

CCCAP Teacher Wage Pilot: Year 1 Evaluation Snapshot

Findings from the Early Childhood Stimulus Evaluation Hub Data Through July 2024









Stimulus Funding. The Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) administered over \$700 million in [federal and state stimulus funding](#) to address pandemic recovery needs and strengthen Colorado's early childhood sector.

Evidence Building. The Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab served as the [Early Childhood Stimulus Evaluation Hub](#) (the Hub), overseeing high-quality evaluations of 18 stimulus-funded strategies. Research teams conducted the evaluations with Hub support, and the Hub synthesized and aligned findings for policy and program improvements.

Colorado Child Care Assistance Plan (CCCAP) Teacher Salary Increase Evaluation. The Colorado Lab engaged MDRC to evaluate the [CCCAP Teacher Salary Increase Pilot](#) (Pilot). The evaluation is also being funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as part of a larger Building and Sustaining the Child Care and Early Education Workforce (BASE) project led by MDRC. This brief represents year 1 evaluation work conducted through July 2024. A full set of findings from years 1 and 2 of the Pilot will be available in late 2025.

The Pilot aims to bring pay for early care and education teachers equal to or close to a livable wage. The Pilot is being evaluated using a mixed methods approach to examine effects on teacher retention, economic well-being, and other teacher- and center-level outcomes. The evaluation also examines how the Pilot is being implemented, including the required costs and infrastructure, and explores why a small group of Pilot teachers left their job after the pay raise. Overall findings suggest that continued investment in wage increases is warranted and continued follow-up with these centers and teachers using improved data systems can help track retention rates over time and assess the longer-term effects of the Pilot.

Key Findings & Recommendations

-  Among Pilot Centers, 76% of teachers remained in their center one year later compared to 69% in Control centers. While this was not statistically significant, a 7-percentage point increase in retention is substantively meaningful and warrants further research.
-  There was evidence of reduced material hardship for Pilot teachers, including less food insecurity and fewer unpaid bills.
-  Evidence also suggests increased job satisfaction, more positive perceptions of working conditions, and reductions in depressive symptoms reported by Pilot teachers.
-  When Pilot teachers did leave their jobs, results from exit interviews suggest that low wages were not a primary reason for teachers leaving.
-  The costs to centers of implementing the Pilot were likely more than offset by potential savings from reductions in teacher turnover, which were driven largely by the reduced director and staff time that was devoted to recruitment and hiring, training and on-boarding, and vacancy coverage.
-  Continued investment in wage increases for teachers, improved data systems for program monitoring, and continued evaluation of longer-term effects are promising strategies for Colorado's early childhood system.

This brief is not a product of the BASE project and does not necessarily reflect the views of OPRE/ACF.