

The Massachusetts Early Care and Education Workforce Study: Final Report Relevant to Survey Design

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Report to the Department of Early Education and Care,
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With a solid reputation for innovative research addressing complex issues, the University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston's only public university, is home to numerous centers and institutes that conduct policy-relevant research to support the social, political, and economic development of the community-at-large. The Massachusetts Early Care and Education Workforce Study is directed by scholars from three centers and institutes at UMass Boston: the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation, and the Center for Social Policy.

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The Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy

works to advance women's public leadership and the public policies that make a difference in the lives of all women. Through its innovative educational programs, policy-relevant research, and public forums, it works to ensure that the voices, expertise, and experiences of all women are valued and included in civic discourse and the policymaking process. The center works across sectors to build a prosperous economy that increases access and opportunity for all, particularly low-wage workers and women of color. All center initiatives and research explore the intersection of gender, race/ethnicity, and class on policymaking and politics.

The Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation

envisions a world in which all young children have access to high-quality early care and education (ECE). To achieve this, we develop and support a growing corps of early educators to design, test, and implement innovative ideas and best practices in ECE centers, schools, home-based businesses, and systems; we conduct cutting-edge research about how to redesign systems and policies to cultivate the leadership of early educators.

The Center for Social Policy (CSP) researches the root causes of economic hardship and examines the intersection of public policies and employment practices to boost well-being. The center accomplishes this through active engagement with policymakers, researchers, service providers, and those facing economic hardship.

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Note: This study was completed with funds appropriated to the Department of Early Education and Care in the FY2018 state budget for the purpose of a statewide study of the early education and care workforce to be conducted by UMass Boston. Section 2 of Chapter 47 of the Acts of 2017 contained the following language in item #3000-1020: "not less than \$100,000 shall be expended for a comprehensive statewide study, conducted by the University of Massachusetts at Boston, relative to the early education and care workforce in the Commonwealth."

Phase I Executive Summary

There is a long history of low compensation and inadequate benefits being provided to the early care and education workforce. The dire consequences of this – on educators, their own families, and the children for whom they care – have been well-documented in both the scholarly literature and in policy relevant reports.

What is new in the Commonwealth is an increasingly urgent conversation about the need to change this situation. The leadership in the State House, on both the House and Senate sides, have made recent statements about the need for new public policies to address this set of issues – and there are significant investments in the workforce on the table for the coming fiscal year. The question before our lawmakers and concerned residents of Massachusetts is where are the current data on the ECE workforce needed to shape new public policy options and legislative as well as other proposals?

The need for policy-relevant data led to the creation of the *Massachusetts Early Care and Education Workforce Study*. This report and the accompanying PowerPoint comprise Phase One of this study. The research team wants to design the survey questions in alignment with the concerns and experiences of stakeholders in early care and education, particularly those of educators themselves who work in a variety of settings. By holding focus groups and conducting a small scale survey, the research team has determined four key issue areas to gather data on in the survey:

- 1) Compensation and Benefits: ECE workers told us it is hard to make ends meet on an educator's salary, but what are current levels of compensation and how do they vary by race/ethnicity, educational level and other factors? What kinds of employer benefits are available? How is low compensation driving educators out of the field? What level of compensation would stabilize the workforce? What kind of pay would enable ECE workers to save an eventually retire?
- 2) Professional Development and Credentialing: The ECE workforce is eager for professional development but face hurdles in access? To what extent are hurdles financial? Why is there a continued disconnect between educational attainment and compensation even when ECE workers do get credentials?
- 3) Public Benefits Usage and Cliff Effects: This issue is largely unstudied for this workforce, and the extent of public benefits usage is largely undocumented. This study will gather data on the extent of public benefits usage by type of benefit and type of ECE worker. Data will help assess what happens when public benefits are available, and what happens when workers lose them?
- 4) Debt Load: The requirement for higher levels of credentialing, especially obtaining an AA or a BA, has caused many ECE workers to take out loans. We will collect data on the extent of educational debt, as well as data on debt for housing and automobiles, as well as general credit card debt.

We are grateful for the insights we have gained in this pre-survey data collection phase and are now ready to design a policy-relevant statewide survey.

Introduction: Purpose and Goals of Phase I Study

Background

Every weekday morning over four hundred thousand young children in Massachusetts get up, dressed and leave to go to child care while their parent or parents go to work. Every weekday morning over seventy five thousand educators in Massachusetts get up, dressed and either set up their homes, or drive/take public transportation to classrooms where they teach these children and foster their cognitive, social, emotional, and motor development to the best of their ability. (Supel, 2018). The work they do is setting a social and educational foundation for these children that will have lifelong consequences.

There is a profound disconnect between the true cost of quality care and what the state and/or parents pay for that care. The level of subsidy provided by the state does not cover the cost of care per child. This has been a problem for many years in terms of the level of subsidy for publicly supported child care. This and other factors result in low compensation, a persistent challenge facing early childhood educators – not only in Massachusetts but across the nation. Yet the latest report from the University of California/Berkeley that tracks ECE workforce issues for all fifty states found that, in Massachusetts, progress on compensation is “stalled.” (Whitebook et al, 2018).

To say the work of these educators is essential to the future of our families, homes, workplaces, and civil society is an understatement. What could constitute more important work for the residents of the Commonwealth? Yet the public policies of the Commonwealth, and many other states, do not reflect adequate public investment in the work of early childhood education. Consequently these educators remain unpaid and undervalued.

Purpose

The Massachusetts Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Study aims to provide current data on this workforce so that new policies impacting their pay, benefits, working conditions, public benefits usage, debt relief and professional development opportunities can be developed. There has not been data systematically and comprehensively collected on this sector of the Massachusetts workforce in nearly 15 years.

Specifically, Phase One was designed to inform domains and questions to be included in the ECE Workforce Survey by exploring two emerging topics of relevance and concern for this workforce, cliff effects and debt load, particularly as related to compensation and professional development.

Phase I: Research Design

The research team organized eight focus groups covering different regions of the Commonwealth and including several types of stakeholders connected to the early care and education workforce and/or familiar with issues facing it. For more detail, please see Appendices A and B for methodological detail. First and foremost, we wanted to hear from educators themselves and worked hard to ensure diversity in racial and ethnic background as well as the type of setting in which they work. The focus groups included educators who are English-speaking, Spanish-speaking, and Chinese-speaking. These educators work in center-based and family child care settings. In addition, we held focus groups that included center directors, case managers, benefits counselors, professional development providers, and higher education faculty.

The research team organized the focus groups around four key topics that will serve as the areas of focus in the survey. An Advisory Committee convened at the outset of the project provided helpful guidance on how to frame these four topics and what data were most important to collect through focus groups. Please see Appendix C for more information on the Advisory Committee.

As indicated in Appendix B, the eight focus groups included a total of 40 individuals. Focus groups as a method of data collection hold both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand they allow for the collection of in-depth accounts that reflect broader themes and allow educators an opportunity to offer their own experiences and perspectives on policy issues and potential solutions. They also provide important data to inform the development of a survey instrument to address pressing concerns of workers in this field in Massachusetts – data that would be otherwise not available for this purpose.

On the other hand, given the nature of early care and education workplaces, it is very difficult to find a feasible time for educators to attend focus groups. Family child care providers and center-based educators cannot leave children unattended. Study participation depends on the availability of substitute teachers or availability of educators in the evenings after work. Reaching educators who were able to take time during workdays was a major challenge faced by the research team, in addition to the reality that even after-hours options made available to educators did not work for many who were interested in participating in the study. We also know that a focus group is not a good format for collecting sensitive personal data, such as the utilization of public assistance. In order to collect such data we developed brief paper surveys that focus group participants could complete, thereby protecting information they wish to keep confidential. In addition, if focus group attendance was lower than anticipated, we modified our research plan as needed and conducted individual interviews with those individuals who were available for an interview prior to the end of the study period (N=4). The initial study protocol and protocol modifications were approved by UMass Boston's Institutional Review

Board. What is presented as analysis below and in the accompanying PowerPoint reflects an initial mining of data for the purpose of topic refinement and survey development. When the survey is developed in Phase II, the data collected in Phase I will be utilized in a more detailed manner, with attention to some more nuanced findings that are not discussed here.

