



July 07, 2020

Dear Subcommittee Chairman Danny K. Davis and members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on the Child Care Crisis and the Coronavirus Pandemic,

My name is Kelly Smith and I am the President for the National Workforce Registry Alliance (the Alliance). The Alliance is a national 501c3 membership organization representing 41 state ECE and After School Workforce Registries, as well as numerous individual and organizational members. We have been committed to strengthening data collection on the Early Childhood Education (ECE) essential workforce since 2009, by supporting state workforce registries, connecting policy makers to state and national data, and coordinating research and publications related to ECE workforce development. We also host an annual national conference highlighting childhood development workforce data, ECE professional development systems, and encouraging information dissemination. Today I am reaching out to share with you state workforce registry examples of essential workforce data that may inform your policy conversations and decisions more deeply.

Early childhood workforce registries are active in 44 state professional development systems. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, registries have served an integral role: collaborating with state leaders and the child development workforce to disseminate pandemic and reopening information, providing opportunities for professional development training while socially distancing, and granting unprecedented access to providers to inform researchers and decision makers at the Federal and state levels with ongoing and live updates. For example, through state workforce registries, the Alliance facilitated access to over 700,000 providers for Yale University, as they conducted a national study on the transmission of Coronavirus and child care professionals. Study results are anticipated by July 15.

State registries help keep a finger on the pulse of available care. Maine, for example, reported that the state did not mandate child care closings and at the peak in April, the state was operating at 57% of capacity. With more programs re-opening, they are reporting that approximately only 30% of children and families are choosing to return, impacting the ability to retain staff and sustain operations.

In many states, ECE workforce registries have the unique task of approving, tracking, and recognizing workforce professional development. An example of how state workforce registries adapted to and enabled the workforce during the pandemic included continuing to make workforce training options accessible to essential workers. Ohio's state funded professional development is provided through their online learner management system. During April-June, there were 140,219 state funded (free to the workforce) training sessions completed online by the ECE workforce. In the state of Maine, they tracked over 1,695 practitioners completing on-demand training and an additional 1,405 practitioners completing 40 offerings in the statewide moodle platform completed during the months of March-May. Another 133 Community of Practice calls were developed and facilitated via Zoom statewide by the Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network.

Examples of completed training included providing access to Center for Disease Control guidelines to reopening, resiliency training, and cultural competency training. Colorado, for example, had to cancel the

regional ECE conference, the day before it was scheduled to open, due to COVID-19, leaving thousands of professionals struggling to fulfill annual training requirements. Within 24 hours, the CO Professional Development Information System was able to streamline the training approval process to stand up an online forum and distribute to presenters. Within days, participants were able to access live remote sessions, free of charge.

Additionally, registries provide a variety of unique support in each state: from technical assistance to state specific surveys, outreach to providers at risk (CA, IL), developing their websites to link essential workers with access point to open care (OH), aggregating, disseminating, and creating resources for the workforce (AZ, CA, ME). Many state registries are working to ensure the workforce pipeline is not interrupted by collaborating with the Department of Public Instruction to ensure high school students could continue to complete ECE coursework (NC); scholarship dollars were provided to help with credential completion (OH). There are states for whom the CARES Act funds were disseminated through the workforce registries to help connect support directly to care providers (IL, OH, ME). In the state of CA, they are creating an emergency substitute pool. Stipends and Recovery Grants (ME) have also been disbursed via registries.

In Ohio, the Governor's office allocated \$60 million dollars of the CARES Act funding in Ohio for direct support to child care to re-open programs. The Pandemic Support Payment Grants application process was through the Ohio Professional Registry. Program Administrators from center based, family child care and day camp programs logged into their Registry Profile to access the grant application and reconciliation application. There were 3,354 programs approved for \$30.5 million dollars in June. The remainder of the funding will be provided through an application process in July. These grants provided funding for assistance in covering the cost of COVID-19 classroom dividers, cleaning supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), temporary sinks, thermometers, and other expenses to meet COVID-19 licensing requirements. In addition to the COVID-19 Payment, Child Care Centers are also eligible for a Ratio Support Payment. This payment is intended to support Child Care Centers as a result of reduced ratios.

We at the Alliance applaud your efforts to steer attention toward the essential child care professional with whom our nation's social and economic well-being depends. We are here to connect you or any state representative looking for more data on the ECE workforce, at the state or national level. Our work exists to provide data that informs analysis and decision making regarding future investments in the essential workforce. We look forward to your additional discussions and support for the essential professionals that children and families, as well as the economy, can not do without.

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