Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

CSCCE
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment

Report | December 2022

Early Educator Voices: OREGON

Work Environment Conditions That Impact Early Educator Practice and Program Quality

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Executive Summary

Early educators are the key to quality early care and education (ECE) services, and there is broad consensus that high-quality care and learning environments for young children depend on educators who are skilled at nurturing children's development and learning. Yet, inadequate working conditions and low pay routinely hamper educators in their efforts to apply effective teaching and caregiving practices (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015; McLean et al., 2021). Early educator work environments have a direct impact on their teaching practice, ongoing skill development, and general well-being, yet work environments have routinely been overlooked in quality improvement efforts. Transforming the way that the early care and education system values and supports the working conditions of early educators requires sustained strategies on multiple levels.

As a part of ongoing efforts to transform Spark, Oregon's quality *recognition* and improvement system (QRIS)[1], Oregon reached out to the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) for our assistance to better understand the work environments of the more than 12,000 early educators who offer services for the state's 269,000 children under the age of six (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022a). Oregon's ECE system includes some 1,200 center-based programs and more than 2,000 home-based family child care (FCC) programs (Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division [ELD], 2021). Similar to other states throughout the nation, Oregon is facing a child care crisis, particularly for infants and toddlers. Families with infants and/or toddlers in every county experience a child care desert, with an estimated eight infants and toddlers for every available child care slot (Pratt & Sektnan, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the lack of available care in Oregon (Pears et al., 2021).

In the winter of 2022, CSCCE had the opportunity to survey educators employed in both center- and home-based programs throughout the state of Oregon about their working environments. This was the first CSCCE study utilizing the SEQUAL tool to capture the experiences of FCC providers and their staff and also the first SEQUAL study to examine working conditions after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This report examines the results of the SEQUAL survey across settings and roles of early educators in Oregon and was commissioned by the Oregon Early Learning Division in order to inform their quality improvement efforts.

[1] Throughout the United States, the QRIS acronym more commonly refers to a quality *rating* and improvement system.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Supported Staff Want to Stay

Regardless of program setting or role, early educators across Oregon reported insufficient staffing levels, high turnover, and difficulty in hiring staff or substitutes as major concerns. Staffing issues are especially profound for FCC providers who may be left to care for all of the children by themselves or forced to close when assistants are sick or unavailable. Turnover and retention are long-standing issues in the ECE field, but the pandemic made these challenges much more serious.

To recruit and maintain high-quality staff, programs must offer the work conditions early educators need to thrive. Indeed, programs that do well in the areas measured by SEQUAL tend to have better staff retention. Across many of the SEQUAL domains, we found that educators in Oregon with higher mean scores were more likely to indicate they would still be working at the same program in three years. Thus, programs that strive to meet the characteristics outlined in the SEQUAL domains—and states that support programs to meet these characteristics—appear to be more likely to retain staff.

To attract and retain staff by supporting the work environment of educators, we recommend that Oregon:

- Look to and learn from wage initiatives like those in New Mexico and within Oregon (Multnomah County) and utilize the knowledge gained to develop statewide wage initiatives;
- Provide opportunities for staff to engage in ongoing learning and development, for example, through apprenticeship or other paid internship models; and
- In the context of reforming Spark and the QRIS scoring system, embed work environment standards to emphasize their importance, direct quality improvement resources toward improving conditions, and ensure that programs cannot achieve the highest ratings without addressing work environment standards.

Training and Support

Training and support are other key factors in attracting and retaining a qualified workforce. Although many Oregon educators (center-based teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants) participate in professional development, they reported insufficient training in several areas, including observation and assessment, and communication with families. Furthermore, while many of the educators surveyed indicated involvement in several

"one-off" professional development trainings, they often lacked opportunities for sustained long-term training or opportunities for peer-to-peer learning.

Educators need a variety of professional development opportunities, as well as support in integrating what they have learned into their classroom practices. Opportunities for coaching and sustained dialogue with colleagues in the ECE field support the creation of learning systems, and peer support helps ensure the use and retention of professional development.

In this regard, we recommend that Oregon:

- Create more opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and professional development, where educators can learn from and support one another;
- Develop and implement training programs that support program leaders, supervisors, and coaches in addressing work environment issues, as they require support and training on how to implement and sustain these types of changes;
- Provide funding for institutions of higher education and training programs to develop and offer classes and workshops related to work environment standards, rights of teaching staff on the job, and the critical importance of economic, emotional, and physical well-being among adults in the workplace; and
- Explore registered apprenticeship programs that could offer comprehensive training programs, where interns are paid to work in early care settings while enrolled in a degree pathway program at an affiliated higher education institution to earn further credentials.

Multiple Languages, Multiple Experiences

Our findings indicate that multilingual educators in Oregon feel they have less agency in their program setting and that their input is undervalued. We also noted that the majority of our center director sample were White monolingual (English speaking) individuals, while about one third of the center-based teaching staff were Latina and/or people of color who spoke multiple languages.

Examining policies and procedures to ensure equity in educator voices and diversity across all roles and settings is essential to supporting the workforce. Further study of the lived experiences of educators who speak languages besides English might provide insight into how to better support this group of educators.

To this end, we recommend that Oregon:

- Institute strategies that engage early educators, in particular multilingual educators, in the process of informing quality improvement and regularly collect data to assess how they experience the work environment.

Adult Well-Being

- The hourly median wage for center-based teaching staff is $17.00 and for FCC assistants, $16.50.
- Almost two thirds of center-based teaching staff reported a total annual income of less than $40,000.
- For FCC providers, the annual income range is $23,375-$27,500 for providers at small FCCs and $38,250-$54,600 for providers at large FCCs.

Across center- and home-based programs in Oregon, early educators experience conditions that challenge their economic, emotional, and physical well-being. Many struggle to afford housing, health care, sufficient food, and other basic necessities for themselves and their families. Early educators also reported conditions that threaten their health and safety, most notably not being able to take breaks during the workday (although required by law to do so) or not being able to take their paid sick leave.

These conditions coupled with low pay undermine early educators' well-being and exacerbate stress and turnover. Indeed, many educators who recently left the field cited low wages and lack of benefits as primary drivers of their decision to leave.

To remedy this situation, we recommend that Oregon:

- Provide financial resources and other assistance specifically designed to enable programs and providers to comply with work environment standards in a reasonable period of time;
- Work to support FCC providers and centers overall by undertaking a workforce study to assess the wages of early educators and understand where they are now, where they need to be, and how the state can financially support the workforce to bridge that gap; and
- Revisit the state's Child Care Cost of Quality Study and consider the costs of care from a sustainable and systemic perspective (Aigner-Treworgy et al., 2022), which integrates appropriate compensation and benefits for the workforce along with workplace supports outlined in SEQUAL.

The Strain on Family Child Care Providers

In Oregon, almost one quarter (23 percent) of early educators are family child care providers or assistants (Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education [OCCD] & Oregon Child Care Research Partnership [OCCRP], 2021). FCC providers shoulder a dual role of business owner and educator, providing care in their homes. Few FCC providers are able to employ assistants to help them in their work. Oregon has an opportunity to recognize and support family child care work through initiatives like:

- An FCC provider network that offers substitutes or respite care workers so that FCC providers can have a day off or receive professional development;
- Professional training unique to the FCC provider world—like tax preparation, business planning and budget creation, supervision and feedback—developed and delivered in collaboration with existing family child care associations (supporting the development of new associations as needed);
- A mechanism to connect providers with supports and resources in the community to help offset costs of their business and alleviate their professional responsibilities; and
- Specialized mentoring and coaching opportunities shaped and delivered by those with family child care experience.

Conclusion

Our findings underscore the need for further changes in the practices and provision of staffing, training and support, and economic well-being. While early educators identified aspects of the work environment that were strong—notably around teamwork and collaboration with colleagues for center-based educators and support from their supervisor for both center-based educators and FCC assistants—four areas in particular stood out that require improvement to strengthen their work environment: staffing; training and support for working with children and families; adult well-being; and health and safety. Additionally, for FCC providers, business practice supports require improvement.

> *"We are underpaid [and] have no union or entity looking out for us. We lose pay with every closure due to COVID. While schools closed, we never fully closed our doors and have been the child care for frontline workers."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

> *"We are exhausted and need mental health support. Personally, I've been looking for two years for some kind of mental health support, and even though I have insurance, no one takes it. We need to have a pool of people that can substitute for us. We need PCR tests to distribute to families. There's so much more I would like to say, but I'm too exhausted to continue."*
>
> *— Large FCC Program Provider*

Introduction

Early educators are the key to quality early care and education (ECE) services, and there is broad consensus that high-quality care and learning environments for young children depend on educators who are skilled at nurturing children's development and learning. Yet, inadequate working conditions and low pay routinely hamper educators in their efforts to apply effective teaching and caregiving practices (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015; McLean et al., 2021). For example, being able to depend on paid leave when sick, paid non-child-contact time to complete professional responsibilities, and opportunities for input into decisions that impact their teaching practice or programs have been shown to impact educators' well-being and practice in the classroom (Whitebook et al., 2016). Nonetheless, definitions of and metrics to assess quality rarely reflect such workplace supports for educators. Instead, the emphasis on quality improvement as it relates to the workforce has relied on strategies and metrics tied to professional development and education levels, without the context of working conditions. Furthermore, early education is one of the lowest-paid occupations in the United States, with a median hourly wage of $13.22, which is only $28,555 a year (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). These low wages coupled with insufficient working conditions have long fueled turnover and teaching shortages in the sector, circumstances that have been severely compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic (CSCCE, 2022).

These long-standing inadequacies reflect, in part, a lack of inclusion of early educators' expertise and perspectives in policy and quality improvement initiatives. Their views on their work environments are essential and should be central to shaping policy and practice recommendations to improve program quality, child outcomes, and early educators' own well-being. Whether they are working in center- or home-based programs, and regardless of funding source or ages of children with whom they work, early educators require adequate resources and conditions in order to deliver on the promise of high-quality ECE services. Prioritizing workforce supports leads to a system that is equitable, efficient, and effective for children, their families, and educators.

Strategies to improve the quality of ECE work environments have largely focused on the training and professional development of early educators without addressing the development and improvement of their work contexts. Early educators are rarely offered, and thus rarely receive, holistically supportive working conditions, nor are workplace supports typically the focus of strategies and policies to improve the quality of ECE services (Whitebook et al., 2018). Persistently poor working conditions and pay have contributed to a crisis in ECE in which a severe workforce shortage has led to a shortage in available child care spaces. As of this writing, there are 8 percent fewer U.S. child care jobs than in

February 2020, while employment across other occupations has returned to near pre-pandemic levels. In Oregon, this crisis is clear: every county reports a shortage of available child care, an issue prior to and exacerbated by the pandemic (Pears et al., 2021; Pratt & Sektnan, 2021).

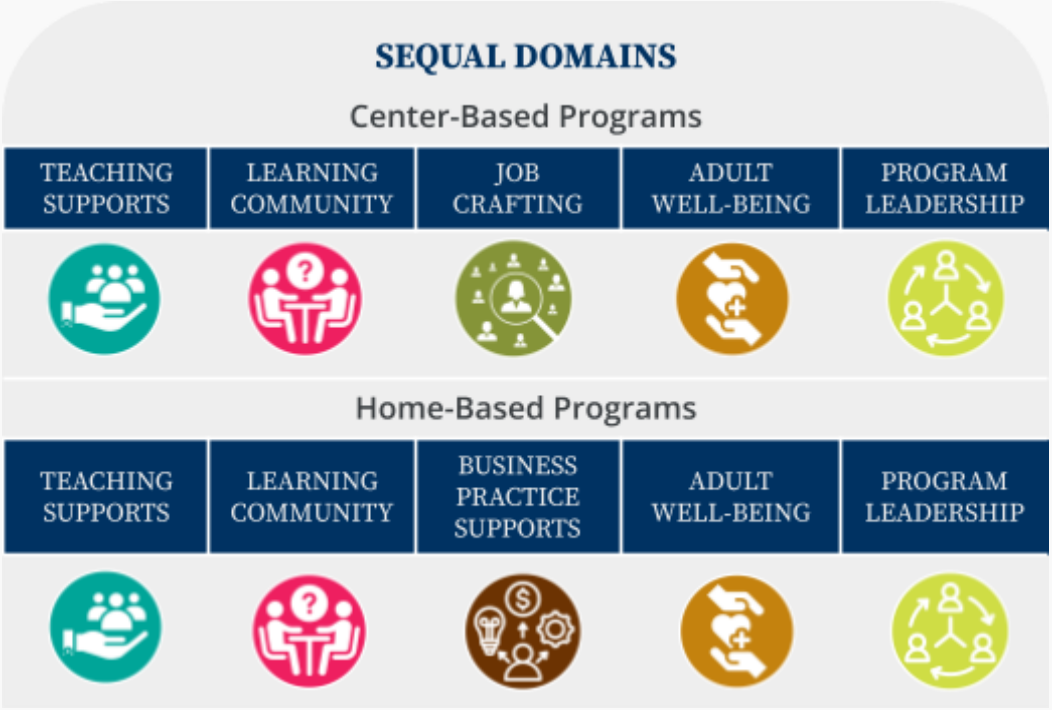
In the winter of 2022, the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) had the opportunity to ask early educators about their working conditions. We surveyed educators employed in both center- and home-based programs throughout the state of Oregon. Notably, this was the first CSCCE study utilizing the SEQUAL tool to capture the experiences of family child care (FCC) providers and their staff and also the first SEQUAL study to examine working conditions after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This report examines the results of the SEQUAL survey across settings and roles of early educators in Oregon and was commissioned by the Oregon Early Learning Division (ELD) in order to inform their quality improvement efforts.

SEQUAL (Supportive Environmental Quality Underlying Adult Learning)

To capture early educators' assessments of their work environments and to support the inclusion of educators' perspectives into quality improvement strategies, CSCCE developed the Supportive Environmental Quality Underlying Adult Learning tool, or SEQUAL. There are two versions of the tool: SEQUAL for center-based teaching staff and SEQUAL for family child care educators. While both surveys assess similar components of the early childhood work environment, the two surveys vary to reflect differences in the features, roles, and responsibilities that exist within each setting. In addition, a companion survey for center administrators captures program information to contextualize the teaching staff responses.

SEQUAL for center-based teaching staff is a validated measure used in ECE workforce studies throughout the country. This survey addresses five critical areas of teachers' learning environments: Teaching Supports, Learning Community, Job Crafting, Adult Well-Being, and Program Leadership.

SEQUAL for FCC educators captures the perspectives of home-based providers/owners and their staff. The survey focuses on their experiences working and teaching in a home environment along with operating a child care business and addresses five critical areas of FCC work environments: Teaching Supports, Learning Community, Business Practice Supports, Adult Well-Being, and Program Management and Leadership.



The Early Childhood Education Landscape in Oregon

Oregon is home to more than 12,000 early educators serving the state's 269,000 children under the age of six (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022a). Oregon's early childhood education system includes around 1,200 center-based programs and more than 2,000 home-based family child care (FCC) programs (ELD, 2021). There are two types of home-based programs. Registered FCC programs are smaller and consist of a sole provider who serves up to 10 children with no additional staff. Certified FCC programs may serve up to 16 children and employ staff in addition to the provider/owner.[2]

As in other states across the country, there are myriad sources of local, state, and federal funding that support ECE programming in Oregon. Oregon's publicly funded programs include Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), Preschool for All, Preschool Promise, Baby Promise, Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten/Head Start. Despite the nearly $300 million allocated to these programs annually, family fees constitute the majority (72 percent) of spending on Oregon's ECE system (ELD, 2019a).

[2] Throughout this report, we refer to family child care programs as "small" or "large," according to the number of children they serve, rather than their regulatory status. Small FCC programs are also known as "registered family child care" and large FCC programs as "certified family child care." Similar to reports released in Oregon, we are also using small/large instead of regulatory status to appeal to a broader audience (ELD, 2019a).

TABLE 1. PUBLICLY FUNDED CHILD CARE IN OREGON*

	Program Description	Age of Children Served
Preschool Promise	Free preschool to families living at or below 200% of federal poverty level (FPL) Mixed delivery system (licensed centers and FCCs, school districts, Head Start, community-based organizations, etc.)	3- and 4-year-olds
Baby Promise	Developed through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to pilot and strengthen supply and quality of infant and toddler care for families at or below 200% of FPL	Infants and toddlers
Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten/Head Start and Early Head Start	Combines federal and state funding to offer early education to families at or below 100% of FPL	Infants and toddlers 3- and 4-year-olds
Preschool for All	Provides free early education in Multnomah County starting Fall 2022 and to be scaled up over eight years	3- and 4-year-olds
Employment Related Day Care (ERDC)	Subsidy that assists working families in paying for child care (families pay a portion through a copay based on family income, size, and amount provider charges)	Infants and toddlers 3- and 4-year-olds and school aged children

*Table 1 summarizes information gleaned from the ELD 2019 report *The State of Early Care & Education and Child Care Assistance in Oregon* and the information Multnomah County (2022) released regarding Preschool for All

Preschool for All

In November 2020, voters in Multnomah County, which includes the city of Portland, approved a wealth tax to fund Preschool for All. This initiative provides free ECE services for three- and four-year-olds in public schools, private preschools, and home-based care and increases the wages of preschool teachers. Following other communities across the United States that raised pay in line with K-12 educators, the initiative increases lead teacher wages to parity with kindergarten teachers while also guaranteeing a minimum of $18.00 an hour for assistant teachers.

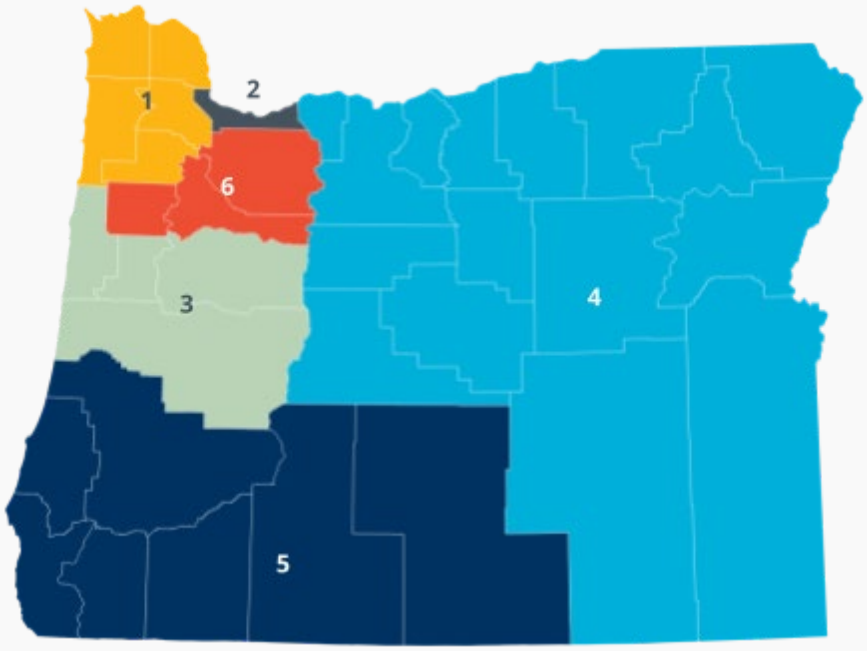
Similar to other states throughout the nation, Oregon has a child care crisis, particularly for infants and toddlers. Families with infants and/or toddlers in every county experience a child care desert, with an estimated eight infants and toddlers for every available slot (Pratt & Sektnan, 2021). Programs such as Baby Promise were designed to help increase the supply of slots for this age group, while strengthening the quality of care for children birth to age three. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the lack of available care in Oregon (Pears et al., 2021). Between 2010 and 2019, the population of children in Oregon from birth to age five steadily declined, but in 2020, the child population under five years old grew significantly, leading to a potential increase in demand for child care and placing a further strain on the already limited market (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022a).

Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care

Legislation passed in 2021 led to the formation of the Department of Early Learning and Care, creating a department separate from the Department of Education. The new Department of Early Learning and Care comprises the Early Learning Division (ELD) and the Office of Child Care from the current Department of Education, along with the Employment Related Day Care, Direct Pay Unit, and Inclusive Partners offices from the Department of Human Services (ELD, 2022a). This transition uplifts the importance of the early care and education field and signals Oregon's commitment to early educators.

Across Oregon, 16 regions operate cross-sector systems known as Early Learning Hubs to support children, families, and early educators in Oregon's 36 counties. These Early Learning Hubs are regional cross-sector partnerships that work together to coordinate and align services for children and families in a defined geographical service area (ELD, 2019b). For this study, we grouped the hubs into six regions (see **Figure 1**) based on sample size, similar geographic location, type of community (i.e., population density), and total population. A more detailed sampling description can be found in **Appendix B**.

FIGURE 1. OREGON HUBS AND COUNTIES, BY SAMPLING REGION



Region	Hubs	Counties
1	Northwest Early Learning Hub, Early Learning Washington County, and Yamhill Early Learning Hub	Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Washington, and Yamhill
2	Early Learning Multnomah	Multnomah
3	The Early Childhood Hub of Lane County and Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties	Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn
4	Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub, Frontier Early Learning Hub, Eastern Oregon Early Learning Hub, Four Rivers Early Learning Hub, Early Learning Hub of Central Oregon	Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler
5	South Coast Regional Early Learning Hub, Southern Oregon Early Learning Services, and South-Central Oregon Early Learning Hub	Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, and Lake
6	Marion and Polk Early Learning Hub, Inc. and Clackamas Early Learning Hub	Clackamas, Marion, and Polk

Study Methodology

From January through early March 2022, researchers from CSCCE implemented a SEQUAL study in Oregon to examine how early educators employed in center- and home-based early care and education programs throughout the state assessed their work environments and their experiences working since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Center-based teaching staff (teachers[3] and assistant teachers) and FCC providers (large and small FCC program providers and FCC assistants[4]) were invited to complete the appropriate online survey—either SEQUAL for Teaching Staff or SEQUAL for FCC Providers—to capture information about their demographic backgrounds, educational preparation, and work experience, including their current job role, job tenure, and compensation.

In addition, program leaders (e.g., center directors, assistant directors, supervisors) completed an online survey to provide contextual information about their centers—the SEQUAL for Administrators. The information collected in this survey includes descriptions of the teaching staff working in their program, children served, and program characteristics. Administrators also answered questions about their own demographic and professional background and current job role. To capture the influences of the pandemic and resulting programmatic or policy changes, the survey also included questions related to the impacts of COVID-19 for both administrators and educators.

At the time of the study, Oregon had 1,288 certified center-based programs in operation, of which 210 center-based programs were originally invited to participate. An additional 2,104 FCC programs (882 large FCCs and 1,222 small FCCs) were in operation at study launch, 180 certified and 210 registered programs were invited to participate. A stratified random sampling design was initially utilized, taking into account program setting and geographic region. However, because of low response rates across each program setting and inaccurate contact information for FCC providers and assistants, all eligible FCC staff and an additional 210 center-based programs were invited to participate.

The final sample of respondents included 85 program leaders (56 of whom were center directors), 485 center-based teaching staff, 395 FCC providers (195 large and 200 small programs), and 116 FCC assistants. For a more detailed description of the study methodology, study instruments, sampling frame and selection, population and sample, response rates, and analysis plan, please see **Appendix A**.

