

Early Childhood Education & the 87th Session

children at Risk



HB 619 (S. Thompson | Lopez | Button | Talarico)

Improving the Early Childhood Education Workforce

Early childhood educators play a critical role in our state. In addition to setting the foundation for our children's academic, health, and social development, early educators contribute to Texas's economic success by providing the care necessary for many families with young children to work. Despite being an essential occupation, Texas early educators often receive extremely low wages, limited training or opportunities for advancement, and few benefits. Because child care centers are often owned and staffed by low-income women of color, opportunities exist to address racial disparities in the child care workforce.



- The average hourly wage of an early educator in Texas is \$9, which equates to about \$19,000 per year (2018).
- Roughly 56% qualify for at least one form of public benefit, such as Medicaid or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (2018).
- Due to COVID-19, many Texas programs have been forced to furlough staff, reduce wages, or layoff educators to help manage expenses.

Child care educator salaries, especially those in programs accepting subsidy payments, do not reflect the complexity of the job. In addition, earnings do not significantly increase as educators earn higher degrees and progress within their careers. Early educators face limited career advancement opportunities, as a result the industry struggles to retain quality-trained educators.



POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Require Texas Workforce Commission to develop a statewide plan with goals for helping educators achieve credentials and degrees, earn living wages, and utilize the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System and Workforce Registry.

If Texas hopes to sustain a high-quality early education workforce, it needs a statewide plan with strategic goals. Specifically, this plan should include recommendations for



- Improving data collection practices
- Increasing compensation and reducing turnover
- Eliminating racial and gender pay disparities
- Strengthening paid professional development and career pathways, including apprenticeships
- Improving local workforce board support systems, technology, and participation in the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System

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The following organizations and individuals are signed on in support.

Amerigroup

Austin/Travis County Success By 6 Coalition

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston

Brighton Center

Catholic Charities of Dallas

Child Care Associates

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Circle Up, United Methodist Women

CitySquare

Commit Partnership

Cynthia Pearson, Day Nursery of Abilene

Dallas Early Education Alliance

Dillon Joyce Ltd

Doctors for Change

Dominican Sisters of Houston

Early Learning Alliance

Early Matters Dallas

Educate Midland

Educational First Steps

Emergence Health Network

Family Association of San Antonio, Inc.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids - Texas

Hancock Professional Development Resources &
Consulting

Houston Area Urban League

Ivy Kids - Hobbs

Kaleidoscope Child Development Center, Inc.

Kids Kountry Learning Center

Kids R Kids #5 Texas

Kids R Kids Learning Academy Westpointe

Kids R Kids of Lakeshore

Leslie Fierro - Avance, Inc. National

Mission: Readiness - Texas

Momentous Institute

Onjaleke Brown

Open Door Preschools, Austin TX

Ready Nation - Texas

Rhonda Parker

Sabrin Kinslow, LMSW

SAISD Early Childhood

Texans Care for Children

Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

TexProtects

TXPOST

United Way of Greater Austin

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas

United Ways of Texas

Vanguard Academy

YMCA of Greater Houston

YMCA of Greater San Antonio

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