

For Immediate Release:

May 9, 2018

Media Contact:

Gill Walker
gwalker@naeyc.org
202-350-8857

K-3 Teachers Are Early Childhood Educators

New research shows 76% of K-3 educators are in favor of creating a unified and aligned system of early childhood education birth through 8

Washington, D.C.--The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has released results from a new market research project conducted to further understand whether and to what extent educators working with children in grades kindergarten through third grade see themselves as a meaningful part of the early childhood education continuum.

Results indicate that a strong majority do consider themselves early childhood educators, and, further, that they value preparation in child development and express comfort in being part of a unified system with educators of children ages birth to eight. K-3 educators are clear-eyed about both the challenges and benefits of creating this unified system, but believe that both higher wages and greater respect are the most important potential outcomes.

“The scientific community confirms the critical nature of each year from birth through age 8, and views them together as a coherent and unified stage of life,” said Rhian Evans Allvin, NAEYC’s CEO. “Yet all too often, the educators working across these years are separated by issues from professional preparation to compensation. These divides have resulted in a fragmented early childhood profession and forfeited opportunities to learn from one another. This study gives me hope for a future that looks different in ways that will benefit children, families, and educators.”

Key results include:

- 76% of K-3 educators are in favor of creating a unified and aligned system of early childhood education birth through 8
- Both K-3 and 0-5 educators value an environment that promotes social and emotional development; 92% of 0-5 educators identify it as “extremely important,” while 69% of K-3 educators do the same.
- 83% of K-3 educators prioritized the importance of a working environment in which they have leaders who trust and support their teachers
- 80% of K-3 educators identify assessment and testing as the biggest challenge they face
- Both K-3 and 0-5 educators agree that the positive impact they have on children and their community is extremely important to them in choosing the teaching profession

The executive summary of this research is attached; for additional information, on this and other market research, please visit [NAEYC's website](#).

Methodology

This research was conducted by a bipartisan team of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) and Public Opinion Strategies, and with support from the Richard W. Goldman Family Foundation. The first portion consisted of online focus group interviews with 14 educators currently teaching in grades K-3, conducted August 1-3, 2017. This was followed by a nationally representative online survey of 537 teachers who currently or recently taught in grades K-3, conducted August 23 - October 3, 2017. Participants were recruited from among the members of NAEYC and several other national and state early childhood education organizations, and a commercially-available database.

###

NAEYC is the foremost professional membership organization committed to transforming the lives of young children and delivering on the promise of high-quality early learning. NAEYC represents tens of thousands of early childhood educators who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children, birth through age 8. Learn more about NAEYC at www.NAEYC.org.