



A Union of Professionals

Every Student Succeeds Act

A New Day in Public Education

Early Childhood Education

Research shows that early childhood education is one of the best investments we can make to prepare a child for success in school and life. The promise of public education starts with high-quality early education. Given the importance of linkages and coordination between early childhood education programs and elementary schools, the Every Student Succeeds Act strengthens this education continuum. The legislation includes many references to early childhood education programs—in particular, the following:

- ESSA creates preschool development grants (Title IX), which are competitive one-year grants to allow states to enhance and better coordinate early education programs in order to improve quality and access and transition into elementary school, while targeting resources for low-income families. States may apply for a three-year grant to improve existing programs, expand access or develop new programs.
- Title I state and local plans ask for descriptions of support, coordination of services and the transition process with early childhood education programs and the local educational agency or elementary school. Preschool programs are defined in ESSA as being for children under age 6.
- Collaboration between elementary school leaders, teachers and paraprofessionals with early childhood education directors and providers is allowable by having joint professional learning and planned activities that help children with the transition to elementary school and assist with school readiness (Title II).
- Early childhood education programs are included as an eligible entity in several literacy grant programs (Title II).
- Title III is expanded to include early childhood education programs and to support school readiness and the transition from early childhood education programs for English learners.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.6 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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