Letter from the CCSA President

As we transition from summer to fall, we see many changes occurring. The leaves are falling, the temperatures are cooler, and the days are getting a bit shorter. Children have been able to go back to school in person, and after school programs are operating. We had hoped that COVID-19 would be a bad memory by now; unfortunately, that is not the case.

As we have all seen in our states, there is a very real labor shortage affecting businesses in our country, including child care programs. Many programs have had to shut their doors. Some estimates have said that the early care and education industry lost about a third of its workforce as a result of the pandemic.

According to Katie Hamm in a CNBC article recently, the pre-pandemic annual turnover rate in the early childhood industry was 30%. She stated that about 65,000 child care jobs have been added back since President Biden took office, but that is not enough. As long as there are not enough child care teachers in programs to care for our children, parents will not be able to return to work.

COVID-19 has exposed a variety of truths about the fragility of our early education workforce, all of which predated the arrival of the pandemic. The Biden administration stated that the employment issues and lack of child care that we are experiencing now stem from many years of underinvestment in early care and education. This is something those of us in the industry already knew and have been working to correct for decades.

With ARPA funds released, this is an opportunity for T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE$ programs to work closely with state administrators and philanthropy to further develop our programs. For more information contact:
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center, a division of Child Care Services Association
PO Box 901
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
510.614.5822 – phone
510.614.5822 – fax
www.teacheationalcenter.org
www.childcareservices.org

What does this mean? It means that we are all working on building the future early childhood workforce with continued enthusiasm! Thank you for all you do every day.

--Marsha Basloe, President
Child Care Services Association

P.S. Look for the 2020-2021 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Program Report and State Compendium this fall!
More than ever before, federal, state and local policymakers and the public recognize the need for high-quality, affordable, and accessible child care that depends on an educated, well-compensated early childhood workforce. Likewise, the National Center is the hub of a network of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE$® initiatives across the country. This series of policy briefs informs and provides recommendations for policymakers, programs, advocates, and other stakeholders in early childhood, higher education, and workforce development systems for a strong early childhood workforce. The briefs are:

Creating Equity for and within the Early Childhood Workforce: A Policy Brief

Retaining Educated Early Childhood Educators: A Policy Brief

Higher Education and the Early Childhood Workforce: A Policy Brief

Career Pathways for Early Childhood Educators: A Policy Brief

To address the early childhood education workforce crisis that plagues the nation, early childhood educator apprenticeships have emerged as a promising strategy to provide additional support to increase the workforce’s knowledge, skills and education. In summer 2021, the National Center convened a workgroup of T.E.A.C.H. state program administrators to support the center as staff explored current early childhood apprenticeship programs, the ways T.E.A.C.H. states are engaging in this work and what role the National Center could play in supporting the growth of early childhood apprenticeship programs.

As the National Center continues to explore where the elements of early childhood apprenticeships and the T.E.A.C.H. program overlap or are aligned, the insights shared from this group are providing key information that informs the development of the center’s work. The National Center would like to express our thanks to this amazing group of professionals for their support and expertise. We look forward to continuing to move this work forward.

--Edith Locke
Sr. Vice President, Professional Development Initiatives
State Teams Secure Wins in Addressing Early Childhood Workforce Issues

Over the past 12 months, building on the T.E.A.C.H. National Center’s experiences using a multi-state approach, seven state teams addressed big policy and funding issues facing the early childhood workforce. With support from the National Center and a deep commitment from team members in Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina and South Carolina, all of the states made measurable progress toward their team’s goals. Below are a few highlights from several of the teams.

- Iowa’s work resulted in a $7 million for expansion of the Child Care WAGE$® Program.
- In Nevada, the team was able to complete the work needed to establish a long-hoped-for online, non-licensure, Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education. Students are already signed up for the first course.
- New Jersey’s team worked tirelessly to get legislation passed unanimously by the Assembly and the Senate to overhaul their state’s child care subsidy payments system by funding programs based on enrollment instead of attendance. It currently awaits the governor’s signature.
- In North Carolina, work on the development and finalization of a salary scale was completed. While not fully adopted into policy yet, it was embraced and sent out by the Division of Child Development and Early Education as a resource for the NC Pre-K Program summer transition planning and was used to justify rates requested in the program.

