



The Massachusetts

Career Ladder & Early Educator Compensation Reform



The Bessie Tartt Wilson
Initiative for Children

May 2013, Kira Taj, MPH

BTWIC Trustees

Gail Kirk
Chairperson

Maureen Alphonse-Charles
Vice Chairperson

George M. Coulter
Treasurer

Jed Swan
Clerk/Secretary

Phyllis B. Cater

Wanda Geer

Robert Greenwald, Esq.

Mary Lassen

Dawn Perry, Esq.

Jessica Parker Battle, Esq.

Charles A. Rizzo

John M. Scully

Tyra Sidberry

Atul Varma

Wayne Ysaguirre

Mary Reed
ex-officio

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Acknowledgements | ii |
| Glossary | iii |
| Executive Summary | iv |
| Introduction | 1 |
| What is a Career Ladder and Where are Career Ladders Being Used? | 2 |
| The Massachusetts Career Ladder | 3 |
| Salary Analysis and the Career Ladder | 5 |
| Salary Data | 7 |
| Conclusion and Recommendations | 10 |
| APPENDIX A | 11 |
| APPENDIX B | 14 |

Table of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1A: Median Salary Range of Early Educators in Massachusetts, by Type of Early Education Setting | iv |
| Figure 1B: Median Salary Range of Early Educators in Massachusetts, by Type of Early Education Setting and Educational Level | 7 |
| Figure 2. Highest Educational Level of Center-Based Early Educators Analyzed | 8 |
| Figure 3. Median Annual Salaries of Early Educators Employed by Private Early Education Centers in Massachusetts | 8 |
| Figure 4. Comparative Median Annual Salary Data, Selected Occupations in Massachusetts | 9 |

Acknowledgements

The Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children would like to thank the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care for its collaboration on this work. Katie DeVita, Phil Baimas, and Sherri Killins were true partners throughout every step of the project. A special thanks to the thousands of early childhood educators in Massachusetts who have taken time out of their busy days to enter information into the Professional Qualifications (PQ) Registry, the source of data for this report.

BTWIC would also like to thank its generous funders for their commitment to supporting early childhood education in Massachusetts:

Barr Foundation

Blue Cross Blue Shield

BNY Mellon

The Boston Foundation

Cabot Family Charitable Trust

Citizens Bank

John Hancock Financial Services

Mabel Louise Riley Foundation

State Street Foundation

W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation

Additionally, BTWIC is grateful for donations from other corporations and individuals who share our interest in supporting accessible, high-quality early education for children in Massachusetts.

Glossary

Business Administration Scale (BAS): A tool utilized as part of the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System that measures the overall quality of business and professional practices in family child care settings.

Career Ladder: A structure that defines levels of professionalism in a particular field of work.

Department of Early Education and Care (EEC): The state agency overseeing early education and care and after-school services for families in Massachusetts.

Professional Qualifications (PQ) Registry: A statewide database of individuals working in the early education field in Massachusetts. The Registry is overseen by the EEC and gathers important information on the size, composition, education, and experience of the current workforce.

Program Administration Scale (PAS): A tool utilized as part of the Massachusetts QRIS that measures the overall quality of administrative practices of early education center-based programs.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS): A method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and after-school settings. QRIS are similar to other consumer rating systems, in that they “rate” goods or services to provide customers with a better understanding about the quality of that item. The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) formally began developing a QRIS during the spring of 2008.



Executive Summary

Early educator compensation levels are central to recruiting and retaining highly qualified educators in Massachusetts. Inherent in the Department of Early Education and Care’s (EEC) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), the Program Administration Scale (PAS), and the Business Administration Scale (BAS) is a commitment to evaluating and aligning educator salary levels with increased professional development. The Massachusetts Career Ladder and data from the Professional Qualifications Registry provide an important backdrop.

The Massachusetts Career Ladder

In 2010, the Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children (BTWIC) collaborated with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to create a career ladder for early educators. The Massachusetts Career Ladder, endorsed by the EEC Board in May 2011, articulates pathways of professional advancement. The ladder currently serves as a resource for educators and programs throughout the state and was cited in the federal Race to the Top — Early Learning Challenge grant as a strategy aligned with improving early educator compensation and professional development.

Salary Data from the Professional Qualifications Registry

BTWIC analyzed salary data from the EEC’s Professional Qualifications Registry (PQ Registry) in 2012 in order to understand baseline salary data for early educators in the state. The median annual salary for center-based early educators is below the average salary of workers in comparable fields and below the economic independence standard for Massachusetts (see Figure 1A). BTWIC also found that the median salary is the same for educators in privately-owned centers as compared to non-profit centers.

Figure 1A: Median Salary Range of Early Educators in Massachusetts, by Type of Early Education Setting

| Center-Based Median Annual Salary(1) | Center-Based number of records analyzed | Family Child Care Median Annual Salary(2) | Family Child Care number of records analyzed | Average salary of comparable fields in MA(3) | MA Economic Independence Level for a single individual/ single parent with one pre-school child(4) |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 7,041 | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 2,091 | \$27,978 | \$28,500 \$51,384 |

Sources: EEC Professional Qualifications Registry as of August 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011, and Crittenton Women’s Union’s Economic Independence Calculator 2013. See Appendix A for full methodology.

