

T.E.A.C.H. times

Summer 2017

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T.E.A.C.H. Times
Teresa Graves, Editor

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T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®
National Center
PO Box 901
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Letter from the Founder

As the importance and use of formal early childhood education programs has grown, pundits have raised questions about the worth of such programs. In particular, with increasing use of public funding for early care and education, observers have asked how much they cost in relation to their benefit and whether teachers of young children are really teachers. To address some of these questions, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), a part of our nation's most esteemed scientific body, the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine convened a panel to study the science of early childhood development and to examine what educators working with children from birth to eight need to know and be able to do. I had hoped that their examination of the issue as presented in "[Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#)", and their recommendation that we as a nation move to requiring all teachers of young children have a bachelor's degree, would significantly advance our policies and thinking about teachers of young children.



Sadly, this has not proven to be the case, and a recent spate of ill-informed commentaries require some correction. The recent news that a single jurisdiction, the District of Columbia, has mandated that all ECE teachers have at least an associate degree in early childhood education or its equivalent in the next few years has resulted in a number of responses in which various commentators have claimed: that (1) requiring a college education for an early childhood teacher is either unnecessary or impossible or both; (2) a minimum education requirement will threaten the employment of the current ECE workforce because they are incapable of completing a college education; and (3) employing teachers with college degrees will make needed child care unaffordable for working parents and low-income families who need it most. There is considerable evidence that each of these assertions is untrue, and that the failure to appreciate this fact may lead to public policies that will turn the clock backward for families and teachers, and could adversely affect the future of this nation by failing to optimize the future potential of its youngest citizens.

The NAM report summarizes the science of what young children need in their early childhood teachers and makes the case for a minimum of a bachelor's degree. In this respect, the US situation can be clarified by international comparisons. A number of years ago on an early childhood study visit to France, I learned a little about the requirements for early childhood teachers in their system. The first step

in their education is earning what is the equivalent to a bachelor's of arts degree in any number of disciplines, from history to French, to mathematics to sociology. Basically the French expect their teachers to have a well-rounded education on which to build their specialized learning in early childhood education, which involves an additional two years of study.

In our work with over 135,000 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship recipients across the country, we have found that so many must take remedial English and math coursework to bring them up to the college level. They gain a level of proficiency in communication and math that they may never have had when they graduated high school. This has only strengthened them as teachers, who are better able to work with young children and to communicate more effectively with families. And the general studies coursework provides them with greater skills in critical thinking, information gathering, writing and understanding of the human condition. We also know that children with parents who have college degrees have significantly more vocabulary by the time they are three, which sets them on the path for reading and school success. Yet many children in early childhood settings often spend most of their waking hours 5 days a week for their first 5 years with someone other than their parents. Shouldn't we want that person in loco parentis to have a college degree, if the evidence is so strong that it matters for parents?

[The National Survey of Early Childhood Care and Education](#) found, using survey data from 2012, that 53% of teachers working in center-based settings already have two-year, four-year or advanced degrees. The federal government already requires degrees for teachers working in Head Start, with all teachers having at least an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education and at least 50% of all teachers working in Head Start programs nationally having a bachelor's degree. And many state and federally funded Pre-K teachers are required to have at least a bachelor's degree, with many states also requiring a teaching license. In addition, many states, as part of their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) have also required teachers to have at least two-year degrees at the highest levels. And to their credit, the District of Columbia has recently set a new requirement for all teachers working in child care centers to have at least an associate degree in early childhood education or its equivalent. But the debate continues, as evidenced by the negative responses by many to this new standard. And recent articles from [New America](#) and [The Atlantic](#) have also questioned the need for and affordability of teachers with bachelor's degrees.

Letter from the Founder (con't.)

I want to make the case for degreed teachers in all early care and education programs, recognizing that this will be a long journey. Requiring an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education, like DC did, may be a good start along this path, and there is evidence that it can and should be done. In both the [Washington Post](#) article on the DC decision and in the New America article, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® initiative was mentioned as a mechanism that could help teachers get their degrees.

About 27 years ago in North Carolina we had to take a hard look at our child care system and the people who were teaching and caring for our young children. It was not a pretty picture. Less than 10% of our teaching workforce had a two or four year degree in anything, the turnover rate was over 40%, salaries were abysmal and most child care centers did not require or support any professional development of their teachers. We wanted to create a strategy that would help change this. We began with some assumptions. We assumed that if we provided our workforce with the opportunity to go to college to earn credentials and degrees, AND we really supported their journey into higher education, that they would and could be successful. But our assumptions were informed (and transformed) by data. Our research said that teachers wanted a degree, but that barriers in their personal lives, in their centers and in higher education made it very hard.

