

# Education and Experience of the California ECE Workforce

By Yoonjeon Kim, Lea J.E. Austin, Elena Montoya, and Anna Powell



**This data snapshot focuses on the education and experience of family child care providers, center directors, and center-based teaching staff in California.** It is one of a series of releases from CSCCE's [2020 California Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Workforce Study](#), the first comprehensive study of early educators in the state in more than 15 years.

From October through December 2020, we surveyed representative samples of approximately 2,000 center administrators and 3,000 home-based family child care (FCC)

providers, as well as non-probability samples of about 2,500 center-based teaching staff members and 280 transitional kindergarten (TK) teachers. Estimated workforce sizes for each of the populations are 24,700 FCC providers, 9,500 center directors, 60,800 center-based teachers, and 23,000 center-based assistant teachers ([data snapshot on workforce size](#)).

Transitional kindergarten teachers are critical members of the ECE workforce. Data from the TK sample are not included in this snapshot due to limitations in representativeness and comparability of data with the other populations. CSCCE published [findings on TK teachers](#) in a previous data snapshot. A more detailed report about these educators is forthcoming.

# Experience

Most early educators in California have worked in early care and education for more than a decade though, notably, center-based teaching staff have substantially less tenure than directors or family child care providers.

## TENURE IN THE SECTOR AMONG EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

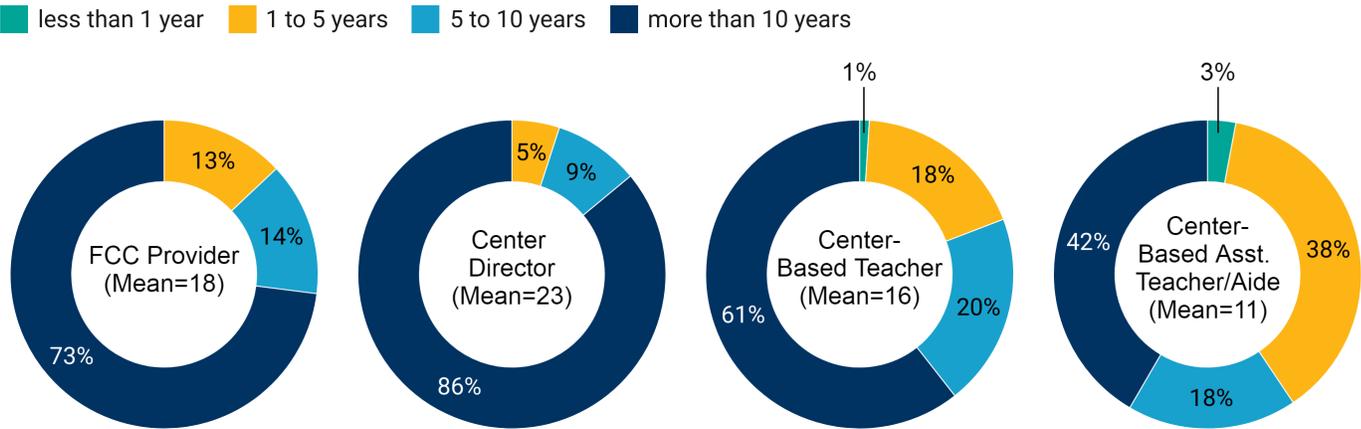


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

# Education

## Educational Attainment

Most early educators in California have earned a college degree, even when current regulations may not require this level of education. For example, among FCC providers, 30% hold a bachelor's degree or higher and another 23% have an associate degree.

