

# Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five

## Wisconsin's Early Care and Education Workforce: Summary Report on the Survey of Center-Based Teachers

For the Series of Studies of the Wisconsin Early  
Care and Education Workforce, Report 2

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This report provides a snapshot of the early care and education (ECE) teaching workforce in Wisconsin. This is the second report in a three-report series describing the strengths and challenges of Wisconsin's ECE system. In this report, we present findings from a survey of teachers working in center-based ECE programs. The other reports in the series describe results from a survey of [center-based ECE program directors](#) and [family child care providers](#).


The ECE Teacher Survey was sent to a sample of teachers who completed a background check to work at a licensed group program regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) to serve children ages 5 years and younger. Of the 4,000 teachers who received a survey, 2,059 (52%) responded, but some were no longer working in a teaching role at an ECE program. Our analyses focus on 1,685 teachers who were currently working as a lead, assistant, float or substitute teacher or in another teaching role. Most teachers in our sample (64%) were lead teachers, followed by assistant teachers (22%) and float or substitute teachers (11%). Most teachers (79%) worked in a 12-month per year position, and, on average, teachers worked 34 hour per week. Although teachers reported having been working at their current ECE program for an average of 5 years, 22% reported having been at their job for less than one year, suggesting substantial turnover.

### Teachers' Wages and Benefits

ECE teachers in our sample reported low wages and limited access to benefits. Teachers' median hourly wages ranged from \$11.00 for assistant teachers to \$13.55 for lead teachers. Only one in five teachers had health coverage through their ECE job, half had access to paid sick leave, and three-quarters reported having paid holidays. Lead teachers were more likely than assistant and float/substitute teachers to receive health insurance through their ECE job. Teachers working in programs with higher YoungStar ratings reported higher wages, and greater access to benefits. We also found evidence that teachers in the Southern region were better compensated than teachers in some other regions both in terms of wages and benefits.

### Teachers' Experience in ECE, Education, and Professional Development

Teachers in our sample had been working in ECE for 10 years on average, but lead teachers had more years of experience (average of 12 years) than assistant and float/substitute teachers (6 to 7 years). The vast majority of teachers (82.7%) had some college education or a college degree—with 20% having obtained an associate's degree and 27.3% having obtained a bachelor's or post-graduate degree—but lead teachers had more education than assistant and float/substitute teachers. One in five teachers was currently enrolled in a degree program. These high levels of education and enrollment are particularly striking given teachers' low wages and limited benefits. Teachers working in programs with higher YoungStar ratings had more years of experience and more education compared to those in lower-rated programs.




Teachers reported high levels of engagement in professional development (PD) opportunities. For example, nearly three-quarters had participated in some type of PD during the past 12 months, and nearly one in four reported having worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant. Most teachers reported having participated in PD related to supporting children’s social and emotional needs while most teachers reported needing more PD on supporting dual language learners and caring for children with special needs. Lead teachers and teachers working in programs that were more highly-rated by YoungStar reported greater participation in PD and training activities compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers and to those working in lower-rated programs, respectively.

### **Teachers’ Intent to Stay in Their ECE Job and Field**

Teachers reported a strong commitment to the ECE field, with more than 8 in 10 agreeing that they work in ECE because it is their career or profession, but a substantial minority intends to leave either current job or the ECE field. More than one in four teachers reported looking for a new job in the past 6 months. A similar proportion of teachers (28%) plan to leave the ECE field within the next two years and 50% plan to leave within the next five years. The most common reason for looking for a new job or planning to leave the field (for reasons other than retirement) was to find a job that pays more, with more benefits, or more opportunity for advancement. In addition, nearly one-third of teachers reported that they had considered becoming a family child care provider or nanny during the past 6 months. Finally, over one-third of teachers in our sample either currently had a second job or were recently looking for a second job, which might indicate insufficient earnings in their ECE job. Lead teachers and teachers with higher wages reported higher levels of commitment to and greater intentions of staying in the ECE field compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers and to teachers with lower wages, respectively. These findings suggest that a substantial minority of teachers have sought out or intend to seek out other job or career opportunities, driven primarily by their low compensation.

### **Teachers’ Emotional, Physical, and Economic Wellbeing During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Because we surveyed teachers nearly one year into the COVID-19 pandemic that has had detrimental effects on many families’ mental health and financial security, our survey aimed to assess teachers’ emotional, physical, and financial wellbeing. We found that a substantial proportion of teachers, between 25% to 29%, reported experiencing feelings of burnout from their job a few times per week or everyday. Similarly, between 20% to 27% of teachers reported experiencing food insecurity within the past month, and 22% reported that it was very or extremely difficult to live on their household income. We also found that lead teachers reported lower levels of wellbeing—they were more likely to report feelings of burnout from their job,



lower overall health, and more difficulty living on their household income compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers—while teachers in the Southeastern region reported higher levels of food insecurity compared to teachers in other regions.

### **Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Teachers' Jobs**

Although a substantial minority of teachers (25%) reported receiving a temporary pay increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 4% were still receiving this pay increase in early 2021. Yet, most teachers (57%) reported that COVID-19 has made their job more stressful, and many reported COVID-19 related job worries. For example, more than one-third were very or extremely worried about being exposed to COVID-19 at work. Lead teachers were more likely to report increased job stress due to COVID-19 and COVID-19 related worries than assistant and float/substitute teachers, and teachers who worked in programs that were more highly rated by YoungStar also reported more job stress. Teachers in the Southeastern region consistently reported higher rates of COVID-19 related worries than teachers in other regions.

### **Conclusion**

Our findings show that ECE teachers are a dedicated group of professionals with strong educational qualifications and a commitment to ECE. Yet, ECE teachers work for low wages and few benefits in stressful working conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these concerns, with most teachers reporting increased job stress and COVID-19 related job worries and almost none still receiving a COVID-19 pay increase. One in five reported experiencing food insecurity. Teachers who had intentions of leaving their current job or the ECE field most commonly reported doing so to find a job with better pay and compensation. Addressing the pay and work supports available to ECE teachers will improve the experiences of the ECE workforce that cares for Wisconsin's children.

## Section 1: Background

This report is part of a series of reports on the Wisconsin Early Care and Education Workforce. The first report (Awkward-Rich, Jenkins, & Dresser, 2021) focused on early care and education (ECE) program directors. A subsequent report will cover family providers.

Researchers from the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) and the Survey Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UWSC) developed the survey. The survey was fielded from January to March, 2021. The survey was developed in consultation with key stakeholders and designed to cover workforce issues by asking teachers in ECE settings directly about their experiences. The survey asked detailed questions about ECE teachers': demographics, wages, benefits, education, experience, professional development, wellbeing, intent to stay in ECE, and COVID-19 related factors. The survey was developed to ask questions in a consistent manner with prior surveys of the ECE workforce and the recent report on ECE program directors. It also included questions about COVID-19 to gather information about ECE teachers' experiences during the global pandemic.

## Section 2: Survey Data Collection

The sampling frame was drawn from the DCF background check database and included teachers (lead, assistant, float or substitute teachers) who worked at currently open licensed group programs located in a community-based ECE center (or public school) that was regulated to serve children under the age of 5. The list of teachers meeting these criteria was drawn on November 16, 2021, and contained 18,977 teachers representing 1,822 ECE programs. From this list, UWSC drew a random sample of 4,000 teachers (representing 1,381 ECE programs). The UWSC fielded the survey from January 15 to March 23, 2021.

Teachers were sent by regular mail an 8-page, paper-and-pencil survey with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and a \$10 pre-survey payment; teachers who completed the survey received an additional \$20 cash payment. The UWSC sent a follow-up mailing with the survey and cover letter only to those who had not yet returned the survey approximately one month after the first mailing. Of the 4,000 teachers who were mailed a survey, 2,059 returned a completed survey; yielding a response rate of 51.5%. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the response rate differed by region and YoungStar region. The response rate was lowest in the Southeastern region (43.3%) and highest in the Northern region (64.2%). The response rate was lowest among teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings (44.4%) and highest among teachers who were in a program that did not participate in YoungStar (61.0%).

TABLE 1: Response Rate by Region

	All	Northeastern	Northern	Southeastern	Southern	Western
Total responded	2054 (51.4%)	531 (56.8%)	183 (64.2%)	557 (43.3%)	496 (53.2%)	287 (51.5%)
Responded and currently work in ECE program	1765 (44.2%)	452 (48.3%)	155 (54.4%)	478 (37.2%)	440 (47.2%)	240 (43.1%)
Responded and not currently employed	134 (3.4%)	32 (3.4%)	11 (3.9%)	46 (3.6%)	25 (2.7%)	20 (3.6%)
Responded and left the field	155 (3.9%)	47 (5.0%)	17 (6.0%)	33 (2.6%)	31 (3.3%)	27 (4.8%)
Did not respond	1941 (48.6%)	404 (43.2%)	102 (35.8%)	728 (56.7%)	437 (46.8%)	270 (48.5%)
Total fielded	3995	935	285	1285	933	557

Notes: Table shows the number of cases by their response status. The percentages in parentheses indicate the percent of total field cases for that specific response type. We excluded 5 respondents who completed the survey but did not indicate their current employment status.




We used the background check database for the sampling frame because it was the best available source of information on the vast majority of ECE teachers working in center-based programs. However, there are some limitations to the data. New programs and new employees are required to complete a background check immediately, but existing programs and employees were being phased into the background check requirements at the time of the survey. This suggests that new ECE programs and new teachers—those just entering the field or those changing jobs—are more likely to be in the data than those who have been in the field longer. We believe the background check data covers a significant percentage of ECE teachers but cannot be sure who is not included in the background check database.

TABLE 2: Response Rate by YoungStar Rating

	All	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Not Participating	Participating, Not Yet Rated
Total responded	2054 (51.4%)	0 (0%)	274 (44.4%)	726 (50.9%)	190 (54.6%)	625 (52.5%)	172 (61.0%)	67 (51.1%)
Responded and currently work in ECE program	1765 (44.2%)	0 (0%)	215 (34.8%)	623 (43.7%)	171 (49.1%)	556 (46.7%)	146 (51.8%)	54 (41.2%)
Responded and not currently employed	134 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	27 (4.4%)	52 (3.6%)	8 (2.3%)	29 (2.4%)	12 (4.3%)	6 (4.6%)
Responded and left the field	155 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	32 (5.2%)	51 (3.6%)	11 (3.2%)	40 (3.4%)	14 (5.0%)	7 (5.3%)
Did not respond	1941 (48.6%)	1 (100%)	343 (55.6%)	699 (49.1%)	158 (45.4%)	566 (47.5%)	110 (39.0%)	64 (48.9%)
Total fielded	3995	1	617	1425	348	1191	282	131

Notes: Table shows the number of cases by their response status. The percentages in parentheses indicate the percent of total field cases for that specific response type. We excluded 5 respondents who completed the survey but did not indicate their current employment status.

Among the 2,059 survey respondents, 1,765 (85.7% of survey respondents) reported that they were currently employed in an ECE program serving children ages birth through five (not yet in 5-year-old kindergarten), 155 (7.5%) reported that they were employed in a different field, 134 (6.5%) were not currently employed, and 5 (0.2%) did not report their employment status. Of the 1765 currently working in ECE, we excluded 13 respondents who worked in someone's private home, 8 respondents who worked in a public school program not licensed by DCF, 2



respondents who worked out of state, and 57 respondents who worked in a non-teaching role (e.g. home visitor, administrator, support staff). Our final sample size included 1,685 teachers currently working in an ECE program serving children 0-5 years of age.

Survey respondents were asked to give permission for researchers to link their survey responses with their data from The Registry so that we could access detailed information about their education, ECE credits and credentials, and Registry level. Fifty-nine percent (N=995) of respondents in our final sample consented to have their Registry data linked to the survey. The UWSC was unable to match 7% (N=69) of these respondents with any Registry data record. For the 926 respondents for whom we have a matched Registry data record, 5% (87) had no data in their Registry record (data for all fields was missing). Therefore, our sample for the analyses of the Registry data includes 839 teachers, representing 49.8% of our full teacher sample.

## Section 3: Teacher Demographics

We report teachers' demographic characteristics in Table 3. Teachers were, on average, 38 years of age and nearly all identified as female gender, which is consistent with the gender distribution in the ECE workforce. A majority of teachers (58.9%) were married or living with a partner, and 38.8% had children. In terms of race and ethnicity, 82.7% identified as White, 6.6% identified as Black, 6.0% as Hispanic or Latino, 2.9% as Asian, and 1.8% as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, multi-racial, or other race, and this distribution is consistent with the racial and ethnic composition of Wisconsin's population. About 6% of teachers were born outside of the U.S., and 14.7% reported that they speak a language other than English. Because we did not ask teachers to report on the demographic characteristics of the children that they care for, we have no way of knowing how the demographic characteristics of teachers compare to those of the children they serve.

TABLE 3: Teachers' Demographic Characteristics

Age	38 years
Female gender	97.6%
Race/ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	82.7%
Black, non-Hispanic	6.6%
Hispanic	6.0%
Asian, non-Hispanic	2.9%
Other race, non-Hispanic	1.8%
Born outside the U.S.	6.1%
Speaks language other than English	14.7%
Have one or more children	38.8%
Marital status	
Married or in a legally recognized domestic partnership	45.2%
Living with a partner	13.7%
Single, neither married nor living with a partner	41.2%
Notes: N=1656-1678. Other race includes Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, other race, multi-racial.	

## Section 4: Role, Wages, and Benefits

We begin by describing teachers' roles, wages, and benefits. Most teachers in our sample were lead teachers who worked full-time hours in a year-round position. Overall, teachers had low wages (\$11-\$13 per hour) and many did not receive health insurance or paid time off through their jobs. Only one in five teachers had health coverage through their ECE job, half had access to paid sick leave, and three-quarters reported having paid holidays. On average, teachers had been working in their current ECE job for 5 years, and 22% had started their current job within the past year. However, we found important differences by teachers' role, YoungStar rating, and region. Lead teachers worked more hours per week, had longer job tenure, had higher wages, and were more likely to have health insurance through their job than assistant and float/substitute teachers. Teachers working in programs with higher YoungStar ratings also had longer job tenure, higher wages, and greater access to benefits, both health insurance and paid time off. We also found evidence that teachers in the Southern regions were better compensated than teachers in some other regions both in terms of wages and benefits.

### Role

Most teachers in our sample (64%) reported that they work as a lead teacher in their program, followed by assistant teachers (22%), float or substitute teachers (11%), and teachers who reported an "other" role (3%), which included those serving in both an administrative and teacher role. We found few differences in teachers' role by YoungStar rating and none of these differences were statistically significant (see Table 4), but teachers' role varied by region (see Table 5). For example, 70.6% of teachers in the Southeastern region were lead teachers compared to 49.7% of teachers in the Northern region. This is useful to keep in mind when interpreting subsequent findings that find differences by region in teachers' job characteristics since differences in teachers' role could be driving the findings. Due to the small number of individuals selecting an "other" role, we focus primarily on lead, assistant, and float/substitute teachers in the following analyses.

