Early Educator Job Quality
The Challenges of Caring for & Educating California’s Youngest Children

Lea J.E. Austin, Ed.D
Director
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
University of California, Berkeley

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What Early Educators Need

**PREPARE**
Teacher preparation to work with young children in group settings

**SUPPORT**
Supportive adult working environments including non-child contact time to perform professional responsibilities

**REWARD**
Appropriate compensation, including dependable increases in pay and benefits

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A Profile of California’s Early Educators

54% of home-based providers & 29% of center-based teaching staff are immigrants

97% are women

*Total includes the following occupations as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics (OES): “child care workers,” “preschool teachers, excluding special education,” “preschool teachers, special education,” “education administrators: preschool/child care center programs”. These data do not include the self-employed, although home-based child care assistants, who are employees, are likely included in the “child care worker” category. Due to the limited data available across states in the OES, state-based surveys or registries may provide more comprehensive estimates of the ECE workforce.

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Race/Ethnicity of Early Childhood Workforce in California, 2012

Note: Because the sample size of home-based unlisted providers was too small to report the five race/ethnicity categories reported for the center-based workforce and the home-based listed workforce, these five race/ethnicity categories were collapsed into two categories for this segment of the workforce.

California’s Early Educators Far Exceed Minimum Qualification Requirements

Note: Because the sample size of home-based listed providers was too small to report the three educational levels reported for the center-based workforce, these three educational attainment categories were collapsed into two categories for this segment of the workforce. Data on the educational attainment of the home-based unlisted workforce is unavailable.

California’s Early Educators Are Among the Lowest Paid Workers in the State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Median wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care worker</td>
<td>$12.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool teacher</td>
<td>$16.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center director</td>
<td>$23.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten teacher</td>
<td>$38.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary teacher</td>
<td>$45.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All workers</td>
<td>$19.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Earnings by Occupation**

- In 2017 the median wage for child care workers was $12.29, a 3% increase since 2015.
- For preschool teachers the median wage was $16.19, a 3% increase since 2015.
- For preschool or child care center directors, the median wage was $23.91, a 6% decrease since 2015.

**Use of Public Income Supports (EITC, Medicaid, Food Stamps, TANF)**

- Child care worker families’ participation in one or more public income support programs: 58%
Funding Source Matters

Average Hourly Wage of Center-Based Workforce in California, by Funding Source and Sponsorship, 2012

- Community-Based Public Pre-K: $14.30
- Other ECE Center: $15.50
- School-Sponsored Public Pre-K: $17.20
- Head Start: $18.20
There is a Racial Wage Gap

Early educators are **six times more likely** than K–12 teachers to live in poverty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Share in Poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Younger the Child, the Lower the Pay

Early educators working with infants and toddlers face a sizeable wage penalty compared to educators working only with children age three to five, not yet in kindergarten.

In California, an early educator working full-time exclusively with infants and toddler earns $6,240 less than educators who work with preschool age children.

Source: 2018 Early Childhood Workforce Index

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The Myth of Good, Cheap Child Care

Child care costs too much for many families.
Early educators are undervalued and underpaid.
The root cause of the problems with the ECE system is underfunding.

What does a values-based budget for children, parents, and teachers look like?

A California Case Study

An annual cost of $29.7 to $75.4 billion, or $30,000 to $37,000 per child

A one-time investment for recruiting and training teachers of $3.0 to $9.7 billion

Such a system could serve 323,000 to 826,000 children a year

Thank you!

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