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

Some college or less   Associate degree   Bachelor's degree or higher

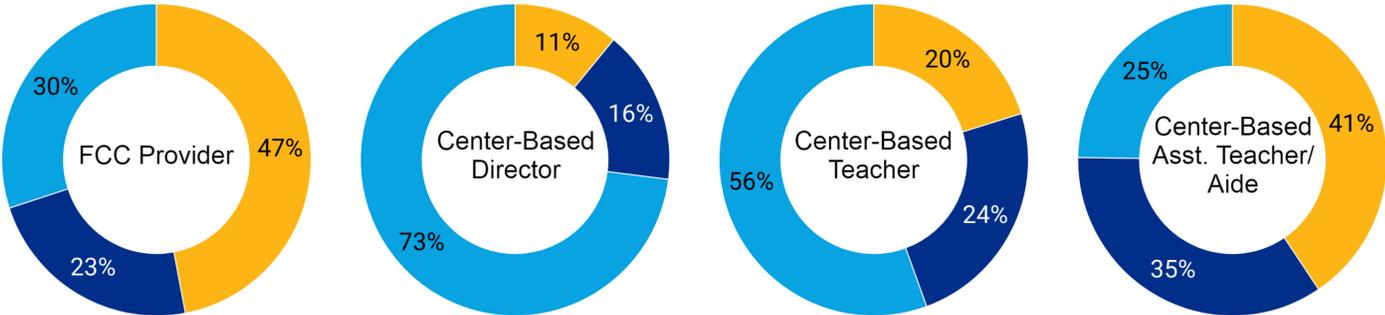


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

## Educational Attainment of Center-Based Early Educators, by Program Funding Source

Educational attainment of center-based early educators varied by program funding source. For example, center directors in Head Start or state-funded Title 5 programs were more likely to have a bachelor’s degree or higher (82%), compared to center directors in programs with other funding sources (69%). This variation may be in large part due to the [different educational requirements set for programs with different funding sources](#).

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF CENTER-BASED EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, BY PROGRAM FUNDING SOURCE, 2020

	Head Start/ Title 5	Other Programs	Statewide
<b>Center Director</b>			
Some college or less (%)	5	14	11
Associate degree (%)	14	17	16
Bachelor's degree or higher (%)	82	69	73
<b>Center-Based Teacher</b>			
Some college or less (%)	12	24	20
Associate degree (%)	30	22	24
Bachelor's degree or higher (%)	58	54	55
<b>Center-Based Assistant Teacher/Teacher Aide</b>			
Some college or less (%)	40	41	41
Associate degree (%)	39	30	35
Bachelor's degree or higher (%)	21	28	25

Notes: Centers with a contract through either Head Start, Early Head Start, or Migrant Head Start or a contract to operate a state-subsidized (Title 5) program were categorized as “Head Start/Title 5.” Centers with other funding sources were categorized as “Other Programs.”

Table: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

## Degree Major

The vast majority of center-based teaching staff and the majority of FCC providers and center directors held a major in early childhood education or child development.

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### MAJOR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AMONG EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

All Educators, Regardless of Educational Degree



Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

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Among the 73% of center directors and 56% of center-based teachers with at least a bachelor's degree, more than one half majored in early childhood education or child development. Among FCC providers and center-based teaching assistants with at least a bachelor's degree (30% and 25%, respectively), more than 40% indicated a major in these fields.

## MAJOR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AMONG EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