So using these data we crafted the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship model that was based on addressing some of those barriers, both economic (cost of tuition, books, travel, paid release time) and social (lack of personal and employer support) barriers, and on the belief that we could leverage higher education to better meet the needs of working, diverse early childhood students. We tested the model with

- Teachers, family child care educators and program directors,
- Credentials and two- and four-year degrees . . . and now with master's degrees,
- First generation students, teachers who had never taken a college course and teachers who had started and stopped,
- Racially and ethnically diverse populations,
- Diverse ages of the women and some men,
- Those working in both rural and urban communities and in child care, Head Start and Pre-K settings, and
- Multiple states.

The results have been amazing!

First, because the scholarships really provide the amount and types of financial support to ensure a debt-free college education and the social support provided by a personal coach and an engaged employer, T.E.A.C.H. recipients have been incredibly successful. In FY16, almost 16,000 T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients in 23 states and the District of Columbia were on a pathway to earn credentials and degrees. Those working on degrees completed 14-17 credit hours a year while working full time, with average GPAs that exceeded 3.2. Their compensation increased about 8% annually while on the scholarship and they now have greater job and career mobility in the short term and for a lifetime. And turnover rates for those on scholarships to earn associate and bachelor's degrees last year were 4-6% - something that provides continuity for children and stability for the programs in which they work. And year after year, the fact that half of our T.E.A.C.H. population nationally are first generation college students, makes these accomplishments even more notable.

The multigenerational impact of this education and these degrees is an important outcome of the program as well. First, the children in their classrooms are immediately benefiting from a more knowledgeable and more engaged teacher. A recent meta-analysis done from the [Campbell Collaboration](#) found a consistent positive relationship between teacher qualifications and the quality of the early childhood classrooms when examining the results in 48 studies worldwide. Second, because it may take a number of years for teachers to complete their degrees and because T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipient turnover is so low, multiple cohorts of children are benefiting from better performing teachers. Third, most T.E.A.C.H. recipients are themselves parents, with children and perhaps grandchildren of their own. Since half of T.E.A.C.H. recipients are the first in their families to go to college, the educational trajectory of their own children is likely changed, creating the potential for a future lifetime of better career and earnings potential. Finally, the compensation for T.E.A.C.H. recipients improves each year they are on the scholarship and then after they earn their degrees. The recent [T.E.A.C.H. national report](#) profiles three individuals with significant wage gains over time, and these are pretty typical. While T.E.A.C.H. doesn't solve the compensation problem for the field, for those who have earned their degrees, there is a real economic pay off.

A recent [study](#) found that children perform better in school where they have had teachers of their same race. Unlike in public schools, teachers working in child care, Head Start and Pre-K settings have historically been more likely to look like the children they are serving. Almost one-half of the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship population are women of color or of Hispanic origin. We have more evidence when we look at NC's early childhood workforce, where T.E.A.C.H. scholarships have been universally available for over 25 years. Forty-seven percent of NC's ECE workforce are people of color . . . growing more diverse in the last 5 years. The latest NC workforce [study](#) found that race was not a factor in which teachers had degrees. When looking at those with degrees specifically in early childhood education, there is virtually no difference between white teachers (39%) and teachers of color (38%) suggesting that NC is achieving equity of access to education for its diverse early childhood workforce. Overall, education levels of the NC workforce continue to increase, with 74% of teachers of 3-5 year olds and 52% of teachers of infants and toddlers having earned degrees. And there has been a 16% increase in program directors of color over the last 12 years, because teachers have degrees and become directors, and in some cases directors who never had degrees have gone back to school and earned one.

We should not and cannot sell the early childhood workforce short; they can meet the challenge of degree requirements. People said Head Start teachers couldn't meet the degree requirements. They have exceeded them. The same thing has been said about higher education requirements in states' Quality Rating and Improvement Systems and in Pre-K programs. Yet teachers are meeting those standards as well. The NC case study of the dramatic shift in the education of the workforce is an example, both of the power of increasing standards, but more importantly what supports are needed to help the workforce achieve their dream. We started the work in NC by asking the workforce if they wanted to earn a degree. Their messages were clear. For most in our field it has been a lifelong and unrealized dream. But with the right economic and social supports, they can and will do it.

