



Compensation & Financial Relief

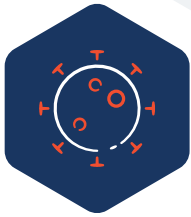
In 2019, national median wages for early educators ranged from \$11.65 per hour (or \$24,232 full-time per year) to \$14.67 per hour (or \$30,514 full-time per year), see [Early Educator Pay & Economic Insecurity](#). Many early educators are quite literally receiving poverty-level wages: the federal poverty threshold for a family of four in 2019 was \$25,750.¹⁰¹ At the same time that wages paid to early educators overall are low, disparities linked to funding source, ages of children, and racial discrimination cause greater harm to certain populations within this workforce. These disparities translate into even lower pay, especially for Black women and educators who work with infants and toddlers, who are paid thousands of dollars less than their peers each year.¹⁰²

The pandemic has greatly intensified the economic insecurity of early educators, forcing many to place their financial well-being ahead of their physical well-being. Unlike public schools, when child care programs close, most early educators have no guarantee that they will continue to be paid. For family child care providers in particular, a loss of income to pay themselves and their business expenses may also mean the inability to pay their rent or mortgage, which is doubly distressing because they operate their businesses from their homes.

And yet, even as many providers try to keep their doors open, the combination of higher costs to meet safety protocols and lower revenues because fewer children are enrolled is leading to job losses and program closures. Many of these closures and layoffs are expected to become permanent.¹⁰³ Over the course of the first eight months of the pandemic, 166,000 jobs in the child care industry were lost. As of October 2020, the industry was only 83 percent as large as it was in February, before the pandemic began.¹⁰⁴

In order to stabilize the early care and education sector, make sustainable progress on appropriate compensation for all early educators, and make teaching young children an attractive career, there must be a reckoning with the inadequacy of current levels of public funding. Estimates vary on the level of public investment needed to reform the system, but all estimates confirm that substantial increases

are necessary, especially in order to provide fair compensation to early educators (see [Financial Resources](#) for state-level estimates developed by CSCCE and the Economic Policy Institute). Furthermore, increased funding must be accompanied by explicit policies and mechanisms designed to raise compensation and to do so fairly — through wage and benefit schedules, for example — in order to undo the wage gaps that characterize today’s system.



EARLY EDUCATORS FACE HEALTH RISKS & LOW PAY, OFTEN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE

Early educators put their lives at risk, often without health benefits,¹⁰⁵ to serve children and families during the pandemic. Even without clear guidance or adequate additional funding, child care programs have largely been expected to continue to operate since the onset of the pandemic, with educators continuing to receive the poverty-level wages that they earned pre-pandemic. For programs that closed, unemployment benefits offered a lifeline for workers, but supplemental unemployment payments provided only limited and temporary relief. Many educators face reduced working hours or longer-term unemployment, potentially without health care coverage for themselves and their families.

A few states notably offered additional payments to child care workers early on in the pandemic. North Carolina and New Mexico, for example, provided monthly bonus payments ranging from \$350 to \$950 per month to early education staff.¹⁰⁶ Kentucky issued a one-time \$1,500 bonus payment to child care workers serving essential workers.¹⁰⁷ Wisconsin relaxed eligibility requirements for their pre-pandemic REWARD stipend initiative and granted awards to recipients who were furloughed or working reduced hours, as well as a one-time stipend increase in July 2020 to active stipend recipients.¹⁰⁸ Vermont provided additional funding to child care programs that were ordered closed during April and May; one of the requirements for receiving the additional funding was that staff pay must be maintained.¹⁰⁹

Nevertheless, these states are the exception: most states have not prioritized educator pay, and one-time payments are not enough to support early educators and their own families.

Appropriate compensation for early educators means that:

- At a minimum, all those working with young children should earn at least the locally assessed living wage;
- Wages should additionally account for job role, experience, and education, with educators compensated fairly for the work they are already doing;
- Wage levels should calibrate upward from a living wage as the starting point to full parity with similarly qualified elementary school teachers; and
- Wage standards should apply whether educators are working in center or home-based programs.

