

# The Multilayered Effects of Racism on Early Educators in California: An Examination of Disparities in Wages, Leadership Roles, & Education

One of the greatest strengths of the early care and education (ECE) field is its diverse workforce. In California, about two-thirds are women of color, largely mirroring the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the children and families they serve. Yet, a report by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment shows that racial and ethnic disparities affect how much they are paid, the jobs they hold, and more.



## Black and Latina educators

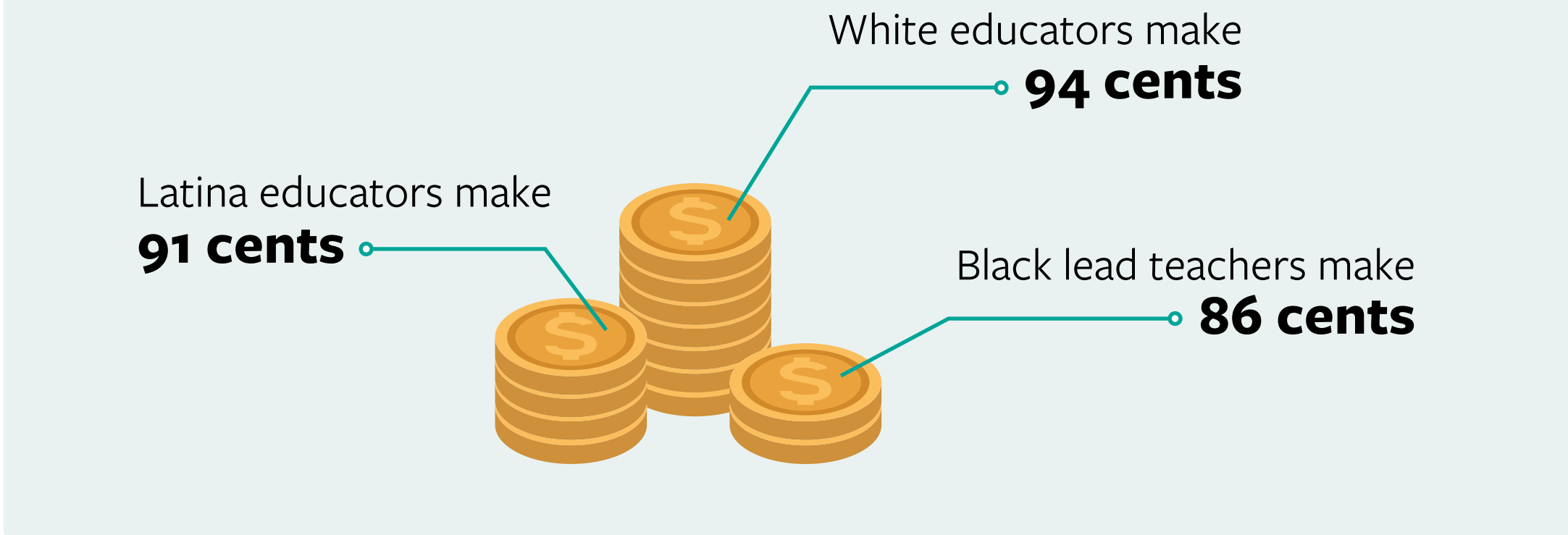
- ▶ Are disproportionately employed in lower-paying roles.
- ▶ Are consistently paid less than Asian or White educators across job roles.
- ▶ Black educators are overrepresented among home-based providers, who are more likely to face resource shortages and economic distress.

## White educators

- ▶ Are more likely to serve in leadership roles and are consistently paid higher wages across job roles, regardless of education levels.