TABLE 4: Teacher Role by YoungStar Rating

	All	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Not Participating	Participating, Not Yet Rated
Lead	64.1%	64.4%	65.9%	62.1%	62.1%	68.3%	56.9%
Assistant	21.9%	18.8%	20.8%	22.9%	23.9%	21.1%	25.5%
Float or substitute	11.5%	15.4%	11.4%	12.7%	10.4%	7.0%	15.7%
Other teacher role	2.6%	1.5%	1.9%	2.4%	3.6%	3.5%	2.0%
<b>N</b>	<b>1,685</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>51</b>

Notes: Table shows the number of teachers in each role; percentages in parentheses indicate the percent of teachers in each role for the overall sample and by YoungStar rating.

TABLE 5: Teacher Role by Licensing Region

	All	Northeastern	Northern	Southeastern	Southern	Western
Lead	64.1%	61.7%	49.7%	70.6%	65.1%	63.1%
Assistant	21.9%	21.8%	36.9%	18.6%	19.3%	23.6%
Float or substitute	11.5%	13.6%	12.1%	8.0%	13.5%	10.3%
Other teacher role	2.6%	2.8%	1.3%	2.8%	2.2%	3.0%
<b>N</b>	<b>1,685</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>233</b>

Notes: Table shows the number of teachers in each role; percentages in parentheses indicate the percent of teachers in each role for the overall sample and by region.

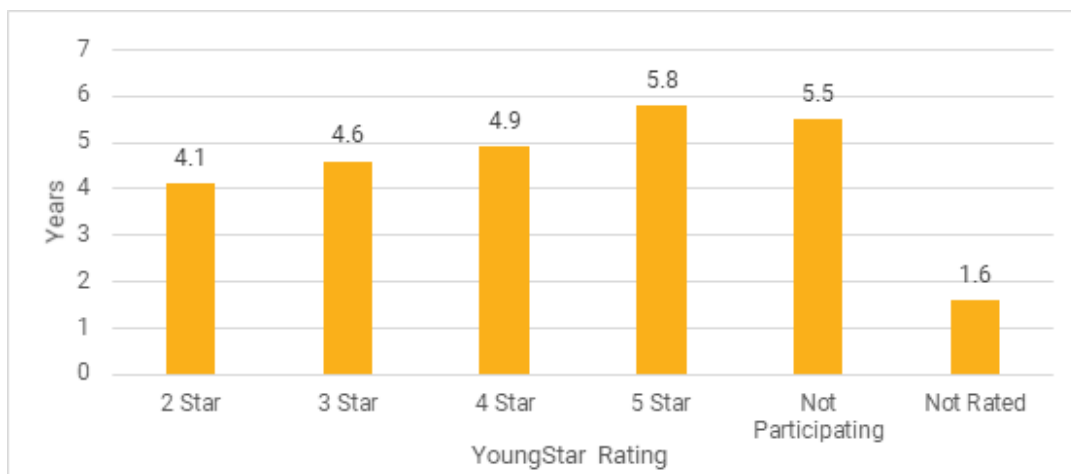
On average, teachers reported working 34 hours per week, with the vast majority (79%) reporting that they are in a 12-month per year position, and most others reporting that they work 9 or 10 months during the school year only. Lead teachers reported working the greatest number of hours per week with an average of 37 hours per week; float or substitute teachers reported the fewest hours at 25 hours per week; and assistant teachers reported working 29 hours per week. The differences in hours worked per week by teacher role were statistically significant. In their current position, teachers reported caring for 11.2 children, on average, with 2.4 adults

in the classroom (including the teacher). Twenty-eight percent of teachers reported working with children under 1 year of age, 50% reported working with 1-year-olds, 35% reported working with 2-year-olds, 37% reported working with 3-year-olds, 40% reported working with 4-year-olds, and 31% reported working with 5-year-olds; the sum of these percentages is greater than 100% because teachers could report working with multiple age groups.

Teachers' average job tenure at their current ECE program was 5 years, but this differed significantly by YoungStar rating (see Figure 1). Teachers at programs with 5 Star ratings and in programs not participating in YoungStar had the longest job tenure. Teachers at programs with 2 Star ratings had the shortest job tenure among rated programs. Teachers at Not Rated programs had the shortest job tenure overall, and this is to be expected because programs that have not yet been rated (because they have signed a YoungStar contract but have not yet received a formal rating) are most likely to be new programs. We did not find significant differences by region; the average tenure ranged from 4.6 to 5.2 years across the regions.

To estimate teacher turnover, we examined the percentage of teachers who had a job tenure of less than one year at their current ECE job. Overall, 22% of teachers reported having been at their job for less than one year, but this varied significantly by role and YoungStar rating (see Table 6). Lead teachers were about half as likely to report a job tenure of less than one year compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers, and in general, teachers in programs with higher YoungStar ratings were less likely to report a job tenure of less than one year compared to teachers in lower rated programs. There were no significant differences in having a job tenure of less than one year by region; this ranged from 19% to 24% across regions. These findings suggest relatively high levels of job turnover among ECE teachers, consistent with other studies of the ECE workforce (Bassok et al., 2021; Whitebook et al., 2014), particularly for assistant and lead/substitute teachers.

FIGURE 1: Teachers' Average Job Tenure at Current ECE Program by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,685; Mean differences in job tenure varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

We can also estimate turnover among all 2,059 survey respondents—not just teachers currently working in a center-based ECE programs—by taking into account the number of teachers (369 or 17.9% of respondents) who had left their job in a center-based ECE program between when we pulled the background check data in November 2020 and fielded the survey in the first quarter of 2021. Combining this information with the number of current ECE teachers in our sample with a job tenure of less than one year, this suggests that 36.0% (741 respondents) of all survey respondents had started a new job within the last year.

TABLE 6: Percentage of Teachers with a Job Tenure of Less Than One Year

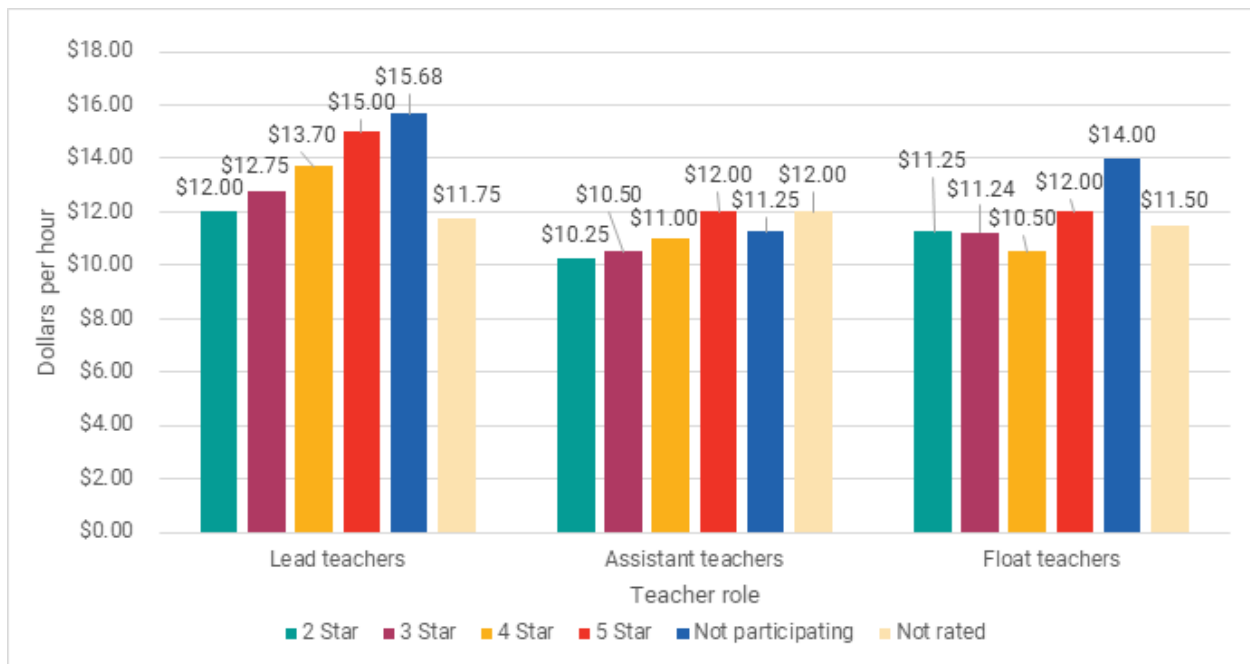
All Teachers	22%
Lead Teachers	16%
Assistant Teachers	34%
Float/Substitute Teachers	31%
2 Star	24%
3 Star	22%
4 Star	20%
5 Star	18%
Not Rated	59%
Not Participating	22%
Notes: N=1685. Percentage of teachers with a job tenure of less than one year varied significantly by teacher role and YoungStar rating at $p < .05$ .	

## Wages

Teachers’ self-reported median hourly wage was \$12.99, but median wages varied significantly by teacher role, YoungStar rating, and region. Lead teachers’ median hourly wage, at \$13.55, was higher than assistant or float/substitute teachers’ wages. Assistant teachers and float/substitute teachers had lower hourly wages at \$11.00 and \$11.50, respectively. Teachers in “other” roles had the highest median hourly wage at \$15.58. Below we show the distribution of wages by YoungStar rating (Figure 2) and licensing region (Figure 3). Across roles, teachers in higher rated programs had higher median wages. This pattern was most pronounced for lead teachers. Lead teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings had an hourly wage of \$12.00 compared to \$15.00 for teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings. Wages for assistant and float/substitute teachers varied less by star level; for assistant teachers, the median wage in a program with a 2

Star rating was \$10.25 compared to \$12.00 in a program with a 5 Star rating. Teachers working in programs not participating in YoungStar reported wages that were as high or higher than teachers working in highly rated programs. With respect to region, teachers across all roles in the Southern and Southeastern regions reported higher wages in comparison to teachers in the Northern, Northeastern, and Western regions.

FIGURE 2: Teachers' Median Wages by YoungStar Rating

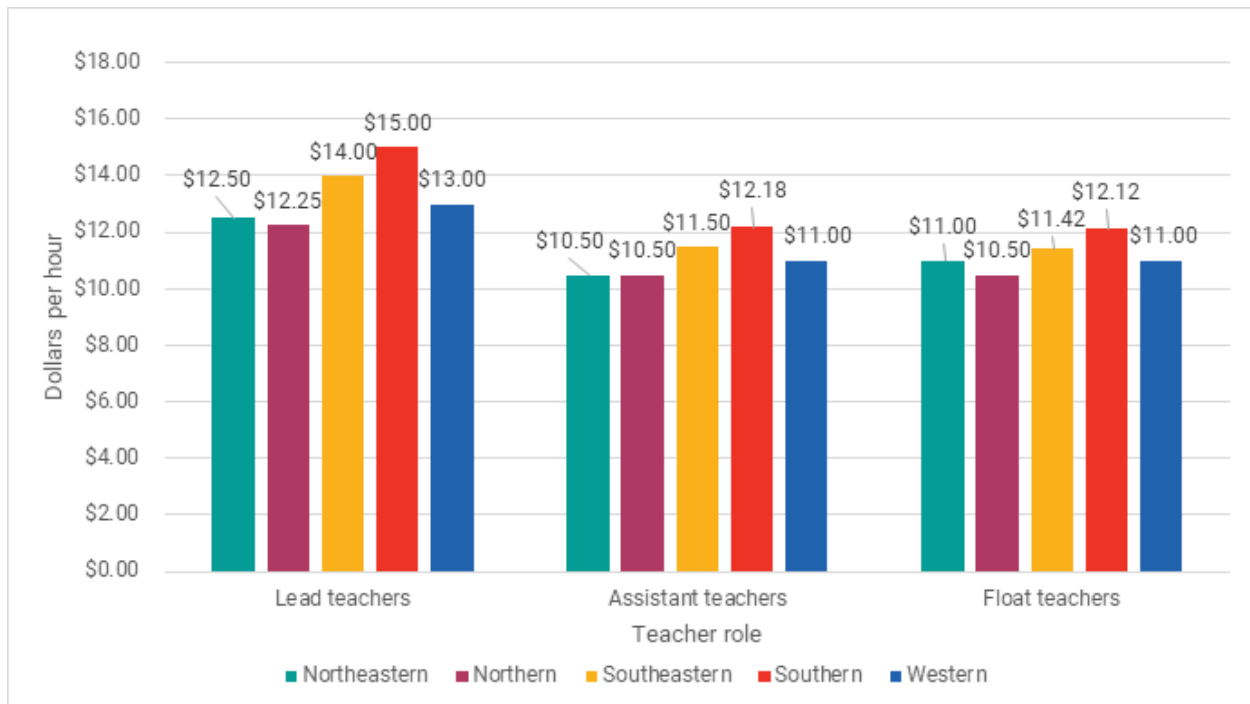


Notes: N= 1,614; Differences in median wages by YoungStar rating and role are significant at  $p < .05$ .

These findings are consistent with ECE teachers' wages reported by child care center directors in the 2020 Survey of ECE Program Directors (Awkward-Rich et al., 2021). In that report, directors reported that lead teachers' median wages were \$12 per hour for a starting wage and \$13 per hour after one year of employment. Given that most of the teachers in our sample had been working at their program for at least one year, it makes sense that they report earning wages equivalent to one year of employment. Median wages for assistant teachers in our sample were also the same as the wages reported by directors for assistant teachers after one year of employment (\$11 per hour). Additionally, findings are consistent across the two reports in that directors working in programs with higher YoungStar ratings and in programs not participating in YoungStar reported higher teacher median wages than directors working in lower-rated programs. Similarly, directors in the Southern and Southeastern regions reported higher ECE teacher median wages compared to teachers and directors in the Northern, Northeastern, and Western regions.