Recommendations

The Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children recommends that the Department of Early Education and Care:

1. Continues to keep early educator compensation as a top priority
2. Explores strategies for improving the completeness and accuracy of PQ Registry data
3. Summarizes salary data from the PQ Registry every two years and releases reports to the public
4. Pursues innovative strategies to increase early educator compensation for high-quality educators

Introduction

The work of an early childhood educator is of critical importance. The rapid brain development that occurs during the first five years of life is shaped significantly by early experiences and relationships with responsive caregivers. Early educators—who work with young children in preschool programs, child care centers, and in their homes—are key players in the developmental process.

Mounting scientific evidence about the relationship between responsive educators and early brain development has accentuated the importance of hiring well-trained early educators. The training and educational level of educators is now a well-recognized component of overall program quality, whether it is reflected in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) or accreditation standards. Nationally, as well as in the state of Massachusetts, there are increased efforts to recruit and retain educators with Associate's or Bachelor's degrees in the field. For example, Level Two of the QRIS in Massachusetts requires at least fifty percent of classrooms at a center to be staffed by an educator with a Bachelor's degree.¹

In spite of the crucial role of educators and increasing expectations for professional training, in Massachusetts the average annual salary of an early educator is less than \$26,500.² Early education programs often lack the ability to compensate early educators for higher educational attainment without increasing family tuition or securing supplemental funding. Educators with additional competencies are therefore not necessarily paid more than less well-trained educators.

Level Three of the Massachusetts QRIS for center-based programs mandates that “staff salary scales reflect the educational levels, experience and performance levels...and are comparable with the current wage level of others in the community with the same levels of education.” Level Four, for both center-based programs and family child care settings, requires that educators have an incentive program that rewards them for achieving the next step of the Massachusetts career ladder. The associated measurement tools, the Program Administration Scale (PAS) and the Business Administration Scale (BAS), measure the frequency of staff salary increases and the degree to which program salary scales reflect levels of education and training. However, these requirements and measurement tools must be informed by data on the current salary levels of early educators in Massachusetts and the salary levels of comparable sectors in the state.

As a voice for the early education workforce, the Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children (BTWIC) has focused on educator compensation as a core issue affecting the quality of early education in Massachusetts. One of its key initiatives has been the development of a career ladder for the early education field. This report summarizes BTWIC's work on the career ladder and the related analysis of salary levels in the state.

What is a Career Ladder and Where are Career Ladders Being Used?

A career ladder, or career lattice, is a structure that defines levels of professionalism in a particular field of work. Ladders are meant to demonstrate pathways of professional upward mobility, outlining responsibilities and credentials appropriate for each level. In recent years, many states have developed career ladders for early educators, and several states have begun offering stipends to educators as they climb the career ladder. Three states with carefully constructed career ladders and stipend programs are Washington, North Carolina, and Oklahoma.

The Washington State Career Lattice has fifteen levels based on five core competency levels, and five “education mastery” categories. Beginning in 2013, an 18-month pilot program deriving from Washington’s Race To The Top — Early Learning Challenge professional development plan will award early educators who register with the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT) and make progress to a higher level on the career ladder by 2015. Awards range between \$100 and \$500.³ Washington’s newest pilot follows an earlier Child Care Career and Wage Ladder Pilot Project which, before it was discontinued, found a correlation between higher levels of education and workforce retention.⁴

North Carolina’s Child Care WAGE\$ Project provides supplements to early educators based on educational attainment. The WAGE\$ Project is informed by research that shows that teacher quality is directly connected to educational level, higher compensation, and stability. It has demonstrated reductions in turnover rates and increases in educational attainment over the past ten years.⁵ The annual award is distributed in two installments to teachers who remain at the same program and engage in educational coursework. The North Carolina system is based on thirteen educational levels and five tiers, with stipends ranging from \$450-\$6,250 for teachers and family child care providers, and \$300-\$4,680 for center directors. The average six month supplement in 2011 was \$815.⁶

The Oklahoma Registry Professional Development Ladder has ten levels based on education and training. The REWARD Oklahoma program provides annual stipends ranging from \$400-\$1,500. The program has been in place since 2001 and the amount of the stipends was reduced in 2011 due to funding issues. There is a time limit for an individual to receive stipends at each level (except level ten) and only educators working 30 hours or more and earning \$15.50/hour or less are eligible. Participating programs must meet quality ratings and accept subsidies.⁷

These examples demonstrate the feasibility of pilot or statewide initiatives to provide wage supplements to early educators. Clearly, these efforts require monitoring and evaluation to correctly analyze their impact on the field. In addition, some states have been able to direct federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding to cover the salary supplements and/or the administrative costs. Massachusetts should consider this approach if it has not already.

The Massachusetts Career Ladder

The Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children is an advocacy organization in Massachusetts focused on quality early education and care for the state's most vulnerable children. During the research period of BTWIC's first large-scale advocacy initiative examining the child care voucher subsidy system in Massachusetts, many issues related to the early education workforce became apparent. Through town hall meetings and focus groups with early educators and administrators throughout the state, BTWIC learned that compensation was the number one challenge for the field. BTWIC formed a Task Force of individuals in 2009 to discuss potential solutions for improving early educator compensation in the state. After six months of discussion and research, four recommendations were proposed. The first was for Massachusetts to develop a career ladder for early education professionals. This and the three accompanying recommendations were released in BTWIC's 2010 report, *Blueprint for Early Education Compensation Reform*.