“Child care teachers need to be paid more. We are living at or below the poverty line.... We are teaching our future generation, and we can’t even make enough to live comfortably.”

ECE Lead Teacher, Minnesota¹¹⁰

Some states (such as Alabama) and several cities have been leading the way, ensuring that teachers in publicly funded pre-K classrooms are paid on par with K-3 teachers.¹¹¹ Yet much more must be done to ensure appropriate wages for educators in all early care and education classrooms, *regardless of the age of the child or the setting*. Efforts in New York City have been moving in this direction, extending wage increases to early educators in Head Start programs and community-based centers, regardless of the age of the child served.¹¹² As an interim step, many states have provided financial relief in the form of stipends, tax credits, or bonuses, which provide some additional income for low-paid early educators but do not fundamentally change the amount of their paycheck.

In addition to wages, compensation includes an array of benefits, such as health insurance, paid sick leave, and retirement contributions. These benefits are standard in many fields but are not consistently available across ECE settings. Due to limited data, we could not assess state policy efforts to improve benefits in the *Index*. For information on the inclusion of staff benefits in the standards of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) for programs, see [Work Environment Standards](#). For information on which states collect data on wages and benefits for the ECE workforce in their state, see [Workforce Data](#).

“What’s in a Name?” — A Glossary of Key Compensation Terms

Words like “compensation,” “parity,” and “living wage” have been gaining traction in early care and education circles, but there are different interpretations of what they mean. Here’s a short guide to help bring clarity to the debate.

- **Compensation:** “A term used to encompass the entire range of wages and benefits, both current and deferred, that employees receive in return for their work,” as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.¹¹³
- **Living Wage:** Typically refers to a minimum threshold for affording basic necessities, which varies by household type and local cost of living. A living wage calculator for various geographies has been developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).¹¹⁴
- **Compensation Parity:** The state or condition of being equal especially regarding status or pay. In current ECE debates, it typically refers to comparability between early educator pay and K-3 teacher pay.¹¹⁵
- **Compensation Strategy/Initiatives:** Initiatives that increase workers’ base annual salaries or hourly wages and/or provide benefits such as health insurance or retirement plans.
- **Financial Relief Strategy/Initiatives:** Initiatives that provide additional income or financial relief outside a worker’s pay and benefits (compensation), based on eligibility, such as stipends or tax credits.
- **Stipend:** As used in the *Index*, a stipend refers to a supplemental or non-wage cash award that an educator may receive more than once (e.g., every six months or every year), often intended to support retention.
- **Bonus:** As used in the *Index*, a bonus refers to a cash award provided as a one-off recognition of a particular educational achievement (such as completion of a degree or credential).

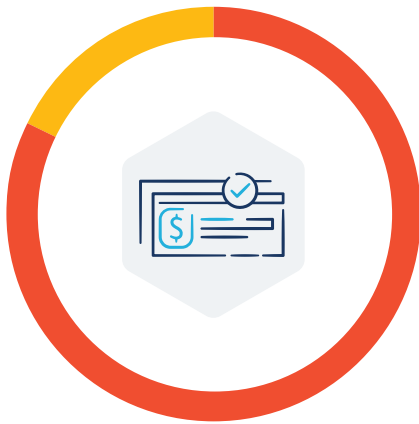
For more information on the differences between compensation strategies, financial relief strategies, and educational support strategies, see [*From Unlivable Wages to Just Pay for Early Educators*](#).¹¹⁶



“Economically, it is very difficult to work in this field. I struggle to get by and live paycheck to paycheck. I have to work a second job in order to barely make ends meet. Emotionally, this job has taken a huge toll on my body.”

ECE Lead Teacher, California¹¹⁷

Overview of State Progress on Compensation & Financial Relief



- Stalled:** 42 states
- Edging Forward:** 9 states
- Making Headway:** 0 states

Between 2018 and 2020, there was a net improvement as four states improved their assessment by making strides in one or more compensation and financial relief indicators: Alabama, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island advanced from **stalled** to **edging forward**. Meanwhile, two other states moved down in their assessments: Nebraska and New Mexico moved from **edging forward** to **stalled**.

