

## Letter from the Founder

### T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® STATES

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

### Child Care WAGES® STATES

Delaware  
Florida  
Iowa  
New Mexico  
North Carolina

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

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[www.teachecnationalcenter.org](http://www.teachecnationalcenter.org)

I recently wrote a [blog](#) for New America about the power of education in the lives of the women in our field. In this edition we feature two women who make that assertion come to life. I hope you will take time to read that short piece.



The blog also focused on how we can maintain and strengthen our diverse workforce as we raise the standards on education. One of those women is a member of our T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Alliance Advisory Council, which is made up of members of our profession from around the country who have benefited from T.E.A.C.H. scholarships. They are a very diverse group of advisors who are teachers, family child care educators, program directors, technical assistance providers and/or community college faculty. They provide us with rich, on-the-ground perspectives about workforce issues in their communities and states. Many of them have become early childhood leaders.

Our discussions in our past two meetings have centered around barriers to degree completion for our workforce. What keeps our workforce from advancing their education? As we know well, money is a big barrier. But it is not just the money to pay for tuition and books; it is the perceived lack of a better paying job when the degree is finished. Our advisory committee members were really struggling with the dilemma of the inability of programs to pay their staff well because tuition, and often state reimbursement rates, are tied to what parents can afford to pay. One member posed the hard question, “Should staff child ratios be increased in classrooms with BA-degreed teachers, so we can pay those teachers more?” No one liked that solution, but it focused on the reality of the choice we are making to subsidize child care on the backs of our workforce. Some states have Pre-K rates that are better; some states even mandate pay parity for Pre-K teachers who have BA degrees and teaching licenses. A few states have various types of wage supplement programs. But often these

are under-funded to meet the need or in constant jeopardy of being de-funded.

We have also talked about barriers related to race, ethnicity, language and class as we try to support our workforce toward college degrees. One identified challenge is the lack of diversity in the college faculty teaching our workforce. While the ECE workforce is very diverse in most places, that is not true of the faculty in community colleges and universities. The long-term good news is that we are seeing T.E.A.C.H. graduates of color earning advanced degrees and joining the ranks of college faculty. The need for diverse and ECE experienced faculty is another important reason we need to educate our workforce.

We also talked about the added complexity of many in our workforce being a first generation college student. Often this means not knowing how to play the “college game”—from enrollment to tutoring to course selection to even envisioning their capacity to earn a degree. Someone in our group talked about how some of our diverse students have strengths in oral language that often aren’t demonstrated in written language, and that there is no appreciation for that skill. And of course, it is even more complicated when English is your second language and there are no or very few college faculty members who speak your first language.

These conversations inform and strengthen our work and thinking as we try to offer robust T.E.A.C.H. scholarships across the country that address some of these issues directly or that leverage solutions from our partners. We have learned so much from our [Alliance Advisory Council](#) and from the 146,000 T.E.A.C.H. recipients over the past 28 years...and we will keep learning and advocating until we get it right.

--Sue Russell, Executive Director, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center

## T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ 2018 National Professional Development Symposium

Center staff are busy finalizing the slate of workshops for the T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ 2018 Professional Development Symposium April 24 -25, 2018, at UNC-Chapel Hill's Friday Conference Center.

### Some of the Speakers from National Organizations for the 2018 Symposium

- Buffett Early Childhood Institute, University of Nebraska
- Council for Professional Recognition
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Governors Association
- National Women's Law Center

### Who Should Attend

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® staff
- Professionals supporting the education and professional development of the early education workforce, including non-profit organization professionals and higher education faculty
- Partners working in or on behalf of early education systems including state and national governmental agency personnel, funders and others working on professional development systems



**Save the Date!**

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

**Moving the Needle on Early Childhood  
Workforce Compensation**

April 24-25, 2018

*The William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education, UNC-Chapel Hill*

### Symposium Offerings

- An opening keynote on the first day and a plenary panel on the second day
- 34 timely workshops and panel presentations addressing:
  - Staff development and day to day operations of T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ initiatives
  - Broader issues of professional development, quality improvement systems, higher education, advocacy and public policy for all early childhood professionals
- Nationally known speakers who address topics timely to the field
- Networking opportunities with peers from across the country

### What People Said About Last Year's Symposium

- "The 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 work force."
- "The breakout sessions with national presenters provide a greater/broader context of the workforce efforts around the nation, which helps states to consider options for alignment of state efforts."

More details will follow soon. If you'd like to get on our email list for more information as it becomes available, visit our website [here](#).



## Addressing the Intractable Issue of Early Childhood Workforce Compensation – An Update on the Work of T.E.A.C.H. State Teams

For the past year, eight T.E.A.C.H. state teams (Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, North Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin) have been engaged in advancing early childhood teacher compensation in their states. With funding from the Alliance for Early Success and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, teams have made progress on their Policy, Advocacy and Funding Action Plans toward raising awareness of early childhood workforce compensation issues and creating or expanding policy, advocacy and funding strategies to improve workforce compensation in their states. While each state operates within its own historical, political and cultural context, all states are moving agendas, opening conversations and collectively identifying potential strategies and solutions. Below are highlights of their work to date.