By Educational Degree

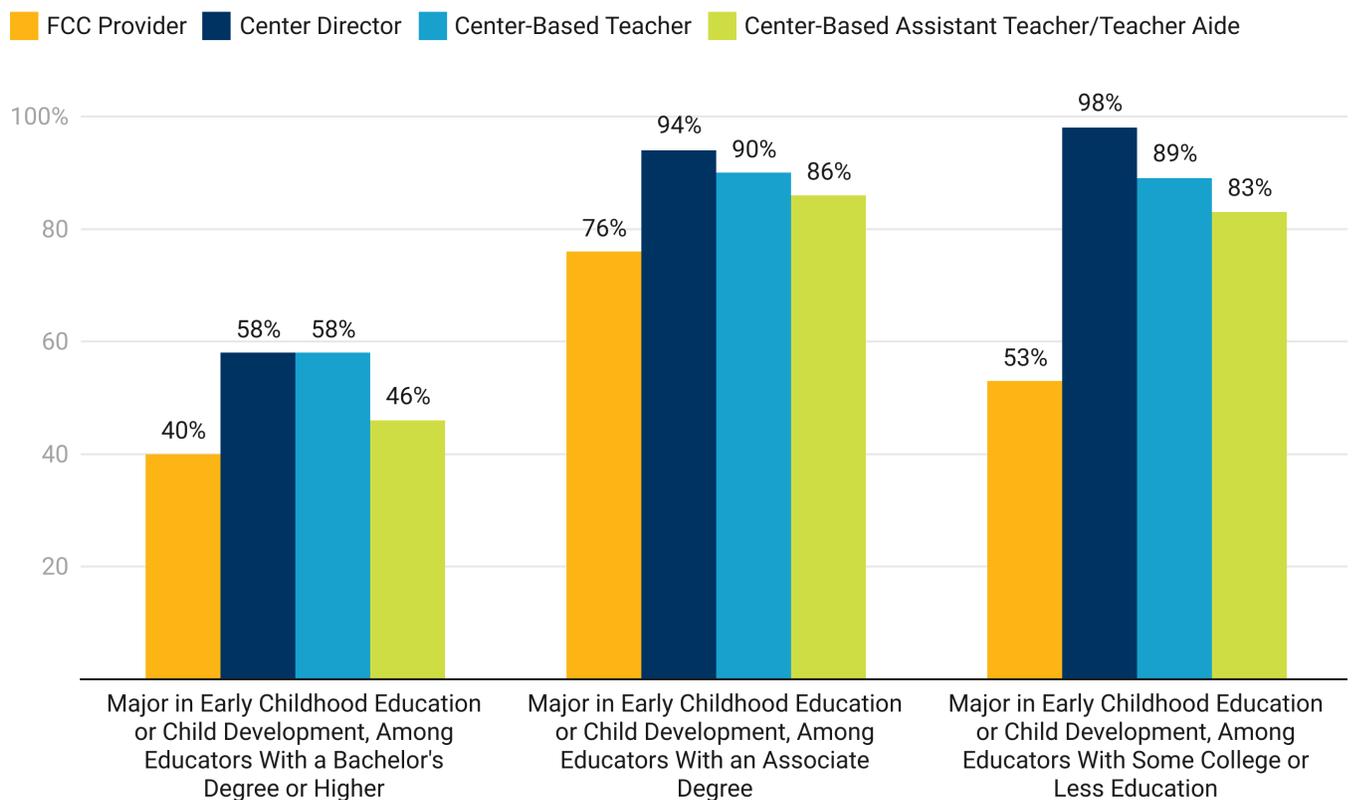


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

## Certification

### Child Development Permit

While the Child Development Teacher-level Permit is only legally required of teachers in certain state-funded programs, it is widely held by educators, totaling close to 60,000 permit holders throughout the state.

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### CHILD DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AT THE TEACHER LEVEL OR HIGHER FOR EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

All Educators, Regardless of Educational Degree

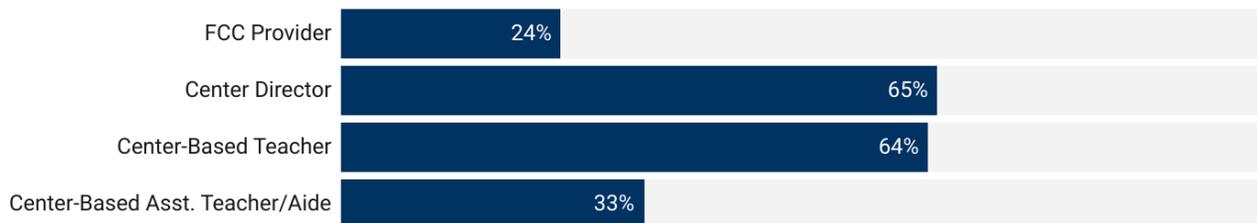


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

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Among the 73% of center directors and 56% of center-based teachers with at least a bachelor’s degree, most also hold a [Child Development Permit](#) at the teacher level or higher. Among FCC providers and center-based teaching assistants with at least a bachelor’s degree (30% and 25%, respectively), more than one third hold a Child Development Permit at the teacher level or higher.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AT THE TEACHER LEVEL OR HIGHER FOR EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

