The Effects of Coronavirus on Early Childhood Educators of Color

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Presenters

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For 50 years, the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) has been committed to our mission “to improve and advance the quality of life for Black children and families through education and advocacy.”
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NBCDI Focus Areas

NBCDI efforts focus on:

• Early Care and Education:
  - NBCDI supports increased access to effective education by providing professional development scholarships for early childhood educators.

• Health and Wellness.

• Family Engagement.

• Literacy.

• Child Welfare.

• Policy and Advocacy.
NBCDI Action Agenda

• Challenge early learning systems to eliminate suspensions and expulsions in early childhood education and provide appropriate support for teachers responding to the needs of children.

• Challenge early learning centers and elementary schools to provide comprehensive, aligned wrap-around supports as a core service.

• Challenge school districts to better equip educators to meaningfully partner with parents and humanely engage and effectively educate Black children of diverse backgrounds.

• Challenge parents and caregivers to engage in daily brain development activities and healthy practices that support social-emotional and cognitive development.

• Challenge all adults in the Black community to invest their energy and talents in public education spaces to ensure the success of every Black child.
**NBCDI’s Responsible Transformation of the ECE Workforce Initiative**

- Examines the impact new education requirements may have on Black early childhood educators.
- Explores how best to implement a Bachelor’s degree requirement for early childhood educators in communities that serve Black children by strengthening, not displacing, the current workforce.
- **Goal:** To increase access to high-quality early childhood education (ECE) by raising education requirements in the early childhood education workforce without displacing Black educators.
Impact of 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education Ruling

In the United States, Black educators have historically been displaced, with the integration of schools resulting in the disenfranchisement of tens of thousands of Black educators in K-12.
Impact of 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education Ruling

- **38,000 Black teachers and administrators** in 21 southern and southern-bordering states lost their jobs.
- Black principals were also demoted en masse.
  - Alabama: The number of Black principals declined from 210 to 57.
  - Virginia: The number of Black principals declined from 170 to 16.
NBCDI envisions that every child in early childhood education will have well-educated and well-compensated early childhood educators who earn a living wage and have access to affordable college education.

Advocating for Equity, Diversity, and Quality.
Historical Background

Why diversity is important to ECE.
Diversity of the ECE Workforce

Race/Ethnicity by Setting: National

Center-Based Teaching Staff
- African American: 17%
- Hispanic: 16%
- White: 5%
- Other: 6%

Home-Based Providers (Listed)
- African American: 14%
- Hispanic: 16%
- White: 6%
- Other: 21%

Home-Based Providers (Unlisted, Paid)
- African American: 23%
- Hispanic: 5%
- White: 51%

Source: Early Childhood Workforce Index, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2018
Long-term Trends in ECE

• Increasing research evidence on the importance of early learning and development.
• Increasing federal and state expenditures.
• Increasing educational requirements (The BA Challenge).
• Increasing demographic diversity.

• The concern: requiring teachers to obtain a BA degree will lead to a loss of diversity in the workforce.
MEDIAN FAMILY WEALTH

NOTE: FIGURES IN 2016 DOLLARS.
SOURCE: FEDERAL RESERVE
Additional Long-term Trends

• WEALTH: On average, Black and Latino families have 10 percent of the wealth that White families have (cnbc.com).

• ACHIEVEMENT: Black and Latino children are far more likely to experience reading difficulties or reading failure (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998).

• ECE needs a diverse workforce that is culturally and linguistically responsive and well-compensated/supported in order to promote children’s learning and development.
Why is Workforce Diversity Essential?

• Cultural familiarity and responsiveness; identity formation.
• Family engagement and communication.
• Linguistic responsiveness and sustained development of children’s home languages.
• Understanding and leveraging children’s lived experiences into learning opportunities.
• Creating and sustaining children’s sense of belonging in the classroom and promoting maximum learning.
ECE Amid COVID-19

• ECE teachers were reporting increased levels of trauma and challenging behaviors among children prior to the outbreak of the pandemic.

• Black and Latino families experience disproportionately higher levels of incidence and death.

• The field must prepare for the full range of psychological and developmental impacts of the pandemic upon children’s learning and development.
ECE AMID COVID-19: Recommendations

• Retain the diversity of the workforce; increase supports and compensation to address impacts.
• Prioritize equity – culturally and linguistically responsive practices.
• Support children to cope and learn amid COVID-19.
• Support families to cope and to promote their children’s security, identity, learning, and development.
Breakout Room Discussions
Principles for Anti-Racist Policies

• Place racial equity front and center. Every policy step must be evaluated through an equity lens and ensure it takes steps to counter historic inequities experienced by people of color.

• Center the voices of people with lived experience throughout the policymaking process.

• Deliver urgent help today while forging a path to equitable systemic, long-term solutions tomorrow.
State Strategies to Support Workforce Equity

Quality, defined equitably, requires:

• Equitable workforce qualifications and standards.
• Being informed by educators and caregivers of color.
• Elevating the strengths and assets of a diverse workforce.
• Quality rating systems that incorporate diverse perspectives of quality.
Valuing early childhood professionals:
• Ongoing communication with and leadership from people who are directly impacted by policies.
• Using disaggregated and qualitative data to equitably distribute funding.
• Significant investment of public funding.
• Tracking use of federal funding.
• Equitable compensation, benefits, job safety, and access to health care.
State Strategies to Support Workforce Equity

Supporting equitable career advancement:

• Equitable access to education, training, and professional development.
• Training and technical assistance opportunities for LEP child care workers and providers.
• Support for educators in all settings, including informal and license-exempt caregivers with culturally and linguistically appropriate training, professional development, quality improvement efforts, and family support programs.
Federal Update

• Potential for more federal funds.
• Other congressional proposals.
• National advocacy – child care is essential!
For More Information

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