



Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force

Working Group Meeting #4: Workforce

May 11, 2022

Welcome!

Here are our virtual meeting protocols



- **Please be on video** as much as possible to help with overall engagement
- **Mute self** when not speaking
- Use **Chat feature** or **“raise hand” button** for questions or comments
- Technical issues can happen to anyone – **chat privately to Hannah Quinn for any needs**
- If you are experiencing an unstable connection - **switch to phone call or close other applications**
- Members of the **public can submit written feedback to** greatstart.taskforce.mmb@state.mn.us

Reminder: Norms & Expectations

- **Members attend meetings prepared and on time**
- **Engage in respectful dialogue**
 - Everyone's input is important
 - Assume best intent
 - Listen with an open mind, and for commonalities
 - Don't say or type anything you wouldn't want to have shared in public
- **Be actively engaged**
 - Don't just disagree, offer a doable alternative idea
 - Speak to the point on the floor
 - Apply your expertise and networks
- **Confirm decisions as we go**
 - Strike a balance between gathering input and moving forward



Protocols to ensure effective discussion

It is critical we use our very limited time together on topic.

- If conversation is **irrelevant to the topic at hand or becoming too narrow** for the scope of our work, *we will redirect with a gentle reminder of the topic at hand.*
- If conversation moves to **points already agreed to by the Task Force**, *we will redirect with a gentle reminder that the topic has been addressed.*

It is critical that all perspectives are heard.

- Please help us in ensuring all Task Force members have time in meetings to share their voice and input. *If you find you are speaking up often, pause to allow space for others.*
- Please let us know if you find it challenging, for any reason, to share your perspectives in our Task Force meetings.
- Reminder there are other opportunities to provide input outside of two-hour meetings, including 1:1 discussions with Task Force leadership, and by providing written input. Requests for individual time and any written input can be provided to greatstart.taskforce.mmb@state.mn.us.

Our Equity Commitments

In all our conversations, we will strive to:

- **Center children and families**
- Pay **particular focus to the needs and priorities** of historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities
- Specifically contemplate **how our decisions may benefit or harm** historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities
- Seek the **expertise and input from stakeholders** already doing the work in historically disenfranchised communities
- Where possible, consider **data that provides insight** into the relative impact on historically disenfranchised children and families and their communities

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles reflect the Task Force's values and beliefs, guide how it operates, and lay a foundation for decision-making

| Promote Equity | Prioritize Family Perspectives, Needs, and Choices | Support the Power of Local Communities | Build Upon our Solid Foundation | Uplift and Diversify the ECE Workforce | Recognize Implementation Realities | Expect High Quality & Effectiveness | Design for Stability, Sustainability, and Positive Impact |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| <p>We will prioritize a system that promotes equitable outcomes, with a specific focus on children of color and building cultural competency in ECE classrooms.</p> | <p>We will prioritize families' perspectives, needs, and choices as we make data driven and evidence informed recommendations, recognizing that all provider types and settings provide value to the system.</p> | <p>We will ensure local communities are able to define their own priorities and are supported to build the system that meets their children and families' needs.</p> | <p>We will build upon the successes of Minnesota's past and current system, lessons from other states, and the expertise and research in the field.</p> | <p>We will invest in our dedicated and capable early childhood professionals so that they have the opportunity to thrive and grow, and we will build and support a racially diverse workforce.</p> | <p>We will recognize inherent system constraints while remaining responsive to local, state, and federal landscape changes.</p> | <p>We will endeavor to create a high quality and effective ECE system that meets the needs of all of Minnesota's children and families, regardless of circumstance, knowing that the state's future workforce, economy, and resident welfare is dependent upon it</p> | <p>We will work to support funding stability for providers, educators, and staff across mixed delivery settings to ensure better service for families.</p> |

Welcome & Agenda

Today's Goals



Align on long-term compensation package recommendations to bring to the full Taskforce



Identify short-term compensation recommendations, as needed



Begin discussion on what a “Qualified” workforce looks like

Working Group Meeting #4 Agenda – 2 hours

- 6:00 – 6:10 p.m.** Welcome and Logistics
- 6:10 – 7:20 p.m.** Discussion: Draft Compensation Package Recommendations
- Financial (wages)
 - Non-wage (benefits)
- 7:20 – 7:50 p.m.** Discussion: “Qualified” Workforce
- 7:50 – 8:00 p.m.** Next Steps

Our Working Group Charge

Define what a “qualified, diverse, supported, and equitably compensated” ECE workforce in Minnesota looks like and how it can be achieved.