[3] Throughout the report we use "teacher" to refer to "lead and head teachers."
[4] FCC assistants are only employed at large family child care programs.

Findings: Educator Characteristics

Personal Characteristics

We asked educators to provide details about their personal characteristics, including their identified gender, age, country of origin, family characteristics, ethnic and/or racial background, and languages spoken (see **Table 2**, **Table 3**, and **Table 4**).

TABLE 2. DEMOGRAPHICS OF EARLY EDUCATORS, BY JOB ROLE

Demographic	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs			Total
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher	
Age	N=182	N=176	N=104	N=54	N=281	N=165	N=962
29 years or younger	4%	4%	47%	7%	40%	36%	23%
30 to 49 years	45%	50%	37%	52%	42%	46%	45%
50 years or older	51%	46%	16%	41%	18%	18%	32%
Gender	N=189	N=182	N=107	N=53	N=301	N=169	N=948
Female	99%	98%	93%	93%	97%	92%	95%
Male	0%	1%	6%	7%	1%	4%	3%
All other genders*	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	5%	2%
County of Birth	N=183	N=178	N=103	N=56	N=288	N=159	N=967
United States	83%	76%	92%	91%	85%	86%	86%
Another county	17%	24%	8%	9%	15%	14%	14%
Marital Status	N=191	N=185	N=109	N=56	N=291	N=162	N=994
Married/Partnered	74%	66%	47%	64%	61%	58%	64%
Unmarried/Single	26%	34%	53%	36%	39%	42%	36%

*5% or fewer of respondents from each population reported being non-binary, transgender, or self-described their gender.

Gender and Age

Almost all educators (95 percent) in our sample identified as female. While a majority of early educators were more than 30 years old, there were variations in age group by program setting and job role. Two fifths (43 percent) of center-based teaching staff were between the ages of 30 and 49. Conversely, almost one half (48 percent) of FCC providers were 50 years old or older, while 47 percent of FCC assistants were under the age of 30.

Country of Origin

One in five FCC providers was born outside of the United States, with slightly higher percentages of large FCC program providers compared to small FCC program providers (24 percent and 17 percent, respectively). Among center-based teaching staff, 15 percent were born outside of the United States.

Family Characteristics and Marital Status

The majority of FCC providers (70 percent) reported their relationship status as married or living with a partner, while almost one half of FCC assistants reported their relationship status as unmarried/single. Among center-based teaching staff, slightly more than two fifths (42 percent) of assistant teachers reported being unmarried or single, while nearly two thirds of teachers and directors reported being married or partnered (64 percent and 61 percent, respectively).

Ethnic and/or Racial Background

Of the educators in the sample, the majority (64 percent) identified as White, and one fifth (20 percent) identified as Latina (see **Table 3**).[5] Generally, educators' ethnic and/or racial backgrounds were representative of the child population in Oregon (Annie E. Casey, 2021a). A higher proportion of center directors identified as White compared to any other racial/ethnic background. Due to small sample size, further analysis in this report aggregating by ethnic and/or racial background uses "White," "Latina," and "Other" to examine group differences.

TABLE 3. ETHNIC AND/OR RACIAL BACKGROUND OF EARLY EDUCATORS, BY JOB ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs			
	Small FCC Provider N 178	Large FCC Provider N 178	FCC Assistant N 102	Director N 56	Teacher N 290	Assistant Teacher N 162	Total N=962
Asian	5%	3%	1%	5%	7%	8%	5%
Black	2%	2%	8%	0%	1%	2%	3%
Latina	17%	23%	22%	5%	23%	23%	19%
Multiethnic	3%	4%	8%	5%	4%	4%	5%
White	70%	65%	58%	83%	62%	59%	66%
Other*	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%

*Other ethnicities and/or races reported include American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

[5] Because the early care and education workforce is overwhelmingly composed of women, we will use the gender-specific term "Latina" to describe members of the ECE workforce who identify as part of the Latin American diaspora. At the same time, we gratefully acknowledge the participation of early educators who identify as men, non-binary, or other gender identities.

Languages Spoken

One quarter (25 percent) of the early educators surveyed reported speaking a language other than English. By program type and role, center-based teaching staff and large FCC program providers were more likely to be multilingual: 34 percent of center-based assistant teachers, 36 percent of teachers, and 28 percent of large FCC program providers speak another language in addition to English (see **Table 4**). The vast majority of directors (87 percent) and small FCC program providers (81 percent) reported being monolingual, speaking only English.

TABLE 4. LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY EARLY EDUCATORS, BY JOB ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs			
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher	Total
Languages Spoken	N=189	N=183	N=107	N=56	N=303	N=166	N=1,003
English only	81%	72%	83%	87%	64%	66%	75%
Multilingual	19%	28%	17%	13%	36%	34%	25%
Language Fluency*	N=198	N=193	N=114	N=56	N=307	N=173	N=1,041
English	90%	93%	94%	100%	95%	96%	95%
Spanish	23%	16%	19%	7%	20%	20%	17%
Other**	13%	11%	6%	7%	11%	19%	13%
Chinese	0%	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%

*Respondents were asked to check all that apply so percentages may not add up to 100%.
**Other languages reported include American Sign Language, Arabic, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Hmong, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Tagalog, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. All were under 2% across job roles.

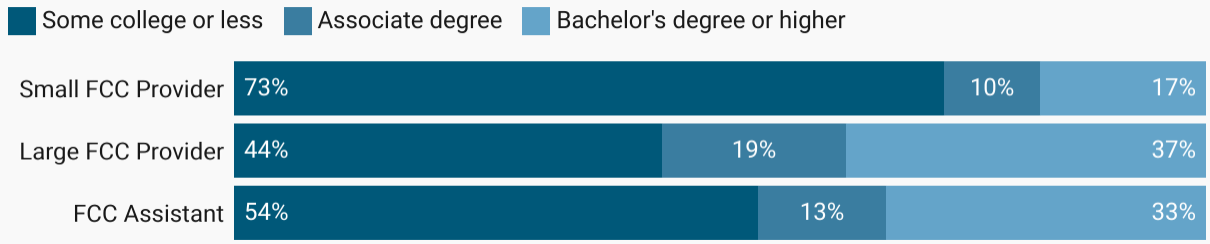
Professional Background

Education

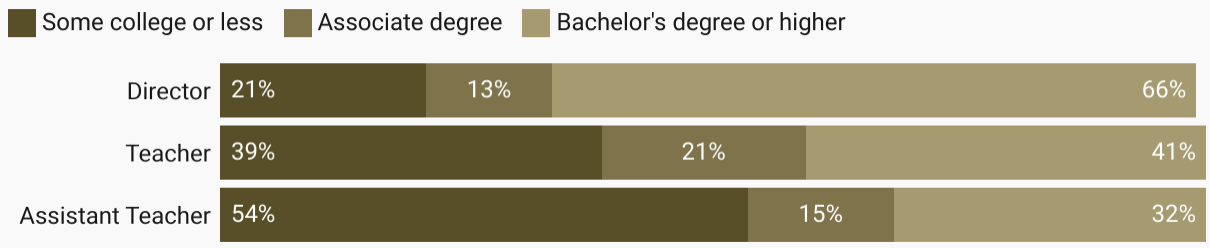
Center-based teachers and directors were more likely than home-based educators to hold degrees (see **Figure 2**). Large FCC program providers were more than twice as likely as small FCC program providers to hold a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, two thirds of center directors (66 percent) held a bachelor's degree or higher.

FIGURE 2. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF EARLY EDUCATORS, BY JOB ROLE

FCC PROVIDERS



CENTER-BASED EDUCATORS



Small FCC Provider N=183
Large FCC Provider N=182
FCC Assistant N=103
Director N=56
Teacher N= 296
Assistant Teacher N=162
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

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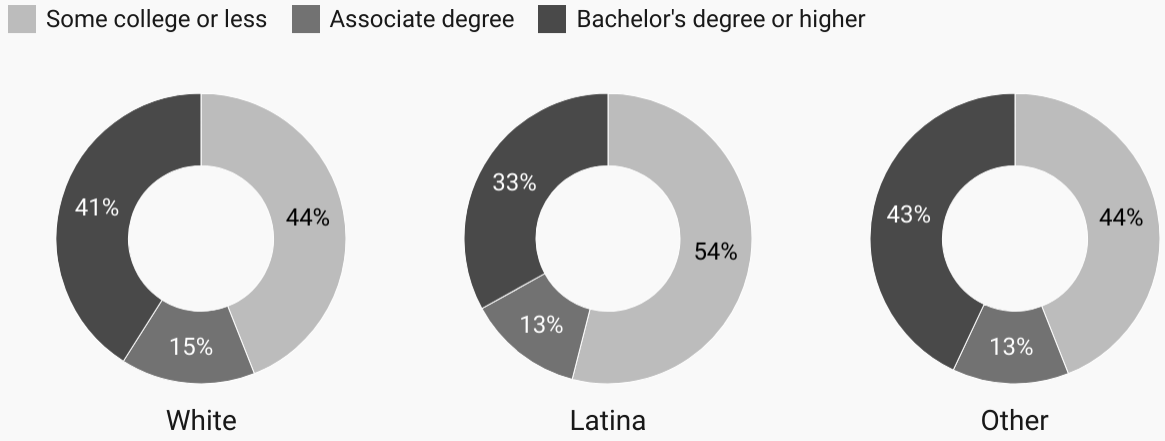
Educators who identified as Latina were less likely to have a bachelor's degree (33 percent) compared to educators who identified as either White or some other ethnic/racial background (41 percent and 43 percent, respectively). See **Appendix D** for a complete list of educational attainment by ethnic/racial background.

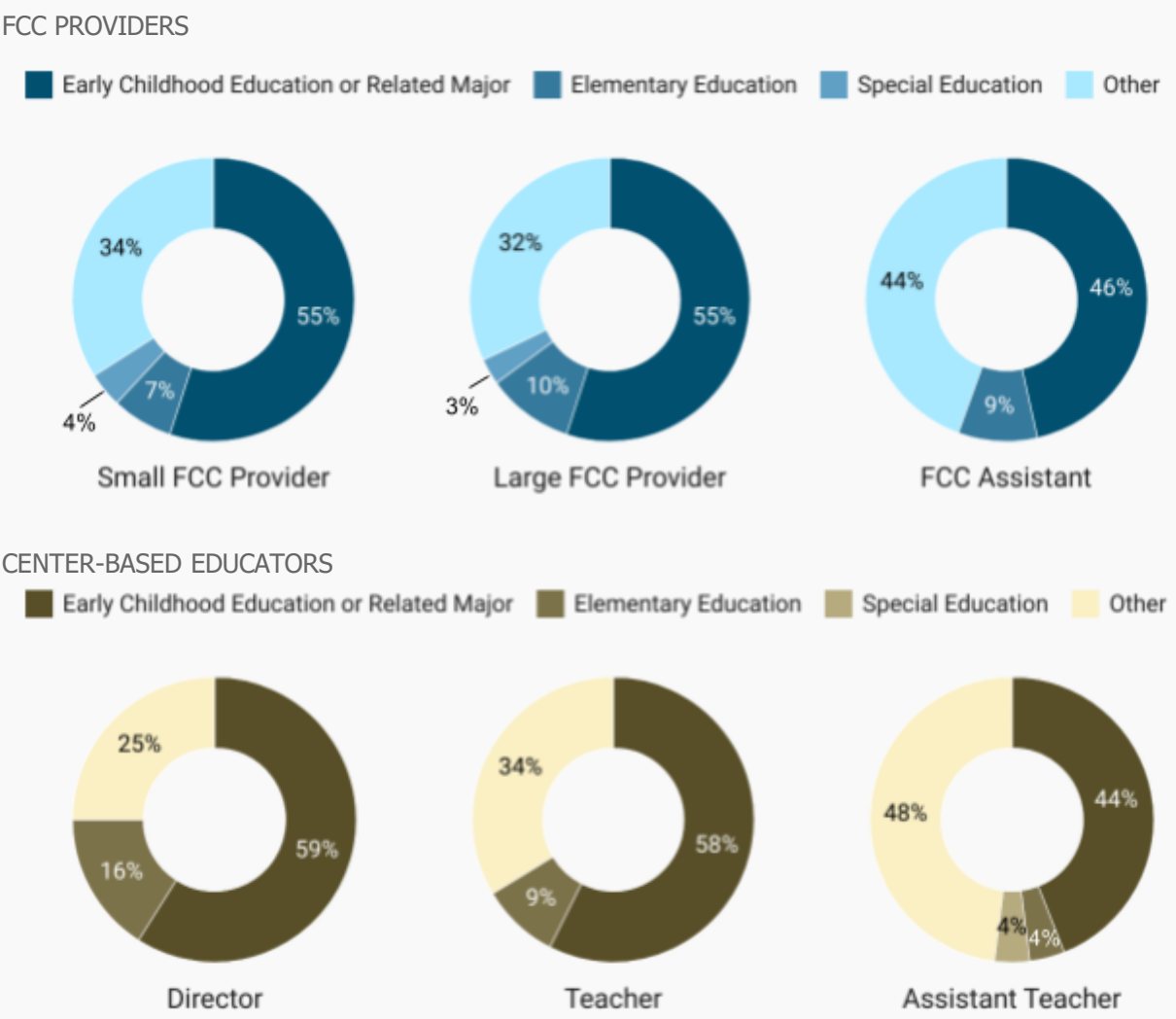
FIGURE 3. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF EARLY EDUCATORS, BY RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND



White N=613
Latina N=191
Other N=119
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Early educators reported early childhood education or a related major as the most common major among those who either completed a degree or studied for a degree (see **Figure 4**). Educators reported a variety of coursework areas under the "other" major category, including accounting, general studies, business, social work, and religious studies. While educational requirements are minimal and vary across program types, the ECE workforce in Oregon is highly educated, and while the percentages reported here are slightly higher, they mirror those from the 2019 *Oregon Early Workforce Report* (OCCD & OCCRP, 2021).

FIGURE 4. MAJOR FOR HIGHEST DEGREE STUDIED FOR OR EARNED, BY JOB ROLE



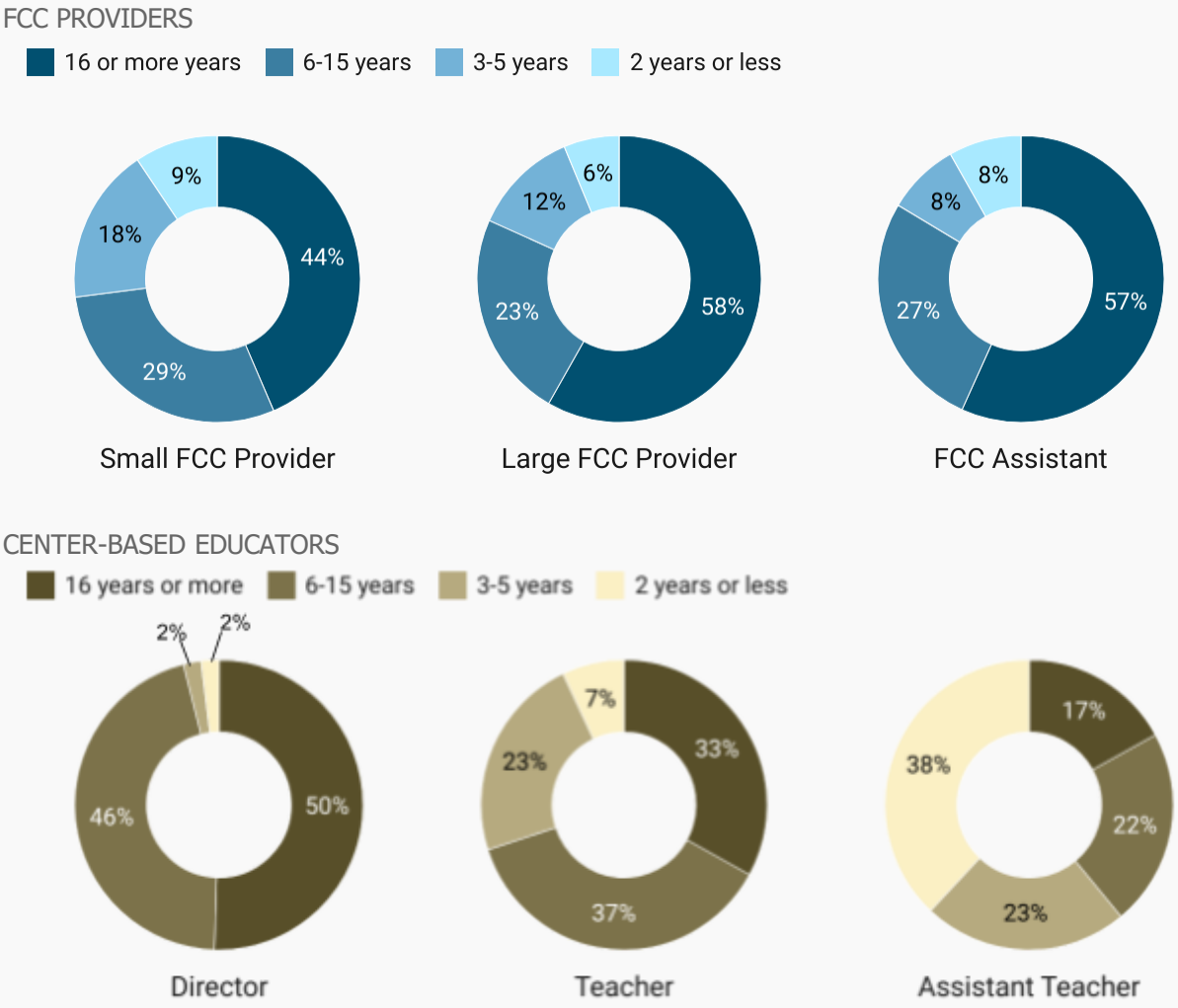
Small FCC Provider N=92
Large FCC Provider N=143
FCC Assistant N=70
Director N=44
Teacher N=175
Assistant Teacher N=71
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Two thirds of center-based teaching staff (67 percent) held student loan debt. Of those who had debt, 16 percent held an excess of $25,000 when leaving their program, and 24 percent currently hold loan debt in excess of $25,000, indicating that educators may struggle to repay their student loans without incurring further debt.

Tenure

Overall, the early educators in our sample represented a range of experience, from those who are new to the profession to others with many years of experience. Most FCC providers and assistants reported working in the early childhood education field for six years or more, with about one third of FCC providers (37 percent) reporting more than 16 years of experience in the field (see **Appendix D** for further detail on tenure).

FIGURE 5. NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE FIELD, BY JOB ROLE



Small FCC Provider N=170
Large FCC Provider N=158
FCC Assistant N=97
Director N=55
Teacher N= 287
Assistant Teacher N=159
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Generally, FCC providers and assistants reported being in their current job role for longer than center-based teaching staff.

Examining tenure in their current job role, nearly two thirds of center-based teachers and assistant teachers (60 percent and 59 percent, respectively) reported being in their current job role for less than two years, suggesting a high turnover among centers. See the section on **COVID Findings: Program Operations** (page 76) for a further discussion of how the pandemic exacerbated turnover in Oregon and in the field overall.

Those Who Left the Field

A small portion of Oregon early educators who took the SEQUAL survey reported having left the field within the past two years (45 center-based teaching staff and 16 FCC assistants, comprising 6 percent of all early educators surveyed). More than one half (57 percent) of the center-based teaching staff who left were assistant teachers. Among all those who left, the average tenure in early childhood education was seven years, with a range of one year to 32 years. Nearly two thirds (62 percent) of those who left the field had a college degree. This finding illustrates that a highly educated and experienced portion of the ECE workforce is leaving early care and education entirely.

Reasons for Leaving

The top reasons educators reported leaving early care and education were inadequate compensation, health concerns related to COVID-19, and a lack of benefits. Nearly one third (31 percent) of center-based teaching staff who left indicated that they did so in order to pursue a career in a different field.

Incentives to Return

More than one half of those who left the ECE field indicated that a higher income and more benefits would encourage them to return to early care and education.

Findings: Compensation

Wages of Center-Based Teaching Staff

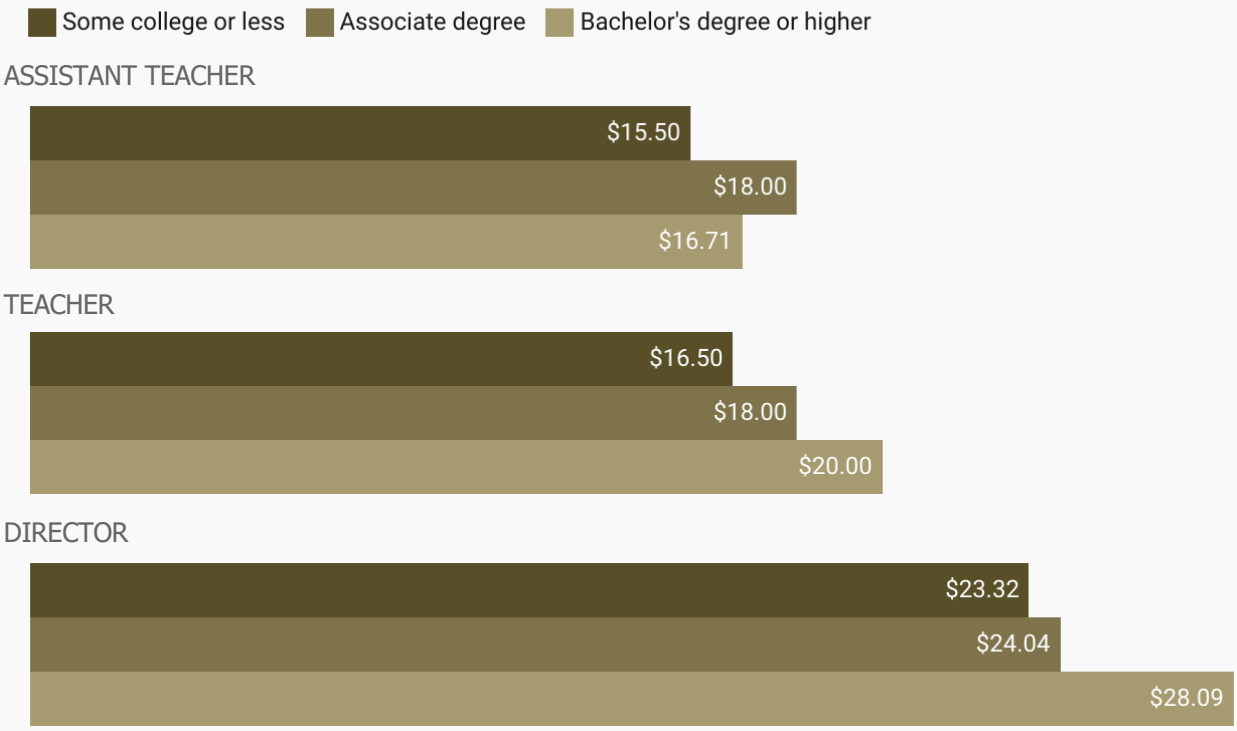
According to the 2020 *Early Childhood Workforce Index*, early educators in Oregon with a bachelor's degree were paid 36 percent less than K-8 teachers, and the poverty rate was seven times higher among early educators than K-8 teachers (McLean et al., 2021).

