T.E.A.C.H. Times

Spring 2022

Biannual Newsletter

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® States

Alabama
Arkansas
Colorado
Florida
Indiana
Iowa
Maine
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
North Carolina
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Washington, DC
Wisconsin

Child Care WAGE$® States

Florida
Iowa
Nebraska
North Carolina
Tennessee

State programs are licensed by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center at Child Care Services Association.

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Chapel Hill, NC 27514
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Letter from the President

This month marked a time for thinking about our challenges and opportunities. In March 2020, many of our states closed child care and others remained open as a support for essential workers as we all grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic. That was actually two years ago and challenges were throughout the two years. Many of them still remain.

This month was also the one-year anniversary of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which provided much necessary support for our child care community. We know that more is needed as these temporary funds are supporting the early childhood world today, but they are not sufficient to build our child care system into strong support for children, families and communities and businesses trying to hire a workforce.

Because the operation of any child care program (either in a center or a home) relies on staffing, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) and its T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center (National Center) worked with the Early Learning Policy Group to review state initiatives based on publicly available information to better understand specific investments in the child care workforce.

We need to build a new high quality workforce and support the workforce that has given their hearts and souls to young children during this pandemic. Twenty-three states included a specific requirement for stabilization grants to be used to support the ECE workforce — Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Post-pandemic, we cannot go back to the funding levels that were there before the pandemic. Our educators are too important to developing young minds and supporting county and state levels of workforce engagement.

There have also been numerous surveys, conversations and papers on the compensation of the early childhood workforce. Our National Center released A Look at Salary/Wage Scales for the Early Childhood Educator Workforce, the BUILD Initiative published Improving Child Care Compensation Backgrounder 2021, The Hunt Institute has COVID-19 State Child Care Actions, Child Care Aware of America released an ARPA tracker, NAEYC surveyed child care and released A Resource for Child Care Providers in Centers and Family Child Care Homes, the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) released a public database of compensation strategies and more. If you are looking for what is happening across the country, these are just a few of the possible resources.

The National Collaborative of Infants & Toddlers (NCIT), composed of more than 2,500 local, state and national organizations, released a letter outlining top priorities to create a better future for infants and toddlers.

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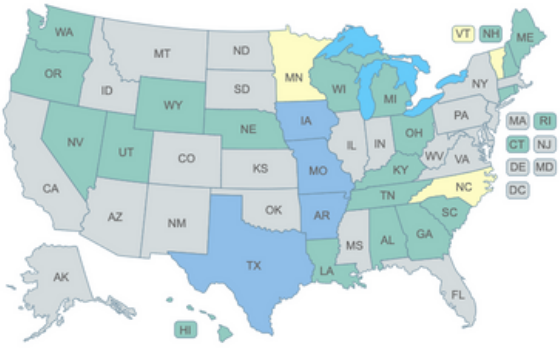

ARP stabilization grants with required workforce support or a bonus opt-in

Federal funds used to increase T.E.A.C.H. scholarships or the WAGE$ program to support the ECE workforce

ARP stabilization grants requiring ECE workforce support or opt-in bonus AND ARP funds used to increase T.E.A.C.H. scholarships and the WAGE$ program

View larger map

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Priorities in the letter included economic security for all, high-quality, affordable child care, comprehensive family supports, maternal and child health' and equitable policy implementation. Child Care Services Association and the National Center were pleased to sign on to this letter and many of our partner agencies also signed on.

Under Senior Vice President Edith Locke's leadership, the National Center staff have been busy planning for the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Convening April 20-22. With excellent keynotes, plenaries and interesting and diverse workshops, we are looking forward to seeing so many people at The Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Based on the registrations received, it will also be one of our largest. See more information to the right.

We have spent the last year exploring the key components of early childhood apprenticeships and how the T.E.A.C.H. program aligns with this workforce strategy. Learn more about the workgroup that supported these efforts and our approval by the U.S. Department of Labor. There will be multiple workshops on an early childhood apprenticeship program at the Convening.

It has been an active year so far, and we're as committed as ever to supporting the early childhood workforce and protecting children across the country. As you will see throughout this newsletter, the work throughout the states is comprehensive and urgent. Thank you for your continued support for—and dedication to—children, families and the workforce so essential to their growth and success.

As I close this message, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge new challenges for children and families. Once again, the world is witnessing the destructive impact of war on children and families. Our hearts and prayers are with Ukraine.

My best,

Marsha Basloe
President, Child Care Services Association

Early Childhood Workforce Convening Just Around the Corner: It's Not Too Late to Register

We hope you will join us!

View the registration packet.

The workshops are scheduled, the keynote and plenary sessions are confirmed and for the first time since the pandemic began, we will be meeting face to face April 20-22, 2022, in Chapel Hill, N.C.

This annual event, hosted by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center, a division of Child Care Services Association, brings together professionals from across the country who are working on advocacy, policy, funding, strategy development and systems building toward implementation and sustainability of programs, strategies and funding that support early education systems nationally and in states and communities across the country.

