

**December 2021 Update of Education Qualifications for Teachers
(QSM: Qualified Staff Member) in State-Funded Early Childhood Programs**

Sec. 10-520a. Report re staff qualifications requirement compliance. Not later than January first, annually, the Office of Early Childhood shall submit a report regarding the status of school readiness program providers' compliance with the staff qualifications requirement, described in subsection (b) of section 10-16p, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

Note: Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-16p revised most recently through Public Act 19-34.

The legislation referenced above requires that every early childhood program receiving state funds to assign an employee in the role of Teacher as a designated qualified staff member (DQSM) in every classroom (regardless of the classroom's funding) serving infants through preschoolers. See [General Policy A-01 Early Childhood Educator Requirements in State-Funded Programs](#). Data is captured in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry (the Registry).

As of December 20, 2021 there were 388 state-funded programs (May 2017: 399; Dec 2018: 386; Dec 2019: 394) serving any combination of infants through preschoolers in 1,637 classrooms (May 2017: 1,692; Dec 2018: 1,639; Dec 2019: 1,690). 52% of those programs meet the current benchmark for the Qualified Staff Member (Dec 2019: 69%; different benchmarks pre 2019 - see Tables A and B).

“State-funded” is defined as those early childhood programs receiving one or more types of the following funds through the Office of Early Childhood:

- School Readiness
- Child Day Care
- State Head Start
- Smart Start / Smart Start for Recovery
- Preschool Development Grant (2016 to 12/2019 due to OEC Quality Enhancement fund use)

This report provides workforce and compliance detail relevant to the legislation.

Data Notes

Data included in this report is derived from the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry.

- Verified education qualification data is used from individual account holders with confirmed employment in OEC identified state-funded early childhood programs.
- Each program is required to identify all classrooms within the program, and designate a QSM for each relevant classroom within the Registry. Additional detail as well as the program and individual implementation benchmarks can be found in [General Policy A-01 Early Childhood Educator Requirements in State-Funded Programs](#), and [General Policy A-03 Early Childhood Professional Registry](#).
- Projections for the 2022, 2025, and 2029 benchmarks utilize the logic for those legislated benchmarks against the current data.

Tracking Benchmark Data

Tables A and B (below) depict program-level compliance with the QSM legislation over time: Table A shows benchmarks that were in place until 06/30/2019, replaced by Table B benchmarks 07/01/2019.

Table A: QSM program compliance data: January 2015 to May 2019

Date	# programs	Prior Benchmark A: Programs met minimum for one designated Qualified Staff Member(QSM) per classroom or group: current CDA credential plus 12 ece credits		Prior Benchmark B: July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2023 goal: at least 50% of designated QSMs have qualifying bachelor degree and remaining percentage meet associate degree option		Prior Benchmark C: Programs meet July 1, 2023 goal: 100% of designated QSMs have a qualifying bachelor degree option	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
01/27/15	400	236	59%	170	42%	100	25%
06/30/15	384	307	80%	247	64%	166	43%
12/03/15	399	256	64%	196	49%	124	31%
12/27/16	398	300	75%	219	55%	138	35%
11/27/17	398	275	69%	230	58%	146	37%
06/27/18	399	321	80%	263	66%	165	41%
12/01/18	386	286	74%	230	60%	145	38%
05/27/19	390	314	81%	258	66%	164	42%

Table B: QSM Program compliance data: July 1, 2019 legislation (CURRENT)

Date	Total # state funded programs	Benchmark A: Program meets current minimum for one designated Qualified Staff Member(QSM) per classroom or group with a CDA credential or higher (until June 30, 2022)		Benchmark B: Program meets July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2025 goal: at least 50% of designated QSMs have associate degree or higher and remaining percentage has CDA credential		Benchmark C: Program meets July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029 goal: at least 50% of designated QSMs have qualifying bachelor degree and remaining percentage meet associate degree option		Benchmark D: Program meets July 1, 2029 goal: 100% of designated QSMs have a qualifying bachelor degree option	
		# meet	% meet	# meet	% meet	# meet	% meet	# meet	% meet
12/10/2019	394	270	69%	258	65%	162	41%	140	36%
2020 – COVID Waiver		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
12/20/2021	388	201	52%	183	47%	127	33%	106	27%

