The Commonwealth's Brain Builders: Virginia Early Childhood Workforce Survey 2017

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

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Introduction

At the request of the Virginia School Readiness Committee[1], in the spring and summer of 2017, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, in collaboration with the Virginia Community College System, conducted a survey of early education program administrators and teachers across the Commonwealth. The study was designed to provide information about Virginia's early childhood professionals and professional settings. This was done in order to inform the School Readiness Committee's charge to advance policy recommendations to support a thriving, qualified early childhood workforce, in turn helping the children and families it serves to thrive. Research demonstrates that children's brain development is deeply influenced by the quality of their interaction with adults. Given that nearly 350,000 Virginia children have all parents/guardians in the workforce, for large spans of children's days that interaction is with an early childhood professional. The focus areas of the survey were program administrator and teacher qualifications; wages and benefits; professional development; and staff turnover and retention.

At the highest level, the Workforce Survey reveals that Virginia faces a time of challenges and opportunities in ensuring that the Commonwealth's youngest residents have access to highly-qualified, highly-trained, and highly-effective early childhood educators.

These challenges and opportunities disproportionately impact the state's at-risk populations, who benefit the most from high-quality early learning experiences yet struggle with access to high-quality services. If the state embraces these opportunities, it can set measurable, ambitious goals for the workforce and buttress the workforce with budgetary and policy supports to reach those goals. If these opportunities pass by, Virginia faces an early childhood educator shortage similar to the one it is facing in K-12 education, and will continue to see its at-risk students entering kindergarten at a lower readiness level on average than their peers.[2]

The Workforce Survey shows that in Virginia – as in many states – the teacher and administrator qualifications, wages, benefits, and turnover rates vary widely by program type. This variability has major implications for efforts to support and upskill the workforce. For instance, while experts disagree on the specific degree or credential that best acts as a proxy for early childhood teacher quality, there is a consensus that practitioners need to have a content-specific set of skills and competencies in order to maximize their impact on children. Children attending public school division-based Head Start, Title I Pre-K, or VPI/VPI+ programs are reasonably likely to have teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher. However, all told, these public programs only serve a fraction of at-risk students; together, they reach roughly 35,000 children, whereas there are nearly 200,000 low-income children aged birth through 4 in Virginia. The vast majority are served in private centers, family day homes, or in Friend, Family & Neighbor care (the last of which was not a focus of this study).

Only half of teachers in private centers hold a bachelor's degree, and a third have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) as their highest level of attainment. Among family day home providers, more than half have a high school diploma or GED as their highest degree. Moreover, low wages and high turnover rates abound in this group of providers. The average hourly starting wage for teachers in private centers is $12.83 and for teachers in family day homes it is $11.67, significantly below school-based program average wages of more than $20 an hour. Among all teachers who do not have a second source of income in the household, fully 55% report an annual salary of $25,000 or less, putting wide swaths of this critical workforce near or below the federal poverty line. This wage structure does not support the natural attainment of additional qualifications by center or family day home teachers, and indeed, cost and time are the most commonly cited barriers to accessing additional professional development.

1 The School Readiness Committee was established in 2016; see Virginia Code § 2.2-208.1

2 Virginia School Readiness Report Card, 2016

While Virginia's early childhood education wages are in line with national averages, the implications remain troubling. More than a third of private centers report turning over 20% or more of their staff each year, and those centers that serve high numbers of at-risk children report having particular difficulty filling those roles. Teachers who are planning to leave the profession in the coming years by far cite low pay and lack of benefits as the reasons driving their decision – and these teachers are most likely to be young and in the early stage of their career. Low numbers of young teachers entering/remaining in the profession at the same time that waves of older teachers of the Baby Boomer generation are hitting retirement age is precisely the equation that led to the current K-12 teacher shortage.[3]

While these data present a discouraging picture, Virginia has the opportunity to use this baseline information to establish an informed, aligned, unified agenda to prioritize the early childhood education workforce and ensure that the most highly-skilled professionals are flowing to the classrooms of highest need. Considering national best practices and the ongoing work of the School Readiness Committee, this agenda may include:

- Setting statewide goals of increasing the percentage of teachers with relevant certificates and degrees ("credentials"), with differentiated goals tied to distinct program types, while maintaining the focus on early childhood education as a priority high-demand workforce;
- Expanding integrated supports for the workforce, most notably Virginia Quality, the state's Quality Rating & Improvement System;
- Ensuring alignment of professional development offerings with core competencies that are reflected in seamless, stackable credentials;
- Removing policy barriers to maximal uptake of high-quality, publicly-funded programs and innovations such as VPI and Mixed-Delivery Preschool Grants;
- Fully utilizing innovative opportunities to build the workforce pipeline, including dual-enrollment programs and Registered Apprenticeships;
- Fully utilizing programs that enable low-cost professional development, such as Project Pathfinders and the Virginia Department of Social Services' Child Care Provider Scholarship; and
- Considering options to increase the funding streams for early childhood education and to fully leverage the funding streams that exist in order to promote an improved wage structure and/or accessible and affordable professional development opportunities

Through designing and implementing such an agenda, the Commonwealth can strategically respond to the results of the Workforce Survey, setting up the state to monitor its progress through regular repetition of the Survey, which can show the impact policy shifts are having on both the state's early childhood workforce and the many tens of thousands of children and families it serves.

3 National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, "Nation's Schools Facing Largest Teacher Retirement Wave in History," June 24, 2011.

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Summary of Results

Survey Respondents

Two surveys were created: One targeted to program administrators (individuals with the primary administrative responsibility, for example Center Directors or Head Start Coordinators), and one targeted to lead teachers (individuals with primary responsibility over at least one classroom/group of children ages 0-5). A total of 814 program administrators and 497 lead teachers from across the state provided responses to most of the survey items.

Qualifications

Growing recognition of the importance of high quality experiences for young children's development has underscored the focus on the qualifications of those who work with young children. Key findings included:

- There is tremendous variability in teacher qualifications based on the type of provider setting they work in; for instance, the majority of family day home teachers lack any college degree while all VPI teachers, by requirement, hold a college degree.
- Overall, nearly 40% of teachers hold a bachelor's degree, 16% an associate degree, and 17% a master's degree; however, the bachelor's degree-holding teachers were heavily concentrated in publicly-funded programs such as school division-run pre-K programs and Head Start programs.
- Nearly one-in-four teachers have completed high school or received a GED as their highest level of education, including a third of center-based teachers and over half of family day home teachers.
- Overall, 63% of those holding any college degree hold their highest degree in early education or a related field.
- Teachers in public programs (78%) and in Head Start/Early Head Start programs (73%) were also much more likely than teachers in private centers (38%) and family day homes (25%) to hold degrees in early childhood education.
- Overall, 20% of administrators reported high school or GED as their highest level of education, and 19% reported an associate degree as their highest level of education. About one-third (34%) completed a bachelor's degree and one-quarter (26%) held a master's degree (and 1.5% held a doctoral degree).
- The majority of directors with highest level of education of associate degree (65%) or bachelor's degree (55%) had their degrees in early education, but among those holding a master's degree, the majority (58%) were in a field other than early childhood.

Wages and Benefits

The economic well-being of early educators is directly related to their wages and access to related benefits. This study gathered economic well-being data on teachers and program administrators in several ways, including wages, health insurance and additional benefits. Key findings included:

- Average teacher wage varied significantly by the type of program the teacher worked in (e.g. programs with less educational requirements, such as family day homes and center-based programs, reported substantially lower average wages than public programs), teacher educational level, field of study, and completion of certificates and early childhood licenses.
- The average starting hourly wage for family day home teachers was $11.67; for center-based teachers, $12.83; for Head Start/Early Head Start teachers, $16.14; and for public school program teachers, $20.95.
- About 42% of teachers received health insurance from their employer.
- Nearly two-thirds of programs offered teachers paid time off, and 80% provided some support for ongoing training and education.
- Program administrators reported average annual salary of $46,350. This wage varied by the type of program they managed and their educational degree and field.

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Program Turnover and Retention

The consistency of early educators provided by low turnover is valuable for young children's development and one indicator of quality. Turnover is also an important indicator of the general well-being of a profession. Low turnover is associated with more stability in the workforce, for example. While there is no consensus, generally turnover higher than 20% is considered to be of concern. Key findings included:

- One-in-four (25%) programs reported turnover of 20% or higher, but there was high variability based on program type; the high-turnover programs were disproportionately likely to be private centers.
- Overall, 41% of programs reported no staff turnover during the past year, a percent close to but lower than national estimates. About one-third (34%) reported turnover of less than 20%.
- The vast majority of family day homes (83%) reported no turnover (many family day homes have only one owner-employee), and nearly half of public programs (47%) also reported no turnover.
- Hourly salaries were lower for teachers and assistant teachers among programs with high turnover than programs with low or no turnover. The salary difference was about $2.50 per hour for full-time lead teachers.
- Overall, about one quarter (25.5%) of administrators reported that they had difficulty finding qualified staff to fill open positions. While only 10% of family day home administrators and less than 8% of public program administrators reported difficulty in filling open positions, more than one-third of private programs (35%) and nearly half of Head Start or Early Head Start programs (46%) reported difficulty in filling positions.
- More than half of programs (65%) with high turnover (losing 20% or more of its teaching staff in the past year) reported difficulty filling positions, and 28% of programs with modest level of turnover (less than 20%) reported difficulty filling positions. By contrast, programs with no turnover seemed to be able to fill positions – only 6% of these programs reported difficulty in filling open positions.
- Overall, about one-fifth of lead teacher respondents (20.6%) reported they will "definitely" or "probably" not still be in the field in 3 years, and about 80% reported they were likely to remain in field.
- More than one-quarter (26%) of teachers likely to leave indicated a desire for "Better working conditions." More than three-quarters (76%) of teachers who said they will likely not be in the field in 3 years reported "Better pay" as being a motivator to stay in the field; on average they reported earning $1.00 less per hour in wages than teachers who are likely to be in the field in three years.

Professional Development

Professional development among early educators in Virginia was examined in two ways – asking teachers about their preparation to work successfully with children & families, and asking teachers and administrators about areas of need, as well as access and barriers to professional development. Key findings included:

- Teacher confidence in their preparation did not vary based upon their education, but did vary by years of experience, whether they held a Child Development Associate credential (CDA), and whether they were licensed.
- Most teachers reported that they had the training they needed to feel successful; however, the most common barriers to engaging with professional development opportunities were cost and time.
- Teachers and administrators tended to identify the same topics of greatest need for professional development – behavior management and social & emotional learning – although there were some differences between them. Additionally, there were differences reported by administrators in the needs of lead teachers versus assistant teachers, with assistant teachers reported as needing more foundational skills like ages & stages of child development.

Background & Methodology

Brain development in the earliest years of childhood sets the foundation for future academic and life success. In these years, the physical architecture of the brain is evolving with almost incomprehensible complexity: The young brain makes more than one million neural connections every second.[4] It comes as little surprise, then, that the experiences of and environments for young children have a deep and lasting impact – for good or for ill – on their cognitive development.

In Virginia, hundreds of thousands of children are spending significant time in environments led by early childhood professionals.

Nearly 350,000 young Virginians ages birth to five (more than two-thirds of children in the Commonwealth) have all of their parents/guardians in the workforce, meaning that they are in the care of another. A significant percentage of these children come from families in the lower income brackets, putting them at higher risk of not entering kindergarten ready to thrive in the K-12 system. Many, if not most, of these children receive care through some form of an organized setting, either in a family day home, private center (secular or faith-based), or publicly-funded program such as Head Start, Early Head Start, Title I Preschool through local school divisions, or the state's Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) and federal grant-funded VPI+ programs.[5]

Table 1. Young children & child care need in Virginia, 2016.

INDICATOR	VIRGINIA
Number of Children Birth through Age Four	511,000
Poverty Rate	15%
Number in Poverty (100% or less of federal poverty level)	77,000
Number at 200% or less FPL	190,000
Number in Deep Poverty (50% or less FPL)	36,000
Number with all available parents working	335,000

Sources: All estimates are from the Virginia Kids Count Data Center, sponsored by Voices for Virginia's Children in association with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, or from the 2016 Virginia School Readiness Report Card published by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. For some indicators, data are published for a different age range than 0-4 (often 0-5); when necessary, estimates are pro-rated to derive a 0-4 figure.

All told, Virginia has more than 25,000 early childhood professionals working in over 5,000 sites guiding the development of young children.[6] Research is clear that no factor within those settings has a greater impact on children's development than the skills, knowledge, and competencies of the professionals who are interacting with children.[7]

Yet, little is known about the early childhood workforce in Virginia. No systematic survey of this workforce has been done in more than 10 years. In order to design policies and practices that will ensure Virginia's early childhood professionals have the conditions and support to thrive, information is needed on the makeup of the workforce, their experiences, and their needs.

