With Gratitude for the Generous Support of the Research Sponsors

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Richard W. Goldman Family Foundation
Four Research Objectives

1. **Understanding** the attitudes and beliefs of current educators about the profession

2. **Identifying** factors that will be most helpful in encouraging educators to make the field a long-term profession

3. **Assessing** strategies for attracting new educators to join the field

4. **Developing** messaging to enhance public appreciation of, and support for, the work of early childhood educators
Four Phases to the Research

1. In-depth, online qualitative interviews with a sample of educators nationally
2. Quantitative online survey of 3,750 early educators
3. Four focus groups with current educators, and those interested in entering the field
4. National survey of 950 voters
FM3 and POS are a bipartisan team that has partnered to complete research in 44 states.
The Image of the Profession
More than six in ten voters recognize the ages of birth to five as the most important time for child development.

What do you think is the most important age for developing a child’s capacity to learn?

- Up to age one: 12%
- One to two: 21%
- Three to four: 29%
- Five to ten: 23%
- Eleven to fourteen: 2%
I’m going to read you a list of a variety of different kinds of workers that may be present in your community. Please tell me how you would rate the importance of each type of worker for your local community: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important.
Voters recognize the connection between early childhood educators and quality – including compensation and degrees.

(% Rating Components of ECE Programs as Extremely/Very Important for Ensuring Quality)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has patient and compassionate teachers</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes language and literacy</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes positive social and emotional development</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes math skills and problem solving</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has teachers who meet state and local standards</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has teachers who are well-compensated</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has teachers and staff with degrees in child development and/or early childhood education</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps a low student-to-teacher ratio</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6.
Q6. I am going to read you a list of different components that some people might point to as indicators of a quality early childhood education program. Please tell me how important you believe it is for a quality early childhood education program to include each component: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.
Voters recognize many positive attributes of early childhood educators and the role they play.

(Percentage of Voters Saying Various Phrases are Accurate Descriptions of Early Childhood Educators)

- Play a critical role in helping children grow and develop: 92%
- Genuinely care for the children they teach: 89%
- Are compassionate: 89%
- Need specialized training to be effective: 87%
- Are an essential part of our education system: 86%
- Are creative: 85%
- Are smart: 84%
- Put children’s interests before their own: 82%
Voters overwhelmingly reject the idea that early childhood educators have “easy jobs.”

(% of Voters Saying Various Phrases are Accurate Descriptions of Early Childhood Educators)

- Can make a long-term career of their work in early education: 78%
- Are highly-skilled: 76%
- Are appropriately trained for their jobs: 74%
- Are valued by the community: 69%
- Work part-time: 57%
- Are likely to quickly move on to other careers: 55%
- Are paid, on average, about the same as fast food workers: 47%
- Are easily replaceable: 37%
- Are equivalent to a local babysitter: 32%
- Have fairly easy jobs: 23%

Q11. I’m going to read you a list of phrases that may or may not describe people who work as early childhood educators. Please tell me whether you feel each phrase is generally an accurate or an inaccurate description of early childhood educators.
Defining and Growing the Profession
I have always loved working with children

I wanted to help young people develop their skills and be ready to succeed in school

Someone encouraged me to pursue a position in early childhood education

I became interested in the subject while pursuing a college degree

I had a child/children and wanted to learn more about caring for them

It is a job I could get without needing a Bachelor’s Degree
Educators recommend that others considering the field get training – and prepare for low pay.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in becoming an early childhood educator? (Multiple responses accepted; Top responses shown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advice</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be educated/trained/get degree/experience</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t do it for money</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to enjoy/love children/families</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging/hard work/takes commitment</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be patient/caring/compassionate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewarding/fulfilling/satisfying</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be passionate/follow your dreams/heart</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nearly all educators believe an “excellent” member of their profession is passionate, patient, caring and loving.

(% of Educators Saying Various Phrases Describe an “Excellent” Educator)

- Passionate about working with children: 89%
- Caring: 88%
- Patient: 87%
- Loving: 85%
- Flexible: 79%
- Continually tries to improve: 78%
- Creative: 76%
- Optimistic: 66%
- Innovative: 60%
- Doesn’t get upset easily: 60%

Q24. Please indicate how well you think each describes a person who would make an excellent early childhood educator. If you don’t know enough to say whether one of these phrases describes them, select “don’t know.”
More than half of educators believe an excellent early educator has an academic background in child development.

