



Nevada Early Care and Education Workforce Framework

Jenna Nguyen, Margaret Gillis, Sally Shepherd, Howard Morrison,
Sheresa Blanchard, Mallory Scott, Ciarra Norwood

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Workgroup Members

**denotes member of the leadership team*

Lela Arney*

The Children's Cabinet

Ashley Dines

The Children's Cabinet

Carrie Paldi*

Learning Care Group

Latisha Brown

State of Nevada Child Care
Licensing

Marty Elquist*

The Children's Cabinet

Cathy Peshlakai

University of Nevada, Reno
Extension

Emily Buckles

Las Vegas Urban League

Patrice Gardner*

Nevada Department of
Education, Office of Early
Learning and Development

Mary Regan

Las Vegas Urban League

Dr. Melissa Burnham*

University of Nevada, Reno

Leandro Gomez

Las Vegas Urban League

Angela Rose

City of Las Vegas, Community
Youth and Development

Irene Bustamante Adams

Nevada Workforce
Connections

Amanda Harding

The Children's Cabinet

Jorge Salas

Nevada Workforce
Connections

Dr. Teresa Byington

University of Nevada, Reno
Extension

Danielle Holmes

The Children's Cabinet

Denise Sidney

College of Southern Nevada

Brianna Cambra
The Children’s Cabinet

Crystal Johnson*
Nevada Division of Welfare
and Supportive Services

Maura Snyder
Nevada Division of Welfare
and Supportive Services

Kelly Carr
Nevada Department of
Education, Office of Early
Learning and Development

Lindsay Klaes
Washoe County Child Care
Licensing

Rachel Stepina*
Nevada Department of
Education, Office of Early
Learning and Development

Emily Champlin*
Nevada Department of
Education, Office of Early
Learning and Development

Karissa Loper*
Nevada Division of Welfare
and Supportive Services

Denise Tanata
The Children’s Cabinet

John Cregg*
Nevada Association for the
Education of Young Children

Lynette Macfarlan
Great Basin College

Katie Wellman
Nevada Department of
Employment, Training, and
Rehabilitation-Workforce
Investment Support Services

Kimberly Cullen
The Children’s Cabinet

Jamelle Nance*
Children’s Advocacy Alliance

Justin White
Data Insight Partners

Jencie Davies
Truckee Meadows Community
College

Patti Oya
Nevada Department of
Education, Office of Early
Learning and Development

Sarah Wright
University of Nevada, Reno
Extension

Annette Dawson Owens
Children’s Advocacy Alliance

Shelly Nye*
The Nevada Registry

Kathy Yoder-Bass
The Hills Preschool

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Introduction

The National Early Childhood Landscape

Because the early care and education (ECE)¹ system in the United States is not publicly funded, the resulting infrastructure is a fragmented patchwork of programs and braided funding streams at the federal, state, and local levels. For parents and families, the system is a maze to navigate, understand, and access. For the ECE workforce, while resilient and passionate, the lack of public funding corresponds to low pay and benefits, high turnover, and limited opportunities for professional development and career advancement.

The ECE workforce has historically faced systemic barriers and structural inequities based on race, gender, class, and language,² which were amplified during the unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) reports, “Since 2020, the child care sector has lost almost 80,000 jobs, or about 7.5 percent of its workforce, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”³ This loss compounded the challenges inherent in a fragile ECE ecosystem rooted in historical and contemporary racial, gender, and income inequality⁴ that perpetuates systemic barriers in recruiting and retaining well-qualified staff and professionalizing the ECE field.⁵

The pandemic also intensified the demanding working conditions and negative economic and health outcomes that dedicated ECE professionals face in caring for young children and supporting their growth and development.



ECE professionals are subjected to high levels of workplace burnout, emotional exhaustion, and stress. They endure long work hours, sometimes without being able to take a lunch or bathroom break due to staff shortages. They are also at increased risk for mental and physical health conditions, including depression, asthma, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.⁶ Because of funding issues and lack of resources, “many childcare providers have to dip into their own pockets to make up for the small classroom budgets they’re given.”⁷ Also, as a result of low wages, some are forced to take on a second job to make ends meet, many rely on public assistance, and 1 in 3 experienced food insecurity in 2020⁸. Simply put, “staffing and compensation are at the heart of building a better early childhood system,”⁹ and more needs to be done to support a well-prepared, qualified, and diverse ECE workforce.

With the overwhelming impact of the pandemic on the ECE workforce, federal grants and COVID-19 relief and recovery funds created opportunities to invest in the workforce in

more innovative ways than ever before. Throughout 2020 and 2021, Congress included significant funding in COVID-19 recovery bills to support child care providers.¹⁰ This government assistance helped stabilize child care businesses, even as enrollment declined and some programs were forced to close. The funding also helped providers “integrate competitive hiring strategies” to address the universal retention problem in the ECE workforce.¹¹ Subsequently, in February 2023, ACF launched the National Early Care and Education Workforce Center (ECE Workforce Center). This research and technical assistance center aims to combat workforce challenges by improving recruitment and retention, addressing the need for an inclusive career pathway that supports both degrees and credentialing, and providing better compensation and benefits.¹²

These resources and initiatives were established to help stabilize the ECE workforce while implementing both short-term and long-lasting policy change. Through this framework, Nevada seeks to build on this national movement, leveraging its statewide collaboration and commitment to make systemic change in supporting a thriving ECE workforce.

The Nevada Early Childhood Landscape

Like the rest of the country, Nevada has been deeply affected by the child care crisis. According to the Nevada 2022 Child Care Market Rate Survey, the average annual cost of infant care in Nevada is \$13,420,¹³ which is more expensive than in-state tuition for 4-year public college.¹⁴ The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provided approximately \$2.9 billion in aid to Nevada to combat the COVID-19

pandemic, child care facility closures, and other economic consequences, but these funds are intended to be spent by December 31, 2024.¹⁵ The pandemic decimated the supply of child care in many communities across the nation, and now is a critical time to allocate the necessary investments to provide the support and respect ECE professionals deserve.

As of June 2023, there are 8,099 active members of The Nevada Registry. Of these 8,099 members, approximately 92% are women, 50% are people of color, and 62% are 31 years of age or older. Although ECE is a historically underpaid industry, stakeholders and policymakers in Nevada have made great strides in increasing the wages for the ECE workforce. From June 2019 to June 2023, the median hourly wage of all active Registry members increased by 32.6% (from \$11.50 to \$15.25). While this improvement should be celebrated, the increase is still insufficient for many families to meet their needs without relying on public or private

The Nevada Registry

Who can be a member of The Nevada Registry?

Membership with The Nevada Registry is open to all early care and education (ECE) professionals regardless of role or setting. This includes anyone working with children and families (both directly and indirectly) in a variety of settings (center-based child care, family child care, Head Start, state-funded prekindergarten, Tribal child care, out-of-school time, etc.) and applies to professionals who are new to the field as much as those who have served children and families for many years.

“In order to grow our child care capacity to meet the needs of Nevada’s working parents and employers, as well as to support Nevada’s entire economy, we must ensure that we have a strong early childhood workforce. The collective effort to identify workforce goals and strategies outlined in this Framework is only the first step. We must now identify costs, implementation steps, and advocacy efforts to address these needs so we can build a strong early childhood workforce to fill our child care programs to capacity. This not only helps meet the needs of working parents – filling programs to capacity is critical to stabilize operations for individual child care business owners so their small businesses can thrive. I couldn’t be more honored for The Children’s Cabinet to be a part of this collective effort.”

- Marty Elquist,

Supporting Early Education & Development Department Director, The Children’s Cabinet

assistance. Increasing salaries is imperative to support, recruit, retain, and equitably compensate an experienced and passionate Nevada ECE workforce.

Nevada ECE Workforce Framework Workgroups

In 2022, The Children’s Cabinet and the Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services announced a partnership to develop a comprehensive, unifying framework to support the state’s ECE professionals and the families they serve.¹⁶ Between November 2022 and June 2023, The Children’s Cabinet contracted with SRI International to facilitate a stakeholder-engaged process to develop this framework. In addressing the needs of the ECE workforce, four workgroups were identified to build the framework: Compensation & Financial Incentives, ECE Workforce Data, Professional Pathways, and Working Conditions & Supports.

Thirty-nine workgroup members from across Nevada (including educators across different ECE settings, state and nonprofit program administrators, and staff from the Nevada System of Higher Education) came together to outline priorities and guide strategic planning

efforts to support a thriving ECE workforce in the state. Workgroup members were convened across 17 meetings over the span of 6 months, with each workgroup meeting four times. Additionally, all workgroups met once at the midpoint of the engagement to discuss intersections across the workgroups. A leadership committee of 12 members was convened over three meetings to provide strategic guidance and input on decision-making on both the development of this

“Families need to be confident in the care and education their children are receiving, and we know strong, supported ECE staff lead to supported families who can work, receive job or vocational training, or continue their education. This partnership and the convening of these stakeholders will help us to better understand the needs, next steps and best practices to provide a strong start for our youngest Nevadans.”

- Karissa Loper Machado,

Agency Manager, Child Care and Development, Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

report and the phased approach of future implementation. See the [Acknowledgements](#) for workgroup member names and affiliations.

In convening these meetings, recurring themes emerged in the long-term outcomes stakeholders were aiming to accomplish. It was clear the topical focuses of the workgroups were inextricably linked. For example, improving compensation is critical for enhancing career pathways that allow professionals to advance within the field. If compensation does not increase with the education and experience required for moving up career ladder levels, efforts to retain and advance professionals in the field will have little impact. Retention is also affected by aspects of quality work environments, including paid benefits and opportunities for low or no-cost professional development. Leaders need access to timely and accurate data about

wages, retention, and career advancement in order to evaluate the effectiveness of improvement efforts.

The five priorities presented in this report represent the interconnected nature of the four workgroups. They build on existing initiatives and the foundation of hard work that has already been established by Nevada’s ECE stakeholders. In creating the Nevada ECE Workforce Framework, the overarching aims in addressing these priorities are to establish clarity around career pathways, support and improve staff wellness, emphasize the value of ECE professionals through equitable compensation, ensure leaders and stakeholders have access to timely and accurate data to inform decision-making, and advocate for future sustained funding for the ECE workforce.



Nevada ECE Workforce Support Priorities

Priority 1: Support a well-prepared, qualified, diverse, equitably compensated, and thriving early childhood workforce in Nevada.

Why is this priority important?

“High-quality early learning settings depend on a high-quality workforce.”