Phase I: Key Findings

There are three overarching themes reflected in the data collected for Phase I that may not be new to those familiar with trends in this field in Massachusetts but are important to highlight here as they represent major topics to be addressed in the statewide survey.

The commitment of many teachers to the field of early childhood education is deep and often long-term while simultaneously the nature of their work is shifting and expanding.

It is striking that many teachers have been in this professional field for a number of years and many plan to remain. Many are motivated by the sheer joy and reward of teaching very young children and leading ECE programs. Their commitment is significant not only because their compensation is so low, but also because teachers and directors reported repeatedly that their responsibilities have increased. They find many more challenging behaviors among the children in their classrooms, and there is a perceived rise in the diagnoses of autism, ADHD, and a variety of learning disabilities. Teachers also report encountering children facing adversities such as homelessness and parents who have died. Respondents reported that most ECE centers and family child care homes do not have access to the kinds of resources they need to support children facing these issues. They also reported challenges accessing appropriate training for their career stage. It is important to have data about the professional development needs of the ECE workforce, and about their access to a coherent and ongoing continuum of professional learning opportunities for teachers, program administrators, and family child care providers.

Early care and education as a professional field is experiencing a significant shortage of qualified ECE educators and program directors and this means many centers and other types of programs are not operating at full capacity.

It is imperative to have current data on the extent of the teacher and family child care provider shortage, the reasons for the shortage, and the impact of this shortage on the availability of ECE programs for young children from birth to five. This would require that the workforce survey include an adequate sample of ECE program directors and family child care providers, as discussed in the sampling options section.

There is a high level of economic insecurity among educators in the ECE field and this impacts not only the ability of educators to pay their bills, but also the quality of life for themselves, their partners/spouses, and their own children.

This finding is complex and can only be documented by collecting data on a number of indicators. The research team will consider how data collected on the level of pay/compensation, extent of financial and nonfinancial benefits provided by employers, usage of public assistance, and debt load might be combined to develop an index or scale related to economic security in the ECE workforce.

A. Compensation and Benefits

Many educators cannot support themselves or their families on their earnings providing early care and education.

Compensation is at either below minimum wage, at minimum wage, or at what is termed a “low-wage” level, making it virtually impossible to make ends meet. Although many educators are hopeful about new Massachusetts legislation that will increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, most are aware that this will not significantly impact their ability to pay their monthly bills or move them toward long-term economic security. Participants expressed concern about their economic well-being:

- “We’ve got to jump a lot, like a \$10 hourly wage increase immediately. And we’re getting, we inch up every year a dollar maybe if we’re lucky.”
- “I can’t afford to stay in this field”
- “it’s very frustrating for a lot of educators...why are educators leaving the field and I think that, you know, the economic factor, not just the living wage but all of the things that are appended to that..really, really poor”

Implications for Survey Design

There is a pressing need for data to specify earnings for different kinds of educators so they can be disaggregated by their race/ethnicity, age, number of years in the profession, and other factors that may affect income levels for ECE workers. Particularly given the new minimum wage law, the survey will need to quantify what percent of educators earn less than minimum wage, at the minimum wage, and above the minimum wage and how the wage issues are linked to utilization of public assistance (as discussed in more detail in the following section) to get a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of compensation.

Given the lack of progress on raising compensation, many educators are looking toward improved employer benefits as a way to gain additional support.

Some center directors are being creative in their attempt to recruit and retain staff, paying sign on bonuses, giving paid breaks, paying for increasing amounts of health insurance, giving tuition assistance, providing flexible spending accounts, and flexible schedules.

Key quotes:

- “if pay can’t get raised, they should compensate in other ways, “like an added benefit option in her package for the center to pay for health care at 100% or provide them with discounted child care at the same center or another center.”
- “At \$60 a paycheck...health insurance ‘packs a punch’.”

Implications for Survey Design

There is a need to collect data on the provision of traditional benefits (such as health insurance and sick days) and non-traditional benefits, on how widespread each of these benefit provisions are, and to what extent they make a difference in recruitment, retention, and length of service, as well as increased potential for economic security of educators and their families.

Many early care and education teachers are at risk for having no option to retire and no savings to fund their living expenses during retirement.

While employers in other industries have moved away from guaranteed pension plans based on seniority, many have offered 401K Plans or other vehicles to help employees save and build a retirement fund. This appears to be limited in the ECE workplace. Given that family child care is essentially a small business, family child care educators do not pay into Social Security.

Implications for Survey Design

Retirement data are essential for any analysis of the ECE workforce, including information about what percent of the workforce lacks Social Security, whether or not educators have access to retirement savings accounts, whether there is any employer contribution, and what level of retirement savings they anticipate if they remain in the ECE workforce. Data could also be collected to make projections on how many retired ECE workers will live at or below the poverty level based on their current levels of savings.

There is pressure for ECE educators to hold two or three jobs.

Some educators are advised to get a second job where the employer is required to pay into Social Security. Some educators need to get a second job because the level of compensation in their teaching job is simply not providing a “living wage.”

Implications for Survey Design

There is a need to document what percentage of educators hold two jobs or more, what kinds of additional paid work they have, and how much they make in their non-ECE positions. Data should also be collected on each educators total earnings, and what percent of their earnings come from their ECE job and what percent comes from other types of employment.

B. Professional Development and Credentialing

Educators are eager for professional development opportunities, but often face significant financial obstacles in accessing courses and/or degree programs.

Educators want to grow professionally and keep up with the latest developments in the early childhood education field, but few work for agencies that offer tuition assistance or scholarships. Additionally, an educator's socioeconomic and parenting situation can influence their capacity to take on professional development opportunities.

Implications for Survey Design

We need data on trainings completed by educators during the last calendar year, including length, mode, cost, and types of trainings. The survey should include questions on whether the educator's employer offered tuition assistance or scholarships, and if they did, whether all or part of the cost of the training or degree program was covered. The survey will also need to include questions regarding the number of educators pursuing an AA (Associate's degree), BA (Bachelor's degree), or master's/graduate degree, their status in the degree program, and anticipated completion year.

The coherence and sequencing of coursework/training over time need to be addressed in professional development offerings; opportunities need to account for differing needs of educators at all levels of the career ladder: entry level, mid-career, and advanced career.

Much of what exists is at entry level and there is little to no advanced career and leadership development available. Additionally, it's important to provide more access to various levels of professional development coursework on trauma, children with special needs, multilingual learners, and cultural competence; while such needs have been previously documented, the emphasis on trauma is clearly a newer and emergent concern articulated by several study participants.

Another concern is about CEU trainings, and confusion about if and how these translate into college credits. Some focus group participants voiced concern that CEU credits do not carry any real professional development "currency." As one focus

group participant explained, there is a “huge disconnect with the CEUs; CEUs were never intended to be an entrée to college but that’s how they’re being sold that way and that’s not what their intention was...”

Implications for Survey Design

We need representative data on educators’ professional development needs relative to their career level and credentials.

Access to professional development opportunities is limited by factors other than the cost; some are geographic and there additional complex factors.

When educators live in rural areas or in certain regions of the state, focus group participants find a lack of high quality degree programs or other professional development opportunities. For instance, some educators explained that even when they want to increase the level of professional development beyond the “typical workshop,” it is very hard for them to be able to manage it all without any public assistance or other wrap around supports (such as child care for their own children). Others noted that only a very small percentage of educators can access the limited early educator state scholarships, and that financial burdens are related to not only tuition and child care, but also to the cost of books, internet access, and transportation. As one focus group participant explained, “They can’t afford their books....they say I’ll go but they can’t afford gas to get there, childcare, books. And even if they take it on line, they still need a book. Some of them need to have access to wireless that they don’t pay for.”