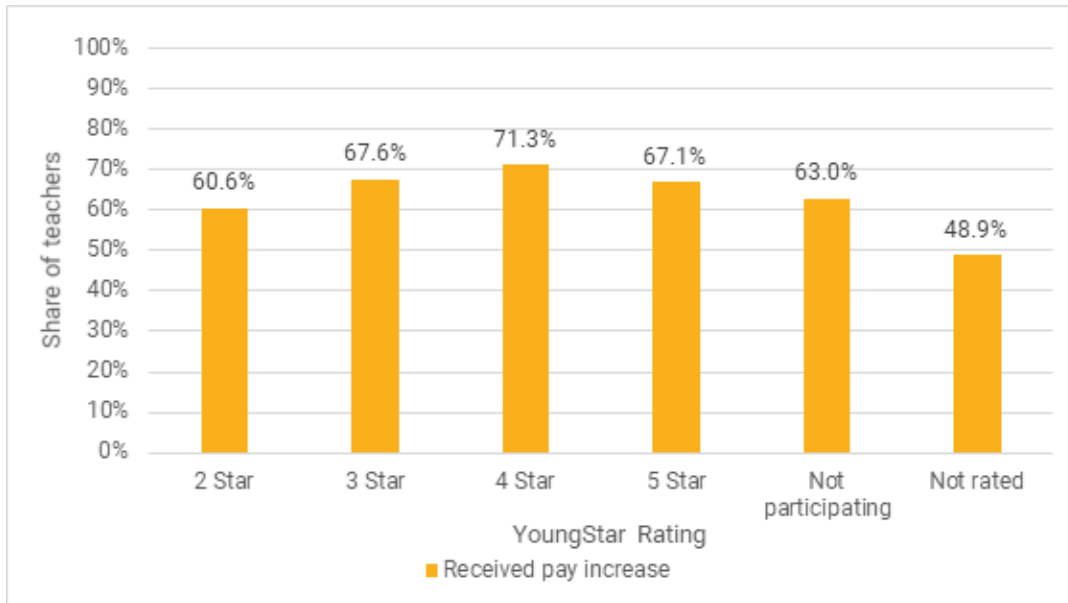
FIGURE 3: Teachers' Median Wages by Licensing Region



Notes: N=1,614; Differences in median wages by region and role are statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

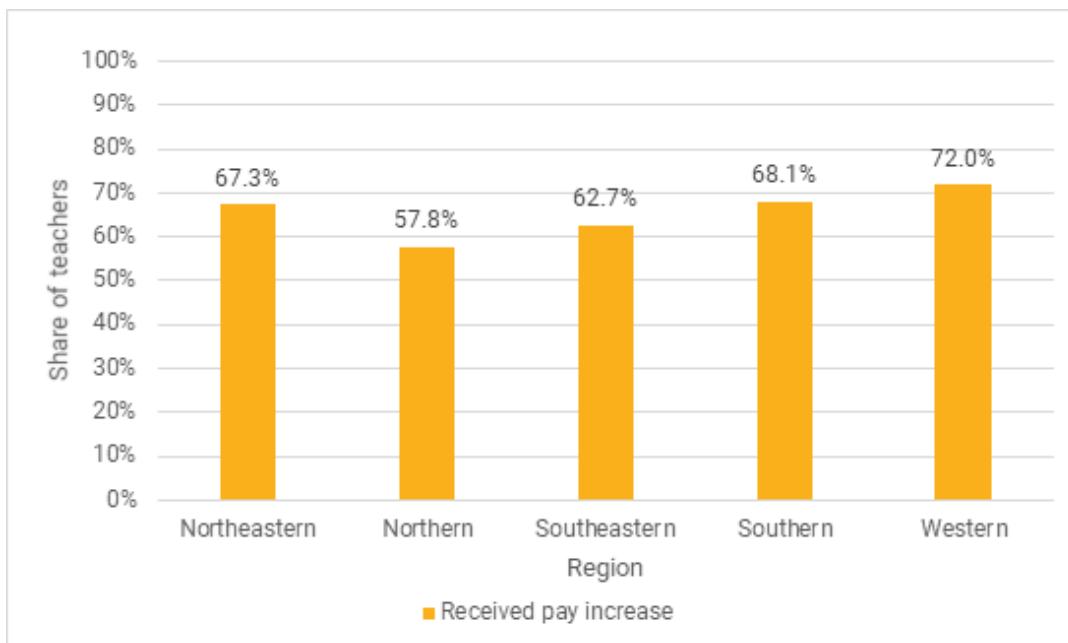
Among teachers who had been working at their current program for at least one year (N=1,313, or 78% of the sample), two-thirds (66.0%) reported receiving a permanent pay increase (raise) since they began working there. (We report on teachers' temporary pay increases due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Section VIII.) We did not find statistically significant differences by YoungStar rating (see Figure 4), but we did find significant differences by region (Figure 5). Teachers in the Western region were most likely to have received a permanent pay increase while teachers in the Northern region were the least likely.

FIGURE 4: Percentage of ECE Teachers who Received a Permanent Pay Increase by YoungStar Rating



Notes: Sample is limited to 1,313 teachers who had been at their current ECE program for at least one year. Percentage of teachers receiving a permanent pay increase did not vary significantly by YoungStar rating.

FIGURE 5: Percentage of ECE Teachers who Received a Permanent Pay Increase by Licensing Region



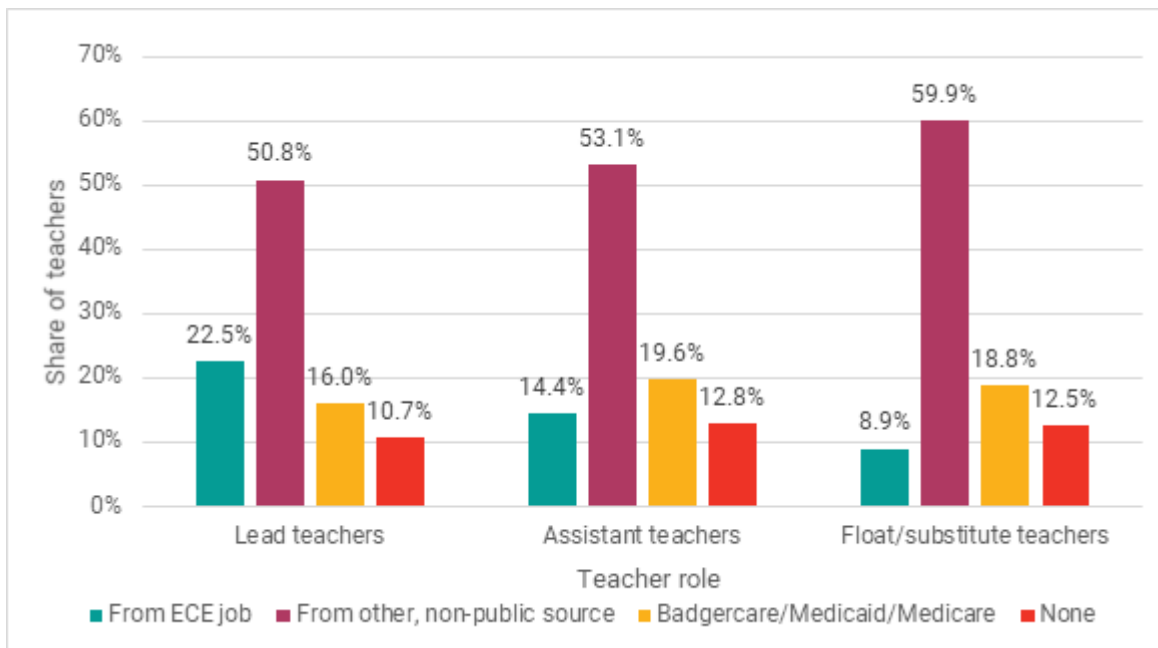
Notes: Sample is limited to 1,313 teachers who had been at their current ECE program for at least one year; Percentage of teachers receiving a permanent pay increase varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

## Benefits

Only one-fifth of teachers (19.6%) reported that they received health insurance through their current ECE job. About one-quarter (25.5%) reported that they received health insurance through their spouse or partner's employer; 17.0% from Medicaid or Medicare; 1.1% from another job; and 25.5% from another source, typically their parents' health insurance or a plan that they purchased through the health insurance marketplace. Nearly 12% of teachers reported having no health insurance coverage. When comparing these findings to the 2020 Survey of ECE Program Directors (Awkward-Rich et al., 2021), the percentage of teachers receiving health insurance through their ECE job is the same. According to directors, 20% of teachers received health insurance through their ECE job although 53% were eligible for it. Our findings suggest that for those teachers who do not receive health insurance through their job, most are able to access insurance through other sources, but a substantial minority lacks any coverage. We cannot compare the percentage of teachers receiving health insurance through other sources or being uninsured across the two surveys because the director survey did not ask about this. However, the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education found similar rates of insurance coverage in a national sample of the center-based ECE workforce: 25% had health insurance coverage through their job, 14% had coverage through Medicaid or Medicare, and 16% had no health insurance coverage (National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team, 2019).

Teachers' health insurance coverage varied significantly by teachers' role, region, and YoungStar rating. Lead teachers were more likely than assistant and float/substitute teachers to have health insurance coverage through their ECE job (see Figure 6). Lead teachers were also slightly less likely to have public health insurance coverage through Badgercare/Medicaid or Medicare and to be uninsured. As described in Section IV.A., lead teachers worked a greater number of hours per week in their ECE job compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers, and therefore, these differences in health insurance coverage might be explained in part by lead teachers being more likely to work full-time positions, which tend to be more likely to offer benefits.

FIGURE 6: Sources of ECE Teachers' Health Insurance by Role

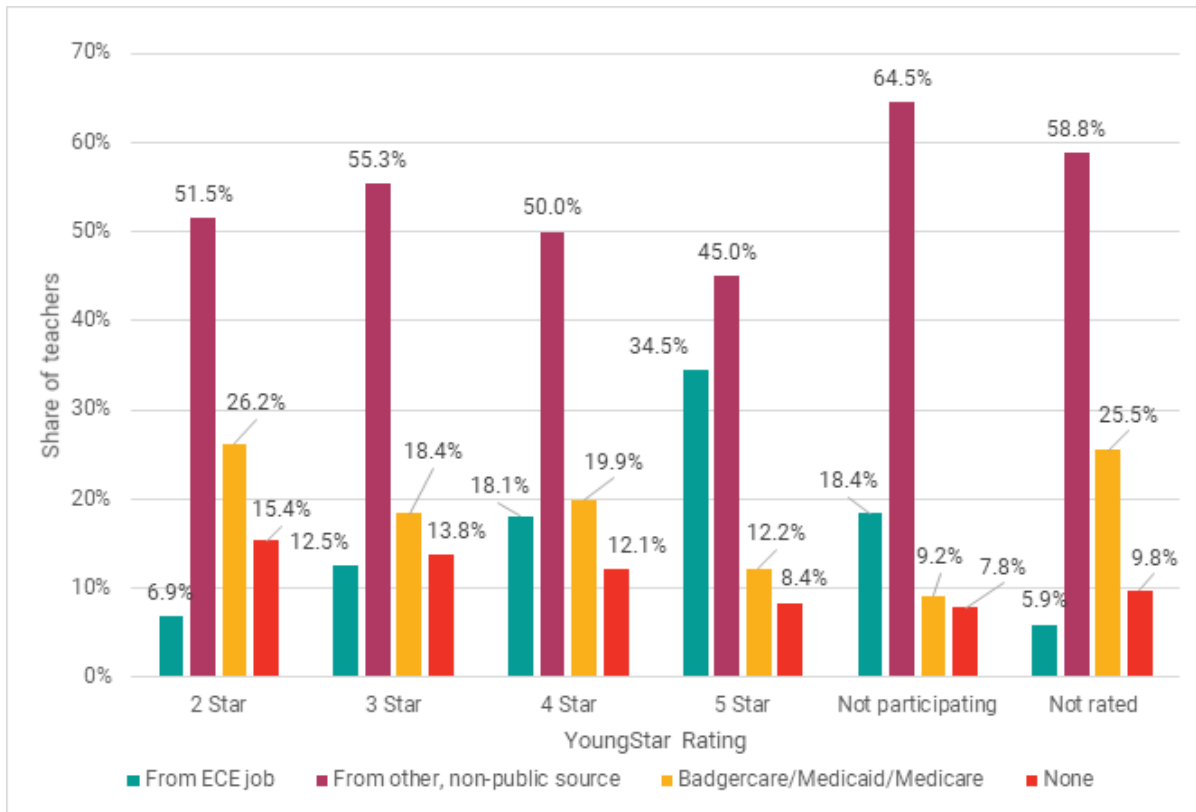


Note: N= 1,678; Source of health insurance varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$

Teachers' health insurance coverage varied significantly by YoungStar rating (see Figure 7). Teachers at 5 Star programs had higher rates of health insurance coverage through their job compared to teachers in lower-rated, Not Participating programs, and Not Rated programs. For example, only 7% of teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings had health insurance through their ECE job compared to nearly 35% of teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings. Teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings and in Not Participating programs had the lowest rates of public health insurance coverage and being uninsured. Because teachers' role did not vary significantly by YoungStar rating, teachers' role does not explain differences in health insurance coverage across YoungStar ratings.

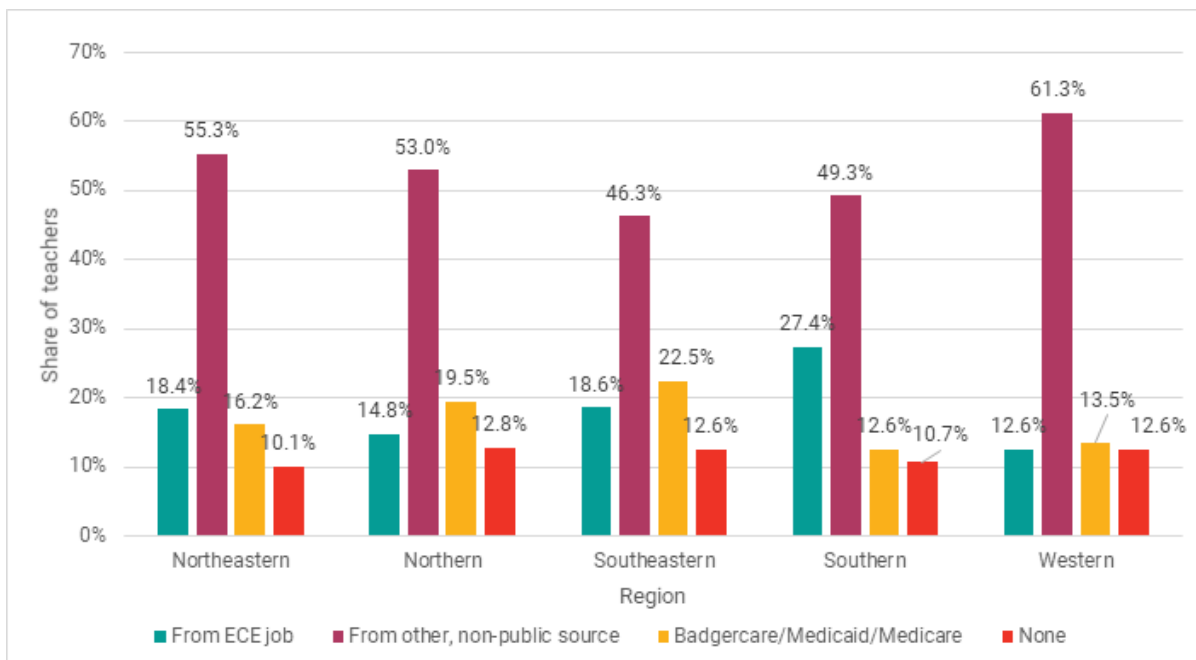
We also found significant differences in health insurance coverage by licensing region (see Figure 8). Teachers in the Southern region were more likely than those in the Northern, Northeastern, and Western regions to have health insurance through their ECE job. Because in our sample teachers in the Northern region were less likely to be lead teachers (50%) compared to teachers in the Southern region (65%), differences in the rate of health insurance through their ECE job between these two regions may be partially driven by differences in teachers' role by region. Rates of public health insurance coverage were highest in the Southeastern region, and rates of being uninsured were highest in the Southeastern, Northern, and Western regions.