- [Office of Early Childhood Development, Administration for Children and Families](#)

For Nevada’s children to be safe, healthy, and thriving during their first eight years of life, the adults who care for them must be as well. ECE professionals in Nevada are better positioned to provide high-quality learning experiences for children when they are supported in their professional development and career advancement; when they are equitably compensated and valued and do not have to worry about their financial security; and when they have access to a supportive work environment that promotes their physical and mental well-being, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life.

ECE professionals in Nevada are essential to the economy, and “the provision of early care and education is a public responsibility”¹⁷ that needs our collective attention and sustained investment at the federal and state levels. We must not lose the momentum and lessons learned from the pandemic in seizing this opportunity to impact policy and inform the general public to make systemic changes in support of the ECE workforce.

The first crucial way to support a thriving ECE workforce is by developing and aligning

professional pathways that establish a coordinated pipeline of well-qualified ECE professionals who are supported in their career growth and advancement. Professional pathways for the ECE workforce are essential to building a sustainable workforce with the knowledge and skills to provide high-quality learning experiences for children. The Nevada Registry and the Nevada Early Care and Education Professional Career Ladder provide the building blocks to do so.

The Nevada Registry is a sophisticated workforce data system and well-developed recognition and professional development system that captures information about the ECE workforce in Nevada through Career Ladder placement, workforce support, training approval, and data collection. Nevada can invest its resources in further developing the infrastructure of the Registry and promoting its use. If ECE professionals become members of The Nevada Registry and participate in it, they can take advantage of access to myriad benefits, including training opportunities and a personalized Professional Development Plan (PDP), health benefits and available scholarships, and news and updates about state-driven advancements to the early childhood system.

Focusing our attention on one piece of the pie to support the ECE workforce, we first emphasize the significance of professional pathways. Professional pathways that build on one another help ensure professionals have adequate foundational knowledge and ensure

equitable access to high-quality ECE programs for all children. To be successful, professional pathways must be clear, articulated across training and education levels, and universally recognized. They must be aligned with compensation increases and include opportunities for ongoing training, capacity-building, and support. Additionally, professional pathways are needed to articulate multiple points of entry (such as when individuals are transitioning from other disciplines) and opportunities to advance within the field from initial entry to advanced positions (such as those providing leadership within state agencies). Clearly articulated professional pathways demonstrate the importance of the roles of ECE professionals, make the profession appealing, and promote equity among the workforce.

Nevada can use the Registry and its Career Ladder as the foundation from which to build a comprehensive and coordinated system of workforce supports that includes meaningful pathways with compensation and access to high-quality professional learning and

leadership opportunities for ECE professionals at all levels of their career growth. Developing this coordinated infrastructure is crucial to supporting professionals at every stage, including 1) recruiting and supporting early childhood professionals who are just entering the field, 2) retaining and developing experienced and qualified early childhood professionals who would like to expand their skills and continue to deepen their knowledge, and 3) ensuring trainers and technical assistance providers have access to ongoing high-quality training themselves to provide comprehensive supports to others.

What is the current status in Nevada?

Recognizing the critical role of a well-prepared ECE workforce in delivering high-quality learning experiences to children, Nevada has taken significant steps to address this need through a range of initiatives to provide training, professional development, and educational opportunities for the ECE workforce (see the [Appendix](#) for additional details). These efforts cater to various levels of ECE professionals, spanning from high school students to master's-level administrators.

Nevada's universities and colleges have established strong collaborative relationships with one another, which is evident through articulation agreements and consistent course numbering. These agreements and standardizations streamline the educational pathway for aspiring ECE professionals, ensuring a seamless transition between institutions. Likewise, programs offering ECE pathways and scholarships help to attract, recruit, and support individuals pursuing careers in the field. The expansion of online ECE degree programs, including bachelor's degree programs



further enhances accessibility and flexibility for aspiring ECE professionals, enabling them to pursue education while balancing work and other commitments. Furthermore, practicum experiences in ECE programs play a crucial role in preparing students for the workforce. These practicum opportunities allow students to fulfill their requirements while working in their current place of employment.

Of utmost importance is The Nevada Registry, which is critical for supporting the ECE workforce (see the [Appendix](#) for detailed information about the Registry, including demographics, wage data, and Career Ladder data). The Registry is a professional development data system that captures information about the demographics, education, training, and employment of ECE workforce members and allows statewide tracking and approval of trainings. The Registry also places workforce members on the Career Ladder by validating their education and experience and placing them at the corresponding ladder level.

In June 2023, of the 8,099 active Registry members, approximately 47% were at Level 1 on the Career Ladder, and 21% were at the Certificate of Participation level.¹⁸ Approximately 16% were at Level 2, and the remaining 16% were distributed across Levels 3 through 7. Of the 8,099 active Registry members, 6,465 (80%) were direct service providers, including directors (956; 15%), lead teachers (2,515; 39%), and assistant teachers/aides (2,484; 38%).

These numbers suggest there is a lot of room for advancement and leadership development within the Nevada ECE workforce. By clearly articulating career pathways and compensation aligned with the Career Ladder and roles, Nevada can support ECE professionals to advance and remain in the field. The Nevada Registry also serves as a gateway for the state to provide all eligible members of the ECE workforce with incentives and access to much needed benefits that support retention and well-being.

“This is an incredibly exciting time for the Early Childhood Education (ECE) profession at the local, state and national level, and an equally exciting time for The Nevada Registry! As a data repository, The Nevada Registry is uniquely positioned to provide the workforce data needed to inform policy, investments, and data-driven decisions for Early Childhood in Nevada. Leveraging Registry data can help identify workforce priorities to strengthen and improve working conditions for ECE educators which will in turn increase the quality of experiences for children and families in Nevada. Our shared vision and commitment to engage in critical conversations about early care and education, coupled with essential workforce data, will help us better understand the early childhood landscape in Nevada, the needs of our workforce and where to direct targeted support to make the greatest impact. It is through this shared commitment to continuous growth that we can elevate the ECE profession in Nevada to new and exciting heights.”

- Shelly Nye,
Program Director, The Nevada Registry

Despite the availability of various initiatives and training opportunities in Nevada, workgroup members have identified ongoing challenges to recruiting and retaining well-qualified professionals in the ECE field. One of the key factors contributing to the shortage of ECE teachers, particularly in child care programs, is the combination of low wages and a lack of benefits and financial incentives that would encourage ECE professionals to remain in the field. It has been observed that new college graduates and ECE professionals with bachelor's degrees often opt for teaching positions in the K–8 system due to significantly higher wages, which are approximately 44% higher than those offered within the ECE system.¹⁹

Furthermore, the absence of a robust leadership development system has a negative impact on retention and career advancement within the ECE workforce. In order to stabilize the workforce and maximize investments in training and supporting new professionals, it is crucial for Nevada to establish formalized professional pathways that align with increased compensation and opportunities to assume roles both within and outside the classroom. This includes roles in training and technical assistance, program administration, and leadership positions at state or local agencies.

By evaluating the effectiveness of these initiatives, and expanding where appropriate, Nevada can identify areas of improvement and make necessary adjustments to better support the preparation and development of a diverse and highly skilled ECE workforce. Ongoing evaluation allows for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of these initiatives and helps inform decision-making to ensure

the most effective allocation of resources. By leveraging The Nevada Registry and through these ongoing efforts, Nevada is building a comprehensive system that ensures ECE professionals have access to training and professional pathways that equip them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to provide high-quality learning experiences for young children, as well as the opportunities for personal growth and professional advancement in the field. This empowers ECE professionals to take charge of their professional journey and pursue meaningful career trajectories within the field.

“As the host of Nevada’s Early Care and Education Professional Career Ladder, The Nevada Registry collects, validates and warehouses the professional and educational achievements of ECE educators throughout the state and highlights those accomplishments through Career Ladder placement. Providing a single point of access, The Registry provides professional development planning tools, including an online Professional Development Plan, and hosts a comprehensive website containing an online calendar of approved training, an industry-related news page, a statewide job board, and community resources/information. The Nevada Registry also operates the statewide training approval system for all informal, community-based training (not-for-college-credit) in Nevada.”

- [The Nevada Registry](#)

Phased Approach to Advancing the Priority

(1) Assess, revise, and implement the Career Ladder to articulate pathways for advancement within the ECE field aligned with commensurate compensation increases.

- a. Leverage existing cross-agency workgroups and committees to create an implementation plan that includes a timeline and communication plan.
- b. Revise/finalize the Emerging level competencies and program administrator competencies, and formalize adoption of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards and Competencies, as outlined in the Nevada Ready! B-5 Alignment: Workforce Standards Report.²⁰
- c. Create a methodology to account for experience and multiple forms of education and training completed.
- d. Provide a phased-in approach for incorporating existing ECE professionals into the new Career Ladder.
 - i. Develop requirements for existing early educators that may allow exemptions or develop separate requirements for those who join the workforce after the establishment of new policies and processes.
- e. Revise the Professional Development Planning (PDP) Tool and align it to the Nevada ECE Professional Career Ladder.
- f. Draft a salary scale that is tied to competencies based on the Career Ladder and engage child care employers to develop a plan for implementing the salary scale across ECE programs and settings.

(2) Use The Nevada Registry as the foundation and coordinate with Nevada Strong Start Child Care Services Center (CCSC) partner agencies to develop and implement a system for providing ongoing training and support to ECE professionals across programs and settings.

- a. Develop a system to support professionals new to the ECE field.
 - i. Identify and provide the trainings and supports that new hires need based on their roles, focusing on job-embedded supports and mentorships.
 - ii. Provide consistent training and support in the first 120 days of employment (refer to Spiral Up).
 - iii. Coordinate with state agencies to reduce the time and costs associated with pre- and early employment requirements, such as background checks and tuberculosis testing.
- b. Develop and implement a system for providing high-quality ongoing training and supports to ECE professionals to promote career advancement.
 - i. Engage stakeholders in evaluating existing training and support initiatives to determine how they are working and for whom and to identify which initiatives should be expanded, how they may be improved, and which may need to be discontinued (see the [Appendix](#) for a list of initiatives).

- ii. Develop plans for scaling up or implementing changes identified through the evaluation to provide access to promising initiatives throughout the state.
 - 1. Identify, pursue, and secure resources needed to sustain and expand initiatives, including financial and personnel.
 - 2. Communicate with stakeholders about the availability of expanded or revised resources and supports.
 - 3. Collect data and monitor effects of implementation on recruitment, retention, and advancement of ECE professionals across programs and settings throughout the state.
- iii. Ensure trainings and trainers are high quality.
 - 1. Provide training and supports to trainers to ensure ECE professionals have access to high-quality trainings and trainers.
 - 2. Develop and implement a systematic approach to approving trainers and trainings that is linked to the Career Ladder.
- c. Leverage The Nevada Registry to provide and track professionals' engagement in training and support initiatives.
- d. Coordinate with Nevada Strong Start CCSCs to connect the ECE workforce to approved trainings and other supports.