(% of Educators Saying Various Phrases Describe an “Excellent” Educator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% of Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives back to the community</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to work hard for low pay</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has an academic background in child development</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a college degree in child development</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail oriented</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q24. Please indicate how well you think each describes a person who would make an excellent early childhood educator. If you don't know enough to say whether one of these phrases describes them, select “don't know.”
Educators are less likely to say that attributes such as “tough” or “competitive” are important.

(Q24. Please indicate how well you think each describes a person who would make an excellent early childhood educator. If you don’t know enough to say whether one of these phrases describes them, select “don’t know.”)

(% of Educators Saying Various Phrases Describe an “Excellent” Educator)

- Idealistic: 31%
- Thick-skinned: 30%
- Cautious: 27%
- Risk-taker: 25%
- Emotional: 22%
- Tough: 20%
- Competitive: 17%
- Demanding: 15%
- Intense: 14%
- Set in their ways: 5%

Q24. Please indicate how well you think each describes a person who would make an excellent early childhood educator. If you don’t know enough to say whether one of these phrases describes them, select “don’t know.”
The vast majority of educators say they want to make early childhood education their long-term career.

Do you plan to keep working for the long term as an early childhood educator serving children five or younger? Please rate the likelihood of early childhood education being your long-term career on a 0-100 scale, where 0 means you definitely will not continue in the field in the long term, 100 means you definitely will and 50 means you are unsure.

Mean Score: 83.8
Certainty seems to increase significantly at the 10-year mark.

Interest in Continuing as an Educator, by Time in the Profession

- **0-50 (Definitely Will Not Continue)**
- **51-80**
- **81-99**
- **100 (Definitely Will Continue)**

- **0-3 Years**
  - 19% (Definitely Will Not Continue)
  - 21% (51-80)
  - 28% (81-99)
  - 32% (Definitely Will Continue)
  - (11% of Sample)

- **4-10 Years**
  - 19% (Definitely Will Not Continue)
  - 24% (51-80)
  - 26% (81-99)
  - 30% (Definitely Will Continue)
  - (24%)

- **10+ Years**
  - 13% (Definitely Will Not Continue)
  - 14% (51-80)
  - 27% (81-99)
  - 47% (Definitely Will Continue)
  - (64%)
Educators with the lowest household incomes are somewhat more likely to expect to pursue other careers.

**Interest in Continuing as an Educator, by Household Income**

- **<$30,000**
  - Definitely Will Not Continue: 19%
  - 51-80: 19%
  - 81-99: 24%
  - Definitely Will Continue: 39%

- **$30,000-$60,000**
  - Definitely Will Not Continue: 13%
  - 51-80: 18%
  - 81-99: 26%
  - Definitely Will Continue: 43%

- **$60,000+**
  - Definitely Will Not Continue: 13%
  - 51-80: 15%
  - 81-99: 29%
  - Definitely Will Continue: 42%
Educators say the lack of sufficient pay and benefits were the major obstacles to becoming an early childhood educator.

How much of an obstacle were each of the following challenges you faced in the process of becoming an early childhood educator? Would you say they were a major obstacle, minor obstacle, not an obstacle at all or you think it does not apply to you?

Q12.

- Finding an available job with sufficient salary and benefits: 79%
- Affording the cost of a college degree: 69%
- Finding an available job that matched your skills: 48%
- Navigating the process of getting a college degree: 46%
- Understanding the various requirements for becoming a teacher: 39%
Educators of color were more likely to perceive a range of obstacles compared to whites.

*(% Labeling Each a “Major Obstacle”)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Characteristics</th>
<th>All Educators</th>
<th>Latinos</th>
<th>African-Americans</th>
<th>Asians/Pacific Islanders</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Educators of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding an available job with sufficient salary and benefits</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affording the cost of a college degree</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating the process of getting a college degree</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding an available job that matched your skills</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the various requirements for becoming a teacher</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. How much of an obstacle were each of the following challenges you faced in the process of becoming an early childhood educator? Would you say they were a major obstacle, minor obstacle, not an obstacle at all or you think it does not apply to you?
Low pay is seen as by far the biggest challenge facing current early childhood educators.