Implications for Survey Design

The survey will need to yield geographic location of the educators and closest college degree program(s) or access to online programs. This will allow an analysis of how much the geographic isolation of educators and ECE training options is affecting professional credentialing. In addition, we will utilize other demographic (survey) data to discern whether this is an issue that disproportionately affects different sectors of the ECE workforce.

Family child care providers may have some different professional development needs and interests that must be addressed through special offerings for this educator/provider group.

Specific concerns articulated by providers include the need for specialized training such as curriculum training focused on the mixed age groups that are characteristic of family child care setting, trainings offered evenings and weekends, and access to college degree programs.

Implications for Survey Design

The survey should include questions about the educational credentials, professional development needs, and access to professional development of family child care providers.

There is a significant disconnect between level of professional credentials and level of compensation for educators across different types of ECE programs.

When educators pursue and complete professional development opportunities, they often see little impact on their paychecks. For example, as one family child care provider explained, “I have an Associate degree, Bachelor’s degree, Masters’ degree, and I also have a certificate. In my opinion my education has served me well as a business woman, as an entrepreneur and as an early educator. However, for me personally my pay should not be the same with someone who is 18 years old just starting a home daycare and it is when it comes to a voucher. I get the same pay as someone 18 years old, with a high school diploma, and is starting their own early learning center in their home. I get the same pay and I don’t think that is fair.”

In addition, increased professional development and/or QRIS requirements may be having an impact on the stability of the birth to five ECE workforce.

Some focus group participants report that as soon as ECE educators get a BA they move on to another job, to earn a higher salary, for example by taking teaching positions in the public school system. Focus group participants also noted the demands of QRIS on family child care providers, without accompanying compensation increases. As one family child care provider explained, “A lot of the people are leaving the field because of the quality rating standard QRIS. They feel annoyed that they are getting requested to get more education and there is no compensation for the extra regulation or mandatory training. So people are leaving the field left and right. They feel very policed, they don’t feel supported or helped. They feel the state is only looking to find out what is wrong and not looking to help people.”

Implications for Survey Design

We need data on how many educators have received a BA, how many are currently pursuing a BA, and the date they received or expect to receive a BA to allow analysis of trends. We also need to gather data to measure how this is impacting educator retention and salaries, looking at ECE centers and family child care homes. We need data on pay levels and educational levels in order to document whether new professional credentials result in an increase in pay or not.

Working as an educator, caring for family members young and old, and going to school is an overwhelming triumvirate of responsibilities to carry.

Some focus group participants reported that going to school at night after teaching all day is exhausting, negatively affects their own parenting, and that they need support, particularly childcare for their own children. An educator's socioeconomic and parenting situation can influence their capacity to take on professional development opportunities.

Implications for Survey Design

We need to assess employer practices pertaining to providing work/family supports to educators seeking professional development.

In addition, there is a need for a unified system for submitting and accessing educator credentials in order to allow for easier tracking and documentation of credentials and coursework.

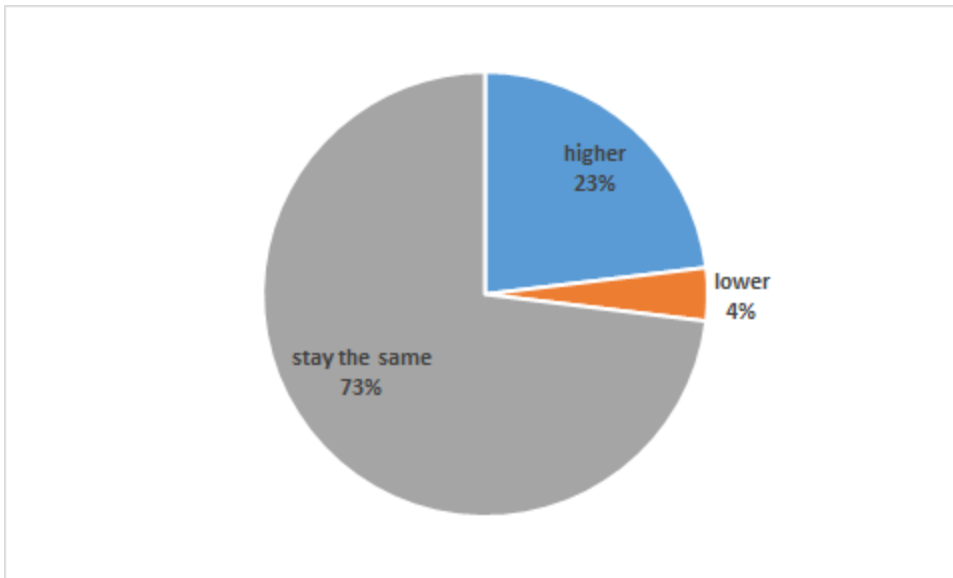
In order to prevent having individuals retake CEU courses if they change jobs and lose their certificates, it's necessary to ensure that the system addresses this need. Each teacher's path to PD needs to be individualized to that teacher's need, goals, career level, and aspirations.

C. Public Benefits Usage and Cliff Effects

Public benefit usage and the impact of cliff effects were primarily assessed by 1) the benefits counselor focus groups; 2) interviews conducted for benefits counselors unable to attend the focus group; 3) a pilot survey conducted at an early childhood center, and 4) additional comments that arose in other focus groups.

The pilot survey focused on public benefits and the experience of cliff effects was conducted in a center-based ECE center located in South Boston (n=27). A survey was used instead of a focus group because the group was primarily an intact work team (2 respondents were from a nearby center-based setting).

The survey analysis revealed the average employee tenure was 6.17 years. Center staff reported earning \$450 - \$700 per week, with median weekly pay \$500. Average hours were 39.7, with several respondents reporting working overtime. 62% of the respondents are sole providers for their households. Consistent with the overall labor market on wage stagnation, most expect their financial situation to remain the same next year.



Housing instability is fairly common for this sample of the ECE workforce, which increases the need for public benefits support and makes these workers especially vulnerable. The survey revealed that over a quarter - 27% - live in a housing situation that is not satisfactory and an additional 12% live in a temporary housing situation (sharing with friends or family). Moreover, three (11%) respondents reported that they have been formerly homeless at some previous time.

Of the 26 respondents, 42% report having children under 18 living at home. This is important, as some public benefits are targeted only for families with children.

Many educators have to rely on public benefits in order to make ends meet.

Forty-one percent of the respondents in this sample of center-based employees reported being on at least one benefit. Health insurance was the most frequently accessed benefit, with about thirty percent reported being on MassHealth for themselves or their children. Focus group participants suggested that “most of our educators will refuse the health insurance that we offer because they’re eligible for Mass Health.” In addition, several reported concerns about losing MassHealth due to income fluctuations and earnings increases:

“Mass Health gives them an incredibly hard time because of the fact that their income fluctuates and goes up and down and really by the time they get all the paperwork done for this quarter, they [MassHealth] are already rejecting them for the last quarter because they just happen to have one extra kid.”

“I can’t make an extra quarter without being penalized and I can’t get healthcare for my child”

Almost thirty percent (eight survey respondents) reported being on more than one benefit. The other benefits noted were SNAP (food stamps), WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) and Housing Support (which encompasses both public housing and rental vouchers). Four respondents expressed concern about reduction in a benefit if their wages increase (the cliff effect), and most of these expressed concerns about a rent increases. As one focus group participant expressed:

“There’s a lot of navigating around income as their income goes up and down based on the number of children that they have and then negotiating with their public housing authority because it affects their rent.

