

Recommendation for Federal Funds Allocated to Child Care in Arkansas

AECA Public Policy Committee May, 2021

Section 6: Recruit & Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

Section 6.3.1: AECA is especially grateful for the proposed expansion of the successful [Teacher Education and Compensation Helps](#) (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood Scholarship program. We believe T.E.A.C.H. Employer-Sponsors should be in the process of working towards higher levels of quality. In addition, we want to make sure an adequate number of teacher scholarships are available to programs serving low-income children.

- We recommend the addition of a wait list priority system for employer-sponsors that would include some participation in Better Beginnings as well as having a current CCDF participant agreement on file.
- We also recommend adding a loan repayment option to recognize members of the ECE workforce who began pursuing their formal education prior to the availability of the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program.

Section 6.3.1: Social-Emotional (SE) Learning Supports for Children, Staff, and Families

AECA is asking that Arkansas use existing and new resources to support the Social-Emotional needs of the adults in children's lives, including:

- Providing the necessary funding for a minimum of five social emotional learning coordinators to be housed throughout the state.
- Increasing the current allocation for Array partners. We hope this expansion will include, but not be limited to, expanding the pilot that broadens the options to building trauma-informed ECE.
- Expanding models that are currently a part of Array.

Array partners work together in regional teams, in collaboration with the staff of funding partner DHS/DCCECE, to offer ECE providers in AR communities a full continuum of coordinated social-emotional training and supports to increase self-regulation and social-emotional skills in staff, children and families and reduce challenging behavior in the classroom.