Virginia's civic and economic future depends on the success of the early childhood workforce. Out of this understanding came the commitment to conducting the 2017 Virginia Early Childhood Workforce Survey.

4 Harvard Center on the Developing Child

5 The rest of the children are served by family, friends, or neighbors (known as FFN care). While there are no Virginia-specific statistics for the percentage of children in FFN care, national research suggests it is between a third and half of children

6 UC-Berkeley Center for the Study of Child Care Employment & Virginia Department of Social Services statistics

7 Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC), "Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation," 2015

Role of the Workforce Survey

The urgent need for the Early Childhood Workforce Survey emerged from the work of the Virginia School Readiness Committee. The School Readiness Committee (SRC) was formed by General Assembly in 2016 via HB 46 and signed into law by Governor Terry McAuliffe. The SRC's initial charge was to "address the development and alignment of an effective professional development and credentialing system for the early childhood education workforce in the Commonwealth."[8]

The Committee quickly identified the need for baseline data on the workforce to inform strategic priorities and recommendations. Therefore, the SRC "recommended that the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation and Virginia Community College System co-lead a workforce survey to establish baseline information about the credentials held, wages/benefits, and professional development needs of professionals working with children aged birth through 5."[9]

Responding to this recommendation, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation and Virginia Community College System's Davenport Institute for Early Childhood Learning collaborated starting in early 2017 to spearhead the design and administration of the survey. Input into the design was solicited from key stakeholders including the School Readiness Committee, the Virginia Department of Social Services, the Virginia Department of Education, early childhood practitioners and policy experts in Virginia, and national experts in conducting early childhood workforce surveys. VECF contracted with Dr. Kyle Snow of Early Childhood Research Consulting to lead the analysis.

8 Virginia Code § 2.2-208.1

9 School Readiness Committee, *Report on Activities, August 2016 – July 2017*

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Methodology/Sampling

Survey Audience

Two surveys were created: One targeted to program administrators (individuals with the primary administrative responsibility, for example Center Directors or Head Start Coordinators), and one targeted to lead teachers (individuals with primary responsibility over at least one classroom/group of children ages 0-5).[10] For the purposes of this effort, assistant teachers and teacher's aides were excluded as survey respondents, although questions about these professionals were asked of program administrators.

Table 2. Definitions of key titles in the survey instrument.

TITLE	DEFINITION
Administrator	Individuals whose primary work responsibility is to lead an institution that provides early care and education services to young children in the age range of birth to 5 years old. Administrators lead or supervise all administrative activities for a site, including finances, human resources, and instructional leadership. In some cases (for instance, in Head Start networks) the administrator may be responsible for overseeing multiple sites.
Lead Teacher	Individuals whose primary work responsibility is to support the growth and development of young children by leading a group or classroom of children. Practitioners lead the instructional activities in classrooms of all types, and are sometimes variously referred to as child care providers, preschool teachers, or in the Code of Virginia as "program leaders." In some cases (for example, in VPI classrooms in public elementary schools), these practitioners hold a teacher license; in the majority of cases across early childhood practitioners in Virginia, they do not.
Assistant Teacher/Teacher's Aide	Individuals whose primary work responsibility is to support the growth and development of young children by assisting a lead teacher with a group or classroom of children.
Head of family day home	Individuals who lead early care and education based out of their home. In many cases, these individuals are the sole employee of their business and serve simultaneously as the owner, administrator, and lead teacher, responsible for all relevant duties listed above.

The surveys were primarily distributed as online instruments, with a small proportion of paper surveys utilized. The surveys and instructions were available in English and Spanish.

10 Although teacher surveys were distributed through programs that also received the administrator survey, the data from the two surveys were not linked in any way.

Surveyed Population & Data Collection

Surveys were distributed broadly, with an array of program type targeted, including:

- Family day homes (licensed, voluntarily registered, or local ordinance approved)
- Centers (for-profit and non-profit)
- Religiously-exempt Centers
- Head Start/Early Head Start (community-based and school-based)
- Public school programs (VPI, VPI+, Title I Pre-K, locally-funded, Early Childhood Special Education)
- Other public programs (university-based, military-based, etc.)

Unregulated programs and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) Care were excluded from the survey.

The survey window ran from April 2017 through July 2017. This included outreach through various and diverse networks across Virginia, including:

- A database of registered settings provided by the Virginia Department of Social Services
- The Humanities & Early Childhood division at the Virginia Department of Education
- Child Care Aware of Virginia
- Virginia Head Start Association
- Virginia Infant-Toddler Specialist Network
- The Virginia Community College System Early Childhood Peer Group
- Virginia Alliance of Family Day Care Association
- Virginia Council for Private Education
- Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education
- Local Smart Beginnings networks
- Numerous other local partners

Outreach was performed primarily through email with several personalized follow-up opportunities. In some cases, paper surveys were hand-delivered to programs and then returned for data entry.

Response Rate

Respondents to the online surveys began completing questions by clicking the appropriate link. However, just because a respondent begins a survey does not mean that it is completed or that all items on the survey are completed. In addition, some respondents may begin the survey multiple times, possibly without completing all of the items. As a result, the data sets resulting from surveys are generally reviewed and checked for redundant, logically inconsistent, or "out of range" responses. This "cleaning" process results in fewer respondents in the analysis data set than began the survey.

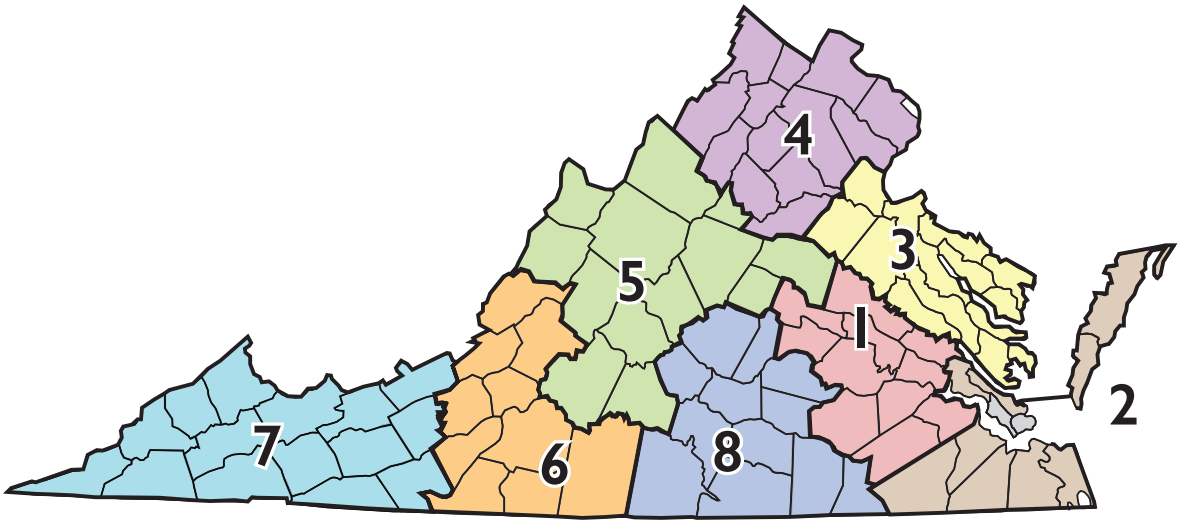
A total of 939 surveys were begun by program administrators. In the case of multi-site programs, one administrator was asked to respond. In the case of VPI and VPI+ programs, the local school divisions' VPI Coordinators were asked to respond as administrators. This represents about 17% of all early care and education programs in Virginia. Following a thorough review of the survey data, a total of 814 respondents were retained in the final analysis sample. These cases had data for a majority of the items on the survey. The excluded cases were largely duplicate entries (respondents began the survey multiple times) or were missing substantial data. Because not all respondents provided answers to all questions, the actual number of responses may vary across questions.

A total of 583 surveys were begun by teachers within these programs. A total of 497 respondents were retained in the final data analysis set. Respondents were excluded when they were duplicates, were not lead teachers, or worked exclusively with children whose age was outside of the birth to 5 year range. As with the administrator survey, because respondents may not have answered all questions, the actual number of responses to each question varies.

Geographic Breakdown of Responses

For the purposes of this survey, we utilized the regional breakdown adopted by the Virginia Department of Education:

VDOE Regions



We made a strong effort to ensure a proportional geographic distribution of survey responses, and the respondent sample closely matches the actual distribution of programs in the Commonwealth, as seen below:

Table 3. Distribution of program administrators in the sample and estimated for each region.

REGION NAME	PERCENT OF PROGRAMS – ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY RESPONDENTS	PERCENT OF PROGRAMS – ACTUAL STATEWIDE*
1 – Central	10%	13%
2 – Tidewater	17%	19%
3 – Northern Neck	6%	6%
4 – Northern	44%	41%
5 – Valley	10%	11%
6 – Western	6%	6%
7 – Southwest	3%	3%
8 – Southside	2%	2%

**Estimated based on number of registered child care centers and family day homes*

Note on Sampling Bias

This study used a "convenience" sample that maximized responses. As this sampling included direct outreach by individuals who personally knew administrators and lead teachers (as opposed to a neutral mass mailing to all programs), the sample should be considered "non-random." This decision was made in order to ensure response rates would be high enough for statistically valid analysis within a reasonable timeframe. However, this means that all data and results presented in this report should be considered with the caveat that there may be introduced selection bias in the cohort who completed the survey. Specifically, it is likely that the samples represent a more highly-educated, better-compensated, and more stable slice of the early childhood workforce than that of a random sample.

Additionally, family day home providers introduce a complicating factor due to their unique setup. Many family day home programs are run by a single individual who acts both as the administrator and sole lead teacher.[11] In this study, it is possible that respondents from family day homes with a single owner/teacher may have responded to the administrator survey, the teacher survey, or both. As a result, they may be under-represented in one or both samples. Data regarding family day homes should therefore be taken with caution. That said, because of their multiple roles, administrator/teachers of family day homes could generally be valid respondents to either survey.

11 Indeed, a total of 61 respondents to the administrator survey who lead family day homes indicated they had no lead teachers (or responded "n/a" to the item asking about number of lead teachers) and 56 reported they had one lead teacher. It is possible that some of these respondents to the administrator survey also responded to the teacher survey.

Note on Regional Estimates

This study collected data on the location of programs in which lead teachers or administrators worked. This was done in the interest of ensuring that all parts of the state were included in the study. However, the non-random design of the sample does not allow it to be used to generate population estimates for the state or any specific region within the state. While much of the data presented throughout this study may include region as one categorical variable, in most instances, there will not be sufficient number of cases within one or more cells of the analysis to generate a reliable estimate.[12]

In addition, comparisons across regions must be done with great caution because so much of the variation in characteristics of teachers and program administrators is driven by multiple factors that may also vary by region. For example, teacher salary varies by region, but regions vary by the proportion of programs of different types, and program type has an impact on teacher salary. In such a case, apparent variation in salary by region may be driven more by the type of program the teacher works in than the geographic location. In some instances, comparisons may be made, but in most instances, comparisons will be limited by the small number of cases in some comparisons. Future studies may wish to focus on more targeted geographical regions.

12 The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, among other entities, suppresses estimates based upon fewer than 10 cases. This is a commonly established "rule" to reduce attention to less reliable estimates, and is followed here.

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Section I: Qualifications

Growing recognition of the importance of high quality experiences for young children's development has underscored the focus on the qualifications and related competencies of those who work with young children. *While research is mixed as to the relevance of an academic degree on the teachers' effectiveness in supporting optimal development of young children, it is clear that a combination of some participation in higher education coursework and in-classroom coaching can be effective in improving teachers' practice and interactions with children. Without consensus yet on the most appropriate credential for these educators, gaining a clear understanding of the current status of the workforce's attainment of higher education credentials will help to inform goal-setting.* Therefore, this study included a focus on the educational background as well as credentials and licenses held by lead teachers as well as program administrators.

KEY FINDINGS

- There is tremendous variability in teacher qualifications based on the type of provider setting they work in; for instance, the majority of family day home teachers lack any college degree while all VPI teachers, by requirement, hold a college degree.
- Overall, nearly 40% of teachers hold a bachelor's degree, 16% an associate degree, and 17% a master's degree; however, the bachelor's degree-holding teachers were heavily concentrated in publicly-funded programs such as school division-run pre-K programs and Head Start programs.
- Nearly one-in-four teachers have completed high school or received a GED as their highest level of education, including a third of center-based teachers and over half of family day home teachers.
- Overall, 63% of those holding any college degree hold their highest degree in early education or a related field.
- Teachers in public programs (78%) and in Head Start/Early Head Start programs (73%) were also much more likely than teachers in private centers (38%) and family day homes (25%) to hold degrees in early childhood education.
- Overall, 20% of administrators reported high school or GED as their highest level of education, and 19% reported an associate degree as their highest level of education. About one-third (34%) completed a bachelor's degree and one-quarter (26%) held a master's degree (and 1.5% held a doctoral degree).
- The majority of directors with highest level of education of associate degree (65%) or bachelor's degree (55%) had their degrees in early education, but among those holding a master's degree, the majority (58%) were in a field other than early childhood.

