Elementary Principals on Hiring and Staffing in the Early Grades* (Washington, DC: New America, May 2016), <https://static.newamerica.org/attachments/13105-principals-corner/5.4Early-Ed-Principal-3.fcae675c291e4c6fbdabee1d50450b594.pdf>.

²¹ Richard Abernathy, phone interview, May 13, 2016; Julie Davis, phone interview, June 7, 2016; Mark Jones, phone interview, June 7, 2016; Peg Foster, phone interview, May 3, 2016; Paul Healey, phone interview, May 31, 2016; Sonya Launius, phone interview, May 16, 2016.

²² Toby Lichtle, e-mail correspondence, June 2, 2016.

²³ Mark Jones, phone interview, June 7, 2016.

²⁴ Julie Davis, phone interview, June 7, 2016;
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²⁵ For example: Peg Foster, phone interview, May 3, 2016;
Richard Abernathy, phone interview, May 13, 2016.

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²⁷ Joanna Grymes, phone interview, April 27, 2016;
Cheryl Reinhart, phone interview, May 13, 2016;
Jody Veit-Edrington, phone interview, April 29, 2016;
Richard Abernathy, phone interview, May 13, 2016.

²⁸ Richard Abernathy, phone interview, May 13, 2016.

²⁹ Laura Bornfreund, *Getting in Sync: Revamping the Preparation of Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten and the Early Grades* (Washington, DC: New America, March 2011), <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/getting-in-sync/>.

³⁰ Marica Cox Mitchell, phone interview, June 29, 2016; Sherry Cleary, phone interview, May 27, 2016.

³¹ Joanna Grymes, phone interview, April 27, 2016; Marica Cox Mitchell, phone interview, June 29, 2016; Sherry Cleary, phone interview May 27, 2016; Getting in Sync.

³² Joanna Grymes, phone interview, April 27, 2016.

³³ Jody Veit-Edrington, phone interview, April 29, 2016.

³⁴ Bruce Atchison, Louisa Diffey, and Emily Workman, *K-3 Policymakers' Guide to Action: Making the Early Years Count* (Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, November 2016), https://www.ecs.org/ec-content/uploads/K-3_Policymakers_Guide_to_Action.pdf.



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