FIGURE 6. EARLY EDUCATOR MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE, BY JOB ROLE

Assistant Teacher N=147
FCC Assistant N=109
Teacher N= 281
Director N=52
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

The median hourly wage of center-based teaching staff in the sample was $17.00. Examining by job role, the median hourly wage was $16.00 for assistant teachers and $18.00 for teachers (see **Figure 7** and **Appendix C** for further wage data). The median hourly wage for center-based teaching staff with at least a bachelor's degree was $20.00, reflecting an hourly wage gap of $24.47 with similarly qualified kindergarten teachers in the state. Almost two thirds (63 percent) of center-based teaching staff reported a total annual household income of less than $40,000, and more than two thirds (68 percent) reported that one half or more of their income comes from their work with children.

FIGURE 7. CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF MEDIAN WAGE, BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

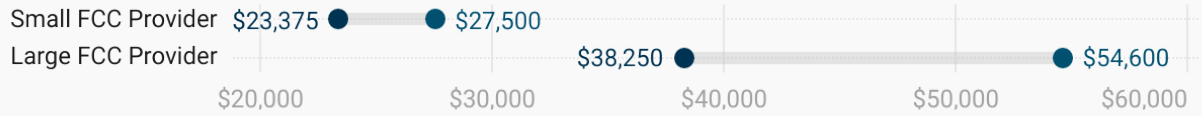


Assistant Teacher N=142
Teacher N=274
Director N=51
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Wages of Family Child Care Providers

The estimated annual income range for small FCC program providers was $23,375 to $27,500 and for large FCC program providers, $38,250 to $54,600.[6] The median hourly wage for FCC assistants was $16.50. A majority (71 percent) of FCC assistants reported that their total household income was less than $40,000, and 60 percent reported that one half or more of their income came from their work with young children.

FIGURE 8. FCC PROVIDER ANNUAL INCOME RANGE



Small FCC Provider N=138
Large FCC Provider N=141
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Furthermore, in addition to their work at their program, 12 percent of center-based teaching staff and FCC providers, as well as almost one fourth (23 percent) of FCC assistants, currently work another job. The most frequently reported additional jobs were related to caretaking and the service industry: babysitting, delivery driving, housekeeping, office assistant, and retail.

Savings for Retirement

We asked early educators if they had savings specifically for retirement, and most did not. More than two thirds (67 percent) of FCC providers, three quarters (75 percent) of FCC assistants, and one half (52 percent) of center-based teaching staff reported that they did not have any savings for retirement. Notably, nearly one half (48 percent) of all FCC providers reported being age 50 or older and therefore presumably closer to retirement; low wages may make it especially difficult for FCC providers to build savings for retirement. Among FCC providers, a higher percentage of small FCC program providers reported not having savings: 75 percent compared to 59 percent of large FCC program providers.

[6] Estimating family child care earnings is challenging because it is often aggregated with programmatic costs and revenues. As a result, it can be difficult to understand FCC providers' take-home pay. Readers should exercise caution interpreting FCC provider wages as we do not know the total revenue and costs for providers in the sample and thus cannot disaggregate from their personal wages. For more information on how the wages were estimated, see **Appendix C: Methodology for Calculating Family Child Care Income.**

Benefits

Health Care

While most early educators report one or more sources of coverage for health care, 13 percent of FCC providers, 8 percent of FCC assistants, and 7 percent of center-based teaching staff reported not having health insurance (see **Table 5**). Oregon offers a range of public health insurance options, including the Oregon Health Plan (OHP), Medicare, Medicaid, and TRICARE. The most common types of insurance plans reported across early educators surveyed were the Oregon Health Plan or being covered under the plan of a parent or spouse. Center directors (46 percent) were more likely than center-based teaching staff (38 percent) to report being insured through their employer.

TABLE 5. EARLY EDUCATORS' ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE AND SOURCE, BY JOB ROLE*

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs			
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher	Total
	N=173	N=171	N=97	N=53	N=288	N=160	N=942
Covered through employer	1%	6%	5%	46%	38%	38%	22%
Purchased directly from insurance company	11%	14%	6%	9%	4%	5%	8%
Oregon Health Plan	26%	25%	34%	11%	13%	12%	20%
Medicare	9%	10%	10%	5%	6%	7%	8%
Medicaid	10%	6%	8%	4%	5%	7%	7%
Covered by parent's or partner's policy	39%	25%	32%	21%	30%	32%	30%
Other	1%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Does not have health insurance	8%	17%	8%	0%	7%	7%	8%

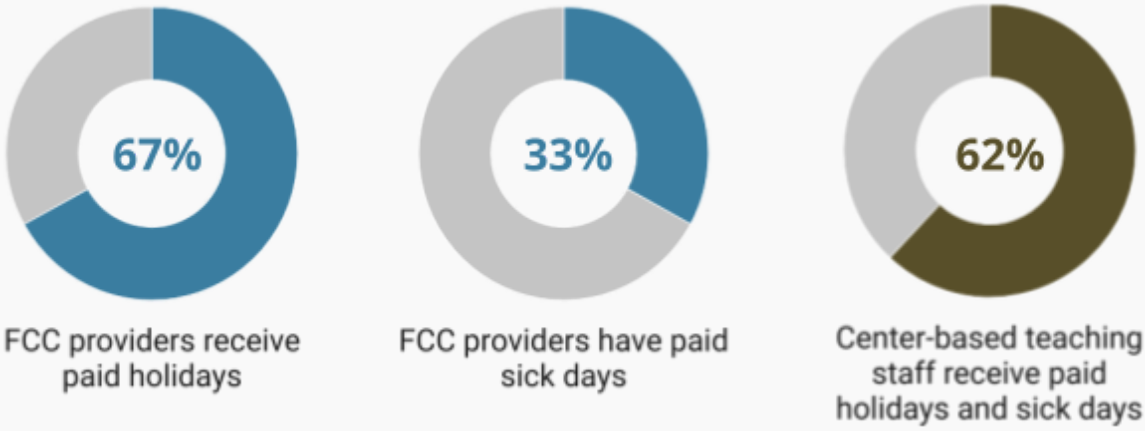
*Respondents were asked to check all that apply so percentages may not add up to 100%

Vacation and Leave

Two thirds (67 percent) of FCC providers reported having paid holidays, and one half (50 percent) reported having paid vacation days, indicating these days are included in their contracts with families. However, fewer FCC providers (33 percent) reported having paid sick days.

A vast majority of center-based teaching staff reported that they receive paid holidays (62 percent) and paid sick days (62 percent) while almost one-half (48 percent) reported paid vacation during the year. More than one third (38 percent) reported that their employer permitted them a specific number of days off to be used for either vacation or sick leave.

FIGURE 9. ACCESS TO PAID HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE



FCC Provider N=270
Teacher N= 186
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

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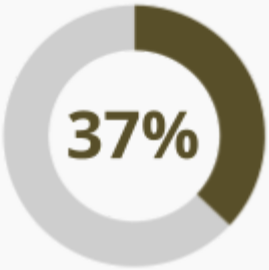
> *"I would like parents to know that while I love working with their children,* ***I no longer have the opportunity to take vacations*** *like I did in the past. There is* ***no one else to fill in for me anymore****, as my only other co-worker was laid off and has still not been replaced. It is hard to find someone who wants to immerse themselves in a field where* ***exposure to germs and illness is quite high*** *[...] and the pay isn't always proportionate to the work, both mentally and physically. I am not burnt out [...] but I often feel that I am no longer firing on all cylinders, so to speak."*
>
> *— FCC Assistant*

Public Income Supports

We asked early educators if they utilized any public support programs in the past year, such as the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, Medicaid, Healthy Families, Medicaid for Children, or pandemic EBT food assistance. Nearly one half of FCC providers (53 percent) and FCC assistants (56 percent) as well as 27 percent of center-based teaching staff reported utilizing two or more public supports in the past year. Furthermore, more than one third (37 percent) of center-based teaching staff with a bachelor's degree resided in families that utilized at least one form of public support. Early educators' use of public safety net programs is a reflection of the low compensation and economic insecurity they experience.



of center-based teaching staff with a bachelor's degree resided in families that utilized at least one form of public support

Findings: Work Environments

The data that follow are organized by SEQUAL domains and by dimensions within each domain. As noted above, four of the SEQUAL domains align across the center and FCC surveys (i.e., Teaching Supports, Learning Community, Adult Well-Being, and Program Leadership), while the domains of Job Crafting for center-based teaching staff and Business Practice Supports for FCC providers are wholly unique to each to reflect the significant differences in roles and responsibilities. To measure these important elements of the early educator role, the center-based survey includes a domain titled Job Crafting, while the home-based survey focuses on Business Practice Supports.

Each of the following sections begins with a description of the domain and its importance to educator practice and development, followed by a brief discussion of the overall domain mean score across program setting and job role. Items on SEQUAL are measured on a six-point scale, with one (1) being "strongly disagree" and six (6), "strongly agree." Unless otherwise noted, higher scores indicate a stronger agreement with the item and a more supportive work environment (for example, a mean score of 4.5 on Teaching Supports indicates that the educator feels they are *relatively* supported in their work environment). There are a few items that are dichotomous (yes/no), for example, whether they participated in certain professional development opportunities. In our analysis, we note any differences in survey items across the center and FCC surveys, and we present themes that emerged among the early educators surveyed. Variations by educator characteristics (e.g., tenure, educational attainment, language spoken) and program characteristics (e.g., QRIS participation, geographic region) are described when there are significant differences. For a more detailed explanation of how to interpret the findings, see **Appendix A**.

> *"It is hard work! We are not paid enough for what we do, and we are not respected in society for what we do for future generations and leaders of our country. This work is important! We care and show up each day to work hard for children and families! We are not doctors or counselors, but our work sure looks like it at times! If you know someone who works in the ECE field, respect and love them!"*
>
> *— Center Director*

> *"I love my job. However, it comes with no benefits and little pay. I am not sure how much longer I can continue in this field."*
>
> *— Large FCC Program Provider*

Domain 1: Teaching Supports

Domain Score
Center-based teaching staff: 4.44
FCC providers: 3.94
FCC assistants: 4.56

The Teaching Supports domain includes questions about a range of workplace tools and essential conditions that enable early educators to apply their knowledge and skills and provide high-quality early learning. Items in this domain examine how an individual might be supported in their daily teaching routine (e.g., through access to substitutes or regular breaks, curriculum materials, resources and training for working with children and families) and how they are professionally supported (e.g., opportunities for reflection and assessment of children, access to professional development). When such supports are missing or unreliable, their absence undermines efforts to improve or sustain program quality and places additional burdens on the complex and demanding work of teaching, which includes meeting the varied needs of individual children in the classroom or home environment.

The Teaching Supports domain measures the availability and sufficiency of resources in the classroom or family child care environment to support early educators' teaching practices and children's learning. The survey items in this domain are organized into five dimensions: 1) use of observation and assessment; 2) availability and quality of materials; 3) supports and resources for children and families; 4) staffing; and 5) professional responsibilities (for items on professional responsibilities related to FCC providers' businesses, please see Domain 3 – Business Practice Supports). These dimensions cover elements of support across both settings, such as the regular use of observation to document children's learning and assess their strengths and needs, having access to resources to help address child or family trauma, and having qualified substitutes available when needed. In addition to these items, the FCC provider survey includes items on planning activities for mixed age groups and about training/continuing education specific to family child care.

An examination of mean score differences for the Teaching Supports domain allows us to understand to what extent educators feel well resourced. Center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants had slightly higher mean scores than FCC providers (M=4.44, M=4.56, and M=3.94, respectively). Thus, while all educators in the sample feel their work is somewhat supported, FCC providers are on the lower end of this spectrum.

To understand the difference in mean scores, we examined early educators' responses to different items within the domain. FCC providers and assistants responded similarly to center-based teaching staff regarding their use of and training in observation and assessment, but FCC providers did not respond as affirmatively on questions related to staffing, resources for supporting children and families, and availability of essential materials. As the owners and directors of their own programs, FCC providers' responses indicate feeling less well-resourced to carry out the varied aspects of their job, compared to assistants and center-based teaching staff.

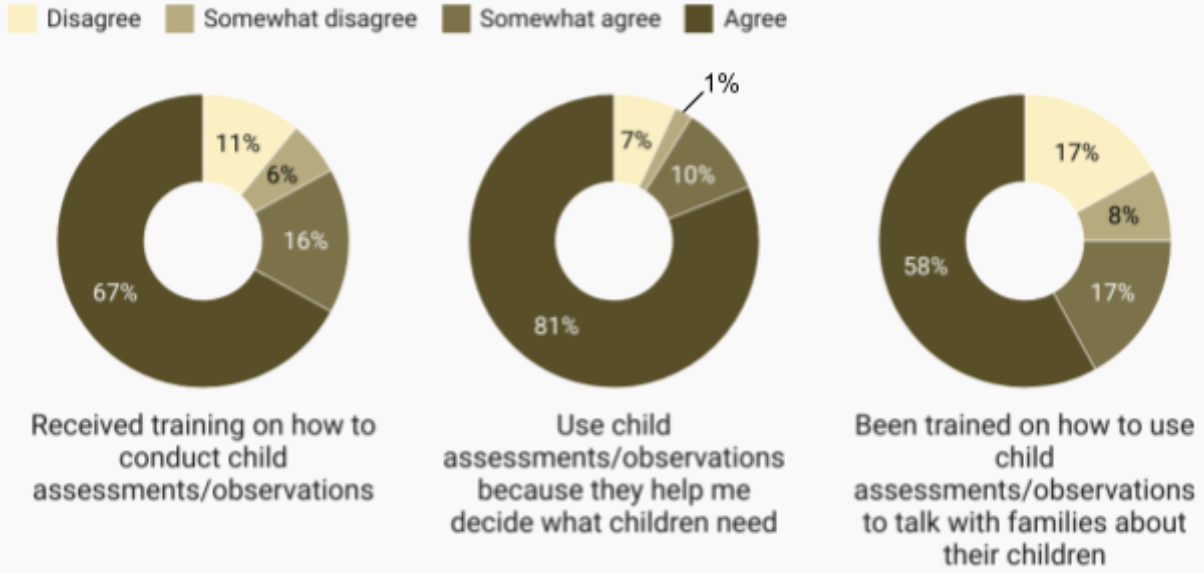
> *"Although we are essential workers, we have not received the support needed to keep operating our business."*
>
> *— Small FCC Program Provider*

Implementing Observation and Assessments

> *"My program does not train nor help me use observations and assessments to guide my work in the classroom. I do so relying on my previous experience and knowledge of best practices."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

Almost all of the early educators surveyed reported regularly observing and assessing children and agreed that these tools are useful supports for their teaching practice. However, they also identified challenges around training on or implementation of assessments. One third of center-based teaching staff indicated insufficient training in how to conduct assessments, and nearly one half reported not having sufficient training in how to use these assessments to communicate with families about their children (see **Figure 10**). Additionally, while almost all FCC providers indicated observing children regularly, fewer reported consistently using developmental checklists or other assessment tools to plan for and support individual learning needs (see **Figure 10**).

FIGURE 10. CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF EXPERIENCE WITH OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT



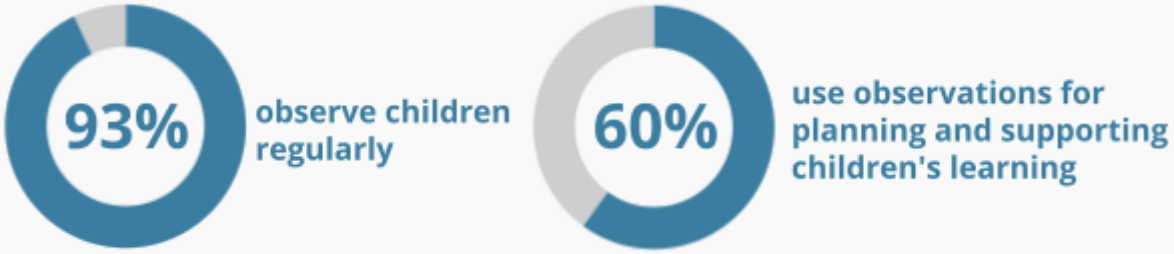
N=381-386
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

"I am an educated professional who does not simply watch over children. Especially now, with the difficulties and setbacks that COVID brought about for young children, I am working very hard to meet each individual child's needs and assess where they are at socially, academically, emotionally, and [in] other areas before they are off to kindergarten."

— FCC Assistant

Observations and assessments provide valuable information about children's development. Nonetheless, because FCC providers are providing care in a home-based setting, often with fewer children and/or with children of multiple age groups, observing children may not lend itself to the use of more formal tools. When educators are not sufficiently trained or are inconsistent in assessing children's learning using available tools, assessments may be working against effective teaching instead of providing support.

FIGURE 11. FCC PROVIDER EXPERIENCE WITH OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT



N=387-385
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

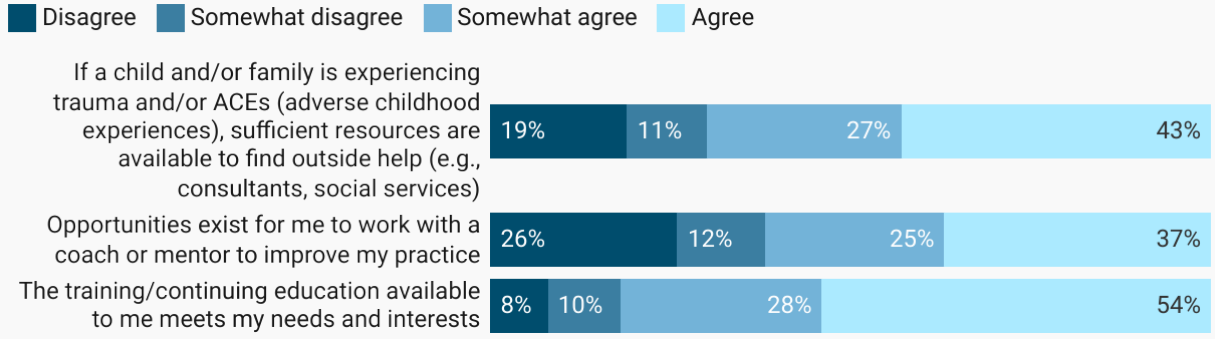
Supports for Children and Families

Early educators take a "whole child" approach to their provision of care and education and thus work with families and the communities in which they are embedded to ensure that all aspects of childhood are supported. In this regard, early educators need training, support, and access to outside resources to effectively meet the needs of children and families. Early educators surveyed reported that outside resources were not consistently available. In particular, early educators noted a lack of supports available for working with children and their families. A majority (64 percent) of FCC providers and almost one half (47 percent) of FCC assistants reported that if they encountered a challenge communicating with children or their families because of a language barrier, there were not always sufficient outside resources available to help meet the challenge.

In addition to a need for increased supports for working with children and families, nearly one half (42 percent) of center-based teaching staff reported that there was not enough training available for working with children's challenging behaviors. FCC providers and assistants also noted a lack of resources available for children or families experiencing trauma and/or adverse childhood experiences (ACEs; see **Figure 12**). In order to provide support for the whole child, Oregon educators need to have better training and access to resources supporting the varied developmental pathways of children in their care.

Both large FCC program providers and small FCC program providers felt like these resources were insufficient (62 percent and 46 percent, respectively).

FIGURE 12. SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FCC PROVIDERS



N=371-376
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Supports for Family Child Care Educators

FCC educators were also asked about training and supports specifically designed for family child care. FCC providers and assistants reported that the training and continuing education available to them was not always specific or relevant to family child care and that it did not always meet their needs and interests. Trainings are often designed around center-based programs, which FCC educators must translate to their own individual context. This lack of support and training specific to the needs of FCC providers and the insufficient nature of other supports, appear to be two of the factors contributing to a lower domain score for FCC providers overall. Given the unique context of family child care—providing care in a home setting, working with multiple age groups, and the dual role of being an educator and business owner—specific training needs to be better developed to support this workforce.

Furthermore, a majority of FCC providers reported that they did not have sufficient opportunities to work with a coach or mentor to improve their practice (63 percent). Since many FCC providers feel isolated because they work alone or with very limited staff, such opportunities to engage with other adults offer another pathway for feeling supported.

> *"There are not a lot of class[es] that are about [...] home care. Most of the classes are [...] for center-based care."*
>
> *— Small FCC Program Provider*

Sufficient Staffing Supports

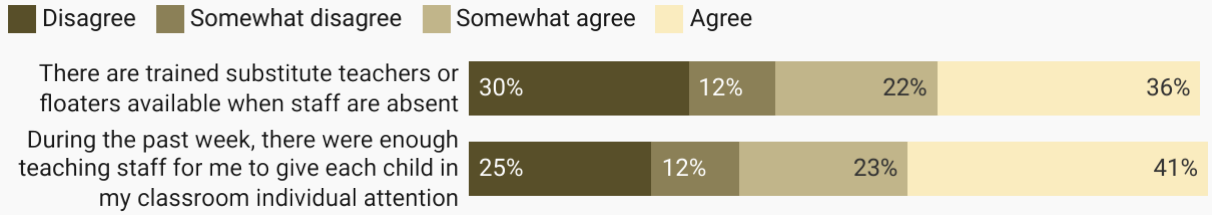
> *"Not enough staff to keep rooms open or provide planning time. As more staff leave, more rooms close, and responsibilities increase."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

Regardless of program setting, early educators surveyed in Oregon reported staffing challenges (e.g., access to qualified substitutes, sufficient staff coverage to provide children with individualized attention, hiring staff in the event of turnover). While the crisis in the field is longstanding, the pandemic greatly exacerbated these issues.

The average turnover rate reported by center directors was 31 percent for assistant teachers and 17 percent for teachers during the 12 months prior to the survey (see **COVID Findings: Program Operations**, page 76, for center administrator and FCC provider responses to impacts of the pandemic on program staffing). When there are not enough staff, it challenges the ability of educators to attend to individual children's needs and provide a stable and nurturing learning environment for all the children in their care.

Center-based teaching staff reported that they could not rely on trained floaters or substitutes to cover when staff are absent. They also reported inadequate staffing levels for providing children with individual attention (see **Figure 13**). While a majority (61 percent) agreed that if turnover occurs in their program, everything possible is done to hire qualified new staff, only 26 percent agreed that new staff will be hired quickly, indicating the difficulty of recruitment and hiring.

FIGURE 13. STAFFING SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF

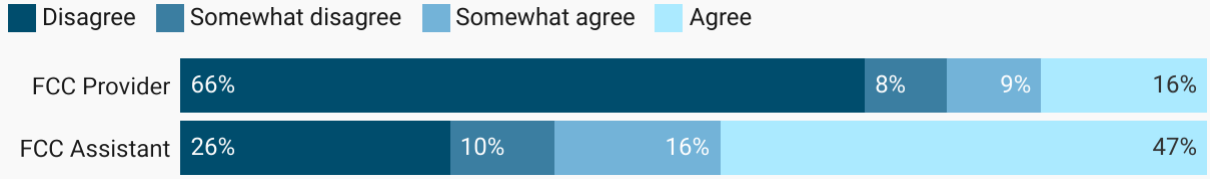


N=472-484
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Similar to center-based teaching staff, FCC providers and assistants reported challenges to staffing. FCC providers rely on substitutes or respite providers when issues arise and they need coverage. However, FCC providers surveyed assessed these sources as unreliable (see **Figure 14**). Furthermore, a majority (68 percent) of large FCC program providers indicated that they did not have a back-up plan if their assistant was sick. FCC providers appear to struggle more with staffing supports than center-based teaching staff, thus contributing to a lower Teaching Supports domain score overall. When support staff are unavailable or unreliable, early educators' ability to meet their own needs and the needs of their families is seriously restricted, and they may be forced to close their program, which impacts the children and families they serve. Unreliable staffing also has the potential to lead to burnout among staff who remain.

