

Supporting Minnesota's Early Childhood Workforce

Minnesota's early childhood workforce - the teachers, assistant teachers, aides, family home providers/business owners, early childhood family educators and the like - are the foundation upon which the rest of the early childhood system depends. **Minnesota needs qualified, diverse, supported and fairly compensated early childhood educators so that parents can go to work, businesses can hire employees and children can thrive.**

The median hourly wage in Minnesota for a child care worker is only \$11.44 per hour or \$23,795 per year. A bachelor's degree in early childhood is the lowest paid degree you can earn in the United States. The median wage for teachers working in preK classrooms in the private sector is \$14.68 per hour and \$21.57 per hour in the public schools in Minnesota. Early childhood professionals in Minnesota work long hours, receive few benefits and struggle to meet their own families' needs. A recent study of child care center staff in Minnesota found that:

- 55% worry about having enough to pay their families' monthly bills
- 39% worry about paying housing costs
- 24% worry about having enough food for their own children

In order to attract and retain the early childhood workforce, reduce turnover as well as foster children's developmental needs, Minnesota needs to provide more support for new and current early childhood educators. It is recommended that Minnesota:

- Provide more support for ongoing education and professional development through TEACH, REETAIN and CDA scholarships for those already in the field
- Implement tax credits
- Include workforce support in DEED grants
- Provide tuition support to those going into the field
- Expand "Grow Your Own" to include early childhood teachers
- Expand supports for early childhood teachers of color and American Indian teachers
- Increase funding to help families access quality early care and improve compensation for providers who accept CCAP, scholarships and other public funds
- Implement the recommendations from the Legislative Auditor's report

Wages of Career-Type Jobs in Minnesota That Require a High School Diploma and Short Term on the Job Training