Keynote Presenters

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

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

Panel Session Presenters

Susan Hibbard
Executive Director, BUILD Initiative
Moderator

Ola Friday, Ed.L.D., M.P.P.
Director at Early Educator Investment Collaborative

Shannon Rudisill
Executive Director, Early Childhood Funders Collaborative

Sakinah P. Harrison, MNO, Ed.D.
Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Albert Wat, M.A.
Senior Policy Director, Alliance for Early Success

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program: Moving the needle on student success for the past 30+ years

By Amy Duffy, T.E.A.C.H. NC Manager III

Earning a college degree is promised to be the ticket to professional and economic advancement. However, the journey toward educational opportunities often involves obstacles. While traditional approaches focused on financial support have increased college access, they have not necessarily addressed all the challenges students face to complete educational goals.

Recently, MDRC published How Congress Can Move the Needle on College Completion, a commentary advocating for evidence-based student success initiatives to broaden support. Although the federal government's interest in implementing a multifaceted approach to student success may be new, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program (T.E.A.C.H.), an early care and education workforce initiative, has used many of these student success strategies over the past 30+ years to help the workforce complete formal education and college degrees.

Paying for college remains a primary challenge for students, and it is even more difficult for the early care and education workforce who are already undercompensated. T.E.A.C.H. alleviates that by offering both comprehensive and capped scholarships. Federal financial aid alone does not always fully cover the rising cost of college. Also, some students take student loans because they do not qualify for grants.

T.E.A.C.H. covers a large percentage of tuition, books and course access or pays a capped amount that is adequate to cover tuition and books. Scholarship recipients also earn raises or bonuses after completing a set number of credits each year. Thus, T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients can essentially earn a debt-free education through all the supports provided. Scholarship recipients are also encouraged to seek other sources of financial aid to wrap around the scholarship support they receive.

Even when the financial worry of paying for college is removed, time and motivation are other challenges, especially for those already in the workforce. From its inception, T.E.A.C.H. has recognized this barrier and designed scholarships to provide teachers with paid release time to balance work and school.

Other program incentives, such as awarding bonuses to those who progress toward a degree and a more substantial bonus upon degree attainment, help stimulate motivation.
Read more...

Thank you to the National Apprenticeship Workgroup

The National Center has spent the last year exploring the key components of early childhood apprenticeships and how the T.E.A.C.H. program aligns with this workforce strategy. A workgroup of leadership from across the country has supported this work and provided critical information. The National Center would like to express our thanks to this amazing group of professionals for their support and expertise.

- **Amanda Enos**, Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program & T.E.A.C.H Support Coordinator, Southern New Hampshire Service Inc.
- **Brenda Schramm**, ECE Workforce Development Director, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
- **Jessica Emond**, Operations Manager, SNHS Child Development, Head Start and Early Head Start
- **Kerron Kalloo**, Program Manager, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program, National Black Child Development Institute
- **Laurie Litz**, Director, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Child Care Association
- **Lisa Hildebrand**, Executive Director, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children
- **Lori Stegmeyer**, Director of Workforce Initiatives, Children's Forum
- **Mairnel Russo**, Manager of Early Childhood Initiatives, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children
- **Morgan Tolin**, T.E.A.C.H. Program Coordinator & Outreach Specialist, Maine Association for the Education of Young Children
- **Nar Doumbya**, Co-Director T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Wisconsin

With the support of the workgroup, the National Center has developed a unique apprenticeship strategy that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Labor. The National Center will begin an apprenticeship pilot project in the coming months. Additional information and a webinar will be announced soon, so stay tuned.

Improving Child Care Compensation Backgrounder 2021

The purpose of this backgrounder is to provide states, communities, and tribes the tactical information they need to better understand if and how they want to pursue policy levers to support early educator compensation.

Harriet Dichter and Ashley LiBetti, Improving Child Care Compensation Backgrounder October 2021, (The BUILD Initiative, 2021), available here.

Three Evidence-Based Ways to Support the Early Care and Education Workforce

By *JoAnn Hsueh*

This commentary was originally published by Early Learning Nation in March 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequities and fragilities inherent in existing child care markets and decimated the supply of child care in many communities. As part of the $3.5 trillion budget plan, Congress is currently considering ways to address the long-standing underinvestment in the early care and education (ECE) workforce in order to help stabilize child care markets nationally. Despite being deemed essential to the nation's economy, the ECE workforce experiences high turnover, low pay and benefits, and limited opportunities for professional development and advancement—all of which undermines the quality and continuity of care for young children.

Unfortunately, the effectiveness of long-term reforms for the child care workforce has not been well-studied. However, there are decades of studies testing "make work pay" initiatives—where workers are provided extra monetary payments, sometimes in the form of bonuses, earnings supplements and earned income tax credits—that provide highly relevant insights. These strategies are remarkably reliable at boosting workers' earnings and incomes, reducing poverty, and, in some cases, increasing employment retention. Here are three lessons from this research that can help increase opportunities for advancement and upward mobility for the child care workforce.