The creation of a career ladder for early educators was also a priority of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) as part of its effort to support professional development. Before 2010, EEC had tried unsuccessfully to develop a career ladder, running into difficulties due to the diversity of settings and issues at stake for educators with varying levels of education and experience in the field. In 2010, the Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children began collaborating with the EEC to try again to develop a career ladder for the state. The team brought together key stakeholders to create a ladder with multiple pathways that merges core competencies, education, and experience levels and can be applied across all types of settings. The ladder was shared with over 400 educators and administrators through a statewide survey. Feedback was positive and educators agreed that the career ladder would be a valuable contribution to the field.

The career ladder for Massachusetts articulates pathways in which increasing responsibility aligns with greater knowledge and skills, leading to professional advancement. It has multiple entry points and defines multiple pathways, blending education and experience for professional

growth and movement so that there is no single “right” path to move up the ladder. The ladder is a single document designed for all sectors of the early education workforce, including center-based educators, family child care providers, and out-of-school time educators. It is comprised of five levels, from entry level to leadership level. (See Appendix B for the entire ladder.) The ladder is distinct from but compatible with requirements in the QRIS.

The career ladder for Massachusetts was created with the following set of guiding principles:⁸

- Quality is important at every level of the ladder.
- Competency can be attained through alternative qualifications, not only by completing a degree.
- All sectors of the field and the workforce are valued. Everyone must be able to recognize themselves in the ladder.
- The early education field is not a dead end; there are opportunities for professional growth.
- Reflective practice and lifelong learning are key to professional growth.
- Professional development requires peer support and networks to be successful.

In May 2011, the Massachusetts Board of Early Education and Care endorsed the career ladder. Use of the ladder is not mandated, rather it is meant to serve as a resource. Its purpose is to serve as a template so that programs can develop career ladders specific to their own sites, to plan professional development activities for different levels of responsibility, and to aid supervisors and directors as they guide and mentor staff.

Massachusetts was one of nine states to receive federal funding in 2012 as part of the federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant program. The career ladder BTWIC helped design was cited several times in the state application as being important to workforce development and compensation initiatives planned over the next few years.⁹

Salary Analysis and the Career Ladder

BTWIC's ultimate goal of establishing a career ladder for Massachusetts was to create a professional development structure that is tied to increased salary levels. Compensation increases would encourage early educators to progress up the career ladder to a higher professional level and would help the field retain highly qualified educators. There is currently a lack of incentives for early educators to obtain more training and education if they are not rewarded with a higher level of compensation.

The Department of Early Education and Care recognizes the importance of addressing salary levels for early educators. The Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) specifically speaks to the issue of career development and salary levels, particularly in Levels Three and Four. Level Four center-based programs, for example, are required to have an “incentive program that rewards

From 2011-2012, BTWIC analyzed wage data from the EEC's Professional Qualifications (PQ) Registry in order to provide baseline data on average wage levels of early educators across the state. This data makes it possible to examine the gap between early educator salaries and wage levels in Massachusetts for workers with similar educational backgrounds, setting the context for a discussion on compensation increases that could be connected to initiatives such as the career ladder.

each educator that achieves the next step on the career ladder.”¹⁰ Both the Program Administration Scale (PAS) and the Business Administration Scale (BAS)—two tools central to the QRIS—address the issue of educator compensation. The high-end goals set forth, however, require substantial financial resources as well as an understanding of baseline salary levels of educators in programs across the state.

The PQ Registry was developed by the Department of Early Education and Care in 2010 to collect data on the early education workforce in Massachusetts. All early educators and workforce members are now required to create and maintain a profile in the PQ Registry that includes information about their training, educational

background, and salary level. All information is self-reported. The Registry is an invaluable resource because it gathers information on early educator salaries and education levels in one central database for the first time in Massachusetts. At the same time, the Registry is relatively new and remains a work in progress. Although over 60,000 records have been created in the Registry, many individuals left the salary field blank or entered a value of \$0. BTWIC cleaned this salary data and analyzed approximately 10,000 records to get baseline data on wage levels. (See Appendix A for full notes on the methodology).

BTWIC presented its first salary analysis to the Fiscal Committee of the Massachusetts Board of Early Education and Care in December 2011. Included in the presentation were median salary levels according to program type, as well as suggested per-hour wage increases for each level of the ladder. (BTWIC's presentation included wage data and suggestions for out-of-school time educators, but the smaller sample size and varying number of hours of employment per week made it difficult for this sector to be included in subsequent analyses.) The Fiscal Committee requested additional analyses and expressed concern about comparing wages of early educators to the general market wage of workers in Massachusetts with similar levels of education because industries can vary widely. The committee also requested a comparison of the wages of educators in non-profit early education settings with educators in for-profit centers.

BTWIC subsequently analyzed updated salary data from the PQ Registry, taking into account the comparison challenges and exploring the additional pieces of data requested.



Salary Data

Data from the PQ Registry as of August 2012 shows that the median annual salary for center-based early educators in Massachusetts is between \$22,501 and \$25,000. For family child care providers, it was reported to be slightly higher, between \$25,001 and \$27,500 (see Figure 1B). Salary levels for educators and providers rise slightly as educational attainment increases, however they remain below the average salary of workers in comparable sectors in Massachusetts. Furthermore, the median annual salary of early educators in center-based settings is less than the real cost of living; an estimated annual salary of \$28,500 is needed to live in Massachusetts as a single adult without the use of public assistance.¹¹ The PQ Registry data therefore shows that at least half of the center-based early educators in Massachusetts are not making a self-sufficient living in terms of their salary alone.