By Educational Degree

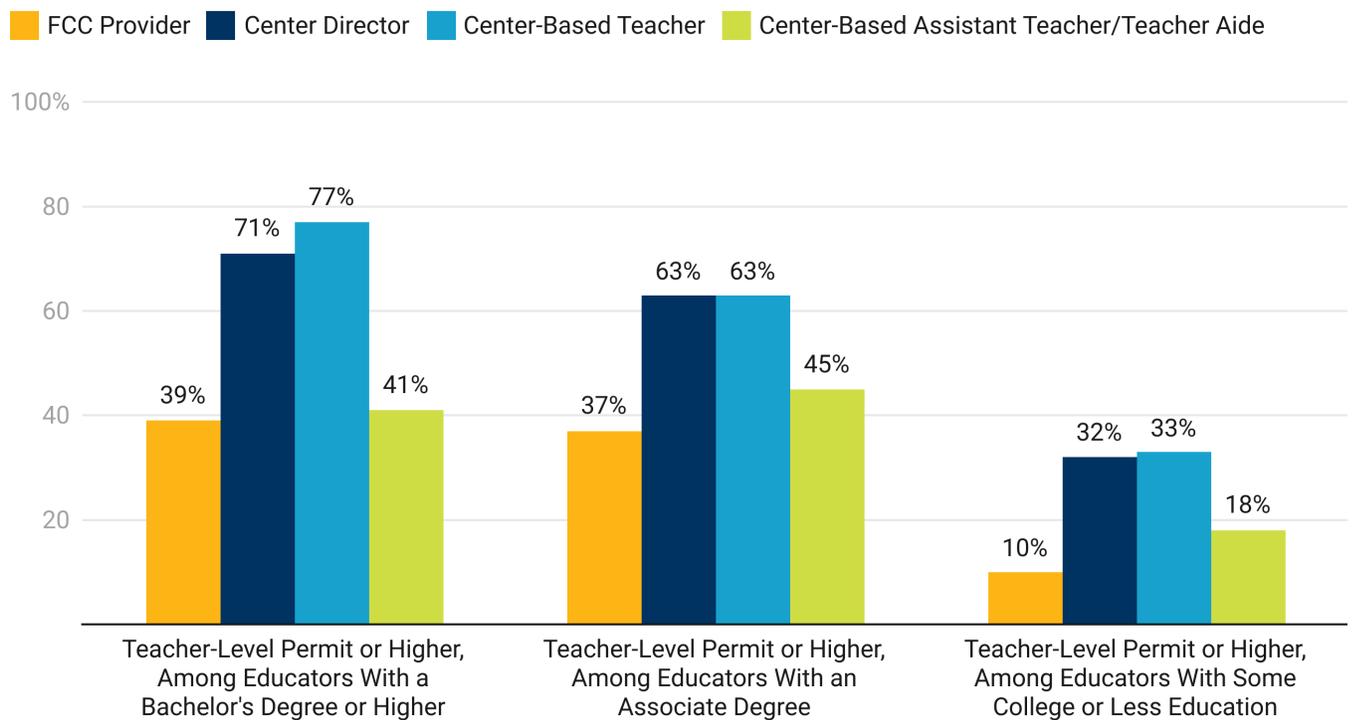


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

## Teaching Credential

No early educators in California are required to hold a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential, though more than 7,000 of them currently do.