FIGURE 7: Sources of ECE Teachers' Health Insurance by YoungStar Rating




Note: N=1,678; Source of health insurance varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 8: Sources of ECE Teachers' Health Insurance by Licensing Region



Note: N=1,678. Sources of health insurance varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

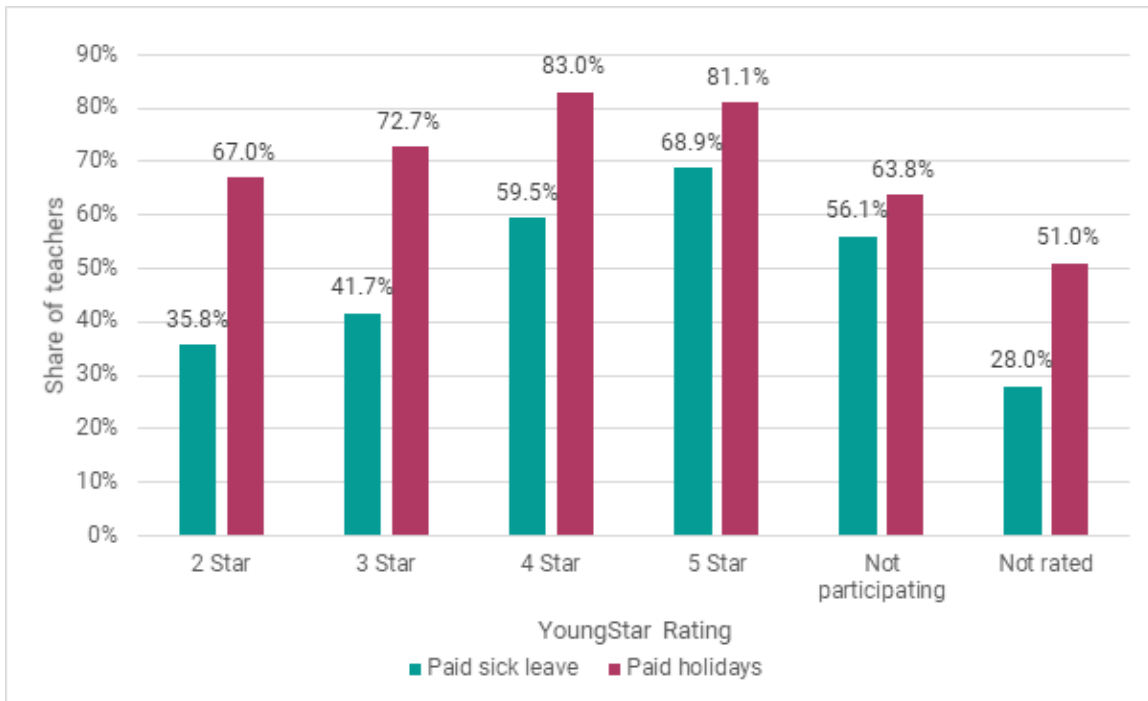


Most teachers reported that their program offers paid holidays (74.3%), but only about half (52.1%) reported that they had access to paid sick leave; a greater percentage (62.1%) had access to unpaid sick leave through their current ECE job. These findings are mostly consistent with the 2020 Survey of ECE Program Directors (Awkward-Rich et al., 2021). According to directors, 54% of teachers had paid time off (including paid vacation, personal, and sick days), which is very similar to the percentage of teachers reporting access to paid sick leave. However, directors reported that 92% of teachers had paid holidays, whereas teachers in our survey reported a substantially lower rate.

Access to paid time off varied significantly by YoungStar rating. Teachers at higher-rated programs with 5 and 4 Star ratings were more likely to have access to paid sick leave and paid holidays than teachers in lower-rated or Not Rated programs (see Figure 9). For example, nearly 70% of teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings had paid sick leave compared to only 36% of teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings. Teachers at Not Participating centers were more likely to have access to paid sick leave compared to teachers at 3 Star, 2 Star, and Not Rated programs, but were less likely to have access to paid holidays compared to teachers at 4 Star and 5 Star programs.

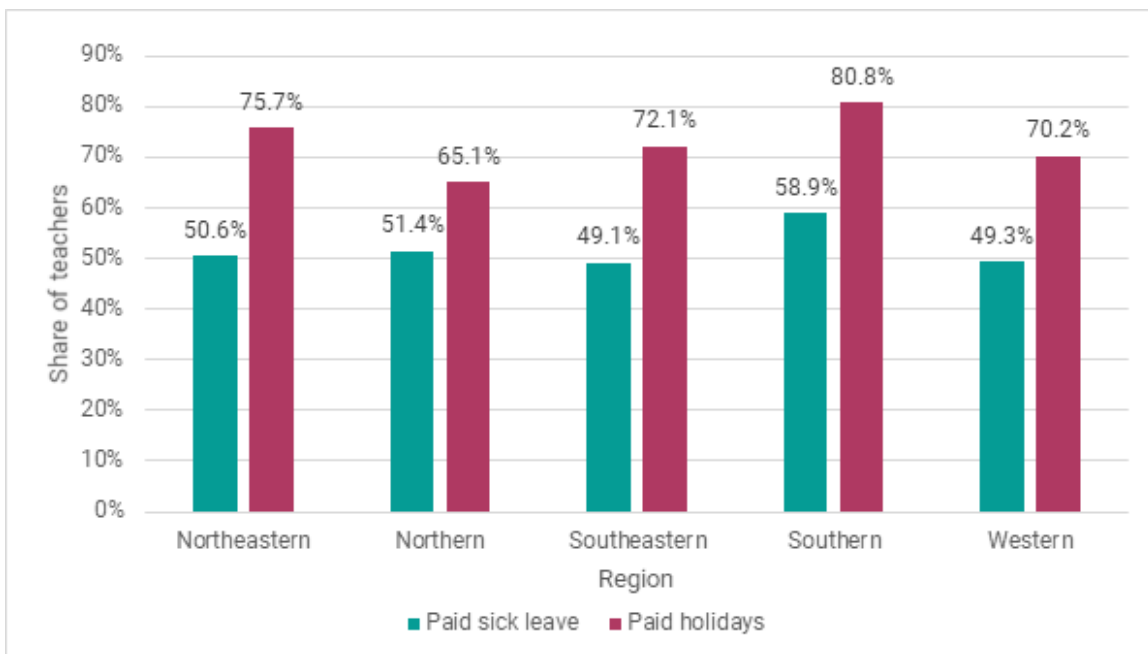
Access to paid time off varied significantly across regions; teachers in the Southern region had the highest rates of access to paid time off compared to other regions (see Figure 10). Teachers in the Southern region had the highest rate of paid sick leave—nearly 60% compared to about 50% in the other regions. Teachers in the Southern region also had the highest rate of paid holidays (80.8%), whereas teachers in the Northern region had the lowest (65.1%).

FIGURE 9: Percentage of Teachers with Paid Time Off by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,621-1,660. Access to paid sick leave and paid holidays varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 10: Percentage of Teachers with Paid Time Off by Licensing Region



Notes: N=1,621-1,660. Access to paid sick leave and paid holidays varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

## Section 5: Experience, Education, and Professional Development

In this section, we describe teachers' experience in ECE, level of education, and participation in professional development (PD) and training in ECE. On average, teachers in our sample had been working in ECE for 10 years. The vast majority of teachers (82.7%) had some college education or a college degree; more than one-quarter (27.3%) had a bachelor's or post-graduate degree. About one in five teachers was currently enrolled in a degree program, and those who had not yet earned an associate degree were most likely to be currently enrolled. Teachers reported high levels of engagement in professional development opportunities; nearly three-quarters had participated in some type of PD during the past 12 months. With respect to PD content areas, most teachers reported having participated in PD related to supporting children's social and emotional needs while most teachers reported needing more PD on supporting dual language learners and caring for children with special needs. Nearly one in four (23.4%) teachers reported having worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant, but fewer (13.0%) had engaged in practice-based coaching in the past 12 months. With respect to the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program and REWARD stipend program, participation rates were similar across the two programs (14.2% to 19.9%, respectively), but teachers who had not participated in the program were more likely to be familiar with the T.E.A.C.H. program than with the REWARD program.

We also found that teachers' experience, education, and PD varied significantly by teacher role and YoungStar rating, but found few differences by region. Lead teachers had twice as many years of experience (12 years), on average, compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers (6-7 years) and had higher levels of education, meaning they were more likely to have an associate or bachelor's degree. However, assistant and float/substitute teachers were more likely to be currently enrolled in a degree program, suggesting many are working on attaining a degree. Across multiple types of PD and training opportunities, participation in professional development activities was generally higher among lead teachers compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers. Teachers working in programs that were more highly-rated by YoungStar had more years of experience, higher levels of education, and greater participation in PD and training activities compared to teachers working in lower-rated programs.

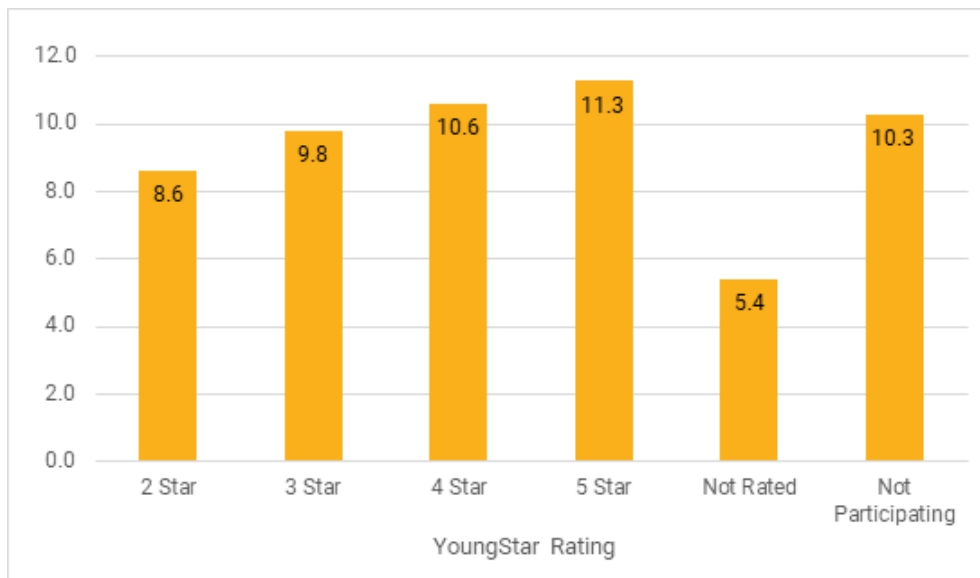
### Experience

On average, teachers in our sample had been working in ECE for 10 years. Lead teachers had an average of 12 years of experience compared to 6-7 years for assistant teachers and float/substitute teachers, a statistically significant difference. Teachers currently working in programs that were more highly rated by YoungStar had significantly more years of experience, as did those in programs that did not participate in YoungStar (see Figure 11). We also found statistically significant differences in years of experience by region (see Figure 12). Teachers in the Southeastern region had more years of experience compared to other regions, and teachers in the Northern and Western region had the fewest years of experience. However, because in



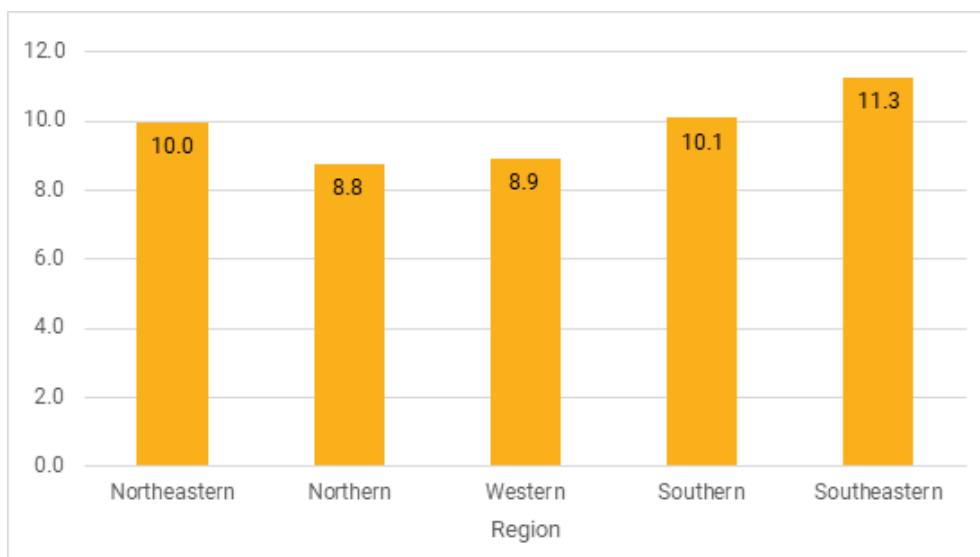
our sample teachers in the Southeastern region were more likely to be lead teachers and lead teachers had more years of experience, some of these differences in years of experience by region may be explained by differences in teachers' role by region. When we focus only on lead teachers, lead teachers in the Southeastern region still have the most years of experience (12.8 years) compared to lead teachers in other regions (10.9 to 11.8 years) but the differences between regions were smaller and not statistically significant.

FIGURE 11: Average Years in the Field of Early Care and Education by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,677. Average years of experiences varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 12: Average Years in the Field of Early Care and Education by Licensing Region



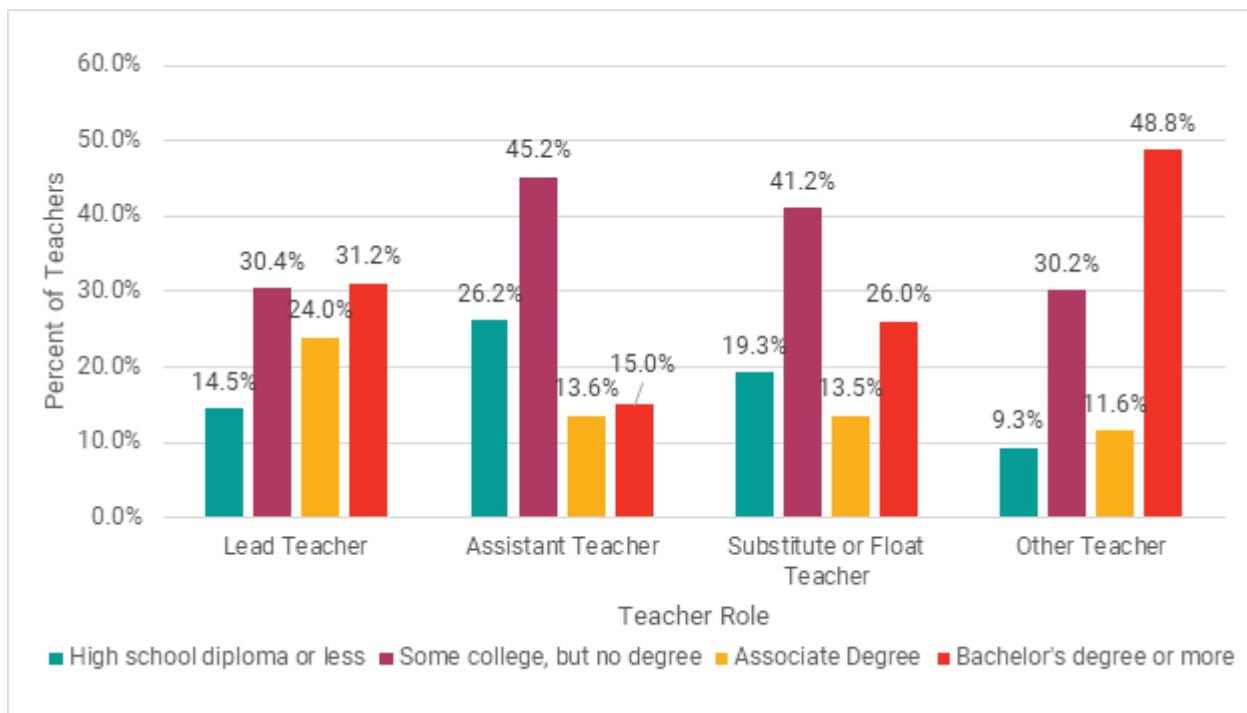
Notes: N=1,677. Average years of experience varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

## Education

The vast majority of teachers in our sample (82.7%) had some college education or a college degree; only 17.3% had a high school degree or less education. Just over one-third had some college credits, but had not earned a degree. Nearly 50% of respondents had an associate's (20.1%), bachelor's (24.8%), or master's or PhD degree (2.5%). Among teachers with a college degree, most had a degree in ECE or a related field: 70.7% of those with an associate degree, 58.9% of those with a bachelor's degree, and 61.9% of those with a master's or PhD.

