



**Florida Staff  
Retention Study  
For Early Head  
Start And Head  
Start Programs  
(2016)**

# Introduction

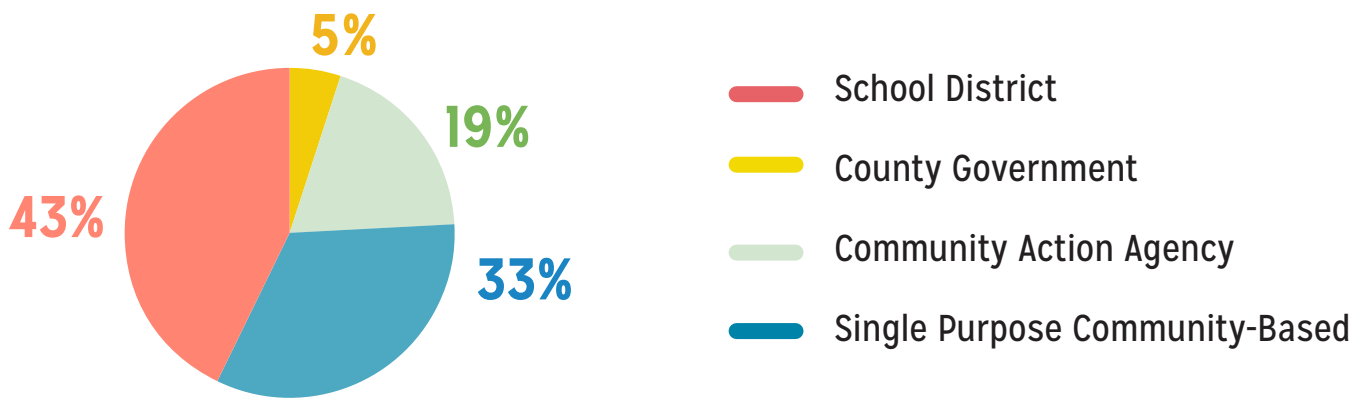
Attracting and retaining a qualified workforce for Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Florida is central to achieving the best outcomes for children and their families. To examine retention rates and factors impacting retention and turnover for instructional staff employed at Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) programs throughout the state, an instructional staff retention survey was administered to Florida grantees and delegates. The survey addressed turnover rates, reasons for turnover, and factors linked to staff retention such as benefits and retention policies. The study questions along with key findings are presented in this brief report.

## Survey Participants

A geographically diverse sample of 21 Florida EHS/HS grantees and delegates responded to the survey representing all regions and 40 of the 67 counties.

- ◆ Distributed about evenly across regions (South = 29%; North and Central = 35%).
- ◆ Variation on program (67% provided EHS; 91% provided HS) and organizational type.

### Percentage of Programs by Organizational Type.



## Findings

### Benefits

*What benefits do programs offer to instructional staff?*

- ◆ Life Insurance, Health Insurance and Retirement/Pension benefits are most frequently covered by programs (either full or partial coverage).
- ◆ Dental insurance and disability benefits are least frequently covered.



### Percentage of Programs Offering Various Types of Benefits.

Benefit	Percentage of Programs Offering Coverage		
	Fully Covered	Partially Covered	Not Covered
Retirement/Pension	38%	57%	5%
Health Insurance	29%	67%	6%
Life Insurance	62%	14%	24%
Tuition Reimbursement	29%	52%	19%
Dental Insurance	10%	19%	71%
Short-Term Disability	10%	14%	76%
Long-Term Disability	24%	14%	62%