What We Must Consider

Per the Legislation

Equitably Compensated

Include a compensation framework that supports recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce in every early care and education setting

Set compensation for early childhood educators by reference to compensation for elementary school teachers

Supported

Consider the need for and development of a mechanism that ties childcare reimbursement rates to employee compensation

Qualified


Develop affordable, accessible, and aligned pathways to support early childhood educators' career and educational advancement

Diverse

Increase racial and ethnic equity and diversity in the early care and education workforce and recognize the value of cultural competency and multilingualism

Consider the recommendations from previous work including the Transforming Minnesota's Early Childhood Workforce project and other statewide reports on systemic issues in early care and education

Themes From Our Jamboard Session



Equitably Compensated

Equitable compensation for ECE staff . . .

- Includes benefits
- Is comparable to other educators and similarly situated professionals
- Provide family-sustaining wages
- Reflects the education and experience required to do the job
- Is *equal* pay regardless of setting or child age group




Supported

Supported ECE staff receive. . .

- Equitable pay
- Comprehensive benefits
- Prep time
- Ongoing professional development
- Decision making input

They are valued as professionals by parents & families, their organizations, and society



Qualified

Qualified ECE staff are . . .

- Competent
- Skilled
- Educated
- Experienced
- Culturally Competent

They have access to ongoing professional development

They have received education and training in ECE **and/or** they have obtained requisite experience



Diverse

ECE staff represent . . .

- A mix of ages
- A mix of genders
- A variety of experiences
- The children they are serving

Two Forms of Compensation

Equitably Compensated

Include a compensation framework that supports recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce in every early care and education setting

Set compensation for early childhood educators by reference to compensation for elementary school teachers



Financial Compensation



Non-Wage Compensation (Benefits)

Why address compensation?



Recruitment and retention



Professionalization of the field



Achieve a livable wage



High-quality care and education



Long-term stability for programs, children



Fairly compensate the "workforce behind the workforce"



Make education investment worth it

Questions for Consideration

1. What is the purpose of our compensation strategy?

- To support recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce in every early care and education setting

2. What benchmark(s) the north star for improved compensation?

- Reference to compensation for elementary school teachers

3. What is the desirable distribution for compensation improvements? For example, through regular paychecks? Through periodic bonus payments or supplements?

- We are focused on long-term compensation reform, but will revisit the need for short term financial relief solutions and incentives

4. Given the low wages of so many in the early care and education workforce, and the known reliance on public benefits, how does the proposed approach interact with access to public benefit programs?

- We are aware of the benefits cliff issue and have included recommendations to mitigate those issues.

Financial Compensation Best Practices

From the Research

- A living wage should be considered the starting point for ECE compensation
- Wage levels should calibrate upward from a living wage to full parity with similarly qualified elementary school teachers as education, experience, and competencies increase
- The compensation floor for ECE staff will not differ based on the ages of the children served or job setting

Proposed MN ECE Professional Wage Scale

| ECE Level | Educational Requirements | Role | Hourly Wage | Annual Wage | Wages Based On: |
|-----------|--|--|-------------|-------------|---|
| Base | High School Diploma | Starting wage for non-credentialed staff is \$3-4 higher than avg. pay in 2020 | \$15.00 | \$31,200 | Cost of Living (DEED) |
| ECE I | CDA Certificate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wages for qualified ECE staff start at living wage rate for MN (family of 3) | \$18.20 | \$37,856 | One Minnesota Council on Inclusion and Equity Wage |
| ECE II | Early Childhood-related Associate Degree | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Educator in 0 – 5 settings Support Educator in Gr K – 3 settings Guide Practice of ECE I Roles | \$22.75 | \$47,320 | 125% of ECE I |
| ECE III | Early Childhood Ed BA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wages increase to parity with public school teachers based on education advancements Guide Practice of ECE I and II Roles | \$28.44 | \$59,072 | Parity with Public Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers (125% of ECE II) |

Outstanding Concerns About the Wage Scale

The wage scale is not reflective of regional variations in the living wage

- *Potential Solution: Develop a tiered wage scale where the ECE I starting wage (floor) would reflect local geographies' living wage (per the DEED Cost of Living Tool).*

The wage scale is a static tool; it hasn't been updated to reflect 2022 wages

- *Potential Solution: Update adopted wage scales on an annual basis to reflect cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and/or other fluctuations in labor market compensation.*