One benefit recipient in subsidized housing received training to work in childcare, went to work at nonprofit in childcare. Then her rent was going up with earnings going up with steady job. She was considering quitting her job. The worry was that she would be losing money overall. She felt that they were assessing the increase wrong (because of need for home repairs). She was seriously thinking about quitting the job, even though she liked it and valued it. She was going to go back on welfare (was already on SNAP), because her housing was guaranteed, she would be cutting her expenses by not working. The working was resulting in bills and payments she could not manage.”

Some educators are not eligible for public benefits although they need them.

Focus group benefit counselors reported working with few childcare workers. Focus group participants report that childcare educators are generally eligible for many public benefits – and some use them – but some educators are not using public benefits due to the eligibility requirements or barriers to access for different programs.

Benefits counselors reported that they were typically responsible for one benefit [in our interview/focus group sample, those benefits included TAFDC (Temporary Aid to Families with Dependent Children), SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and LIHEAP (Low Income Heat Energy Assistance Program)]. Focus group respondents expressed an in-depth knowledge of their specific assigned benefits, and were able to explain the rules and regulations in detail. However, they reported that it was typically not part of their job responsibility to be knowledgeable about all other benefits that a client may be on or potentially be on or eligible for, thus when the needs for those benefits arose (e.g., housing), they referred to another agency. Counselors often accessed various resources to share with their clients on benefit eligibility, work requirements, and job placements.

Respondents reported that many times clients only needed childcare, yet the way the eligibility system is structured, they can only get the childcare voucher if they are on TAFDC (welfare):

“Someone may say ‘I don’t want to apply for cash benefit, I just need childcare’, yet they say you have to apply for cash benefit (TAFDF).”

“I have seen families who have just childcare or daycare vouchers and their cash benefit is very low but they still have to go through that whole process to determine. You know there should just be some benefit specific to them, but they have to see a case caseworker and they are going to make them apply for TAFDC. It is an extra hurdle.”

Focus group participants also noted that it can be challenging to verify employment. Large employers (like TJ Maxx or Stop and Shop) are on a centralized employer system (Work Number). But this is not the case for smaller employers:

People have trouble getting verifications from their employer. If working, need to supply letter. Employers don’t always want to give them the letter.

Many benefits require employment verification, so the inability to produce a formal letter from their employers puts childcare workers at risk for losing a benefit entirely.

When educators take on more work hours, even a small number of hours, their benefit levels are reduced.

Focus group participants report that many educators often want more work hours due to their low compensation, but fear they will become ineligible for public benefits because their paycheck will reflect this slight rise in income (which then needs to be reported to the agency administering the benefit), even though it is frequently temporary:

“It is tricky because if you are just literally a dollar over the income limit, you are not eligible or your vouchers will just “go to 0” to keep your case active, but active at 0 that means you are not getting anything...Several times you may see the same family or the same person their benefit fluctuates, around holiday time their benefit go down because they are working more.”

“People are supposed to report their income if it increase with over a \$150 every month.] The reality is that people don’t report except when their wages go down because then they will qualify for more benefit. People don’t report their increased income because they do not want to lose benefit.] We take gross income, although people are always shocked to hear that.] People get confused with gross v. net

income all the time, we have to tell them this is how your eligibility was determined.”

Additional focus group data suggest that the cliff effect may be impacting child care worker’s interest in professional advancement: “..the cliff effect, a lot of folks are gonna lose their own public assistance if the make more money. So I don’t want to be lead teacher qualified because then I’m gonna lose my childcare voucher and I’m gonna lose [several benefits]”

Focus group respondents noted that there are some new policies in place for the past year to help recipients maintain SNAP benefits longer, so they are not penalized for working more. However this policy is new; the impact of this policy could take a while before it becomes evident.

Implications for Survey Design

Because wages are so low for the childcare workforce, they are able to stay on many benefits for longer, such as MassHealth. We need data on what percent of the ECE workforce currently rely on some form of public benefit, and this data should be collected by specific benefit programs. We also need to aggregate and analyze this comprehensive data to determine the benefit bundles, or combinations of benefits, the ECE workforce uses. These are more likely to be vulnerable families and are also more likely to experience significant cliffs. This may enable us to identify patterns and develop more specific policy recommendations tailored to the ECE workforce.

By collecting public benefit usage in conjunction with employer-provided benefits, we will be able to analyze typical patterns across the industry, as well as identify needs and gaps.

The rates of homelessness and reports of housing instability should not be overlooked. The survey will collect information on homelessness and housing situation, to better understand the housing challenges facing the ECE workforce. It is also important to examine the impact of housing instability on the ability of these workers to maintain their employment.

It will be helpful to collect data on how many educators applied for a public benefit, but were turned down due to lack of eligibility for specific programs, or perhaps some other reason. We also need to collect data on the nature of ECE employment (in terms of hours, schedule predictability, and seasonal employment) to better understand access and maintenance of benefits. For example, if smaller or family-based centers do not have formal payroll processes, it may make it challenging for them to verify income which is essential for benefit maintenance.

While these challenges in accessing and maintaining benefits are also faced by other low-wage workers, it would be useful to ascertain the specific hurdles faced by ECE

workers. These hurdles may include lack of benefits information, lack of benefits counseling, bureaucratic rules that make it difficult to fill out applications, difficulty accessing agencies (due to transportation or scheduling barriers), and other issues such as summer break and how to manage benefits when pay or employer benefits are prorated.

We also need data on whether there is adequate translation of benefit information and benefit applications. This will enable us to document whether ECE workers whose primary language is not English face additional hurdles in accessing public benefits.

Data on the prevalence of losing public benefits due to temporary or permanent increased earnings, and data on the negative impact of losing benefits on the households of ECE workers, as well as the ECE worker herself/himself are essential. The survey should assess the extent to which workers understand their paychecks (e.g., the difference between gross and net earnings). The survey will be designed to include questions to document in detail the extent of cliff effects in the ECE workforce. These data will help us better understand when and why cliffs occur in the childcare industry, thus enabling the development of recommendations for policy changes, altering industry practices, and support services such as financial coaching.

D. Debt Load

Educators are not only struggling with low compensation, but are also experiencing economic stress due to student loan repayment pressures.

Educational debt is known to be an issue for ECE educators, but the extent of the problem has not been documented. Some study participants noted that loans either serve a tremendous barrier to enrolling in higher degree programs and/or needing to leave the field due to loan debt related to their education. In one case, a study participant explained that some teachers feel that their only options to get higher degrees are “only loans” and some of them just cannot afford paying them back, so they don’t even try. Another explained,

“Educators who have gone through the formalized traditional route of education and have student loans and have these monthly payments that they’re paying...They’re in a field where there are loan forgiveness programs but accessing those are very tricky and very complicated.”

Implications for Survey Design

We need to collect data on what percent of educators, by type of ECE setting, are paying off student loans, how much their total loan is, how much they pay per month, general loan requirements and/or stipulations, and how likely it is that they

will be able to pay off their loans. This is necessary not only because debt is an important factor related to economic security and well-being but also relates directly to professional development opportunities - including what is available, affordable, and utilizable.

Due to low compensation, educators often carry personal debt along with student loan debt and this causes additional stress for educators and their families.

Implications for Survey Design

Data are needed on the extent of personal debt such as car loans, credit cards, loans from family members. Specifically, the kinds of personal debt educators are carrying, the amount they owe for each type of loan, and the total amount of debt they are carrying - likely on top of student loan debt - are necessary for a comprehensive understanding of debt implications on this workforce. In addition, these data will be analyzed as a percentage of annual earnings for educators, and how this varies by race/ethnicity, age, educational level, type of ECE program, and other factors.

Preliminary Sampling Options for Statewide Survey

Prepared by Anthony Roman, Senior Research Fellow, Center for Survey Research, UMass Boston

Focus Populations

The proposed survey of the early care and education workforce in Massachusetts will concentrate on three separate populations. They are:

1. Family child care providers
2. Center-based educators
3. Center-based administrators

The best available data on statewide counts of these populations, as provided by the state using licensing and PQR data, is 5,800 FCC providers, 47,500 Center-based educators and 4,500 Center-based administrators. It should be noted that the broader definition of administrator is being used here which includes anyone at a center who has administrative duties. If the more restrictive definition is used, which only includes CEOs, then the counts would be 49,160 Center-based educators and 2,840 Center-based administrators. For development of sampling specifications, the broader definition will be used. However, use of the more narrow definition will have little effect on any results.