## How Do Wage Gaps Affect Lead Teachers?

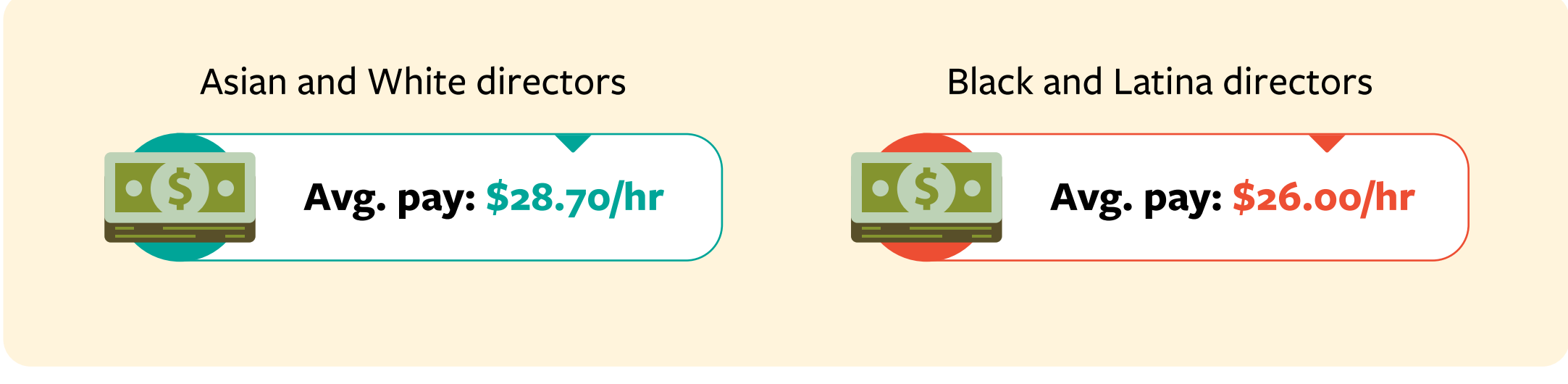
For every dollar paid to Asian lead teachers...



## That adds up to

- ▶ **\$2,800 less per year** for White lead teachers
- ▶ **\$3,900 less per year** for Latina lead teachers
- ▶ **\$6,000 less per year** for Black lead teachers

## How Do Wage Gaps Affect Center Directors?



- ▶ **Latina child care center directors** make **87 cents** for every dollar earned by White or Asian directors.

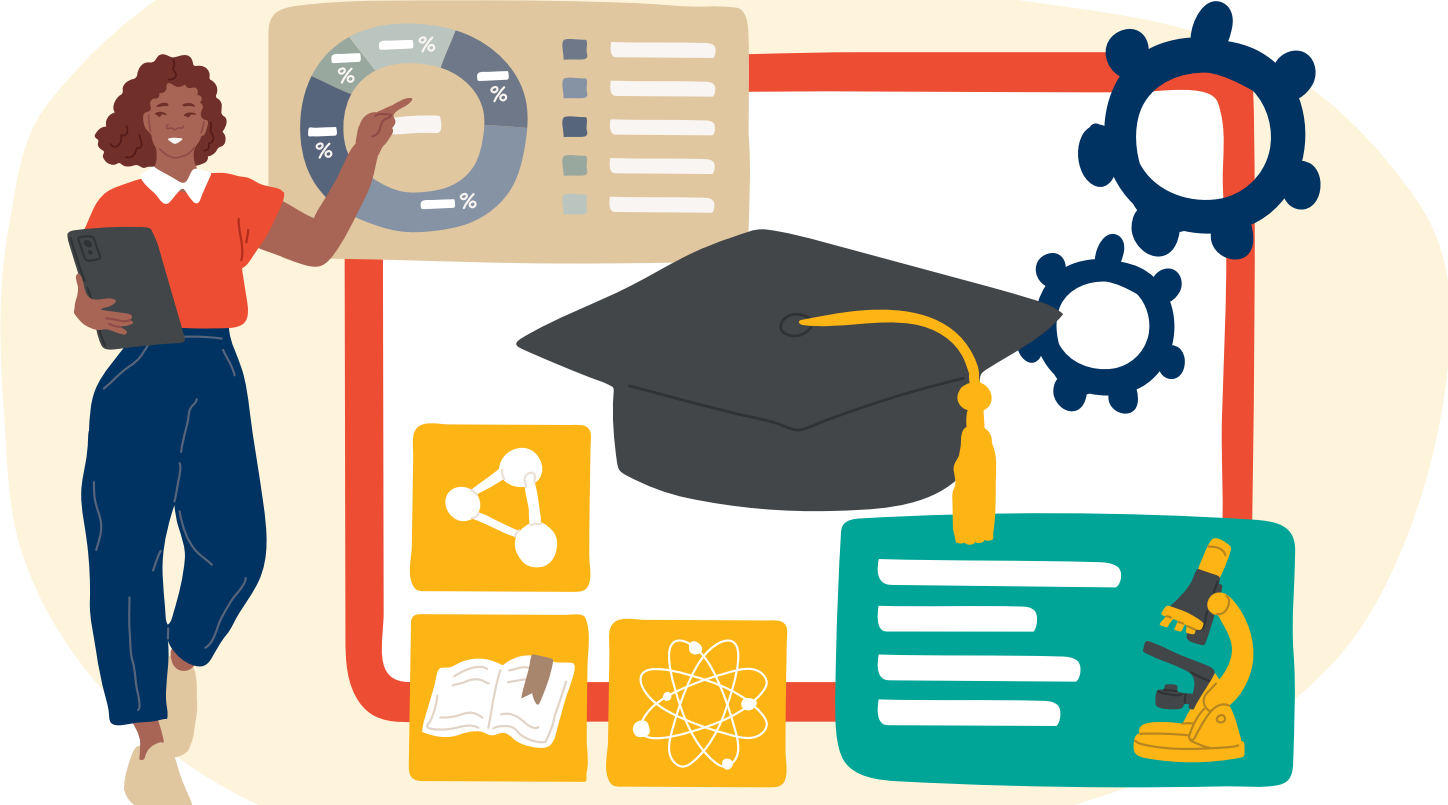
- ▶ **Black child care center directors** make **94 cents** for every dollar earned by White or Asian directors.