> *"There is no one else to fill in for me anymore, as my only other co-worker was laid off and has still not been replaced."*
>
> *— FCC Assistant*

FIGURE 14. AVAILABILITY OF SUBSTITUTE OR RESPITE PROVIDERS, BY FCC PROVIDER TYPE



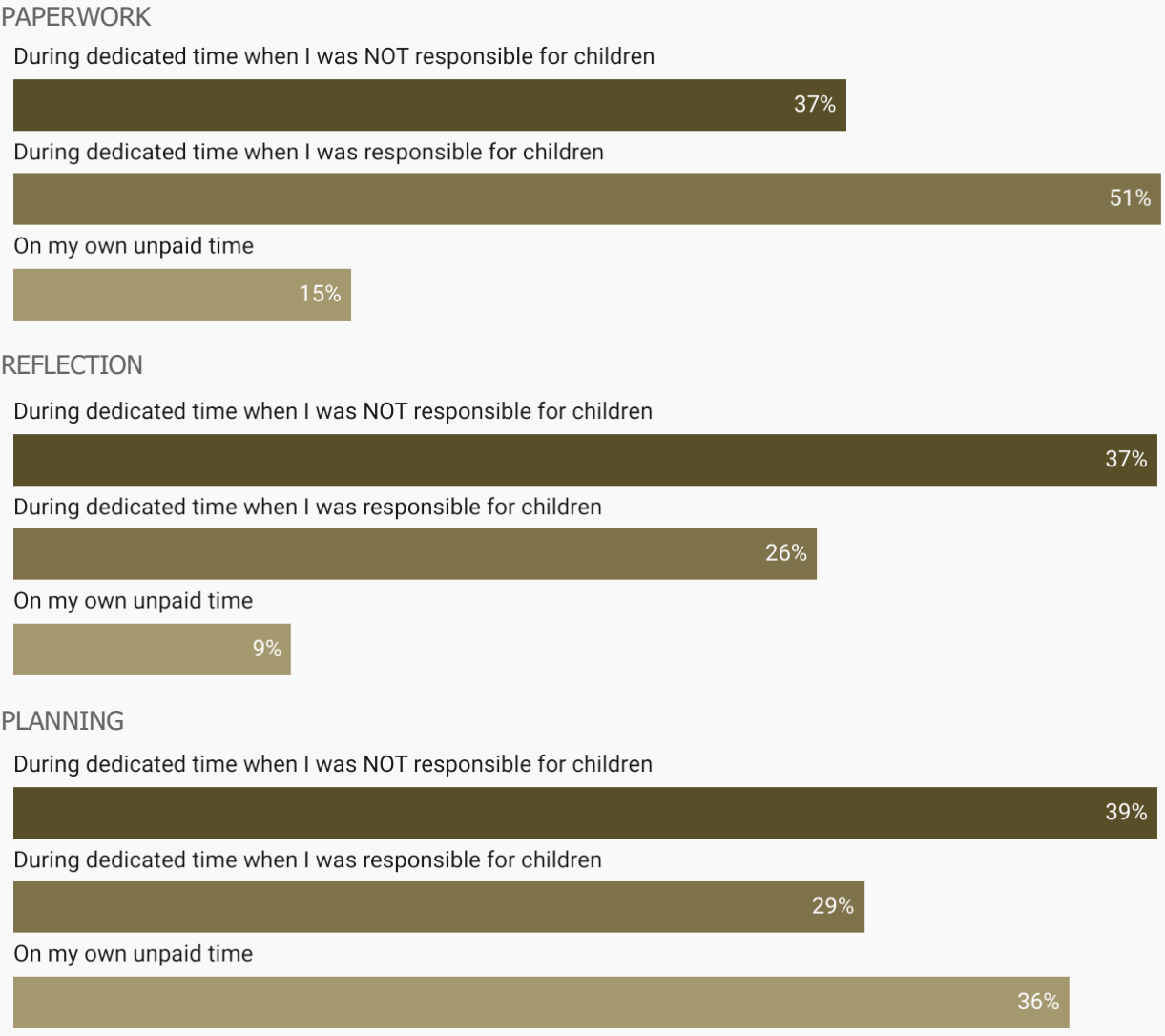
FCC Provider N=371
FCC Assistant N=188
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Time for Professional Responsibilities

Staffing also impacts the amount of time that early educators have to work on completing their professional responsibilities, such as planning classroom curriculum. The early educators surveyed indicated that they often use their unpaid time or time when they are working in the classroom with young children to complete professional responsibilities. Early educators need *dedicated non-child-contact* time to plan curriculum, conduct observations and assessments, share with one another, and complete required paperwork.

Among educators surveyed, less than one half of center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants indicated that they had dependable dedicated planning time each week, and nearly one half of center-based teaching staff agreed that in the past week, they did their paperwork during a time when they were also responsible for children (see **Figure 15**). Furthermore, center-based teaching staff reported that they did not have the opportunity to meet with other teaching staff to reflect on classroom practice during the past week.

FIGURE 15. TIME FOR CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF TO ENGAGE IN PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES



Respondents were asked to check all that apply so percentages may not add up to 100%
N=485
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

This problem is exacerbated for FCC providers who often work alone or with only a single assistant. Indeed, the vast majority of FCC providers (87 percent) indicated that most of this type of work is being done after work hours during their personal time. A majority of providers agreed that there was sufficient time every week to give each child in their program individual attention (76 percent) and to have meaningful connections with the family members of each child in their program (70 percent). However, when examined by provider type, small FCC program providers reported higher percentages of agreement on these items (81 percent and 82 percent, respectively) compared to large FCC program providers (70 percent and 59 percent, respectively). However, since small FCC program providers care for fewer children, the smaller teacher-to-children ratio may account for these findings.

Variations in Teaching Supports: Supports Matter for Training and Retention

Programs across the country that participate in a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) often receive additional financial support and resources, which in turn can help provide resources and opportunities for training and professional development. In Oregon, small FCC program providers who participated in QRIS had significantly higher Teaching Supports domain mean scores (M=4.27) compared to small FCC program providers who did not participate in QRIS (M=3.85),[7] thus indicating a possible relationship between teaching supports and QRIS participation.

Furthermore, there were notable differences among FCC providers who were multilingual and whose programs participated in QRIS. Both multilingual large FCC program providers and multilingual FCC assistants had significantly higher Teaching Support mean scores (M=4.03[8] and M=4.91, respectively)[9] compared to FCC providers and assistants who spoke English only (M=3.74 and M=4.49, respectively). Thus, the positive relationship between QRIS and teaching supports appears greater for those who are multilingual.

This relationship was also found across roles for areas of support services. Multilingual small FCC program providers, multilingual large FCC program providers, and multilingual FCC assistants all had higher mean scores (M=3.88, M=3.51, and M=4.74, respectively)[10] compared to those who spoke English only (M=3.43, M=3.13, and M=4.16, respectively).

---

[7] $t(1,147)=-3.270$, $p<0.001$

[8] $t(1,180)=-2.294$, $p=.023$

[9] $t(1,105)=5.216$, $p=.024$

[10] Small FCC program provider: $t(182)=-2.168$, $p=.031$; Large FCC program provider: $t(180)=-2.017$ $p=.045$; FCC assistant: $t(105)=-2.285$, $p=.024$

As these items include working with non-English-speaking children and their families, being able to communicate with children and families and provide continuity may be driving those higher scores.

Spark: Oregon's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS)

In 2013, Oregon implemented Spark, Oregon's QRIS system. While the QRIS acronym commonly refers to a Quality Rating and Improvement System across the United States, in Oregon the acronym refers to a Quality Recognition and Improvement System. Administered at the state level for both center- and home-based family child care programs, Spark consists of 33 standards grouped into five categories:

- Children's learning and development;
- Health and safety;
- Personnel qualifications;
- Family partnerships; and
- Administration and business practices.

Participating programs are rated at four levels ranging from "commitment to quality" to "5-star." Currently, two fifths of early education programs participate in Spark (The Research Institute, 2022a). Program ratings are calculated based on licensing compliance, child observations and assessments, child health and developmental screenings, ratios and group size, teacher and director qualifications, teacher–child interactions, and program environment (The Research Institute, 2022b). Participating programs receive a variety of resources and supports intended to improve program practices and ratings, including access to professional development, professional growth advising, assessments/observations and data to inform practice and growth, and financial incentives/grants to support professional and program improvement.

Spark is currently undergoing revisions.

There also appears to be a relationship between the tenure and retention of teachers on the Staffing dimension within the Teaching Supports domain. There were notable differences in scores by job role and tenure for center-based teaching staff. Overall, assistant teachers had higher mean scores (M=4.17) compared to teachers (M=3.77).[11]

[11] $t(1,482)=3.48$, $p<001$

Additionally, teaching staff with two years or less at their current center had significantly higher mean scores (M=4.15) compared to those who have been at their centers longer (three to five years, M=3.78; six years or more, M=3.65).[12] Teaching staff with longer tenure may feel the additive impacts of turnover and insufficient teacher supports over time. This finding may also reflect that understaffing and a lack of resources to support children and families has a greater impact on teachers or that turnover may be occurring at a greater rate with assistant teachers, resulting in lower scores for teachers.

Supported Teachers Want to Stay

We found a significant difference between the Teaching Supports domain mean scores of center-based teaching staff who wanted to stay in their current program and those who were thinking about leaving. Educators whose three-year plans included staying at their current center had significantly higher mean scores (M=4.63) compared to those who are not sure of their plans (M=4.30) and those who want to leave the ECE field (M=4.21).[13] Thus, educators who feel more supported in terms of staffing, training, and professional development appear to want to continue to work in their current program.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Teaching Supports domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores**.

[12] F(3,448)=11.39, p<0.001
[13] F(3,450)=6.21, p<0.001

Domain 2: Learning Community

Domain Score
Center-based teaching staff: 4.15
FCC providers: 3.98
FCC assistants: 4.30

The Learning Community domain addresses conditions that strengthen and refine teaching practice. A professional learning community encompasses issues of policy, practice, and relationships. It involves opportunities to participate in relevant trainings, occasion to practice emerging skills, and encouragement for testing new strategies and ideas. Effective learning and implementation of new approaches to teaching requires engagement among colleagues across all roles in the organization. When learning opportunities fail to address classroom challenges, allow for opportunities to practice and reflect, or engage all members of the team, adult learning and organizational improvement are stalled and less likely to be sustained.

As measured in the survey, the Learning Community domain consists of questions highlighting two dimensions regarding: 1) opportunities for professional development; and 2) opportunities to apply learning and develop teaching skills and practice with other educators in a variety of educational contexts.

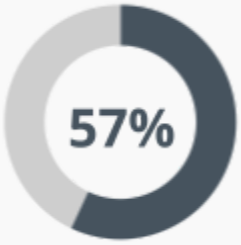
Due to the nature of family child care, we expect to see a difference between center-based teaching staff and FCC providers on this domain. Indeed, Oregon FCC provider responses indicate a lower Learning Community domain score than center-based teaching staff (M=3.98 and M=4.15, respectively). FCC providers often work alone or with few others with whom they can build collegial relationships. Furthermore, given they are the "sole" care provider, they may not have the staffing capacity to engage with professional development opportunities (for further discussion about staffing challenges for FCC providers, see page 36 in the Teaching Supports domain). Next, we examine the two dimensions that compose the Learning Community domain: professional development and applying learning.

Professional Development

Most FCC providers and center-based teaching staff indicated that in the past year, they participated in professional development opportunities that addressed a particular topic either in person or online. In addition to these one-time opportunities, 59 percent of center-based teaching staff and 60 percent of FCC providers indicated that they participated in more in-depth training, which spanned several sessions.

This positive finding means most educators are taking advantage of many of the pertinent opportunities available to early educators.

However, both center-based teaching staff and FCC providers indicated that in the past year, they did not have as many opportunities to engage in more relational forms of professional development, such as coaching with a mentor or participating in a book group discussion (only 33 percent from each group). Fewer still reported that they had the opportunity to attend a professional conference (20 percent), take a college course for continuing education credits (20 percent), or observe another classroom or school (10 percent). Professional development opportunities such as these allow educators to engage with the material in a way that is more personal and applied, crafting the information to fit their own classroom practices or seeing how it plays out in other classrooms. They also encourage early educators to engage in critical thinking about their teaching practice and that of other educators. These types of professional development opportunities are crucial to high-quality teaching and positive developmental outcomes for children.



of center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants agreed they would be paid for the time they engaged in required professional development activities

> ***"La busquedad (sic) de nuevas estrategias de enseñanza fue importante para seguir con el desarrollo de los niños."***
>
> *"The search for new teaching strategies [is] important to continue [as] the development of children [continues]."*
>
> *— FCC Assistant*

Pandemic restrictions may have contributed to low participation in these relational opportunities, since many conferences were canceled or relegated to online platforms. Due to physical distancing restrictions, educators were often unable to meet in groups to have discussions. In addition to these social restrictions, center-based teaching staff and FCC providers also indicated that limited budgets and staffing shortages hindered their ability to participate in professional development opportunities. FCC providers, in particular, felt they could not adjust their work schedule or secure a substitute in order to attend professional development opportunities. In addition to pandemic restrictions, having sufficient staffing and funding to engage in professional development may also present a serious challenge for early educators.

Applying Learning

> *"In my program, I am able to apply new teaching practices that I have learned through training courses. It is sometimes difficult to keep new practices going when we have float[er] assistants and substitute assistants helping in the classroom because of staffing shortages…."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

The other aspect of the Learning Community domain is the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in professional development to strengthen teaching practice. The SEQUAL measure for both FCC providers and center-based teaching staff contains several questions regarding such opportunities. While the specific questions sometimes differed, FCC providers and center-based teaching staff scored similarly on this dimension (M=4.31 for both groups of educators). This mean score indicates that educators from both settings somewhat agree that families and co-workers support them in trying new approaches, that the professional development they engage with helps them improve their practice, and for FCC providers, that these opportunities help them improve their business.

Center-based teaching staff also agreed, although not as strongly, that staffing changes make it difficult to try new things in the classroom. FCC providers felt similarly, with a weak agreement that other professionals (like other FCC providers or mentors) support them in trying new things. Having opportunities to experiment with new approaches, and feeling trusted in this regard, helps educators grow and improve. Thus, these results point to the importance of consistent support from colleagues as a part of a learning community.

Variations in Learning Community: The Importance of Opportunities for Collegial Discourse

While FCC providers had a lower mean score than center-based teaching staff for the Learning Community domain overall (M=3.98 and M=4.15, respectively), there are significant variations in the mean scores for both groups based on language spoken by the educators, their tenure and job role at their current program, future plans, and their program's involvement in Oregon's QRIS. Findings for these variations were not necessarily significant for both groups of educators, thus pointing to unique aspects of learning community experiences for FCC providers and center-based teaching staff. These early educators are similar in that the variations in scores points to the importance of opportunities for collegial discourse and professional development among early educators in Oregon.

In terms of opportunities for collegial interaction, there is a significant result for language, where large FCC program providers and assistants who are multilingual have significantly higher Learning Community mean scores (M=4.24 and M=4.60, respectively) than providers and assistants who speak only English (M=3.86 and M=4.35, respectively).[14] There is not a significant result for language among center-based teaching staff. Large FCC program providers are offered opportunities for professional development and are encouraged to work with peer programs. Perhaps for the often-isolated FCC providers, who may feel doubly isolated by language, these opportunities foster a community of learners that we might not see in other settings.

Most QRIS programs require early educators and their care programs to support elements of the Learning Community domain; for example, engaging in professional development inside and outside of the program in order to foster teaching practices and skills and building in opportunities for reflection with colleagues. Thus, one would expect educators working at QRIS-participating programs to report a more affirmative score than those who do not. Large and small FCC program providers who participate in QRIS had significantly higher mean scores (M=4.16 and M=4.22, respectively) than large or small FCC program providers who do not take part in such initiatives (M=3.76 and M=3.78, respectively).[15] As indicated above, the collegial discourse and professional development required by QRIS may be FCC providers' only opportunity for such interaction and improvement.

[14] F(1,181)=5.629 p=0.004
[15] F(1,320)=9.934 p=0.002

Supported Teachers Want to Stay

Among center-based teaching staff, there is a significant finding for job roles, tenure at their current program, and future plans. Center-based assistant teachers responded with a significantly higher mean score on the Learning Community domain than teachers (M=4.36 and M=4.04, respectively).[16] This finding may be due to the very nature of the assistant teacher job role, which necessitates working in concert with a lead teacher. Educators with longer tenure at their current program, regardless of job role, have a significantly lower Learning Community mean score, perhaps indicating the toll of years of hard work without fair compensation. Finally, those who responded that they would be working at the same program in three years, regardless of job role or tenure, had a significantly higher mean score (M=4.34) than educators who saw themselves teaching elsewhere (M=3.84) or even outside of the field (M=3.90).[17] Thus, it is not necessarily the longevity of the job role that matters, but the opportunities for professional development, collaboration, and reflection that appear to contribute to an educator's desire to remain in the field.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Learning Community domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores**.

[16] t(479)=2.855, p=.004

[17] F(3,449)=6.38, p<.001

Domain 3: Job Crafting for Center-Based Teaching Staff

Domain Score: 4.38

The Job Crafting domain focuses on workplace practices and relationships that support individual teaching staff in expressing how their work is done and sharing decisions that impact their classrooms and the larger organization. When teaching staff consider themselves part of a well-functioning team and feel they have a meaningful say in how their classrooms operate, they are more able to engage in the reflection, creative problem-solving, and innovation necessary for continuous quality improvement. Both morale and performance improve in workplaces where employees feel well informed about program policies and changes and can identify that there is a clear process for giving input into organization-wide decisions that impact their day-to-day jobs. When teamwork and avenues for input are lacking or input is not seriously considered, morale and engagement decrease, while turnover increases.

The Job Crafting domain for center-based teaching staff includes dimensions that assess: 1) how educators work together as a team in their educational setting; 2) how much input they feel they have; and 3) their perceived decision-making power. Given that FCC providers generally have few staff members and are the sole decision makers, this domain does not exist for them in the SEQUAL survey.[18]

SEQUAL assesses how much voice teaching staff feel they have in working together as a team in their program and how much power their voices have to influence change in program policies. Center-based teaching staff in Oregon have a mean score of 4.38 on the Job Crafting domain, indicating that across all centers, educators *somewhat* agree that they have a certain level of input and autonomy in their work.

> *"With the many years of experience I have, I wish my input was appreciated …"*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

[18] SEQUAL does not assess job crafting in FCC environments because FCC providers are crafting their jobs by creating their own programs and through aspects such as learning community and their business practices (see the next section, Domain 3: Business Practice Supports for FCC Providers).

Decision Making and Input

For the most part, center-based teaching staff had strong affirmative answers as to the amount of input and decision-making power they have. These educators indicated that they have a certain level of autonomy regarding what takes place in their classroom (for example, making plans or changes in their classroom activities) and they are informed about policies and programming at their center. While they feel that they are well informed by administrators in the program, they do not feel that their input is well received. Fewer than one half of the educators surveyed indicated that they feel invited to offer input into policies and programs, that there is a clear process for offering input, or that their input is taken seriously. Thus, even though center-based teaching staff are well informed about policies at their programs, they do not feel they have much input as to what those policies actually are.

Teamwork

Center-based teaching staff in Oregon reported high levels of teamwork. The majority of educators indicated that they feel they work together in the classroom as a team (82 percent), that they work collaboratively to plan the classroom curriculum (65 percent), and that they work collaboratively with other classrooms in the center (72 percent). These strong scores indicate that a culture of collaboration among the educators is an asset in many of the schools. Taken together with the Input dimension and overall Job Crafting findings, fostering this sense of collaboration to include educators and administrators might raise Job Crafting domain scores overall.

FIGURE 16. CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF TEAMWORK

N= 452
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Variations in Job Crafting: Opportunities for Input

There were significant findings for race/ethnicity, job role, and future plans. Early educators who identified as Latina approached a statistically significant finding, with lower mean scores on the Input dimension (M=4.25) than those who identified as White or some other ethnic/racial background (M=4.52 and M=4.55, respectively).[19] These results point to the importance of centers working intentionally to support and include all educator voices in their policies and procedures.

There was also a statistically significant difference by job role on the Job Crafting domain. Assistant teachers had a significantly higher domain mean score than teachers (M=4.32 and M=4.5, respectively),[20] and across the items, assistant teachers had slightly more favorable assessments of teamwork (M=5.03 and M=4.82, respectively) and decision-making opportunities (M=4.56 and M=4.44, respectively). These findings indicate that assistant teachers work somewhat effectively as a team with their co-workers and thus feel they can offer input for classroom and programmatic decisions that impact their work. In other areas of the survey, such as the Support Services for Children and Families dimension, assistant teachers also had higher scores than teachers (M=4.55 and M=4.17, respectively). This finding may reflect that assistant teachers in our sample work effectively with their lead or head teacher, feel supported, and therefore, feel valued to share their input.

Supported Teachers Want to Stay

Teaching staff members who planned to stay at their center had significantly higher scores on the Teamwork (M=5.09) and Input dimensions (M=4.70) and the overall Job Crafting (M=4.60) domain in comparison to those who want to leave their center but remain in the field (M=4.54, M=4.26, and M=4.13, respectively) and those who want to leave the ECE field altogether (M=4.68, M=4.10, and M=4.00, respectively).[21] These results appear to indicate that it is essential for center-based programs to foster job crafting, honoring and incorporating the voices and ideas of *all* of their educators in order to retain staff and increase their performance.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Job Crafting domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores**.

[19] F(2,448)=2.916 p=.055
[20] t(476)=1.964 p=.050
[21] Teamwork dimension: F(3,425)=6.1, p<0.001; Input dimension: F(3,446)=9.623, p<0.001; Job Crafting domain: F(3,442)=9.266, p<0.001

Domain 3: Business Practice Supports for FCC Providers

Domain Score
FCC providers: 4.79
FCC assistants: 4.57

The Business Practice Supports domain measures aspects of the FCC environment that support and facilitate the successful operation of a provider's business. These aspects include time for professional responsibilities, physical space, and supports for operating the business (such as technology and training). FCC providers are not only responsible for providing care and education, but also for maintaining their business and therefore need supports for both aspects. Dedicated time for completing professional responsibilities and time for connecting with children and families are important for fostering a positive learning and working environment, and on the business side, technological resources and training are essential for creating a successful enterprise and, thus, a successful work environment for the providers themselves and any staff they may employ.

In addition to their role as educators, FCC providers have the responsibility of meeting the needs of employees and the families they serve as well as the demands of operating a business. Items in the Business Practice Supports domain capture FCC provider perspectives on: 1) the supports they have for operating a business in their home and in the community (such as access to reliable Internet and training in the creation and maintenance of a budget); and 2) how they allocate time for tasks related to the business portion of their learning program.