The wage scale is tied to increases in education but doesn't include increases for commensurate experience

- *Potential Solution: Add provisions for alternative pathways, years of service, and/or number of professional development hours/yr for each ECE level.*

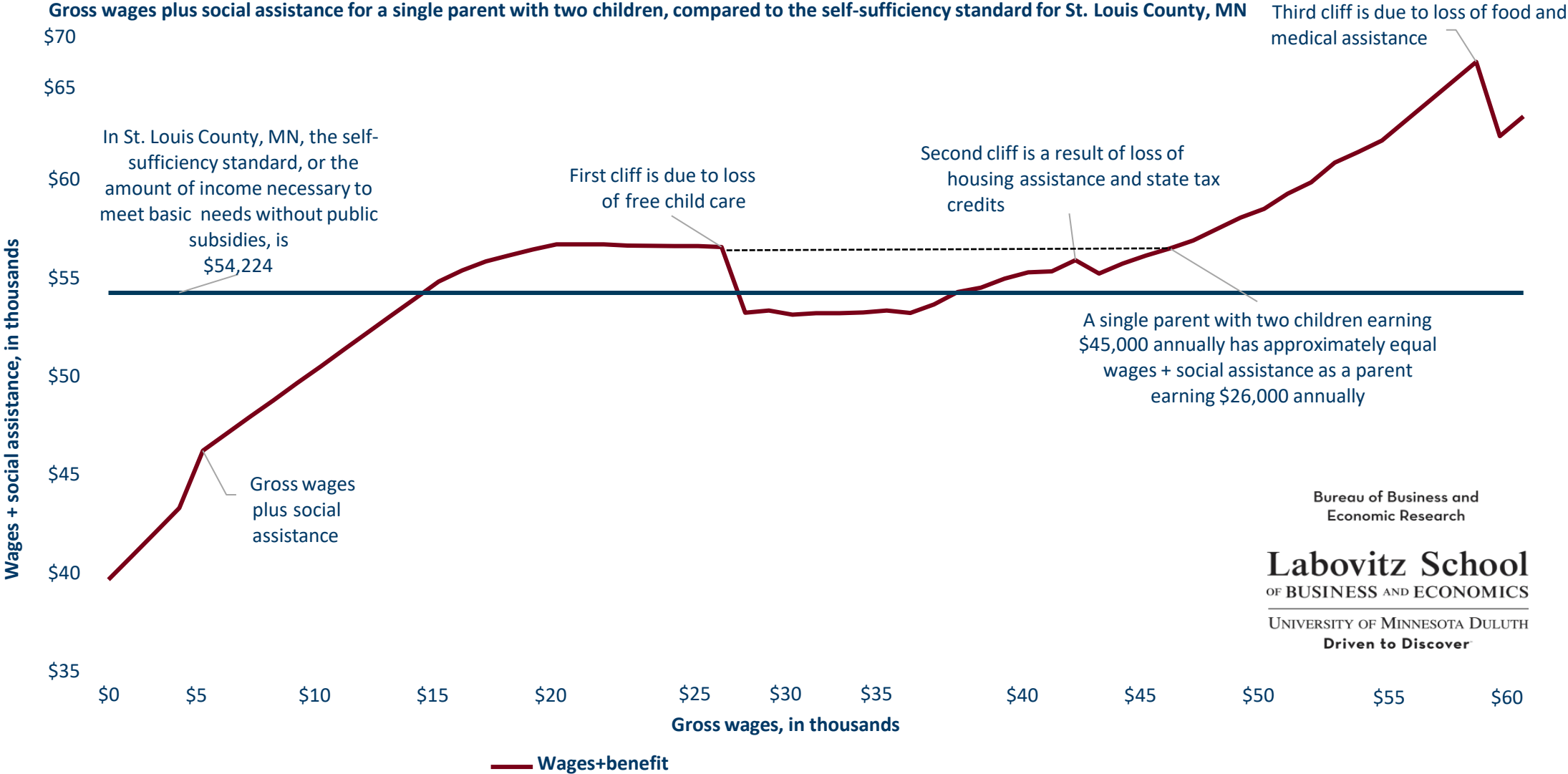
Family child care providers don't see themselves reflected in this wage scale