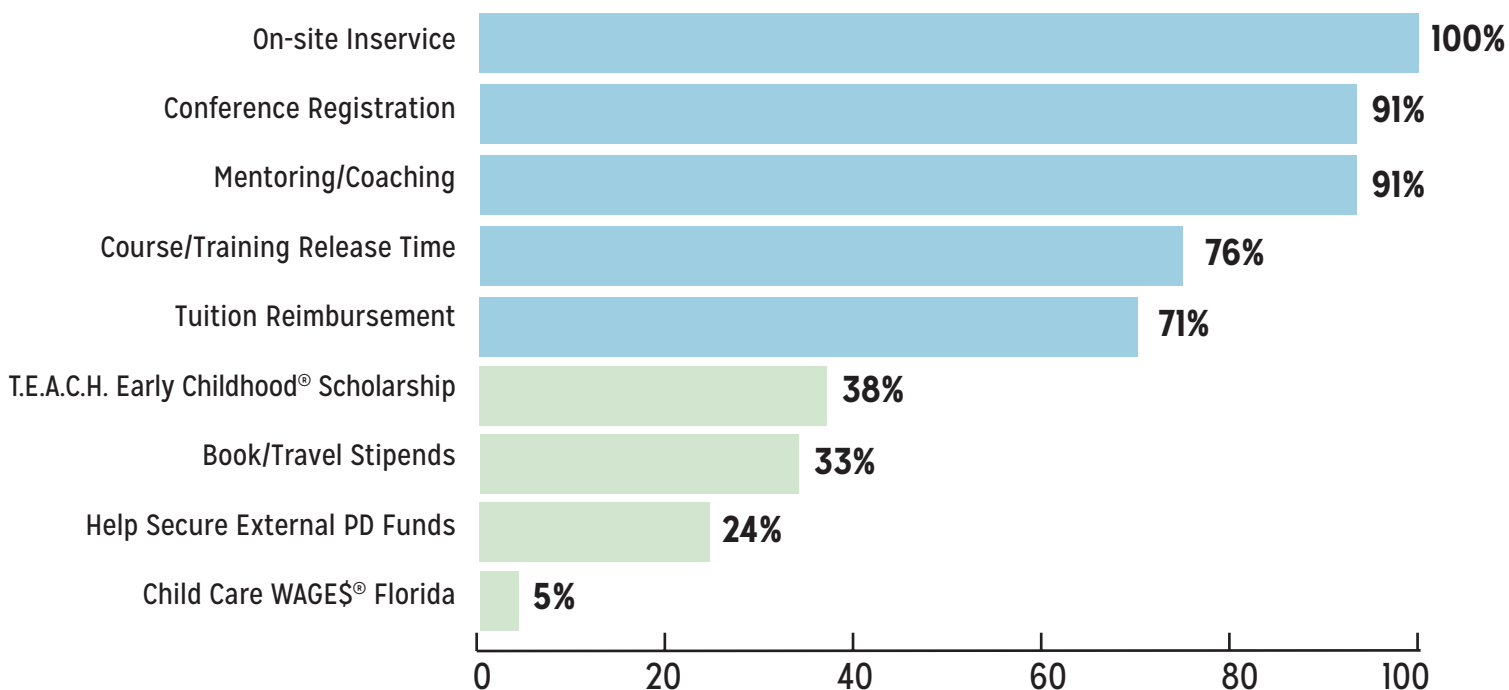
# Professional Development and Other Offerings

*What professional development offerings are most often provided?*

*What retention policies and practices are most often implemented?*

Offerings most frequently provided include various professional development (PD) supports, annual staff evaluations, written personnel policies, fringe benefits and opportunities for promotion.

## Percentage of Programs Providing Professional Development Offerings.



## Percentage of Programs Implementing Retention Policies and Practices.

**70%+**  
Programs

**40% to 69%**  
of Programs

**<40%**  
of Programs

- ◆ *Written annual evaluations*
- ◆ *Personnel policies*
- ◆ *Fringe benefits*
- ◆ *Promotion opportunities*
- ◆ *Secure place for belongings*
- ◆ *Paid planning time*
- ◆ *Training expenses covered*
- ◆ *Adult bathrooms*

- ◆ *Formal mentoring/coaching*
- ◆ *Recognition Activities*
- ◆ *Paid breaks*
- ◆ *Paid lunch periods*
- ◆ *Paid time off for trainings*
- ◆ *Paid bereavement leave*
- ◆ *Written salary schedule*
- ◆ *Competitive salary*
- ◆ *Overtime Compensation*
- ◆ *Separate staff lounge*

- ◆ *Paid job-protected maternity/ paternity leave*
- ◆ *Free/reduced-price child care*
- ◆ *Flexible work schedules*
- ◆ *Written contract*
- ◆ *Participate in T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship*
- ◆ *Participate in Child Care WAGES® Florida*

# Compensation and Turnover rates

## Salary

### What is the typical salary range offered to instructional staff?

- ◆ Typical hourly wage is \$11.50 for EHS and \$15.50 for HS.
- ◆ There is wide variation in hourly wages ranging from \$8.50 to \$24.50 for EHS and \$10.50 to \$36.00 for HS.
- ◆ Instructional staff employed at programs with high retention rates make better wages; especially at HS programs.
  - Programs ranking in the top six on staff retention were categorized in the high-retention group.
  - Due to the small sample size, these findings may or may not be representative of all EHS/HS high retention programs.