Teachers' education level varied by teachers' role in statistically significant ways, as we would expect (Figure 13). Lead teachers had higher levels of education compared to assistant teachers, but float/substitute teachers had higher levels of education compared to assistant teachers. More specifically, lead teachers were more likely to have an associate's or bachelor's degree (or higher) compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers, but float/substitute teachers were more likely than assistant teachers to have a bachelor's degree (or higher). Assistant and float/substitute teachers were more likely than lead teachers to report having some college education but no degree, suggesting they may be more likely to be currently working on attaining a degree, consistent with our findings below regarding current enrollment in school. Teachers in other roles were most likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher.

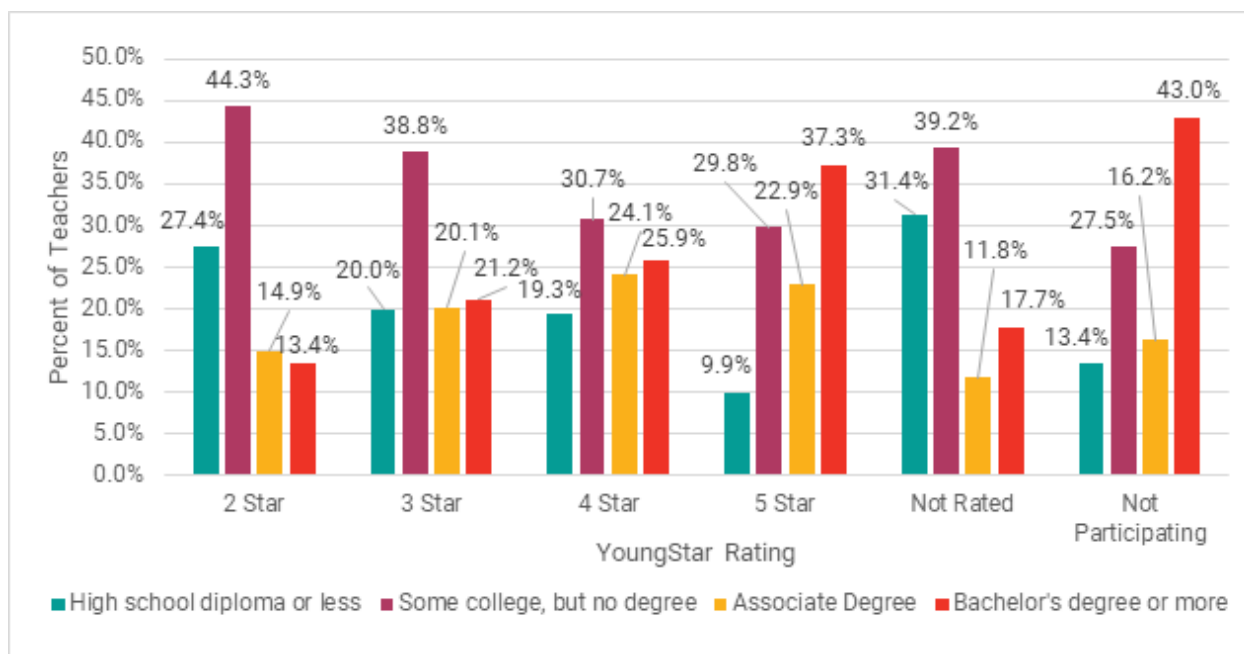
FIGURE 13: Highest Level of Education by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1,674. Level of education varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

We also found statistically significant differences in teachers' education by YoungStar rating, with teachers in higher-rated programs having more education (Figure 14). For example, 37% of teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings had a bachelor's degree or more compared to 13% of teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings. We did not find significant differences in teachers' education by region; the percentage of teachers with a bachelor's degree or more ranged from 22% in the Northern region to 31% in the Southern and Southeastern regions.

FIGURE 14: Highest Level of Education by YoungStar Rating



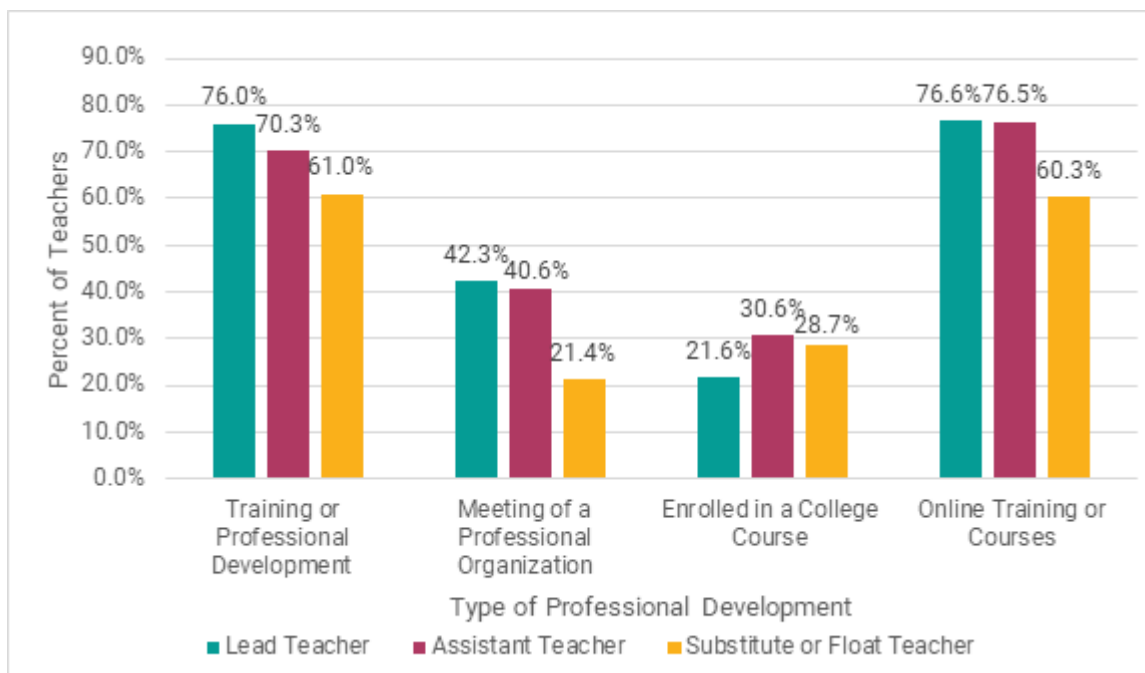
Notes: N=1,674. Level of education varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

About one in five teachers in our sample was currently enrolled in a degree program. Half of the teachers currently enrolled in a degree program did not respond when asked about which type of degree they were currently working on, but of those that did provide their degree type: 5.6% were working on their GED, a certificate, or a credential; 35.6% were working on their associate degree; 50% were working on their bachelor's degree; and 8.8% were working on their master's degree. Assistant teachers (30.2%) and float/substitute teachers (32.6%) reported enrollment in degree programs at statistically significant higher rates than lead teachers (14.3%). This may be due to lead teachers already having higher levels of education. Only 7% of teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education were currently enrolled in a degree program compared to 18% of those with an associate degree, 36% of those with some college but no degree, and 11% of those with a high school degree or less education. We did not find statistically significant differences in teachers' current enrollment in a degree program by YoungStar rating or region.

## Professional Development

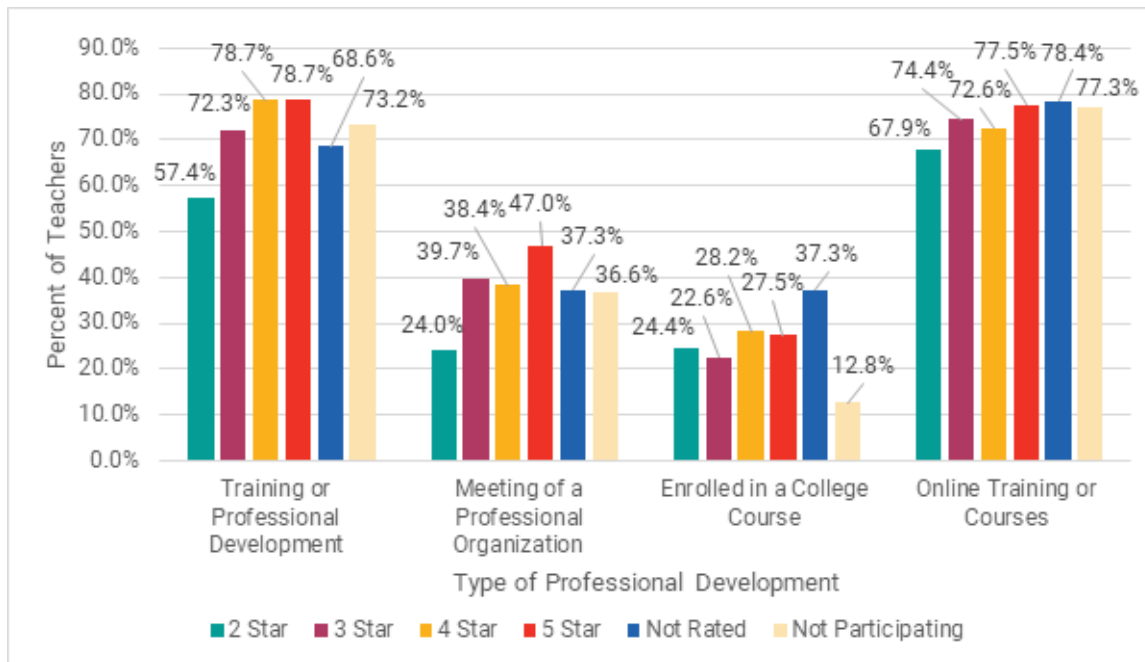
We asked teachers to report on the different types of professional development (PD) opportunities they had participated in during the past 12 months. We first asked about different types of PD that they participated in to improve their skills or gain new skills in working with children: 73.1% had participated in training or PD to improve their skills; 74.8% had participated in an online training or course; 39.6% had participated in a meeting of a professional organization, like the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association; and 24.5% were currently enrolled in a college course (not necessarily as part of a degree program). Engagement in these PD activities was generally higher among lead and assistant teachers (see Figure 15), with the exception that assistant and float/substitute teachers were more likely to report having been enrolled in a college course than lead teachers, which is consistent with our finding above that assistant and float/substitute teachers were enrolled in a degree program at higher rates than lead teachers. Engagement in these PD activities was also significantly higher among teachers working in more highly rated programs (see Figure 16), but differences by region were not statistically significant (not shown).

FIGURE 15: Professional Development Engagement by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1639-1,659. PD engagement varied significantly by teacher role for all four types of professional development at  $p < .05$ .

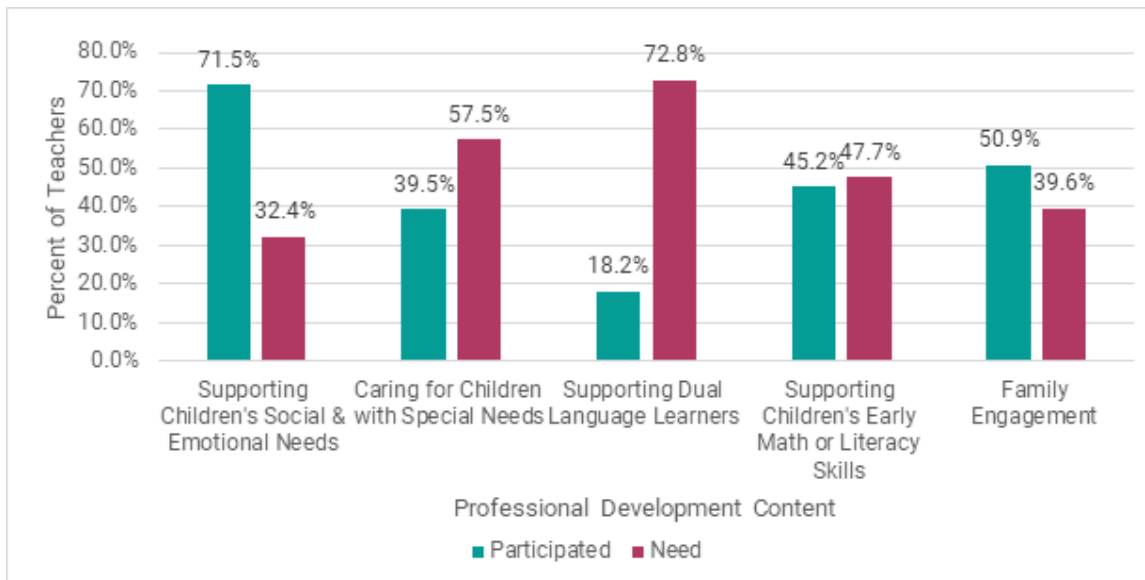
FIGURE 16: Professional Development Engagement by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,639-1,659. PD engagement varied significantly by YoungStar rating for all types of professional development at  $p < .05$  except for Online Training or Courses, which was not statistically significant.

Teachers also reported on the different types of PD content areas they had participated in during the past 12 months and the content areas that they felt they needed more training in. As shown in Figure 17, the most common type of PD that teachers had participated in was supporting children’s social and emotional needs and the least common was supporting dual language learners. With respect to training needs, a large majority of teachers reported needing additional training on how to support dual language learners and more than half needed more training in caring for children with special needs. Across content areas, teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings reported higher levels of participation in PD, and teachers in lower-rated programs reported higher levels of need for PD training, differences that were statistically significant. In general, lead teachers reported participating in professional development across content areas at statistically significantly higher rates than assistant teachers and float/substitute, and assistant teachers reported statistically significantly higher rates of participation than float/substitute teachers. There were no statistically significant differences across regions.