A full report on the project will be available on the National Center’s website in late October. Meanwhile, four states are just beginning to bring teams together to move the needle on early childhood workforce compensation over the coming year. Watch this space for an update next spring on the efforts of teams from Kentucky, Maine, Nebraska and Washington.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center Confirms Keynote Speakers for 2022 Early Childhood Education Workforce Convening

If there is one certainty amidst the uncertainties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s the changing nature of the times, including unprecedented opportunities for early childhood education, and of course, the early childhood workforce. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center invites you to explore, debate and discuss these changes and opportunities at our Early Childhood Education Workforce Convening (formerly the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE$® National Symposium), April 20-22, 2022, at the William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education at the University of NC-Chapel Hill.

This annual event brings together professionals who are implementing and sustaining programs, strategies and funding that support early education systems nationally and in states and communities across the country. It’s not too late to submit a workshop proposal. You can find out more about this event on our website.

Announcing Keynote Co-Presenters

Iheoma Iruka, Research Professor, Department of Public Policy, Frank Porter Graham Institute

Shantel Meek, Founding Director, The Children’s Equity Project, Arizona State University

Thank you our 2021 Symposium Platinum Sponsor!
T.E.A.C.H. National Center Welcomes New Members to the Advisory Committee

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Advisory Committee:

Marica Cox Mitchell is a long-time partner and friend of the T.E.A.C.H. National Center. Mitchell is director of early learning at Bainum Family Foundation. Prior to this role she was a Deputy Executive Director at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and has worked in the early childhood education field for more than 20 years.

Michelle Kelly is the director of Child Care WAGE$® at Signal Centers in Tennessee. In the field for 20+ years, her career has taken her from the early childhood classroom to center director and child care resource and referral director.

Iruka and Equity Research Action Coalition Featured

Iheoma Iruka, PhD, and the new Equity Research Action Coalition were featured in the UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute’s 2021 Impact Report. The Equity Research Action Coalition will pursue research that promotes and supports the healthy development of Black children across the African diaspora. Also, it will focus on developing science-based evidence that can be used to inform practice and policy aimed at eradicating the impact of racism, and all its consequences, on the lives of Black children, families and communities. Learn more about the Equity Research Action Coalition here.

Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance Funded for Back to Work Program through Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative

ECCLA is a proud recipient of the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI), supporting the Back to Work Early Childhood Education Scholarship Program. Their efforts will focus on recruiting displaced workers into the early care and education field in Colorado.

Early childhood professionals are the workforce behind Colorado’s workforce, and the early childhood workforce is facing pressures like never before as classrooms close due to shortages and the cost of providing care. Prior to the pandemic, 70 percent of programs reported challenges in finding qualified staff, and since the pandemic began, more than 10 percent of child care professionals report they will not return to the field (Early Milestones Colorado). The Back to Work Program will help rebuild the pipeline of early childhood professionals supporting our families and children to thrive.

Building on and working with ECCLA’s existing T.E.A.C.H. Colorado Scholarship Program, the Back to Work program will provide a model for recruiting displaced workers into the early childhood field and helping them to obtain the education and certification needed to access higher paying early care and education jobs.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Advisory Committee

Marsha Basloe, ex officio: President, CCSA
Edith Locke, ex officio: Senior VP, Professional Development Initiatives, CCSA
Allison Miller, ex officio: VP, Compensation Initiatives, CCSA

National Members
Helen Blank
Consultant
Carol Brunson Day
Consultant
Lauren Hogan
NAEYC
Iheoma Iruka
Equity Research Action Coalition, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

Marica Cox Mitchell
Bainum Family Foundation
Ana De Hoyos O’Connor
San Antonio College

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Members
John Cregg
Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children
Nar Doumbya
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association
Phyllis Kalifeh
Children’s Forum Inc.
Michelle Kelly
Signal Centers
Michelle Raybon
Alabama Partnership for Children