Overall, the majority of states (42) remain in the **stalled** category, having not implemented substantial compensation strategies or financial relief measures in their early care and education workforce policies, while a total of nine states are **edging forward**. As in 2018, no states are rated as **making headway**.

TABLE 3.5

Compensation & Financial Relief: A Key to State Assessments

CSCCE

Compensation & Financial Relief	Values & Partial Points		Maximum Points per Indicator
Compensation: Salary parity for publicly funded pre-K teachers?	Parity (all)	3	3
	Parity (some)	2	
	Partial parity or sub-parity (all)	1	
Compensation: Required standards (outside pre-K)?	Yes/No		3
Compensation: Standards guidelines or plans (outside pre-K)?	Guidelines: Yes/No	2	2
	Plans only: Yes/No	1	
Compensation: Earmarks for salaries in public funding (outside pre-K)?	Yes/No		1
Financial relief: Stipend or tax credit?	Yes/No		2
Financial relief: Bonus?	Yes/No		1
Total			12

0-4 points per category	Stalled
5-8 points per category	Edging Forward
9-12 points per category	Making Headway

FIGURE 3.9

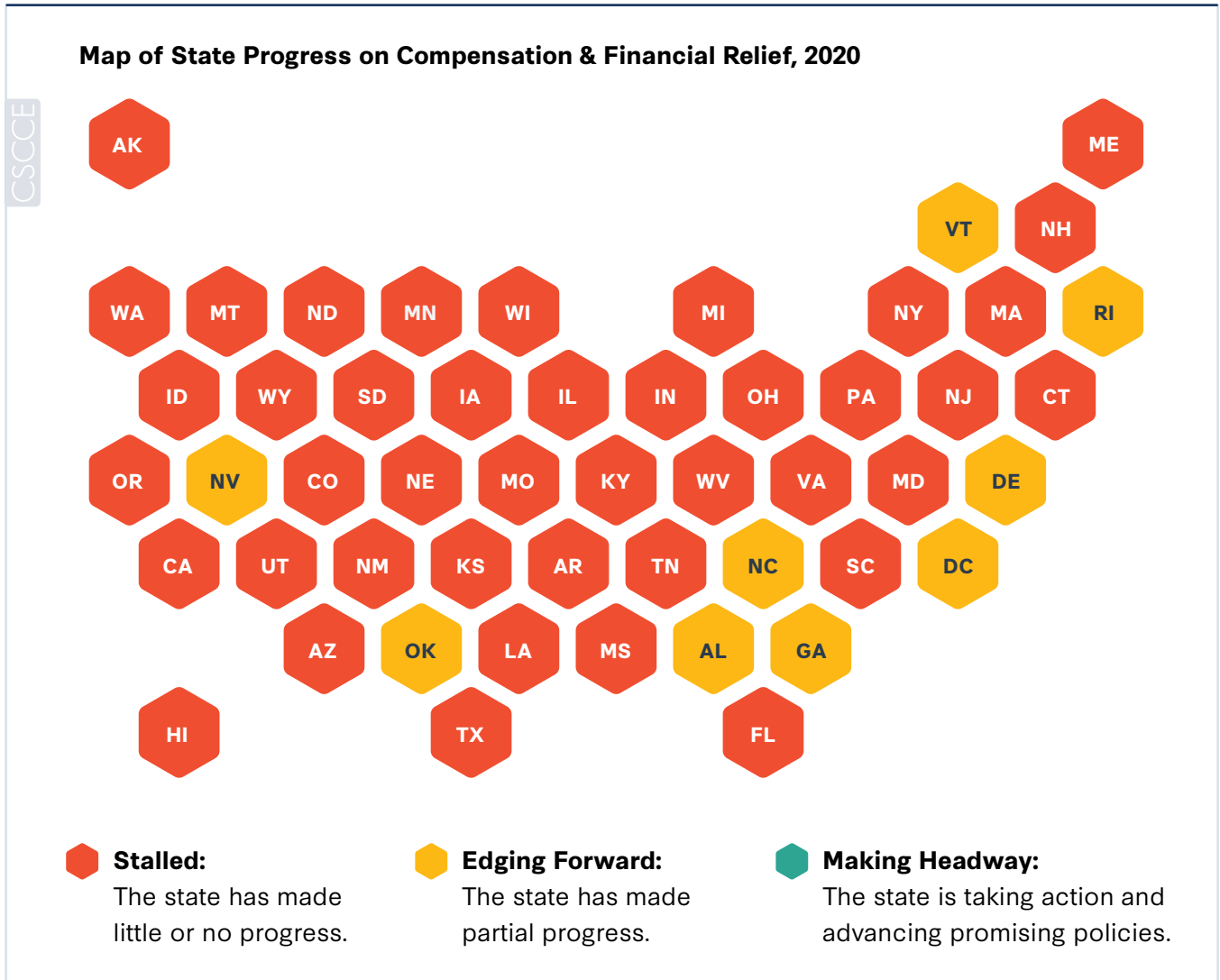


FIGURE 3.10

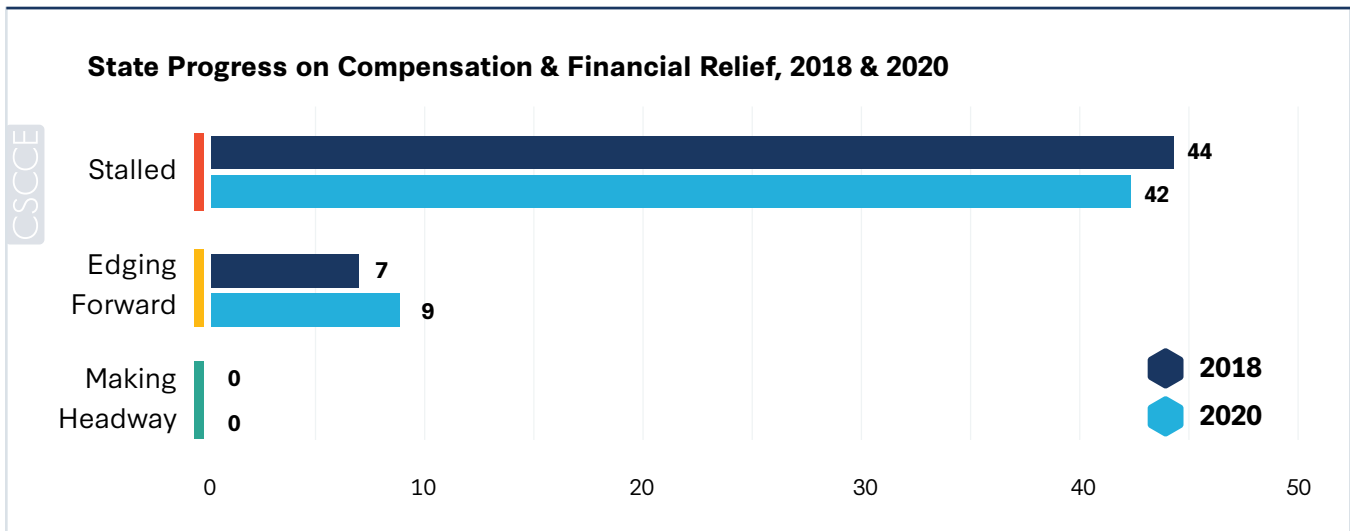
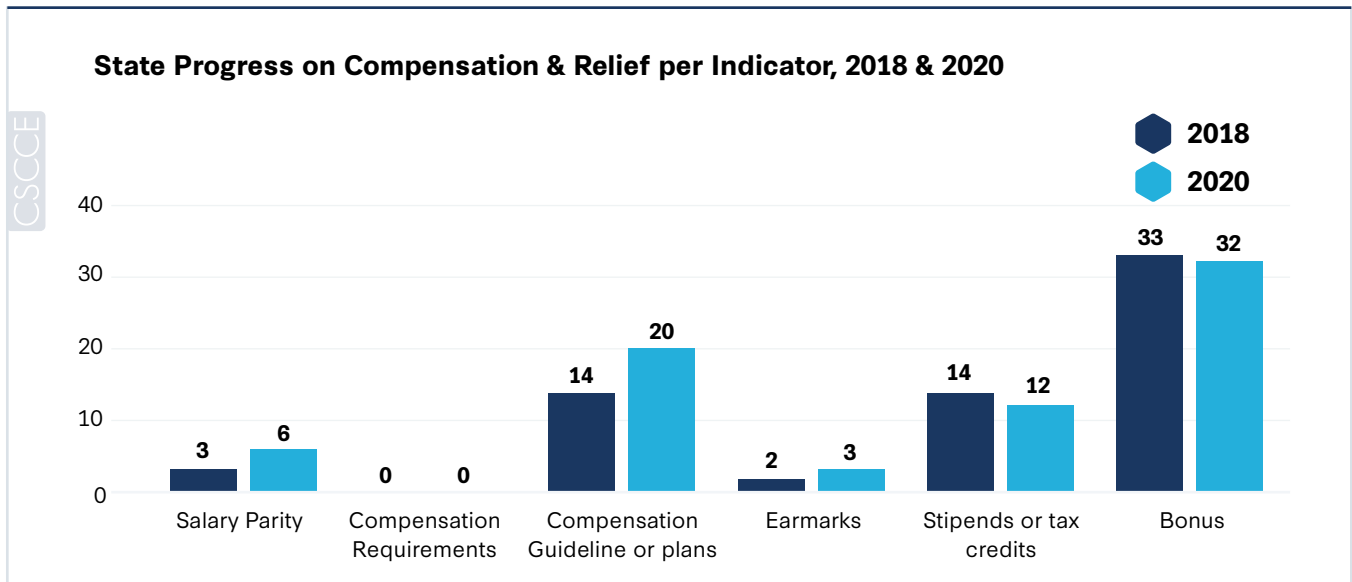


