

T.E.A.C.H.

Early Childhood[®] Florida

Impact Report 2020-2021

5,031 total scholars including
816 HS CTE scholars

\$10M

invested in T.E.A.C.H.
scholarships



25,981

credits taken

66

colleges,
universities, and
training organizations



2,100

employer sponsors
60% For-Profit



19.5 Bachelor
15.6 Associate

Average credits per
completed contract

6% turnover rate
for T.E.A.C.H. scholars.

National rate is **30%**

2,689

scholars



3.47

average GPA

93%

of sponsors saw
positive changes
in their teachers



99%

of scholars and sponsors
would recommend



165,618

children benefitting



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program

Action Requested: Support fully funding the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program at \$10M. The full appropriation will fund approximately 6,000 scholarships in 2022-23.

Issue: Brain research makes it clear that early experiences are critical for successful brain development, and making sure these quality early experiences are possible is far more effective than trying to address problems at a later age. It takes a qualified, educated, stable, and effective early childhood educator to provide the types of experiences that are needed to build trust and *promote learning and readiness for kindergarten*. Children, particularly those from low-income, vulnerable families, who receive quality early care and education, are more likely to be readers by third grade, graduate high school, pursue secondary education, and go on to be contributing members of society. Unfortunately, many of those working in VPK and early learning programs throughout Florida do not have the education and training to ensure that children receive the maximum benefit from their experiences, a fact exacerbated by low wages and high staff turnover. *COVID-19 has exacerbated the challenges to the early learning workforce making access to T.E.A.C.H. scholarships even more critical*. The T.E.A.C.H. program successfully addresses these three key issues (teacher education, turnover, and compensation) to improve the outcomes for Florida's children. To increase the supply of well-prepared teachers, continuation of funding is needed to serve early childhood educators who are eligible and receiving scholarships.

Background: The T.E.A.C.H. program (F.S. Chapter 1002.95), first received statewide funding in 1998 to assist early childhood educators, and over 60,000 scholarships have been provided to over 39,000 scholars since that time. The program was level funded for 13 years at \$3M annually. Tuition costs since 2002 have more than tripled, which means fewer students can be served. The program received an appropriation of \$10M for 2020-21, which included \$3M recurring and \$7M non-recurring dollars, making it possible to serve many more early childhood educators. Early childhood educators typically earn very low wages, making higher education unattainable without help. The T.E.A.C.H. program consistently produces data-informed, measurable outcomes that address the challenges of the field (**teacher education, turnover, and compensation**) and provides access to well-trained and qualified counselors through the T.E.A.C.H. program office to help them navigate the often-confusing landscape of professional development and higher education options.

How T.E.A.C.H. Works: The T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program is a successful three-way partnership between the employer, the teacher, and the T.E.A.C.H. program addressing the problems of **teacher education, turnover, and compensation** in the child care and early learning field. The employer agrees to pay a portion of the costs for tuition and books, and provides paid release time weekly for the teacher to handle duties such as attending classes and completing homework assignments. The employer also agrees to provide at least a 2% raise or bonus at the end of a successful contract. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship participant (scholar) agrees to pay a portion of the tuition and books, and agrees to remain employed at their sponsoring center for one year beyond the end of the contract. The T.E.A.C.H. program agrees to pay a majority of the costs and provides a bonus upon successful completion. The T.E.A.C.H. program, created and licensed by the Child Care Services Association in North Carolina, operates in 22 states and the District of Columbia. The Children's Forum in Tallahassee holds the license to administer the T.E.A.C.H. program in Florida. For additional information, contact the Children's Forum toll-free at 877-FL-TEACH or visit the website at teach-fl.com.

¹Citations for supporting research are available upon request.