



National Association for the Education of Young Children

1313 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4101

www.naeyc.org

For more information, contact:

Kristina Gawrgy
Office: 202-350-8857
Mobile: 202-427-4734
kgawrgy@naeyc.org

For Immediate Release:

September 14, 2009

NAEYC Urges Passage of the Early Learning Challenge Fund

(Washington, DC) – The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) strongly urges the U.S. House of Representatives to quickly pass the Early Learning Challenge Fund in H.R. 3221 this week to help create state systems of high-quality early childhood education so that every child has an opportunity to be prepared for school, work, and life.

The grants will be awarded to states to raise the quality of early childhood education programs serving children from birth to kindergarten and are a critical federal-state partnership that will reap economic and social benefits for all.

“It’s been demonstrated over and over that quality matters,” said Mark R. Ginsberg, Ph.D., executive director of NAEYC. “This legislation challenges states to create systems of high-quality standards, professional development and training, and ways to help providers in every type of setting improve their teaching practices and services as they prepare children for school and for life success.”

The new multibillion dollar investment is especially welcome after years of flat federal funding and as states are working to improve the quality of and access to the range of early childhood programs for children from birth to kindergarten. Noted economists have said that the return on investment in high-quality early childhood education is one of the best choices we can make for our economic and social future.

The legislation reflects many of the principles that NAEYC promotes for a high-quality system of early childhood education: quality program standards that set the conditions for learning with supports to providers to meet and sustain higher levels of quality; professional preparation and ongoing development that is linked to better compensation; assistance to programs and providers on how to use developmentally appropriate practices to help children meet early learning expectations, including screening and referrals to additional services for children who need them, family outreach and engagement, and coordination with other funding streams and system planning efforts.

NAEYC urges quick passage in the House and Senate to move this investment in quality forward.

Founded in 1926, the National Association for the Education of Young Children has nearly 90,000 members worldwide. The association is the largest and most influential voice for early childhood education professionals and the field of early childhood education in the United States.

###