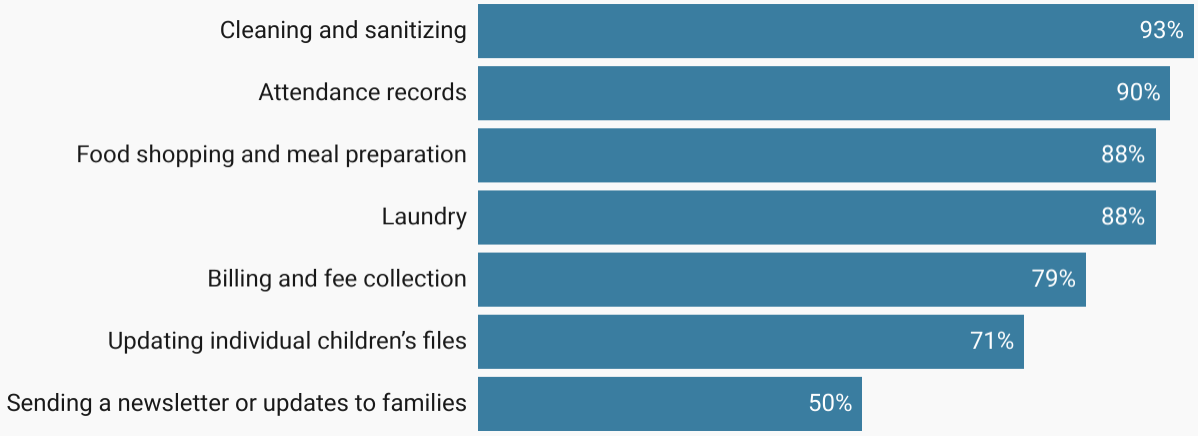
FCC providers surveyed had a domain mean score of 4.79 overall, indicating that they feel supported, but only to a modest degree. This moderate sense of support appears to stem from how FCC providers responded to questions regarding their ability to allocate time to supporting their business. Specifically, only 42 percent of providers agreed they had enough time to complete the necessary paperwork for their business in the past week, and only 40 percent of large FCC program providers agreed they had enough time to meet with their assistants for planning. Next, we will take a closer look at how providers responded to questions related to business operations supports and time for business responsibilities, along with the types of supports they reported using.

Time for Business and Professional Responsibilities

> *"For a 36-hour-a-week job, I work 50-60 hours a week. Sanitizing, mowing, preparing food, grocery shopping, laundry, classes, and more."*
>
> *— Large FCC Program Provider*

In addition to their responsibilities as educators, FCC providers must fulfill a variety of professional responsibilities to support their business. FCC providers indicated that these responsibilities include recordkeeping and reporting, family and community outreach, professional growth, and program maintenance, among many others (see **Figure 17**).

FIGURE 17. FCC PROVIDERS' PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES



N=395
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Many providers struggled with finding time to complete their business responsibilities. Only 42 percent of FCC providers surveyed felt they had enough time during their regular operating hours to do necessary business operations such as recordkeeping, bill paying, and fee collection. Only 34 percent of large FCC program providers felt they had enough time compared to 50 percent of small FCC program providers. Furthermore, fewer than one half (40 percent) of large FCC program providers felt that there was enough time each week to engage, plan, or reflect with their assistants.

FCC providers are usually only compensated for hours of direct care, not for the hours they spend on these business-related responsibilities. Furthermore, a majority of providers (69 percent) reported that they do not have anyone other than themselves or their assistants to help with services outside the direct care of children (e.g., cleaning, laundry, and

bookkeeping). Thus, to create a system of adequate care, fees for family child care programs need to include dedicated time for providers to complete the necessary documentation of their work with children.

Business and Community Supports

FCC providers were also asked to assess how their home environment supports their business, how comfortable they are using technology, and what resources are available in the community to offset some of the expenses of running their child care business. While a majority of providers (70 percent) agreed that they received training specific to running their child care business, it is notable that almost one third do not consistently agree that they received adequate training. Providers have a dual role of being both an educator and a business owner, and such training can provide much-needed support.

In other areas of the survey (see the Teaching Supports Domain, page 31, and the Program Management and Leadership domain, page 63), FCC educators report that the training and continuing education offered to them is often not specific to family child care or not relevant to their needs. Given that a vast majority of providers agreed that they are comfortable using online training (87 percent) and registering for courses (83 percent), online learning could be a potential avenue for delivering much-needed training and support.

> *"It's a full-time job just to stay on top of guidelines and procedures, let alone implement them. You can never win—some people will think you're too lenient, others will think you're too strict. It's exhausting. All the parents are exhausted, too. None of them can do extra with their kids at home, which also makes our job so much harder. It's not their fault. They are doing the best they can. We all are."*
>
> *— Large FCC Program Provider*

Technological and Home Supports

A majority of FCC providers (69 percent) agreed that their home has a designated area or office space for conducting FCC business functions, which leaves nearly one third who indicated that they do not have a sufficient or separate space. Having a designated office or space can help create boundaries between their home and child care business, which often may blend together.

In terms of using technology to run their business, FCC providers reported that they have technological resources available and also feel fairly comfortable using these resources. For example, almost all FCC providers (90 percent) have reliable access to the Internet, and a vast majority (86 percent) have a working computer and printer and also feel comfortable using email. However, while FCC providers feel comfortable using technology, they may not always feel confident in using it for specific aspects of their business. For example, less than one half (48 percent) agreed that they feel comfortable using online budgeting and accounting programs (e.g., payroll).

Community Supports

The community in which providers reside can offer much-needed resources and financial support for their programs. However, FCC providers in Oregon reported a lack of community supports. While a majority reported that there are food reimbursement programs (63 percent) and professional libraries with books and videos of interest for FCC providers (53 percent), fewer reported that there are toy-, book-, and equipment-lending services (28 percent); buying clubs to purchase food and/or consumable supplies in bulk (25 percent); cleaning services (15 percent); food preparation services (8 percent); or diaper services (5 percent). It could be that communities are not offering these services or that FCC providers are not aware of what is available to them. While we did not ask FCC providers about barriers, it could be that the use of these services would add additional costs to their program. Oregon could explore ways to better assist FCC providers and connect them with available resources and donation services in their community to support their work and offset some of their expenses.

Variations in Business Practice Supports

Examining variations in mean scores on the Business Practice Supports domain, there were differences in educational attainment for large FCC program providers. Large FCC program providers with at least a bachelor's degree had a higher mean score (M=5.46) compared to those with some college or less (M=4.93) on items assessing their business practices.[22] This finding might reflect that providers with degrees may have learned about or had training in these areas in their education programs, especially with regard to using technology.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Business Practice Supports domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores**.

[22] $F(2,180)=9.925$, $p<0.001$

Domain 4: Adult Well-Being

Domain Score
Center-based teaching staff: 4.19
FCC providers: 3.84
FCC assistants: 4.19

The Adult Well-Being domain encompasses the economic security and wellness of early educators as well as their interactions with one another, all of which are influenced by policies, practices, and relationships. Low pay and inadequate benefits common to most early childhood jobs contribute to financial worry and insecurity among many early educators. Poor compensation is often exacerbated by expectations to complete job tasks during unpaid time or to work when ill, undependable breaks or schedules, and the absence of financial reward for professional advancement. Teaching young children is physically demanding work, which also includes continual exposure to illness and requires that teaching staff be trained to protect their health and assured appropriate ergonomic equipment as well as adequate sick leave and vacation time.

Another important contributor to educator well-being is the tenor of relationships among colleagues at a program. For FCC providers who work alone, this aspect entails the outside relationships they foster and their feeling of community with the ECE field at large. In a climate of respect and fairness, well-being can protect against or even alleviate stress, but such dynamics as favoritism and unresolved conflict can exacerbate it. In addition, children's well-being and learning are directly influenced by the emotional and physical well-being experienced by the adults primarily responsible for their education and care. When adults experience high levels of stress, there is a greater likelihood that they will be unable to engage children in developmentally supportive interactions that contribute to their learning.

The Adult Well-Being domain measures how programs support early educators' economic well-being and also the supports for their physical and emotional well-being. Dimensions within the domain include: 1) Economic Well-Being, which comprises the dependability of workplace policies (e.g., pay and benefits) and the degree to which educators worry about financial security; 2) Wellness, which examines conditions to ensure safety and security for teaching staff; and 3) Quality of Work Life for center-based educators.

The surveys across program settings are similar, with a couple of exceptions. First, FCC providers are assessed on their personal economic security and also the financial stability of their child care business. Additionally, center-based teaching staff were asked about relationships with their co-workers and the climate of their work environment, including how well they are supported and treated by other adults in their workplace, while these items are not on the FCC provider survey.

On the Adult Well-Being domain, center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants had slightly higher mean scores compared to FCC providers (M=4.19, M=4.19, and M=3.84, respectively). While center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants felt somewhat supported on this domain, mainly in how their programs support their wellness and the quality of relationships they have with co-workers, they worried greatly about their economic security. FCC providers had additional concerns in comparison to most center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants: they are worried about the economic security of their business, which possibly contributes to this lower score.

> *"I wish people realized that by pulling their kids from care, their childcare provider isn't able to feed her family. I wish they knew that we don't get paid if we don't have kids in care, and that we also don't qualify for unemployment."*
>
> *— Small FCC Program Provider*

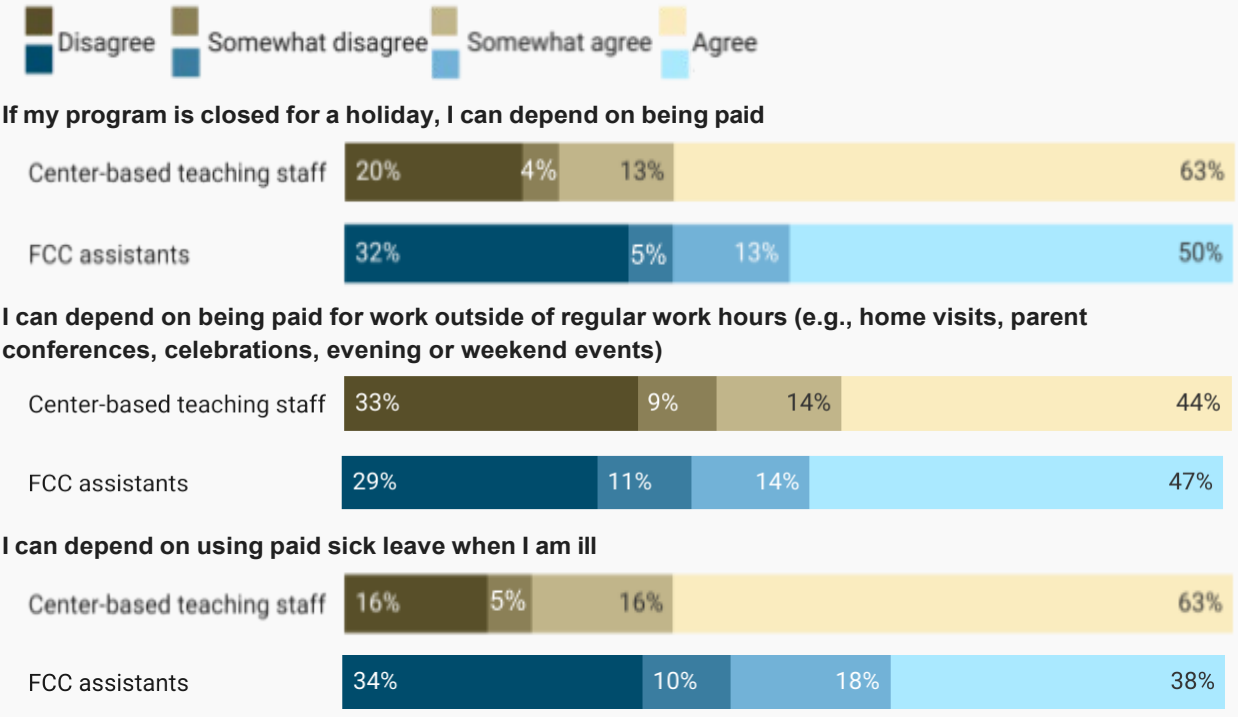
> ***"Cuando hay un alto nivel de estrés entre los maestros por problemas personales o cualquier otro tipo, no estamos dando lo mejor a los niños, por lo cual es un ambiente tenso para ellos y pueden percibirlo y ellos se ponen igual de inquietos."***
>
> *"When there is a high level of stress among the teachers due to personal problems or any other type, we are not giving the best to the children, so it is a tense environment for them and they can perceive it and they become just as restless."*
>
> *– Center-Based Teacher*

Economic Well-Being

Lack of Dependable Compensation Policies

Center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants reported on the dependability of economic compensation policies to support their well-being and teaching practice. While a vast majority (84 percent) of center-based teaching staff agreed that they could depend on being paid for attending center staff meetings, both center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants reported that they could not depend on being paid for additional work-related responsibilities—such as work done outside of regular business hours—or being able to use their benefits like their paid sick leave when ill, which is especially problematic while working during a pandemic (see **Figure 18**). Ensuring that educator time is valued and compensated and that educators can depend on utilizing their benefits when they need to is essential to fostering economic and physical well-being in the workforce.

FIGURE 18. RELIABILITY OF COMPENSATION POLICIES FOR CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF AND FCC ASSISTANTS



Teaching Staff N=471
FCC Assistants N=113
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Center-based teaching staff also assessed their ability to depend on compensation policies if they acquire additional training or advancement. Fewer than one half (49 percent) agreed that they could depend on a pay raise if they were promoted to a role with more responsibility. The absence of financial reward for professional advancement can serve as an additional stressor and drive turnover. To generate feelings of respect and foster a positive work environment, everyone should be assured of a raise if they are promoted.

Furthermore, in addition to the lack of dependable compensation policies, many educators reported that access to breaks was undependable. Regular breaks are a basic requirement mandated by state and federal law. More than one third of center-based educators (34 percent) and FCC assistants (38 percent) reported that they could not depend on getting paid breaks during the workday. In addition to its legal ramifications and the impact on educators' economic well-being, this finding has clear implications for children—in order to be alert and responsive to children, early educators need to have breaks.

> ***"Trato de no mezclar lo personal con mi enseñanza o desempeño laboral, trato de sacar lo positivo para poder hacer mis horas de trabajo menos pesadas ya que a veces no hay personal suficiente para darnos unos minutos de descanso y eso es exhausto."***
>
> *"I try not to mix personal affairs with my teaching or job performance, I try to take the positive to be able to make my work hours less heavy since sometimes there are not enough staff to give us a few minutes of rest and that is exhausting."*
>
> *– Center-Based Teacher*

Economic Insecurity

Low wages and the inability to depend on compensation policies contribute to economic insecurity of the workforce and drive turnover. Across participants surveyed in Oregon, there was a high level of worry about financial security (see **Table 6** for issues that cause educators to worry; for information on participants' wages and benefits, please see page 24). Almost two thirds (61 percent) of educators worried about paying their family's monthly bills and slightly more than one half (51 percent) worried about paying their housing costs. It should be noted that for FCC providers, their housing is also their place of business. Furthermore, FCC providers also worried about the financial security of their child care business.

"I experienced tremendous support in unexpected ways—parents emailing or texting support and extending their hopes to pay tuition for a month when closed."

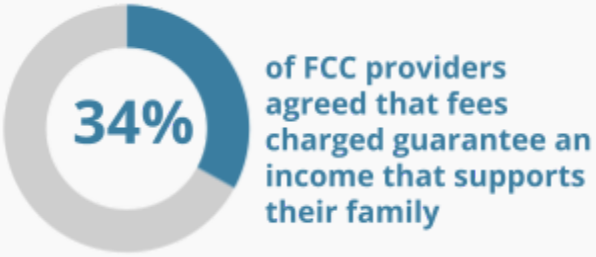
— Small FCC Program Provider

Despite the skilled nature of this essential work, wages for the ECE workforce do not support their basic needs and well-being. Early educators reported worrying about paying routine household and daily living expenses. Furthermore, more than one half (58 percent) of center-based teaching staff and 44 percent of FCC assistants worried about not getting a raise. The ability to have intentional interactions with children is an important skill for teachers, requiring them to remain focused and present in the moment. Economic insecurity can cause significant stress and distract teachers from focusing on children's needs.

TABLE 6. EARLY EDUCATORS' ECONOMIC WORRY, BY JOB ROLE

I worry about...	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs			Total
	Small FCC Provider (N=194)	Large FCC Provider (N=190)	FCC Assistant (N=114)	Director (N=56)	Teacher (N=303)	Assistant Teacher (N=166)	
Paying my family's monthly bills	65%	65%	54%	54%	65%	64%	61%
Paying housing costs	51%	50%	54%	36%	60%	57%	51%
Having enough food for my family	31%	31%	21%	16%	30%	40%	28%
Paying routine healthcare costs	68%	73%	53%	48%	60%	61%	62%

Financial Instability of FCC Programs



In addition to their personal financial stability, we also asked FCC providers about the financial stability and operations of their child care program. The picture painted by their responses is a fragile one. Only around one third of FCC providers indicated that the fees they charge for care guarantee an income that supports their family (34 percent) or that program expenses will be met (33 percent). In order to ensure that program expenses are met and that they receive a family-supporting income, FCC providers would need to raise the fees that they charge for care. However, a vast majority

worried that families may not be able to afford their services if they raised fees (85 percent) or that raising fees might backfire and cause them to lose enrollment and, thus, income (84 percent).

These financial concerns about their business compound the worries for FCC providers, with one half (52 percent) indicating that they worry that they might not be able to stay open because they cannot pay their bills. The solution to ensuring income and meeting expenses is not as simple as raising family fees, yet something needs to be done to alleviate the financial strain so FCC providers are able to remain open.

"We are short staffed, underpaid, undervalued, and still show up each day to care for the children of this country. We want more leadership to do some better math to incentivize this critical field for a more inspirational future."

— Large FCC Program Provider

Physical Wellness and Safety

In addition to being asked how their programs supported their economic well-being, early educators were also asked about how the conditions and training available in their work environment—either their center or home environment—are designed to ensure their safety, security, and physical health. Compared to center-based teaching staff, FCC providers and their assistants had more favorable assessments of how their workplace environment (in their own home) supports their wellness. For example, almost all FCC providers (90 percent) and a vast majority of FCC assistants (79 percent) agreed that they have a comfortable place to sit with children compared to slightly more than one half (57 percent) of center-based teaching staff. Educators need safe, comfortable, and ergonomic equipment that supports their physical health while working with young children, which may be easier to provide in a home-based setting.

However, early educators across program settings noted that they did not have methods for managing stress. For example, slightly more than one half of FCC providers (52 percent) and FCC assistants (55 percent) agreed that they have strategies to help them manage stress and maintain a healthy lifestyle, while less one third (32 percent) of center-based teaching staff agreed that their programs provide trainings on managing stress and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Early education is an emotionally, intellectually, and physically demanding profession, and work environments can support early educators to ensure their physical safety and well-being.

Quality of Work Life

High-quality work environments also foster feelings of fairness and respect among educators, a sort of social-relational well-being. When teaching staff work in a climate that allows bullying, includes favoritism, or has staff conflicts, it can create stress or exacerbate existing stress. Because interpersonal relationships influence how teaching staff experience their jobs, the SEQUAL survey assesses how other adults in the work environment support and treat center-based teaching staff.

Three quarters of center-based teaching staff responded that they feel respected by their co-workers and that co-workers support them when they encounter personal issues. Their answers also indicate, for the most part, a climate that fosters collegiality and respect; more than three quarters of the respondents agreed that their values regarding the teaching of young children are shared by those they work with, and close to three quarters indicated that bullying co-workers is not tolerated at their program. However, fewer center-based teaching staff (57 percent) agreed that they felt their complaints would be heard and handled fairly and appropriately.

There is a similar pattern in responses for the Work Life dimension as with the Job Crafting domain, where educators simultaneously reported a sentiment of teamwork with co-workers, while also feeling that their voices and input are not respected by the administration. Educators responded to work life questions indicating that they feel supported by their co-workers, but when it comes to voicing a complaint or receiving support to help manage their stress and health, they feel less supported by the administration. Only 32 percent of center-based teaching staff agree that their programs provide supports for managing aspects of their health and well-being like trauma, stress, and diet, and only 52 percent of FCC providers feel that they have the tools to manage stress and well-being. While center-based educators may be able to rely on their strong relationships with co-workers, only 55 percent of FCC providers indicate that they have regular contact with other adults. In both center and FCC settings, educators need supports to help them manage the stress and health demands of their work.

FCC Provider Isolation

Most FCC providers work alone or with very few assistants. Such isolation can negatively impact their well-being and lead to burnout.

Areas of the FCC survey, particularly in the Adult Well-Being domain, asked about their relationships and connections with others. Almost one half of FCC providers reported that:

- They did not have enough contact with other adults during the week to not feel isolated (44 percent);
- They do not regularly engage with other adults who are not employed by them (45 percent); and
- They do not connect with other FCC providers (40 percent).

Small FCC program providers had higher rates of feeling isolated than large FCC program providers, which may reflect that they work alone and do not employ other staff. Leaders in Oregon could facilitate connections for FCC providers that would help them get better support and offset these feelings of isolation.

Adult Well-Being Variations: Supportive Relationships

In examining variations in mean scores on the Adult Well-Being domain, there were no differences among FCC educators. For center-based teaching staff, there were variations by job role and tenure. Following a pattern seen throughout the findings, assistant teachers had significantly higher mean scores than teachers on the overall domain (M=4.36 and M=4.09, respectively)[23] and Quality of Work Life dimension (M=4.95 and M=4.66, respectively).[24] While all early educators worried about their economic well-being, assistant teachers had more favorable assessments of their quality of work life and relationships with co-workers in their program. Overall, assistant teachers had higher scores on areas of support in their programs and relationships with their colleagues.

[23] t(482)=3.209, p=0.01
[24] t(480)=3.289, p=0.01

Additionally, there were statistically significant differences among teaching staff who were newer to their center in comparison to those who have been there longer. Teaching staff with two years or less at their center had higher Quality of Work Life dimension mean scores compared to those with six years of experience or more (M=4.90 and M=4.59, respectively). As these items assess how educators are supported and treated by other adults in their program, newer staff may still be developing those relationships, or since they are new, they are being supported more and mentored by other staff with more experience, thus contributing to higher scores.

Supported Teachers Want to Stay

Center-based teaching staff with a higher mean score in this domain were more likely to indicate that they planned to remain teaching at their program for the next three years (M=4.36).[25] While approaching significance (p=.063), it is worth noting that this domain is the only one in which differences were found among FCC assistants based on their future plans. Similar to center-based teaching staff, FCC assistants with a higher mean score reported that they planned to remain at their program for the next three years. Thus, if educators feel that their work environment supports their well-being they may be more likely to remain in their current early care and education program, as opposed to leaving the field or taking a position at another program.

It is worth noting that those who planned to stay at their center also had slightly higher median hourly wages. As this domain assesses economic security and the climate of the work environment, early educators whose financial, physical, and emotional needs are met may be less likely to want to leave as these are critical elements of the work environment.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Adult Well-Being domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E**: **Domain Mean Scores**.

[25] F(3,450)=5.145, p=.002.

Domain 5: Program Management and Leadership

Domain Score
Center-based teaching staff: 4.68
FCC providers: 3.99
FCC assistants: 5.00

The Program Management and Leadership domain focuses on early educator assessments of other staff members who fulfill leadership functions that provide support and guidance to their practice.

