


## What is needed in the early childhood education field?

Equitable Access	Increased Teacher Compensation	A Strong & Expanded Educator Pipeline
 <p>81% of eligible PA children are unserved by the Child Care Works program</p>	 <p>18% of early childhood educators are living in poverty</p>	 <p>92% of child care programs report staffing shortages</p>
<h3>Root Causes</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current state funding is not sufficient to accommodate all students.</li> <li>• 86% of child care centers closed at some point during the pandemic.</li> <li>• Many families are unaware of subsidized programs.</li> </ul>	<h3>Root Causes</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The poverty rate in Pennsylvania is 13.1%, but is 18% for EC workers.</li> <li>• The median hourly wage for PA early childhood educators is far below that of elementary teachers:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10.69 for child care workers</li> <li>• \$13.96 for pre-K teachers</li> <li>• \$36.58 for K teachers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<h3>Root Causes</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and retention of ECE workers is challenging due to low pay, especially as wages rise elsewhere.</li> <li>• The cost of higher education, especially unpaid student teaching, is prohibitive to ECE workers without assistance.</li> </ul>
<h3>Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the \$70 million increase for public Pre-K programs in Governor Wolf's proposed budget. This will allow 2,308 more children to be served and increase rates for full- and half-day slots to address rising costs for providers.</li> <li>• Accelerate access to high-quality child care for working parents by providing a wage supplement for teachers and staff through \$115 million in sustainable state/ federal funding.</li> <li>• Provide funding for advertising of state-funded ECE programs through relevant channels to raise awareness among eligible families.</li> </ul>	<h3>Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the \$115 million wage supplement for child care workers, which will provide an increase of \$2 per hour for child care professionals to retain the current workforce. This will reduce turnover, which negatively impacts child development and results in classroom and program closures that disrupt families' ability to work.</li> <li>• Work over time toward salary parity between Pre-K and K-4 educators and continued wage increases for child care workers, which will allow early childhood professionals to earn a living wage and move out of poverty.</li> </ul>	<h3>Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Senate Bill 99, which would create youth pathways into education through dual enrollment and grants to educator preparation programs.</li> <li>• Expand the Early Childhood Education Career Technical Education program, which allows high school students to graduate with a Child Development Associate, into more high schools across PA.</li> <li>• Provide funding for early childhood educator apprenticeship programs to create affordable education pathways for early childhood education professionals.</li> </ul>

**Pennsylvania's children are ready to learn...  
Are we ready to support them?  
#ReadySetGoPA**

The mission of Teach Plus is to empower excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers to take leadership over key policy and practice issues that advance equity, opportunity, and student success.  
[www.teachplus.org/pa](http://www.teachplus.org/pa)

**Teach Plus 2021-22 Early Childhood Policy Fellows:**

- **Brandi Hester-Harrell**, Senior Policy Fellow
- **Donna Kilgore**, Bloom Early Education Center
- **Brieanne Rice**, JB's Bright Beginnings
- **Jessica Roberts**, Central Susquehanna IU
- **Leida Rosario**, Jackson Early Childhood Center
- **Laura Smith**, Capital Area Head Start

Teach Plus is a proud member of the Start Strong PA and Pre-K for PA campaigns.





**START  
STRONG  
PA**



From birth to age 5, young children’s brains make millions of neural connections every second — forming brain architecture for life. At no other time in a human’s life will the brain develop at this remarkable speed or with such intricacy. This is the foundation upon which all later learning, behavior, and health depend.

State policymakers should help Pennsylvania families maximize the potential of these first five years by supporting evidence-based, high-quality early care, education and health services. Doing so will strengthen our Commonwealth's children, families, and our future.

### **As part of the 2022-23 final state budget, Pennsylvania policymakers should support:**

- Serving an additional 2,308 children and increasing rates for full- and half-day slots by increasing the high-quality pre-k line items by \$70 million. The rate increase is necessary to support the early care and education workforce and address rising costs for providers.
- Accelerating access to high-quality child care for working parents by providing a wage supplement for teachers and staff through \$115 million in sustainable state/federal funding. This investment will provide an increase of \$2 per hour for child care professionals to retain the current workforce, reducing turnover which negatively impacts child development and results in classroom and program closures that disrupt families’ ability to work.
- Providing an additional 3,800 pregnant women, young children and their families with evidence-based home visiting services by increasing the Community-Based Family Center line item by \$15 million. We also encourage an increase in the Nurse-Family Partnership line item of \$1.2 million to serve 200 more families in the commonwealth.
- Expanding the postpartum coverage period in Medicaid from 60 days to 12 months by including \$8 million in funding. This funding will ensure individuals have access to insurance before, during and after their baby’s birth and can have lasting impacts on health outcomes.
- Serving more infants and toddlers in the Early Intervention Part C program through the Department of Human Services by increasing funding \$11.5 million with \$1.2 million allocated for children eligible for tracking when their mothers have a positive screen for postpartum depression or anxiety. This funding will ensure children with developmental delays are identified, referred to and accepted for the services they need to reach their fullest potential.