Figure 1B:
Median Salary Range of Early Educators in Massachusetts, by Type of Early Education Setting and Educational Level

| Overall Median Salary Range, by Type of Setting | Center-Based Median Annual Salary (1) | Center-Based number of records | Family Child Care Median Annual Salary (2) | Family Child Care number of records | Average salary of comparable sectors in MA (3) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 7,041 | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 2,091 | \$27,978 |

| By Education Level | Center-Based Median Annual Salary (1) | Center-Based number of records | Family Child Care Median Annual Salary (2) | Family Child Care number of records |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Not high school graduate | \$20,001 - \$22,500 | 73 | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 142 |
| High school graduate/GED | \$17,501 - \$20,000 | 1,091 | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 661 |
| Child Development Associate (CDA) | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 173 | \$27,501 - \$30,000 | 144 |
| Some college (no degree) | \$20,001 - \$22,500 | 1,967 | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 419 |
| Associate's degree | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 1,266 | \$27,501 - \$30,000 | 258 |
| Bachelor's degree | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 1,924 | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 336 |
| Graduate or professional degree | \$27,501 - \$30,000 | 461 | \$27,501 - \$30,000 | 112 |
| Totals | | 6,955 | | 2,072 |

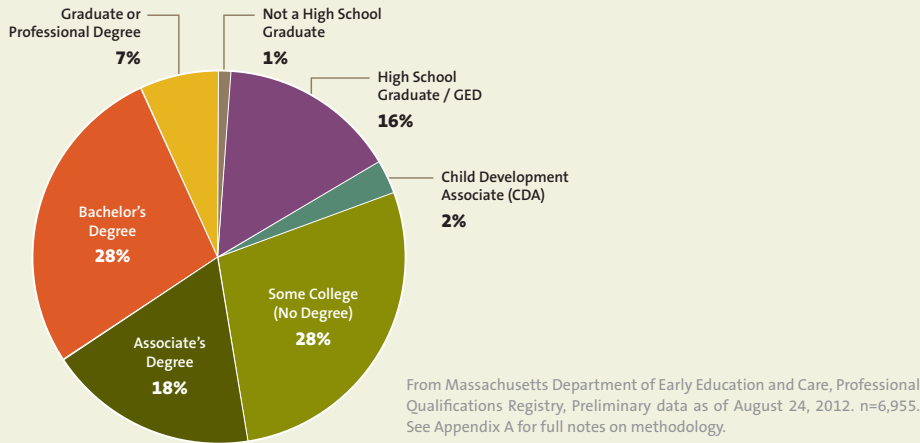
Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry Preliminary Data as of August 24, 2012. See Appendix A for full notes on methodology.

(1) Center-Based settings include the PQ Registry program type categories of Group Child Care, Head Start, and Early Intervention.

(2) Family child care settings include the PQ Registry program type categories of Family child care and Family child care system.

(3) Source: BTWIC calculations, based on four occupations: nursing aides, human service assistants, teacher assistants, and home health aides. Bureau of Labor Statistics. May 2011 Massachusetts Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.

Figure 2. Highest Educational Level of Center-Based Early Educators Analyzed



A sub-analysis compared the median salary of early educators working in private multi-site centers with that of educators working in non-profit centers. BTWIC found the salary levels to be the same. The median annual salary of educators working for private providers also ranges from \$22,501 to \$25,000 (see Figure 3). Salary ranges are especially flat throughout all educational levels, with the median salary for educators in private settings with Bachelor's degrees the same as that of their colleagues with some college and no degree.

Figure 3. Median Annual Salaries of Early Educators Employed by Private Early Education Centers in Massachusetts

| Overall Median Salary Range | Private Chains Median Annual Salary (1) | Number of Records Analyzed |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 1,020 |
| By Education Level | Private Chains Median Annual Salary (1) | Number of Records Analyzed |
| Not high school graduate | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 9 |
| High school graduate/GED | \$20,001 - \$22,500 | 179 |
| Child Development Associate (CDA) | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 16 |
| Some college (no degree) | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 297 |
| Associate's degree | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 143 |
| Bachelor's degree | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 319 |
| Graduate or professional degree | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 40 |
| Totals | | 1,003 |

From Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry Preliminary Data, as of August 24, 2012. See Appendix A for notes on methodology.

BTWIC also used data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to compare early educator median salary ranges with other occupations and sectors in Massachusetts. Figure 4 shows that the wages of center-based early educators in the state are comparable to wages of taxi drivers and individuals in the retail sector.

Figure 4. Comparative Median Annual Salary Data, Selected Occupations in Massachusetts

| Occupational Category | Annual Median Salary | Approximate Employment |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| Kindergarten Teachers | \$57,630* | 3,780 |
| Child, Family, and School Social Workers | \$43,534 | 9,730 |
| Office and Administrative Support Workers | \$34,216 | 1,970 |
| Educators in Public Preschools | \$30,001 - \$32,500 | 3,083 |
| Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants | \$28,475 | 40,280 |
| Social and Human Service Assistants | \$28,392 | 16,510 |
| Teacher Assistants | \$28,360* | 34,100 |
| Home Health Aides | \$26,686 | 19,010 |
| Family Child Care Providers | \$25,001 - \$27,500 | 7,376 |
| Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners | \$25,646 | 14,640 |
| Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs | \$25,334 | 7,310 |
| Early Educators in Center-Based Programs | \$22,501 - \$25,000 | 33,383 |
| Retail Salespersons | \$22,214 | 108,670 |

Sources:

1) Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2011 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for the state of Massachusetts. Available online: http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ma.htm The Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational data reports only median hourly wages. Hourly wages were multiplied by 2,080 hours (based on 40 hours work week) to calculate the annual median salary.