FIGURE 3.11



Indicator 1: Does the state require salary parity for publicly funded pre-K teachers?

Rationale: An appropriate benchmark for determining early childhood educator compensation standards is parity with K-3 teachers, recognizing that early education and care requires just as much skill and training as teaching older children in the birth-to-age-eight continuum.¹¹⁸ Do states require the same starting salary and salary schedule, prorated, for pre-K teachers as for K-3 teachers, and does this parity apply to publicly funded pre-K teachers in all types of settings and all pre-K programs in the state? While we have focused on whether states meet the criteria for salary parity — both starting salary and salary schedule — parity in benefits and payment for professional responsibilities are aspects of parity that also require attention but are not part of the current assessment (see **Table 3.6**).

Current Status Across States: As of the 2018-2019 school year, just six states met these criteria for pre-K salary parity in all settings/programs (Alabama, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island), while another 18 required salary parity for some pre-K teachers (e.g., in public schools only or only in some of their pre-K programs, if the state had more than one). An additional three states (Alaska, Minnesota, Missouri) met the criteria for partial or sub-parity, at least for some pre-K teachers. Six states do not have state pre-K programs assessed by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), so no data were available for these states (Idaho, Indiana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming).¹¹⁹ Although not assessed in the *Index*, individual cities have also been moving forward with implementing their own pre-K programs, and some (e.g. New York City, San Antonio) have actively addressed compensation parity.¹²⁰

Change Over Time: The number of states that met the criteria for pre-K salary parity in all settings/programs doubled from three to six between 2018 and 2020. Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, and Rhode Island were added, while Tennessee was lost. Compared with 2018, there was a net increase of eight states requiring salary parity for some pre-K teachers only. In some cases, these differences may reflect changes in how state pre-K administrators reported their policies to the NIEER State of Preschool survey, rather than actual changes in the policies themselves.¹²¹

TABLE 3.6

Compensation Parity & Related Forms of Compensation Improvement: A Framework

CSCCE

Type of Compensation Improvement	Components of Compensation			Payment for Professional Responsibilities
	Salary		Benefits	
	Starting Salary	Salary Schedule ¹²²		
Parity (defined as equivalent)	Same, prorated for length and number of days	Same, prorated for length and number of days	Same package, same options for coverage for health, retirement, and vacation/holiday/sick leave	Same menu of supports and dosage for non-child contact responsibilities (e.g., planning time, professional development days)
Partial Parity (defined as equivalent for select components)	Same, prorated for length and number of days	Not same or absent	Equivalent options for some benefits, but not full package of benefits	Equivalent options for some supports, but not full menu of supports
Sub-Parity (defined as similar but not equivalent)	Same, not prorated	Same, not prorated or not same/absent	Same package of benefits, not equivalent value	Same menu of supports, not equivalent value
Alternative Forms of Compensation Improvement	Strategies that improve pre-K compensation in order to close the gap with teachers of older children but fall well short of parity. In theory, compensation improvement strategies could also set goals higher than earnings of K-12 teachers in public schools, though in practice this is rare. ¹²³			