Deciphering the Data

COVID-19 Waiver: QSM requirements were waived during COVID-19 under the Commissioner’s authority granted by Executive Order of the Governor. The waiver expired June 30, 2021 and programs continue to work to achieve compliance with the QSM requirements. General Policy [A-01](#), Legislative Requirements for Staff Qualifications in State- Funded Programs, identifies that staff not currently meeting a qualifying bachelor degree must have an ongoing professional development plan including a plan of study developed and regularly updated with the college advisor, and should make measurable progress toward qualifications goals.

Timing: Table A’s highlighted rows identify the most compliant dates. The trend shows the highest compliance just prior to a benchmark, and then a drop in compliance directly after – which corresponds to legislation changes extending the benchmarks. As soon as the legislation changes, the compliance begins to fall. These “falls” are a combination of (1) programs failing to keep the system updated, (2) individuals slowing their degree progression based on the new time cushion, and (3) lack of a carrot / stick for compliance / noncompliance.

Current Benchmarks: The July 1, 2019 benchmarks not only changed three benchmarks to four and again extended the deadlines, but also redefined what can count in the non-qualifying degree portion and for how long. This reduced the overall compliance in Table B from benchmark B to C by dropping anyone with a degree outside the ECE field plus 12 ece credits (now expiring 06/30/2025).

Classroom Data

Data below details the breakout over time of classrooms serving any combination of infants through preschoolers in relation to Designated Qualified Staff Member (DQSM). 5/2017 was the most complete.

6/16	5/17	12/18	12/19	12/21	
97	97	93	92	83	Total # of Infant Classrooms
77	88	75	76	58	Total # of Infant Classrooms with DQSM
79%	91%	81%	83%	70%	% of Infant Classrooms with DQSM
20	9	18	16	25	# of Infant Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
219	218	217	219	205	Total # of Toddler Classrooms
179	203	187	186	139	Total # of Toddler Classrooms with DQSM
82%	93%	86%	85%	68%	% of Toddler Classrooms with DQSM
40	15	30	33	66	# of Toddler Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
1,279	1,283	1,229	1,273	1,235	Total # of Preschool Classrooms
1,158	1,192	1,120	1,125	995	Total # of Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
91%	93%	91%	88%	81%	% of Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
121	91	109	148	240	# of Preschool Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
43	63	71	74	90	Total # of Mixed Age - Infant and Toddler/Twos Classrooms
39	58	53	57	66	Total # of Mixed Age - Infant and Toddler/Twos Classrooms with DQSM
91%	92%	75%	77%	73%	% of Mixed Age - Infant and Toddler/Twos with DQSM
4	5	18	17	24	# of Mixed Age - Infant and Toddler/Twos Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
26	17	18	18	9	Total # of Mixed Age - Infants thru Preschool Classrooms
20	14	11	11	5	Total # of Mixed Age - Infants thru Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
77%	82%	61%	61%	56%	% of Mixed Age - Infants thru Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
6	3	7	7	4	# of Mixed Age - Infants thru Preschool Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
3	2	3	3	3	Total # of Mixed Age - Toddler/Twos and Preschool Classrooms
2	2	3	3	1	Total # of Mixed Age - Toddler/Twos and Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
67%	100%	100%	100%	33%	% of Mixed Age - Toddler/Twos and Preschool Classrooms with DQSM
1	0	0	0	2	# of Mixed Age - Toddler/Twos and Preschool Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
12	12	8	11	12	Total # of Mixed Age - Preschool and Kindergarten Classrooms
12	10	8	11	6	Total # of Mixed Age - Preschool and Kindergarten Classrooms with DQSM
100%	83%	100%	100%	50%	% of Mixed Age - Preschool and Kindergarten Classrooms with DQSM
0	2	0	0	6	# of Mixed Age - Preschool and Kindergarten Classrooms <u>without</u> DQSM
1,679	1,692	1,639	1,690	1,637	Total # of Classrooms serving Infant - Preschool
1,487	1,567	1,457	1,496	1,270	Total # of Classrooms serving Infant - Preschool with DQSM
89%	92%	89%	87%	78%	% of Classrooms serving Infant - Preschool with DQSM
192	125	182	221	367	Total # of Classrooms serving Infant - Preschool <u>without</u> DQSM