*Figure is the mean (not median) salary - the only data available from Bureau of Labor Statistics for these occupations. For "kindergarten teachers," excludes teachers in special education classes.

2) For the three categories shaded in purple: Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry data as of August 24, 2012. See Appendix A for full notes on methodology.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children, in collaboration with the Department of Early Education and Care, created a career ladder for early educators with the aim of articulating a professional pathway for all early educators. Salary data from the EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry enabled BTWIC to gather baseline data on current wage levels of early educators in the state, setting the context for a discussion about current compensation levels.

The median salary of center-based early educators in the state is between \$22,501 and \$25,000, which is below the average salary of comparable fields in Massachusetts as well as below the economic independence standard for a single adult. The state of Massachusetts must increase its investment in the early childhood education workforce if it is to recruit and retain well-qualified early educators and attain its goal of providing high-quality care to young children.

The state of Massachusetts must increase its investment in the early childhood education workforce if it is to recruit and retain well-qualified early educators and attain its goal of providing high-quality care to young children.

Early education in Massachusetts has experienced a sea change in the last five years, with the advent of the Quality Rating and Improvement System and the influx of federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge dollars. However, early education providers and programs are still struggling financially and lack the resources to increase pay for their staff. Families themselves are struggling to pay for the high cost of care and cannot afford additional tuition to support pay increases.

The Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children recommends the following:

1. The EEC should maintain its commitment to early educator compensation as a top priority. The effectiveness of other quality efforts will suffer if compensation is not also addressed.
2. The EEC should explore strategies for improving the completeness and accuracy of PQ Registry data, specifically the salary field.
3. The EEC should release reports every two years that summarize PQ Registry data. This would arm early educators, advocates, and the public with important data on the state of early educator compensation.
4. The EEC should pursue innovative ways of increasing early educator salary levels for high-quality educators—through the career ladder, raising the reimbursement rate, QRIS grants, and/or other strategies.

The EEC and the state of Massachusetts must ensure that early educators have adequate financial incentives to attain a higher level of professionalism. Innovative strategies to support the early education workforce have the potential to elevate Massachusetts as a national leader for early education workforce reform. Without such efforts, the quality of early childhood education in the state will inevitably suffer.

APPENDIX A

Methodology

Figure 1A & B. Median Annual Salaries of Early Educators in Massachusetts

From Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry Preliminary Data, as of August 24, 2012. Salaries were reported by educators and employers themselves, in the form of salary ranges. 60,886 records were in the Registry as of August 24, 2012. From this number, individuals working less than 30 hours a week were excluded (18,395 records). Then, records with blank salary data were deleted (23,592). Salaries of less than \$10,001 and greater than \$100,000 were excluded (5,332 records). The program categories of “other,” “residential and placement,” and “school-aged care” were then deleted (2,016). Lastly, individuals with a title such as Program Administrator, Director, Site Coordinator, Consultant, Custodial, Education Coordinator, Food services, Kindergarten Coordinator, Transportation, or Developmental Specialist were excluded (1,751), in order to retain records representative of teaching staff in early education. After excluding these categories, the original 60,886 records were reduced to 9,800. The 9,800 records were split into three categories: center-based (7,041), family child care (2,091), and public preschool (668).

(1) Center-Based settings include the PQ Registry program type categories of Group Child Care, Head Start, and Early Intervention.

(2) Family child care settings include the PQ Registry program type categories of Family child care and Family child care system.

(3) BTWIC calculations—the average of the median salaries of four occupational categories: “Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants,” “Social and Human Service Assistants,” “Teacher Assistants,” and “Home Health Aides.” Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. May 2011 Massachusetts Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.

(4) Source: Crittenton Women’s Union. Economic Independence Calculator, 2013. The \$28,500 figure is for an individual to live in Massachusetts without the use of government subsidies, and \$51,384 for a single parent of one preschool-age child. Available online and accessed February 28, 2013: http://www.liveworkthrive.org/research_and_tools/economic_independence_calculator

The PQ Registry categories of “high school graduate” and “GED” were combined into one category for the educational analysis.

Figure 2. Highest Educational Level of Center-Based Early Educators Analyzed

Includes the 6,955 center-based early educator records detailed in Figure 1B. These are early educators with wage records in the Professional Qualifications Registry. Center-based settings include the PQ Registry program type categories of Group Child Care, Head Start, and Early Intervention. The educational categories of “high school graduate” and “GED” were combined into one category for this analysis.

Figure 3. Median Annual Salaries of Early Educators employed by private early education centers in Massachusetts

From Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry Preliminary Data, as of August 24, 2012. Salaries were reported by educators and employers themselves, in the form of salary ranges. 60,886 records were in the Registry as of August 24, 2012. From this number, individuals working less than 30 hours a week were excluded (18,395 records). Then, records with blank salary data were deleted (23,592). Salaries of less than \$10,001 and greater than \$100,000 were excluded (5,332 records). The employee types of “volunteer,” “contractor,” “owner/licensee,” and “intern” were then deleted (1,525). The program type “family child care settings,” “public preschool,” “residential and placement,” “school-aged care,” and “other” were deleted (3,699). Only the nine private chains with 50 or more staff records with salary data in the PQ Registry (1,176 educators in total) were kept. Then, individuals with a title such as Program Administrator, Director, Site Coordinator, Consultant, Custodial, Education Coordinator, Food services, Kindergarten Coordinator, Transportation, or Developmental Specialist were excluded (156), in order to retain records representative of teaching staff in early education. After excluding these categories, the original 60,886 records were reduced to 1,020.