Source: Whitebook, M. & McLean, C. (2017). In Pursuit of Pre-K Parity: A Proposed Framework for Understanding and Advancing Policy and Practice. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley & New Brunswick, NJ: The National Institute for Early Education Research.

Indicator 2: Does the state set required compensation standards for ECE settings outside of public pre-K programs?

Rationale: While our parity framework has so far been used to evaluate existing compensation policies for public pre-K programs, there is no reason that it should not be more broadly applied to all early educators of children birth to age five. To

the extent that early educators have equivalent education and experience — and many already do — they should be paid equivalently to teachers of older children, regardless of the setting in which they teach.

Current Status Across States: No states set required compensation standards for ECE settings outside of pre-K, including for infant and toddler teachers.

Change Over Time: This indicator has remained unchanged since 2018. However, at the local level, in 2019 New York City established agreements to fund starting salary parity for all certified teachers in community-based ECE settings and to provide raises for unionized, non-certified teachers and other staff by 2021, a positive step forward that could provide a model for the rest of the country.¹²⁴

Indicator 3: Does the state have plans or guidelines for compensation in ECE settings outside of public pre-K programs?

Rationale: As no states have yet implemented required compensation standards for ECE settings outside of pre-K, an important first step is to articulate these standards.

Current Status Across States: The District of Columbia, Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington have articulated compensation standards or guidelines for early educators beyond pre-K teachers. Thirteen additional states have convened advisory groups or task forces, or they have made other plans to address this issue.

Change Over Time: Since 2018, five states have progressed to articulating compensation guidelines for early educators beyond pre-K teachers (Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington). Most states remained the same, but six states had plans in 2018 and no longer have plans in 2020 (Delaware, Indiana, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, and Pennsylvania).

Indicator 4: Does the state earmark public funding for early educator salaries in settings outside of public pre-K programs?

Rationale: Establishing compensation guidelines and standards is an important step, but states must also direct spending to compensation. Without a specific line item in the budget and sufficient funding to accompany it, compensation can go unaddressed, even when reimbursement rates are raised or program grants are made available.

Current Status Across States: Only three states (Alaska, Massachusetts, and Montana) designated funding specifically for early educator compensation. Massachusetts has a rate reserve for early educator salaries, while Montana's QRIS requires programs to allocate a portion of their incentive dollars toward the base pay of early educators. In Alaska, a state child care grant provided to child care resource and referral agencies is designated for use in increasing compensation.

Change Over Time: Since 2018, one additional state (Alaska) has met this criteria.

Indicator 5: Is there a statewide stipend or tax credit to supplement early educator pay?

Rationale: To the extent that compensation strategies have not yet been implemented, state leaders should consider introducing financial relief strategies as an interim measure. Stipends include programs that offer cash awards annually or every six months to teachers, typically on graduated supplement scales according to educational level. One such stipend program is Child Care WAGE\$, licensed to states by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center at Child Care Services Association.¹²⁵ Other states have created their own stipend programs, such as REWARD in Wisconsin. Similarly, tax credits supplement wages by providing refundable tax credits annually. Stipends and tax credits may be applied for and received by qualifying teachers, if funds are available, which is not guaranteed.¹²⁶

Current Status Across States: Eleven states have a statewide stipend program, such as WAGE\$ or something similar, and two states (Louisiana and Nebraska) offer ECE teacher tax credits. Nebraska offers both a stipend (WAGE\$) as well as a tax credit, for a total of 12 states with either a stipend or a tax credit program. One state (North Carolina) offers two separate stipend programs: WAGE\$ and Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$®; the latter program was introduced in fall 2018 as a means of addressing low pay for infant-toddler teachers specifically.¹²⁷ Although we do not include them in our indicators, some states offer stipends available at the local level or in multiple regions of the state (e.g., Arizona, California, Florida, Texas, Iowa).¹²⁸