Finally, to those who say we cannot afford what it will cost to support teachers in their pursuit of degrees or in the additional funding that will be needed to fairly compensate this professionalized workforce, I say we really have no choice. Many years ago we figured out that our society needed its citizens educated and we created public schools and set professional standards for teachers. We have used federal, state and local dollars to do this, because we believed that our society would be better served if all of its citizens had a sound basic education. But now science is telling us that kindergarten is too late for many of our children to catch up, to be able to succeed in school and eventually in life. We cannot continue to ask parents to bear the full cost of this, nor can we continue to ask the ECE workforce to continue to subsidize early childhood education in their forgone wages. Investing in highly qualified teachers and great early childhood programs may be the best educational investment we can make. We owe it to our children and to our early childhood teachers to find the money.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® National Professional Development Symposium Roundup 2017

It was another banner year for the T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ National Professional Development Symposium, with colleagues from 27 states and the District of Columbia participating, including staff from 21 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® programs and five WAGE\$/salary supplement programs, numerous higher education faculty, and representatives from many national organizations in attendance. Over the course of the two-day event, over 140 people attended sessions specific to the needs of their programs, discussed issues, and heard nationally known speakers talk about public policies and changes occurring within the early childhood industry, and explored issues of equity around education, compensation, diversity and career pathways in our field. The keynote address, Leveling the Playing Field for the Early Childhood Workforce: Addressing the Equity Gaps, was given by Jacqueline Jones, President and CEO of the Foundation for Child Development.

A plenary panel presentation on the symposium's second day continued a discussion that began at last year's symposium on race, gender and equity issues from a personal perspective. Panelists Carol Brunson Day (Brunson, Day & Phillips), Ana De Hoyos O'Connor (San Antonio College), and Rosemarie Vardell (Community Advocate and Retired Assistant Professor, North Carolina A&T State University), spoke from personal experiences. They provided the audience with insight on how race, gender, and equity affected them growing up, in their careers, and throughout their lives.

This year, with sponsorship from Kaplan Early Learning Company, the Center hosted an inaugural networking reception. During the reception, state T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ programs participated in a poster session, attendees feasted on delicious appetizers, and Mickey Mills filled the venue with the soothing sounds of steele drums. Participants had the opportunity to mix and mingle with colleagues and peers, and door prizes were given out to several lucky winners during the event.

Save the Dates for the 2018 T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ Symposium - April 24-25, 2018. Also, be on the lookout for the Request for Workshop Proposals, which will be sent out in the next few weeks.

What Participants Said About the Symposium:

- *"Networking is a huge benefit. I also enjoy that the presentations help us dive deeper into the pieces that are crucial to the big picture."*
- *"The opening discussion with Dr. Jacqueline Jones established an important overview of what's impacting our current and future ECE workforce."*
- *"I loved the experienced counselor roundtable, it's always my favorite."*

..... Leveling the Playing Field for the Early Childhood Workforce: Addressing the Equity Gaps

Dr. Jones reminded us that while there are many critical components that make up high quality early learning programs, the workforce is essential and matters the most. She highlighted the importance of connecting the science of early development (including the rapidity of brain development, the interplay of genes and the environment, the impact of stress on development and individual differences in sensitivity the environment) to informing what early education teachers need to know and be able to do. She spoke to the notion that quality costs, and stated that in any other profession, quality is not limited by cost. She ended by noting that in the early education system where children living in poverty need the most and best care, we run this business based on what the poorest people can pay, which speaks to the lack of equity for all children.

Save the Date!
April 24 -25, 2018

Attend the

**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® &
Child Care WAGE\$®
2018 National
Professional Development
Symposium**

Chapel Hill, NC

Dr. Jones speaks to attendees of the 2017 Symposium



Becky Fox and Art Guye from Kaplan Early Learning Company, who sponsored the Symposium reception.



Mickey Mills helps to keep things lively at the inaugural Symposium reception.