In center-based ECE programs, leaders fulfill multiple functions. Here, we focus on supervision of teaching staff and oversight for daily operations of the site, which may be functions fulfilled by more than one person in a given site. Leaders create a workplace climate that supports staff morale and encourages innovation when they are: knowledgeable about child development and pedagogy; engaged in learning themselves; considered to be accessible and fair; and committed to listening and responding to staff concerns. When leaders are assessed as inaccessible, insensitive, or unfamiliar with the daily experiences of teaching staff, confidence in their authority and in the organization is undermined.

For FCC providers, this domain also assesses program management, which includes program policies and practices that support an efficient business, good communication with families, and a positive working environment for themselves and anyone they may employ.

The SEQUAL survey for center-based teaching staff calls this domain Leadership, whereas the survey for FCC providers calls this domain Program Management and Leadership. The two surveys are most similar for center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants, as they are both asked to assess their supervision.

However, the survey for FCC providers is quite different. FCC providers are not supervised, but instead, they themselves may provide supervision or coaching, assess program policies and practices that support an effective business, and strive to create a positive environment for families, themselves, and any staff that they may employ. Additionally, FCC providers were asked about their ability to provide input into community- or system-level policies or decisions that impact their business.

Comparing the mean scores on the Leadership domain across early educators, center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants had higher mean scores compared to FCC providers (M=4.68, M=5.00, and M=3.99, respectively). This finding may be attributed to the differences in the survey items. While center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants were assessed only on how supervision is offered to them, FCC providers are assessed on how they provide supervision, in addition to their program policies and practices for supporting their business and work environment. Both center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants feel that their practice is mostly supported by their supervisors and that their supervisors or leaders create a mostly positive work environment.

Nonetheless, while FCC assistants rated their supervisors and their supervision positively, many FCC providers indicated that they learned how to be a supervisor while on the job, without formal training, and need additional training to provide effective supervision. Providers also reported that while they have handbooks and tools to support their efforts to communicate with families, they need additional supports related to the financial aspects of their business.

Supervision and Guidance

> *"The leadership in this program has a huge impact on the program. The leadership has set into place a community that cares for one another and continues to look for and further early childhood education. It truly is what more programs should look like."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

Overall, Oregon educators had favorable assessments of their supervisors and leaders, recognizing them as knowledgeable, supportive, and encouraging.[26] A vast majority of center-based teaching staff (85 percent) and FCC assistants (89 percent) agreed that their supervisor is knowledgeable about early childhood curriculum and working with young children. Additionally, a majority of center-based teaching staff (78 percent) and FCC assistants (80 percent) agreed that their supervisor encourages them to solve problems. While their supervisors are knowledgeable and encouraging for the most part, one third of center-based teaching staff indicated that their supervisor did not treat them fairly and/or handle staff conflict well. Furthermore, both center-based educators and FCC assistants

[26] Center-based teaching staff were asked similar items about both their supervisors and leaders, who may or may not be the same person, and FCC assistants were only asked about their supervisors. For the purposes of comparison, in the findings we note when the supervisor or leader is being reported on for center-based teaching staff.

reported a lack of opportunities to meet routinely with their supervisor to review their teaching practice; only 37 percent of center-based educators and 51 percent of FCC assistants reported that their supervisor meets with them at least once a month to discuss their teaching. Educators need strong educational leaders to whom they have easy access and from whom they can receive individualized feedback on job performance and provide feedback based on observation and discussion. It is also important for leaders and supervisors to gather information on staff through observation, feedback from other staff, and direct input from the staff members themselves.

> ***"En lo personal falta liderazgo por parte de los supervisores, un líder siempre no[s] (sic) empuja a hacer mejores, no solo manda y da órdenes camina junto con sus empleados, sin embargo eso no pasa y la frustración comienza afectarnos y no dar nuestro 100 por ciento con los niños."***
>
> *"Personally, there is a lack of leadership on the part of the supervisors, a leader always pushes us to be better, he goes beyond giving orders and being in charge, he walks together with his employees, however that does not happen and the frustration begins to affect us and we do not give our 100 percent with the kids."*
>
> — *Center-Based Teacher*

Provider as Supervisor

Large FCC program providers assessed their own leadership abilities by answering items about their training as supervisors and the training of their staff. A vast majority agreed that their assistants are trained to work with young children (99 percent) and that they depend on them to meet adult–child ratios (90 percent). However, many FCC providers struggled to find time to meet with their assistants each week. For example, while a vast majority (96 percent) agreed that they provide their assistants with supervision and feedback on their job performance on a regular basis, less than one half (40 percent) agreed that there was enough time for them to engage with their assistants during the last week to co-plan, reflect, or provide feedback. This finding indicates that while FCC providers may try to meet with their assistants daily, it often does not occur as frequently as they would like.

Beyond not having the time to supervise their employees, many FCC providers indicated that they did not have the proper training for this part of the job, with only 30 percent indicating they had specific training on how to provide feedback or on any and all aspects of being an employer and only 27 percent having received business development training. Furthermore, nearly one half (48 percent) of FCC providers indicated that they had learned their supervision and leadership skills on the job and not through formal training. Thus, FCC providers need a variety of professional development opportunities beyond those offered to early educators in general. While the director certification requirements associated with an FCC license may offer some initial training for being a supervisor, having sustained opportunities to develop their business and leadership skills are essential.

Policies and Supports for Running an Effective Business

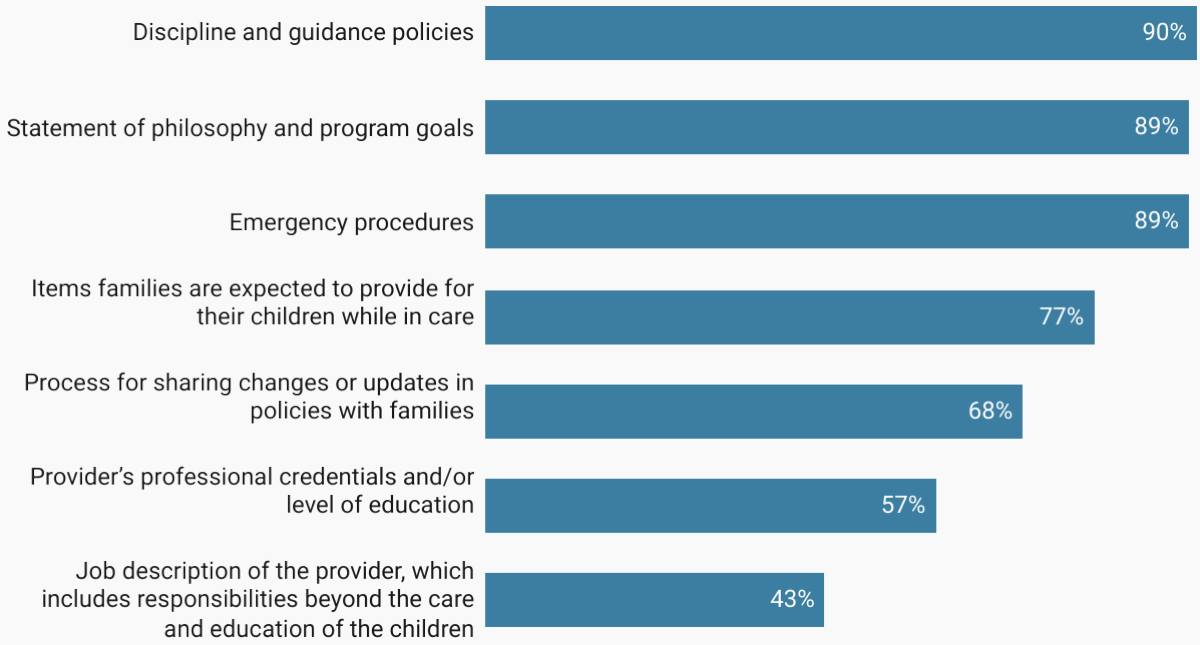
> *"It's been the hardest two years of owning/running a business in all ways possible. Normal life problems haven't taken a break or slowed down either. We had to do twice the advocating during COVID because not only did we have to ask for funding to help us survive, but we've also had to fight constant rules and building code changes that impact our businesses daily, too. It's been completely exhausting, and I had never contemplated closing my business for a lower-stress job before COVID hit."*
>
> *— Large FCC Program Provider*

In addition to their role as educators, FCC providers have the responsibility of operating a child care business. FCC providers were asked a series of items about program management, including the policies and practices for maintaining an effective business and their training in these areas. Overall, FCC providers reported having written policies that supported effective communication with families, but they noted challenges around supports and training for running their business, particularly regarding budgeting and finances. Nonetheless, only one third of FCC providers agreed that technical assistance and consultation on issues of business management were available to them—and business management is an essential component of FCC providers' responsibilities. FCC providers noted that the trainings and continuing education they receive are not always relevant to family child care and does not always meet their needs (see the Teaching Supports domain, page 31) and that they struggle with their finances to support their child care business (see the Adult Well-Being domain, page 54).

Communication With Families

Communication with families is important for building positive relationships, trust, and clear expectations. FCC providers reported that they felt they had effective communication with families. A vast majority of FCC providers (79 percent) had written policies that support positive parent–provider communication, and almost all FCC providers (95 percent) have program policies in a handbook and/or written down, which are given to families at the time of enrollment (see **Figure 19** for common items communicated with families).

FIGURE 19. ITEMS INCLUDED IN WRITTEN POLICIES THAT FCC PROVIDERS COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILIES



N=395
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

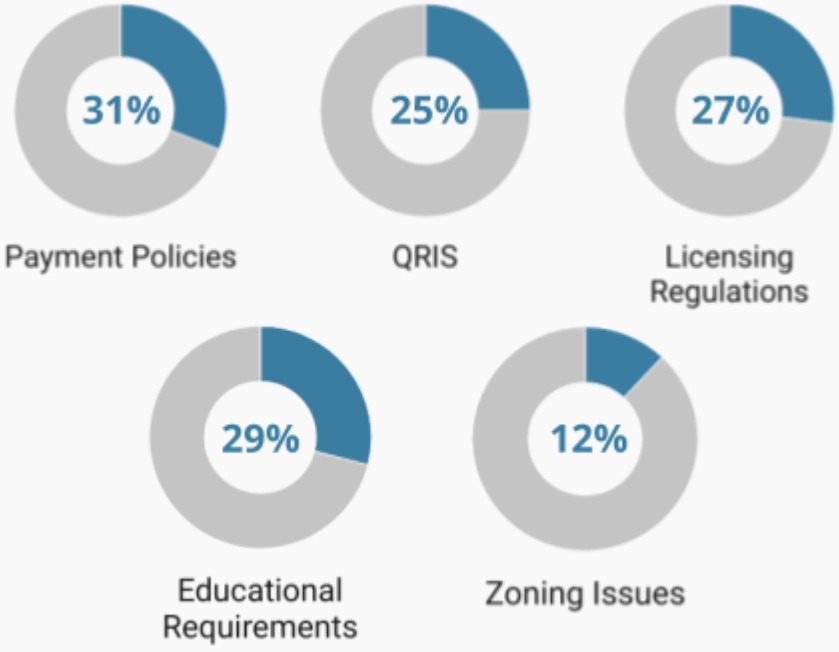
Overwhelmingly, FCC providers struggled with the financial aspects of running their business and reported a lack of training in this area. Less than one half (48 percent) of FCC providers surveyed felt comfortable using budgeting software and doing accounting. Furthermore, only 29 percent felt they had adequate training in creating a budget. Perhaps related to the dearth of training and comfort with accounting, 72 percent of FCC providers indicated that they *did not* have a line item in their budget for their salary. Come tax preparation time, 42 percent of FCC providers said that there are no supports available to help maximize business deductions when they file their tax returns. As FCC providers are also responsible for operating and running a business, and the pandemic has pushed many

FCC programs to the financial brink, training and supports should be prioritized and provided to assist providers on this very essential part of their business. Effective trainings unique to FCC providers could be designed to better support this segment of the ECE workforce and, in turn, their staff and the families and children they serve.

Lack of Voice in Program Policies and Decisions

Similar to center-based teaching staff (see the Job Crafting domain, page 47), FCC providers feel that they do not have a voice in many policy decisions occurring at the community or system level that impact their business and the FCC community overall. Bearing additional responsibilities without a voice makes creating change and sustaining a program incredibly difficult, especially in light of all of the additional responsibilities that an FCC provider already holds.

FIGURE 20. FCC PROVIDERS LACK VOICE IN ECE POLICIES AND DECISIONS



N=236-298
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Variations in Leadership and Program Management

Examining variations in mean scores for FCC providers on this domain, small and large FCC program providers who participated in QRIS had significantly higher mean scores (M=4.14[27] and M=4.12,[28] respectively) compared to those who did not participate in QRIS (M=3.83 and M=3.69, respectively). As quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) across the United States often offer participating providers additional resources, it might be that FCC providers in Oregon who participate in QRIS receive resources that support aspects of program management and leadership.

For center-based teaching staff, there were significant differences by job role. Center-based assistant teachers (M=4.87) had a higher mean score compared to center-based teachers (M=4.58).[29] This finding could reflect that assistant teachers can depend on both their lead teacher and supervisor for support in comparison to teachers, who may only have a supervisor for support and who may also be in a supervisory role themselves.

Supported Teachers Want to Stay

Teaching staff who planned to stay at their current center (M=4.90) had a higher mean score than those who planned to leave their center but remain in the field (M=4.55), those who don't know their future plans (M=4.54), and those who planned to leave the field (M=4.30).[30] This finding may reflect the influential role of leadership in creating a positive work environment for staff and the importance of having a supportive supervisor or leader in an educator's decision to stay or leave.

For additional mean scores for early educators on the Program Management and Leadership domain by select educator and center characteristics, please see **Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores**.

[27] t(169)=4.214, p=.042
[28] t(147)=8.113, p=.005
[29] t(408)=3.095, p=.002
[30] F(3,446)=7.18, p<0.001

Oregon's ECE Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

> *"This is a very tough but rewarding job. You may have one, two, or three children, but I care for sometimes 10 kids a day, plan for their learning, change diapers, feed, nurture, and a slew of other things. I manage behaviors, have to discipline and regulate my class. Parents constantly send their kids to school sick, exposing other children and teachers to the illness. The age I care for never cover coughs or sneezes, and illness spreads. They cough and sneeze in the faces of their peers as well as teachers. And inevitably we get sick. We are educated, [some] even have master's degrees. [...] We're here because we want to be. Be kind and respect the rules of the school because they're in place to keep everyone safe and healthy."*
>
> *— FCC Assistant*

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the essential, invaluable nature of early care and education services and the educators who provide them. The pandemic also exacerbated many structural inequities and crises that already existed within the system of early care and education in the United States (McLean et al., 2021; Whitebook et al., 2018). Since March 2020, early educators, along with the children and families they serve, experienced major disruptions to learning, income, routine, and well-being.

A national survey of 6,000 child care centers by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in December 2020 painted a grim picture of the pandemic-ravaged ECE Workforce. Prior to the dissemination of various public emergency relief funds, more than one half of early care providers were on the brink of closure (NAEYC, 2020b). Even after the distribution of public funding, many providers still faced tremendous health and safety challenges in 2021 that hampered programming and undermined the well-being of educators and children alike (RAPID-EC, 2021).

Oregon's child care system also experienced major disruptions due to the pandemic. According to a May 2020 report by the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division (ELD), 3,800 licensed child care programs, both center and family based, were operating in Oregon prior to Governor Kate Brown's pandemic closure executive order on March 23, 2020 (ELD, 2020). After the governor ordered child care programs to close unless they were providing Emergency Child Care (ECC), only about 2,100 programs were

approved as ECC providers. The mandatory closures left a nearly 40-percent gap in the already limited supply of available child care.

Among the 2,100 programs that were able to remain open and operating, the ELD report showed providers and educators alike facing stress and financial strain. Providers reported operational difficulties from low enrollment and the rising cost of operations as a result of additional expenditures for personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies. Early educators also had to contend with staff shortages and difficulties implementing public health requirements like social distancing with toddlers and infants.

Pandemic disruptions experienced in the child care system filtered through to parents of young children (Waxman & Gupta, 2021). Across the country, about 14 million working families with young children expressed heightened emotional, physical, and financial stress (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Center for Education and Workforce, 2021). In Oregon, more than one half of households with children lost employment income between October 2020 and March 2022, and the majority (55 percent) of households with children age birth to four experienced disruptions to child care arrangements due to the pandemic (Annie E. Casey, 2021b, 2022b).

How households with young children experienced the pandemic varied according to their race, gender, and ethnicity. For example, about 20 percent of women with children under age six left their jobs as a result of lack of child care in 2020, a larger percentage than men with children in the same age group. Job loss due to a lack of child care was magnified in some communities of color: 23 percent of Black families were unable to work because they didn't have reliable child care, while only 7 percent of Hispanic and 14 percent of White (13 percent) families indicated lack of child care as a reason for job loss (Belfield & Kashen, 2022).

While child care industry staffing shortages were an issue prior to COVID-19 (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003), as new health and safety guidelines emerged for ECC providers (NAEYC, 2021) these shortages only increased. In Oregon, the guidance on statewide standards for child care operations involved instructions on masking, daily health checks, contact tracing, social distancing at pick-up and drop-off, increased cleaning protocols, and staff- and group-size limitations (ELD, 2020). Furthermore, 65 percent of Oregon child care providers surveyed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2021) indicated that during the height of the pandemic they were unable to recruit and retain staff due to the wage discrepancy between ECE and many other fields. The lack of staff resulted in reduced operating hours, fewer children served, longer waitlists, and more closed classrooms (ELD, 2020). These and many other pandemic-related factors posed challenges to Oregon's ECE system and its workforce.

Findings: COVID-19 Impact

Given these conditions, we added questions to the survey in order to capture the experiences and well-being of educators during the ongoing pandemic. Early educators shared their personal and professional experiences, along with impacts affecting program operations. Early educators surveyed across program settings and job roles revealed how the burden of the pandemic continues to be felt as programs grapple with financial hardships, closures, insufficient staffing levels, and ongoing worry about their health and safety.

It is worth noting that during data collection in the winter of 2022, the Omicron variant surged throughout the United States. Some early educators surveyed noted that their programs were experiencing temporary closures, but these closures were routine throughout the pandemic.

Across both center- and home-based settings, early educators shared frustrations over parents sending sick children to their program, worries about health and safety (for themselves and their own families), insufficient staffing levels, burnout, and not feeling appreciated as a field given the important contributions they make every day for children, families, and society. As one educator said:

> *"We work very long hours—11 hours a day, with no breaks or lunch break. Sundays are dreaded days, as we are typically trying to find coverage for Monday, with staff calling out sick. Due to COVID protocols and staff being excluded for symptoms, we have a lot of absences to try to find coverage for. Almost every day is the worry of if we will have enough staff to cover all of our classrooms. Will we have to turn families away or close a classroom? I worry about staff burnout and always working in a survival mode. My admin duties take me away from what I love—mentoring teachers and working with children."*
>
> *— Center Director*

Health and Safety

> *"...It is unacceptable to live in a world where it is so difficult for parents to take time off to take care of their children when they are sick. It's unfair to send a sick child to school and then for everyone else to face consequences. I understand a parent has to work, but no one should be put at risk like this."*
>
> *— FCC Assistant*

While the K-12 system was able to provide education remotely, many early educators were expected to continue working in person to provide instruction and care for children and families, thus compromising their own health and safety. Regardless of program setting or job role, the early educators surveyed expressed high levels of worry about health and safety, for themselves and their own families, as programs remained open. Educators indicated that since the onset of the pandemic they experienced anxiety about getting COVID-19 (63 percent of small FCC program providers; 74 percent of large FCC program providers; 72 percent of FCC assistants; 64 percent of center directors; and 71 percent of center teaching staff), or worried about possibly infecting families in their programs (74 percent of small FCC program providers; 76 percent of large FCC program providers; 77 percent of FCC assistants; 79 percent of center directors; and 75 percent of center teaching staff). They also worried about getting infected, families sending sick children to their program, and other staff working while sick because they could not afford to miss work (see **Table 7**). It is important to note that one third (36 percent) of center-based teaching staff and almost two thirds (62 percent) of FCC assistants reported that they could not depend on using paid sick leave if they were ill, which is especially troublesome during a pandemic when educators are trying to keep themselves and those in their environment safe and healthy.

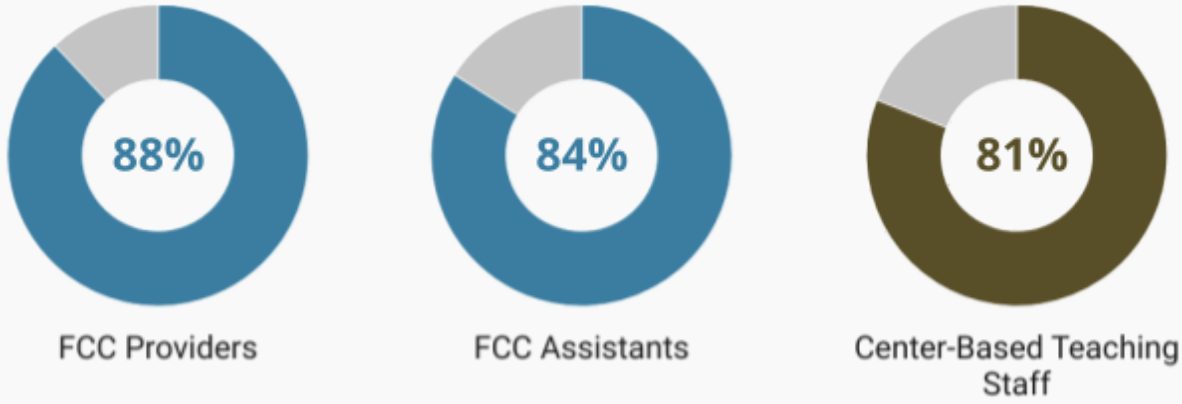
TABLE 7. EARLY EDUCATORS' WORRY ABOUT HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS, BY JOB ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs	
	Small FCC Provider N 190	Large FCC Provider N 178	FCC Assistant N 109	Director N 54 56	Teaching Staff N 451
Exposing my own family to COVID-19 while my program is operating	72%	75%	71%	75%	77%
Staff working even if they are sick because they cannot afford to miss work	45%	57%	51%	67%	69%
Families sending sick children to the program because parents need child care in order to work	81%	90%	87%	91%	87%

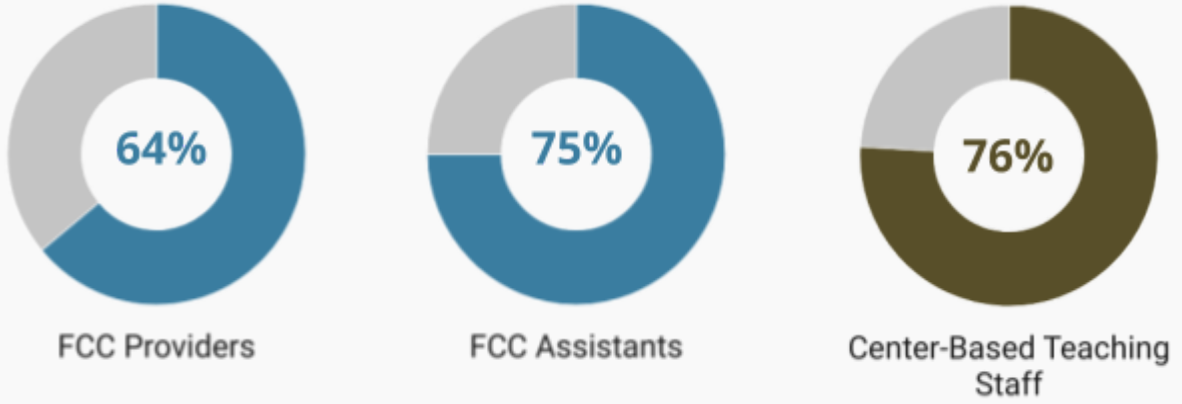
Early educators noted various personal changes since the start of the pandemic. A vast majority of teaching staff (81 percent), FCC providers (88 percent), and FCC assistants (84 percent) reported changes in their sleep. Additionally, 76 percent of center-based teaching staff, 64 percent of FCC providers, 75 percent of FCC assistants experienced feelings of negativity or anxiety about the future.