Qualifications of Teachers

The National Academies of Sciences report *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* provides a detailed review of what teachers of young children should be expected to know. Among its recommendations for a highly qualified workforce is that teachers complete a college degree in early education. However, right now, Virginia's early childhood teachers have a broad range of qualifications. Teacher qualifications were assessed by asking teachers to indicate the degrees they have earned and by determining the highest degree reported. Teachers were also asked to indicate whether they have earned any of several credentials relevant to working with young children. Finally, lead teachers were asked to report any teaching licenses they held at the time of the survey.

Teacher Degrees

Teachers reported a range of educational experiences. In this study, both the level of the degree and the field of study are considered individually to describe teacher qualifications.[13] Almost three-quarters (73%) of teachers reported their highest level of education to include a college degree (associate degree or higher) and 27% reported a high school diploma or GED certificate as their highest level of education. Nearly 40% of teachers reported completing a bachelor's degree and 17% reported a master's degree. However, just over one-quarter (26%) of teachers reported a bachelor's degree in education and 9% reported a master's degree in education as their highest degree. Overall, 63% of those holding any college degree held their highest degree in early education or a related field.

Among teachers who completed any college degree, 70% reported at least one college degree completed at a college or university in Virginia, while just over half reported completing all their college degrees in Virginia.

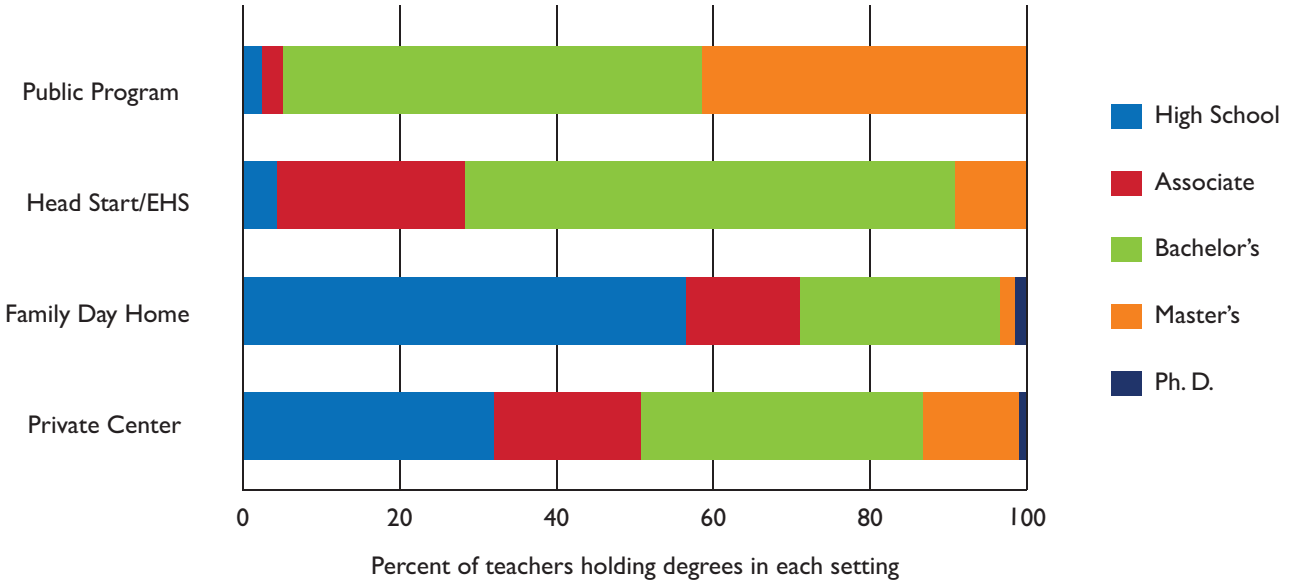
Table 4. Highest degree completed by lead teachers.

HIGHEST DEGREE	PERCENT
High School Diploma/GED	27.1
Associate Degree	16.2
Bachelor's Degree	39.5
Master's Degree	16.8
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	0.4

The highest degree held by teachers varied widely across program types. As shown below, more than half of teachers in family day homes reported high school or GED completion as their highest degree and about one-quarter completed a bachelor's degree. In contrast very few teachers in publicly-funded Head Start programs reported high school as their highest degree. Indeed, nearly all teachers in public programs reported a bachelor's degree or master's degree as their highest level of education.

13 It is instructive to consider *both* the level and field of study for the highest degree, but dramatically different sample sizes, including sometimes small counts, preclude analysis of variation in credentials. For purposes of this brief, we consider type of degree and field of degree separately.

Table 5. Teachers' highest degree in different program types.



Teachers in public programs (78%) and in Head Start and Early Head Start programs (73%) were also much more likely than teachers in private centers (38%) and family day homes (25%) to hold degrees in early childhood education. Highest degrees earned did not vary greatly by the number of years of teaching experience reported by lead teachers. However, the field of study of the highest degree was related to years of experience teaching. However, teachers beginning their careers (less than 1 year teaching) and those with 10-20 years teaching experience were more likely than other teachers to have completed their highest degree in early education or a related field.

Table 6. Field of highest degree, by years as a teacher.

YEARS AS A TEACHER	PERCENT WITH HIGHEST DEGREE OF HIGH SCHOOL/GED	PERCENT WITH EARLY EDUCATION DEGREE	PERCENT WITH DEGREE NOT IN EARLY EDUCATION
Less than 1	25.0	53.1	21.9
1-5	26.3	39.7	34.0
5-10	29.6	45.4	25.9
10-20	25.0	61.9	14.3
More than 20	27.3	42.4	30.3

Teacher Credentials

Teachers were asked whether they held a range of credentials or certificates (see Table 7 below). The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, a private national credential equivalent to one 3-credit community college course, is common in early education, but it is not the only item that teachers may obtain; the Virginia Community College System offers several relevant Career Studies Certificates as well as a more rigorous Early Childhood Development Certificate. In this study, though, by far the most commonly reported attainment was the CDA, reported by 18.5% of lead teachers.

Table 7. Credentials and certificates reported by lead teachers.

CREDENTIAL	PERCENT
The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential	18.5
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, Early Childhood Education (approximately 15 credit hours)	7.5
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, Infant and Toddler Care (approximately 15 credit hours)	3.8
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, non-education field	2.0
An Early Childhood Development Certificate from a Virginia Community College (approximately 30 credit hours)	9.3
Early childhood credentials/certificates from outside Virginia	5.8

Overall, teachers who had completed various credentials or certificates were most typically working in private centers, family day homes, or Head Start or Early Head Start programs. The percentage of teachers in non-public school programs holding a CDA credential was approximately the same across those settings (20-24%). Career Studies Certificates focused on early childhood education were more common among teachers in Head Start and Early Head Start programs (17%) and family day homes (16%). Early Childhood Development Certificates were most common among teachers in Head Start and Early Head Start (17%), and these teachers were also much more likely to hold early childhood certificates or other credentials from outside of Virginia (14%).

Table 8. Percent of teachers reporting different credentials or certificates, by program type.

PROGRAM TYPE	CDA	VCCS CAREER STUDIES CERTIFICATE IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT	VCC EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE	EARLY CHILDHOOD CERTIFICATES – OUTSIDE VA
Private center	21.1	12.1	8.1	3.6
Licensed family day home	23.6	16.4	9.1	1.8
Head Start/Early Head Start	20.3	17.2	17.2	14.1
Public school program	3.9	6.5	6.5	5.2

Among teachers who reported holding a CDA credential, just over half (52%) reported completing at least one college degree, including 24% completing an associate degree, 21% completing a bachelor's and 7% completing a master's degree.

Teacher Licenses

Like many states, Virginia recognizes several licenses applicable for teachers of young children. This study asked about three specific licenses available to eligible early educators in Virginia. Teachers responding to this survey generally did not report holding a specific license – only about 10% reported holding either of the two licenses focused on early childhood education generally, and fewer than 3% of teachers reported the early childhood special education license.[14] Interestingly, teachers who reported some other license often cited either an early childhood-related license from another state, or a non-early childhood focused Virginia license (current or expired).

Table 9. Percent of teachers with specific licenses.

LICENSE	PERCENT
Virginia teaching license, PreK-3 or NK-4[15]	10.5
Virginia teaching license, PreK-6	10.1
Virginia teaching license, B-5 Early Childhood Special Education	2.6
Other	7.5

Qualifications of Administrators

As was done for teachers, administrator qualifications were assessed by asking program administrators to indicate the degrees they have earned and by determining the highest degree reported. Administrators were also asked to indicate whether they have earned any of several credentials relevant to working with young children. Finally, administrators were asked to report any teaching licenses they held.

Administrator Degrees

As with teachers, respondents to the administrators' survey indicated a range of educational experiences. Overall, 20% reported a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education, and 19% completed an associate degree. About one-third (34%) completed a bachelor's degree and one-quarter (26%) held a master's degree (and 2% held a doctoral degree). Overall, 42% of administrators held their highest degree in early education while 37% had their highest degree in a different field of study (the remaining 20% had completed high school or a GED). Finally, about one-third (35%) of administrators reported that none of their degrees were from Virginia colleges or universities, and just under half (43%) reported that all of their degrees were from Virginia institutions.

14 Teaching licenses are mainly applicable for Pre-K programs overseen by the Virginia Department of Education, and have little relevance for teachers in private centers, family day homes, or community-based Head Start programs.

15 The NK-4 license is no longer offered in Virginia, having been phased out in a licensure change in the 1990s.

Table 10. Highest degree (detailed) reported by program administrators.

HIGHEST DEGREE	PERCENT
High School Diploma/GED	20.3
Associate Degree, Early Childhood Education	12.4
Associate Degree, non-Early Childhood Education	6.7
Bachelor's Degree, Education field	18.3
Bachelor's Degree, non-Education field	15.2
Master's Degree, Early Childhood Education	10.9
Master's Degree, non-Early Childhood Education	14.8
Ph.D. or Ed.D., Early Childhood Education	0
Ph.D. or Ed.D., non-Early Childhood Education	1.5

The type of degree reported as the highest degree completed by administrators varied somewhat across program types. Administrators of family day homes (44%) were much more likely to report high school or GED as their highest level of education, and were also more likely than administrators of other types of programs to report an associate degree (30%). Bachelor's degrees were more common among Head Start/Early Head Start administrators (52%) and administrators of private centers (40%). Finally, public school program administrators most typically reported a master's degree (83%). In terms of field of study, administrators in public school programs were more likely to hold their highest degrees in fields other than early childhood education, while administrators of all other types of programs were more likely to hold their highest degree in early childhood education.

Table 11. Highest degree (all fields) held by program administrators, by program type (percentage)

PROGRAM TYPE	HIGH SCHOOL/GED	ASSOCIATE	BACHELOR'S	MASTER'S
Private center	15.0	18.7	39.8	24.8
Licensed family day home	44.4	29.8	17.7	8.1
Head Start/Early Head Start	6.5	9.7	51.6	29.0
Public school program	0.0	2.1	10.6	83.0

Administrator Credentials

Administrators were asked if they held any of several credentials provided by Virginia, national, or other state entities. The most commonly reported (18%) was the CDA, followed by an early childhood development certificate (12%) or a Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College (12%).

Table 12. Percent of program administrators with specific credientials.

CREDENTIAL	PERCENT
The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential	18.3
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, Early Childhood Education (approximately 15 credit hours)	11.8
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, Infant and Toddler Care (approximately 15 credit hours)	4.1
A Career Studies Certificate from a Virginia Community College, non-education field	3.1
An Early Childhood Development Certificate from a Virginia Community College (approximately 30 credit hours)	12.0
Early childhood credentials/certificates from outside Virginia	10.9

Completing a credential varied somewhat by program type:

- CDA (28% of administrators) and a Career Studies Certificate in Early Childhood Education from a Virginia Community College (20%) were more common in family day homes than other programs.
- Early childhood certificates obtained outside of Virginia were more common among administrators of Head Start/Early Head Start programs (16%) and private centers (14%).
- Across all certificate types, administrators of public school programs were less likely than other programs to report completion, possibly because higher degrees, rather than certificates, are required to serve in those roles.

Administrator Licenses

Overall, teaching licenses were not typically reported by program administrators - just 8% reported a Virginia PreK-3 or NK-4 license and 9% reported a PreK-6 license. When administrators did report holding an early childhood related license, they were most typically from public school programs.

Table 13. Program administrator-reported license by type of program.

