



Preparing Early Childhood Educators: Grow Your Own and Apprenticeship

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A Look at Terms

- **Grow Your Own:** GYO is a locally developed partnership between early childhood education programs, educator preparation providers, and/or community-based organizations that recruit and prepare local community members (e.g., high school students, paraeducators, parents) to earn the necessary credentials to teach in their communities.
- **Registered Apprenticeship:** A Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce and individuals can obtain paid work experience and receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential.

Why have GYO and apprenticeship garnered national attention?

- Teacher shortages
- Declining interest and enrollment in teacher preparation programs
- Demand for cultural and linguistic competence
- Need for comprehensive and low-cost pathways to help career advancement and credential attainment
- Potential for higher retention in the profession
- Increased interest and funding from policymakers

Existing barriers for ECE Workforce

Financial

- Low compensation
- Insufficient benefits
- High cost of tuition and fees

Linguistic

- English-only curricula, credential programs, and professional development

Bureaucratic

- Baseline credentials not honored
- Varied credential requirements
- Unreliable information on pathways

How do GYO and apprenticeship help remove barriers?

Elements	GYO	Apprenticeship
Community-based recruitment	●	◐
Individualized support for candidates	●	◐
Multiple pathways offered (e.g., high school, undergraduate, graduate)	●	◐
Progressive wages		●
Paid work-based learning	◐	●
Aligned coursework	◐	●
Minimum number of hours/years of work-based learning		●
Cohorts	◐	◐
Earn a degree	◐	◐
Eligible for certification/licensure	◐	●

● = always present

◐ = sometimes present

Bright Spot

University of the District of Columbia *Bilingual Associate Degree Program*

Developed in partnership with local early education providers and multilingual provider association

Offers coursework in Spanish and English

Provides pathway and scholarship funding to help multilingual educators meet DC's credential requirements



Bright Spot

Kennedy Children's Center *Grow Your Own Program*

Developed to help meet need for certified special education teacher assistants

Recruits and prepares unemployed and underemployed community-members to offer a new career pathway

Offers cohort, mentorship, test preparation, financial resources, job placement services, and help finding resources such as childcare and tutoring

Partnering with City University of New York to develop associate degree programs in early childhood special education



Bright Spot

Minnesota

Grow Your Own Early Childhood and Family Educator programs

State funded competitive grant available to licensed family child care, center-based care, school district or charter school early learning programs, Head Start, institutions of higher education and community-based organizations

Provides scholarships or stipends to participants pursuing early childhood degrees and credentials

Provides programming and support for teacher candidates to succeed in the licensure program, degree program, or the credential program



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Policy and System Considerations

- *Teacher preparation is not a unified system*
- *Funding and Sustainability*
 - Budgets change and appropriations are not consistent from cycle-to-cycle.
 - Need for financial incentives to support partnerships
 - Strategies to promote funding and program sustainability include blending and braiding, comprehensive policies to address cost of earning a degree, consortia, “last cost in,” and building in capacity for fundraising.
 - US DOL funds three intermediaries that can help support program registration and implementation (two are focused on early childhood educators and one is focused on K-12 teachers).