The PQ Registry categories of “high school graduate” and “GED” were combined into one category for this analysis.

Figure 4. Comparative Median Annual Salary Data, Selected Occupations in Massachusetts

Sources:

1) Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2011 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for the state of Massachusetts. Available online: http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ma.htm The Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational data reports only median hourly wages. Hourly wages were multiplied by 2,080 hours (based on 40 hours work week) to calculate the median yearly salary.

**Figure is the mean (not median) salary for kindergarten teachers and teacher assistants- the only data available from Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Kindergarten teachers" excludes teachers in special education classes.*

2) For the three categories shaded in purple: Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Professional Qualifications Registry data as of August 24, 2012. Salary data in the EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry is in the form of median annual salary ranges. Salary data based on 668 records from public preschool educators, 7,041 records from educators in center-based settings, and 2,091 records from family child care providers. "Early educators in center-based programs" excludes public preschool settings. The approximate number of individuals employed in each category was calculated by taking the proportion of educators with the identified program types in the dataset (n=31,960) and applying each category's proportion to an estimated total number of 60,000 early educators in the state of Massachusetts.



APPENDIX B

*The EEC Career Ladder for Family Child Care Homes and Center-based Early Education and Out of School Time Programs*¹²

The Path to a Career Ladder

Context

EEC has long recognized the need for a career ladder (or lattice) to define professional growth in early education and out of school time and its potential to remedy the inadequate compensation of educators in our field. The development of a career ladder is in the agency's enabling legislation and has been advanced by recommendations of the 2008 Workforce Development Task Force in its report, "Steps Forward," work by the Professional Development Workgroup of EEC's Advisory, as well as ad-hoc work groups on the issues affecting family child care and school age child care in this regard. Most recently, the Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children (BTWIC) released its "Blueprint for Early Education Compensation Reform" in September 2010. First among the report's recommendations is the development of a career lattice. EEC and BTWIC partnered on this common goal.

Common Goal

The goal was to develop a single career ladder that is applicable across settings in EEC's mixed delivery system. The ladder is focused on educators working directly with children and those who are responsible for their professional development and the development of curriculum. It does not include staff whose jobs are primarily administrative or fiscal. The ladder addresses levels of responsibility (job functions) and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to execute these functions. Although the ladder may eventually be integrated into QRIS standards or licensing regulations, it was not initially drafted to align to these standards and regulations.

Programs are not required to use this initial career ladder.

This initiative is not intended to produce the final, finished career ladder for our field. The goal was to create an initial career ladder that is relevant to educators in all early education and out of school time settings, that can form the basis for discussion by stakeholders, and that leads to a more finished ladder that is acceptable to the field.

An Inclusive Development Process

October 2010

- Developed an initial career ladder for internal review

November to December 2010

- Convened two small external focus groups to provide feedback on the career ladder
- Revised ladder to incorporate applicable feedback

January to February 2011

- Presentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee of EEC Board
- Launched online survey of educators in the Professional Qualifications Registry

March to April 2011

- Analyzed survey results: 439 individuals responded. 96% (301) indicated general approval of the Ladder
- Updated Planning and Evaluation Committee

May 2011

- Endorsed by the EEC Board

The following summarizes previous work by EEC with stakeholders on the development of a career ladder.

Definition

“A career ladder (lattice) should support and value our ECE/OST workforce and recognize that a diverse workforce is essential for a quality ECE/OST system that yields positive outcomes for every child and family. A career ladder has multiple entry points and clearly defines multiple pathways for professional growth and movement.”

Guiding Principles

- **Quality** is important at every level of the ladder.
- “**You are competent**” even if you have alternative qualifications instead of a degree.
- **All sectors of the field and the workforce are valued.** Everyone must recognize themselves in the ladder.
- **Our field is not a dead end;** there are opportunities for professional growth.
- **Lifelong learning** and professional growth does not necessarily mean pursuing a degree.
- **Reflective practice** is key to professional growth.
- Professional development requires **peer support and networking.**

What are the characteristics of a career ladder?

1. The Career Ladder must:

- Focus on the individual educator (as opposed to QRIS which is program-focused)
- Include alternative pathways beyond degree attainment
- Be comprehensive but comprehensible — simple to use and understand
- Define learning outcomes (competencies)
- Include equivalencies for different levels of professional development, like in-service training and credit for prior learning
- Be an integrated component of the workforce development system.

2. The Career Ladder should:

- Define a pathway for ECE/OST educators that illustrates the next step in professional growth
- Identify common professional development needs
- Be a template for mapping the workforce development system
- Recognize an educator’s increasing competency with compensation
- Link college courses to EEC core competencies to frame collaboration with higher education.