Study Considerations

As will be detailed below, two primary considerations for this study are: 1) whether regional estimates are desired or not and 2) what level of precision is acceptable. Another consideration that is inferred is what response rate can be expected. The higher the response rate, the less bias there will be in survey estimates and lower costs will be incurred. What is necessary to consider is how receptive the target populations will be to being surveyed.

Additionally, related to response rate expectations is the respondent burden that is being placed on people. The longer and more complicated the survey, the higher level of burden is placed on respondents and the fewer that can be expected to complete the survey.

Another factor to consider whether the questionnaire and other survey materials need to be translated into languages other than English which would likely include Spanish, Portuguese, Creole, and one or two others. Each translation can be quite expensive, as well as the cost for printing various language versions of the questionnaire, programming various language web surveys and even hiring multilingual interviewers if the telephone is used. Costs increase rapidly when translations are required and translation costs can range wildly depending on how much you want to get verified translations.

These are just some of the considerations involved in conducting a survey such as this and trying to figure out what the expected survey costs might be. There are many options to consider, and guidance from EEC and the advisory committee will be essential. Once some details about sample size, response rate expectations, translations required and mode of survey administration is known, then costs are a bit more likely to be somewhat in the ballpark.

There are different options for attempting to get higher response rates which cost different amounts. We expect some of the higher intensive strategies may be required to ensure adequate response rates for these populations.

The following sampling options outline what would be needed for a statewide sample and for regional samples.

Overall Sampling Strategies

There are two primary approaches for developing a sampling strategy for these populations. The first is a strategy which concentrates on producing accurate statewide estimates. This approach involves simple random sampling on a statewide level. The primary benefit of this approach is that it is the most cost-effective strategy for minimizing the sample size required to obtain accurate statewide estimates. The main drawback of this approach is that it may or may not yield acceptable regional estimates.

The second approach is a stratified sample design which uses regions as the stratifying variable. For these populations, the state notes five regions of interest. They are Western Mass., Central Mass., Northeast Mass., Southeast Mass. including Cape Cod and the Metro Boston area. After the populations are stratified into the above regions, then a simple random sample is selected from within each region. The primary benefit of this approach is that it can guarantee a certain level of accuracy for estimates from each of the five regions. The main drawback is that it requires a larger overall sample size, adds complexity to analyses of survey data and will be more expensive.

Details of the two approaches are presented below.

Statewide Sample Approach

Initially, what is being considered with this design is simply creating statewide estimates for each of the three populations. For this approach, a simple random sample of people from each population under study is recommended. For development of estimated sample sizes, the goal will be to have 95% confidence limits of +/- 5 percentage points around an estimated proportion from these populations of 50%. In other words, if the data from the survey yielded an estimate of 50% (e.g., 50% of FCC providers felt a certain way or 50% of Center-based

educators had experienced some type of event, etc.), then there would be 95% certainty that the true population proportion was between 45% and 55%.^[1]

In order to achieve this level of statistical precision, a sample size of 384 completed surveys^[2] would be needed from each of the three populations under study. Note that this is 384 *completed* interviews. So the original sample size must be larger. If it was expected that a 70% response rate could be obtained in the surveys, then that would mean the original sample size should be 549 people from each population. If it was anticipated that only a 50% response rate would be obtained,^[3] then the original sample size would need to be 768 people from each population.

The +/- 5 percentage point level of precision obtained is around a statewide estimate which uses data from all of the 384 completed interviews. If regional estimates were created from these 384 interviews, a different picture emerges. Using regional breakdowns supplied by the Department of Early Care and Education, the following levels of precision would be obtained at a regional level:

	<u>FCC</u>	<u>Center-based Educators</u>	<u>Center-based Administrators</u>
Central MA	+/- 11.2*	+/- 14.4	+/- 15.1
Metro Boston	+/- 10.2	+/- 8.2	+/- 8.7
Northeast	+/- 9.3	+/- 11.2	+/- 11.2
Southeast & Cape	+/- 13.9	+/- 11.8	+/- 11.2
Western MA	+/- 13.3	+/- 16.6	+/- 13.9

* All numbers in the table are expressed as percentage points. For example, 11.2 means +/- 11.2 percentage points for the limits of a 95% confidence interval.

It is quickly apparent that regional estimates do not have the same level of precision as estimated regional sample sizes are much smaller. Most 95% confidence limits are greater than 10 percentage points.

If a greater level of overall statewide precision was desired, say +/- 3 percentage points instead of +/- 5 percentage points, then a far greater sample size would be needed. To get this level of precision, 1067 completed interviews would be required or almost three times number of interviews for the +/- 5 percentage points cited in the above calculations. Also, this would mean an original sample size of 1524 if a 70% response rate was anticipated and 2134 if a 50% response rate was expected. Again, these are much bigger numbers.

However, this number of completed interviews would lead to better regional estimates as indicated below:

	<u>FCC</u>	<u>Center-based Educators</u>	<u>Center-based Administrators</u>
Central MA	+/- 6.7*	+/- 8.7	+/- 9.1
Metro Boston	+/- 6.1	+/- 4.9	+/- 5.2
Northeast	+/- 5.6	+/- 6.7	+/- 6.7
Southeast & Cape	+/- 8.3	+/- 7.1	+/- 6.7
Western MA	+/- 8.0	+/- 10.0	+/- 8.3

* All numbers in the table are expressed as percentage points. For example, 6.7 means +/- 6.7 percentage points for the limits of a 95% confidence interval.

It can be seen that regional estimates have much more precision due to the higher number of expected interviews within each region.

Finally, if it was decided due to cost constraints or for some other reason that it was necessary to have a lower level of precision on statewide estimates, the following can be considered. With 170 completed interviews within each population from across the state, 95% confidence limits would be +/- 7.5 percentage points. This would also mean an original sample size of 243 people from each population if a 70% response rate could be obtained and an original sample size of 340 people if a 50% response rate could be expected. If this option was chosen, then regional estimates would not be advised, as sample sizes per region would be quite small with very low precision.

Regional Sample Approach

If regional estimates were a primary concern, then it is suggested that a sampling approach be taken to guarantee a certain level of precision within each region. This would require a stratified sample in which there were 5 separate strata corresponding to the 5 regions. In other words, each population would initially be divided into people from each of the 5 regions and then a simple random sample of people from within each region would be drawn. If, within each region, 95% confidence limits were desired that were no greater than 7.5 percentage points, then 170 completed interviews would be required from each of the 5 regions. This would imply an overall sample of $5 \times 170 = 850$ completed interviews from across the five regions. This would then lead to estimated 95% confidence limits of approximately +/- 3.7 percentage points for statewide estimates created by combining completed interviews from all 5 regions. This last estimate assumes that standard errors are inflated by 10% due to the stratified design. In other words, it assumes a design effect of 1.1 for statewide estimates. It is not known with certainty what the design effects will actually be, but the 10% inflation factor on standard errors is a reasonable approximation. It should also be remembered that this implies an original sample size of 1214 people from each population if a 70%

response rate is assumed and 1700 people if a 50% response rate is assumed. Still, this is a better approach if both statewide and regional estimates are desired.

If higher precision was sought for regional, estimates, this means a significantly larger study. For example if regional 95% confidence limits of +/- 5 percentage points were sought, then this implies 384 completed interviews per region or 1920 completed interviews statewide.

[1] The value of 50% was used in this development as confidence limits around any other estimated proportion (e.g., 60%, 20%, etc.) would be smaller than +/- 5 percentage points. As such, this is a conservative approach.