PROGRAM TYPE	VA PREK-3 OR NK-4	VA PREK-6	VA B-5 EC SPECIAL ED
Private center	5.4	7.4	1.3
Licensed family day home	3.8	0.8	1.5
Head Start/Early Head Start	9.8	12.2	0.0
Public school program	23.9	28.2	4.2

Section II: Wages and Benefits

The economic well-being of early educators is directly related to the amount of money they are paid (i.e., their wage) and their access to a range of benefits (e.g., health insurance, paid time off, etc.). In turn, the economic state of the early childhood workforce has an impact on recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction/performance. This study gathered economic well-being data on teachers and program administrators in several ways. Data on wages[16], health insurance, and employment status were gathered directly from lead teachers. Salary data for lead and assistant teachers were also collected from administrators, as well as program benefits such as paid leave. Finally, administrators reported their own wages.

KEY FINDINGS

- Average teacher wage varied significantly by the type of program the teacher worked in (e.g. programs with less educational requirements, such as family day homes and center-based programs, reported substantially lower average wages than public programs), teacher educational level, field of study, and completion of certificates and early childhood licenses.
- The average starting hourly wage for family day home teachers was $11.67; for center-based teachers, $12.83; for Head Start/Early Head Start teachers, $16.14; and for public school program teachers, $20.95.
- About 42% of teachers received health insurance from their position.
- Nearly two-thirds of programs offered teachers paid time off, and 80% provided some support for ongoing training and education.
- Program administrators reported average annual salary of $46,350. This wage varied by the type of program they managed and their educational degree and field.

Teacher Wages

Teacher wage data were collected in several ways in order to ensure accuracy on this sensitive topic. First, lead teachers were asked to report their wage directly. Second, program administrators were asked to report the average starting and highest hourly wages their program pays to full-time and part-time lead and assistant teachers.

Teacher-Reported Wages

Overall, the average hourly wage reported by teachers was $14.61, just about twice the Virginia state minimum wage of $7.25. Of course, the overall average can and in this case does obscure significant differences in wages among teachers based upon aspects of the setting in which they work, teachers' education and credentials, and their years of experience; these variations were revealed to be substantial.

Table 14. Average hourly wage, by program type.

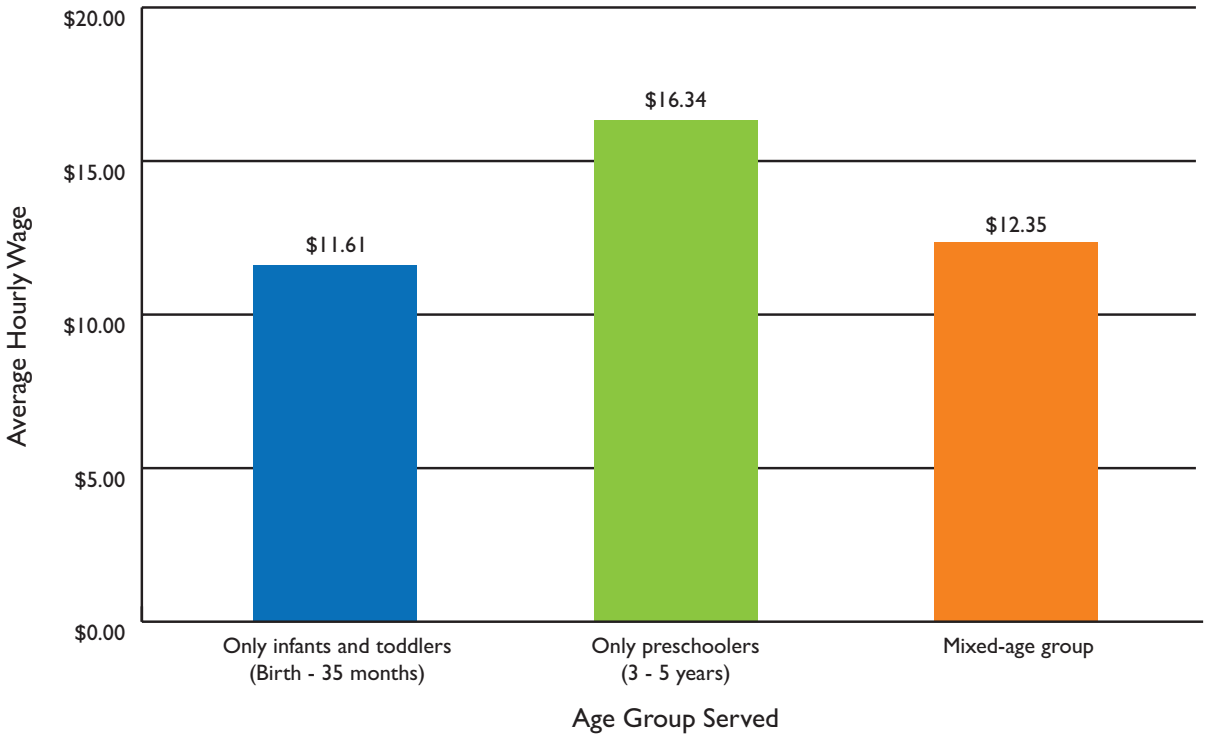
TYPE OF PROGRAM	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE
Public school program (non-Head Start, e.g. VPI, VPI+, Title I, locally funded, early childhood special education, or other public program)	$20.95
Head Start/Early Head Start (community-based or school-based)	$16.14
Private Center (for-profit center, single center; for-profit center, multi-center; non-profit center; religiously exempt center)	$12.83
Licensed, voluntarily registered, or local ordinance approved family day home or participant in a family day home system	$11.67

16 Data on wages were collected from teacher and administrator respondents. For most of the wage items, the survey allowed respondents to report wages hourly, monthly, or annually. For teacher data, wages were converted to hourly rates. For program administrators, wages were calculated to be equivalent to an annual full-time wage based upon 2080 hours.

Teacher-reported hourly wages differed dramatically by the type of program they were working in. Teachers in public school programs reported wages ($20.95) substantially higher than other teachers – more than $4 per hour higher than teachers working in Head Start/Early Head Start program, and nearly twice the hourly wages paid to teachers in private centers ($12.83) and family day homes ($11.67).

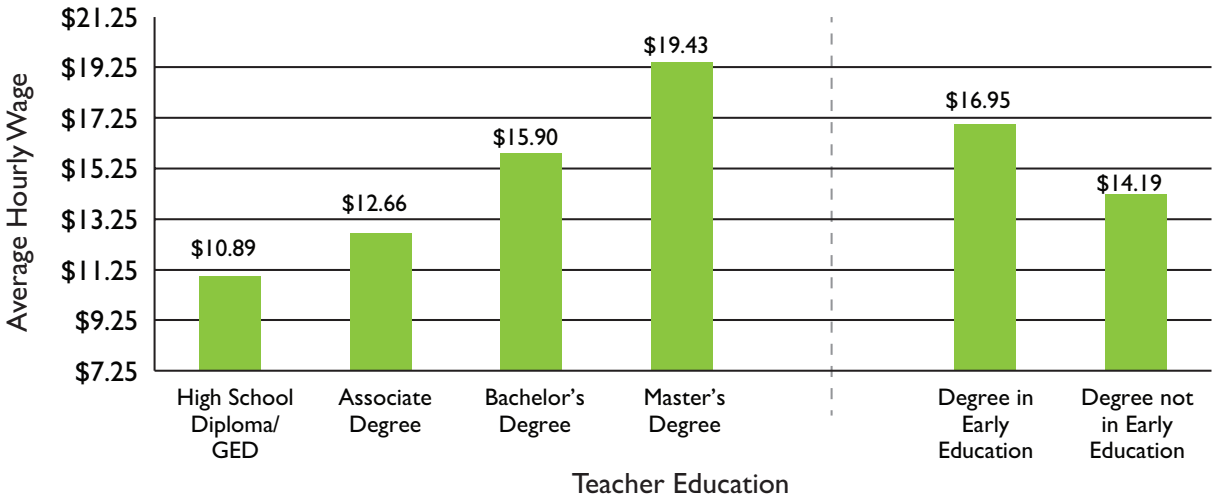
Teacher wages were also associated with the ages of children they serve. Teachers of infants and toddlers reported substantially lower salaries ($11.61) than teachers of preschool-aged children ($16.34). Teachers working with multiple ages (who were also likely to be working in private centers and family day homes) had salaries closer to those paid to teachers of infants and toddlers (who were also mostly in family day homes or private centers, which tended to pay lower wages than public programs and Head Start/Early Head Start programs that tended to provide services only to preschool-aged children).

Table 15. Average hourly wage for teachers working with different age groups.



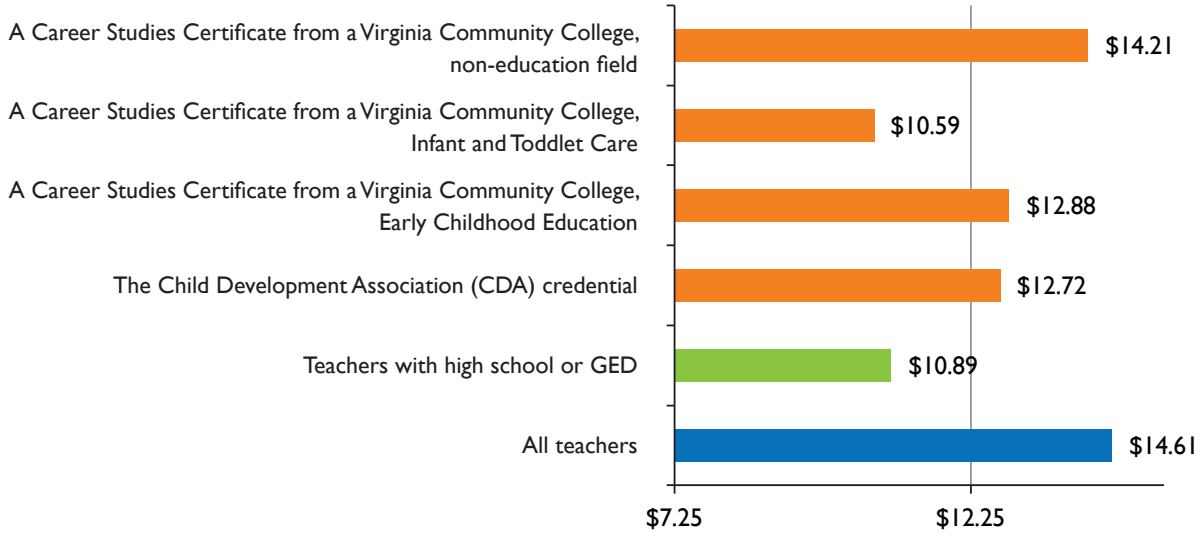
In addition to characteristics of where they work, teachers' salaries also varied by their educational background, and if they held specific credentials or licenses. Teacher hourly wages increased with years of education. Teachers with 4-year degrees reported hourly wages about 50% higher than those of teachers who completed high school or a GED, and teachers with a master's degree earned nearly twice as much. This likely owes in part to the fact that higher degrees provide access to higher-paying public school roles. Across all types of college degrees, teachers with their highest degree in early childhood education earned a higher hourly wage than teachers with degrees in other fields.

Table 16. Average hourly wage by teachers' educational background.



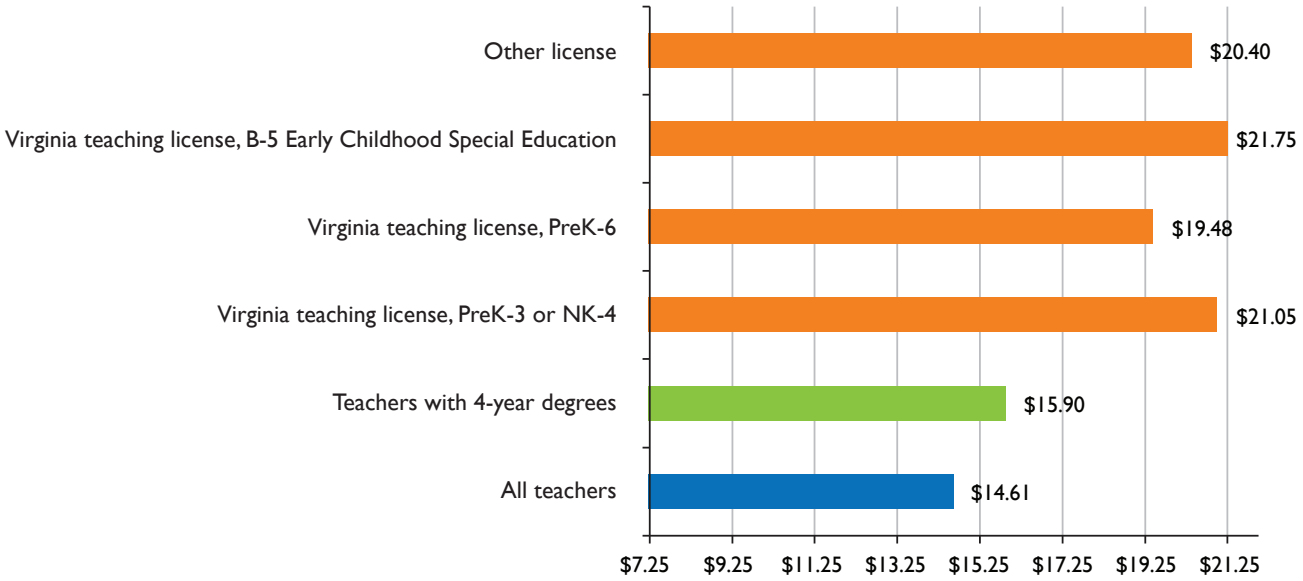
Finally, teachers were asked if they had completed any additional credential or held any license related to early childhood education. Teachers who completed certification programs such as the Child Development Associate or a Career Studies Certificate in early education had a bump in wages compared with teachers who completed high school. Although the data shows variation in wages by Career Studies Certificate subject, the number of teachers reporting Infant and Toddler and non-education CSCs was very low (<10 respondents), so these differences should be observed with caution.