3. The Career Ladder must connect with:

- EEC QRIS, Core Competencies, Regulations, and related EEC initiatives
- Current research
- Improved outcomes for children and youth
- A system of measurement

EEC is not mandating the use of this Career Ladder by early education and OST programs. Many programs already have a ladder that meets their needs. This ladder is intended as:

A resource across EEC's mixed delivery system that:

- Articulates how increasing responsibility aligns with greater knowledge and skills (competency) and professional advancement;
- Establishes a common starting point for work on more refined pathways like a career lattice;
- Provides a frame to address compensation and other broad issues that affect our entire workforce.

A reference that programs and educators can use to:

- Develop a career ladder that is specific to their program;
- Assess and improve a ladder that already exists;
- Map intentional professional growth for educators;
- Plan professional development for different levels of responsibility;
- Aid supervisors and directors as they guide and mentor staff.

Important notes:

1. This basic first version is a common starting point to build upon. It will evolve and develop as educators gain experience with it and grow professionally.
2. This ladder includes only educators who work directly with children and families and supervisory positions that support the professional development of other educators. It does not address administrative functions or other positions.
3. Position Titles and Certifications have been omitted intentionally at this stage of the ladder's development. The goal is to define responsibilities that cut across early education and out of school time settings rather than tying these and other elements to an identified position or credential.
4. Educators can enter the ladder at any level that they qualify for whether they work in a home-based or center-based setting.
5. The responsibilities identified at each level may look different in different types of care but they require the same underlying skills. An educator at the Leadership Level in center-based care is likely to provide other educators in the program with formal supervision. Her Leadership Level counterpart in family child care may fulfill these same responsibilities in the context of a family child care system or educator support group.
6. Although this ladder reflects some licensing requirements and some QRIS standards, it is not intended to align with either of these.



| EEC Core Competency Areas | | 3. Partnering with Families and Communities | 6. Observation, Assessment, and Documentation |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth | | 4. Health, Safety, and Nutrition | 7. Program Planning and Development |
| 2. Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth | | 5. Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum | 8. Professionalism and Leadership |

| Beginning (Entry) Level | RESPONSIBILITIES | EDUCATION | EXPERIENCE | IN-SERVICE TRAINING | CONTINUING EDUCATION |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not responsible for children without direct supervision Assists more qualified educator with activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 years old and in HS OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 years old | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal experience in early education or out of school time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEC orientation PQ Registry IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to increase competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements an IPDP with supervisor that includes child development (competency area 1) AND working on HS or GED and/or working on ABE/ESOL |

| Novice Level | RESPONSIBILITIES | EDUCATION | EXPERIENCE | IN-SERVICE TRAINING | CONTINUING EDUCATION |
|--------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for a small group of children Seeks and receives peer and supervisory support Works under supervision in center-based settings Plans and leads small group activities Supports each child's well-being | Vocational HS diploma in ECE | None in addition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQ Registry IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to increase competency Meets regularly with supervisor and/or peers and reflects on practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursuing CDA or certificate in a specific age group or setting OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursuing a degree in ECE or related field using GED, ABE, ESOL, Ability to Benefit (ATB) or Accuplacer as needed OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled in child development for 3 credits or 4 CEUs (comp. area 1) AND 30 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 hrs. in competency areas 1,2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 |
| | | HS/GED AND 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) | 9 mos. in early education or out of school time | | |
| | | 30+ hrs. in competency areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 | 9 mos. in early education or out of school time | | |
| | | 5+ hours of EEC required orientation | 12 mos. in early education or out of school time OR 18 mos. parenting experience (FCC only) | | |

| Independent Level | RESPONSIBILITIES | EDUCATION | EXPERIENCE | IN-SERVICE TRAINING | CONTINUING EDUCATION |
|-------------------|--|--|---|--|---|
| | Independently responsible for a group of children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and implements specific activities within a defined curriculum. May lead or guide other educators, volunteers, or staff during activities Individualizes activities for children Models appropriate behaviors and techniques | CDA | 12 mos. in early education or out of school time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to enhance competency Meets regularly with supervisor and/or peers and reflects on practice | Continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and PQ Registry including either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursuing associates or higher degree in ECE or related field and/or certificate for a specific age group/setting OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) AND 90 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 |
| | | HS/GED or higher AND 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) AND 30 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 | | | |
| | | 60+ hrs. in competency areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 | 24-36 mos. in early education or out of school time | | |

| Supervisory Level | RESPONSIBILITIES | EDUCATION | EXPERIENCE | IN-SERVICE TRAINING | CONTINUING EDUCATION |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| | Responsible for one or more groups of children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and implements activities Consults with, supervises, and guides educators at Beginning, Novice, and Independent Levels towards continuous improvement using evidence-based models and techniques Mentors educators and peers to support their professional growth Evaluates educators at Beginning, Novice, and Independent Levels Models appropriate behaviors and techniques | Associates or higher in ECE or related field AND 30 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | 24+ mos. in early education or out of school time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses personal IPDP to exceed annual training requirements and to enhance competency Meets with staff regularly to give feedback, guidance, and encourage reflective practice | Continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and PQ Registry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current knowledge across 8 competency areas. Pursuing higher degree in ECE or related field Specialization in an area (special needs, infant care, assessment, literacy, etc.) Maintain certifications, credentials, licenses AND 30 hrs. in competency areas 7 and 8 |
| | | Unrelated Associates or higher AND 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) AND 30 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 AND 30 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | 36+ mos. in early education or out of school time | | |
| | | 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) AND 90 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 AND 30 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | 48+ mos. in early education or out of school time | | |