[2] The sample size value remains the same because all population sizes are relatively large. The 384 completed interviews range from 0.8% of the Center-based educator population to 6.6% of the FCC provider population to 8.5% of the Center-based administrator population. In other words, the sampling fractions remain below 10% in each case and therefore are quite small. The estimated sample size values will only change across populations if sampling fractions become much higher for some of these populations.

[3] If respondents perceive value to their circumstance, then rates will be higher. If more expensive options are used such as monetary incentives and Priority Mail, then rates can be expected to be somewhat higher. If no incentives are used in a single regular mailing, rates will be lower. 40-50% is a reasonable estimate.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Phase One of the Early Care and Education Workforce Study has now been completed. The focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys provided the research team with rich and detailed insights into the professional and personal lives of educators across the Commonwealth. We are appreciative to all participants for sharing their stories, their joy in and commitment to teaching young children, as well as their concerns about how the current system works and the lack of respect they feel often is given to them as workers. Many also provided ideas about solutions to a wide range of ECE challenges, but it is premature to move to recommendations concerning policy solutions until we can survey a representative sample of educators across the state.

By identifying key findings and specifying particular types of data that need to be collected, we are now fully ready to enter Phase Two and design the statewide survey. The input we have gotten from individuals who work in and/or closely with the ECE field allows us to move directly into framing individual survey questions and shaping survey sections so that particular issues that have not been well-documented or well-understood in previous surveys and studies of the ECE workforce can be specified and eventually addressed.

We are aware of the need to administer the survey in ways that ensure a robust response rate and that the ECE workforce – in all its diversity – is adequately represented in the survey sample. As a next step, we would like to discuss with the Commissioner and professional staff of the Department of Early Education and Care as soon as possible on these two important topics.

We look forward to partnering with all our colleagues in the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, as well as our esteemed Advisory Committee, to move this survey forward and lay the basis for new policy-relevant data and analysis on the ECE workforce.

Sources Cited

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Whitebook, Marcy. McLean Caitlin and Bethany Edwards. 2018. *The Early Childhood Workforce Index 2018*. June 27, 2018. Retrieved on 28 June 2018 from <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/early-childhood-workforce-2018-index>.

Appendix A. Data Collection Instruments

Demographic Data Instrument: Educators

In what age category are you?

- 18 - 29
- 30 - 44
- 45 - 59
- 60 - 70
- 70+

2. How would you define your gender or gender identity?

- Female
- Male

Other:

3. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic / Latina
- White / Caucasian
- Multiple ethnicity
- Other (please specify ___)

4. What language(s) do you speak?

5. Please indicate the language you speak primarily at home:

6. What is the highest level of school that you have completed?

- Elementary school
- Some high school
- High school diploma (or GED)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate studies, no degree
- Master's degree
- Medical degree (MD, DO, DDS, DVM)
- Legal degree (LLB or JD)
- PhD or EdD
- Other (please specify _____)

7. Please list state- and/or early care and education-specific credentials and certifications:

8. If you've received any specialized training in the field please indicate that here:

9. Job role (please check all that apply)

- Assistant Teacher
- Teacher
- Director
- Other: _____

11. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

- In training for future employment
- Employed, working full-time
Hours per work _____
Weeks per year _____
- Employed, working part-time
Hours per work _____
Weeks per year _____
- Self-employed
- Not employed, looking for work
- Not employed, NOT looking for work
- Retired
- Not able to work due to disability or on leave from work

12. Length of time working in early childhood field:

- Less than one year
- One to three years
- Between three and five years
- Between five and ten years
- More than ten years

13. Length of time in current position:

- Less than one year
- One to three years
- Between three and five years
- Between five and ten years
- More than ten years

14. Do you earn a salary or hourly wage?

- Salary
- Hourly wage

15. Do you receive benefits at work?

- Yes
- No

16. If YES, which ones?

- Health Insurance
- Paid Leave
- Sick time
- Vacation time
- Tuition/Professional development reimbursement

- Access to paid professional development
- Other:

17. Do you hold a second job?

- Yes
- No

Demographic Data Instrument: Stakeholders

1. What is your current position or title?

2. Please list your organization/agency/institution:

3. How would you define your gender or gender identity?

- Female
- Male
- Other: -----

4. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic / Latina
- White / Caucasian
- Multiple ethnicity
- Other (please specify)

5. What additional affiliations related to early care and education field do you have?

Focus Group Protocol: Educators [English-version]

Professional Development

The first topic we'd like to discuss is professional development in this field.

What would it mean to attain your desired level of professional development? What would this look like for you?

In terms of professional advancement in the early care and education field, what are some challenges that you have faced?

Are there additional challenges that you have heard about what are they?

How has additional training and education you have received impacted your job?

More specifically, did the additional training/education impact your wages? How?

- Promotion
- Increased wages
- Job title change
- More responsibilities

Have you or would you consider going to school to advance your career?

How do you pay for school (or your degree program); how would you pay for it?

For those interested in changing career pathways away from child care and education (if they come up): What are the reasons for changing your career?

Compensation and Benefits

The next topic we'd like to discuss is compensation and, more broadly, economic security in this field.

Do you think you are paid fairly for the job you do? Why or why not?

If you find the compensation level to be too low, what are the reasons that keep you in your job?

In terms of employer-provided benefits, what is available through your employer? (probe-how important do you think they are to have as part of a compensation package?)

- health insurance

- paid leave
- maternity leave
- retirement benefits
- tuition reimbursement
- paid training opportunities
- scholarships

What would it mean to attain your desired level economic security as an educator in this field?

What would this look like for you?

What do you think needs to be changed about compensation and/or benefits for working in the early care and education field?

Recommendations

If you could offer one or two recommendations about the professional development and/or financial status of early childhood teachers, what would they be?

Focus Group Stakeholder Protocol: Professional Development (PD) and Higher Education

How easy is it for early educators to access appropriate professional development opportunities at each stage of their professional development?

Probes: What about funding /scholarships to take college courses? Access to technology?

In what ways if any have you assisted and worked with educators around financial, debt, or public assistance needs related to their work and their professional development? Please describe.

What do you see as the barriers for early educators accessing and completing higher education degrees?

At your institution?

In your community or the state/system level?

What do you see as the facilitators for early educators accessing and completing higher education degrees?

At your institution?

In your community or the state/system level?

If you could change something to improve PD opportunities for early educators, what would you change and why?

To what extent is PD and higher education successfully preparing and supporting educators to develop the cultural competence needed to support children and families they serve?

What else is important for us to know that we didn't ask already?

Focus Group Stakeholder Protocol: Compensation and Benefits

Compensation Factors

First we'd like to ask you about the factors that determine compensation levels and/or pay raises of early childhood educators.

For your program, can you tell us how your fee structure works? Partial or full-paying families?

We assume if you are reliant on subsidized slots, we know that there's a big difference between private pay and reimbursement for each child.

How does this factor into what you can provide for salaries for your educators?
Does this affect your ability to hire new educators?

Are there other influences on the pay rates for early childhood educators at your agency/organization?

How do waitlists affect compensation of workers, if at all?

We know that salaries for early care and education teachers in various regions are lower than in other areas.

What determines pay rates in this region of Massachusetts?
What makes this area different from other parts of the state?

To what extent do you think that your salaries/wages are commensurate with those of other child early childhood educators with the same level of qualification/education (in community or region)?

Has each of your programs made a calculation about cost of care for each subsidized child versus what you receive from state?

Are there established rates for early care educators with different levels of educational attainment? Do you link educational attainment to pay? Or seniority?

What percentage of your revenue goes to teacher salaries? Have you seen any trends in this over the past few years?

For your teachers who have Associate's and Bachelor's degrees, do you think that college debt is a factor affecting their economic security?

Pay Raises

We'd like to take some time to discuss pay raises.

How do wages progress at your agencies or organizations?

Do workers get raises over time? How often?