Total State-Funded Teaching Staff: Eligible QSMs

There are 3,658 (Dec 2018: 4,062; Dec 2019: 4,127) teaching staff members in 3,994 (Dec 2018 = 4,384; Dec 2019: 4,455) teaching staff positions in state-funded programs (the difference reflects duplicates when a teaching staff member works in more than one classroom – i.e. assistant teacher in the Monday through Friday morning toddler room and the M-F afternoon preschool room; data below is unduplicated).

Of all teaching staff in state-funded programs: 1,987 or 54% (Dec 2018: 2,421 or 59%; Dec 2019: 2,374 or 58%) are QSM eligible. Tables D and E show the education qualifications of these individuals by legislated expiration date. **Note the circled decreases in those holding a qualifying bachelor degree – a drop of 16.2% from 2016 to 2021. This represents fewer bachelor degree qualified staff from which to place in the role of designated QSM.**

Table D: Benchmark data from 2016-2018 for **eligible QSMs** in any teaching role in state funded programs; highlighted row represents those individuals meeting goal of qualifying bachelor degree option

2016	2017	2018	Eligibility Expiration	Education Detail
12.68%	11.62%	10.95%	06/30/2020	Ladder level 7/8 (CDA credential plus 12 ece credits)
22.46%	41.12%	38.33%	06/30/2023	Ladder level 9/10 (associate degree plus 12 ece credits) or non-qualifying bachelor degree or higher
64.46%	46.76%	50.72%	12/31/2099	Qualifying bachelor degree option

Table E: Benchmark data from **2019 on** for **eligible QSMs** in any teaching role in state funded programs; highlighted row represents those individuals meeting goal of qualifying bachelor degree option

2019	2021	Eligibility Expiration	Education Detail
27.30%	27.88%	06/30/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ladder level 7/8 (CDA credential plus 12 ece credits); Ladder level 9 (non ece associate degree plus 12 ece credits); Ladder level 11 (non ece bachelor degree plus 12 ece credits); or Non-qualifying master’s degree (or higher)
23.21%	23.86%	06/30/2029	Associate’s degree in ECE or A-level ECTC
49.49%	48.26%	12/31/2099	Qualifying bachelor degree option

Status of DQSMs (Designated Qualified Staff Member)

Individuals who are currently placed in the role of DQSM in a classroom now have expiration dates ranging from 06/30/2025 to 12/31/2099 (meeting the qualifying bachelor degree). Tables F and G outline the spread of DQSM expiration dates.

- Note the relatively low overall drop of those who meet a qualifying bachelor degree option from 2016 to 2021 of only 1.49%, but the loss of gains seen in 2018-2019.

Table F: DQSM by Expiration Date **2016-2018**

Descriptor	Percentage of total # DQSM		
	2016	2017	2018
Designated QSMs expiring 06/30/20	6.87%	4.61%	3.31%
Designated QSMs expiring 6/30/23	30.22%	35.19%	30.74%
Designated QSMs expiring 12/31/99	62.91%	60.20%	65.95%

Table G: DQSM by Expiration Date – **2019 on**

Descriptor	Percentage of total # DQSM	
	2019	2021
Designated QSMs expiring 06/30/25	18.21%	19.21%
Designated QSMs expiring 6/30/29	15.99%	19.23%
Designated QSMs expiring 12/31/99	65.79%	61.42%