(3) Collect data on a recurring basis to assess implementation of the Career Ladder, training, and other supports, including data on impacts of implementation on programs, professionals, and other stakeholders.



Priority 2: Ensure early childhood professionals have access to a living wage and affordable benefits package.

Why is this priority important?

The second way to support a thriving ECE workforce is by engaging in advocacy and policy improvement to ensure ECE professionals have access to a living wage and benefits packages that reward their hard work, allow them to take pride in what they do, and afford them the financial stability to provide for their families and plan for their economic futures without having to worry about food insecurity and poverty.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a child care crisis that decimated an already fragile ecosystem. The PBS NewsHour podcast *Raising the Future: What History Can Teach Us About Child Care in the U.S.* reported that 1 in 4 women left the workforce during the pandemic due to a lack of child care.²¹ Three hundred and fifty thousand child care workers were laid off during the first few months of the pandemic in early 2020, and by October 2021, less than half had been rehired. As of June 2023, the workforce crisis continues as ECE professionals across the United States remain undervalued, underpaid, and understaffed. While child care is a community issue that will take collective action, it is also “a business issue”²² that affects the health of the U.S. economy, needing collaborative thinking and action on how to sustain investments, funding mechanisms, and cross-sector partnerships.

ECE is a challenging profession that requires specialized training and experience to provide high-quality care and education to young children. Competitive compensation and financial incentives help to stabilize the

ECE workforce, recruit and retain dedicated and qualified ECE professionals, and support the well-being, empowerment, and professionalization of the field. Compensation and incentives are important for showing the workforce that we respect and value their work.



According to the U.S. Department of Labor,²³ the current hourly minimum wage in Nevada is \$10.50 for employees who are not offered qualifying health insurance and \$9.50 for employees who are offered qualifying health insurance. Effective July 1, 2023, the minimum wage will increase to \$11.25 and \$10.25, respectively. Furthermore, effective July 1, 2024, there will be a uniform minimum wage of \$12.00 per hour for all employees in Nevada.

Despite these increases, it is important to consider the [Self-Sufficiency Standard](#) by county in Nevada, which shows the stark reality of what it takes to make ends meet. This standard defines “the amount of income necessary to meet the basic needs of working-age families in Nevada without public or private assistance.”²⁴

For instance, to be economically self-sufficient, a single-parent household with one infant needs an annual wage ranging from \$36,914 to \$51,310, which is equivalent to an hourly wage of \$17.48 to \$24.29, by county. Table 1 further provides a breakdown of Registry member position and median hourly wage by county. These figures highlight both the progress

that Nevada has made toward equitable compensation for the ECE workforce and the disparity that remains between current wages and the income required to achieve economic security and self-sufficiency in Nevada, underscoring the challenges ECE professionals face and the need for equitable compensation that aligns with the actual cost of living.

Table 1. Registry Membership and Hourly Wage by County

County	Active Members	Percentage of Total Membership	Direct Service Members**	Directors/Assistant Directors		Lead Teachers		Assistant Teachers/Aides (Including Floaters/Breakers/Substitutes)	
				# of Directors in County	Median Hourly Wage	# of Lead Teachers in County	Median Hourly Wage	# of Asst. Teachers in County	Median Hourly Wage
Carson City	200	2.47%	161	22	\$19.00	49	\$15.00	76	\$13.00
Churchill	52	0.64%	38	6	\$15.38	15	\$13.75	15	\$11.10
Clark	5173	63.87%	4087	617	\$20.00	1665	\$15.30	1547	\$13.50
Douglas	114	1.42%	98	15	\$15.54	41	\$14.00	37	\$13.25
Elko	173	2.14%	129	16	\$20.00	43	\$14.76	64	\$13.00
Esmeralda	0	0%	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Eureka	0	0%	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Humboldt	31	0.38%	28	3	*	8	\$12.00	13	\$10.75
Lander	19	0.23%	12	3	*	2	*	6	\$11.00
Lincoln	1	0.01%	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Lyon	172	2.12%	137	20	\$20.00	38	\$14.50	66	\$13.00
Mineral	8	0.10%	7	2	*	2	*	2	*
Nye	77	0.96%	66	8	\$17.50	15	\$17.50	25	\$17.00
Pershing	11	0.14%	9	0	N/A	3	*	4	*
Storey	10	0.12%	10	3	N/A	0	N/A	6	17.34
Washoe	1940	23.95%	1607	225	\$22.00	611	\$16.80	593	\$15.00
White Pine	48	0.59%	41	8	\$27.45	15	\$17.06	15	\$14.39
Out of State	70	0.86%	34	8	\$27.50	8	\$19.84	15	\$14.00
	8099	100.00%	6465	956		2515		2484	

*To maintain confidentiality, wage data is not published when number of members in county is five or less.

As stated earlier, according to data reported by the Nevada 2022 Child Care Market Rate Survey,²⁵ the average cost of infant center-based care in Nevada is \$13,420, while the average in-state tuition for a 4-year public college is \$5,920.²⁶ This makes infant care in Nevada more than twice as expensive as college.

To examine the true cost of child care, we can use the national [Cost of Child Care](#) calculator developed by the Center for American Progress. The current online calculator provides a breakdown, by state, of how family tuition for child care is affected as indicators of quality are adjusted. By selecting Nevada, we can see how decreasing staff–child ratios, increasing salaries, providing retirement benefits, increasing contributions to health insurance, and providing more time for educators to plan lessons can cost Nevadan families anywhere from \$1,109 to \$2,583 per month per child in an infant classroom, \$909 to \$2,009 in a toddler classroom, \$808 to \$1,549 in a preschooler classroom, and \$1,057 to \$2,487 in a home-based family child care center.

In addition to this national calculator, Nevada is currently working on an alternative cost model that will serve as a state-specific resource for rate-setting to determine the true cost of child care as quality variables are added. This alternative cost model will take into account a variety of program characteristics (e.g., group size, ages of children served, program type, location, total licensed capacity, education level of teachers, benefits to staff, paid prep time) and will output the true cost of providing the level of quality care selected. Nevada aims to have the alternative cost model completed by June 2024.

Without federal investments, the cost that families must shoulder to send their child to a quality ECE program is exorbitant and, for some, unaffordable and out of reach. When families are unable to afford child care, one or more parents may be forced to leave the workforce. To support a stable, broad ECE workforce, the availability of ECE programs and professionals is critical. Increasing salaries and providing access to benefits are so necessary to recruit and retain experienced, qualified, and passionate early childhood professionals that President Biden signed the Executive Order on Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers in April 2023.²⁷

“The Congress must provide the transformative investments necessary to increase access to high-quality child care—including preschool and Head Start—and long-term care services, as well as high-quality, well-paying jobs that reflect the value the care workforce provides to families and communities. Such investments include removing barriers and providing the funding needed for Tribal Nations to effectively provide high-quality child care and long-term care.

Nearly every other advanced country makes greater public investments in care than the United States. Investing in care is an investment in the future of America’s families, workforce, and economy.”

- [Executive Order on Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers](#) (emphasis added)

Alignment of the Nevada Early Care and Education Workforce Framework to Federal Priority

In 2022, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education released a [joint letter](#) that highlighted strategies to support staff wellness. Four recommendations with suggested action steps were developed to support the social, emotional, mental, and behavioral health of young children and their caregivers, including the ECE workforce:

1. “Implement evidence-based practices that support positive social-emotional development and mental health for all children and wellness for every caregiver.
2. Prioritize workforce wellness and enhance workforce capacity to identify and respond to children’s and families’ social-emotional and mental health needs.
3. Leverage policy and funding to increase access to social-emotional and mental health support and reduce barriers to access.
4. Use data to promote equitable implementation and outcomes.” (p. 2)

This letter complements a 2021 information memorandum released by the Office of Head Start on [Supporting the Wellness of All Staff in the Head Start Workforce](#). As the May 2023 [Dear Colleague Letter on Opportunities to Support the Mental Health and Well-Being of the Early Care and Education Workforce](#) by the Office of Early Childhood Development summarizes, the joint letter and memorandum “encourage ECE programs across settings to:

- Assess workforce well-being and solicit staff feedback to inform staff wellness plans that incorporate mental health and physical activities into regular work routines.
- Make mental health and wellness information available to staff and provide regular opportunities to learn about mental health, wellness, and health education including through in-service professional development.
- Provide competitive wages, benefits (e.g., paid leave, health care), employee assistance programs, and other incentives to support retention.
- Cultivate a healthy work culture that fosters a sense of belonging, respect, and trust by providing peer-to-peer support; opportunities for staff to make decisions and lead; and increase self-knowledge and efficacy, including through reflective supervision, early childhood mental health consultation, and mentoring.
- Improve work environments by providing adult-sized furniture in classrooms, dedicated spaces for peer-to-peer connections that are inviting and comfortable, opportunities to take ‘wellness breaks’ when needed, healthy snack and meal options for staff, and opportunities for exercise.”

What is the current status in Nevada?

Like other states across the country, Nevada endeavors and is committed to providing equitable and adequate compensation to most ECE providers. As of June 2023, the 8,099 active Nevada Registry members reported a median average wage of \$15.25 statewide. Statewide, median hourly wages varied for center directors (\$19.50), lead teachers (\$15.75), assistant teachers/aides (\$14.00), and licensed family child care providers (\$15.00). Wages also varied by county within the state, with median reported wages ranging from \$15.38 to \$27.45 for center directors, \$12.00 to \$17.50 for lead teachers, and \$10.75 to \$17.34 for assistant teachers/aides. As noted above, these wages are above the minimum wage in Nevada but may not be adequate for families to meet their basic needs for self-sufficiency.

As the ECE field moves toward increased professionalization by increasing expectations for education, training, and experience, raising wages becomes even more critical. One stakeholder stated, “Compensation does not match education and training; we are raising the bar without raising the floor.” Although increasing wages and access to benefits is a seemingly insurmountable task, Nevada has a strong commitment to leveraging and expanding its many current initiatives and funding opportunities.

First and foremost, Nevada has a strong and robust early childhood workforce registry that can be leveraged to recognize professional achievements and provide access to opportunities for increased compensation and benefits. A huge milestone was achieved in February 2023 when The Nevada Registry

announced that all Registry members would be eligible to receive no-cost telemedicine and teletherapy services through February 2025 through the state-sponsored [Telehealth Services Benefit Program](#). Starting in July 2023, this program will be expanded to include access to no-cost dental and vision coverage, an employee assistance program, unlimited telemedicine calls, 10 teletherapy sessions, and an optional whole life insurance policy.