Compensation Summit Brings Together T.E.A.C.H. State Teams and National Leaders to Move the Needle on Compensation

On April 27-28, 2017, with funding from the Alliance for Early Success and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center hosted the 2017 – Moving the Needle on Compensation Summit. Teams of diverse stakeholders from each of eight T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® states (Florida, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Nebraska, North Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin) gathered to learn from national experts and from each other with the ultimate goal of advancing early childhood teacher compensation policy, advocacy and funding strategies in their home states. State teams came prepared with draft action plans, which they updated while on site as they learned more and networked with other state team members and presenters. Following the Summit, the National Center will continue to provide technical assistance to these state teams throughout the life of the project, envisioned as a 2 ½ year national initiative. At the conclusion of the project, the Center will disseminate findings through presentations, tools and articles that can inform efforts to address the need for a well-compensated early childhood teaching workforce in states across the country.

Here's what some attendees had to say about the most valuable and useful aspects of the Summit:

- ***"I really enjoyed the variety, from state team reports to the opportunity for teams to work together, to listening to experts in the field."***
- ***"Having the opportunity to connect with other states and learn from their successes and challenges was very helpful in considering our own options and will provide resources to follow up with."***
- ***"Being able to work as a team without distractions was really helpful. Working in a novel space often leads to novel ideas."***

"Being able to work as a team without distractions was really helpful. Working in a novel space often leads to novel ideas."

Many thanks to our state teams, to our funders and to the following national presenters:

- Leanne Barrett, Senior Policy Analyst, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
- Marica Cox Mitchell, Deputy Executive Director, Early Learning Systems, National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Rochelle Finzel, Group Director, Children and Families Program, National Conference of State Legislatures
- Seth Gerson, Program Director, Education Division, National Governor's Association
- Caitlin McLean, Workforce Research Specialist, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
- Anne Mitchell, President, Early Childhood Policy Research
- Amy O'Leary, Early Education for All Campaign Director, Strategies for Children
- Albert Wat, Senior Policy Director, Alliance for Early Success
- Elaine Weiss, National Coordinator, Broader Bolder Approach to Education Campaign, Economic Policy Institute

State teams are now back home, working on implementing their Policy, Advocacy and Funding Action Plans with technical assistance from T.E.A.C.H. National Center staff. Webinars on topic to support plan implementation are scheduled through the fall and funding is being sought to bring the teams back together for another Compensation Summit in 2018. For more information [contact Julie Rogers](#).

Shedding Light on the ‘Leadership Gap’ in Early-Childhood Programs

The [McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership](#), at National Louis University in Wheeling, IL, launched a new website in June, 2017 that focuses on what the McCormick Center calls the “leadership gap” in early-childhood education. In an article written by Marva Hinton, she states that “the site includes statistics related to the qualifications of early-childhood program leaders who work with children from birth to age 8, as well as state and national profiles.” Click [here](#) to read the article and learn more about the website.

Support T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Endowment Fund will ensure ongoing support for the implementation and expansion of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® college scholarships for low-income early educators working with young children in child care settings across the nation. Building on 27 years of providing access to T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to over 135,000 early educators, Child Care Services Association will raise \$10 million over 5 years, securing resources needed to support strategic innovation, expansion and continuation of its signature, national initiative by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center. Gifts to the endowment may include cash, stocks and bonds, real estate, life insurance and bequeathed funds from a personal will in the form of cash, securities, real estate or personal property. To support the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Endowment, click [here](#).

T.E.A.C.H. DC: Leading the Nation in High-Quality Early Childhood Education

Erica Campbell, T.E.A.C.H. Manager, National Black Child Development Institute

This article highlights NBCDI’s contribution to the system-wide staffing requirements in DC. The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) administers the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.-DC), Early Childhood® program in Washington, DC, a scholarship program for early childhood educators, generously funded by the District of Columbia’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education and United Parcel Service. NBCDI is proud to share that T.E.A.C.H.-DC is expanding our program to support the early childhood workforce in DC and increase access to high-quality early childhood education programs for young children.

DC’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education and UPS have increased funding for T.E.A.C.H. to support early childhood educators in DC to meet new education requirements. Based on new regulations effective as of December 2016, center directors will be required to have a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or a bachelor’s degree with at least 15 semester credit hours in early childhood education by December 2022. ECE teachers will be required to have an associate’s degree in early childhood education or a bachelor’s degree with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood education by December 2020.

With the increase in funding for T.E.A.C.H.-DC, NBCDI will award more scholarships and expand supports to address challenges our scholars face as non-traditional college students. Our goal is to enhance these supports and provide scholars with tutoring in writing, English language, and math as well as college preparation courses—most scholars are returning to the classroom after 10 or 20 years. About 20% of our scholarship recipients have reported that English is not their first language and that they would benefit from English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and support services. With these additional services, we anticipate an increase in scholars’ GPA and our graduation rates.