What allows for raises to be possible? What makes it hard to institute raises?

Public Assistance

One of the topics of our study is very small pay raises that may affect a publicly subsidized benefit for educators who rely on such benefits.

Do you have any evidence that this happens in your organization/center?

Employment Benefits

When hiring educators, what do hiring packages entail beyond compensation?

What benefits are available to your employees?

Tuition/PD reimbursement

Retirement option

Life Insurance

Health insurance

Incentive program for next stage of career ladder

Break time allowance during workday

Policy Change

To what extent do you think the increased attention to educator salaries will make a difference to compensation levels? Affect subsidized rates?

Do you think there are particular policy levers that could make a difference in educator pay rates?

Educator Protocol: Early Education and Child Care Survey

This questionnaire is designed to ask you questions regarding your financial experiences over the past few years.

The survey is anonymous – no need to put your name on it!

As you complete the questionnaire, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

How many of your children under the age of 18 live in your household:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

What are their ages? ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

How many adults live in your household, including yourself (friends, family, roommates):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

Which of the following best describe your current housing circumstance? Check one that applies best.

I rent a house or apartment that is satisfactory for my family.

I rent a house or apartment that is not satisfactory for my family.

I own a home that is satisfactory for my family.

I own a home that is not satisfactory for my family.

I am sharing a house or apartment with friends or family and this arrangement is SATISFACTORY for my family.

I am sharing a house or apartment with friends or family; this arrangement is NOT SATISFACTORY for my family and is TEMPORARY.

My family is living in a shelter or other emergency housing.

Other: (please describe)

Have you or your children ever experienced homelessness? Yes No
If yes, who experienced homelessness? Me alone Me and my children

B. EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCES

How long have you been working at your current job? ____ Years and ____ Months

How many hours per week do you typically work?

Is your schedule the same from week to week?

How many weeks did you work over the last 12 months? _____ weeks

What was your weekly income from your current or last held job(s)? \$ _____

Is that: before taxes after taxes not sure

Do you receive any benefits directly from your employer (e.g., health insurance? Tuition assistance? Retirement fund?)?

Did anyone else help contribute to your household expenses over the last 12 months (e.g. spouse/partner, child, relative)

Yes No

Do you expect your family income to be higher, lower or to stay the same this year:

higher lower stay the same

Many families we talk to seek assistance to help meet their needs. Next we'll ask about your experience with these programs.

Did you receive any of the following supports from the government over the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Mass Health/Medicaid for you

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

Mass Health/Medicaid for your kids

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

TANF/TAFDC cash assistance

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

WIC _____

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

Food Stamps/SNAP

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

Housing Support (rental voucher (like Section 8, public housing or other support)

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

Child care assistance (voucher or subsidy)

If so, how many months over the last 12 months: _____

Fuel Assistance (such as LIHEAP)

a. Any other supports from the state or federal government (e.g. SSI, SSDI, Social Security, foster care stipend, veterans' payments, emergency assistance) (please name)

Does this assistance help you meet your needs? If so, how? If not, what is still unmet?

Has there ever been a time where a mix of wages from your job and public assistance is not enough to make ends meet?

If yes, how often does that happen in a year?

About how much more do you need to make ends meet?

Have you ever been concerned about losing a benefit if you take a new job, a promotion, or work too many hours? What did you do?

Appendix B: Data Sources

Table 1. Summary of Data Source(s), Topics Covered, Location, Participant Type			
Data Type	Main Topics	Location	Participants
2 focus groups (13 participants in total; 6 educators each and 1 program director who was present in each group)	Compensation and professional development	Boston	Educators, one English-speaking and one primarily Chinese-speaking
Surveys (28 completers)	Compensation and public assistance/cliff effects	Boston	Educators
Focus group (4 participants in total)	Compensation, public assistance, debt, and professional development	Lawrence	Educators, Spanish-speaking
Interviews (2 participants in total)	Compensation, public assistance, debt, and professional development	Springfield	Family Child Care Providers
Focus group (3 participants in total)	Compensation and benefits	Greenfield	Center Directors

2 Focus groups (8 participants in total, 4 in each group)	Compensation and benefits, and professional development	Worcester	Center Directors, One Family Child Care Provider
Focus group (11 participants in total)	Professional development/credentials	Danvers	Early Education and Care Professionals
Focus group and interviews (3 participants in total; 1 focus group and 2 interviewees)	Public assistance/cliff effects	Roxbury	Case Managers

Table 2. Study Participant Summary	
Total number of focus groups	8
Total number of FG participants	40
Total number of people interviewed	4
Total number of people surveyed (<i>one missing survey not reported on</i>)	28
Total number of study participants	72
Total number of stakeholders (Directors/case Managers/etc.)	14
Total number of educators (Center-based educators/family child care providers)	58

Appendix C. Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee was convened to help shape the goals and outcomes of this study. Members of the Advisory Committee included a broad cross-section of 44 stakeholders, including educators and leaders from the early care and education field, policy makers, public agencies and child care agencies officials, members of the business community, diverse types of providers, professional associations, labor unions, nonprofit advocacy organizations and philanthropic organizations.

Members include:

Karley Ausiello, Vice President, Community Impact, United Way of Massachusetts Bay
Sunindiya Bhalla, Senior Director, Community Impact - Educational Success, United Way of Massachusetts Bay

Mary Lou Burke-Afonso, Chief Operating Officer, Bright Horizons-North America

JD Chesloff, Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Roundtable

Leo Delaney, President, Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care (MADCA) Board of Directors

Speaker Robert DeLeo, Massachusetts House of Representatives

Senator Sal DiDomenico, Massachusetts State Senate

Bill (William) Eddy, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care

Bruce Figueroa, Head, Nonprofit Banking, Citizens Bank

Elizabeth Gilbert, EdD, Director, Early Childhood Educator Project, Labor Management Workplace Education, UMass Amherst

Christine Heer, Director, Sprouts

Rachel Heller, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)

Clare Higgins, Executive Director, Community Action Pioneer Valley Boston

Colin Jones, Senior Policy Analyst, Mass Budget and Policy Center (**Noah Berger**, President, MassBudget)

Theresa Jordan, Director, Children's Facilities Finance, Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation

Marcelo Juica, PhD, Director, Endicott College-Boston

Joan Kagan, President/CEO, Square One

Amy Kershaw, Associate Commissioner for Programs, Department of Transitional Assistance (**Koren Christensen**, Deputy General Counsel, Department of Transitional Assistance)

Theodore Kokoros, Preschool Teacher, Transportation Children's Center

JD LaRock, JD, EdD, President and CEO, Commonwealth Corporation

Michele Lisio, Office of Speaker DeLeo, House of Representatives

Charlene Mara, Early Childhood Education Program Coordinator, Quinsigamond Community College

Nancy Marshall, EdD, Adjunct Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, Wellesley Centers for Women

Jesse Mermell, President, Alliance for Business Leadership

Amy O'Leary, Campaign Director, Early Education for All (EEA), Strategies for Children, Inc.

Elaine O'Reilly, Partner, Governmental Strategies, Inc.