FIGURE 17: Professional Development Content Participation and Need

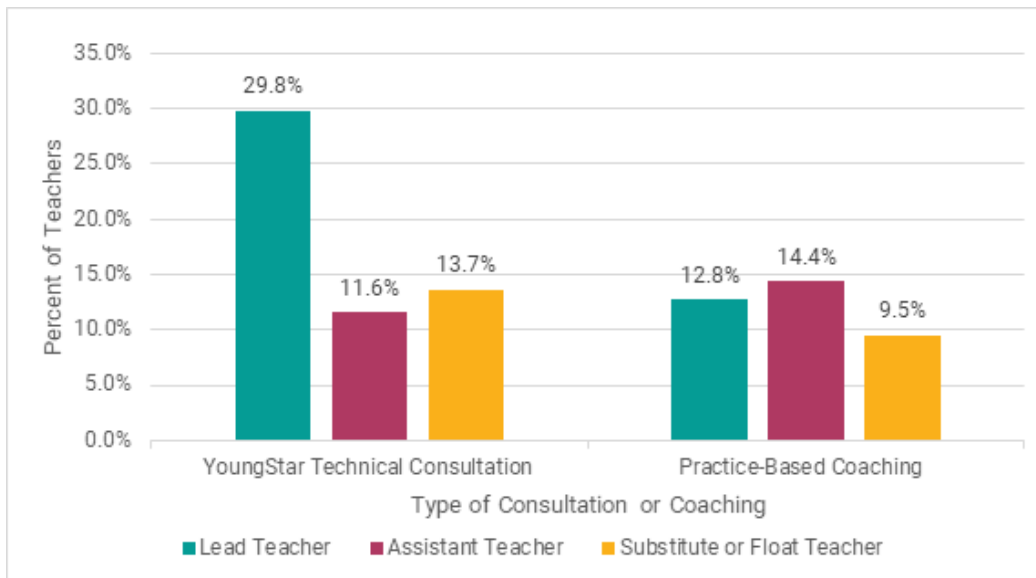


Notes: N=1,683-1684.

We asked teachers if in the past 12 months they had worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant or engaged in practice-based coaching to improve their skills in working with children. Nearly one in four (23.4%) teachers reported having worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant, and 13.0% had engaged in practice-based coaching.

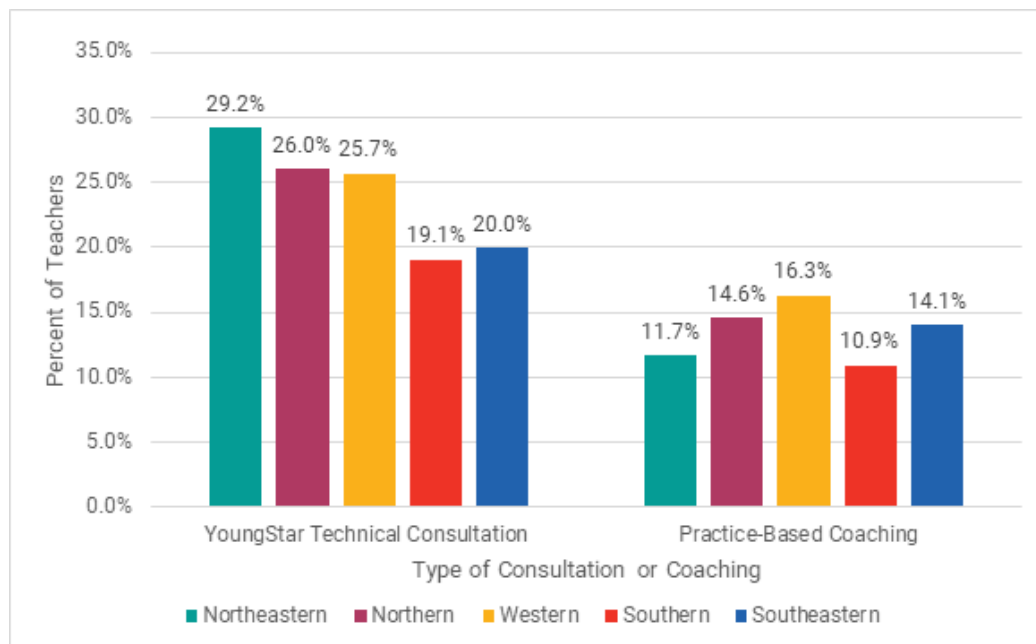
The percentage of teachers who had worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant varied at a statistically significant level by teacher role, region, and YoungStar rating, but the percentage of teachers who had engaged in practice-based coaching did not. Lead teachers reported working with a YoungStar Technical Consultant at higher rates than assistant teachers and substitute or float teachers (Figure 18). Teachers in the Northeastern, Northern, and Western regions were more likely to have worked with a YoungStar Technical Consultant compared to those in the Southern and Southeastern regions (Figure 19).

FIGURE 18: Consultation and Coaching by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1,626-1,647. Participation in YoungStar Technical Consultation varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ . Participation in Practice-Based Coaching did not vary at a statistically significant level by teacher role.

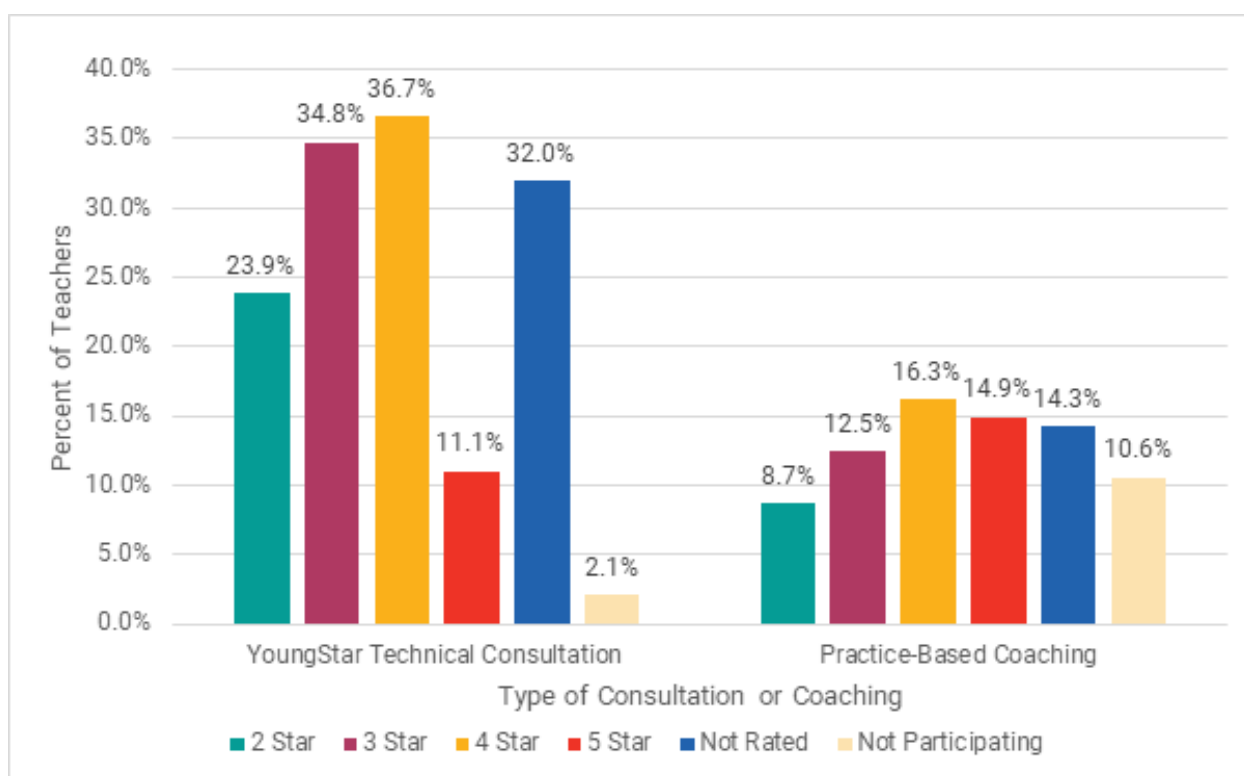
FIGURE 19: Consultation and Coaching by Licensing Region



Notes: N=1,626-1,647. Participation in YoungStar Technical Consultation varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ . Participation in Practice-Based Coaching did not vary at a statistically significant level by region.

Teachers in programs with 3 and 4 Star ratings and those in Not Rated programs had the highest participation in working with a YoungStar technical consultant (Figure 20). We would expect lower rates of participation among Not Participating and 5 Star programs because the majority of 5 Star programs receive their YoungStar rating by meeting accreditation standards from another accrediting organization, such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children or the Head Start Performance Standards. However, we note that teachers in 2 Star programs reported substantially lower rates of working with a YoungStar technical consultant compared to teachers in 3 Star, 4 Star, and Not Rated programs.

FIGURE 20: Consultation and Coaching by YoungStar Rating



Note: N=1,626-1,647. Participation in YoungStar Technical Consultation varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ . Participation in Practice-Based Coaching did not vary at a statistically significant level by YoungStar rating.

Finally, the survey assessed teachers' familiarity with and participation in the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship and REWARD stipend programs. While participation rates were similar across the two programs, teachers were more likely to be familiar with the T.E.A.C.H. program than with the REWARD program. Nearly half of teachers (48.1%) had at least heard of the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program (or were very familiar with it), but only 14.2% had participated and 37.6% had never heard of T.E.A.C.H. (see Table 7). For the REWARD stipend program, only 18.7% had heard of the program and another 19.9% had participated in the program, while a majority (61.5%) had never heard of the program.

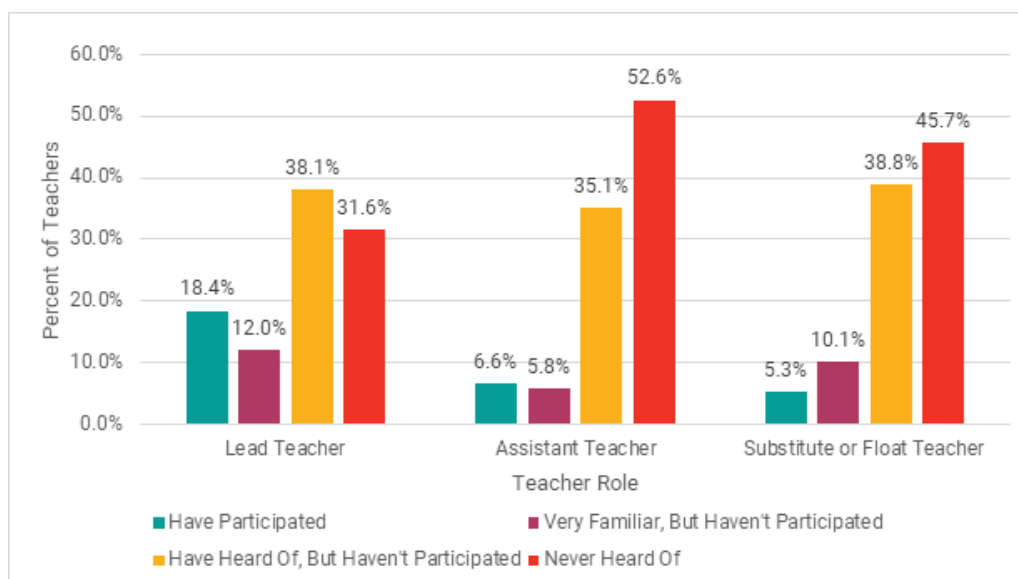


TABLE 7: Teachers' Participation in and Familiarity with T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD Programs

	T.E.A.C.H.	REWARD
Have participated in the program	14.2%	19.9%
Very familiar with program but not participated	10.8%	2.2%
Have heard of the program	37.3%	16.5%
Have never heard of the program	37.6%	61.5%
Total	100%	100%
N	1,664	1,651

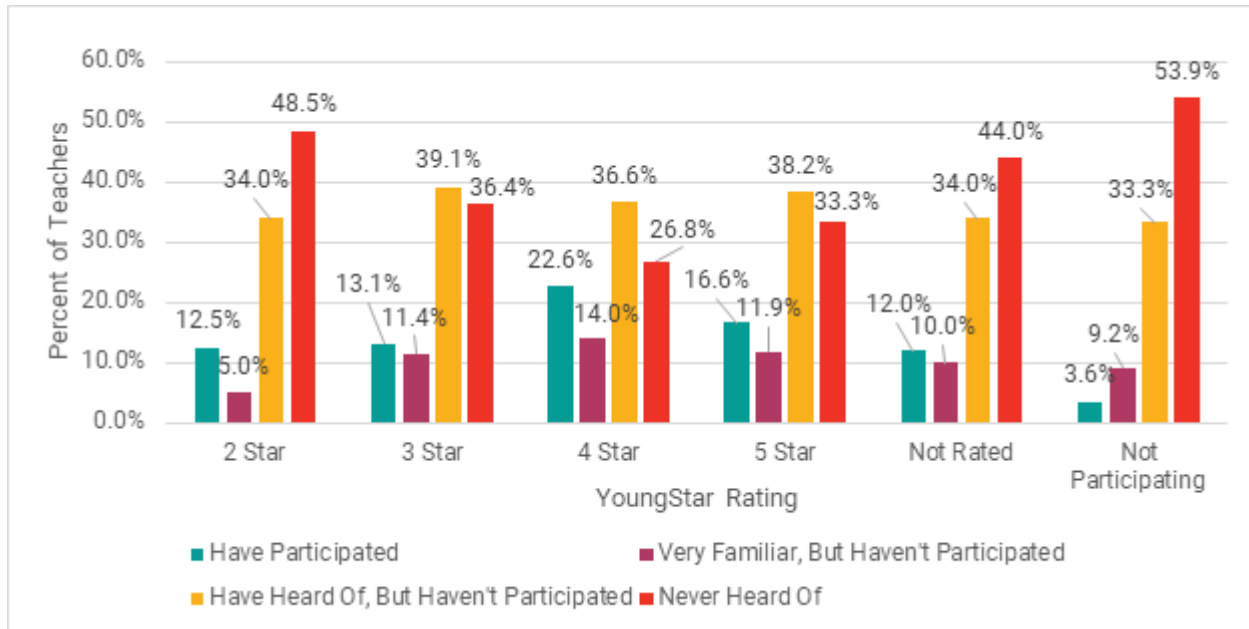
Participation in and familiarity with the T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD programs varied significantly by teacher role, YoungStar rating, and region. Below we show results for the T.E.A.C.H. program, but the pattern of results was similar for the REWARD program. Lead teachers were more likely to have participated in T.E.A.C.H. and less likely to have never heard of the program (see Figure 21). Teachers in programs with 4 and 5 Star ratings were more likely than teachers in lower rated, Not Rated, or Not Participating programs to have participated in T.E.A.C.H. and were slightly less likely to have never heard of the program (see Figure 22). Teachers in the Southeastern and Southern regions were more likely than teachers in other regions to have participated in the T.E.A.C.H. program, whereas teachers in the Northern and Western regions were more likely to have never heard of the program (see Figure 23).