FIGURE 21. EARLY EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES OF PERSONAL CHANGES, BY JOB ROLE

Changes in Sleep



Feelings of Negativity or Anxiety About the Future



FCC Providers N= 369
FCC Assistants N= 109
Center-Based Teaching Staff N= 449-450
Source: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

Program Operations

Staffing

> *"Staff have been consistently sick with many other [illnesses] resulting in almost constant staff shortages."*
>
> — *Center Director*

> *"[I have] one staff member but no subs available for when staff is out."*
>
> — *Large FCC Program Provider*

> *"We do what we do because we love the kids and families. We are working in a germ factory and get sick often. We have to use our sick time if we get COVID. Our co-workers are working paycheck to paycheck and don't call in sick."*
>
> — *Center-Based Teacher*

The topics of insufficient staffing levels and turnover permeated the responses from early educators. The average turnover rate across programs was 17 percent for teachers and 31 percent for assistant teachers (for more information on staffing, see page 36, in the Teaching Supports domain).

Center administrators and FCC providers reported on staffing changes that occurred in the past 12 months as well as their current staffing situation at the time of the survey. Center directors were more likely than FCC providers to report that even though they rehired much of their previously furloughed staff (68 percent), they also had several staff members who were not working due to health concerns (74 percent). While many centers closed and laid off workers due to pandemic restrictions and reductions, FCC providers often did not have this economic luxury—they needed to keep working during the pandemic in order to meet their own personal economic needs (few FCC providers have savings and/or a retirement to rely on, see page 26).

After laying off much of their staff during the pandemic, many centers now faced the difficult task of rehiring in order to resume capacity as restrictions eased. With regard to their current staffing situation, both center-based educators and FCC providers shared their perspectives on the challenges of finding and hiring qualified staff. In the words of a

center-director, "Staff have left child care due to burnout and low pay; staff have been consistently sick with many other [illnesses] resulting in almost constant staff shortages; staff shortages align with under-enrollment." A large FCC program provider explained, "[I have] lost staff and can't afford to hire more. I need more staff so that I can take more children from the waitlist."

To understand retention and turnover concerns, center-based teaching staff and FCC assistants were asked to report on their professional three-year plans. Slightly less than one half of center-based teaching staff and one third of FCC providers indicated that they would still be working in their current program. The others presented a mixture of vocational pathways, some from elsewhere in the field and others outside the field entirely. These results appear to be partially related to years of education—those with a bachelor's degree or higher were more likely to indicate they wanted to leave the field or were unsure, while those with an associate degree or fewer years of schooling were more likely to report staying in their current job role.

Respondents indicated many reasons for leaving. For example, one center-based teacher indicated that the difficult work with little respect, especially given all the circumstances related to COVID-19, makes doing the work even harder.

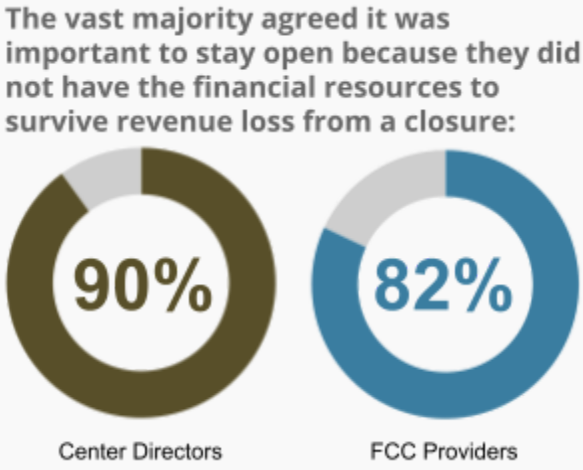
> *"This is not easy. The lack of respect for this field is growing because of COVID. While K-12 schools closed to protect children, teachers, staff, and families, we were forced to open and operate almost as usual. Most families consider their work/themselves so important that they don't even blink at bringing sick children to school (even those with known exposures) so that they don't miss their work, with no care for teachers or their families at home. I feel horribly disrespected, and after 18+ years in the field, I have entered a new training program to leave the field. I can't do it anymore. The lack of respect comes from everywhere and includes pay, benefits, work load, and perception of the field."*
>
> *— Center-Based Teacher*

"These past two years have been the hardest in my 25 years [in the field]. The financial challenges despite loans and grants and the inability to find the staffing needed will most likely end our program [...] this year."

— Center Director

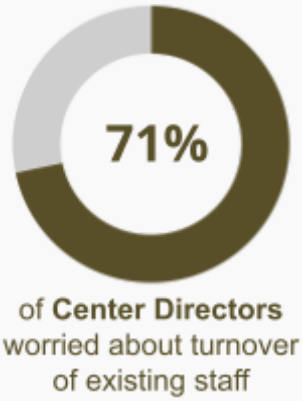
"This year has been so different than any year in child care prior. It is very hard to keep staff. It is very hard to support families, and we have to close often due to exposure or low staff numbers. It is clear now that this daycare model is not working, and we need state support. Our families deserve more and so do we."

— Large FCC Program Provider



For centers and family child care programs, complete shutdown during COVID-19 was not an option because many were already on the brink of financial collapse pre-pandemic (Schulman, 2020; NAEYC, 2020a). Thus, many ECE programs remained open to serve essential workers or reopened quickly out of financial necessity. A vast majority of center directors (90 percent) and FCC providers (82 percent) felt it was important to stay open because they did not have the financial resources to survive revenue loss from a closure. Only one third of FCC providers agreed that the fees they charge families guarantee them a sustaining income (see Adult Well-Being, page 54).

The staffing situation exacerbated by COVID-19, along with funding and compensation concerns, leads to many questions about the sustainability of ECE programs. For example, center directors worried about turnover of existing staff (71 percent), paying staff (46 percent), paying themselves (27 percent), paying health insurance and benefits for themselves and/or their staff (18 percent), and missing a mortgage or rent payment (11 percent). For the early educators who remain in this work, while they recognize families rely on them and many love the work they do and feel a sense of commitment to it, the level of physical, emotional, and financial stress is untenable and undermines the effectiveness of Oregon's ECE system.



Final Thoughts and Recommendations

Given the complexity of the current early care and education system and the added challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are a variety of avenues by which Oregon could articulate standards and ensure sufficient funding for providers to implement them. Specifically, leaders in Oregon have an opportunity to shape expectations and codify standards for early educator work environments incorporating SEQUAL domains.

Oregon has made significant investments in improving the quality of ECE services, for example with the recent initiative for compensation parity and increased wages for early educators along with universal pre-K in Multnomah County, as well as a revision of the state QRIS system. While our findings indicate that many of the resources offered by these systemic investments are reaching some center-based teaching staff and FCC providers, more needs to be done to improve the work environments of early educators throughout Oregon.

As our final thoughts, we offer some reflections on major themes cutting across SEQUAL domains, along with recommendations for policy and practice that would contribute to a system that better supports the work environments of early educators and, therefore, the families and children they serve.

Supported Staff Want to Stay

Regardless of program setting or role, early educators across Oregon reported insufficient staffing levels, high turnover, and difficulty hiring staff or substitutes as major concerns. Turnover and retention are long-standing issues in the ECE field, but the pandemic made these challenges much more serious. Throughout the survey, many educators mentioned low wages, and among those who recently left the field, low wages and lack of benefits were often cited as primary reasons for their decision to leave.

Staffing shortages have wide ramifications, from classroom closures and reduced enrollment to violations of federal labor law when there are not enough staff to cover breaks. Staffing issues are especially profound for FCC providers who may be left to care for all of the children by themselves or forced to close when assistants are sick or unavailable.

The following examples from state and local communities undertaking different approaches to address the staffing crisis may serve as inspiration for actions throughout Oregon.

- Fairfax County, Virginia, is embarking on a fast-track model to train assistant teachers, partnering with a local community college and a variety of employers to provide the necessary training and support for an entry-level opportunity on a truncated timeline.
- Multnomah County, Oregon, recently passed an initiative to invest in the ECE workforce and aims to improve wages for early educators, guaranteeing parity with kindergarten teachers for lead teachers in preschool settings and increased wages for assistant teachers. Increasing wages and providing benefits (e.g., health insurance, retirement) supports the workforce and their well-being, thus reducing one of the drivers for turnover.
- New Mexico recently announced the Competitive Pay for Professionals grants to offer a $3 per hour pay increase for early childhood professionals. Initially funded by the American Rescue Plan, this grant program aims to attract and retain professionals in the early care and education field by offering a competitive and livable wage.

We recommend that Oregon look to and possibly incorporate such strategies from within Oregon as well as across the United States that focus on creating opportunities for attracting and retaining staff. Specifically, we recommend that Oregon:

- Look to and learn from wage initiatives like those in New Mexico and within Oregon (Multnomah County) and utilize the knowledge gained to develop statewide wage initiatives; and
- Provide opportunities for staff to engage in ongoing learning and development, for example, through apprenticeship or other paid internship models.

To recruit and maintain high-quality staff, programs must offer the working conditions early educators need to thrive. Indeed, programs that do well in the areas measured by SEQUAL tend to have better staff retention. Across many of the domains, we found that educators in Oregon with higher mean scores were more likely to indicate they would still be working at the same program in three years. Thus, programs that strive to meet the characteristics outlined in the SEQUAL domains—and states that support programs to meet these characteristics—appear to be more likely to retain staff.

To attract and retain staff by supporting the work environment of educators, we recommend that Oregon:

- Develop workplace standards, such as guidance on wages and appropriate levels of paid planning time, which are necessary for educators to engage in professional practice and to alleviate conditions that cause educator stress, using existing models

such as the International Labor Organization Policy Guidelines (2022) and the Model Work Standards (CSCCE, 2019) to support this process; and

- In the context of reforming Spark and the QRIS scoring system, embed work environment standards to emphasize their importance, direct quality improvement resources toward improving conditions, and ensure that programs cannot achieve the highest ratings without addressing work environment standards.

Training and Support

Training and support are key drivers in creating the work conditions necessary to retain staff across child care settings. Opportunities for professional development, collaboration, and reflection appear to contribute to early educators' desire to remain in the ECE field, in addition to supporting their daily practice as educators.

Although many Oregon educators (center-based teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants) participate in professional development, they reported insufficient training in several areas. FCC providers indicate that they need more training in aspects of business management and planning, while FCC assistants and center-based teaching staff say they need further training in observation and assessment of children, especially in the translation of assessments into curriculum and communication with families. Furthermore, while many of the educators surveyed indicate involvement in several "one-off" professional development trainings, they often lacked opportunities for sustained long-term training, especially on topics such as trauma-informed practices and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), or collegial opportunities such as visiting other classrooms and schools.

In this regard, we recommend that Oregon:

- Create more opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and professional development, where educators can learn from one another.

These opportunities are especially important to support work with under-resourced communities, taking into consideration the diverse needs and strengths of these children and families.

Early educators need access to a variety of professional development opportunities. Likewise, coaching and sustained collegial dialogue contribute to systems of learning. Professional development content should also be responsive to new research on community needs, for example offering support in trauma-informed practices or anti-bias education, both before and after community trauma.

Additionally, professional development should not only address practices with children in the classroom, but work environment standards for early educators, as well.

In view of these observations, we recommend that Oregon:

- Develop and implement training programs that support program leaders, supervisors, and coaches in addressing work environment issues, as they require support and training on how to implement and sustain these types of changes;
- Provide funding for institutions of higher education and training programs to develop and offer classes and workshops related to work environment standards, rights of teaching staff on the job, and the critical importance of economic, emotional, and physical well-being among adults in the workplace; and
- Explore registered apprenticeship programs that could offer comprehensive training programs, where interns are paid to work in early care settings while enrolled in a degree pathway program at an affiliated higher education institution to earn further credentials.

Registered apprenticeships offer a unique opportunity to fulfill the need for early educators in the classroom. Many organizations are now supporting communities and states to create apprenticeship programs as a means to alleviate the staffing crisis and professionalize the workforce. For examples, see Kentucky's statewide apprenticeship program (Commonwealth of Kentucky, 2022) and efforts by Early Care & Education Pathways to Success to act as a sector intermediary in California (ECEPTS, n.d.).

Multiple Languages, Multiple Experiences

Our findings indicate that multilingual educators in Oregon feel they have less agency in their educational setting and that their input is undervalued. Further attention should be paid to the experiences of educators who speak multiple languages in and/or outside of their work settings. In particular, the voices of multilingual educators should be sought out and incorporated into policies that better support them.

To this end, we recommend that Oregon:

- Institute strategies that engage early educators, in particular multilingual educators, in the process of informing quality improvement and regularly collect data to assess how they experience the work environment.

Examining policies and procedures to ensure equity in educator voices and diversity across all roles and settings is essential to supporting the workforce. In this regard, it is important to note that the sample of center directors for the current study was almost exclusively

White and monolingual, while one third of the center-based staff were Latina and/or people of color who spoke multiple languages. Ensuring pathways to leadership positions, including directors and those working in quality improvement and professional development, would contribute to the diversity of the workforce across roles and settings.

Adult Well-Being

Across center- and home-based programs in Oregon, early educators experience conditions that challenge their economic, emotional, and physical well-being. Many early educators struggle to afford housing, health care, sufficient food, and other basic necessities for themselves and their families.

The median hourly wage reported by center-based teaching staff is $17.00 and for FCC assistants, $16.50. Almost two thirds of center-based teaching staff reported a total annual income of less than $40,000, and 68 percent reported that one half or more of their income comes from their work with young children. For FCC providers, the annual income range for small providers is $23,375-$27,500, and for large FCC program providers, $38,250-$54,600. These economic struggles are exponential for FCC providers who not only support themselves, but must also sustain their businesses; many reported that they were very concerned about their ability to meet the financial needs of their programs.

Early educators also reported conditions that threaten their health and safety, most notably not being able to take breaks during the workday (although required by law to do so) or not being able to take their paid sick leave. These conditions coupled with low pay undermine early educators' well-being and exacerbate stress and turnover.

To remedy this situation, we recommend that Oregon:

- Provide financial resources and other assistance specifically designed to enable programs and providers to comply with work environment standards in a reasonable period of time;
- Work to support FCC providers and centers overall by undertaking a workforce study to assess the wages of early educators and understand where they are now, where they need to be, and how the state can financially support the workforce to bridge that gap; and
- Revisit the state's Child Care Cost of Quality Study and consider the costs of care from a sustainable and systemic perspective (Aigner-Treworgy et al., 2022), which integrates appropriate compensation and benefits for its workforce along with workplace supports outlined in SEQUAL.

Oregon is already making strides to ensure the economic well-being of early educators throughout the state. The recent initiative in Multnomah County will collect revenue from a local tax in order to raise the wages of early educators in that county—not only for lead teachers in pre-K settings, but also assistant teachers and those working with younger children.

The Strain on Family Child Care Providers

Approximately 30 percent of infants and toddlers are cared for in home-based early care and education settings throughout the United States (Paschall, 2019), but in some counties and communities, FCC providers are the only source of care (Henly & Adams, 2018). In Oregon, almost one quarter (23 percent) of the ECE workforce are family child care providers and their assistants (OCCD & OCCRP, 2021). Oregon FCC providers in particular reported the financial strain they incur as business owners and personally as a result of being child care providers and the constraints they feel to keep their fees down in order to keep their enrollment up.

In addition to the financial strains of being an FCC provider, those who responded to the survey in Oregon indicated a certain level of isolation, with few professional development connections or relationships, as well as a lack of support for their business practices, especially on the financial side. FCC providers are isolated relationally and financially in a way that affects all other SEQUAL domains: without their own strong source of support, their leadership capacity, their personal well-being, and their ability to seek and receive appropriate professional development and to provide necessary teaching supports for themselves and to their assistants is undermined.

Oregon is making strides to relieve the financial burden on FCC providers and families. Last year, the state increased their reimbursement rates for FCC providers and centers as a strategy to relieve the financial strain on families and raise pay for early educators (ELD, 2022b). Nonetheless, more can be done to support FCC providers in particular. Oregon has an opportunity to recognize and support family child care work through initiatives like:

- An FCC provider network that offers substitutes or respite care workers so that FCC providers can have a day off or receive professional development;
- Professional training unique to the FCC provider world—like tax preparation, business planning and budget creation, supervision and feedback—developed and delivered in collaboration with existing family child care associations (supporting the development of new associations as needed);

- A mechanism to connect providers with supports and resources in the community to help offset costs of their business and alleviate their professional responsibilities; and
- Specialized mentoring and coaching opportunities shaped and delivered by those with family child care experience.

Capturing the experiences and perspectives of early educators working directly with children presents an opportunity to further refine and strengthen the policies, practices, and resources necessary to facilitate a high-quality system that supports children and their teachers alike. The findings from the Oregon SEQUAL study are intended to inform decision making and guide quality improvement strategies statewide.

Appendix A: Study Design

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to data collection, the survey instrument and data collection procedures were approved by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California, Berkeley.

In the winter of 2022, a letter announcing the study was sent via email to all licensed center- and home-based early care and education programs throughout the state of Oregon. This letter introduced the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) and announced the upcoming study, indicating to all recipients that their program could be selected to participate. Within a week of the notification letter, staff at CSCCE sent an email to center administrators, center teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants via the Qualtrics survey platform. This email described the purpose of the survey and provided a personalized link to access the survey. The data collection period began in January 2022 and extended into early March of that same year.

Before launching the SEQUAL survey, the link brought the participant to the Informed Consent page, which detailed the purpose of the study, the procedures, any potential risks/discomforts, confidentiality of the data provided, contact information for our staff, a statement explaining that participation was completely voluntary, and finally, an online consent form where participants could agree to participate or decline. If the participant selected "agree," they were taken to the SEQUAL survey, and if they selected "disagree," they were redirected to the CSCCE homepage and removed from our SEQUAL mailing list.

The survey could be accessed from any electronic device connected to the Internet, and as the survey was sent through a personalized link, participants were able to take the survey in more than one sitting. A total of six reminder emails were sent to participants who had not completed the survey.

To thank participants for their time and participation, a $25 gift card was sent to each participant who completed the survey.

Survey Instruments

Three survey instruments — the SEQUAL Teaching Staff Survey, the SEQUAL Administrative Survey, and the SEQUAL FCC Survey — were employed to capture information on work environments and demographic and workforce characteristics. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and related programmatic or policy changes that may have affected educators' work experiences, each survey also included a set of questions covering pandemic-related impacts on program operations and on the workforce.

Surveys were offered in English, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese for center-based teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants. The surveys were administered online by Qualtrics and took approximately 45 minutes to complete.

SEQUAL Teaching Staff Survey. The SEQUAL Teaching Staff Survey is a validated measure and includes two sections: 1) staff perceptions about workplace policies that affect their teaching practice; and 2) a profile of teacher education, experiences, and demographic information. For the section on staff perceptions of their work environment, teaching staff were asked to rate a series of statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The items focused on each of the following five domains:

1. Teaching Supports – 27 items, including statements on the following dimensions: curriculum; observations and assessments; materials; support services for children and families; and staffing and professional responsibilities;
2. Learning Community – 17 items, including statements on professional development opportunities and applying learning;
3. Job Crafting – 15 items, including statements on the following dimensions: making decisions in the workplace; teamwork; and input;
4. Adult Well-Being – 34 items, including statements on the following dimensions: economic well-being; quality of work life; and wellness supports; and
5. Leadership – 33 items, including perceptions of their supervisor and the leader of their program.

In the teaching staff profile, participants were asked to provide information on personal characteristics (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity), level of education, and work characteristics (e.g., wages, tenure, ages of children in their classroom).

SEQUAL FCC Survey. The SEQUAL FCC includes two sections: 1) perceptions about workplace policies that affect teaching practice; and 2) a profile of educator education, experiences, and demographic information. For the section on perceptions of their work environment, providers and assistants were asked to rate a series of statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The items focused on each of the following five domains:

1. Teaching Supports – 20 items, including statements on curriculum; observations and assessments; materials; support services for children and families; training and continuing education;
2. Business Practice Supports – 18 items, including statements on professional responsibilities and what providers need to operate a successful business, including material needs and time;
3. Learning Community – 21 items, including statements on professional development opportunities and applying learning;
4. Adult Well-Being – 36 items, including statements on the dimensions of economic well-being and quality of work life; and
5. Program Management and Leadership – 33 items, including perceptions of their supervisor for FCC assistants and the management of the program and how they engage professionally with other adults.

The FCC survey is currently undergoing validation.

SEQUAL Administrator Survey. Program leaders in center-based programs also filled out a version of the survey. A program leader was identified as the person at the site who would have access to administrative information about workplace benefits and policies, as well as program and staff characteristics. The survey asked program leaders to provide program-level information on the center and characteristics of teaching staff employed and children served at the center, in addition to their own personal and professional characteristics.

U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form. Two items from the six-item version of the U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module (U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2012), a widely used self-report measure for assessing food security, were completed by early educators .

Sampling Frame and Procedures

A stratified random sampling design was employed by program setting (e.g., centers, large FCCs, and small FCCs) and by region of the state. Regions were created by consolidating the 16 Early Learning Hubs into six regions based on sample size, similar geographic location, type of community (i.e., population density), and total population. Within this design, proportionate sampling was also employed to ensure that the proportion of centers and home-based programs in the sample matched the proportion in the population. Due to low response rates at the midpoint of the study and the amount of inaccurate contact information for educators in Oregon, we oversampled for FCC participants and a replacement email was used if there was a second administrator for an unresponsive center during replacement sampling. Due to inaccurate contact information, it is not clear how many invited participants were actually reached.

Analysis Plan

Frequency Analyses. All SEQUAL items were rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). We used frequency analysis for SEQUAL items (e.g., the percentage of teaching staff who agreed or disagreed) as a measure of teaching staff assessment of workplace policies, practices, and relationships. These frequencies are reported as percentages or fractions for each of the items on the SEQUAL domains and dimensions. Crosstabs were also performed to look at the percentage of center-based teaching staff and FCC educator responses to the SEQUAL by QRIS participation and job role.

T-Tests and Analysis of Variance (ANOVAs). T-tests and ANOVAs were used to examine differences between groups (e.g., by QRIS participation, and job role). Depending on the number of groups, t-tests and ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences in center-based teaching staff and FCC educators perceptions of their work environment as captured by their SEQUAL scores. Since t-tests assume equal variances between groups, we used Welch's t-test to compare means when the equal variances assumption was not met.