- *Potential Solutions:*
 - *More research should be conducted to understand the true costs of FCC operation (e.g. infrastructure, food, transport, salaries). The adopted wage scale should be used to estimate staffing costs.*
 - *For FCC owners, a wage floor, with a shared understanding of how this wage may be impacted by variation in enrollment, should be established that reflects their dual responsibilities as directors and providers of care and education. Additional staff should be compensated according to the adopted wage scale.*

The wage scale may have the unintended consequence of causing some to lose their public benefits

Benefits Cliffs:

A Single Parent Earning \$26,000 Has Little Incentive to Increase Hours or Accept Raise



Source: Economic Stability Indicator, Children's Defense Fund Minnesota; Self-sufficiency Standard, University of Washington

Financial Compensation Recommendations

- 1. Develop and adopt a tiered wage scale¹** that reflects regional variations in the living wage. The ECE I starting wage would serve as the floor and would reflect the local geographies' living wage.² Subsequent wage increases would be structured to move towards pay parity with that of elementary school teachers as ECE III status is achieved.
- 2. The adopted wage scale should be updated on an annual basis** by DLI to reflect cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and/or other regional fluctuations in the labor market that impact wages.
- 3. For FCC owners, a wage floor should be established,** with a shared understanding of how this wage may be impacted by variation in enrollment, that reflects their dual responsibilities as directors *and* providers of care and education. Additional staff should be compensated according to the adopted wage scale.

1. Modified from the DEED wage scale and based on a scaled down list of [MN's 6 Planning Regions](#)

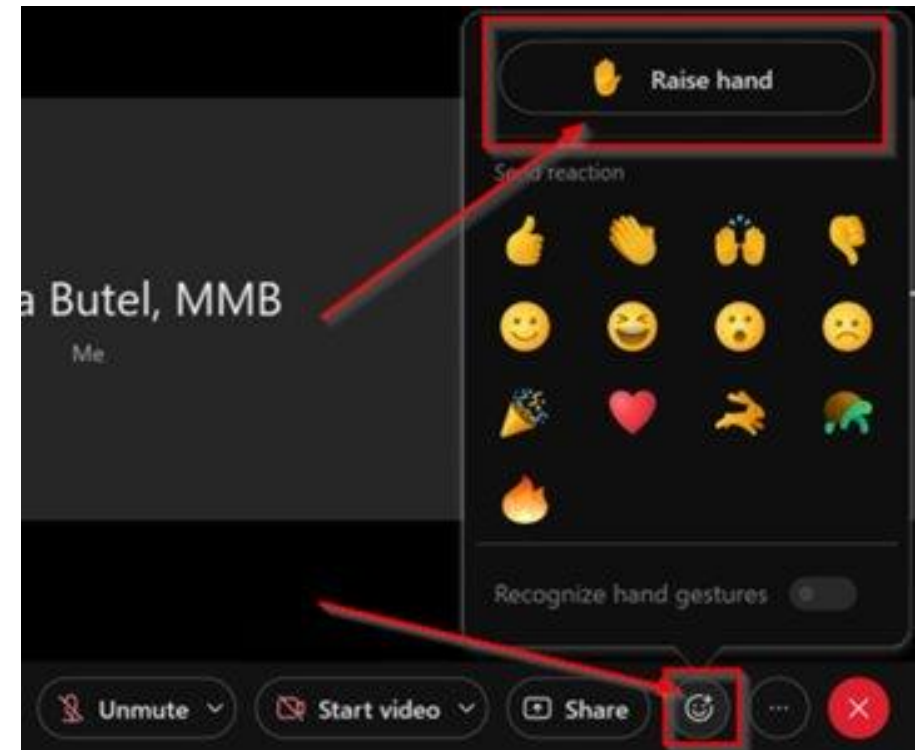
2. Per the DEED Cost of Living Tool

Financial Compensation Recommendations (cont'd)