FIGURE 21: Familiarity with T.E.A.C.H. Program by Teacher Role



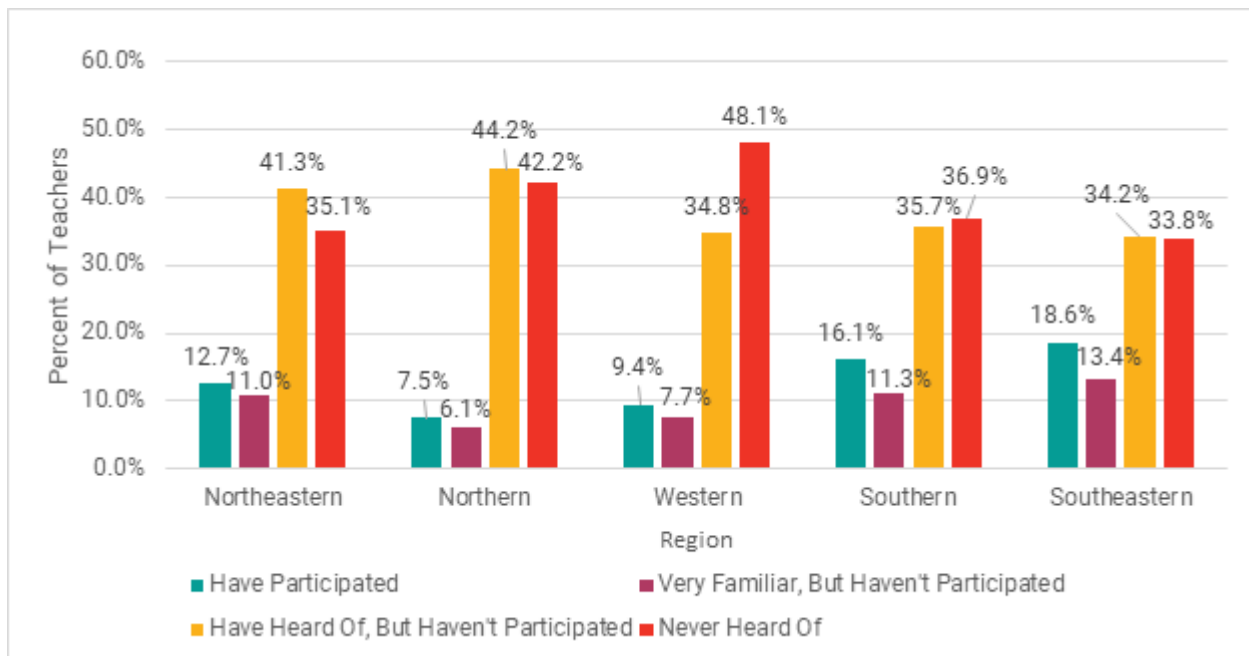
Notes: N=1,621. Participation in and familiarity with the T.E.A.C.H. program varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 22: Familiarity with T.E.A.C.H. Program by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,664. Participation in and familiarity with the T.E.A.C.H. program varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 23: Familiarity with T.E.A.C.H. Program by Licensing Region



Notes: N=1,664. Participation in and familiarity with the T.E.A.C.H. program varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

## Section 6: Intentions to Stay in the ECE Field and Current Job

We next describe teachers' intentions of staying in their current job and the ECE field, as well as their reasons for leaving. We also examined how many teachers currently have a second job or have recently looked for a second job as this may indicate insufficient earnings in their ECE job. We looked for variation by teachers' wages, as well as their role, their program's YoungStar rating, and region.

More than one in four teachers reported looking for a new job in the past 6 months, and the majority of these teachers reported that their reason for looking was related to seeking a higher-quality job with better pay, more benefits, or opportunity for advancement. A similar proportion of teachers—slightly more than 25%—plan to leave the ECE field within the next two years and 50% plan to leave within the next five years. The most common reason for planning to leave the field (for reasons other than retirement) was to find a job that pays more, with more benefits, or more opportunity for advancement. In addition, nearly one-third of teachers reported that they had considered becoming a family child care provider or nanny during the past 6 months. Despite this, teachers reported a strong commitment to the ECE field, with more than 8 in 10 agreeing that they work in ECE because it is their career or profession. Finally, over one-third of teachers in our sample either currently had a second job (16%) or were recently looking for a second job (22%).

Teachers' role and wages were consistently related to their intentions to stay in their current job and field. Lead teachers reported intending to stay in the ECE field for longer, were less likely to say that they plan to move to a different field, were less likely to have a second job, and reported higher levels of commitment to the ECE field compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers. Similarly, teachers with higher wages reported intending to stay in the ECE field for longer, were more likely to say that they plan to leave the ECE field due to retirement, were less likely to have looked for a second job, and reported higher levels of commitment to the ECE field compared to teachers with lower wages. Lead teachers and teachers with higher wages were also less likely to have considered becoming a family child provider or nanny. Taken together, these findings suggest that a substantial minority of teachers have sought out or intend to seek out other job or career opportunities and the primary reasons are related to their compensation and opportunities for advancement.

### Searching for a New Job or Additional Job

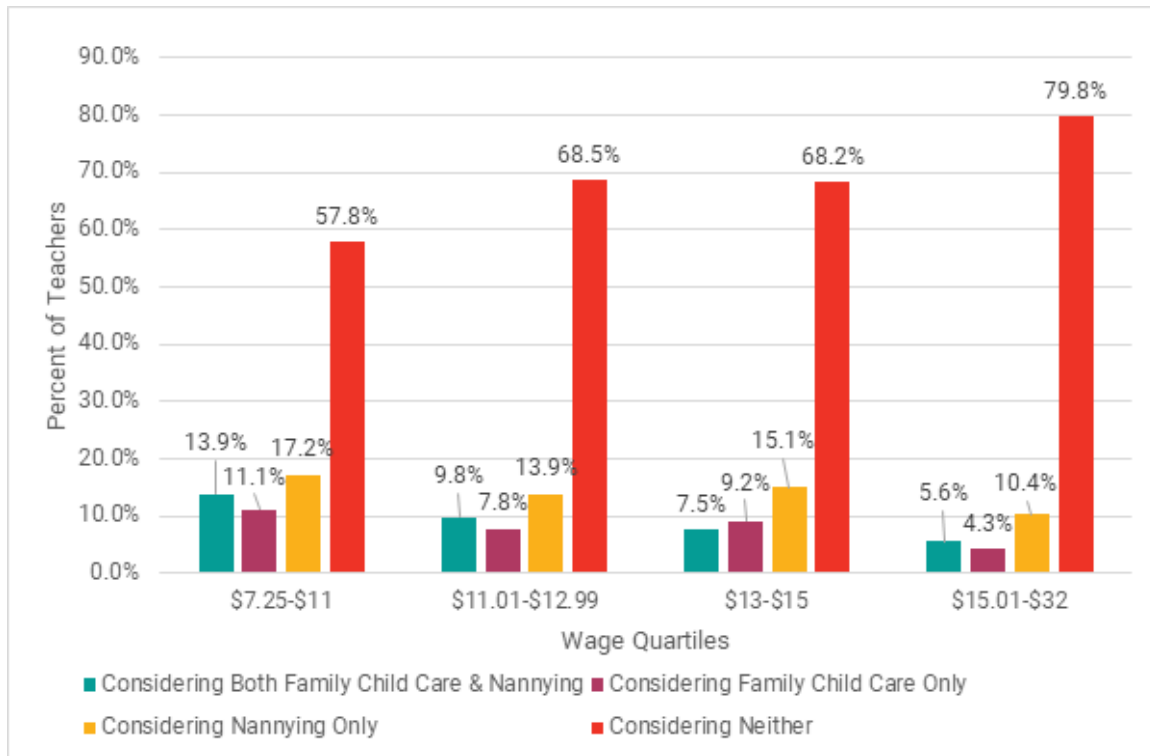
To capture teachers' intentions to stay in their current ECE job, we asked them if they had looked for a new job (not including a second or additional job) in the past 6 months, and if so, what their reasons were for searching for a new job. We found that 27.6% of teachers reported looking for a new job in the past 6 months. This was consistent across teacher roles, teachers' wage quartiles, YoungStar rating, and region with no statistically significant differences. Among teachers that said they had looked for a new job, the most common reasons teachers selected were:

- To find a job that pays more, offers more or better benefits, or offers more opportunity for advancement (88.1%)
- To find a job that is a better fit for them, such as matching their training or experience, values or goals, or culture (46.1%)
- To find a job with less potential COVID-19 exposure (24.3%)
- Because they want to leave this field (23.9%)
- Because they were worried this job may end (17.7%)
- For personal or family reasons, such as having a new baby or for health reasons (16.6%)
- Because they were asked to leave their current or former job, such as being laid off, furloughed, or fired (4.3%)

Teachers were also able to write in other reasons for searching for a new job; these included: factors of work environment, such as poor management, lack of support, being treated unfairly and concerns regarding coworkers; factors related to pay and benefits, such as high costs of living, inability to live off of current wages, needing better insurance or looking for a better schedule; the pursuit of career goals more in line with their education; and stressors of working with children.

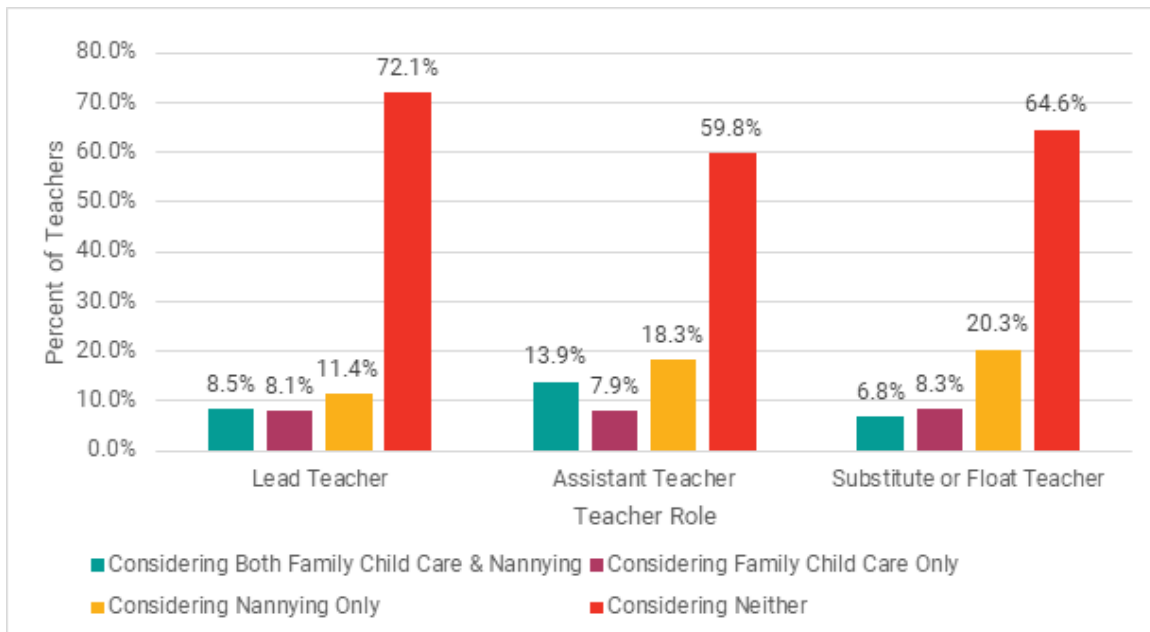
We asked teachers if in the past 6 months they had considered becoming a family child care provider (or going to work for a family child care provider) or considered becoming a nanny (or caring for children in the child's own home). We found that 17.2% of teachers had considered becoming a family child care provider and 23.2% had considered becoming a nanny. Because some teachers responded yes to both, we found that 31.2% of teachers had considered becoming a family child care provider and/or a nanny (13.4% had considered both; 68.8% had considered neither). This varied by teachers' wages and role, but less so by their program's YoungStar rating, and region, although all differences were statistically significant. Teachers with the highest wages were less likely to have considered becoming a family child care provider or nanny (Figure 24), and lead teachers were less likely than assistant teachers to have considered this (Figure 25). We found significant but less pronounced differences by YoungStar rating and region; teachers in higher-rated programs were more likely to have considered becoming a nanny (15.5% in programs with a 5 Star rating vs. 8.9% in programs with a 2 Star rating) whereas those in lower rated programs were more likely to have considered becoming a family child care provider (6.3% in programs with a 5 Star rating vs. 11.4% in programs with a 2 Star rating; not shown in figure). With respect to region, teachers in the Southeastern region were more likely to have considered either becoming a family child care provider or nanny (36.2%) in comparison to those in other regions (26.2% to 30.8%).

FIGURE 24: Considering Other Child Care Options by Hourly Wage Quartile



Notes: N=1,607. The percentage of teachers considering other child care options varied significantly by wage quartiles at  $p < .05$ .

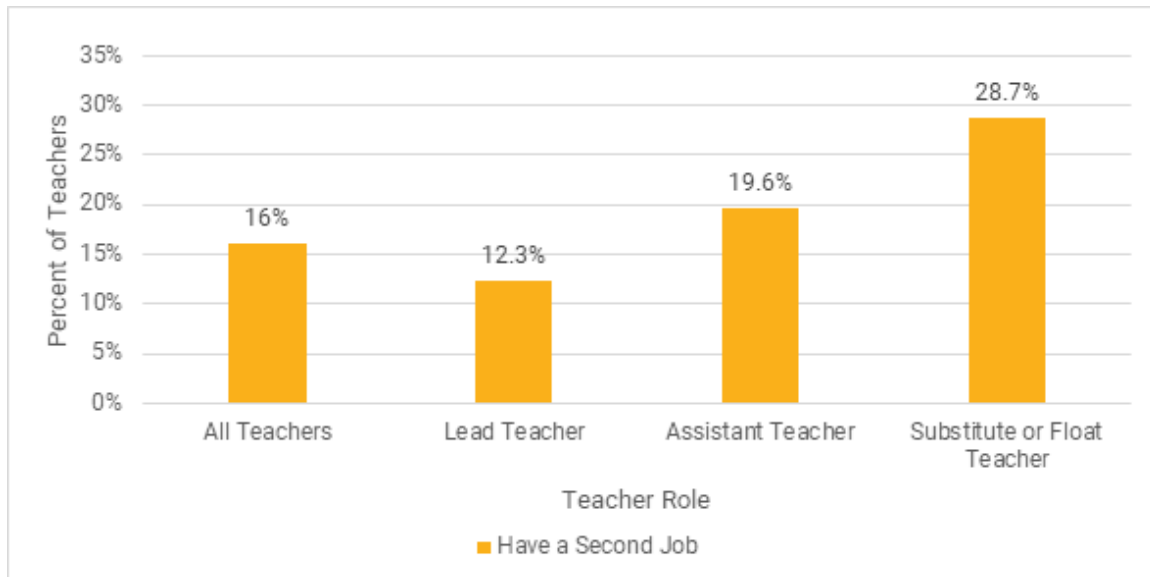
FIGURE 25: Considering Other Childcare Options by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1,678. The percentage of teachers considering other child care options varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

Sixteen percent of teachers (N=269) reported that they have a second job in addition to their ECE job, but this varied significantly by teacher role. Only 12.3% of lead teachers compared to 28.7% of float/substitute teachers reported having a second job. We did not find significant variation by their program’s YoungStar rating, by region, or by wage quartiles.

