

TESTIMONY

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

Respectfully Submitted by: Andrew Prowten, Director of Education Approvals

Subject: S.206

Date: February 4, 2026

The Agency of Education supports the spirit of these efforts to professionalize the early childhood education community. The Agency also recognizes the benefits of personal accountability and public safety that the Office of Professional Regulations could provide. Unfortunately, the currently proposed language may negatively impact the mobility of Vermont Licensed Educators and Educator Preparation Program (EPP) graduates. **The Agency of Education recommends a language change from “Early Childhood Educator” to “Early Childhood Education Professional.”** This compromise recognizes the hard work and leadership of our colleagues outside the public PK-12 space and protects compliance and clarity around federal requirements and local CBAs and policies that use the term “licensed educator.”

Vermont is a signatory of the [National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification \(NASDTEC\) interstate reciprocity agreement for Educator Licensure](#). As a signatory, Vermont Licensed Educators and graduates of Vermont EPPs are eligible for Educator Licenses in other states. In return, the State of Vermont, “has the responsibility to adhere to federal requirements and guidelines regarding the qualifications of educators, [p.1]” and must, “recognize the complex nature of the Interstate Agreement, and the public’s need for clear, accurate information... [and] agree to make Levels of Licensure... clear to each other and the public[p.6].”

The nationally recognized definition of an “Educator” is “categorized as a teacher, administrator or support professional [e.g. school counselor] who may be required by the Member Jurisdiction to hold a license [p.3]” who holds the minimum of a baccalaureate degree and has completed an approved EPP. The only exception is an individual with at least a bachelor’s degree, who is employed under a temporary license, and is enrolled in an approved EPP.

None of the proposed three Early Childhood Educator licenses “adhere to federal requirements and guidelines regarding the qualifications of educators [p.1].” This proposed “ECE Licensure” language through OPR impedes the public’s need for clear, accurate information, and jeopardizes reciprocity for Vermont Licensed Educators and EPP graduates. A simple language change will greatly reduce these risks.