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## MULTIPLE SUBJECT TEACHING CREDENTIAL FOR EARLY EDUCATORS IN CALIFORNIA, 2020

Educators With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher

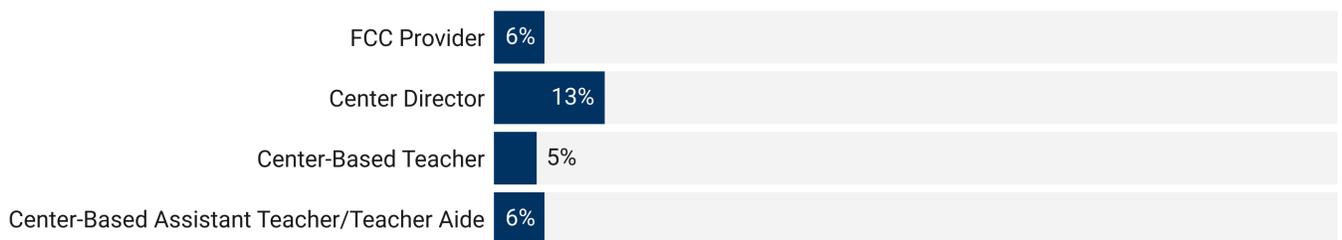


Chart: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

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## Methodology

In the California ECE Workforce Study, CSCCE asked individuals about their tenure in the early care and education field, educational attainment levels, majors for the highest level of education, California Child Development Permit levels, and California teaching credential status. For the analysis of tenure, we used an estimation sample with complete information on tenure and job role. For the analysis of educational attainment, major, and permit level, we used an estimation sample with complete information on those three items as well as measures of program funding and job role. For the analysis of teaching credentials, the sample included those with a bachelor's or higher degree with complete information on credential status. The tables in this snapshot are weighted to adjust for unequal response rates based on underlying program characteristics.

## Measures

**Workforce size** for family child care providers and center directors is based on the total number of programs from data provided by the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network for centers and FCC providers in 2019. For the estimated size of the workforce of center-based teachers and assistant teachers/teacher aides, we derived an average number of paid teaching staff per program from a statewide representative sample of center directors and FCC providers through the Workforce Study. A weighted total was calculated using the total number of programs in 2019.

For **education**, we asked respondents to report on the highest level of schooling that they had completed. Original response options included seven categories, ranging from “less than a high school diploma” to “doctoral degree.” For our analysis, we combined the original categories into three categories: some college or less, associate degree, and bachelor’s degree or higher.

For **major**, we asked respondents about the major of their highest degree. We created an indicator variable for those who selected either “Early Childhood Education” or “Child Development.”

For **permit level**, survey respondents could select whether they hold a California Child Development Permit and, if so, at what level. Original response options included seven categories, including “I do not have a permit,” “Assistant Teacher,” and “Program Director.” For our analysis, we created an indicator variable on whether the respondent held a permit at the teacher, master teacher, site supervisor, or program director level.

For **multiple subject teaching credential**, we asked respondents with a bachelor’s degree or higher whether they hold a current California teaching credential and, if so, which type(s). An indicator variable was created for those who selected “Multiple Subject.”

For **tenure**, we asked respondents to provide the year they started working in the early childhood field. We grouped the responses in four categories: less than 1 year, 1 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, and more than 10 years.

For **program funding**, centers with a contract through either Head Start, Early Head Start, or Migrant Head Start or a contract to operate a state-subsidized (Title 5) program were categorized as “Head Start/Title 5.” All other centers were categorized as “Other Programs.”

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## Correction

This data snapshot was updated on October 5, 2022. The proportion of center-based assistant teachers/teacher aides with a Child Development Permit at the teacher level of higher in the figure on page 7 and the corresponding text above the figure have been changed to correct a previous error. In the original publication, the proportion was 41 percent. It is now corrected to 33 percent.

## Suggested Citation

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**Editor:** Deborah Meacham