

# Compensation Capacity-Building Community of Practice



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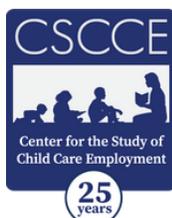
## Overview

The [Early Educator Investment Collaborative](#) is supporting the capacity of governments to implement systemic, innovative, and equitable solutions to increase wages and access to benefits in the early care and education field. Teams from states and localities across the country will convene quarterly in the Compensation Capacity-Building Community of Practice (CoP). This CoP will be a space for peer learning, where teams will engage in collective problem-solving and coaching to support implementation of their projects.

Between January 2025 and December 2026, the CoP will bring the six teams together to learn from each other and experts. As facilitator, the [Center for the Study of Child Care Employment](#) will support teams and document successes and lessons learned to share across the ECE field.

Each quarter, this newsletter will summarize the CoP convening and share emerging themes and takeaways from office hours and other technical assistance offerings. In this first quarter, teams had the opportunity to meet, share their projects with each other and with EEIC leadership, and begin exploring technical assistance opportunities.

**EARLY  
EDUCATOR  
INVESTMENT  
COLLABORATIVE**  
*Professional Educators.  
Professional Compensation.  
Prepared Children.*



**“We know that we value early early childhood educators, and we need to demonstrate that value through the way that we compensate them.”**

- Dr. Ola Friday, Executive Director,  
Early Educator Investment Collaborative

# Meet the Teams

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## Colorado

The **Colorado Department of Early Childhood** is working to reach “just and equitable” compensation for early educators, tied to qualifications and role. The team hopes to explore new and existing funding sources to make progress implementing key reports and plans, such as a [benefits research study](#).



## Louisiana

The **Louisiana Policy Institute** and its partners **For Providers By Providers** and **Agenda for Children** are working to implement compensation demonstration projects in local communities. They aim to leverage those findings, along with [data](#) about the workforce and compensation, to advance statewide policies to improve compensation.



## District of Columbia

The **D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education** is continuing to implement, evaluate, and share the learnings of the [Pay Equity Fund](#) and [HealthCare4ChildCare](#). The team is exploring how to better project funding needs based on provider and educator data.



## Minnesota

The **Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families** and the **Minnesota Children’s Cabinet** are exploring ways to implement their [wage scale](#) and seeking strategies to pay for increased compensation that don’t come at the expense of families or program budgets.



## Illinois

The Illinois team convenes partners from the **University of Illinois at Chicago, SAL Community Services, Illinois Action for Children, and Illinois Board of Higher Education**. They are exploring ways to leverage the new Department of Early Childhood and supporting an [early childhood apprenticeship program](#).



## Tarrant County, Texas

**Child Care Associates** is conducting research with and about early educators and piloting new financing models with the goal of [informing regional and statewide policies](#) around early care and education. The team is building strategic relationships with a range of stakeholders, including the business community, to support their efforts.

# Key Takeaways and Themes

- **Need for creative financing:** Teams raised that state budgets are constricting as federal relief funds expire, and states and advocates are facing uncertainty about federal funding and support for child care. Across the CoP, teams are interested in identifying sustainable, innovative solutions to fund increased educator compensation.
- **Access to benefits:** Several teams are interested in better understanding current access to and needs for benefits in the early childhood workforce. Teams are excited to learn from the work happening in **Washington D.C.** and **Colorado**.
- **Building political will:** Teams, especially those working in more conservative states and communities, are interested in best practices around messaging the importance and impact of increased compensation. Both **Louisiana** and **Tarrant County** are exploring ways to connect with and engage the business community.
- **Moving from planning to implementation:** Several teams, including **Minnesota** and **Illinois**, are working on translating research into policy or learning from pilot projects. Through the CoP, states hope to learn more about strategies to implement, scale, and fund promising practices or tools such as salary scales.
- **Importance of educator voice:** CSCCE has found that sustained funding with compensation-focused policy solutions and community organizing and educator activism have been central to states' long-term change. **Louisiana** echoed these findings in the kickoff.



*At the end of the kickoff convening, participants were asked to share one thing they heard from another team that they would like to incorporate into their own work.*

In their own words, participants are interested in:

- Registry development and workforce dashboard from Colorado
- New early childhood department launch strategies and lessons learned
- Insight into creating recommendations around our workforce data
- Access to benefits - how are folks approaching it?
- Connecting with our workforce registry team to reopen conversations about alignment between public and private settings

“ At every stage of the process, we have had early educators themselves in the room...sometimes that meant for us that our process moved a little bit slower, [but] **it's okay if it takes a little bit longer, if it means that we're really doing things with people instead of doing things to them.**

- Mattilyn Batson, Policy and Research Director, Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

# What to Expect from the CoP

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## CSCCE will:

- Host 4 virtual convenings each year.
- Facilitate a menu of technical assistance.
- Host periodic check-in meetings with each team to understand shifting needs and priorities.
- Synthesize, analyze, and share learnings from the Community of Practice through quarterly newsletters, case studies, briefs, and presentations.

## CoP teams will:

- Actively participate in all virtual convenings.
- Make use of technical assistance opportunities, such as Office Hours and the email listserv.
- Respond to CSCCE requests for input and feedback.
- Serve as ambassadors for the Community of Practice bringing learnings back to your full team and wider community.

## About CSCCE

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The [Center for the Study of Child Care Employment](#) at UC Berkeley (CSCCE) provides research and analysis on the preparation, working conditions, and compensation of the early care and education workforce. We develop policy solutions and create spaces for teaching, learning, and educator activism. Our vision is an effective public early care and education system that secures racial, gender, and economic justice for the women whose labor is the linchpin of stable, quality services.

CSCCE is excited to [continue](#) our work on [compensation](#) by partnering with EEIC to facilitate this community of practice. To learn more and access resources, visit [www.cscce.berkeley.edu](http://www.cscce.berkeley.edu).

For questions or to learn more about the CoP, please reach out to Arabella Bloom, Associate Director of Technical Assistance, at [arabella.bloom@berkeley.edu](mailto:arabella.bloom@berkeley.edu).



Learn more:  
[www.cscce.berkeley.edu](http://www.cscce.berkeley.edu)