Table 17. Average hourly wages for teachers with different credentials.



Teachers who held licenses related to early childhood education, or any other license, tended to earn more than other teachers, including those holding 4-year degrees, but no license.

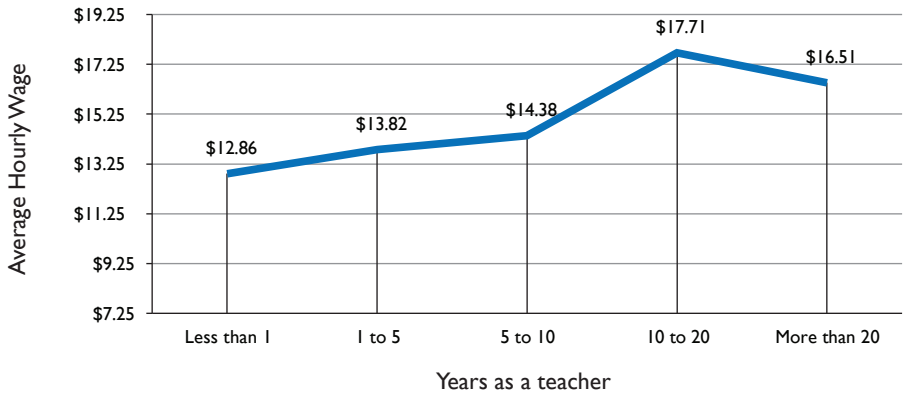
Table 18. Average hourly wages of teachers with different licenses.



It is likely that differences in wages observed across program types, education and credentials are all inter-related. Teachers in public programs that have stricter staff qualification requirements, for example, may be more likely to have college degrees in early education and hold related credentials or licenses, all of which are associated with higher wages. In other words, requirements associated with teaching in certain programs that are related to higher wages may lead to higher average wages in those programs.[17]

One factor that may exist relatively independent of education and credentials is years of experience. For the most part, teachers' wages are linearly related to age, except for a plateau (and slight dip) that appears after 10 years of experience (see below).

Table 19. Average hourly wage by years of experience as a teacher.



17 The data collected for this study do not support the higher level analyses necessary to tease apart all of these relationships. However, other studies of workforce compensation and factors that affect it, as well as the possibility of additional future data collection, may illuminate these.

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Program-Reported Wages

Program administrators were asked to report the typical starting salary and highest salary paid to part- and full-time teachers (lead and assistant teachers). As might be expected, starting wages were highest for full-time lead teachers ($12.71 per hour). The hourly wage difference between full- and part-time positions was much greater for lead teachers (just over $2 per hour) than assistant teachers (about $0.30 per hour). Interestingly, this pay difference persists into the highest hourly wages paid by programs, which were about $4 and $0.60 per hour higher for full- and part-time teachers, respectively.

Table 20. Average starting and highest salaries reported by program administrators for lead and assistant teachers.

TEACHER TYPE	STARTING HOURLY WAGE AVERAGE	HIGHEST HOURLY WAGE AVERAGE
Lead Teachers		
Full-time	$12.71	$16.75
Part-time	$10.63	$12.94
Assistant teachers		
Full-time	$9.69	$11.73
Part-time	$9.40	$11.15

The difference between starting and highest hourly wage rate may be affected by a number of factors, such as differences in education or certificates held, but is also a result of experience. Half (50%) of program administrators reported that their programs provide for a regular schedule of pay increases for staff based on years of experience and credentials held.

Administrator-reported hourly wages (starting and highest) for both lead and assistant teachers varied across program types. Starting and highest wages were greatest for teachers in public school programs ($22.59 per hour), translating into nearly $13,000 more annual income (full-time) than lead teachers in Head Start ($16.19), and twice the wages of teachers in private centers ($11.53) and family day homes ($9.78). Lead teacher highest salaries show a similar pattern across program type, although the difference between starting and highest wages – what might be considered earning growth potential – was nearly four times greater in public school programs than other program types (an increase of nearly $11 per hour compared with an average increase across other programs of about $3 per hour).

Table 21. Full-time lead and assistant starting and highest hourly wage, by program type.

TYPE OF PROGRAM	FULL-TIME LEAD TEACHER		FULL-TIME ASSISTANT TEACHER	
	Starting Wage	Highest Wage	Starting Wage	Highest Wage
Private center	$11.53	$14.74	$9.26	$11.34
Licensed family day home	$9.78	$12.16	$9.50	$9.98
Head Start/Early Head Start	$16.19	$20.18	—	$12.44
Public school program	$22.59	$33.25	—	$15.86

Note: "—" means there were fewer than 10 cases in these cells; averages for these are not reported.

Differences between assistant teacher starting salaries are harder to compare due to limited number of cases, but the differences in highest reported wages suggest a similar pattern, although the differences in wage for assistant teachers are consistently smaller across program types than they are for lead teachers.

Differences in salary related to program types may be tied to a number of factors – entry requirements that are themselves tied to pay differences (for example, level of education, credentials earned, licenses held) which may also be tied to policies governing different program types, as well as vastly different funding streams. For example, nationally, public pre-kindergarten programs require teachers to have completed a 4-year degree, preferably in early education, and expect teachers to be licensed (or license-eligible) to be hired. All of these expectations are associated with higher wages. As a result, teachers in programs that do not have comparable entry requirements may have lower wages.

Average wages in Virginia vary by region, as seen below. Regions that have higher costs of living – specifically Northern Virginia and the Valley region – having significantly higher starting wages, with starting wages in other regions remarkably similar. However, regional variation in wages may be influenced by other factors than just geographical context, and so must be interpreted with some degree of care.

Table 22. Average full-time lead teacher starting wages, by region (all program types), in dollars.

REGION	FULL-TIME LEAD TEACHER – STARTING	
	N	Mean
Central	46	$10.76
Northern	131	$14.34
Northern Neck	26	$11.37
Southside	11	$15.69*
Southwest	18	$11.03
Tidewater	87	$11.05
Valley	50	$14.39
Western	32	$11.89

**Given the small number of respondents, this data point is likely an outlier*

It is possible to put wage data for some groups of early educators into national perspective using data from the National Survey of Early Care and Education administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.[18] Data from that study and data from this survey are presented in Table 13.

18 Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation, Administration for Children & Families, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, "National Survey of Early Care and Education."

Table 23. Comparison between Virginia teacher-reported average wages and national estimates.

TYPE OF PROGRAM	VIRGINIA SURVEY	NATIONAL SURVEY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION*
Private Center	$12.83	$12.20
Head Start/Early Head Start	$16.14	$14.40
Public school program	$20.95	$19.50

**Note: The Virginia data combine Head Start salaries for school-based and community-based programs while the National Survey data excludes school-based Head Start programs, so the Head Start comparison is not apples-to-apples.*

While direct comparisons are challenging due to minor differences in groupings for each estimate, Virginia teachers in this study appear to report slightly higher wages than their peers nationally. Comparisons for family day home providers are not made because comparable data are not available nationally.[19]

Teacher Access to Benefits

For many professionals, access to a range of fringe benefits is an important part of their job. Benefits provide important, non-wage financial support for workers, such as medical insurance or paid time off. As the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment states, "Job quality and worker well-being are not related to earnings and income alone. Workplace policies that support the ability to look after oneself and one's family members are key to a happy, healthy, and productive work environment." [20]

We examined both teacher reports of the various benefits they receive, as well as program administrator reports of benefits their programs provide to their teaching staff.

Teacher-Reported Benefits

Teachers were asked to indicate if they had access to health insurance, and if so, the source of their insurance coverage. Overall 13% of teachers indicated they did not have health insurance from any source. About 2 out of 5 (43%) reported that they received health insurance from their employer. About one-quarter (28%) indicated they received insurance through their spouse.

Table 24. Lead teacher reported source(s) of health insurance.

SOURCE OF HEALTH INSURANCE	PERCENT
Provided by employer	42.6
Covered by spouse's policy	27.6
Covered by Medicare/Medicaid	5.7
Covered by parents' insurance	3.0
Provided through the Affordable Care Act/"Obamacare"	7.5
No insurance coverage	12.8

19 National hourly wage data are not available for early educators in family day homes. Hourly data are available by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for example, for workers in the "child care" occupational category, but this does not fit the family day home definition used here. The National Survey provides a categorical estimate of wages based upon family income of teachers in family homes which does not fit the data collected here.

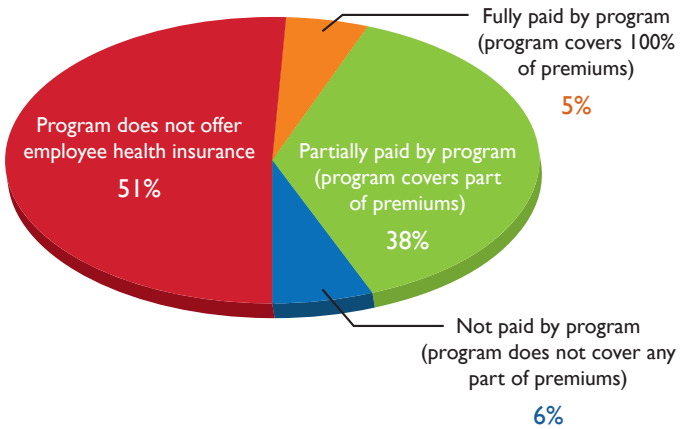
20 Whitebook, M., McLean, C., and Austin, L.J.E. (2016). Early Childhood Workforce Index - 2016. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley, p. 78.

Administrator-Reported Benefits for Staff

Program administrators were asked about the availability of a range of benefits for staff, including the program's support for health insurance, whether and how much leave is provided to their staff, as well as the availability of other fringe benefits for staff.

Just about half (51%) of program administrators indicated that their program does not offer employee health insurance. A total of 43% of programs provided access to health insurance and paid the full premium (5%) or partially paid the premium (38%) for employees. This is consistent with teacher reports that 43% of lead teachers received health insurance through their employer (the teacher survey did not ask about full or partial premium payment).

Table 25. Program administrator report of programs' health insurance benefits for staff.



Program administrators were also asked to report the types of leave and number of days offered to their staff. Administrators were asked about several categories of leave - paid sick and vacation days, pooled paid leave (a single pool that can be used for sick or vacation leave), and paid holidays. Just about one-third of programs did not offer paid sick days (32%) or vacation days (35%), and one-quarter (25%) did not offer paid holidays. Among those programs that did offer paid sick and paid vacation days, they were roughly equally divided between 1-5 days of each, and 6 or more days.

Table 26. Availability of various leave categories programs made available for staff.

TYPE OF LEAVE OFFERED	PERCENT
Paid sick days	
6 or more days/year	31.8
1 to 5 days per year	24.3
We do not offer	31.6
Pooled leave (see below)	12.3
Paid vacation days	
6 or more days/year	34.7
1 to 5 days/year	30.9
We do not offer	34.5
*Pooled leave days**	
More than 10 days/year	30.4
6-10 days/year	34.8
1 to 5 days/year	31.9
Paid holidays	
6 or more days/year	57.1
1-5 days/year	17.8
We do not offer	25.1

**Does not equal 100% because some administrators reported that they used pooled leave days, but declined to provide the number of pooled days offered.*

Program administrators were also asked about a number of professional benefits available to staff, such as paid time for planning or pursuing professional development opportunities. Most programs provided supports to help new hires to be successful; most programs (83%) provided some orientation to new hires, and just over half (55%) provided mentoring for new teachers by veteran teachers. Nearly 4 in 5 (81%) of administrators indicated that they provide some support for education and training expenses, a critical benefit, as cost of such training is often reported by teachers as a barrier. Finally, just over one-third (38%) of programs provided staff with paid breaks – beyond a lunch break – during the day, although nearly two-thirds (63%) provided paid preparation or planning time.

