



Center for the
Child Care Workforce

RIGHTS, RAISES, RESPECT

News and Issues for the Early Care and Education Workforce

**From the Center for the Child Care Workforce,
A Project of the AFT Educational Foundation (CCW/AFTEF)**

September 2004

THIS MONTH:

Making the Connection

- Advocates in Washington State Gather for a Leadership Conference

Federal News

- An Early Care and Education Teacher Takes a Stand on Overtime
- No Progress in Congress on Child Care Issues

State News

- Seattle Levy Passes, Restoring the Career and Wage Ladder
- Two New Legislative Initiatives in CA Seek to Advance the Early Care and Education Workforce

Resources

- A Report on State's Financial Commitments to Pre-K
- State Trends in Child Care
- Closing Early Learning Gaps



MAKING THE CONNECTION

Advocates in Washington State Gather for a Leadership Conference

The Child Care Workforce Alliance of Washington (CCWA-WA), the statewide associate member program of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), sponsored its first Leadership Conference in Seattle this summer. Participants attended workshops on leadership and organizing strategies and brainstormed ideas for future directions for the organization. Since its founding last year, CCWA-WA has grown to include more than 300 members from across the state working to upgrade and increase the pay, benefits, professional opportunities and standards of early care and education staff. Support was received from both the AFT and its state affiliate, AFT Washington.

For more information on the CCWA-WA contact Dorothy Gibson at dgibson@wftaft.org.

FEDERAL NEWS

An Early Care and Education Teacher Takes a Stand on Overtime

In response to new rules on overtime pay proposed by the U.S. Department of Labor, hundreds of activists came to Washington, D.C. in August to protest. Opponents argue that millions of workers, including nearly 30,000 early childhood education teachers, would be denied their right to overtime pay. AFT member, Cindy Weinraub, an early childhood teacher at the Katz Jewish Community Center in Cherry Hill, N.J, came on behalf of the teachers in her local as well as other colleagues from across the country who are expected to be affected by the overtime rules. Weinraub expressed concerns about the low pay, lack of benefits, and high turnover that continue to plague this workforce. "President Bush is making it even more difficult for us [ECE teachers] to stay in this field which is already significantly under-paid and under-appreciated."

On September 9, 2004, the U.S. House of Representatives voted against the proposed rule by supporting an amendment preventing implementation. President Bush is threatening to veto the block so opponents are continuing their efforts to defeat changes to the rules for overtime pay.

No Progress in Congress on Child Care Issues

Although Congress is back in session, activity on key pieces of child care legislation is not expected to move forward before adjournment in early October. Among the bills that are expected to be carried over to the next legislative session are:

Head Start - Last summer, the House passed its version of a bill. The Senate has not yet acted on Head Start's reauthorization.

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) – mandatory funding is linked to TANF reauthorization which is on its seventh extension. 2005 discretionary funding, which is funded annually through an appropriations bill, has maintained the same level for the past three years.

STATE NEWS

Seattle Levy Passes, Restoring the Career and Wage Ladder

The Seattle Families and Education seven year levy passed for the third time on September 15, 2004. The levy, which raises \$116.8 million for educational programs and services that focus on



school readiness and closing the achievement gap includes funding for a scaled-down version of the Career and Wage Ladder.

The Career and Wage Ladder, which lost funding in 2003 and failed at an attempt to restore funding last September through an initiative to tax espresso (I-77), is a project that places teachers on grid-based career ladders that link wage increments to experience, job responsibility and relevant education. The original ladder was highly successful and awarded 1,500 teachers from over 115 centers with grant awards ranging from \$15,000 to \$90,000. The scaled down version included in the levy would be limited to centers who were previously on the ladder and who serve 50% or more subsidized children. The Ladder is funded at \$213,000.

Advocates, including members of the Child Care Workforce Alliance of Washington (CCWA-WA), who were instrumental in the I-77 campaign, worked diligently to get the levy passed. Dorothy Gibson of CCWA-WA praised the work of CCW-WA members in securing this victory but recognized shortcomings that remain, "it's not all we wanted for the Career and Wage Ladder, change comes incrementally and we wouldn't have gotten here if we didn't remain committed to the issues of improving the pay and benefits of the workforce." Dorothy adds that CCWA-WA will, "remain committed to secure even more support and funding for these efforts."

For more information on the Career and Wage Ladder contact www.eoionline.org.

Two New Legislative Initiatives in CA Seek to Advance the Early Care and Education Workforce

AB 712 – Preschool for All Program: Both the California Assembly and Senate, in a bi-partisan effort, passed legislation that would push CA's Preschool-for-All initiative forward by creating a plan for developing a well-qualified and diverse teaching force. This bill would:

1. Establish a Workforce Development Blue Ribbon Committee that will be charged with creating an infrastructure plan by January 2006 that will, "educate, prepare and support a well-trained, culturally and linguistically diverse teaching and administrative staff."
2. Require that a study be developed to determine the estimated cost of a voluntary preschool-for-all program.

This legislation builds on the state's plan to make preschool that includes a highly-qualified workforce available to all California 4-year olds.

For more information and steps to contact the Governor about this bill visit Preschool California at www.preschoocalifornia.org.

SB 1897- Child Care Reform: Passed by both CA houses, this bill would:

1. Allow family child care providers to act collectively to select certified agents to represent them for such purposes as: negotiating group benefits such as health insurance, operating substitute provider pools, and representing providers in disputes with regulatory agencies.
2. Create a Task Force on Workforce Development that would design a plan to include expectations for staff competencies, career ladders, accrediting training, strategies to recruit and retain staff and a recommendation to develop a registry of the workforce.
3. Require better data collection on the supply and demand for child care to lead to a plan to



reduce waiting lists.

4. Assess reimbursement rates and develop a tool to collect information to track information such as qualifications, retention and tenure on the early care and education workforce .

The bill awaits approval from the Governor.

RESOURCES

A Report on State's Financial Commitments to Pre -K

A new report by the Trust for Early Education (TEE) highlights states' commitments in the 2005 fiscal year budgets to pre-kindergarten programs. "Quality Pre-Kindergarten for All: State Legislative Report" reports that fifteen states have increased their funding, while the majority made no new investment (seventeen states maintained current levels of funding, seven states decreased their funding and ten states currently do not provide funding for pre-K.)

To access this report visit the TEE website at www.trustforearlyed.org

State Trends in Child Care

The National Women's Law Center released a new issue brief entitled, "Child Care Assistance Policies 2001-2004: Families Struggling to Move Forward, States Going Backwards." This brief reveals state trends in child care assistance including highlights of how states fail to adjust rates paid to child care providers to keep pace with rising costs.

For a copy of the report visit <http://www.nwlc.org/details.cfm?id=2001§ion=infocenter>

Closing Early Learning Gaps

A recent study funded by the David and Lucille Packard Foundation found that academic achievement gaps amongst low-income minority students and their white, wealthy peers, can be eliminated with center-based preschool programs. The report, "Preschool for California's Children", analyzed over 2,000 demographically diverse California kindergartners.

To view the study conducted by Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) and the Linguistic Minority Research Institute, visit http://pace.berkeley.edu/pace_publications.html.

"Rights, Raises, Respect" is made possible with generous support from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation.

The Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW) was founded in 1978 as the Child Care Employee Project, and in 2002 merged with the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation (AFTEF). CCW/AFTEF is a nonprofit research, education and advocacy organization committed to improving early care and education quality by upgrading the compensation, working conditions and training of early childhood professionals.