In this way, The Nevada Registry serves as a vehicle to support the ECE workforce in Nevada by providing access to essential benefits to help reduce staff turnover and promote a fairly compensated workforce. Participation in The Nevada Registry is mandatory for ECE professionals working in licensed child care settings, and offering access to benefits through the Registry can further incentivize ECE professionals to participate in the Registry, maintain their membership and update their information, and access comprehensive supports available to them.

In Nevada, the collective collaboration and commitment from cross-sector partners has driven the success of numerous initiatives to support the ECE workforce. As listed in the [Appendix](#), these initiatives support an equitably compensated ECE workforce through supplementing wages and offering longevity and retention bonuses to ECE professionals. Others provide ECE professionals with access to stipends and scholarship programs. [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada](#) is funded by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE)'s Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) in partnership with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) and administered

by the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC). T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood scholarships provide financial support to ECE professionals to pursue associate or bachelor's degrees in early childhood education or complete college credits in early childhood to advance on The Nevada Registry's Career Ladder. Upon completion, scholarship recipients receive either a raise or a bonus. Moreover, ECE programs can participate in a mixed-delivery system that allows access to varied funding streams and access to supports through the Preschool Development Grants Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) Program.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada Scholarship Program

The goals of the T.E.A.C.H. program are to:

- Increase the compensation of ECE professionals
- Provide education scholarships for professionals working in a licensed child care center or home care to complete early childhood education degrees or certificates
- Reduce staff turnover rates for participating early learning programs
- Increase the knowledge of ECE professionals working with young children
- Assist early childhood educators in receiving the recognition they deserve

Fiscal Year 2022 scholarship statistics:

- 163 recipients
- 21 graduates
- 97 employers
- 3.26 GPA associate degree
- 3.53 GPA bachelor's degree
- 13.1% wage increase



Despite the significant progress made towards achieving equitable compensation, some challenges persist related to the fluctuating and inconsistent nature of ECE funding. [The Early Childhood Staff Stipend Incentive Program](#) has played a crucial role in providing much-needed financial support to ECE professionals in Nevada during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. Through this program, eligible members of The Nevada Registry can apply for a \$1,000 stipend, alleviating some of the hardships they face. However, it is important to note that this funding is temporary and will sunset on 9/30/2024.

Throughout the pandemic, Nevada was awarded over \$222 million in federal grants to stabilize the child care system and market. This funding provided essential support to ECE professionals, enabling them to navigate the pandemic's impact and continue delivering quality early care and education. These child care provider stabilization grants have been disbursed to 793 child care providers and sites (305 licensed child care centers; 288 family, friend, and neighbor [FFN] providers; 88 family child care [FCC] providers; 32 group FCC providers; and 13 out-of-school-time [OST] providers representing 80 individual sites).²⁸ However, this funding is also temporary. While

the federal grants have been vital over the last few years, it remains crucial to address the long-term sustainability of funding for the ECE sector. Ensuring a stable and reliable funding stream is necessary to support the ongoing needs of ECE professionals, sustain quality programs, and promote equitable access to ECE for all children in Nevada.

In an effort to address the pay disparity between public preschool programs and private child care centers, the Nevada Ready! State Pre-K program has implemented a requirement that participating child care centers must pay their staff the same wage as their local school district. This measure helps alleviate some of the pay disparity between the public preschool programs and private child care centers. While this requirement is a step in the right direction, it may not fully address the wage disparities that exist within a given child care program. Although Nevada Ready! teachers receive comparable wages during their employment period, there can still be a disparity between their salaries and those of teachers in other classrooms within the same child care program.

Next, pre-employment requirements for ECE providers, including tuberculosis testing, comprehensive background checks, and fingerprinting have also been identified as a challenge. These requirements present entry barriers for both individuals and programs. ECE professionals may incur the costs of background checks or tuberculosis testing, and long wait times for background checks and fingerprinting limit the ability of programs to quickly hire new staff and keep aspiring ECE professionals out of the field until those requirements are complete. Efforts to eliminate these barriers may include providing funds to cover associated costs or streamlining processes for background checks and fingerprinting.

Furthermore, Nevada is in the process of conducting various fiscal mapping and cost modeling analyses to determine the true cost of quality care and identify additional partnerships and funding mechanisms. Through the Children's Funding Project, and with funding from the Pritzker Family Foundation via the Children's Advocacy Alliance, Nevada is currently participating in



a multistate cohort to develop a fiscal map of funding from state and federal sources to support a broad range of children’s issues (April 2022–December 2024). This project will result in an interactive, digital fiscal map of existing funding sources by issue area over the last three fiscal years. In addition, Nevada is engaged in development of a cost model and implementation of alternative methodology to set the state’s child care subsidy rate on the true cost of care rather than at 75% of the state median price of care (September 2022–June 2024). The model will include the cost of care by provider type, region, and care level. Finally, Nevada is working with WestEd to conduct a cost of prekindergarten study to look at cost per seat through an equity lens. This work will roll into the Pathway to Universal Pre-K through PDG B-5.

To supplement these initiatives and financing mechanisms, the Compensation & Financial



Incentives Workgroup also expressed the desire to explore aspirational funding structures to support both the ECE field as a whole and the provision of adequate and equitable compensation and benefits for ECE professionals specifically. There is untapped and expansive potential in exploring partnerships with foundations and the business community, collaborating with local casinos, and tapping into the Las Vegas tourism industry (e.g., profits from resort fees, sports taxes, cannabis taxes). Nevada has a unique and extraordinary landscape that offers the opportunity for progressive thinking and partnerships to implement an ECE financing strategy that will be both effective and sustainable.

While efforts have been made to address compensation disparities within the ECE field, the availability and stability of funding sources remain inconsistent. This unpredictability poses ongoing challenges for ECE professionals, making it difficult to ensure sustained and fair compensation. The fleeting nature of funding not only hampers the stability of the ECE workforce but also affects the quality and accessibility of ECE programs. Recognizing these persistent challenges, it is imperative for stakeholders to continue advocating for increased and sustainable funding for ECE. By addressing the issue of inadequate and irregular funding, and advocating for continued investment, we can work towards creating a more stable and supportive environment that recognizes the value of ECE professionals and provides them with the compensation they deserve. This, in turn, will contribute to a resilient and robust ECE workforce that provides the highest quality care and education to our youngest learners.

Phased Approach to Advancing the Priority

(1) Explore, identify, and secure existing, start-up, and sustainable funding streams to provide equitable and adequate compensation to ECE providers.

- a. Use the results of the fiscal mapping report, cost of prekindergarten study, and cost modeling analysis in conjunction with this report to identify existing and potential funding streams.
- b. Research and consider the ramifications of the benefits cliff (the “cliff effect”) and how it will impact ECE professionals and programs.
- c. Prioritize funding to pursue to support sustainable compensation increases across programs and settings.

(2) Provide access to comprehensive benefits packages to attract highly qualified ECE providers.

- a. Identify existing state and local benefits opportunities and explore how they can be maintained and expanded to include a more comprehensive model.
- b. Research the potential of a benefits pool available to all ECE professionals.
- c. Use sustainable funding and participation in The Nevada Registry to increase and expand access to mental and telehealth benefits as well as any other benefit opportunities.
- d. Identify funding sources to continue telehealth benefits beyond Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act funding and the addition of other benefits to improve staff wellness.

(3) Collect data on a recurring basis to assess implementation of efforts to increase compensation and benefits access, including data on impacts of implementation on programs, professionals, and other stakeholders.

“Benefits cliffs (the ‘cliff effect’) refer to the sudden and often unexpected decrease in public benefits that can occur with a small increase in earnings. This happens when families receive benefits through a public assistance program, earn a raise and then become ineligible to continue receiving benefits despite being unable to sustain their household. Sometimes the cliff effect looks more like a slope or plateau. When lost benefits outpace a wage increase, many families ‘park’ or fall off the cliff’s edge, stalling progression in their jobs and careers.”

- [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)

Priority 3: Strengthen and enforce program standards and policies (e.g., QRIS and child care licensing standards) intended to ensure positive work environments.

Why is this priority important?

The third way to support a thriving ECE workforce is to strengthen and enforce program standards and policies that are designed to support positive working environments and conditions, such as child care licensing standards and those governing the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

Quality care for young children depends on the quality of the relationships with the adults in their lives, as well as access to safe and nurturing learning environments. For ECE professionals to deliver high-quality care, they too must have access to a supportive work environment that promotes their physical and mental well-being. To ensure the working environments ECE professionals inhabit and the conditions they face are productive and supportive, quality must be reflected and clearly articulated in program standards and policies.

Working conditions and supports include quality elements to meet the needs of the ECE workforce, including equitable access to professional development opportunities,

sufficient time for professional activities (e.g., dedicated, non-child contact time for planning, observation, and reflecting with other staff), adequate and frequent work breaks during the day, and mental health supports. These supports communicate to ECE workforce members that their well-being matters and is being prioritized, which is an equity strategy for attracting, recruiting, sustaining, retaining, and rewarding skilled and passionate ECE professionals. Together with compensation and professional pathways, supportive working conditions are essential for the ECE workforce to feel valued and able to provide high-quality services for young children.

“A good work environment requires appropriate pay, benefits, and opportunities for ongoing learning. But much more matters—policies and practices shape the climate of the workplace.”

- [Work Environment Standards](#), by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment



What is the current status in Nevada?

Nevada’s child care licensing regulations²⁹ address some basic aspects of positive work environments, such as health and safety, emergency preparedness, responsibilities of program directors and of caregivers, orientation and basic training, and ongoing staff training on CPR. For Early Head Start and Head Start programs in the state, the Head Start Program Performance Standards³⁰ also address aspects such as staff–child ratios and group sizes, a systematic approach to staff training and professional development that includes research-based training and coaching,³¹ provision of information about mental health and wellness, provision of regular and ongoing supervision of staff to support individual professional development and continuous program improvement,³² and budget and staffing that allows sufficient time for staff to engage in training and professional development.

Programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) must meet high standards³³ related to a supportive work environment; professional identity and recognition; qualifications of teaching and administrative staff; ongoing professional development; leadership; management policies and procedures; health, nutrition, and safety policies and procedures; personnel policies; and program evaluation, accountability, and continuous improvement. Each of these standards areas contributes to development and sustainment of positive work environments. As of June 2023, 29 ECE programs within Nevada were accredited by NAEYC and met these standards.³⁴

Previously, the Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS center-based program standards included indicators relating to annual pay increases; a compensation plan that increases based on merit, education, or performance; provision of medical insurance; provision of other benefits; reimbursement of professional development expenses; documented procedures for obtaining staff feedback on program quality; use of staff feedback to develop plans for program improvement; administrative work space for adults that is separate from children’s areas; and annual performance feedback.³⁵ However, as of July 2021, these indicators were removed as factors in star ratings and moved to a coaching tool³⁶ for use with programs. The revised center-based program standards base ratings on required criteria (child care license, registration with the child care subsidy program, active participation of staff on The Nevada Registry’s Career Ladder, group size and ratios) and assessment

Elements of a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

[NAEYC’s 10 Program Standards](#)

1. Relationships
2. Curriculum
3. Teaching
4. Assessment of Child Progress
5. Health
6. Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support
7. Families
8. Community Relationships
9. Physical Environment
10. Leadership and Management

scores from the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ECERS-3)³⁷ or Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ITERS-3)³⁸. ECERS-3 and ITERS-3 do not address items related to staff,³⁹ therefore, these important aspects of work environments are no longer evaluated through the state's QRIS.

Despite the existence of standards and policies regarding paid planning time and breaks, the unfortunate reality is that staff shortages and the need to maintain appropriate staff-child ratios often result in staff members not receiving these essential benefits. However, over the past three years, Nevada has had the opportunity to utilize short-term federal funds to invest in initiatives that improve working conditions in ECE programs. These federal relief packages include the American Rescue Plan (ARP); the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act; the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) Act; and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund. It is important to note, however, that these relief packages are set to expire in 2024.

As mentioned earlier, Nevada has made significant strides since February 2023 by offering no-cost mental health and telehealth services to members of The Nevada Registry. Building upon this initiative, starting from July 1, 2023, vision, dental, and employee assistance program (EAP) benefits will also be provided to Registry members. These added benefits will be funded through the discretionary funds allocated from the CRRSA Act and the ARP.

In addition, Nevada's Early Childhood Support Network (ECSN) plays a vital role in improving working conditions for the ECE workforce. ECSN offers substitute teachers to ECE providers and programs in Northeastern Nevada and in the Las Vegas and Reno metropolitan areas. This support is instrumental in mitigating the challenges posed by staff shortages, allowing regular staff members to take personal time off or sick leave when needed. Currently, the program is being funded through COVID-19 relief funds, making it no-cost to providers until September 2024. Beyond this date, it is projected to cost programs \$12 per hour for substitute teachers.

Furthermore, through the PDG B-5 grant, Nevada is taking proactive measures to promote staff well-being and ensure positive work environments. As part of this three-year grant, starting in 2023, Nevada will be developing a Staff Wellness Guidebook. This guidebook will provide valuable insights and strategies to assist programs in understanding and implementing effective approaches to support staff well-being and cultivate positive work environments.

By leveraging federal resources and state initiatives, Nevada has made significant progress in addressing the critical needs of ECE professionals and improving the quality of ECE in the state. The next part of the conversation involves exploring sustainable solutions beyond the expiration of the current funding, ensuring continued support for the well-being and dignity of ECE staff.

Phased Approach to Advancing the Priority

(1) Identify and review relevant regulations, standards, and policies (e.g., child care licensing regulations, state prekindergarten program standards, QRIS rating factors, program requirements for subsidy providers) that can be leveraged to support positive work environments and how they are being implemented, monitored, and enforced.

- a. Review relevant regulations, standards, and policies for items/indicators and gaps related to breaks, paid planning time, adult space separate from child space, observation time, reflection with other staff, opportunities for staff to provide input on program improvement, compensation, and other aspects of positive work environments described above.
- b. Review how the existing regulations, standards, and policies are being monitored and enforced.
- c. Review Nevada labor laws and how they are being interpreted and implemented in ECE programs.

(2) Determine needed changes to regulations, standards, and policies and their implementation, monitoring, and enforcement to ensure positive work environments across programs and settings.

- a. Review gaps identified in the review of regulations, standards, and policies and consider adding components related to positive work environments.
 - i. Consider the potential impact on programs to implement revised regulations, standards, and policies, including factors such as facilities, staffing patterns, and finance.
 - ii. Consider how monitoring and enforcement of current regulations, standards, and policies could be strengthened to better support positive work environments.
 - iii. Consider new monitoring and enforcement procedures that may be necessary.
- b. Prioritize an approach to updating regulations, standards, and policies, such as modifying child care licensing requirements or QRIS rating criteria, and the steps needed to make the changes.
 - i. Identify monitoring and enforcement procedures to accompany updated regulations, standards, and/or policies.
 - ii. Determine if additional supports need to be allocated to ensure the standards are being met.

(3) Evaluate and consider expansion of the ECSN beyond the current service areas.

- a. Engage stakeholders to evaluate use and impact of the ECSN and potential impact of expansion.
- b. Develop a plan for expanding ECSN, including additional service areas and services.
- c. Identify and secure funding needed to sustain and expand ECSN.

(4) Engage and communicate with the ECE field regarding regulations, standards, policies, and initiatives (e.g., ECSN) to support positive work environments.

- a. Identify and implement strategies for ECE staff and other stakeholders to learn about positive work environment issues through technical assistance, professional development, and teacher/leader preparation programs.
- b. Develop and disseminate guidance documents to support implementation.

(5) Conduct monitoring and enforcement procedures.

(6) Collect data on a recurring basis to assess implementation and enforcement of regulations, standards, and policies, including data on impacts of implementation on programs, professionals, and other stakeholders.



Priority 4: Ensure leaders and stakeholders have access to and use timely and accurate data about the ECE workforce to inform decision-making.

Why is this priority important?

The fourth way to support a thriving ECE workforce is by establishing the means to collect, report, and facilitate the use of data in service of program improvement, resource allocation, and decision-making. Leaders and other stakeholders need access to timely and accurate data about the ECE workforce to understand the composition of the workforce in Nevada and whether the workforce meets community needs, to identify gaps and resources needed to address gaps, and to advocate for resources and change. They also need data to support the professionalization, retention, and well-being of the workforce.

Linking or integrating ECE workforce data with other system data, such as program and child data, can also support better understanding of the effects of workforce initiatives on the broader system. Access to linked or integrated data may enable leaders to evaluate the impacts of workforce initiatives on such areas as program quality and child outcomes.

“Designing and implementing professional development and strengthening workforce supports requires up-to-date and comprehensive information.”

- [Advocacy Toolkit](#), by Center for the Study of Child Care Employment

What is the current status in Nevada?

Similar to ECE program data, workforce data are housed across a multitude of agencies. Workforce data exist at The Nevada Registry, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Department of Agriculture, The Children’s Cabinet, early childhood partnerships, and local organizations (Early Head Start/Head Start). State agencies have some ECE workforce data, although they do not currently produce ECE workforce-specific reports independently or through an early childhood integrated data system ([ECIDS](#)).

Nevada’s greatest asset for ECE workforce data is The Nevada Registry. As described earlier, all individuals working in licensed child care programs, including center-based and family or group home care, who are counted in staff–child ratios must apply to and annually renew their membership in the Registry. Data collected include demographics, employment and education information, training completion, and self-reported wage information. The Registry is part of the [National Workforce Registry Alliance](#) and is recognized as a Partner in Employment Reporting ([PER](#)), which demonstrates a commitment to quality and community. Historically, The Nevada Registry has published [biennial reports](#) on its membership and training approvals, as well as annual program data and statistics on Career Ladder placement and trainer/training approvals for all licensed providers.

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council's (ECAC's) [Data and Evaluation Subcommittee](#) has made progress by implementing goals and objectives developed in the ECAC Strategic Plan. Established in 2022, the subcommittee has focused on developing an early childhood comprehensive services (ECCS) program master list with key program indicators (KPIs), a data dictionary, and research questions/data points for a data system to address. Supported by federal funding, Nevada partnered with the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, to complete a cross-sector inventory of data systems in Nevada that collect ECE workforce data. Additionally, the ECAC has developed the [Nevada Early Childhood Data Dashboard](#), which provides publicly available data on population, workforce, child care, economy, and seminal research on ECE.

The Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation hosts the Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research

Data System ([NPWR](#)), the state longitudinal data system, which houses data from multiple departments. NPWR is a research tool to help policymakers and other leaders design data-driven solutions. This data system includes workforce and education data from the Nevada Department of Education, Nevada System of Higher Education, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, and Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation. While this data system pulls together some important system data, it does not include other ECE data useful for understanding the impact of the ECE workforce and workforce initiatives on the ECE system. An ECIDS that combines data from The Nevada Registry with data from NPWR and other relevant databases would build on these integration efforts and take those efforts a step further toward understanding Nevada's ECE system.

Phased Approach to Advancing the Priority

(1) Build on existing groups and structures.

- a. Utilize the ECAC Data and Evaluation Subcommittee as a state leadership team to coordinate and collaborate with The Nevada Registry, NPWR, and other early childhood data initiatives.

(2) Review ECE workforce data.

- a. Review the cross-sector inventory of data systems in Nevada that collect ECE workforce data completed by NICRP.
 - i. Determine the readiness of the programs and data systems included in the cross-sector inventory to integrate by identifying data gaps, the frequency of data collection, whether data can be disaggregated, disaggregated, etc.
- b. Review data about the ECE workforce annually.
 - i. Decide if there can be stronger alignment with the data elements collected.
 - ii. Determine if additional data need to be collected.
- c. Evaluate progress on the areas identified.

(3) Develop the Workforce Registry Data Dashboard (report generator tool).

- a. Convene a workgroup to lead the development.
 - i. Coordinate with agencies that collect ECE workforce data.
 - ii. Engage the Provider Action Committee for support.
 - iii. Engage technology partners, such as business analysts and developers.
 - iv. Identify key policy questions for the data dashboard to address and the data needed to answer the policy questions.
- b. Develop a draft report that addresses the new questions.
- c. Coordinate with the team leading the ECIDS development.

(4) Identify funding sources for sustainability for the ECIDS.

- a. Review the resources that will be produced through Nevada's participation in a multi-state fiscal mapping cohort through 2024, including a fiscal map of funding from state and federal sources to support a broad range of children's issues, funding gap analysis, revenue options, feasibility analysis, and final recommendations developed by the Children's Funding Project.
- b. Leverage existing federal funds such as the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and PDG B-5 grant.
- c. Identify other federal funds that may have ECE workforce as an allowable cost.
- d. Consider pursuing local philanthropic funds to support development and sustainment of the ECIDS.

(5) Develop an ECIDS.

- a. Coordinate with the Data and Evaluation Subcommittee to identify a core team across agencies and programs that will lead the development. The subcommittee is responsible for executing data collection and integrated systems to increase equity and accountability, which is one of the goals of the Nevada ECAC Strategic Plan. One of the objectives of this subcommittee is implementation of an ECIDS to improve service delivery.
- b. Identify or hire a cross-agency coordinator to support the effort and connect with data leaders across agencies.
- c. Develop a Nevada-specific shared purpose, vision, and mission.
- d. Identify policy questions for the ECIDS to address. These questions may be at the state, regional, or local level.
- e. Create a workforce use case that addresses the identified policy questions.
- f. Create and execute data sharing agreements.
- g. Link the ECIDS to NPWR, the state longitudinal data system.