Table 27. Availability of professional benefits made available by programs.

PROGRAM PROVIDES:	PERCENT
New-hire orientation	82.6
Education/training expenses (on-site professional development, workshop fees, tuition, etc.)	80.8
Paid preparation/planning time	62.5
Mentorship for new teachers by veteran teachers	54.9
Paid breaks	38.4

Finally, administrators were asked about the availability of a range of other employee benefits that their programs may offer to staff. Nearly half of programs provided reduced fees for their employees' children, and 9% provided child care for employees at no cost. Just under half of programs (46%) protected staff jobs for parental leave, but just 12% provided paid parental leave (although it is possible that parents could utilize other leave categories while on leave as is common in other industries). About one-third offered life insurance (33%) or disability insurance (28%). Finally, just under one-third (33%) provided a retirement program that includes an employer contribution.

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Table 28. Administrator report of additional benefits to staff.

OTHER BENEFITS OFFERED TO STAFF	PERCENT
Staff child care support	
Reduced child care fee for employees	50.1
Free child care for employees	9.0
Staff parental leave	
Job protected maternity/paternity leave	45.8
Paid maternity/paternity leave	11.6
Insurance other than health	
Life insurance	33.3
Disability insurance	28.1
Retirement with contributions from employer	2.6
Other	3.6
None of the above	23.4

Teacher Economic Security

In looking at the economic security of teachers of young children, it is necessary to look at their overall household income. As a group, half of teachers (50%) reported household income of $50,000 or more, although household incomes were dramatically different among teachers with other earners in the household. Annual household income for all teachers, for the 38% of teachers who were in one-income households, and for the 62% of teachers in households with more than one income are shown below.

Table 29. Total household income per year from all sources, all teachers, and by presence of additional earner(s) in the household, by percent.

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME	ALL	NO OTHER HOUSEHOLD INCOME	OTHER HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Less than $15,000/year	5.8	13.3	1.2
$15,000 - $19,999/year	9.3	22.0	1.6
$20,000 - $24,999/year	9.5	20.7	2.8
$25,000 - $29,999/year	5.8	12.0	2.0
$30,000 - $39,999/year	9.0	12.0	7.2
$40,000 - $49,999/year	10.8	10.0	11.2
$50,000 - $59,999/year	8.5	5.3	10.4
$60,000 or more/year	41.4	4.7	63.5

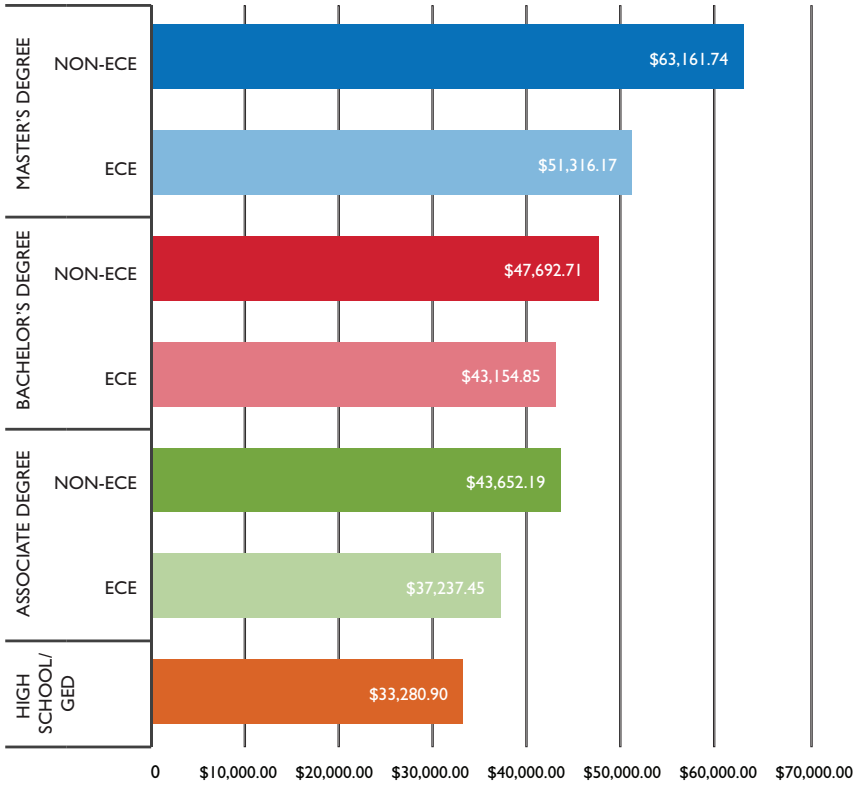
Teachers who were in sole income households generally had dramatically lower household incomes than those with other sources of household income. More than half (56%) of teachers in single income homes had annual incomes of less than $25,000.[21] With another income in the home, only 6% of teachers lived in households with incomes below $25,000. By contrast, just 10% of teachers who were sole earners have household incomes greater than $50,000, while nearly three-quarters (74.9%) of teachers in households with more than one source of income lived in homes with annual incomes of $50,000 or more.

Program Administrator Wages

Like lead teachers, program administrators were asked to report their salaries, which were converted (if necessary) to annual salaries. In this study, the average annual administrator salary was $46,350. These salaries varied by the educational background of administrators as well as the type of program in which the administrator worked.

As shown below, administrator wages were linearly related to degree type. In addition, for administrators with college degrees, salaries were higher when those highest degrees were in fields other than early childhood education. This is in contrast to teacher salaries, where teachers with degrees in early childhood education out-earn their peers with the same degree in other fields.

Table 30. Average annual program administrator salary by degree type and field.



21 The federal poverty line for a family of 4 is $24,600, making this one potentially useful income level by which to consider economic stability.

Administrator salaries also differed based upon program type. Administrators of publicly funded programs reported higher salaries than administrators of private centers and family day homes. Even among these two groups, there were substantial differences in salaries. Administrators of public school programs reported average salaries ($75,320) nearly 50% higher than Head Start/Early Head Start Administrators ($57,432). Administrators of private centers and family day homes reported similar average annual salaries (within $1,500) of between $40,000 and $42,000. Notably, public school program administrators may double as school principals or oversee multiple public school pre-Ks in a pseudo-principal role, explaining the robust salary.

Table 31. Average annual salary for administrators by program type.

TYPE OF PROGRAM	AVERAGE
Public school program (non-Head Start, e.g. VPI, VPI+, Title I, locally funded, early childhood special education, or other public program)	$75,320
Head Start/Early Head Start (community-based or school-based)	$57,432
Private Center (for-profit center, single center; for-profit center, multi-center; non-profit center; religiously exempt center)	$42,141
Licensed, voluntarily registered, or local ordinance approved family day home or participant in a family day home system	$40,681

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Section III: Retention and Recruitment

Turnover in any occupation is not unusual, and is usually expected. In general, a low level of turnover is expected and positive, as workers leave positions due to retirement, opportunity for advancement, or lack of fit. A high level of turnover, on the other hand, may be cause for concern. In early education in particular, the potential disruption in relationships with children and their families caused by staff turn-over can be especially concerning.

Turnover is defined as the ratio of teachers who leave a program in a given period to the total number of teachers in the program. It can be expressed as a percentage (e.g., if two teachers leave a staff of 20, the turnover is reported as "10%"). There is not yet clear consensus in early education about the "optimal" amount of turnover. While a certain amount of turnover should be expected, the consistency of early educators provided by low turnover is valuable for young children's development and can be considered one indicator of program quality.

Nationally, about half of all early education programs report no turnover in staff year-to-year, and overall there is about 30% turnover in program staff. By contrast, turnover among teachers in K-12 is about 15% annually. The Berkeley Center for the Study of Child Care Employment describes turnover by using three categories – no turnover, low turnover (less than 20%), and high turnover (20% or higher).

KEY FINDINGS

- One-in-four (25%) programs reported turnover of 20% or higher, but there was high variability based on program type; the high-turnover programs were disproportionately likely to be private centers.
- Overall, 41% of programs reported no staff turnover during the past year, a percent close to but lower than national estimates. About one-third (34%) reported turnover of less than 20%.
- The vast majority of family day homes (83%) reported no turnover (many family day homes have only one owner-employee), and nearly half of public programs (47%) also reported no turnover.
- Hourly salaries were lower for teachers and assistant teachers among programs with high turnover than programs with low or no turnover. The salary difference was about $2.50 per hour for full-time lead teachers.
- Overall, about one quarter (25.5%) of administrators reported that they had difficulty finding qualified staff to fill open positions. While only 10% of family day home administrators and less than 8% of public program administrators reported difficulty in filling open positions, more than one-third of private programs (35%) and nearly half of Head Start or Early Head Start programs (46%) reported difficulty in filling positions.
- More than half of programs (65%) with high turnover (losing 20% or more of its teaching staff in the past year) reported difficulty filling positions, and 28% of programs with modest level of turnover (less than 20%) reported difficulty filling positions. By contrast, programs with no turnover seemed to be able to fill positions – only 6% of these programs reported difficulty in filling open positions.
- Overall, about one-fifth of lead teacher respondents (20.6%) reported they will "definitely" or "probably" not still be in the field in 3 years, and about 80% reported they were likely to remain in field.
- More than one-quarter (26%) of teachers likely to leave indicated a desire for "Better working conditions." More than three-quarters (76%) of teachers who said they will likely not be in the field in 3 years reported "Better pay" as being a motivator to stay in the field; on average they reported earning $1.00 less per hour in wages than teachers who are likely to be in the field in three years.

Turnover Rate

Overall, 41% of programs reported no staff turnover during the past year, a percent close to but lower than national estimates. About one-third (34%) reported turnover less than 20%. While, again, there is no consensus, generally turnover higher than 20% is considered to be of concern. In this survey, one-in-four (25%) of programs reported turnover of 20% or higher.

The turnover rate varied based upon several features of the programs. While some of these specific features are discussed individually below, it is likely that specific combinations of features ultimately drive turnover:

Turnover rate varied by program type

- The vast majority of family day homes (83%) reported no turnover, although it is important to note that a very large number of these programs reported only one teacher who was also the owner. Nearly half of public programs (47%) also reported no turnover.
- More than one-third of private center programs reported turnover of 20% or higher, while 6% of public programs reported this high level of turnover.

Turnover rate varied by program size

- Small programs, serving fewer than 25 children were especially likely to experience no turnover (80%) while the largest programs, serving more than 75 children were least likely to report no turnover (just 15% reported zero turnover).

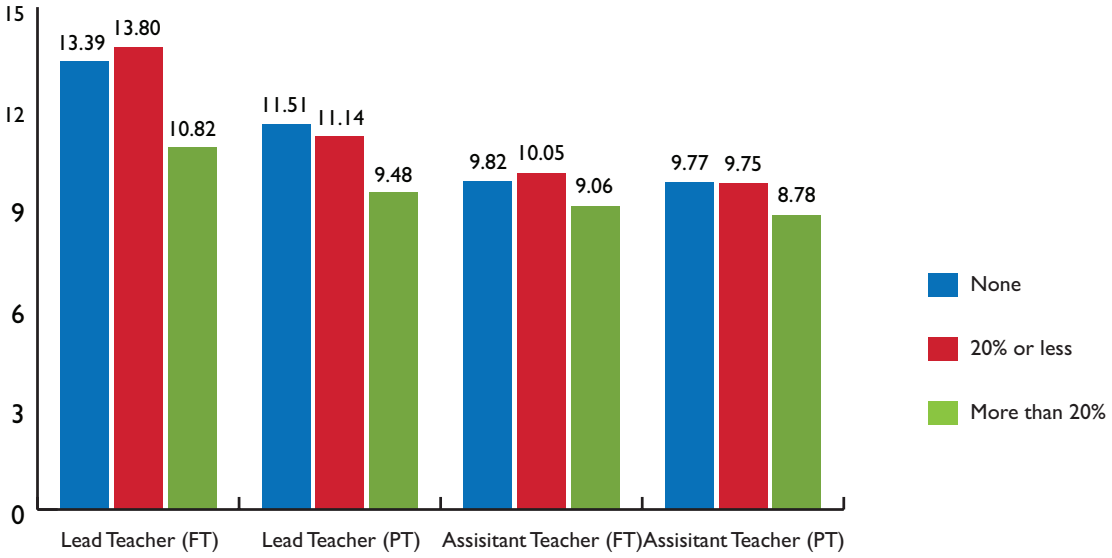
Turnover rate varied by percentage of children in a program supported by public funds

- Programs where all children were supported by public funds were substantially less likely (15%) to report high levels of turnover (20% or more) than other programs.
- Programs with no children receiving public funding were more likely to report no turnover in staff than other programs (47%).

Programs with high turnover rates had lower average salaries for teaching staff

- Hourly salaries are lower for teachers and assistant teachers among programs with high turnover than programs with low or no turnover (see next page).
- The salary difference is about $2.50 per hour for full-time lead teachers.