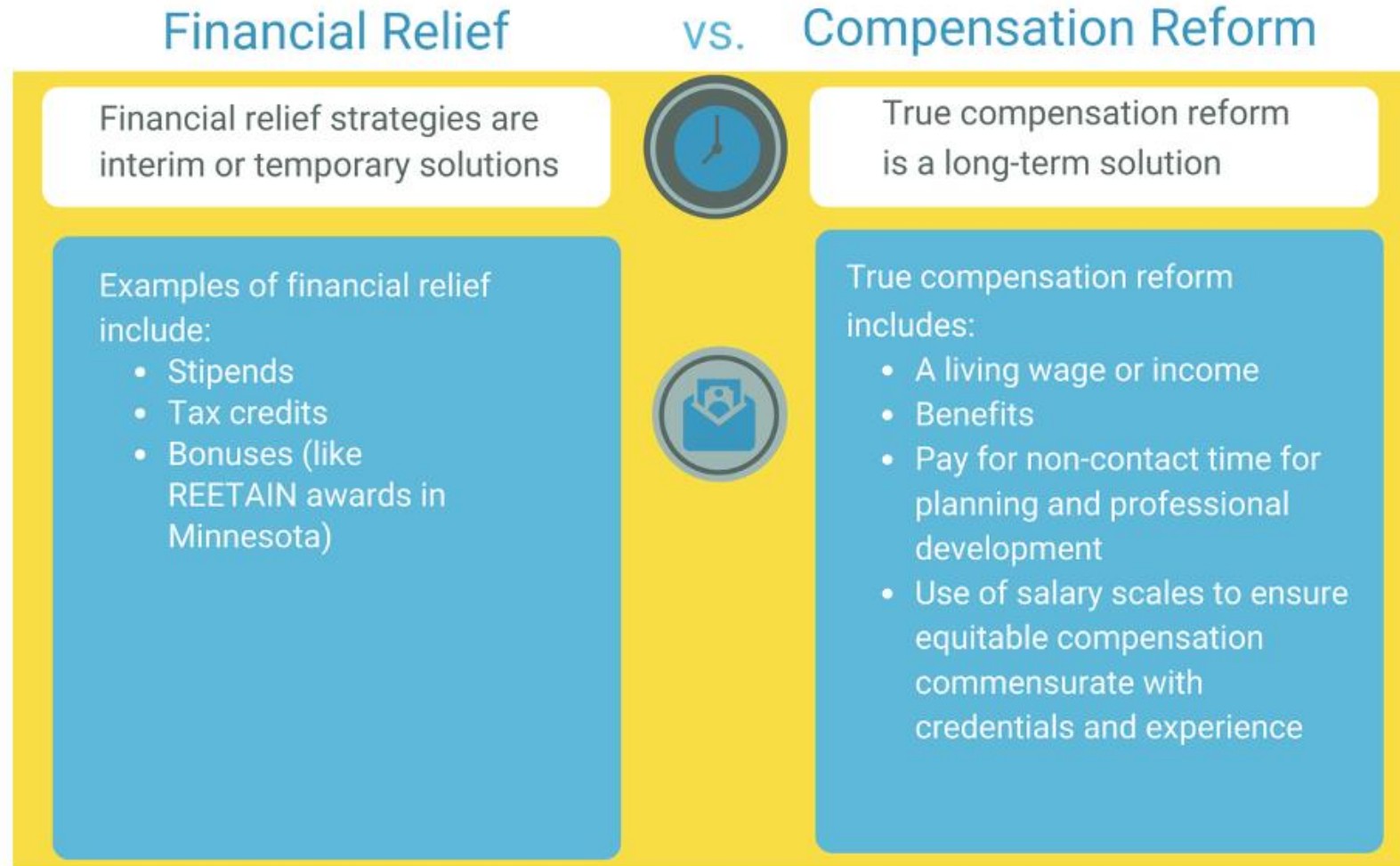
4. **Adopt the *Power to the Profession* Unifying Framework** and tie wage scale increases to the designated classifications.
5. Because ECE staff should be compensated for both their education and experience, the *Power to the Profession* Unifying Framework should be expanded to **accommodate alternative pathways, years of experience, and professional development hours** needed for each compensation level.
6. Additional research should be conducted to **understand the *true costs of operation*** for providers across the mixed delivery system (e.g. infrastructure, food, transport, salaries) in order to estimate future subsidies. The adopted wage scale should be used to estimate staffing costs.

Informal Consensus – Pulse Check

- Please indicate your agreement of the financial compensation recommendations by using the '**Raise Hand**' icon/button in WebEx.
- To do this, click on the 'smiley face' icon at the bottom of WebEx. After the dialog box opens, please click on the '**Raise Hand**' icon/button if you agree on the financial compensation recommendations.



As Recommendations are Phased In (2025-2031), What Might We Need in the Near-term?



Non-Wage Compensation

Why address compensation?