- **Research** - Several states are directing strategies around data collection, empirical data such as updating workforce studies, and case studies/stories of successes individual programs have had in moving toward wage parity. Several states are focusing on understanding current beliefs and knowledge about workforce compensation of ECE stakeholders and/or the public. One state is surveying community based funding partnerships to understand how wage parity happens in those areas and surveying members of the ECE workforce to get their feedback on a proposed salary scale.

- **State Policy and/or Rules** – Making policy changes and improvements in areas such as licensure for teachers outside the public school system, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, and tax credits for early educators is on the agenda of several states.

- **Wage Supplements** – A number of states are working to expand existing wage supplement programs like Child Care WAGES® (structured to reward early educators who have achieved increasing levels of education) or to seek new funding to establish a wage supplement program.

- **Shared Services** - A strategy some state teams hope will create savings for ECE programs is a Shared Services model, whereby ECE programs share administrative costs that could be passed along to staff as increased compensation.

- **Dissemination of Information** – Some states are creating and disseminating policy briefs and informational documents to inform and promote compensation efforts among and between partnering organizations and to assist in informing policymakers.

As we move into year two of this project, states are reporting some unexpected benefits from participating in the project including more stakeholder, partner, and workforce engagement in compensation issues, new connections, new team members, and unusual partnerships being formed and funding being identified, and resources added to support this work. We look forward to our continued work with these states and expect to see continued advances toward better compensation for the workforce.



### Shout Out to State T.E.A.C.H. Programs!

#### A Compensation Win for Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, real progress was made recently on one of the goals in their Policy, Advocacy and Funding Action Plan, which states, “Funding for the REWARD Wisconsin Stipend Program will be increased.” With unexpended Race to the Top funds that need to be spent quickly, the state’s Department of Children and Families awarded \$950,000 to the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) for their salary supplement program, REWARD. The funding eliminated the wait list for REWARD and put those funds into the hands of 1,200 early childhood educators.

### Stepping UP -- Running for Office

An amazing thing happens when our workforce is empowered with education. We see it again and again in our T.E.A.C.H. recipients and in the programs that sponsor them. We wanted to do a brief profile on two women who are running for office and have T.E.A.C.H. connections.

First is Tracy Ehlert. Tracy is a family child care educator who earned her two- and four-year degrees in early childhood education on T.E.A.C.H. scholarships in Iowa. She has continued her education on her own, recently completing her Master’s Degree. On top of all of that, [Tracy is running for a seat in Iowa’s State House of Representatives](#). Tracy said she is doing this because no one in her legislature really understands the needs of young children for high quality early education and she is going there to be a champion.

Our second campaigner is Alissa Mwenelupembe. She is the director of children’s services at St. Vincent Center for Children and Families in Indiana and is working on her doctorate in Education. [Alissa is running for the Board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children](#). Alissa earned her CDA and master’s degree with the help of T.E.A.C.H. Now, she is sponsoring staff at her center to go to college to earn their CDAs, Associate degrees and more on T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.

## T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center Welcomes New Advisory Committee Members and Says Farewell to Others

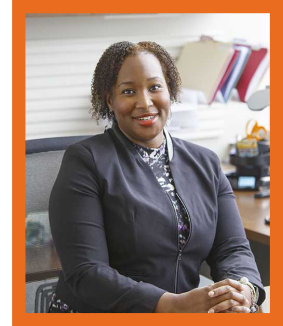
The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Advisory Committee advises the T.E.A.C.H. National Center and helps promote the expansion of T.E.A.C.H. and other integrated education and compensation initiatives as national strategies for improving education and compensation of the early childhood workforce. It also guides policy development and promotes policies that ensure the integrity of the Center. We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Advisory Committee:



**Megan Burk**  
T.E.A.C.H. Director  
Texas AEYC



**John Cregg**  
Executive Director  
Nevada AEYC



**Iheoma Iruka**  
Chief Research Innovation Officer  
High Scope

We say farewell to the following members. Thank you for your service to the Center, T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ programs across the country.

- Barb Merrill, Executive Director, Iowa AEYC (retired)
- Autumn Gehri, T.E.A.C.H. Director, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association
- Chip Donohue, Dean of Distance Learning and Continuing Education, Erikson Institute

### T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® National Annual Program Report



The 2016-17 Annual T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ Program Report focuses on “Making the Case for an Educated and Fairly Compensated Workforce.” The report explores the myths surrounding early childhood education and the early childhood workforce, and provides the truths to bust these myths. Highlights include profiles of National T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship recipients and Child Care WAGE\$® recipients, and highlights from the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center. You can find a copy [here](#).

#### T.E.A.C.H. EARLY CHILDHOOD® NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sue Russell, ex officio: Child Care Services Association

*National Members*

**Helen Blank**  
National Women’s Law Center

**Carol Brunson Day**  
Independent Consultant

**Ana De Hoyos O’Connor**  
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**Iheoma Iruka**  
HighScope

**Peg Sprague**  
Consultant

*T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Members*

**Megan Burk**  
Texas AEYC

**John Cregg**  
Nevada AEYC

**Phyllis Kalifeh**  
The Children’s Forum

**Edith Locke**  
Child Care Services Association

**Michelle Raybon**  
Alabama Partnership for Children



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...ensuring affordable, accessible, high-quality child care for all young children.