Table 32. Average hourly salaries, in dollars, by turnover rate.

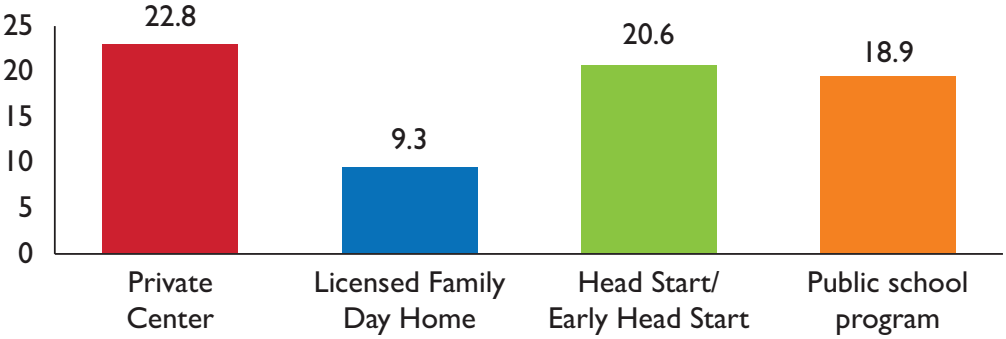


Teacher-Reported Intent to Leave

While program reports of turnover provide one portrait of teacher movement within the early childhood field, asking teachers about their plans to stay in the field provides another view of stability.

Overall, about one-fifth of lead teacher respondents (21%) reported they will "definitely" or "probably" not still be in the field in 3 years, and about 80% reported they were likely to remain in the field. This percentage was similar across most types of programs, except for licensed family day homes. Whereas about 80% of teachers in other programs reported they were likely to still be in the field in three years, more than 90% of teachers in family day homes reported they were likely to remain in the field in 3 years (see below).

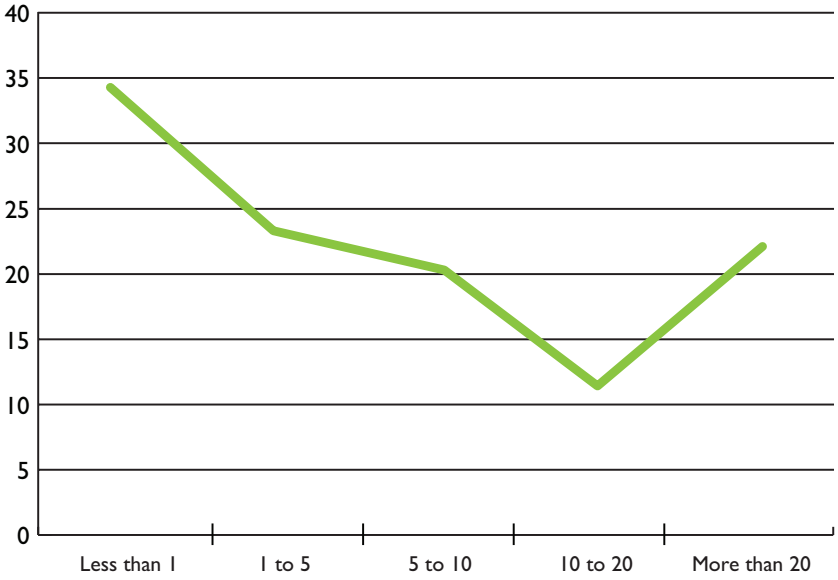
Table 33. Percent of teachers reporting they are likely to leave the field.



Teachers of infants and toddlers were an especially turnover-prone subgroup, with 26% preparing to leave.

Plans to stay in the field were also related to years as a teacher. In general, the percentage of teachers reporting that they were likely to leave the field in 3 years declined as the number of years as a teacher increased, except for the most experienced teachers (those who have taught for more than 20 years). Presumably this is because the least experienced teachers haven't yet decided if a long-term career in the field is right for them, while the most experienced teachers may be approaching retirement age.

Table 34. Percent of teachers reporting they are likely to leave the field in the next 3 years, by years of experience.



Teacher-Reported Motivations to Stay

Teachers who reported they were likely to no longer be in the field in three years were asked to identify factors that were affecting their decision to likely leave the field. More than one-quarter (26%) of teachers likely to leave indicated a desire for "better working conditions," although it is not clear how that phrase was interpreted. Teachers did tend to report that concrete aspects of their working conditions (specifically wages and benefits) were concerns. More than three-quarters (76%) of teachers who said they will likely not be in the field in 3 years reported better pay as being a motivator to stay in the field, and on average these teachers reported earning $1.00 less per hour in wages than teachers who were likely to be in the field in three years. More than half (55%) of teachers likely to leave the field also identified the desire for better benefits.

A sizeable minority (40%) of teachers likely to leave the field noted concerns about professional growth and advancement.

Finally, as attention has been given to professionalizing the early education field, about one-in-four (24%) indicated a desire for "more respect for my profession among friends, family, and the public."

It must be noted that a small percentage of respondents indicating they would likely leave were doing so for reasons largely independent of the work sector – for example, 17% indicated they were likely to be retiring in the next three years, and 4% indicated a change in their spouse or partner's financial situation necessitated a career change.

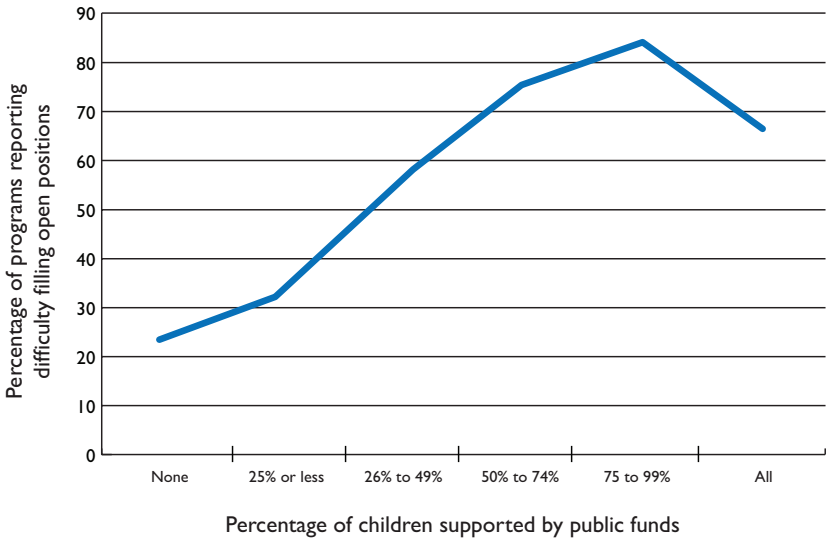
Difficulty Filling Positions

When a program loses staff, for whatever reason, the staff person typically needs to be replaced. Overall, about one quarter (26%) or program administrators reported that they had difficulty finding qualified staff to fill open positions.

The difficulty programs have to fill positions is a rough reflection of the available pool of potential staff as well as the attractiveness of the program as an employer. In addition, some programs may face entry barriers, for example by requiring a specific degree or license that may further restrict the program's potential to fill open positions. Indeed, some types of programs reported more difficulty in filling positions than others. While only 10% of family day home program administrators and less than 8% of public program administrators reported difficulty in filling open positions, more than one-third of private programs (35%) and nearly half of Head Start or Early Head Start programs (46%) reported difficulty in filling positions.

Difficulty in filling positions is also related to the percentage of children receiving public funds in programs, though interestingly less so for programs that enroll only children receiving public funding.

Table 35. Percent of programs reporting difficulty filling positions.



Similarly, program size is related to difficulty in filling positions. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of the largest programs (those serving more than 75 children) reported difficulty filling positions, a percentage twice as high as smaller programs serving 51-75 children (32%) and those serving 25 to 50 children (26%). The smallest programs (those serving fewer than 25 children, which includes all family day homes) reported very little difficulty filling positions, potentially because they may have a very small staff, and therefore openings are few and far between.

Filling open positions is probably most critical for programs with high turnover rates, yet these are exactly the programs that struggle to fill positions. More than half of programs (65%) with high turnover – losing 20% or more of teaching staff in the past year – reported difficulty filling positions. Meanwhile, 28% of programs with modest level of turnover (less than 20%) reported difficulty filling positions. By contrast, programs with no turnover in the past year seemed to be able to fill positions – only 6% of these programs reported difficulty in filling open positions.

Section IV: Professional Development

Once teachers enter the profession, they have opportunities to pursue additional training and support to help them better meet the needs of the children and families they serve. The pursuit of professional development activities is often driven by teachers' own assessment of their strengths and needs, as well as training requirements set forth in regulations. Professional development among early educators in Virginia was examined in two ways – asking teachers about their preparation to work with children and families, and asking teachers and program administrators about areas of need, as well as access and barriers to professional development.

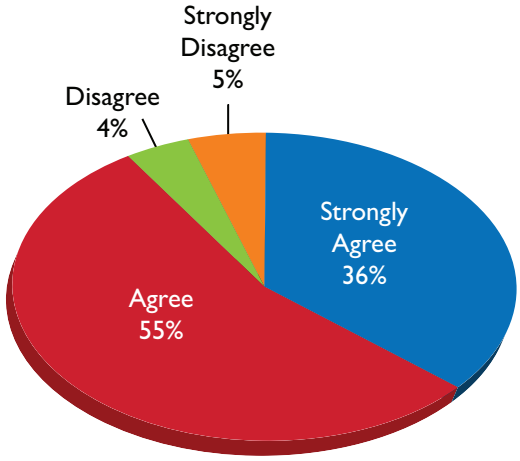
KEY FINDINGS

- Teacher confidence in their preparation did not vary based upon their education, but did vary by years of experience, whether they held a CDA, and whether they were licensed.
- Most teachers reported that they had the training they needed to feel successful; however, the most common barriers to engaging with professional development opportunities were cost and time.
- Teachers and administrators tended to identify the same topics of greatest need for professional development – behavior management and social & emotional learning – although there were some differences between them. Additionally, there were differences reported by administrators in the needs of lead teachers versus assistant teachers, with assistant teachers reported as needing more foundational skills like ages & stages of child development.

Teachers' Report of Preparation

Overall, 91% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared "...for the challenges of meeting the learning and socioemotional needs of young children and their families."

Table 36. Teacher agreement with the statement "I feel prepared for the challenges of meeting the learning and socioemotional needs of young children and their families."



Teachers' confidence in their ability to meet the "learning and socioemotional needs of young children and their families" did not vary greatly by their highest degree earned or the field of study (see next chart).

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Table 37. Teacher agreement with the statement "I feel prepared for the challenges of meeting the learning and socioemotional needs of young children and their families", based on degree.

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	HIGH SCHOOL/GED	EARLY ED DEGREE	NON-EARLY ED DEGREE
	%	%	%
Strongly agree	27.4	38.2	40.3
Agree	63.7	51.7	52.4
Disagree	4.0	4.3	4.0
Strongly disagree	4.8	5.8	4.0

There is some indication that teachers earning specialized credentials or licenses felt more prepared than others. For example, just 5% of teachers who earned a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential disagreed that they were prepared (compared with 9% of teachers overall). Interestingly, teachers who held a Virginia PK-3 or PK-4 licenses were about as likely as teachers generally say they were not fully prepared to work with young children (10% compared to 9% of all teachers), while teachers holding a Virginia PK-6 license were less likely to say they weren't fully prepared than other teachers (6% versus 9%).

Teacher confidence in their preparation to meet young children's needs was not clearly related to their years of experience teaching or years of experience in the field, except: (1) the percentage of most experienced teachers (20 or more years) reporting that they felt prepared was lower than other teachers, perhaps due to the evolving nature of the field; and, (2) all of the teachers new to the field reported confidence in their preparation, compared with 90-95% of teachers with more than 1 year of experience.

Teacher confidence in their preparation to meet the needs of young children varied somewhat by the ages of children teachers worked with. While 93% of teachers working with infants and toddlers agreed they were prepared to work with young children, a slightly lower 91% of teachers working with preschool-aged children agreed along with 88% of teachers who work with mixed aged groups that included both infants and toddlers and preschool-aged children.

Table 38. Teacher agreement with the statement "I feel prepared for the challenges of meeting the learning and socioemotional needs of young children and their families", based on child age.

"I FEEL PREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGES OF MEETING THE LEARNING AND SOCIOEMOTIONAL NEEDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES."	INFANT AND TODDLERS ONLY	PRESCHOOL-AGED ONLY	MIXED AGES
	%	%	%
Strongly agree	35.7	35.6	38.4
Agree	57.4	55.2	49.3
Disagree	5.2	3.7	4.1
Strongly disagree	1.7	5.6	8.2

Professional Development Opportunities

Teachers were asked in general about their access to professional development opportunities, their preferred vehicles for receiving professional development, and barriers and supports to pursuing them.

