



# Beginning School: U.S. Policies in International Perspective (Early Childhood Education Series)

*Richard M. Clifford*

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"Path breaking and prescient, Clifford and Crawford offer a compelling comparative review of early education in developed countries. With thoughtful and detailed contributions from leading international scholars, the volume treats its readers to a vibrant journey through important early education policies and practices. Informative for those interested in United States and international policy, the work is important today, but is essential for anyone interested in advancing the well-being of young children in our increasingly global world."

-- Sharon Lynn Kagan, Co-Director, National Center for Children and Families and Associate Dean for Policy, Teachers College, Columbia University

The United States is at a pivotal crossroads in determining the educational experiences of children ages 3 through 8. To help educators set goals and design effective policies, early childhood experts Clifford and Crawford provide a concise history of early education and care in the United States and invite readers to consider early schooling in a global perspective. Distinguished scholars from five countries that value early education as an integral part of life-long education -- France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and Sweden -- examine the evolution of early childhood practices in their countries. Providing invaluable insight and guidance as we move toward fully serving children and families in our schools, this volume:

- \* Identifies common themes and challenges among six economically advantaged countries, and contrasts their different approaches to educating young children.
- \* Features international contributors that identify the critical issues and decisions from their own countries perspectives.
- \* Describes the social forces that are leading the United States toward universal access to school beginning at age 3.

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