SUPPORTING HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING WITH A HIGH-QUALITY WORKFORCE:

ADDRESSING THE STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF EARLY LEARNING PROFESSIONALS
Figure 4. Hours in Childcare Versus Pre-K by Age 5

Source: Author's calculations.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
PREPARATION

- Core competencies
- Education standards vary widely – by role, settings, ages of children served
- Infant and toddler workforce
  - May not complete preservice education
- Prekindergarten educators
  - Most states require a BA for lead teachers
Barriers to attaining additional education

- $$$
- Time and scheduling challenges
- May require additional supports
- Variation in requirements and pay across settings
What are states doing to support workforce preparation?

- Scholarships and loan forgiveness
- Articulation agreements
- Apprenticeships
- Coaching
- QRIS
- Career pathways lattices/ladders
SUPPORT AND COMPENSATION

- Highest earners = prek teachers in school-based classrooms
- Lowest earners = infant and toddler workers
- Nearly 50% receive some sort of public assistance
- Often paid hourly
- Access to benefits (health insurance, retirement, paid time off) varies
- Access to paid planning time and paid training time varies
SUPPORT AND COMPENSATION

- Barriers to increasing compensation for early learning workforce?
  - $$$
  - High labor costs
  - Parents cannot afford to pay more
  - Low reimbursement rates for providers serving families using child care subsidies
What are states doing to address compensation for workforce?

- Raising reimbursement rates
- Financial incentives – often linked to higher education/training
- Tax credits
- Pay parity
- Wage guidelines
- Shared services
Building a Qualified and Supported Early Care and Education Workforce

Legislative options to consider

Convene stakeholders to understand the issues in your state.
- California: Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education
- Massachusetts: Early Education and Care Workforce Council

Compile useful information on your state’s ECE workforce.
- Illinois: Workforce Study

Create a comprehensive plan to elevate the ECE workforce.
- Colorado: Early Childhood Workforce Plan 2020

Invest in professional development for the ECE workforce.
- Allocate funds for high-quality trainings.
  - California: California Child Care Initiative Project
- Provide funds for coaching, mentoring and other forms of individual support.
  - Washington: Early Achievers Coach Model
  - New Jersey: Coaching for prekindergarten teachers

Build a highly qualified ECE workforce through higher education.
- Ensure articulation agreements between higher education institutions.
  - Indiana: Transfer Single Articulation Pathway
How does Colorado support a high-quality early learning workforce?

- **What are the strengths, needs and challenges in Colorado? What steps are being taken to address these?**
  - Kacee Miller, Early Milestones Colorado

- **What is the legislative role? How can policymakers be involved?**
  - State Representative James Wilson, Colorado

- **What is an early educator’s perspective on the strengths, challenges and needs of the early learning workforce?**
  - Temisha Elliott, Clayton Early Learning
BUILDING A QUALIFIED AND SUPPORTED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE

Kacee Miller
Early Milestones Colorado
Transforming the Early Childhood Workforce in Colorado

Colorado’s Early Care and Education Workforce
NCSL Early Learning Fellows

August 26, 2019

An innovative, public-private partnership to advance the Early Childhood Workforce in Colorado
Early Milestones Colorado is an independent organization helping to advance innovative solutions that improve policies and practices in early childhood development. We work with state and local partners to exchange ideas, share resources, and create lasting, positive change for children.
Project Components

**Research**

Collecting information on the experience and impact of the early childhood workforce.

**Plan**

Developing an actionable State plan to support the early childhood workforce.

**Explore**

Testing innovative strategies to recruit, retain, support, and compensate the early childhood workforce.

**Communicate and Sustain**

Sharing ideas and supporting sustainable change.
Colorado’s Early Childhood Workforce

**Staff Shortages**
- 70% of early learning directors report difficulty in filling vacant positions

**Low Wages**
- 90% of early learning teachers have difficulty paying their bills

**High Demand**
- 33%-43% increased need for teachers and leaders by 2025

Every $1 Invested in early care and education contributes $2.25 to the Colorado economy
Wages are Low

Salaries are a large driver of cost.

Source: Bearing the Cost of ECE in CO, 2017
Recruitment Challenges

• 70% of directors report having difficulty finding qualified staff to fill positions

• Average time to fill a vacant position is 2.5 months

• 49% of directors reported having to fill positions with unqualified staff
Research 2016-2017 Workforce Survey

Turnover/Instability: Quality Impact

63% Teachers are “burned out”
46% Directors must hire unqualified staff
44% Staffing holes force frequent, destabilizing moves of teachers and children
35% Program quality suffers
31% Child behavior problems increase
An ambitious three-year roadmap for a professional development system that promotes a high-quality, effective, diverse workforce for Colorado.
The New Plan

- Workforce Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Compensation
- Leadership
- Finance
- Data & Continuous Improvement
EXPLORING SOLUTIONS
Implementing Solutions

- Targeted Recruitment
- Career Pathways
- Compensation
- Working Conditions

State System & Policy Opportunities
Community / Program System & Policy Opportunities
### 2018-2019 Innovation Grantees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Issue</th>
<th>Innovation Grantee</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Compensation                            | • Child Care 8,000  
• Compensation Parity in Summit County                                                                                                             |
| Targeted Recruitment and Retention       | • Denver’s Early Childhood Workforce Initiative  
• Expanding Possibilities in Early Childhood                                                                                                      |
| Working Conditions                      |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Education and Career Pathways           | • La Plata County Early Childhood Workforce Initiative  
• Pathways to Teaching (P-TEACH)  
• Apprenticeship and Teacher Preparation Initiative  
• Creating Pathways to Early Childhood Training for Rural Latinx Caregivers                                                                        |
## Policy Opportunities

### Key Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education and Career Pathways</th>
<th>Targeted Recruitment and Retention</th>
<th>Compensation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cohort Models</td>
<td>• Securing certification waivers</td>
<td>• Centralized services models</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Concurrent Enrollment</td>
<td>• Building essential skills (soft skills) capacity of entrants to the Early Childhood workforce</td>
<td>• Balance and gradient pay</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Federally Registered Apprenticeships</td>
<td>• Using enhanced data systems to guide local initiatives</td>
<td>• Shared Services Staffing</td>
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### Policy Opportunities

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<td>• Build skills/reduce frustration: Mentor teachers</td>
<td>• Increase flexibility: Waivers</td>
<td>• Local wage ladders and pay parity with K-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Support “grow your own” models: Concurrent enrollment</td>
<td>• Targeted skill building</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve pathways: Apprenticeships</td>
<td>• Targeted recruitment: Enhance data to identify who is “almost qualified” or “already qualified”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bilingual CDA training &amp; concurrent enrollment</td>
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EARLY MILESTONES
C O L O R A D O

ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN’S SUCCESS

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BUILDING A QUALIFIED AND SUPPORTED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE

State Representative James Wilson
Colorado House District 60
BUILDING A QUALIFIED AND SUPPORTED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE

Temisha Elliott
Clayton Early Learning
Questions?