(% of Educators Labeling Factors a Challenge to Continuing in Their Profession)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>One of the Biggest</th>
<th>A Big Challenge</th>
<th>Overall %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low pay</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect for the importance and difficulty of the work you do</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of employment benefits, such as health care</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork and bureaucracy</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of defined opportunities for professional advancement</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring and career guidance</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty balancing the needs of your own family and working as an early childhood educator</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities for education and training to help prepare you to be a teacher</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult work schedule</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q23. Below you will find a list of things that some people consider to be challenges facing early childhood educators that have led some to switch to other professions. Please rate them in terms of how challenging they have been for you personally. The choices are: one of the biggest challenges, a big challenge, a small challenge, not a challenge at all.
Q23. Below you will find a list of things that some people consider to be challenges facing early childhood educators that have led some to switch to other professions. Please rate them in terms of how challenging they have been for you personally. The choices are: one of the biggest challenges, a big challenge, a small challenge, not a challenge at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Characteristics</th>
<th>All Educators</th>
<th>Latinos</th>
<th>African-Americans</th>
<th>Asians/Pacific Islanders</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Educators of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low pay</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect for the importance and difficulty of the work you do</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of employment benefits, such as health care</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork and bureaucracy</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of defined opportunities for professional advancement</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring and career guidance</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty balancing the needs of your own family and working as an early</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>childhood educator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities for education and training to help prepare you to be</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult work schedule</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The government may increase funding for early childhood education, including increasing pay for educators. Do you think it is fair to require current and future early childhood educators to meet a baseline set of qualifications in order to receive this higher salary and benefits?

Yes 83%
No 12%
Prefer not to answer 5%
Some people believe that regardless of program type or the ages of the children they serve, the baseline qualifications for lead teachers should be a Bachelor’s degree in child development and for assistant teachers/aides it should be an Associate degree with some course credits in child development. Do you agree with that idea?

- Yes: 49%
- No: 45%
- Prefer not to answer: 6%
Educators respond strongly to messages emphasizing their ability to make a difference in the lives of young children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Persuasive Reason</th>
<th>% Very Convincing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REWARDING</strong></td>
<td>Early childhood education is a very rewarding career. Educators have the ability to nurture, educate, and lay a foundation that will last a lifetime. Early childhood educators do not simply teach – they transform lives.</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROLE MODELS</strong></td>
<td>Early childhood educators are role models in the lives of the children they serve. Educators support children’s natural curiosity, help them solve problems, provide them with comfort, help them make new friends, follow rules, set boundaries, be an example in their lives and have fun.</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL SUCCESS</strong></td>
<td>Becoming an early childhood educator is an opportunity to lay the foundation for children’s school success. Studies routinely show that children who attend early childhood education programs with well-trained teachers enter kindergarten ready to learn, do better in school and have more productive lives.</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAGIC MOMENTS</strong></td>
<td>Early childhood educators get to experience many magical moments every day when they see the pride on the face of a young child who has learned a new skill and they know they have made a difference in that child’s life.</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q29. Below are a series of statements encouraging people to consider a career as an early childhood educator. Please choose whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing as a reason to pursue a lifelong career in early childhood education. If you do not believe the statement, you can choose that also.
Investing in the Profession
Voters believe increased access to early education will have broad benefits for society.

(\% Believing Expanded Access to Early Education is Likely to Produce Each Benefit)

- **Children would have a smoother transition into kindergarten**: 91% likely
- **Children will benefit from a disciplined, structured environment that teaches them social skills**: 91% likely
- **A majority of children would enter kindergarten ready to learn**: 89% likely
- **Over time, more students would graduate from high school and go on to college**: 86% likely
- **Over time, our country would have a larger pool of highly skilled local workers**: 82% likely
- **The cycle of poverty which denies economic opportunity will get broken for some children**: 79% likely
- **Gaps in achievement for Latino and African American students would be reduced**: 77% likely
- **Local crime and incarceration rates would be reduced over the long-term**: 76% likely

Q8. I’m going to read you a list of different outcomes that might be achieved by expanding access to early childhood education. For each one, tell me whether you think it would be likely or unlikely to happen if access to early childhood education were expanded.
Most voters believe that early childhood educators are paid too little.