1. Longer-term, robust compensation reforms work better than short-term initiatives

Emerging experimental evidence in Virginia already points to the promise of compensation reform efforts; with even relatively modest retention bonuses of $1,500 paid out in three installments, teacher turnover in centers dropped dramatically from 30% to 15% over an 8-month period.

But do time-limited bonuses result in long-term economic mobility? Not always, according to evidence from other sectors. Short-term positive effects on income often fade when monetary supplements end. However, when financial support is sustained for longer periods of time and coupled with other services, like coaching and case management, they can produce larger and longer-lasting effects.

The New Hope Project, for example, combined earnings supplements to raise participants' incomes above federal poverty thresholds for three consecutive years with a combination of other services. This kind of sustained support yielded sustained long-term gains for some workers, allowing them to boost their employment and earnings prospects. While the costs of more comprehensive compensation reforms are higher, the longer-term earnings and income gains experienced by participants often exceed these initial net costs, suggesting they can be a worthwhile investment.

2. Coordinate and align compensation reforms with intensive workforce development initiatives

Make work pay initiatives have been shown to be more effective in the long-term when coupled with education and employment supports. However, ECE workers often must work full-time to make ends meet or to take advantage of compensation and workforce development reforms, which can prevent them from successfully completing degree and credentialing programs.

For example, a generous initiative in Louisiana offered ECE workers scholarships that covered the full cost of tuition for coursework, a financial incentive of $3,300 tax credit per year once teachers completed their credential, and other supports. But

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many teachers who began the program were not able to earn their credentials.

ECE workforce compensation and development reforms can rectify these incompatibilities by aligning their requirements. For example, ECE reforms could condition monetary supplements not solely on full-time work, but on a combination of part-time work and progress in postsecondary preparation or professional development training programs, allowing workers to balance the rigor of educational demands with stable work and their economic well being. Enabling ECE workers to successfully engage in education and training opportunities not only enhances their employment and earning prospects, but also builds core competencies and quality practices to support young children.

3. Aggressively market and simplify application processes to ensure maximum enrollment

Well-designed initiatives are only effective if the targeted workers know about them and can take them up. However, engaging eligible participants can be challenging.

- Simple marketing materials that are personalized with individuals' names and include specific information, like explanations of the supports being offered, can greatly enhance take-up.
- Similarly, delineating specific actions, such as clicking on direct weblinks to learn about eligibility requirements and to complete application materials, can be highly effective.
- Marketing strategies also should meet ECE workers where they are. For example, one could provide child care centers with incentives to promote compensation reforms and workforce development opportunities when they are onboarding staff.

Policymakers have a unique opportunity to rebuild our depleted early care and education workforce. Evidence-building efforts are currently underway to better understand the factors that drive ECE worker turnover and to identify promising strategies that can support the retention and advancement of the ECE workforce. In the meantime, we can learn from other employment sectors to support the well being, economic mobility and skill development of the people we rely upon to care for the nation's youngest children.

JoAnn Hsueh is the director of MDRC's Family Well-Being and Children's Development policy area.

Child care workers don't earn a living wage – And that's a problem for all of us

By Sakinah Harrison, The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center's W. W. Kellogg Foundation Program Officer

This commentary was originally published by Early Child Thrives in March 2022.

Child care workers in 41 states do not earn a living wage – and that was before the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation hasn't improved in the last two years, in an industry that is overwhelmingly female, with a large percentage identifying as Black, Asian or Latino.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the average early childhood worker earned just $11.65 an hour, according to the biennial 2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index from the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California, Berkeley. That, and 60 percent of workers say their child-care programs have tried to reduce expenses through layoffs, furloughs and/or pay cuts since the pandemic started, according to a survey released in December by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

"The pandemic didn't create these circumstances, but it exacerbated them and it brought child care in this country to the brink of collapse," says Dr. Lea Austin, executive director of the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE), in her testimony before the Select Committee on the Coronavirus Crisis.

Nearly 16,000 child care programs across 37 U.S. states have permanently closed since the pandemic began, representing a 9 percent decline in the total number of

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licensed child care providers, according to a report published by Child Care Aware of America.

"Our economy relies on workers who are parents," said Dr. Austin. "Many parents cannot work without reliable child care, and child care cannot work effectively until its own workforce is secure."

Although the federal pandemic relief programs provided important stop gap measures, those measures cannot, nor are they designed, to provide long term fixes. Most child care program have to rely on what parents can afford to pay to fund their programs. Consistent, long-term investments are required to ensure that child care services provide quality care, pay workers competitive wages and keep prices affordable for parents and families.

Learn more:

- Many child-care workers don't earn a living wage—and that was the case even before the pandemic, Megan Leonhardt, CNBC, February 24, 2021
- Early Childhood Workforce Index, Center for the Study of Childcare Employment
- 16,000 Shuttered Child Care Programs Push the Sector Closer to Collapse, Emily Tate, EdSurge, February 11, 2022
- Federal Aid is Propping Up Childcare. It Isn't a Long-Term Fix, Sophie Quinton, Stateline, January 12, 2022

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