

How Employers Can Support Teachers in Their College Experience

In many states increasing education standards for teachers working in Head Start, publicly funded pre-k and early childhood programs participating in state's QRIS system have resulted in teachers going to college. For some teachers college is a new experience; for others it may be a part of a long journey. But for all it is hard to juggle college with already heavy work and family commitments. An early childhood program administrator can help that teacher be successful in many ways.

Below is a list of economic and social support strategies that can help teachers on this pathway to credentials or degree.

- Sponsor a teacher on a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship or help her access other financial support.
- Help the teacher develop an individualized professional development plan.
- Spend some time helping the teacher go through the degree program plan and requirements.
- Attend college orientations with the teacher who is a first time college student.
- Interact with the teacher around course selection each semester.
- Help the teacher identify her needs for additional resources offered at the college or in the community.
- Recognize that paid release time is vital to the teacher's personal and academic success.
- Provide regular check-ins with the teacher to understand how she is juggling various demands and responsibilities at home, work and college.
- Collect grade reports each semester for the teacher's personnel file.
- Celebrate the small victories and steps toward educational achievements.
- Work to further strengthen the teacher's confidence by creating mentoring and leadership opportunities.
- Recognize the teacher's accomplishments with peers, families in the center and in the community.
- Attend graduation or other recognition ceremonies on behalf of the teacher.
- Encourage other staff in the center to express their support of the teacher's efforts.
- Provide opportunities (or strategies) for the teacher to share newly acquired knowledge in her classroom and with families.
- Encourage the teacher to share her knowledge with other teachers in the center.
- Financially reward teachers who are successful along the educational pathway.

This educational journey for many teachers may take a number of years if degree completion is the goal. Having a supportive employer and work environment can make all the difference.



A product of the
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