Priority 5: Develop a policy agenda and public awareness campaign.

Why is this priority important?

The fifth way Nevada can support a thriving ECE workforce is by tying these priorities together to develop a policy agenda and public awareness campaign to advocate for increased and sustained funding in early childhood. There is an urgent need for shared accountability and early childhood investments at the federal level, as current investments are simply not sufficient. As framed in the *Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession*, the federal government has a role in serving as the “financing backbone” of the early childhood system.⁴⁰ Until this happens, state governments and agencies can strategize and think critically about how to support their ECE workforces at the state and local levels throughout this continued child care crisis.



Nevada can engage in a broad range of advocacy efforts to communicate the importance of the ECE workforce with multiple audiences (e.g., legislators, policymakers, business leaders, philanthropic foundations, the general public) and demonstrate why increased and sustainable funding is necessary to support the implementation of the activities listed in this framework. Supporting the ECE workforce and investing in the early childhood sector is not only a societal and community responsibility, it is also a business issue and essential to keeping the U.S. economy strong.

As stated in the introduction, “staffing and compensation are at the heart of building a better early childhood system.”⁴¹ However, increasing base salaries and providing financial incentives for ECE professionals is particularly difficult when much of the child care system is privatized. ECE programs do not receive consistent, reliable public funding the way K–12 public school systems do. Because public funding is limited, ECE programs depend largely on family tuition. The federal

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) provides child care assistance in the form of subsidies for families with incomes up to 85% of the state median income,⁴² but subsidy reimbursement rates do not always reflect the true cost of care.

The child care sector poses a perplexing contradiction when families are met with mounting and unaffordable tuition rates while ECE professionals can barely make a living wage, need to take on a second job, or leave the workforce altogether because the pay and benefits are better elsewhere. Unfortunately, the ECE field cannot compete with other businesses. Why would an ECE professional be incentivized to spend their precious time and money to go back to school to deepen their knowledge about early childhood to advance their career when they will not receive a significant pay increase and can simply make more money working at Starbucks or

Amazon?⁴³ Unlike professionals in other sectors, ECE professionals are not typically rewarded with raises and promotions and typically lack access to comprehensive benefits packages. These disparities force qualified and passionate ECE professionals to leave the field altogether, perpetuating a cycle of staffing shortages and challenges with retention and recruitment.

Federal stabilization grant programs provided COVID-19 relief dollars to ECE programs to maintain operational costs and support staff through the pandemic, but many programs were unable to make up the difference in costs, could not stay afloat, and were forced to close. Many states developed funding formulas to supplement federal funding with their own state funding to provide additional and continued support to ECE programs, a crucial lifeline to stabilize the ECE workforce. But these, too, will run out.



From 2020–2021, President Biden proposed his Build Back Better plan, which included the largest investment in child care in the nation’s history. Unfortunately, his plan was met with resistance and the portion dedicated to expanding ECE ultimately did not pass. The investment in child care would have ensured that “middle-class families pay no more than 7 percent of their income on child care” and would have helped “states expand access to high-quality, affordable child care to about 20 million children per year—covering 9 out of 10 families across the country with young children.” The Build Back Better plan was divided into three parts: the American Rescue Plan (ARP), which was a COVID-19 relief bill that provided \$1.9 trillion in relief dollars and was signed into law in March 2021; the American Jobs Plan (AJP), which addressed infrastructure needs and climate change, aspects of which were signed into law in November 2021 as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act; and the American Families Plan (AFP), which did not pass and would have expanded access to education and child care.

As observed at a national policy level, ECE is still not prioritized nor is it recognized as an infrastructural need and public good. There is much work to be done to shift the public mindset around early childhood and professionalizing the ECE field.

What is the current status in Nevada?

The Nevada ECAC has several subcommittees charged with doing work aligned with the priorities of this framework. Coordinating with and leveraging the ongoing work of the subcommittees will facilitate efficiencies in the development and implementation of a

policy agenda, advocacy toolkit, and public awareness campaign to support the ECE workforce and increased and sustained funding in early childhood. The ECAC subcommittees and their responsibilities are listed below.

- [The Executive/Leadership Subcommittee](#) is responsible for aligning the work of the other subcommittees, establishing the ECAC agenda, and implementing Goal 1 of the [ECAC Strategic Plan](#), which is to “create a coordinated early childhood leadership infrastructure.”
- [The Systems Alignment Subcommittee](#) is responsible for Goal 2 of the ECAC Strategic Plan, which is to “increase coordination and alignment between systems of care for young children and families.”
- [The Communications and Engagement Subcommittee](#) is responsible for Goal 3 of the ECAC Strategic Plan, which is to “increase capacity to equitably connect families with the early childhood system continuum of care and community at large.”
- [The Finance and Policy Subcommittee](#) is responsible for Goal 4 of the ECAC Strategic Plan, which is to “identify budget and finance strategies to drive policy goals and objectives.”
- [The Data and Evaluation Subcommittee](#) is responsible for Goal 5 of the ECAC Strategic Plan, which is to “execute data collection and integrated systems to increase equity and accountability.”

Phased Approach to Advancing the Priority

- (1) From now until the next legislative session in 2025, convene key stakeholders to develop a policy agenda that prioritizes sustained investments in early childhood and provides crucial supports for the ECE workforce.**
 - a. Use existing stakeholder groups as the building blocks for developing this policy agenda and public awareness campaign. Determine lead agencies to champion this work and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) needed for cross-sector collaboration and engage in a culture of continuous improvement.
 - b. Use a consensus-building process to determine key priorities and collective action in this policy agenda. Use this framework report as evidence, along with the workgroup collaboration process as a model.
 - c. Engage the Data and Evaluation Subcommittee as applicable to access data points to inform development and outreach/dissemination strategies. Consider data collection methods (e.g., survey, focus groups) to engage the broader community in the development of this policy agenda.
- (2) Develop an advocacy toolkit to communicate this policy agenda with the public through a comprehensive public awareness campaign.** (See the [Appendix](#) for hyperlinks to state examples and other resources to potentially incorporate.)
 - a. Engage the Finance and Policy Subcommittee and the Communications and Engagement Subcommittee to leverage their experience, expertise, and current work around funding and communications. Current objectives of these subcommittees relate to identifying funding pathways and policy changes needed to meet system goals; implementing a strategic two-way communications plan to engage and connect providers, families, and stakeholders; and expanding engagement, alignment, and coordination of services among all early childhood system providers.
 - b. Coordinate with the Early Childhood Marketing and Outreach Campaign led by Purdue Marion (see the [Appendix](#) for additional information) to leverage lessons learned and materials developed around strategic marketing and outreach, key messaging, campaign design and production, and timing. Consider how the advocacy toolkit may be folded into this work as one component of the comprehensive campaign Purdue Marion is conducting with Nevada.
- (3) Establish state governance to help oversee and advance the priorities of this framework.**
 - a. Coordinate and align with the Executive/Leadership Subcommittee to support its objective to “establish a Governor’s Office for Early Childhood (prenatal to age eight) to align policy and fiscal decision-making for the early childhood system across relevant agencies” or an Office of Early Childhood Systems within the Office of the Governor (previously [Assembly Bill 113](#)). Establishing state governance would help to provide authority in implementing the policy agenda and housing the ECIDS, in conjunction with existing state and local partnerships.

Next Steps

The objective of this framework is twofold: to outline a comprehensive plan of action and to increase public awareness, thereby mobilizing support for sustained investments in the ECE workforce in Nevada. To implement the phased approach encapsulated in this framework, Nevada will:

(1) Identify the agency(ies), workgroup(s), committee(s), or organization(s) that will lead the work.

- a. Implementation of the phased approach will be a collective responsibility and collaborative effort, but Nevada will need to identify the group(s) that will champion each priority. To create efficiencies in the implementation phase, Nevada can leverage the work already happening through current initiatives and coordinate with existing ECAC subcommittees. Doing so will help Nevada identify which other partners will need to be engaged and convened.
- b. Nevada should also determine the sustainability of the workgroups that were convened for the development of this framework. Continuing to convene the workgroups could be beneficial for sustaining the momentum and engagement of stakeholders in the ECE field. These workgroups can serve as platforms for ongoing discussions, problem-solving, and the exchange of ideas and best practices. They provide an avenue for diverse perspectives to be heard and incorporated into decision-making processes, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the challenges and needs of the ECE workforce. Moreover, the workgroups can facilitate ongoing dialogue and information sharing among educators, administrators, and other stakeholders in the ECE field. This collaboration promotes a sense of collective ownership and shared responsibility for advancing the goals outlined in the framework. By maintaining these collaborative platforms, Nevada can foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in the ECE sector.

(2) Identify the resources needed to support the work, including funding and staffing.

- a. Use the framework as a needs assessment to pursue future grant funding opportunities. Explore existing funding sources as well as those that have been untapped. Nevada has a unique and extraordinary landscape that offers the opportunity for progressive thinking and partnerships to implement an ECE financing strategy that will be both effective and sustainable.
 - i. What are our levers? Are there existing funding sources? If not, are there grants available that Nevada hasn't tapped into? Are there philanthropic dollars? Can we make an advocacy case for public dollars? Are there partnerships with foundations and the business community that can be leveraged? Can we collaborate with local casinos or tap into the Las Vegas tourism industry (e.g., profits from resort fees, sports taxes, cannabis taxes)?

(3) Engage in ongoing evaluation to inform decision-making and the most effective allocation of resources. Key considerations for the evaluation process:

- a. **Evaluate the effectiveness of current initiatives:** Evaluate the impact and outcomes of existing initiatives aimed at supporting the ECE workforce.
- b. **Determine which initiatives to expand and scale:** Determine which initiatives have demonstrated success and are scalable for broader implementation. Consider the potential for expanding initiatives to reach a larger number of ECE professionals and communities (e.g., geographic region, rural communities, target populations). Assess the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and potential impact of scaling up successful initiatives to maximize their reach and benefits.
- c. **Identify areas for improvement:** Analyze the data and feedback collected during the evaluation process to identify areas where improvement is needed. This could include addressing gaps or barriers to accessing professional learning opportunities, responding to emerging challenges in the ECE field, or adapting initiatives to meet changing needs. Seek input from stakeholders, including ECE professionals, administrators, and families, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the areas that require attention.

(4) Formalize the partnerships as needed.