Thinking of the early childhood educators who serve children in your community in the years before they enter kindergarten, do you think they are paid too little, too much or about right?

- Too little: 61%
- Too much: 3%
- About right: 18%
- Don’t know/NA: 18%
Voters are split on requiring degrees first or increasing pay first.

Which of the following statements about this idea comes closest to your opinion?

SOME/OTHER PEOPLE say we should increase wages for early childhood educators before we require higher educational standards. Talented people will never seek the education or training to be educators unless they know they can make a reasonable living at it.

OR

SOME/OTHER PEOPLE say we should require higher educational standards for early childhood educators before we increase their wages. We should be sure we have enough skilled and trained workers before we start to pay them more.

Both/Neither/Don't know/NA

43%

40%

16%
A number of demographic factors shape voters’ responses to this tradeoff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Group</th>
<th>Higher Education Standards First</th>
<th>Higher Wages First</th>
<th>Both/Neither/DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-49</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$60,000</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000+</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Census Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14.
Some people have proposed increasing *(HALF-SAMPLE: federal funding) / (HALF-SAMPLE: state funding)* to support early childhood education services, and make high-quality, affordable early education more available to parents. In general, does this sound like something you would support or oppose?

**Voters overwhelmingly support increasing funding for ECE services.**

Federal Funding

- Strongly Support: 62%
- Somewhat Support: 18%
- Somewhat Oppose: 6%
- Strongly Oppose: 11%
- Undecided: 3%

State Funding

- Strongly Support: 64%
- Somewhat Support: 17%
- Somewhat Oppose: 6%
- Strongly Oppose: 8%
- Undecided: 6%
Majorities of Democrats, independents and Republicans support increased investment in early childhood education.

Support for Increased ECE Funding by Party

- **Democrats**: 94% support, 5% oppose, 1% DK/NA (38% of sample)
- **Independents**: 80% support, 16% oppose, 5% DK/NA (27% of sample)
- **Republicans**: 66% support, 27% oppose, 7% DK/NA (35% of sample)

Q7.
There is a pronounced gender gap, particularly among voters over age 50.

Support for Increased ECE Funding by Gender by Age

Men

Women

(23%)

(24%)

(23%)

(26%)
African-American voters are among the most supportive of an investment in ECE.

Support for Increased ECE Funding by Ethnicity

- **Latinos**: 86% support, 13% oppose, 2% DK/NA
- **African-Americans**: 95% support, 5% oppose, 0% DK/NA
- **Whites**: 79% support, 17% oppose, 5% DK/NA
- **Voters of Color**: 86% support, 12% oppose, 2% DK/NA

*(% of Sample) (8%) (11%) (72%) (26%)*
Interestingly, parents are only modestly more supportive than are non-parents.

Support for Increased ECE Funding by Parent Status

- **Have Children at Home**
  - Total Support: 82% (68% of Sample)  
  - Total Oppose: 15%  
  - DK/NA: 3%

- **Do Not Have Children at Home**
  - Total Support: 78% (30% of Sample)  
  - Total Oppose: 16%  
  - DK/NA: 6%

Q7.
Voters continue to support an investment in ECE with the understanding that it would increase wages.

I’d like to return to the idea I mentioned a few moments ago, of increasing federal/state to support early childhood education services, and make high-quality, affordable early education more available to parents. Suppose you knew that this additional funding would be primarily dedicated to increasing wages for early childhood educators, with the goal of reducing turnover in the field and recruiting and retaining more highly-qualified teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Support</th>
<th>If Dedicated to Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Support</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Support</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Oppose</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Voters support raising wages for early educators in a variety of settings.