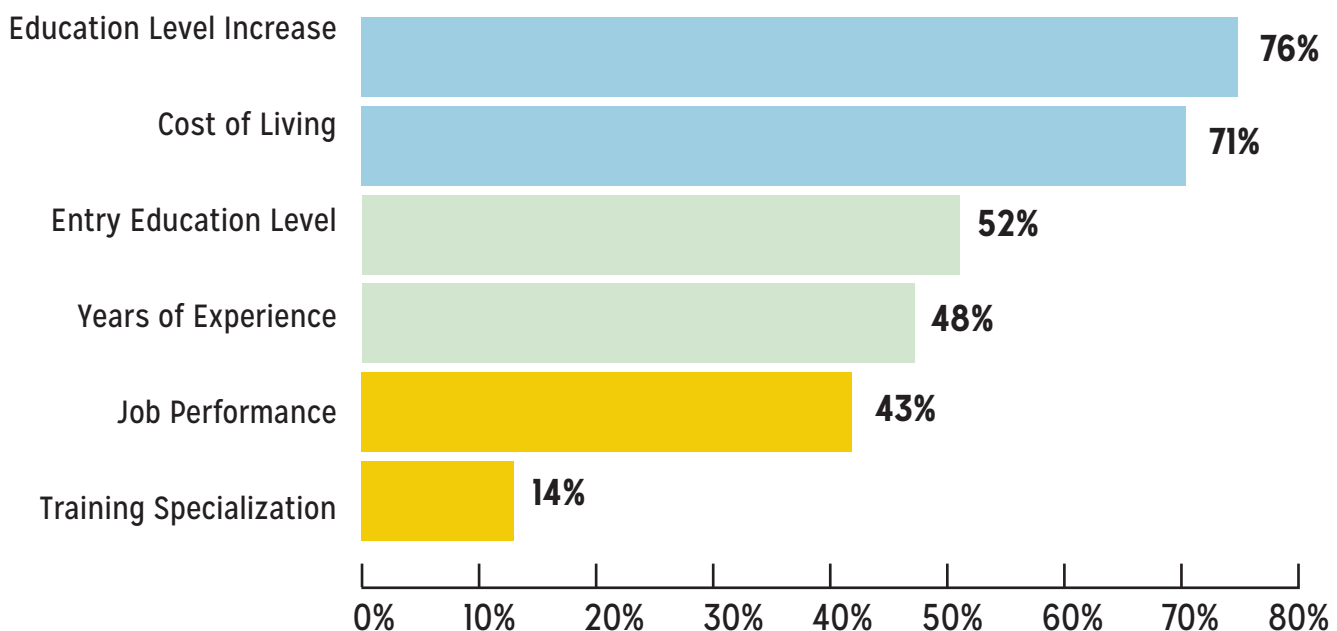
### Median and Variation in Hourly Wages Across Programs.

Programs	Typical Hourly Wage	
	Range	Median
Early Head Start (N=11)		
All Programs	\$8.50 to \$24.50	\$11.50
High Retention Programs	\$11.50 to \$24.50	\$12.00
Head Start (N = 17)		
All Programs	\$10.50 to \$36.00	\$15.50
High Retention Programs	\$11.00 to \$36.00	\$28.00

### What factors most impact salary increases and bonuses?

The two most frequent reasons that instructional staff are given raises or bonuses are for making educational improvements and as a result of increases in the cost of living.

### Percentage of Programs: Factors Impacting Pay Rate Increases and Bonuses.



## Turnover

*What are the typical turnover rates experienced by EHS/HS programs?*

### Early Head Start

- ◆ 17% median instructional staff turnover
- ◆ Median turnover rates ranged from 5% to 28%

### Head Start

- ◆ 23% median instructional staff turnover
- ◆ Median turnover rates ranged from 0% to 64%

## Reasons for Leaving

*How often are exit interviews used to understand reasons for leaving employment?*

- ◆ Most Programs conduct exit interviews (76%) but rates of staff completing an interview are relatively low.
- ◆ Only 25% report all or nearly all leavers complete an exit interview.

*What are the major reasons for instructional staff leaving EHS/HS programs?*

1. Got another job that better fit their needs.
  - ◆ EHS staff typically went to another ECE related job.
  - ◆ HS staff typically went to the public school system or another ECE related job.
2. Wages or benefits were too low.

## Improving Retention

*What factors have the greatest potential to improve instructional staff retention?*

- ◆ The top three factors most likely to improve retention include (1) offering competitive salaries, (2) providing bonuses and raises, and (3) offering competitive benefits packages.
- ◆ Lower ranked factors are not necessarily considered less important, rather it is perceived that changes in those factors would have less of an impact on retention rates relative to changes in higher ranked factors.
  - For example, PD opportunities are clearly valued as most programs already provide multiple PD supports and may feel that less change is needed in this area.

**Rank Order of Retention Factors from Biggest to Smallest Impact.**

### Rank Order of Factors for Improving Retention

- #1 = Improving this factor will have the biggest impact on retention.
- #9 = Improving this factor will have the smallest impact on retention.

- #1. Competitive Salary
- #2. Opportunities for bonuses/raises
- #3. Competitive benefits package
- #4. Opportunities for promotion
- #5. Supportive work environment
- #6. Availability of classroom supports
- #7. Staff involvement in program decision making
- #8. Professional development opportunities
- #9. Flexible work schedules

**#1**

**Competitive Salary**

**#2**

**Opportunities for bonuses/raises**

**#3**

**Competitive benefits package**



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