- a. Develop consistent meeting structures/objectives, in addition to a process for documenting learning and questions. Use this framework and the materials developed through this workgroup process to track progress on short-term and long-term outcomes. Invite stakeholder input and communicate with the ECE field as changes are being generated and implemented.

(5) Engage in advocacy efforts to communicate the importance of the ECE workforce with multiple audiences.

- a. Develop and implement an advocacy toolkit and public awareness campaign to promote the advantages of increasing compensation and benefits for ECE providers.
- b. Develop and implement a policy agenda that prioritizes early childhood and demonstrates why increased and sustainable funding is necessary to support the implementation of the activities listed in this framework.

The unwavering commitment and collaborative efforts of the workgroups and leadership team have been invaluable in guiding the strategic planning efforts and shaping the vision of a thriving ECE workforce—one that not only recognizes Nevada’s progress but also envisions a transformative future for the early childhood system.

Through the collective action outlined in this framework, Nevada intends to build on national momentum and state/local progress in advocating for increased and sustainable investments to support the ECE workforce and championing its continuous improvement. By embracing this shared responsibility, Nevada hopes to create a system that empowers ECE professionals, uplifts children and families, and fosters a strong foundation for their lifelong development.

Endnotes

- ¹ Definition from The Nevada Registry: Early Care and Education (ECE) professionals work at all levels of the Career Ladder, from entry to advanced. The Career Ladder recognizes the important contributions of the entire ECE workforce, regardless of the position a person holds or their level. ECE professionals are teachers, caregivers, child care providers, family day care and group home providers, educators, administrators, trainers, and advocates. In other words, anyone working directly or indirectly with young children (ages birth to 8) in a variety of settings can be a part of The Nevada Registry. In fact, the ladder is designed so that anyone in the field of ECE can be placed on it regardless of whether that person has just graduated from high school and has been employed in the field for 6 months or whether the person is a college professor teaching ECE courses. The ladder is designed to promote mutual respect, cooperation, and equal importance among all roles and settings; it is a person's level of education and specialized training in ECE that determines their placement on the Career Ladder as opposed to their job title.
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Appendix

Registry Data

The Registry membership data provided in this section is current as of June 7, 2023.

Number of Active Registry Members: **8,099**

Demographic Data

- Average age of Active Registry Members: 38 (62% of all members are 31 years of age or older.)
- Average Years with The Nevada Registry: 4.71
- Average Number of Self-Report Years of Experience in ECE: 7.5
This is an overall average that does not consider whether those years of service were full or part time years of employment or whether that work was in a direct or indirect service position.

Membership by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Members	Percentage
African American/Black	1029	12.71%
Asian	538	6.64%
Caucasian/White	3264	40.30%
Hispanic/Latino	1867	23.05%
Multi-Racial	325	4.01%
Native American	102	1.26%
Other	78	0.96%
Pacific Islander	173	2.14%
Skip	723	8.93%
Total:	8099	100.00%

Membership by Gender

Gender	Members	Percentage
Female	7459	92.10%
Male	343	4.24%
Unspecified	297	3.66%
Total:	8099	100.00%

Participation by Registry Career Ladder Level

Level	Members	Percentage
Certificate of Participation*	1681	20.75%
1	3773	46.59%
2	1330	16.42%
3	318	3.93%
4	291	3.59%
5	459	5.67%
6	227	2.80%
7	20	0.25%
Total:	8099	100.00%

*Members at the 'Certificate of Participation' level have less than 1000 hours of direct experience and will be placed at a level once the minimum number of direct service hours have been accumulated.

Wage Data

All members are required to report hourly wage data. Wage data does not exist for 13% of members who are unemployed, employed in a field outside of ECE and/or if their current employment is unknown. Wage data is self-reported. Hourly wage data is reported according to the 'median' (middle) rather than the 'mean' (average) in accordance with the best practices outlined by The National Workforce Registry Alliance.

Level	Members	Percentage
Certificate of Participation*	1681	20.75%
1	3773	46.59%
2	1330	16.42%
3	318	3.93%
4	291	3.59%
5	459	5.67%
6	227	2.80%
7	20	0.25%
Total:	8099	100.00%

Role	Median Hourly Wage (Statewide)
ALL active members statewide	\$15.25
Center Directors	\$19.50
Lead/Head Teachers	\$15.75
Assistant Teachers/Aides (including Floaters/Breakers/Substitutes)	\$14.00
Licensed Family Child Care Providers	\$15.00

Registry Membership and Hourly Wage by County

County	Active Members	Percentage of Total Membership	Direct Service Members**	Directors/Assistant Directors		Lead Teachers		Assistant Teachers/Aides (Including Floaters/Breakers/Substitutes)	
				# of Directors in County	Median Hourly Wage	# of Lead Teachers in County	Median Hourly Wage	# of Asst. Teachers in County	Median Hourly Wage
Carson City	200	2.47%	161	22	\$19.00	49	\$15.00	76	\$13.00
Churchill	52	0.64%	38	6	\$15.38	15	\$13.75	15	\$11.10
Clark	5173	63.87%	4087	617	\$20.00	1665	\$15.30	1547	\$13.50
Douglas	114	1.42%	98	15	\$15.54	41	\$14.00	37	\$13.25
Elko	173	2.14%	129	16	\$20.00	43	\$14.76	64	\$13.00
Esmeralda	0	0%	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Eureka	0	0%	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Humboldt	31	0.38%	28	3	*	8	\$12.00	13	\$10.75
Lander	19	0.23%	12	3	*	2	*	6	\$11.00
Lincoln	1	0.01%	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Lyon	172	2.12%	137	20	\$20.00	38	\$14.50	66	\$13.00
Mineral	8	0.10%	7	2	*	2	*	2	*
Nye	77	0.96%	66	8	\$17.50	15	\$17.50	25	\$17.00
Pershing	11	0.14%	9	0	N/A	3	*	4	*
Storey	10	0.12%	10	3	N/A	0	N/A	6	17.34
Washoe	1940	23.95%	1607	225	\$22.00	611	\$16.80	593	\$15.00
White Pine	48	0.59%	41	8	\$27.45	15	\$17.06	15	\$14.39
Out of State	70	0.86%	34	8	\$27.50	8	\$19.84	15	\$14.00
8099		100.00%	6465	956		2515		2484	

*To maintain confidentiality, wage data is not published when number of members in county is five or less.

Note: Direct service members can be working directly with children in licensed child care settings, license-exempt programs such as Tribal Head Start, State-Funded Pre-K, Department of Defense, Accommodation Facilities or Institutions, School-Age Before/After or Recreation Programs, Family, Friend and Neighbor and/or Kith and Kin care. Members working in indirect service positions are not included in these totals.

Career Ladder Data

Career Ladder Level by Position Title

	# of Registry members by title	% of total membership	Pre-Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
Direct Service Positions										
Center/Preschool Director/Administrator	510	6.30%	21	138	161	57	31	70	29	4
Assistant Director/Program Director	376	4.64%	28	145	114	21	20	34	14	0
Infant/Toddler Director	40	0.49%	10	15	10	2	1	2	0	0
Infant/Toddler Asst. Director	29	0.36%	11	15	2	0	0	1	0	0
Lead/Head Teacher	2515	31.05%	269	1330	515	113	117	135	34	2
Assistant Teacher/Aide	1969	24.31%	659	1042	168	34	43	22	1	0
Floater/Breaker/Substitute	515	6.36%	150	256	65	18	12	8	6	0
Before/After School Teacher	100	1.23%	32	50	10	0	3	5	0	0
Licensed Family Home Care Provider	159	1.96%	3	87	42	13	7	6	1	0
Licensed Group Home Care Provider	66	0.81%	13	35	11	3	1	2	1	0
School District Pre-K Teacher	84	1.04%	17	18	6	6	1	18	18	0
School District Special Education Pre-K Teacher	32	0.40%	1	12	2	0	1	7	9	0
School District K-3rd Grade Teacher	19	0.23%	0	4	5	1	1	3	5	0
School District Special Education K-3rd Grade Teacher	3	0.04%	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Registered Family, Friend & Neighbor Care	37	0.46%	10	17	6	2	1	1	0	0

Unlicensed Kith and Kin Provider	6	0.07%	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Other Direct	4	0.05%	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indirect Service Positions										
Early Childhood Trainer/Coordinator	69	0.85%	5	6	9	3	3	24	17	2
Early Intervention Provider	6	0.07%	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
CCR&R or other child/family agency	20	0.25%	3	0	2	0	1	7	7	0
Higher Education Faculty	17	0.21%	0	0	0	1	0	0	9	7
Program Administrator (Indirect)	87	1.07%	20	19	10	2	4	15	14	3
TA Provider (Coach, Mentor, Consultant)	39	0.48%	2	1	2	1	7	19	7	0
Other Indirect	277	3.42%	96	67	64	5	6	25	13	1
Other										
Unemployed	148	1.83%	12	68	28	12	8	8	12	0
Currently Not Working in ECE	299	3.68%	88	96	38	11	14	31	20	1
Current Employment Unknown	673	8.31%	225	347	58	13	8	15	6	0

Registry Membership by Career Ladder Level, Degree Type and Hourly Wage

Level	Total Number of Members	Percentage of Total Membership	Members with an ECE Degree	Members with a Non-ECE Degree	Median Hourly Wage**
Pre-Level*:	1681	20.76%	N/A	123	\$13.50
Level 1:	3773	46.59%	N/A	255	\$15.00
Level 2:	1330	16.42%	N/A	326	\$17.00
Level 3:	318	3.93%	N/A	59	\$18.00
Level 4:	291	3.59%	261	32	\$18.57
Level 5:	459	5.67%	359	102	\$21.84
Level 6:	227	2.80%	114	113	\$30.00
Level 7:	20	0.25%	4	16	\$40.00

*Members at this level currently have less than 1000 hours of experience and will be placed at a level once the minimum number of direct service hours have been accumulated.

** All members are required to report hourly wage data. However, wage data does not exist for 13% of members who are unemployed, employed in a field outside of ECE and/or if their current employment is unknown.

Current Nevada ECE Initiatives and Workforce Supports

This table represents many of the ECE workforce support initiatives mentioned in this report that were underway in Nevada as of June 2023.