Correlations and Associations Between Scores. To examine the relationships between study variables and scores, bivariate correlations, chi-square, and regression models (linear and multiple regression) were conducted. Correlations were conducted for numerical variables and chi-square for categorical variables.

Throughout this report, we denote differences in SEQUAL scores and other variables by pointing out where scores between two or more groups are *significantly different* from one another. This indicates that there is a statistical difference between group scores or a statistical relationship between variables at a rate greater than chance levels. All significant findings are reported at a p value of $<.05$. Findings slightly above a p value of $<.05$ are reported as marginally significant.

Appendix B: Population and Sample

TABLE B1. POPULATION AND SAMPLE ACROSS SETTINGS

Role	Invited to Participate	Participated	Response Rate
Small FCC Provider (N=200)	1,215	300	25%
Large FCC Provider (N=195)	851	195	23%
FCC Assistant (N=116)	1,350	116	9%
Director (N=56)	420	56	8%
Teaching Staff (N=485)	3,778	485	13%

TABLE B2. PROPORTION OF PARTICIPANTS WHO COMPLETED SURVEY, BY REGION AND ROLE

Role	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6
Small FCC Provider (N=200)	22%	16%	15%	13%	15%	19%
Large FCC Provider (N=195)	24%	26%	15%	6%	9%	20%
FCC Assistant (N=116)	17%	40%	17%	5%	10%	10%
Director (N=56)	19%	19%	14%	18%	7%	23%
Teacher (N=310)	25%	24%	11%	8%	11%	21%
Assistant Teacher (N=175)	22%	29%	14%	9%	11%	17%

TABLE B3. POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF CENTER DIRECTORS, BY REGION

Region	Number of Center Director Surveys Administered	Participated	Percentage
Region 1	86	11	13%
Region 2	102	11	11%
Region 3	56	8	14%
Region 4	56	9	16%
Region 5	50	4	8%
Region 6	70	13	19%
Total	420	56	

TABLE B4. POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF, BY REGION

Region	Number of Teaching Staff Surveys Administered	Participated	Percentage
Region 1	803	116	14%
Region 2	949	123	13%
Region 3	437	58	13%
Region 4	451	40	9%
Region 5	425	53	12%
Region 6	713	95	13%
Total	3,778	485	13%

TABLE B5. POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF SMALL FCC PROVIDERS, BY REGION

Region	Number of Small FCC Surveys Administered	Participated	Percentage
Region 1	236	46	19%
Region 2	285	32	11%
Region 3	142	30	21%
Region 4	155	26	17%
Region 5	157	28	18%
Region 6	240	38	16%
Total	1,215	200	16%

TABLE B6. POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF LARGE FCC PROVIDERS, BY REGION

Region	Number of Large FCC Surveys Administered	Participated	Percentage
Region 1	217	46	21%
Region 2	208	49	24%
Region 3	100	30	30%
Region 4	96	15	16%
Region 5	77	17	22%
Region 6	153	38	25%
Total	851	195	23%

TABLE B7. POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF FCC ASSISTANTS, BY REGION

Region	Number of Large FCC Surveys Administered	Participated	Percentage
Region 1	316	20	6%
Region 2	410	47	11%
Region 3	179	20	11%
Region 4	131	7	5%
Region 5	99	11	11%
Region 6	215	11	5%
Total	1,350	116	9%

Appendix C: Methodology for Calculating Family Child Care Income

Reporting on structural quality indicators or working conditions such as wages and earnings of family child care (FCC) educators is a challenge for many surveys in the field. High non-response rates and insufficient data about programmatic costs and revenues of FCC settings suggest that any earnings estimates should be interpreted cautiously, including ours. Readers should take the figures we present in this report as starting points for discussions about policy and about how to better collect information on these structural quality indicators.

To estimate FCC providers' take-home pay, we used three questions from SEQUAL Oregon addressing:

1) How much FCC providers earned either weekly, monthly, or yearly;
2) Total household yearly income grouped by brackets (e.g. $40,000-49,999); and
3) Self-perceived portion of their income that came from work with children (e.g., none, almost half, all).

Based on the methodology described by Montoya and colleagues (2022), to estimate FCC wages by total household income and the portion earned through their work in early care and education, we multiplied providers' annual household income in 2021 by the reported proportion earned through working in early care and education. We excluded assistants from these calculations. Because our data do not directly measure total FCC provider earnings—and we cannot account for their expenses, such as assistant pay—we provide estimates in the form of a range: a lower, middle, and upper bound.

The bounds are estimated by substituting a qualitative self-perceived proportion of earnings[31] coming from work related to child care and the midpoint from the grouped income question. To estimate the upper bound of the open-ended top income bracket, we assumed that household income in this bracket follows a Pareto distribution and estimated the midpoint following Jargowsky and Wheeler (2018). We ran sensitivity analysis to estimate how different median points for the top bracket would affect our overall estimates and found a minimum difference. Given that some educators did not report their household income, we used the information about how much providers make in a week, month, or year and annualized these estimates using the reported number of hours, weeks or months worked.

[31] The response options spanned "none or very little" to "all or almost all."

TABLE C1. FCC PROVIDER INCOME

	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant
Annual Income			**Hourly Wage**
Median (lower to upper bound)	$23,375-27,500	$38,250-54,600	$16.50

The following table on center-based teaching staff wages is included for comparison.

TABLE C2. CENTER-BASED TEACHING STAFF WAGES, BY JOB ROLE

	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher
Hourly Wage			
Median	$25.24	$18.00	$16.00
Range	$28.85-36.06	$12.50-$30.00	$12.50-$30.00
Educational Attainment			
Some college or less	$23.05	$16.67	$15.51
Associate degree	$24.04	$18.00	$18.00
Bachelor's degree or higher	$28.09	$20.00	$16.70

Appendix D: Findings

Interpreting the Findings

Early educator assessments are reported separately by domains. For each domain, we begin with a description of the domain and why it is important to educator practice and development. We then present the findings by major themes that are consistent across the sample. The findings section reports on domain scores and main themes; within main themes, the overall domain description, variations by educator, and center characteristics are reported.

Domain Scores

Mean scores are provided for each SEQUAL domain; they represent an aggregate of educator responses. Results for each domain represent an aggregate of staff perceptions across programs, and therefore, the prevalence of issues identified will vary by program. Means are calculated according to a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Unless noted, higher scores reflect that a positive work environment condition is in place or can be reliably depended upon.

Variations by educator (e.g., tenure, educational attainment, language spoken) or center characteristics (e.g., QRIS, region) for center-based teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants are based on domain mean scores. Only significant differences are reported.

Main Themes

Within each domain, major themes that emerged across early educators are identified. In these descriptions, data for the sample are reported by:

- The percentage of center-based teaching staff who agree or disagree with individual items describing various workplace policies, practices, and relationships in a given dimension (see "Interpreting Agreement and Disagreement With SEQUAL Items," below); and
- Variations in scores by educator (e.g., tenure, educational attainment, language spoken) or center characteristics (e.g., QRIS, region) for center-based teaching staff.

Interpreting Agreement and Disagreement With SEQUAL Items

The SEQUAL survey presents statements, and early educators are asked to indicate agreement or disagreement. In almost all cases, educator agreement with an item signals that a positive work environment condition is in place or can be reliably depended upon, while disagreement indicates a lack of support for various work environment conditions necessary for educators to apply their knowledge and skills and continue to hone their practice. We note the few instances in which agreement signals a less-supportive environment.

All SEQUAL items are rated on a six-point scale, with designations of "strongly agree," "agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Throughout the report, "agree" combines both "strongly agree" and "agree" responses. Likewise, "disagree" combines both "strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses.

For certain items, when the percentage of "somewhat disagree" and "somewhat agree" responses warrants, they will be reported out to provide greater nuance to those findings. For example, these instances include when the selection of the "somewhat" options (whether "somewhat agree" or "somewhat disagree") suggests that a policy or practice may not be consistently in place, may not be routinely enforced, or is otherwise unreliable and undependable.

Education

TABLE D1. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF EARLY EDUCATORS IN OREGON, BY JOB ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs		
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher
Some college or less	73%	45%	54%	21%	39%	54%
Associate degree	10%	19%	13%	13%	21%	15%
Bachelor's degree or higher	17%	36%	33%	66%	40%	31%

TABLE D2. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF EARLY EDUCATORS IN OREGON, BY JOB ROLE AND RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND

	Some College or Less	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Small FCC Provider			
White	71%	11%	18%
Latina	82%	7%	11%
Other*	64%	18%	18%
Large FCC Provider			
White	33%	26%	41%
Latina	71%	8%	21%
Other	54%	0%	46%
FCC Assistant			
White	47%	10%	43%
Latina	62%	19%	19%
Other	65%	15%	25%
Center Director			
White	24%	15%	61%
Latina	0%	0%	100%
Other	14%	0%	86%
Center Teacher			
White	37%	16%	47%
Latina	50%	27%	23%
Other	38%	26%	36%
Center Assistant Teacher			
White	54%	15%	31%
Latina	61%	17%	22%
Other	39%	14%	47%

*Other ethnicities and/or races reported include American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

TABLE D3. MAJOR FOR HIGHEST DEGREE STUDIED FOR OR EARNED, BY JOB ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Programs		
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher
Child Development or Psychology	11%	6%	11%	7%	11%	6%
Early Childhood Education	38%	43%	24%	34%	32%	24%
Human Development and Family Sciences	5%	4%	7%	14%	10%	8%
Family and Human Services	1%	2%	4%	5%	5%	6%
Elementary Education	7%	10%	9%	16%	9%	4%
Special Education	4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Other*	34%	32%	44%	25%	35%	48%

*Other majors reported include Administration, Accounting, Communication, Consumer Affairs, General Studies, Medicine, Social Work, Theatre Arts, Communication Disorders, Women's Studies.

Tenure

TABLE D4. TENURE IN THE ECE FIELD, BY ROLE

	Family Child Care Programs			Center-Based Care Programs		
	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher
2 years or less	9%	6%	8%	2%	7%	38%
3-5 years	18%	12%	8%	2%	23%	23%
6-15 years	29%	23%	27%	46%	37%	22%
16 years or more	44%	58%	57%	51%	33%	17%

TABLE D5. TENURE AT CENTER-BASED PROGRAMS, BY ROLE

	Director	Teacher	Assistant Teacher
Number of years at current center			
2 years or less	14%	38%	66%
3-5 years	18%	31%	20%
6-15 years	39%	24%	8%
16 years or more	29%	7%	6%
Number of years in current role at current center			
2 years or less	34%	60%	59%
3-5 years	20%	25%	23%
6-15 years	25%	13%	14%
16 years or more	21%	2%	5%

TABLE D6. NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING IN FAMILY CHILD CARE, BY ROLE

	Small FCC Provider	Large FCC Provider	FCC Assistant
2 years or less	15%	12%	14%
3-5 years	29%	17%	13%
6-15 years	31%	27%	33%
16 years or more	30%	44%	39%

Appendix E: Domain Mean Scores

TABLE E1. TEACHING SUPPORTS MEAN SCORES FOR CENTER-BASED PROGRAM TEACHING STAFF

Educator and Program Characteristics	Teacher	N	Assistant Teacher	N
Educational Attainment				
Some college or less	4.3	115	4.5	87
Associate degree	4.5	61	5.0	24
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.5	120	4.3	51
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background				
White	4.3	181	4.5	96
Latina	4.4	66	4.7	37
Other	4.6	43	4.5	29
Tenure in Place				
2 years or less	4.5	111	4.7	107
3-5 years	4.3	93	4.3	33
6 years or more	4.3	92	4.1	23
Region*				
Region 1	4.3	77	4.2	38
Region 2	4.4	73	4.5	50
Region 3	4.4	34	4.7	24
Region 4	4.4	25	4.9	15
Region 5	4.3	34	4.6	19
Region 6	4.6	66	4.6	29
QRIS**				
No	4.4	148	4.5	84
Yes	4.4	161	4.5	91

*For a description of the hubs and counties within each region, see Figure1. OREGON HUBS AND COUNTIES, BY SAMPLING REGION on page 13.
**No indicates non-participation in QRIS, Yes indicates participation in QRIS.

TABLE E2. TEACHING SUPPORTS MEAN SCORES FOR FCC PROVIDERS

Educator and Program Characteristics	Small FCC Provider	N	Large FCC Provider	N	FCC Assistant	N
Educational Attainment						
Some college or less	4.1	133	4.0	80	4.7	56
Associate degree	3.8	19	3.7	35	4.4	13
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.0	37	3.7	69	4.4	40
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background						
White	3.9	123	3.6	114	4.5	59
Latina	4.3	30	4.3	40	4.8	23
Other	4.3	22	4.1	23	4.4	20
Tenure in Place						
2 years or less	4.0	25	3.9	19	4.8	14
3-5 years	4.0	43	3.8	26	4.3	13
6 years or more	4.0	104	3.9	111	4.6	72
Region						
Region 1	4.0	44	4.0	46	4.6	20
Region 2	4.1	32	3.7	48	4.5	47
Region 3	3.8	30	3.7	27	4.6	18
Region 4	4.0	26	3.9	15	4.4	7
Region 5	4.0	28	4.0	20	4.8	12
Region 6	4.2	37	3.9	38	4.5	11
QRIS						
No	3.9	93	3.7	89	4.5	15
Yes	4.3	56	3.9	82	4.6	30

TABLE E3. LEARNING COMMUNITY MEAN SCORES FOR CENTER-BASED PROGRAM TEACHING STAFF

Educator and Program Characteristics	Teacher	N	Assistant Teacher	N
Educational Attainment				
Some college or less	3.9	115	4.4	86
Associate degree	4.2	61	4.5	24
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.1	120	4.2	51
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background				
White	4.0	181	4.4	95
Latina	3.9	66	4.3	37
Other	4.4	43	4.3	29
Tenure in Place				
2 years or less	4.1	110	4.4	105
3-5 years	4.0	93	4.3	33
6 years or more	3.9	92	4.2	23
Region				
Region 1	3.9	77	4.2	38
Region 2	4.0	73	4.1	50
Region 3	4.3	34	4.7	24
Region 4	4.1	24	4.8	14
Region 5	4.1	34	4.6	18
Region 6	4.0	66	4.4	29
QRIS				
No	4.1	148	4.5	84
Yes	4.0	160	4.3	89

TABLE E4. LEARNING COMMUNITY MEAN SCORES FOR FCC PROVIDERS

Educator and Program Characteristics	Small FCC Provider	N	Large FCC Provider	N	FCC Assistant	N
Educational Attainment						
Some college or less	4.0	133	4.1	80	4.5	56
Associate degree	3.9	19	3.7	35	4.0	13
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.8	37	4.0	69	4.1	39
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background						
White	3.9	123	3.8	114	4.3	59
Latina	4.1	30	4.4	40	4.6	23
Other	3.8	22	4.1	23	3.8	20
Tenure in Place						
2 years or less	3.9	25	4.1	19	4.6	14
3-5 years	4.0	43	4.0	26	4.1	13
6 years or more	4.0	104	4.0	111	4.3	71
Region						
Region 1	3.9	44	4.0	46	4.6	20
Region 2	4.3	32	4.0	48	4.3	46
Region 3	4.0	30	4.0	27	4.2	18
Region 4	3.8	26	4.1	15	3.9	7
Region 5	4.1	28	4.0	20	4.5	12
Region 6	3.9	37	3.9	38	3.9	10
QRIS						
No	3.8	93	3.8	89	4.2	15
Yes	4.2	56	4.2	82	4.3	30

TABLE E5. JOB CRAFTING MEAN SCORES FOR CENTER-BASED PROGRAM TEACHING STAFF

Educator and Program Characteristics	Teacher	N	Assistant Teacher	N
Educational Attainment				
Some college or less	4.2	115	4.5	86
Associate degree	4.4	61	4.7	24
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.4	120	4.3	51
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background				
White	4.3	180	4.5	94
Latina	4.1	66	4.3	36
Other	4.6	43	4.4	29
Tenure in Place				
2 years or less	4.4	108	4.6	104
3-5 years	4.3	93	4.4	33
6 years or more	4.2	92	4.5	23
Region				
Region 1	4.1	77	4.2	38
Region 2	4.3	72	4.3	49
Region 3	4.6	34	4.8	22
Region 4	4.1	23	5.0	15
Region 5	4.5	34	4.5	19
Region 6	4.5	66	4.6	29
QRIS				
No	4.4	147	4.5	82
Yes	4.2	159	4.5	90

TABLE E6. BUSINESS SUPPORTS MEAN SCORES FOR FCC PROVIDERS

Educator and Program Characteristics	Small FCC Provider	N	Large FCC Provider	N	FCC Assistant	N
Educational Attainment						
Some college or less	4.9	133	4.7	80	4.8	52
Associate degree	4.8	19	4.7	35	4.3	13
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.8	38	4.8	69	4.4	39
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background						
White	4.9	123	4.6	114	4.5	54
Latina	4.9	30	4.8	40	4.9	23
Other	4.9	22	4.9	23	4.5	20
Tenure in Place						
2 years or less	5.0	25	4.6	19	4.7	14
3-5 years	4.8	43	4.7	26	4.4	13
6 years or more	4.9	105	4.8	111	4.7	68
Region						
Region 1	4.8	44	4.9	46	4.9	19
Region 2	5.2	32	4.7	48	4.5	43
Region 3	4.8	30	4.8	27	4.3	18
Region 4	4.8	26	4.9	15	4.3	7
Region 5	4.8	28	4.6	20	5.0	11
Region 6	4.8	38	4.4	38	4.3	11
QRIS						
No	4.9	93	4.6	89	4.4	15
Yes	4.8	56	4.7	82	4.5	29

TABLE E7. ADULT WELL-BEING MEAN SCORES FOR CENTER-BASED PROGRAM TEACHING STAFF

Educator and Program Characteristics	Teacher	N	Assistant Teacher	N
Educational Attainment				
Some college or less	3.9	115	4.3	87
Associate degree	4.3	61	4.7	24
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.2	120	4.3	51
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background				
White	4.1	181	4.4	96
Latina	4.0	66	4.3	37
Other	4.4	43	4.2	29
Tenure in Place				
2 years or less	4.1	111	4.4	107
3-5 years	4.1	93	4.3	33
6 years or more	4.0	92	4.4	23
Region				
Region 1	3.9	77	4.1	38
Region 2	4.2	73	4.3	50
Region 3	4.3	34	4.4	24
Region 4	4.0	25	5.0	15
Region 5	3.9	34	4.3	19
Region 6	4.2	66	4.5	29
QRIS				
No	4.1	148	4.4	84
Yes	4.1	161	4.3	91

TABLE E8. ADULT WELL-BEING MEAN SCORES FOR FCC PROVIDERS

Educator and Program Characteristics	Small FCC Provider	N	Large FCC Provider	N	FCC Assistant	N
Educational Attainment						
Some college or less	3.9	133	3.7	80	4.2	56
Associate degree	3.8	19	3.8	35	3.9	13
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.8	37	4.0	69	4.2	39
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background						
White	4.0	123	3.8	114	4.3	59
Latina	3.7	30	3.8	40	3.9	23
Other	3.6	23	3.6	23	4.1	20
Tenure in Place						
2 years or less	3.9	25	3.8	19	4.2	14
3-5 years	3.9	43	4.0	26	4.0	13
6 years or more	3.8	104	3.8	111	4.2	71
Region						
Region 1	3.9	44	3.9	46	4.5	20
Region 2	4.0	31	3.8	48	4.3	46
Region 3	3.8	30	3.9	27	3.8	18
Region 4	3.9	26	3.9	15	3.3	7
Region 5	3.7	28	3.7	20	4.5	12
Region 6	3.8	38	3.9	37	4.1	11
QRIS						
No	3.8	93	4.6	89	3.7	15
Yes	3.9	56	4.7	82	4.1	30

TABLE E9. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP MEAN SCORES FOR CENTER-BASED PROGRAM TEACHING STAFF

Educator and Program Characteristics	Teacher	N	Assistant Teacher	N
Educational Attainment				
Some college or less	4.4	113	4.8	86
Associate degree	4.8	61	5.2	24
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.6	120	4.7	51
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background				
White	4.6	178	4.9	95
Latina	4.5	66	4.8	36
Other	4.8	43	4.8	29
Tenure in Place				
2 years or less	4.8	109	4.9	104
3-5 years	4.5	92	4.7	33
6 years or more	4.4	92	4.9	23
Region				
Region 1	4.4	76	4.6	38
Region 2	4.6	73	4.7	49
Region 3	4.9	34	5.2	24
Region 4	4.3	24	5.3	14
Region 5	4.5	33	5.1	19
Region 6	4.8	66	4.9	28
QRIS				
No	4.5	148	4.9	84
Yes	4.6	158	4.8	88

TABLE E10. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP MEAN SCORES FOR FCC PROVIDERS

Educator and Program Characteristics	Small FCC Provider	N	Large FCC Provider	N	FCC Assistant	N
Educational Attainment						
Some college or less	3.9	132	4.1	78	5.1	56
Associate degree	3.7	18	3.8	35	4.4	13
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.9	35	4.1	69	5.0	40
Ethnicity and/or Racial Background						
White	3.8	121	4.0	113	5.1	59
Latina	3.9	30	4.2	39	4.8	23
Other	3.8	22	4.2	23	4.7	20
Tenure in Place						
2 years or less	3.5	24	4.3	19	4.9	14
3-5 years	4.0	41	4.0	26	5.2	13
6 years or more	3.9	103	4.0	109	5.0	72
Region						
Region 1	3.9	43	4.0	45	5.0	20
Region 2	4.1	30	3.9	48	5.2	47
Region 3	4.0	30	4.0	27	4.9	18
Region 4	3.9	26	4.1	15	4.4	7
Region 5	3.7	27	4.2	20	5.3	12
Region 6	3.9	37	4.2	36	4.6	11
QRIS						
No	3.7	92	3.8	88	4.2	15
Yes	4.1	56	4.1	82	4.9	30

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Suggested Citation

Schlieber, M., Knight, J., Adejumo, T., Copeman Petig, A., Valencia López, E., & Pufall Jones, E. (2022). *Early Educator Voices: Oregon. Work Environment Conditions That Impact Early Educator Practice and Program Quality.* Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. https://cscce.berkeley.edu/publications/report/educator-voices-oregon/

Acknowledgments

This study and report were generously supported by the Oregon Early Learning Division.

Special thanks to the center directors, center-based teaching staff, FCC providers, and FCC assistants who gave so generously of their time to take part in this study. Additional thanks to the Oregon Early Learning Division for their support of this project. We are also grateful to our colleagues Lea Austin for guidance and feedback throughout the study and Ana Fox-Hodess for guidance and assistance in the design of this report.

The views expressed in this commentary are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent collaborating organizations or funders.

Editor: Deborah Meacham

About CSCCE

The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE), founded in 1999, is the national leader in early care and education workforce research and policy. CSCCE provides research and analysis on the preparation, working conditions, and compensation of the early care and education workforce. We develop policy solutions and create spaces for teaching, learning, and educator activism. Our vision is an effective public early care and education system that secures racial, gender, and economic justice for the women whose labor is the linchpin of stable, quality services.

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