Change Over Time: Since 2018, there has been a decrease in the overall number of states with stipend programs: three states lost stipend programs (Kansas, Pennsylvania, and Utah), while two other states established stipend programs (Nebraska, and Tennessee). Similarly, the same two states have early educator tax credits (Louisiana and Nebraska) in 2020 as in 2018, though bills were introduced between 2018 and 2020 to create such tax credits in a number of states (e.g., Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia).

Indicator 6: Is there a statewide bonus to supplement early educator pay?

Rationale: Like stipends or tax credits, bonuses can provide a measure of financial relief to educators in the absence of wage increases. Bonuses are typically small cash awards that in contrast to stipends/tax credits, are usually provided as a one-off recognition of educational achievement.

Current Status Across States: A total of 32 states offer statewide bonus programs; 23 of these bonus programs are linked to a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood scholarship program.¹²⁹ Seven states have multiple bonuses (Montana, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, and Washington).

Change Over Time: Since 2018, Arkansas, Maine, and Oklahoma have added a statewide bonus program.¹³⁰ Meanwhile, four states that offered a statewide bonus program in 2018 no longer offer it (Kansas, Kentucky, New Jersey, and New Mexico).



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: COMPENSATION & FINANCIAL RELIEF

- **Prioritize appropriate compensation** — wages/salaries as well as benefits (e.g., health insurance, retirement plans) — as an essential component for rebuilding the early care and education system. Include early educators working in both center- and home-based child care settings. Educate policymakers and the public at large about the importance of better pay and benefits for ensuring a skilled and stable early educator workforce.
- **Establish wage and benefit standards that:** set the wage floor at the locally assessed living wage; account for job role, experience, and education levels; and calibrate up to parity with similarly qualified elementary school teachers. Ensure regular adjustments for cost of living and changes in educational attainment.
- **Dedicate sufficient public funding** for all programs to meet wage and benefit standards. Require and monitor adherence to those standards as a condition of the funding.
- **Collect data on early educator compensation** in order to identify and remedy [racial wage gaps](#) and other pay inequities, such as [lower pay for infant-toddler teachers](#).
- **Frame advocacy messages** to clarify that financial relief initiatives (tax credits, stipends) are an interim strategy, not a long-term solution to achieve appropriate wages and benefits.

TABLE 3.7

Progress on Compensation & Financial Relief, by State/Territory, 2020

	Compensation Strategies				Financial Relief Strategies		2020 Progress
State	Salary Parity	Requirements	Guidelines or Plans	Earmarks	Stipend/ Tax Credit	Bonus	
Alabama	Parity (all)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Edging Forward
Alaska	Sub-Parity (some)	No	Yes: Plans only	Yes	No	No	Stalled
Arizona	No Parity	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Arkansas	No Parity	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
California	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	No	Stalled
Colorado	No Parity	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Connecticut	No Parity	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Delaware	Parity (some)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Edging Forward
District of Columbia	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	Yes	Yes	Edging Forward
Florida	No Parity	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Georgia	Parity (some)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Edging Forward
Hawaii	Parity (all)	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Idaho	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Illinois	No Parity	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	Yes	No	Stalled
Indiana	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Iowa	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Kansas	No Parity	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Kentucky	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled

TABLE 3.7 CONTINUED

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	Compensation Strategies				Financial Relief Strategies		2020 Progress
State	Salary Parity	Requirements	Guidelines or Plans	Earmarks	Stipend/ Tax Credit	Bonus	
Louisiana	No Parity	No	No	No	Yes	No	Stalled
Maine	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Maryland	Parity (some)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Stalled
Massachusetts	No Parity	No	No	Yes	No	No	Stalled
Michigan	No Parity	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Minnesota	Partial Parity (some)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	Yes	Yes	Stalled
Mississippi	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Missouri	Sub-Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Montana	Parity (some)	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Stalled
Nebraska	No Parity	No	Yes: Plans only	No	Yes	Yes	Stalled
Nevada	Parity (all)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Edging Forward
New Hampshire	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
New Jersey	Parity (all)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	No	Stalled
New Mexico	Parity (some)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Stalled
New York	No Parity	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
North Carolina	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	Yes	Yes	Edging Forward
North Dakota	No Parity	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Ohio	No Parity	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Stalled