Nevada ECE Workforce Supports	Description
<p><u>The Nevada Registry and Career Ladder</u></p>	<p>Through the validation of the professional and educational achievements of ECE (Early Childhood Education) educators, The Nevada Registry aims to help raise the status of the profession by promoting a well-trained, educated, supported and fairly compensated workforce; a workforce that represents an ESSENTIAL component of our economy. The Nevada Registry is one of the statewide efforts geared toward reducing staff turnover, increasing wages, heightening professionalism and increasing advancement opportunities for ECE professionals.</p> <p>In addition to being a workforce data system for the state of Nevada, The Nevada Registry is also a recognition and professional development system that helps support the careers of Early Care and Education (ECE) educators. As the host of <u>Nevada’s Early Care and Education Professional Career Ladder</u>, The Nevada Registry collects, validates and warehouses the professional and educational achievements of ECE educators throughout the state and highlights those accomplishments through Career Ladder placement. Providing a single point of access, The Registry provides professional development planning tools, including an online Professional Development Plan, and hosts a comprehensive website containing an online calendar of approved training, an industry-related NEWS page, statewide job board and community resources/information. The Nevada Registry also operates the statewide training approval system for all informal, community-based training (not-for-college-credit) in Nevada.</p>
<p><u>Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)</u></p>	<p><u>Nevada Silver State Stars</u> QRIS creates a culture of continuous quality improvement for Nevada’s child care programs. QRIS defines “quality child care” and creates stronger learning environments for children using standardized, research-based criteria. Partnering with QRIS helps a licensed child care program develop a roadmap and provides support to improve the quality of early care and education services offered to the community. Programs are assessed and given a number of “stars” to indicate what level of quality they have reached.</p> <p>The Children’s Cabinet Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Coaching Program supports licensed child care providers in achieving a higher QRIS star rating by providing effective, on-site assistance to enhance knowledge, skills, practices, or environment. The Children’s Cabinet QRIS Coaches are trained in the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS).</p>

Nevada ECE Workforce Supports	Description
<u>Nevada Strong Start Child Care Services Center (CCSC)</u>	<p>Nevada CCSCs are “one-stop shops” for child care provider training, quality improvement supports, small business administration resources, networking, behavioral and health referrals for children, child care subsidy resources, educational and professional development grants, small business loans, early childhood substitute teachers, and much more. Child care providers of all types have one location (including physical locations in Las Vegas and Reno, as well as virtual for all) to access resources, support, and information needed to operate a business and provide the highest quality care available to the families they serve.</p> <p>CCSC is funded through the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) by Grant Number 2021, G99COV2 Administration for Children & Families, Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) – Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Act (CRRSA); and Grant Number 2101, NVCSC6 Administration for Children & Families, Child Care and Development Block Grant – American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).</p>
<u>Early Childhood Support Network (ECSN)</u>	<p>ECSN program offers temporary, on-call substitute care to licensed child care centers and family child care homes in Reno, Sparks, Carson City, Elko and Las Vegas. The goal of the program is to help facilities maintain quality child care environments and appropriate child-adult ratios if they have sick staff, staff on vacation, or are in the process of hiring. Substitutes undergo an extensive training period that includes best practices working with children and child care licensing regulations. Child care facilities interested in utilizing the service must register with The Children’s Cabinet in advance.</p>
<u>Spiral Up</u>	<p>University of Nevada Reno Extension is offering a 7-week comprehensive virtual training and coaching program for newly hired employees in your program. Program includes 30 hours of hybrid training and up to three hours of coaching support.</p> <p>Topics: State of NV initial childcare training, Professionalism, Creating Connections with Children, Schedules & Transitions, Child Development and Family Partnerships, Effective Teaching Strategies for Social Emotional Development, The Growing Brain Everyday Play and Bringing Joy into Early Childhood Classrooms. (CPR/First Aid not included).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO CAN PARTICIPATE? Early care educators working with children 0-5 years. Priority will be given to educators in their first 120 days of employment. • HOW TO ENROLL? A referral must be made from a licensed center director/administrator. • WHEN ARE THE SESSIONS? The Academy sessions will be offered August, October, January, March, and May. • WHAT IS THE COST? The Spiral Up Academy Level 1 is currently funded and being offered at no cost. <p>** PATHWAY TO CDA: 20 training hours from the Spiral Up Academy Level 1 Program will meet the requirements for the UNR Extension Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)</p>

Nevada ECE Workforce Supports	Description
Child Care Excellence Academy	This program is under development and aims to support those interested in working in child care by providing a three-month academy that supports candidates with all requirements from fingerprints to required trainings, onsite shadowing and job placement within 90 days.
Early Learning Provider Training	Weekly online and in-person Nevada-Registry approved training to meet the professional development training requirements of the early learning workforce. Professional development trainings are available across Nevada's 8 Core Knowledge Areas to build a well-rounded, early childhood workforce.
<u>Early Childhood Community Health Worker Program</u>	Community Health Workers (CHW) provide onsite health education, technical assistance, assessments, mental health resources and referrals for child care providers, teachers, children and families. CHWs are trained in early childhood mental health, developmental assessments, nutrition education and resource/referral navigation to support both providers and families in an effort to ensure healthy development of young children.
<u>Infant/Toddler CDA Programs</u>	The University of Nevada Reno Extension is enrolling now for the infant/toddler Child Development Associate (CDA) coaching program starting in August 2022. This program is free to participants and includes 120 hours of training, training materials, and on-site coaching.
<u>Nevada Youth First</u>	Nevada Youth First is a pilot program geared toward training individuals from foster care and other unemployed young adults to provide childcare throughout Nevada. Because of COVID, there has been a huge gap in childcare options for those families still needing to work. This program seeks to help solve that problem while also providing opportunities to Nevada youth. The program will be discontinued as of 9/30/2023. Lessons learned will be used to inform other strategies and to build out the Nevada Excellence Academy.
<u>T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada Scholarship Program</u>	<p>T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada offers scholarships to eligible employees to enroll in 9-15 credits hours of early childhood education/development coursework per year as they pursue credential, diploma or degree in early education. Upon completion of their contract, scholarship recipients receive either a raise or bonus. Scholarships provide financial support to pursue Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education or to complete college credits in early childhood to advance on The Nevada Registry <u>Career Ladder</u>.</p> <p><u>T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Nevada</u> is funded by the Office of Early Learning & Development (OELD), and administered by the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC).</p> <p>The goals of the T.E.A.C.H. program are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the compensation of early childcare professionals • Provide educational scholarships for professionals working in licensed child care center or home care to complete Early Childhood Education degrees or certificates • Reduce staff turnover rates for participating early learning programs • Increase the knowledge of early childhood professionals working with young children • Assist early childhood educators in receiving the recognition they deserve

Nevada ECE Workforce Supports	Description
Child Care Staff Stipends	<p>The Child Care Staff Stipends Incentive Program provides financial incentives to child care providers who are active members of The Nevada Registry (currently required for all staff working in licensed programs) working in qualified programs at the time of application. The Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC) will provide direct payments to applicants upon verification of employment in the child care sector.</p> <p>Financial stipends will be administered by NevAEYC to eligible Registry members with funding from the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS). This stipend is designed to lessen the financial impact early childhood educators endured during the COVID-19 pandemic, and beyond. Approved applicants will receive a stipend in the amount of \$1,000 (issued directly to individuals; not the program they are employed with). The deadline to apply is April 30, 2023. Stipends will be issued on a first come, first serve basis.</p>
Telehealth + Vision + Dental + EAP benefits	<p>Telehealth and tele mental health benefits for the child care workforce including registered providers caring for children on the child care subsidy program. July 1, 2023 – Dental, vision and EAP benefits added. These accounts allow state investment to create an economy of scale across the provider population and funded by Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).</p>
Employer Child Care Development Program	<p>Not all employers can offer on-site childcare, but there are many options for businesses to support their employee’s work-life balance. It is important for businesses to design a meaningful benefits package and create a culture that embraces and supports working parents. This program provides comprehensive support and consultation for business by analyzing current benefits, conducting an employee needs assessment, generating an analysis report, and support with implementation of findings.</p>
Start Up Grants for Providers Pursuing Licensure	<p>Start-Up grants are available for individuals in Nevada who are opening a licensed child care program. Both home-based providers and child care center providers are eligible to apply.</p>
Background Check Fee and Training Fee Support	<p>The Children’s Cabinet and Las Vegas Urban League can assist providers in covering the cost of background checks and required trainings including CPR/First Aid.</p>
Early Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign	<p>Comprehensive early childhood marketing & outreach campaign that will include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational Analysis – work with project leads to garner an understanding of needs, target audiences and anticipated outcomes • Marketing Research – conduct interviews, focus groups and surveys to further understand needs to develop key messaging and tactics for target audiences • Strategic Marketing Plan – develop comprehensive plan that includes both traditional media and grassroots outreach • Campaign Design & Production – brand approach and tenants; brand capture sequence • Advertising Schedule & Placement – based on research, will include targeted digital media, television, out of home, targeted print and radio • Outreach and Earned Media – owned events and outside events, op-eds, media relations and government/legislative affairs

Other Resources

Examples of Advocacy and Communications Toolkits

- Center for the Study of Child Care Employment. (2022). *Early Educator Engagement and Empowerment (E4) Toolkit*. https://cscce.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/CSCCE_E4Toolkit_EN_v1.pdf
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. (2023). *Medicaid and CHIP Eligibility Renewals: A Communications Toolkit*. <https://www.medicare.gov/resources-for-states/downloads/unwinding-comms-toolkit.pdf>
- Administration for Children and Families. (n.d.). *Health Coverage Outreach Toolkit for the Early Care and Education Workforce*. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/eecd/health-coverage-outreach-toolkit-early-care-and-education-workforce>

Potential Media Resources to Include in Public Awareness Campaign

Reports

- The White House. (2023). *Economic Report of the President*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/ERP-2023.pdf>
- Power to the Profession. (2020). *Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession: Executive Summary*. <https://powertotheprofession.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Power-to-Profession-Framework-exec-summary-03082020.pdf>

Videos

- Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University. (2021). *How Early Childhood Experiences Affect Lifelong Health and Learning*. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/how-early-childhood-experiences-affect-lifelong-health-and-learning/>
- TED. (2021, August 9). *Molly Wright: How Every Child Can Thrive by Five*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aISXCw0Pi94>
- NSPCC. (2017, March 2). *How a Child's Brain Develops Through Early Experiences*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDFYSkZSU>

State Examples of Early Childhood Policy Agendas

- Massachusetts: <https://www.earlychildhoodagenda.org/>
See Strategies for Children's LinkedIn page for advocacy outreach and dissemination ideas: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/strategies-for-children>
- New Mexico: <https://hunt-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/New-Mexico-ECECD-Transition-Committee-Final-Report-18-Month-Action-Plan.pdf>
- Oregon: <https://childinst.org/>
- Vermont: <https://letsgrowkids.org/transform>

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Silicon Valley

(SRI International Headquarters)
333 Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025
+1.650.859.2000
education@sri.com

Washington, D.C.

1100 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 2800
Arlington, VA 22209
+1.703.524.2053

www.sri.com/education-learning/

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