Elizabeth Pauley, Associate Vice President, Education to Career, the Boston Foundation

Representative Alice Peisch, Chairwoman, Joint Committee on Education, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Pooja Phaltankar, Joint Committee on Education, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Councilor Ayanna Pressley, Chair of the Committee on Healthy Women, Families, and Communities, Boston City Council
Jeri Robinson, Vice President, Early Learning Initiatives, Boston Children's Museum
Yvette Rodriguez, Vice President, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services
James Rooney, President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce (invited)
Jason Sachs, EdD, Executive Director, Early Childhood Education, Boston Public Schools
Sharon Scott-Chandler, Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer, Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)
Lilly Searcy, Executive Director, Hattie B. Cooper Community Center
Lucas Skorczeski, Co-Executive Director, Acre Family Day Care
Marie St. Fleur, Principal, St. Fleur Communications
Joanne Szamreta, PhD, Professor, Lesley University
Kira Taj, Associate Director of Research & Development for the Children's Investment Fund, CEDAC
Jane Tewksbury, JD, Executive Director, Brazelton Touchpoints Center
Alayna Van Tassel, Deputy Treasurer and Executive Director of the Office of Economic Empowerment, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Christie Ghetto Young, Chief of Staff, Senator Sal DiDomenico, Massachusetts Senate
Wayne Ysaguirre, President and CEO, Nurtury (Formerly Associated Early Care and Education)

Members of the Departments of Early Education and Care & Higher Education Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Jocelyn Bowen, Director of Research and Preschool Expansion Grant Administration, Department of Early Education and Care
Ola Friday, Associate Commissioner for Workforce Development, Department of Early Education and Care
Winifred (Winnie) Hagan, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success, Department of Higher Education
Madlene Hamilton, Data Specialist, Department of Early Education and Care
Anita Moeller, Deputy Commissioner for Program Administration, Department of Early Education and Care
Carol Nolan, Associate Commissioner for Grants and Programming, Department of Early Education and Care

Advisory committee members provided input primarily at the late March meeting held downtown but several members who could not participate in the meeting offered suggestions following the meeting.

March 29th Meeting of the Advisory Committee held at the Boston Foundation

Members of the research team provided an overview of the study via a Powerpoint presentation and solicited feedback from attendees.

The Powerpoint presentation used for this meeting was provided to EEC in March 2018.

Participating Advisory Committee Members: Noah Berger, President, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center; Sunindiya Bhalla, Senior Director, Community Impact - Educational Success, United Way of Massachusetts Bay; JD Chesloff, Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Roundtable; Koren Christensen, Deputy General Counsel, Department of Transitional Assistance; Leo Delaney, President, Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care (MADCA) Board of Directors, Bill (William) Eddy, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care; Bruce Figueroa, Head, Nonprofit Banking, Citizens Bank; Elizabeth Gilbert, EdD, Director, Early Childhood Educator Project, Labor Management Workplace Education, UMass Amherst; Christine Heer, Director, Sprouts; Clare Higgins, Executive Director, Community Action Pioneer Valley Boston; Marcelo Juica, PhD, Director, Endicott College-Boston; Theodore Kokoros, Preschool Teacher, Transportation Children's Center; Elaine O'Reilly, Partner, Governmental Strategies, Inc.; The Honorable Alice Peisch, Chairwoman, Joint Committee on Education, Massachusetts House of Representatives; Pooja Phaltankar, Joint Committee on Education, Massachusetts House of Representatives; Jeri Robinson, Vice President, Early Learning Initiatives, Boston Children's Museum; Yvette Rodriguez, Vice President, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services; Lilly Searcy, Executive Director, Hattie B. Cooper Community Center; Lucas Skorczeski, Co-Executive Director, Acre Family Day Care; Peg Sprague, Board President, Children's Investment Fund; Kira Taj, Associate Director of Research & Development for the Children's Investment Fund, CEDAC; Jane Tewksbury, JD, Executive Director, Brazelton Touchpoints Center; Wayne Ysaguirre, President and CEO, Nurtury (Formerly Associated Early Care and Education).

Members of ECE Team: Jocelyn Bowen, Director of Research and Preschool Expansion Grant Administration, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care; Ola Friday, Associate Commissioner for Workforce Development, Department of Early Education and Care, Massachusetts; Winifred (Winnie) Hagan, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; Madlene Hamilton, Data Specialist, Department of Early Education and Care; Anita Moeller, Deputy Commissioner for Program Administration, Department of Early Education and Care.

Members of Research Team:

Ann Bookman, PhD, Susan Crandall, PhD, Anne Douglass, PhD, Christa Kelleher, PhD Co-Investigators, Brandynn Holgate, PhD, Co-Research Manager, Araziliz Reyes, MEd, Research Coordinator, Olanike Ojelabi, MS, Research Assistant.

Welcome

Ann Bookman welcomed members of the Advisory Committee at the meeting and those calling in, commenting that a tremendous amount of expertise was present. Staff members

of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education as well as researchers from UMass Boston and Advisory Committee members introduced themselves.

Study Overview

Anne Douglass provided an overview of the workforce study, making the following points:

- It has been a long time since we had a statewide ECE workforce survey.
- The ECE workforce is in “crisis” – there is tension between ensuring adequate pay and benefits and providing affordable, high-quality care.
- There is growing frustration with low wages, teacher shortages, and insufficient professional development.
- We are in need of policy-relevant data to make effective decisions about the ECE workforce.
- The UMass Boston Research team comprised of researchers from the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, Center for Social Policy, and Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation have received initial funding of \$100K for Phase I of the study that allows for the conduct of focus groups and preliminary survey design work.

Advisory Committee members provided the following feedback:

- Tracking workers at agencies that receive subsidies versus workers who do not is important
- Prioritizing location and regional differences is important as there are “childcare deserts” and some of this could be mapped
- Look to address the pipeline into the profession as many with two or four-year degrees work for public schools because other jobs do not pay a living wage
- There are a lot of data available (national, state); How will existing data be used and incorporated?
- Conducting the survey in multiple languages is important

Phase I Overview

Susan Crandall explained that Phase I of the study consists of the following:

- Advisory committee
- Focus groups
- Survey development

Susan further discussed the four key areas of the workforce study, which are:

- Compensation
- Debt load
- Public benefits
- Professional development and credentials

Advisory Committee members offered the following input and posed specific questions:

Compensation

- Retirement is an important benefit and should be considered
- Is there a ceiling to compensation, irrespective of the education of workers?
- Who are the beneficiaries of childcare in MA? Do they contribute financially to the workforce?
- How do payments compare for private centers and subsidized centers? How do different policies impact pay?
- Reimbursement method is a fundamental policy issue

- What is the actual cost of ECE services compared to market rates?
- Address rate structuring, reimbursement, and enrollment issues-e.g. wait listing, and policy of per child per day reimbursement rather than average/aggregate over a year as with Head Start

Debt Load

- What loan forgiveness program(s) exist? Do programs benefit those who are already credentialed?
- Look to address other debt load besides student debt-e.g. child care debt, mortgage
- Using loans for needs other than course work, or taking courses that are not needed can compound debt
- What is the relationship between debt relief and retention, home ownership, and asset-building?

Public Benefits/Cliff Effects

- The biggest cliff effect might be the loss of childcare
- Find out if workers have ever turned down a raise and why
- Will the pay equity law have consequences if someone doesn't take an "equalizing" raise?
- Be sure to capture difference between net and gross income
- What public subsidies are accessible? What are the challenges facing families? What alternative arrangements do families make to afford the cost of living?

Professional Development (PD) and Credentials

- Look at competencies in addition to academic credentials
- Ask educators: How do they feel about where they want to go career-wise? What is needed to grow professionally?
- How effective is the community college advising system? How well do advisors work to support degree attainment?
- What does it take to take advantage of PD opportunities?
- Is technology a challenge in terms of PD access and/or degree completion? (online offerings)
- What opportunities are there to do graduate work?
- Are there language barriers? What does it mean to go back to school for ESL workers?
- What are the assessment strategies and do they capture all of the ways that PD takes place?
- What is public spending for Educator and Provider Support (EPS) programs? Are these professional development offerings sufficient or not?
- Focus on early educator scholarships to find out how effective they are; How many take advantage of them? How many receive them? Is the amount received sufficient or not?

Project Funding

The research team is looking into funding sources for the statewide survey in order to support the remaining phases of the project. The team might look into the potential of securing additional state funds for subsequent phases. Given that the FY 2018 state appropriation supports Phase I through June 30, 2018, it's important to secure additional funds immediately in order to move onto the next phases of the project, including finalizing the survey protocol and getting it into the field. The Advisory Committee may assist as they can with making connections to potential funders and helping to identify funding sources for the study.



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