Recruitment and retention



Professionalization of the field



Achieve a livable wage



High-quality care and education



Long-term stability for programs, children



Fairly compensate the "workforce behind the workforce"



Make education investment worth it

Non-Wage Compensation Best Practices: Benefits From the Research

Center Based

- **All employees have access to health care coverage** via subsidies, reimbursements, or paid upfront costs.
- **A negotiable package equivalent to 10 percent of salary is available for benefits** such as: child care for employee's own children; family member health coverage; short- and long-term disability insurance; dental insurance; optical insurance; and life insurance.
- **All employees have access to retirement savings.** A retirement savings plan (e.g., 401K or IRA) is available with an employer contribution, which equals no less than 3 percent of salary, and includes an option for employee contributions.
- **All providers have access to child care subsidies for their own children** through the raising of eligibility rates or creation of a separate category for eligibility for the ECE workforce.
- **Income disregards are put in place** to ensure ECE staff across the mixed delivery system who receive \$60k or less per year be allowed up to \$10,000 of their earnings to be disregarded.

Family Child Care

- Sources of income for the child care business **guarantee that the provider has health care coverage** that fully covers themselves and any dependents not covered under an alternate health care plan.
- Employees working more than 20 hours per week on a regular basis have the following benefits prorated for the number of hours worked: health care coverage, paid sick and vacation leave, paid holidays, paid planning time, and a professional development fund.
- The provider sets aside minimally **5 percent of net earnings to support self-sufficiency in retirement.**

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED602944.pdf>

https://csce.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/publications/The-Model-Work-Standards-Center-Based_FINAL.pdf

https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/blog/compensation_matters_most.pdf

Example: Washington State

Washington's Early Care and Education Substitute Pool is designed to support licensed Family Home and Child Care Center providers in accessing substitutes for program coverage.

- The substitute pool serves as:
 - A workforce pipeline into the early learning field, providing training and resources for those interested in starting a career.
 - A workforce wellness and stability strategy as providers have access to release time to care for personal and program needs.
 - An emergent needs and scheduled coverage strategy to support licensed child care programs to stay within state ratio and licensing requirements.
- All licensed providers can access Washington's substitute pool.
- Substitutes are available to licensed providers at no cost to them if they meet eligibility requirements. DCYF supports the cost of substitute coverage as funding is available.
- Providers also have the option to privately pay for substitutes.
- Substitutes are trained through a nonprofit partner, *The Imagine Institute*. Required trainings include: Child Care Basics; CPR/First Aid; Safe Sleep; Mandated Reporter; Food Handler's Card.

Non-Wage Compensation Best Practices: Time Off

From the Research

Center Based

- **Staff receive at least 12 paid sick/personal days per year**, which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.
- **A minimum of eight holidays are paid each year.** Employees may use personal or vacation time for religious or cultural holidays when the center is not closed.
- **Employees accrue paid vacation time based on longevity in their program:** minimally five days per year during the first year of employment; 10 days per year during years two through four; and 15 days per year with five or more years of employment. Part-time employees earn paid time off on a prorated basis.
- **Up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave is allowed each year for the birth or adoption of a child, acceptance of a foster child, or employee or family member illness.**

Family Child Care

- **The provider receives a minimum of five paid sick/personal days per year**, which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.
- **The provider receives a minimum of seven holidays per year**, which are paid in full by families whose contracted hours fall on these days.
- **The provider earns a minimum of five vacation days per year in the first two years of operation and 10 days per year in subsequent years**, which is paid in full by families enrolled in the program. Additional unpaid vacation leave may be negotiated with parents in the contract.

Non-Wage Compensation Best Practices: Payment for Professional Responsibilities From the Research

Center Based

- **Work schedules encompass paid contact time with children as well as paid time for completing other professional responsibilities as defined in the job description.** This time is reflected in the program's staffing pattern or through the employment of qualified substitutes or floater teachers.
- **Staff who have professional responsibilities in addition to the direct care and education of children receive a minimum of five hours per week of paid time,** without responsibility for children, to engage in such activities as: curriculum planning; gathering and preparing materials; team meetings and staff collaboration; observation and assessment of children's growth and development; and documentation, reporting, and reflection on classroom practices.
- **Staff have a minimum of 40 hours of paid time for continuing education and professional development each year,** the content of which is determined collaboratively with program administration.

Family Child Care

- The provider receives minimally **two paid days per year for their own professional development.**
- The program budget allocates an **annual fund for professional development expenses** sufficient to cover the cost of training and related expenses, such as substitute providers.

