

Illinois has a shortage of early childhood educators but Black Hawk College is working to help curb that shortage.



Officials from Black Hawk College and [National Louis University](#) (NLU) in Chicago recently signed an agreement for four online bachelor's degree pathways for BHC early childhood education students.

All [Early Childhood Education Associate in Applied Science](#) degree credits can transfer into the NLU bachelor's degree program. There's also an option for students to take more BHC general education courses and transfer up to 80 of those credit hours in addition to their AAS.

Since the NLU program is online, "This allows our students to stay in the Quad-Cities area and work while they are pursuing their bachelor's degree," said Dr. Amy Maxeiner, vice president for instruction at Black Hawk College.

Students also receive two field experiences as student teachers with a focus on preparing them to impact their communities immediately upon graduation, said Rick Yaconis, vice president of enrollment and marketing at National Louis University.

A 2018 [report](#) from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, Southern Illinois University and Goshen Education Consulting shows 20% of early childhood positions in Illinois remain unfilled or filled by an unqualified professional.

One-third of NLU students are enrolled in the school's National College of Education (NCE). All of NCE's teacher-preparation programs – bachelor of arts degrees and Master of Arts in

Teaching - have been approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Media coverage:

WQAD - [Meeting the Illinois teachers shortage with new online bachelor's degree program](#)

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