Access to professional development

Overall, about 84% of teachers agreed that they had access to professional development and training needed to do their work effectively, although nearly 5% strongly disagreed that they had access. This perception did not vary greatly by any teacher or program characteristics.

Most beneficial areas of professional development – lead teachers' reports

Teachers were provided a set of typical topics for professional development and asked to identify those that would be most beneficial. Likewise, program administrators were provided a similar list of topics and asked to identify the areas they felt would be of most benefit to the lead teachers and the assistant teachers in their programs. These topics, along with teacher and administrator responses, are in the table below.

Table 39. Beneficial areas of professional development indentified by lead teachers.

DESIRED TOPICS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LEAD TEACHER SELF-REPORT PERCENT
Behavior management	63.1
Social-emotional development/learning	50.0
Supporting development of children with disabilities/special needs	45.9
Teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEM/STEAM) topics	40.9
Curriculum development & implementation/instructional delivery	38.3
Ages and stages of child development	29.4
Supporting development of English Language Learners	27.4
Professional development geared towards becoming an administrator or supervisor (e.g., administrator, principal, coordinator)	25.4
Developing a warm & welcoming classroom environment	24.3
Trauma-informed care & practices	19.6
Selecting & organizing materials	17.0
Entrepreneurship/Business Management	9.7

Overall, the most frequently teacher-cited professional development topics of interest are behavior management (63%), social-emotional development (50%), and supporting children with special needs (46%). This pattern was generally consistent across characteristics of teachers, with the following exceptions:

- Teachers of infants and toddlers (27%) were much less likely than teachers working with preschool-aged children (45%) and mixed-age groups (49%) of children to identify "Teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEM/STEAM)" as a topic of need.
- Teachers of infants and toddlers (13%) were much less likely than teachers working with preschool-aged children (32%) and mixed-age groups (33%) of children to identify "Supporting development of English Language Learners" as a topic of need.
- Teachers of infants and toddlers (33%) and teachers of mixed-age groups (35%) were more likely than teachers of preschool-aged children (18%) to identify "Developing a warm & welcoming classroom environment" as a topic of need.

Most beneficial areas of professional development for lead teachers and assistant teachers - administrators' reports

Program administrators were asked to identify the areas of most benefit to their lead and assistant teachers. Administrator reports were generally consistent with those of their lead teachers, although there were several differences of note:

- Compared to program administrators, lead teachers were much more likely to identify "Supporting development of children with disabilities/special needs" (46% vs. 29%), "Supporting development of English Language Learners" (27% vs. 16%), and "Professional development geared towards becoming an administrator or supervisor (e.g., administrator, principal, coordinator)," (25% vs. 11%).
- Program administrators (46%) identified "Curriculum development & implementation/instructional delivery" more often than lead teachers (38%).
- Finally, although lead teachers were not given the option of responding to an item about observation and giving/receiving feedback, 21% of administrators thought this was an important area of need (although it ranked 10th in the rankings of all topics).

The five most beneficial areas of professional development for lead and assistant teachers identified by program administrators are shown below.

Table 40. Five most beneficial areas of professional development for lead and assistant teachers identified by program administrators.

LEAD TEACHERS		ASSISTANT TEACHERS	
AREA	**PERCENT**	**AREA**	**PERCENT**
1. Behavior management	66.9	1. Behavior management	69.8
2. Curriculum development & implementation/instructional delivery	45.8	2. Ages and stages of child development	65.4
3. Social-emotional development/learning	42.3	3. Social-emotional development/learning	54.0
4. Ages and stages of child development	36.1	4. Curriculum development & implementation/ instructional delivery	42.6
5. Teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEM/STEAM) topics	35.1	5. Professional development geared towards becoming lead teacher	32.4

While the top four areas of professional development need indicated by administrators were generally consistent for lead and assistant teachers, there were some interesting differences. For example, although in the top four for both lead and assistant teachers, administrators much more heavily endorsed "Ages and stages of development" as a need for assistant teachers than lead teachers.

Other trends of note from administrator's reports of most beneficial professional development for lead and assistant teachers include:

- For assistant teachers, administrators were given the option to identify the need for professional development to support them in becoming lead teachers, an option selected by nearly one-third of administrators for their assistant teachers.
- "Developing a warm and welcoming classroom" was identified by 31% of administrators as a need for assistant teachers, versus only 19% of administrators identifying it as a need for lead teachers.

Preferences for receiving professional development

Now more than ever, there is a range of delivery systems for teachers to receive professional development. Lead teachers were asked about their preferred means of receiving professional development, and administrators were asked about the most feasible and effective means of delivery for their staff. Teacher and administrator responses are shown below.

Table 41. Comparison between teacher preference and administrator report of the most impactful and feasible professional development/training mechanisms for staff.

PREFERRED (TEACHER) OR MOST IMPACTFUL (ADMINISTRATOR) MECHANISM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	TEACHER REPORT	ADMINISTRATOR REPORT
PREFERENCE FOR HOW TO RECEIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	%	%
Online short courses/modules/videos	65.5	72.5
In-person workshops (for example, from the VA Department of Social Services or VA Department of Education)	63.2	32.9
Within my program (from another teacher, site administrator, mentor/coach, through observations, etc.)	39.8	32.9
Online coursework at a Virginia Community College	29.4	23.1
In-person coursework at a Virginia Community College	17.5	17.1
Online coursework at 4-year college/university	15.2	8.2
Hybrid coursework (partially online, partially in-person) at a Virginia Community College	12.2	14.7
Hybrid coursework (partially online, partially in-person) at a 4-year college/university	7.7	4.5
In-person coursework at 4-year college/university	5.5	5.3
Through independent trainers/Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	n/a	39.8
Other	3.7	1.8

In general, teachers and administrators preferred the same top delivery system for professional development – online short courses, modules, or videos. They agreed on the second most common vehicle as well, in-person workshops, although teachers were twice as likely to prefer this (63% vs 33%). Nearly 40% of administrators indicated a preference for using independent trainers through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (teachers were not given this latter option in their survey).[22] It is possible this strong preference is due to directors who were recruited to their roles in part via a CCR&R Network, or otherwise have relationships with their local network, and therefore have more familiarity and comfort with the offerings. There were no notable differences in preferences by teacher or program characteristics.

22 Research suggests that the most effective professional development is on-site coaching where teachers can apply newly gained best-practice knowledge and skills in a continuous cycle of feedback and improvement. Ad hoc professional development has limited research backing.

Barriers to accessing professional development

While teachers and administrators indicate general satisfaction with their level of preparation and ongoing training, there are still often barriers to accessing needed professional development.

Nearly two-thirds of teachers noted time (69%) or cost (65%) as their top barriers to accessing professional development. Nearly one-quarter (26%) noted distance to in-person opportunities as a barrier. Other barriers were endorsed by 20% or less of teachers, reflecting a sizable number of teachers who may be confronting more personal challenges, like lack of child care (20%) or lack of technological access or comfort (12%). Small numbers of teachers indicated either a general lack of interest in professional development (4%), a lack of need (9%), or limited enthusiasm given past experiences with professional development that was not useful (6%).

Program administrators cited a range of barriers tied directly to managing the cost and staffing challenges that professional development may present. Nearly two-thirds (63%) noted the costs incurred to ensure adequate classroom coverage for teachers to participate in professional development, and 58% noted challenges in finding substitutes for those classrooms. These costs are especially pronounced when trainings are scheduled to occur during the programs' operating hours. But costs are also a concern more generally, with nearly half (46%) of administrators citing the expense of overtime pay for staff to complete trainings. More than one-third (35%) reported the cost of training, generally, were too high. Finally, a sizeable minority of administrators reported that training was not accessible (20%) and in the case of on-line training (like that reportedly preferred by teachers), 16% reported too few computers for staff training.

Sources of professional development assistance and opportunities

While teachers and administrators indicate a broad range of barriers to accessing professional development, there are a range of supports available to them in Virginia. Teachers and administrators were asked to indicate their awareness of a range of available programs of support. Overall, 66% of teachers reported awareness of at least one of these supports, and 83% of administrators reported awareness of at least one. While these percentages represent a majority of each group, there is still a substantial minority of each that seems to lack awareness of these programs, and no specific program received more than 42% reported awareness.

Teacher and administrator awareness of at least one form of professional development support or access generally was higher among more experienced teachers or administrators (see below).

Table 42. Professional development support awareness by years.

YEARS AS TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATOR	PERCENT OF TEACHERS AWARE OF ANY SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*	PERCENT OF PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS AWARE OF ANY SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*
Less than 1	50.0	74.2
1 to 5	62.1	80.3
5 to 10	68.4	86.3
10 to 20	67.7	84.6
More than 20	76.6	84.7

**Note: Percentages are based upon the total number of respondents with data for years of experience as a teacher or administrator and awareness of professional development supports.*

Other trends of note included:

Awareness of professional development supports was also related in some way to the type of program the teacher or administrator worked in.

- Among teachers, there was some only minor variation in awareness across program types (64% to 71%), when reported by the teacher.
- For administrators, awareness seemed to be especially variable based upon the type of program, administrators in family day homes (42%) and public programs (34%) were much less likely to report awareness than administrators of private programs (67%) or Head Start/Early Head Start (71%) programs.
- Teachers or administrators unable to identify the type of program they worked in (i.e., they responded "I'm not sure" when asked to identify program type) were less likely to report awareness than their peers who could identify the type of program (59% of teachers and 14% of administrators).

Across the several sources of professional development assistance and opportunities available to early educators in Virginia, there was wide variation in teacher and administrator awareness (see next page).

- Among teachers and administrators, Virginia Quality, Virginia's Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) was the most commonly known source of support (36% of all teachers and 42% of all administrators).
- Teachers were only somewhat aware of the Virginia Child Provider Scholarship Program (31% of all teachers) and the Infant and Toddler Specialist Network (33% of teachers).
- A more sizeable minority of administrators were aware of the Infant and Toddler Specialist Network than were teachers (41% versus 22%).
- Directors were more likely to recognize the role of Child Care Aware of Virginia as a technical assistance provider than teachers (41% versus 16%).
- Directors were more aware of Registered Apprenticeships than teachers (6% versus 2%).

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Table 43. Awareness of professional development supports.

SOURCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE OR OPPORTUNITIES	PERCENT OF ALL TEACHER RESPONDENTS	PERCENT OF TEACHERS REPORTING AT LEAST 1	PERCENT OF ALL ADMINISTRATOR RESPONDENTS	PERCENT OF ADMINISTRATORS REPORTING AT LEAST 1
Virginia Quality rating and improvement system	36.1	54.9	41.5	71.6
Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program	30.8	46.9	—	—
Virginia Cooperative Extension	25.2	38.3	—	—
Infant and Toddler Specialist Network	22.0	33.4	40.8	70.6
Project Pathfinders scholarships	16.1	24.5	18.9	32.6
Child Care Aware of Virginia (for technical assistance)	15.9	24.2	40.5	70.0
IMPACT Registry	3.6	5.5	4.9	8.5
Registered Apprenticeships through the Virginia Department of Labor & Industry	2.0	3.1	6.4	11.0
Virginia Child Care Financing Program	—	—	13.8	23.7
Virginia Shared Services Network, Child Care Aware of VA	—	—	24.7	42.6

Conclusion

As the Workforce Survey shows in detail, Virginia has many assets when it comes to its early childhood workforce. The Commonwealth's teachers consider themselves to be relatively well-prepared for their roles, and in certain settings there are impressively high levels of educational attainment. Multiple resources exist to support early childhood educators.

Yet, significant challenges remain as well. The early childhood workforce is highly stratified. Different program settings have very different populations of teachers and administrators, due largely to distinct educational requirements and wage structures. In a sense, Virginia has three early childhood workforces: those in family day homes, those in private centers, and those in publicly-funded programs such as Head Start, Title I Pre-K, and the Virginia Preschool Initiative. The Commonwealth cannot effectively understand or craft policy to lift up this workforce without reckoning with this fundamental characteristic.

However, despite the stratified workforce and dizzyingly complex governance structure that regulates it, teachers and children, no matter the setting, dovetail in common needs. Children need teachers and administrators who are highly trained and deeply immersed in best practices of early childhood education; their school readiness requires effective interactions with the adults who are caring for them. Teachers need working conditions that make their jobs sustainable so they can be fully present with their charges, and professional development to ensure they have a smooth path to acquiring both additional credentials and ongoing competency-based training.

The efficacy of the early childhood workforce has indelible implications for the health and well-being of the entire Commonwealth – economically, civically, educationally, quite literally in the developing brains of the next generation. The 2017 Early Childhood Workforce Survey can serve as foundational baseline data for creating and promoting a unified and prioritized agenda that supports this workforce, as well as Virginia's children and families, in all of their powerful diversity.