TABLE 3.7 CONTINUED

CSCCE

	Compensation Strategies				Financial Relief Strategies		2020 Progress
State	Salary Parity	Requirements	Guidelines or Plans	Earmarks	Stipend/Tax Credit	Bonus	
Oklahoma	Parity (all)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Edging Forward
Oregon	No Parity	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Pennsylvania	No Parity	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Rhode Island	Parity (all)	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	No	Yes	Edging Forward
South Carolina	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
South Dakota	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Tennessee	Parity (some)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Stalled
Texas	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Utah	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Vermont	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	No	Yes	Edging Forward
Virginia	Parity (some)	No	Yes: Plans only	No	No	No	Stalled
Washington	No Parity	No	Yes: Guidelines	No	No	Yes	Stalled
West Virginia	Parity (some)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Stalled
Wisconsin	No Parity	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Stalled
Wyoming	Not Applicable	No	No	No	No	No	Stalled
Total	—	0	20	3	12	32	

TABLE 3.7 CONTINUED

CSCCE

	Compensation Strategies				Financial Relief Strategies		2020 Progress
Territory	Salary Parity	Requirements	Guidelines or Plans	Earmarks	Stipend/ Tax Credit	Bonus	
American Samoa	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Applicable
Guam	No Parity	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Applicable
Northern Mariana Islands	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Applicable
Puerto Rico	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Applicable
U.S. Virgin Islands	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Available	Not Applicable

Notes: Some states offer stipends available at the local level or in multiple regions of the state, which are not included in this table. Oregon’s Education Award (a bonus) has been discontinued due to lack of funding, but as it processed awards through June 2020, it is being counted for the 2020 Index. New Hampshire will be implementing a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program in 2021, which will include a bonus. None of the five territories could be included in this assessment because of data availability issues. For more information on state pre-K parity policies, see Friedman-Krauss, A.H., Barnett, W.S., Garver, K.A., Hodges, K.S., Weisenfeld, G.G. & Gardiner, B.A. (2020). The State of Preschool 2019: State Preschool Yearbook. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved from <http://nieer.org/state-preschool-yearbooks/2019-2>.

Endnotes - Compensation & Financial Relief

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- 122.** Defined as a scale with clearly differentiated salary increments based on qualifications and years of experience, which provides guidance for salary increases over time.
- 123.** For example, in San Antonio, see Lantigua-Williams, J. (2016, March 8). How San Antonio is Navigating the Tricky Politics of Pre-K. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/03/san-antoniopre-k/472821/>.
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- 126.** For example, the Nebraska School Readiness Tax Credit is capped at \$5 million per tax year, including tax credits for owners of child care facilities as well as tax credits for staff, see Nebraska Department of Revenue & Nebraska Department of Education (2020). *School Readiness Tax Credit Act Notice*. Retrieved from https://revenue.nebraska.gov/files/doc/info/School_Readiness_Notice.pdf.
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- 128.** Some programs operate in several counties within a state; they are counted as “statewide” in the *Index* if at least half of counties participate. California has a new statewide grant program for FY2020-2021, the Quality Counts California Workforce Pathways Grant, which can be used locally for stipends, but stipends are not a required component. Local administering agencies have flexibility in whether to use funds for professional development and/or direct stipends. See California Department of Education (2020). *Quality Counts California (QCC) Workforce Pathways Grant FY 2020-21*. Retrieved from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r2/qccelcwork2021rfa.asp>.
- 129.** Oregon’s Education Award (bonus) has been discontinued due to lack of funding, but as it processed awards through June 2020, it is being counted for the 2020 *Index*.
- 130.** In addition, New Hampshire will be implementing a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program in 2021, which will include a bonus.