DC Mayor Muriel Bowser has also embraced expanding the T.E.A.C.H.-DC program to support early childhood center directors and educators in pursuing advanced degrees. The mayor’s office proposed to double the number of scholarship recipients served by T.E.A.C.H.-DC in their Fiscal Year 2018 proposal submitted to DC City Council in April. On April 26th, NBCDI’s Vice President of Policy Cemeré James provided testimony at the DC City Council Budget Hearing to support a proposal from District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser to expand the T.E.A.C.H.-DC program. In addition to Ms. James, Trinity University Professor Dr. Steen and five scholars testified on the critical role of T.E.A.C.H.-DC in supporting early childhood educators to meet new education requirements.

NBCDI applauds Mayor Bowser and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education for taking action to advance the early learning workforce and provide young children in the District of Columbia with high-quality early learning. With over 6 years of steady, effective incremental growth of the T.E.A.C.H.-DC program, NBCDI has and will continue to build an innovative model with transformative results—for our scholars and the families and children they serve.



Advocates Celebrate Pre-K Expansion in Alabama

Allison Muhlendorf, Executive Director, Alabama School Readiness Alliance

More than 2,100 additional four-year-olds will be able to enroll in a high-quality, voluntary Alabama First Class Pre-K program by September 1, according to a recent announcement by Governor Kay Ivey that the state will add 122 new First Class classrooms for the upcoming school year. The expansion is made possible by a \$13.5 million increase in state investments for the program approved by the Legislature in May.

For 11 years in a row, Alabama's First Class Pre-K program, which is managed by the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education, has been ranked the number one state-funded pre-kindergarten program in the country for quality by the National Institute for Early Education Research. The new classrooms will increase the overall size of Alabama's First Class Pre-K program to 938 classrooms. However, that is only enough classrooms to enroll 28 percent of all four-year-olds statewide.

Advocates welcomed the announcement.

"We are grateful that Governor Ivey and state lawmakers continue to prioritize funding for the expansion of the First Class Pre-K program. We hope they will continue to do so until all families across Alabama that want to enroll their child in a First Class Pre-K classroom are able to do so," said Mike Luce and Bob Powers, the co-chairs of the Alabama School Readiness Alliance Pre-K Task Force.

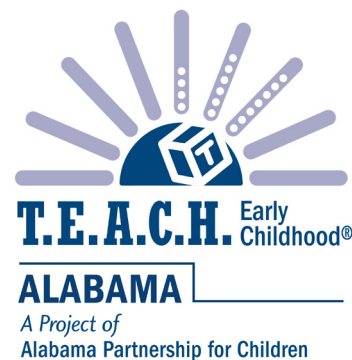
Mike Luce is Vice Chairman of Harbert Management in Birmingham. Bob Powers is the President of The Eufaula Agency. They are joined on the ASRA Pre-K Task Force by more than 40 prominent leaders from the business, education, civic, medical, legal, philanthropic, military and child advocacy communities.

In 2012, the ASRA Task Force launched a ten-year campaign, now in its fifth year, to advocate for incremental increases in First Class Pre-K until the program is fully funded in the 2022-2023 school year.

In May, Alabama Lawmakers appropriated a total of \$77.5 million for Alabama's First Class Pre-K program in the 2018 Education Trust Fund Budget. ASRA has estimated that the state would need to appropriate a total level of funding of \$144 million to give every Alabama family the opportunity to voluntarily enroll their four-year-old in a First Class Pre-K program.

The Alabama School Readiness Alliance advocates for the expansion of high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten. ASRA works to ensure that pre-k is a continuing priority for Alabama's children, parents, community leaders, legislators and governing officials. ASRA is a collaborative effort of A+ Education Partnership, Alabama Giving, Alabama Partnership and VOICES for Alabama's Children.

The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education has provided funding for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Alabama's bachelor degree scholarships since 2007. Through this partnership, T.E.A.C.H. plays a vital role in building the capacity of well-educated early childhood professionals, qualified to work in Alabama's First Class Pre-K classrooms. In 2016, 53% of T.E.A.C.H. sponsoring programs were First Class Pre-K sites, and 50% of bachelor recipients were employed in these classrooms.



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