| Leadership Level | RESPONSIBILITIES | EDUCATION | EXPERIENCE | IN-SERVICE TRAINING | CONTINUING EDUCATION |
|------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| | Responsible for a program or a component of a program. • Develops curriculum and supervises its implementation • Supervises and evaluates multiple Levels of staff • Provides leadership, inspiration and motivation to a network or peer group • Guides educators towards continuous improvement using evidence based models and techniques • Develops and conducts professional development for staff and peers • Mentors educators and peers to support their professional growth • Reviews data to assess progress and to individualize instruction | Bachelors or higher in ECE or related field AND 60 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | 48+ mos. in early education or out of school time | • Uses personal IPDP to exceed annual training requirements and to enhance competency • Develops and provided in-service training for educators and peers • Meets with staff regularly to give feedback , guidance, and encourage reflective practice | Continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and PQ Registry • Current knowledge across 8 competency areas. • Specialization in area(s) (special needs, infant care, assessment, literacy etc.) • Maintain certifications, credentials, licenses • May pursue higher degree |
| | | Associates in ECE or related field AND 60 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | | | |
| | | Unrelated Bachelors or higher AND 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development (comp area 1) AND 30 hrs. in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 AND 60 hrs. in comp. areas 7 and 8 | 60+ mos. in early education or out of school time | | |

Professional Development as Defined in this Ladder

- Education results in college credits approved CEUs, recognized credentials or equivalents.
- Competency based training includes theory, practice, observation, and reflection.
- Competency based training is measured in contact hours.
- Related degrees or certificates may include competency development in the specified areas. If the degree or certificate is unrelated, competency development in these areas is required in addition to the degree or certificate.

Continuing Education: Professional development that advances an educator’s professional growth with the intent of helping the educator move up the ladder.

Experience: Providing direct care and instruction to children during all types of program activities for a minimum of 12 hours per week. Qualifying experience includes regular observation by, and consultation with, a more qualified educator from the Independent Level or above. Observations and consultations must be recorded in the educator’s IPDP.

IPDP is an Individual Professional Development Plan. An IPDP is used to plan and record an educator’s professional growth.

In-service Training: Intentional, on-going professional development and training to meet established requirements and to increase competency within a given level of responsibility. Often includes ongoing, formative observation and feedback by a supervisor or qualified peer. At a minimum, in-service must meet the number of hours required by the EEC regulations.

Mentoring: Activities by which a more experienced educator guides and supports the professional growth of another educator

Related Fields of Study: For early education: Child care, child development, health care, child psychology, social work, or the provision of direct services to children and their families. For school age child care: all the preceding fields and early childhood education, elementary education, recreation, physical education, human services, or the arts.

References

1. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. QRIS Application and Self Assessment, 2011. Available online: https://www.eec.state.ma.us/QRISStatewide/docs/CB_SelfAssessment_Ref.pdf
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. May 2011 Occupational Employment Statistics, Massachusetts. The category of “childcare worker” is used to describe early educators in center-based settings. As this report will describe, BTWIC’s analysis of the Department of Early Education and Care’s Professional Qualifications Registry provides a new estimate that is lower than that of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
3. Washington State Department of Early Learning. Washington State Career Lattice. Available online: <http://www.del.wa.gov/requirements/professional/lattice.aspx>
4. Boyd and Wandschneider (2005). Washington State Child Care Career and Wage Ladder, Follow-up Evaluation Study Executive Summary.
5. The Child Care WAGES Project: An Evidence-Informed Initiative. Available online: http://www.childcareservices.org/_downloads/WAGES_EvidenceInformed10_11.pdf
6. Ibid
7. Center for Early Childhood Professional Development. REWARD Oklahoma website, available online: http://cecpd.org/reward_oklahoma/supplements_new.php and http://cecpd.org/reward_oklahoma/news_registry_reward.php
8. Massachusetts Department of Early Care and Education. The Path to a Career Ladder: Background and Guiding Principles. Available online: http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/prof_devel/20110615_background_guiding_principals.pdf
9. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Birth to School Readiness: The Massachusetts Early Learning Plan 2012-2015. Grant Proposal: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. October 17, 2011.
10. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Quality Rating and Improvement System Center-Based Application and Self Assessment, available online: https://www.eec.state.ma.us/QRISStatewide/docs/CB_SelfAssessment_Ref.pdf
11. Crittenton Women’s Union. Economic Independence Calculator, 2013. A salary of \$28,500 is needed for a single adult to live in Massachusetts without the use of public assistance. For a single adult with one preschool-age child, the figure is \$51,384. Available online: http://www.liveworkthrive.org/research_and_tools/economic_independence_calculator
12. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. EEC Career Ladder for Early Education and Out-of-School Time Educators. Table Version, May 2011; Career Ladder Background and Guiding Principles, June 2011. Available online: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/workforce-and-professional-development/eec-career-ladder-for-educators.html>



STAFF

Mary L. Reed
President

Najeema Holas-Huggins
Manager of Marketing and Associate Researcher

Jean Kenney
Executive Assistant

Kira Taj
Senior Researcher

Report design by Opus Design in Boston, MA
www.opusdesign.us



**The Bessie Tartt Wilson
Initiative for Children**

142 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116 • Phone 617-425-0002 • Fax 617-425-0008
www.btwic.org • initiative@btwic.org • www.facebook.com/btwic • www.twitter.com/btwic