## Those wage gaps add up to

- ▶ **\$7,700 less per year** for Latina directors
- ▶ **\$3,600 less per year** for Black directors

## Does Education Play a Role?

Though further education is typically associated with higher levels of pay, **education pay premiums are not equitably applied.**



- ▶ **Black lead teachers** are not rewarded for obtaining higher educational degrees
- ▶ Black directors were more likely than White directors to hold a bachelor's degree or higher (**82% compared to 72%**), but were paid lower wages than White directors (**\$27.00, compared to \$28.70**)

- ▶ **Asian educators** are often paid less when holding a higher degree
- ▶ When comparing median wages among educators with a bachelor's degree or higher, **White educators were consistently paid higher wages than most educators of color**

## Wage bumps for advancing from lead teacher to a director position



- ▶ **White educators: +\$9.20**
- ▶ **Black educators: +\$9.00**
- ▶ **Asian educators: +\$7.80**
- ▶ **Latina educators: +\$6.00**

## Wage bumps for advancing from assistant teacher to lead teacher



- ▶ **Asian educators: +\$4.80**
- ▶ **Latina educators: +\$3.00**
- ▶ **White educators: +\$2.50**
- ▶ **Black educators: +\$1.40**

## Solutions

Policymakers must address these disparities and provide the public funding needed to support early educators and a thriving early care and education system. Systems and processes are needed to safeguard decision making from the effects of individuals' stereotypes and biases. The findings from this report and other California ECE Workforce Study publications can inform those policy changes.



### Solution 1

- ▶ Update a state's reimbursement rate-setting methodology with salary standards that consider education level, tenure, and job role. This can ensure fair compensation regardless of program type, location, or an educator's race and ethnicity.

### Solution 2

- ▶ When creating new policies, ask: Is equity a policy goal? How is equity defined? What are actionable steps to reach this goal? Also, ensure educators of color are at the table.

### Solution 3

- ▶ State leaders and advocates should use early care and education workforce data to build an understanding of who benefits from specific policies and who is being excluded or harmed by these policies.



Learn more about our findings and recommendations:

**The Multilayered Effects of Racism on Early Educators in California: An Examination of Disparities in Wages, Leadership Roles, and Education**

© Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2024