DRAFT Non-Wage Compensation Recommendations:

Benefits

Health Care

- **Centers, Head Start & Schools: All employees have access to health care coverage** via subsidies, reimbursements, or paid upfront costs.
- **FCC:** Create an FCC health benefits program that would subsidize cost of premiums for FCC providers who cannot get coverage through a spouse. Include funding for health care navigators that specialize in serving child care providers.
 - If eligible, providers would enroll in Medicaid or Minnesota Care, with any premiums reimbursed
 - If not eligible, providers would purchase health care through MNsure (state health insurance marketplace), with premiums reimbursed

Other Benefits

- **Centers: A negotiable package equivalent to 10 percent of salary is available for benefits** such as: child care for employee's own children; family member health coverage; short- and long-term disability insurance; dental insurance; optical insurance; and life insurance.
- **Centers, Head Start & Schools: All employees have access to retirement savings.** A retirement savings plan (e.g., 401K or IRA) is available with an employer contribution and an option for employee contributions.
- **FCC:** Employees working more than 20 hours per week on a regular basis have the following **benefits prorated** for the number of hours worked: health care coverage, paid sick and vacation leave, paid holidays, paid planning time, and a professional development fund.
- **All providers have access to child care subsidies for their own children** through the raising of eligibility rates* or creation of a separate category for eligibility for the ECE workforce.
- **All: Income disregards are put in place** to ensure ECE educators across the mixed delivery system who receive \$60k or less per year be allowed up to \$10,000 of their earnings to be disregarded to access benefits OR a separate eligibility category is created for the ECE workforce.

*Currently, the Affordability group is considering a recommendation to raise eligibility rate to 250% of state median income.

DRAFT Non-Wage Compensation Recommendations:

Time Off

Create regional substitute pools based on the Washington state model so ECE staff can pursue professional development or utilize paid leave

Centers, Head Start & Schools

- **Full time employees accrue paid vacation time based on longevity in their program:** minimally five days per year during the first year of employment; 10 days per year during years two through four; and 15 days per year with five or more years of employment. Part-time employees earn paid time off on a prorated basis.
- **A minimum of eight holidays are paid each year for FTEs.** Employees may use personal or vacation time for religious or cultural holidays when the center is not closed.
- **Full time employees receive at least 5 paid sick/personal days per year,** which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.

FCC

- **The provider sets aside between five and 10 vacation days per year,** which are paid in full by families enrolled in the program. Additional unpaid vacation leave may be negotiated with parents in the contract.
- **The provider receives a minimum of eight holidays per year,** which are paid in full by families whose contracted hours fall on these days.
- **The provider sets aside a minimum of two paid sick/personal days per year,** which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.

DRAFT Non-Wage Compensation Recommendations: Professional Development

All

- The program budget allocates an **annual fund for professional development expenses** sufficient to cover the cost of training and related expenses, such as substitute providers.

Centers, Head Start & Schools

- **Work schedules encompass paid contact time with children as well as paid time for completing other professional responsibilities as defined in the job description.** This time is reflected in the program's staffing pattern or through the employment of qualified substitutes or floater teachers.
- **Staff who have professional responsibilities in addition to the direct care and education of children receive a minimum of five hours per week of paid time,** without responsibility for children, to engage in such activities as: curriculum planning; gathering and preparing materials; team meetings and staff collaboration; observation and assessment of children's growth and development; and documentation, reporting, and reflection on classroom practices.
- **Staff have a minimum of 40 hours of paid time for continuing education and professional development each year,**

FCC

- The provider sets aside minimally **two paid days per year for their own professional development.**

Next Steps

Planned Sequencing of Discussions

| Meeting Date | Topic |
|---------------------------|---|
| February | What do we mean by qualified, diverse, supported and equitably compensated? |
| March - May | Equitable Compensation & Qualified Workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary scale & wages• Benefits & Non-monetary compensation• Qualifications & credentialing |
| June - July | Qualifications and Credentialing & Attracting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce |
| August | Supporting the ECE workforce |
| September – October (TBD) | Finalize Recommendations |

Anticipated Timeline



Monthly meetings February through September 2022

- June 8th | 6:00-8:00 PM
- July 13th | 6:00-8:00 PM
- August 10th | 6:00-8:00 PM
- September 14th | 6:00-8:00 PM
- *October TBD*

Next Steps

- Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 8th from 6:00 - 8:00 pm
- Who can volunteer to present an update for our group at the next taskforce meeting on 5/31?