(% Rating it “Very Important” to Increase Wages for Each Type of Educator)

- Those who work in communities with limited access to early education: 37% Ext. Impt., 83% Very Impt.
- Those who have obtained a college degree specializing in the education of young children: 38% Ext. Impt., 81% Very Impt.
- Those who work at public schools: 33% Ext. Impt., 78% Very Impt.
- Those who work in pre-schools with three- and four-year-olds: 34% Ext. Impt., 76% Very Impt.
- Those who work in low-income communities: 34% Ext. Impt., 75% Very Impt.
- Those with higher levels of education and training: 33% Ext. Impt., 74% Very Impt.
- Those who work in non-profit centers: 29% Ext. Impt., 69% Very Impt.
- Those who work with infants and toddlers under age three: 31% Ext. Impt., 64% Very Impt.
- Those who work in home-based programs: 21% Ext. Impt., 51% Very Impt.
Voters see several compelling reasons to support wage increases for early childhood educators.

(% Very Convincing)

(BRAIN DEVELOPMENT) Research shows that a child’s brain develops most dramatically during the first five years of life. This critical period is a window of opportunity to lay the foundation for all of the years that follow. It takes appropriate salaries and benefits to recruit and retain the best educators to work with our children during this critical period of their development. 61%

(ROLE MODELS) Early childhood educators are role models in the lives of the children they serve. Educators support children’s natural curiosity, help them solve problems, provide them with comfort, help them make new friends, follow rules, set boundaries, be an example in their lives and have fun. 58%

(SCHOOL READINESS) Paying our early childhood educators fairly will improve the quality of preschools, which will strengthen K-12 education. Studies show that kids who go to pre-school are better prepared to learn, more likely to read by the fourth grade and more likely to graduate and go on to college. 58%

Q15. Here are a series of statements from people who support providing increased public funding to increase wages for early childhood educators. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing.
Voters are more likely to call early childhood educators “extremely important” after messaging.

How important would you say early childhood educators are to your local community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Initial Perception</th>
<th>After Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/NA</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2a/Q17.
Voters express high levels of trust for K-12 teachers, parents, early educators and child development experts.

Q21. Here is a list of people and organizations that take positions on issues related to funding for early childhood education. Please tell me if you would generally trust each person or organization’s opinion on this issue, or if you would be suspicious of it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People/Groups</th>
<th>Total Trust</th>
<th>Total Susp.</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in K through 12 schools</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>+70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents of young children</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>+66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child development experts at a local university</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>+64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former pre-school teachers who could not afford to stay in the profession</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>+60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people who want to pursue a career in early education</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>+58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State or local early childhood education advocates</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>+51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National early childhood education advocates</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>+51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q21. Here is a list of people and organizations that take positions on issues related to funding for early childhood education. Please tell me if you would generally trust each person or organization’s opinion on this issue, or if you would be suspicious of it.
Ten Key Takeaways
Ten Key Takeaways

1. Voters are convinced of the value of early education, and believe it will provide a wide range of benefits for the public.

2. Voters value early educators and their work highly, and believe that they are underpaid.

3. At the same time, there are information gaps – most voters do not recognize just how little educators are paid, nor that many are full-time and committed to early education as a career.

4. A love of working with children and a desire to help them succeed are the primary motivators for early childhood educators to work in the field – and is at the root of the most effective messages to encourage them to stay in the field.

5. Most educators would like to continue a career in the field for the foreseeable future – but not all are sure that they will be able to.
Ten Key Takeaways (Cont.)

6. Low pay and benefits are far and away the major obstacle to the recruitment and retention of early educators.

7. Secondarily, there is also a sense among educators that the profession is not respected or appreciated to the degree it should be.

8. Voters strongly support additional investment in early childhood education – and are every bit as supportive when they know that money will fund competitive wages.

9. Messaging around brain development; the importance of educators as role models; and ensuring readiness for K-12 education are the best reasons to support increased compensation for educators.

10. The data show teachers, parents of young children, and academic experts on child development are highly trusted.
NAEYC’s Commitment
Vision Statement

All young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.
Mission Statement

NAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.
The Profession

The early childhood education profession exemplifies excellence and is recognized as vital and performing a critical role in society.
A Three-Pronged Approach

The Image of the Profession

Defining and Growing the Profession

Investing in the Profession