



April 13, 2021

On behalf of our 350 member organizations, Child Care Advocates United (CCAU) is in support of SB 1832 (Pacione-Zayas) – HB 3619 (Crespo) to authorize community colleges to offer Early Childhood Bachelor's degrees and Educator Licensure and encourages state lawmakers to pass the bill.

CCAU is a non-profit professional organization for child care providers and early childhood educators in the State of Illinois. We promote industry excellence by supporting providers in delivering high quality educational and wrap around services to children and their families. We believe that childcare is an essential service, as it provides families with the resources they need to keep children safe and remain independent and economically self-sufficient.

CCAU recognizes that the pathway to create a quality and diverse workforce is strained. The industry needs diversity in higher learning access to alleviate this issue. While members of CCAU will continue to collaborate with traditional four-year institutions to support teachers in their continuing education, it's important that we push the system to offer alternative educational access points that respond to the needs of our workforce. SB1832 and HB3619 allow for the expansion of pathways that will ultimately bring more quality to our early childhood education classrooms.

Steering Committee Members representing Child Care Advocates United's member organizations include:

Anita Andrews-Hutchinson, Chief Operating Officer at It Takes A Village Family of Schools

Ayesha Calhoun, Chief Executive Officer at Brainbox Learning Academy

Jacqueline Curington, President at The Baby Academy, Academy for Children, & Illinois Institute for Children

Tamera Fair, Chief Executive Officer at The Premier Child Care Centers

Robin Hayes, Chief Executive Officer at Mustard Seed Learning Center

Rolanda Orelie, President at Academy for Children II

Allison Perkins-Caldwell, Chief Executive Officer at Allison's Infant & Toddler Centers

Beata Skorusa, Chief Executive Officer at Montessori Foundations of Chicago

Tameka Warner, Chief Executive Officer at Learn Together Grow Together Child Development Centers