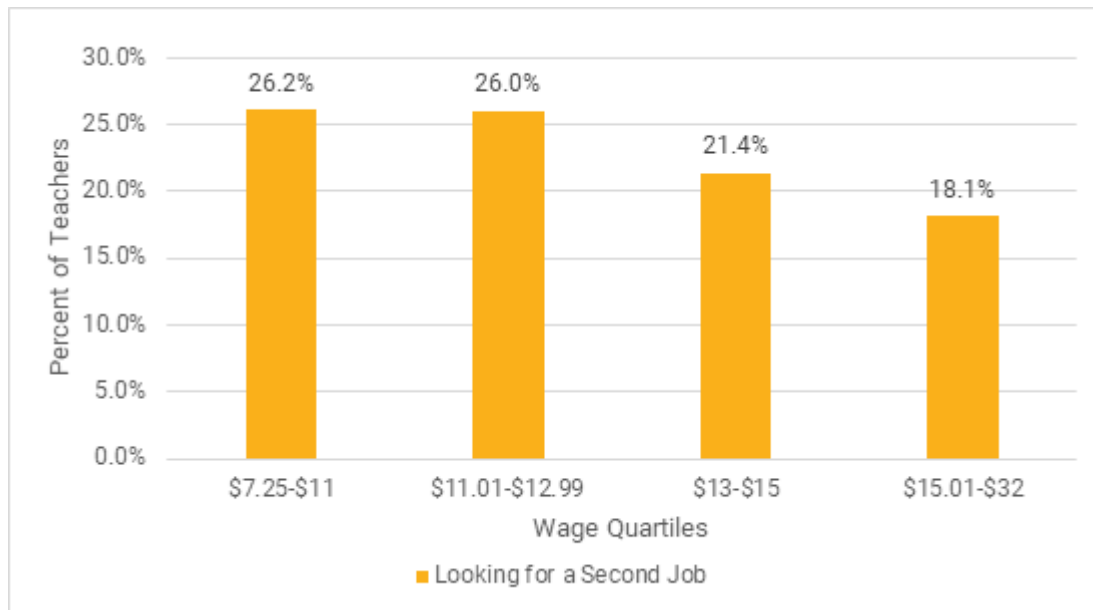
FIGURE 26: Percentage of Teachers Who Have a Second Job



Notes: N=1,680. Percentage of teachers who have a second job varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

Among the 1,411 teachers who did not currently have a second job, 313 (22.4%) reported that they had looked for a second job in the past 6 months. This means that overall, over one-third (34.5% or 582 teachers) of teachers in our sample either currently had a second job or were recently looking for a second job. The percentage of teachers looking for a second job did not vary significantly by teacher role, YoungStar rating, or region, but did vary by teachers’ wage. Twenty-six percent of teachers in the two lowest wage quartiles had looked for a second job compared to 21.4% of teachers in the third wage quartile and 18.1% of teachers in the highest wage quartile.

FIGURE 27: Percentage of Teachers Looking for a Second Job by Hourly Wage Quartile

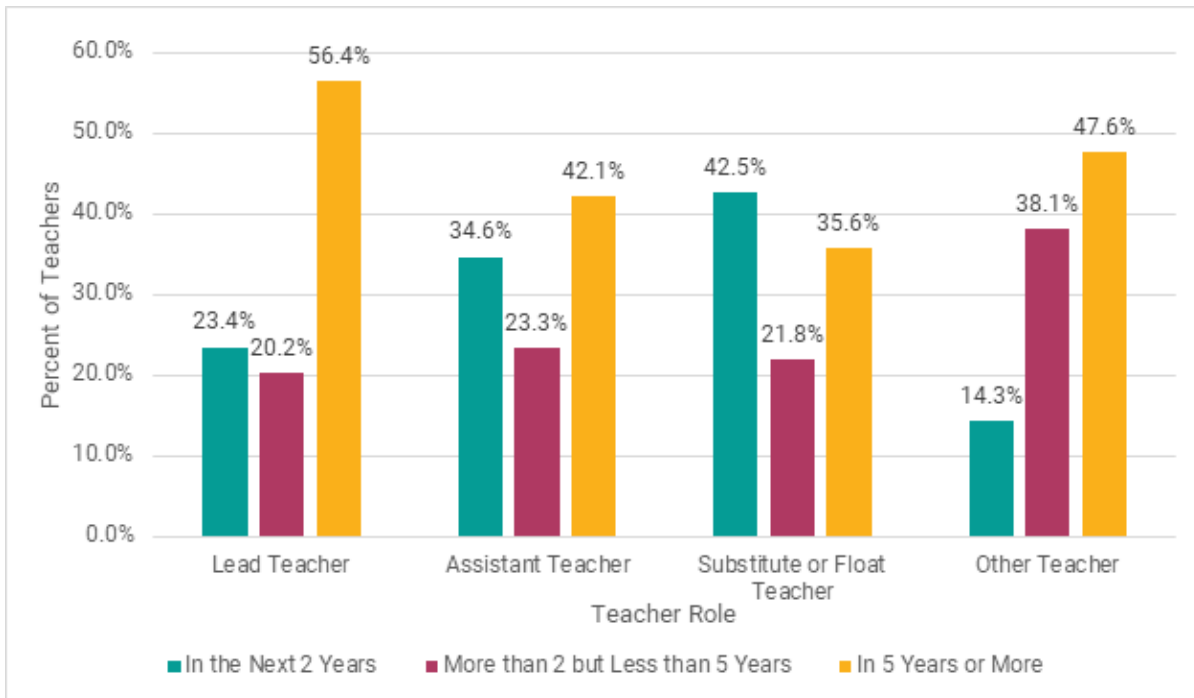


Notes: N=1,334. The percentage of teachers looking for a second job varied significantly by wage quartiles at  $p < .05$ .

### Intention to Stay in the ECE Field

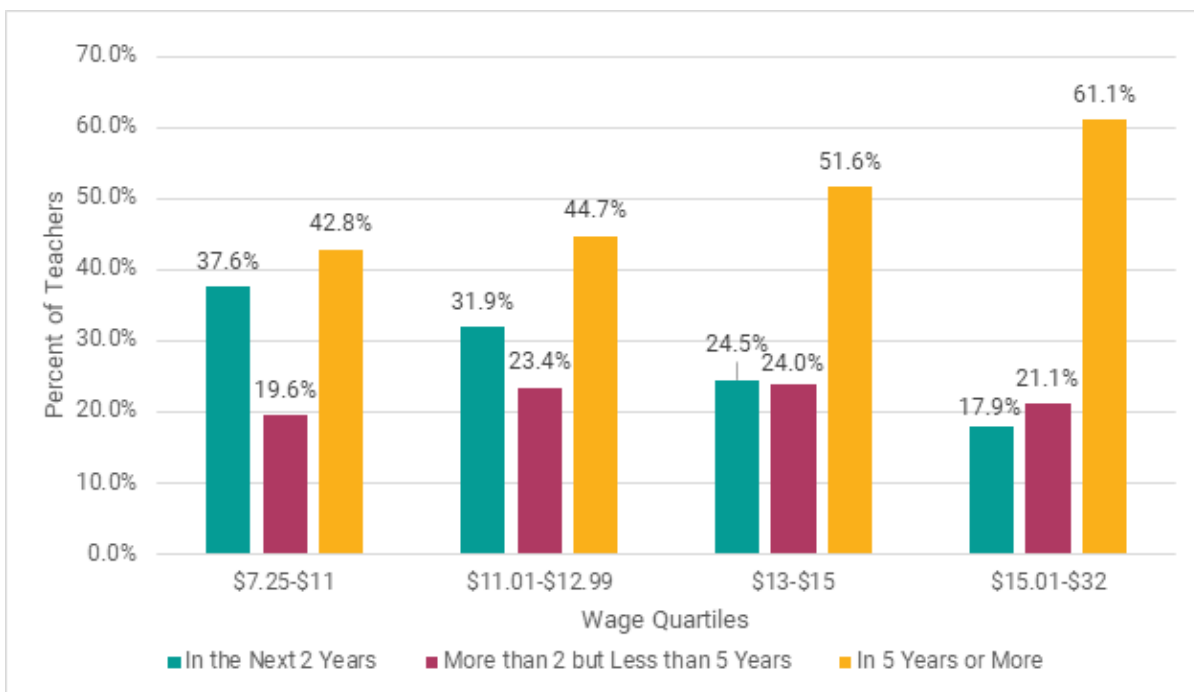
We asked teachers to report on how soon they plan to leave the ECE field—within the next two years, in more than two but less than five years, and in five years or more—and for what reason—moving to work in another field, retiring, or other reason. We found that 27.8% of teachers plan to leave in the next two years, 21.5% in more than two but less than five years, and 50.7% of teachers plan to leave in five years or more. However, this varied significantly by teacher role, teacher wages, and region, but not by YoungStar Rating. Lead teachers were more likely than assistant and float/substitute teachers to say that they plan to leave in five years or more (Figure 28), as were teachers who had higher wages (Figure 29). Teachers in the Western and Southern regions were more likely to say they plan to leave in five years or more than those in other regions (Figure 30).

FIGURE 28: When Anticipate Leaving Field by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1,486. Length of time in which teachers anticipate leaving the field varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

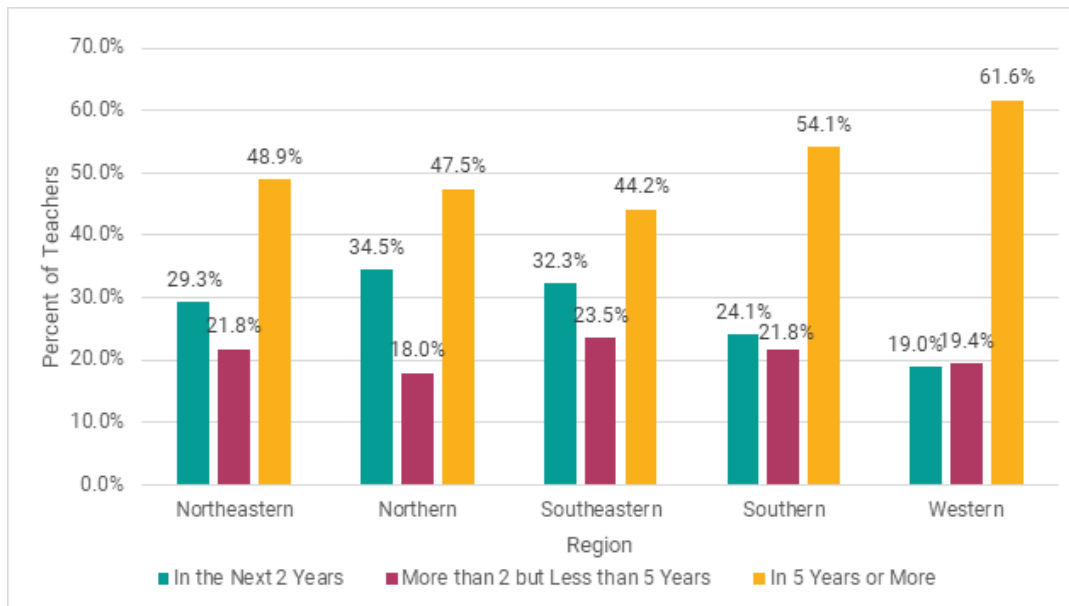
FIGURE 29: When Anticipate Leaving Field by Hourly Wage Quartile



Notes: N=1,424. Length of time in which teachers anticipate leaving the field varied significantly by wage quartiles at  $p < .05$ .



FIGURE 30: When Anticipate Leaving Field by Licensing Region



Notes: N=1,486. Length of time in which teachers anticipate leaving the field varied significantly by region at  $p < .05$ .

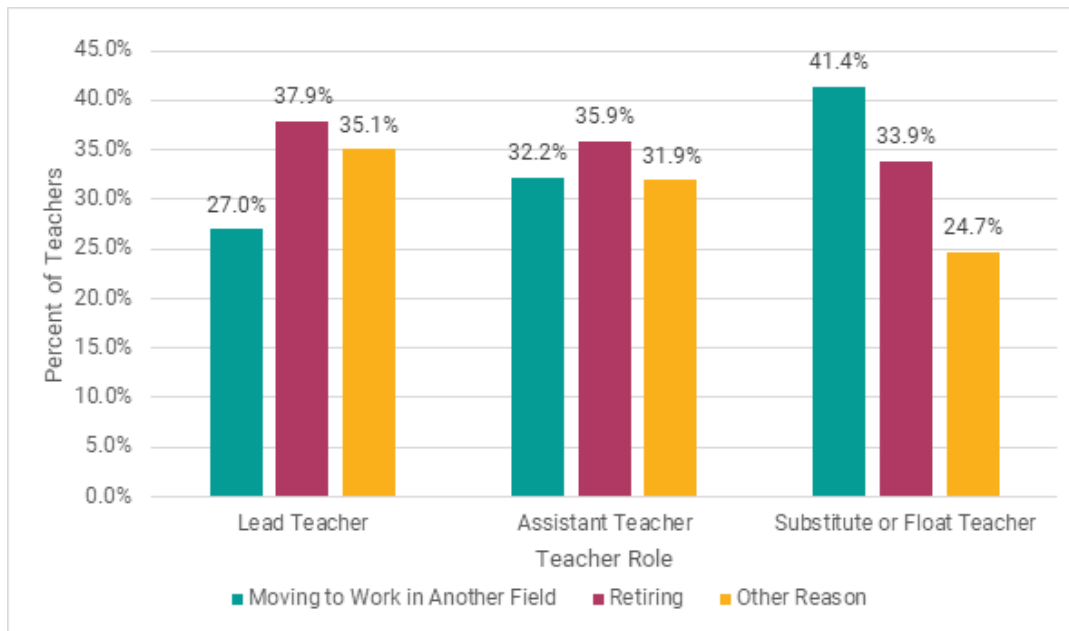
With respect to their reason for leaving the field, 30.0% of teachers reported that they plan to move to work in another field, 37.0% plan to retire, and 33.1% reported another reason. Teachers who planned to move to another field most commonly reported that they plan to leave the field within the next two years while teachers who said they plan to retire most frequently said they were planning on leaving in five years or more. Teachers' anticipated reason for leaving the field varied significantly by teachers' role and wages, but not by YoungStar rating or region. Lead teachers were less likely than assistant and float/substitute teachers to say that they plan to move to another field; they were slightly more likely to say that they plan to leave due to retirement; and substantially more likely to say that they plan to leave for another reason (Figure 31). Teachers with the highest wages were substantially more likely to say that they plan to leave the field to retire and were less likely to say that they plan to leave to move to another field (Figure 32).

For teachers who reported a reason for leaving the field other than retirement, we asked them which reason best describes their main reason for planning to leave the field. These were their responses in order of most to least common:

- To find a job that pays more, with more or better benefits, or with more opportunity for advancement (52.5%)
- To stop working for family or personal reasons, such as having a new baby, or for health reasons (13.4%)
- To find a job that is less stressful (9.6%)

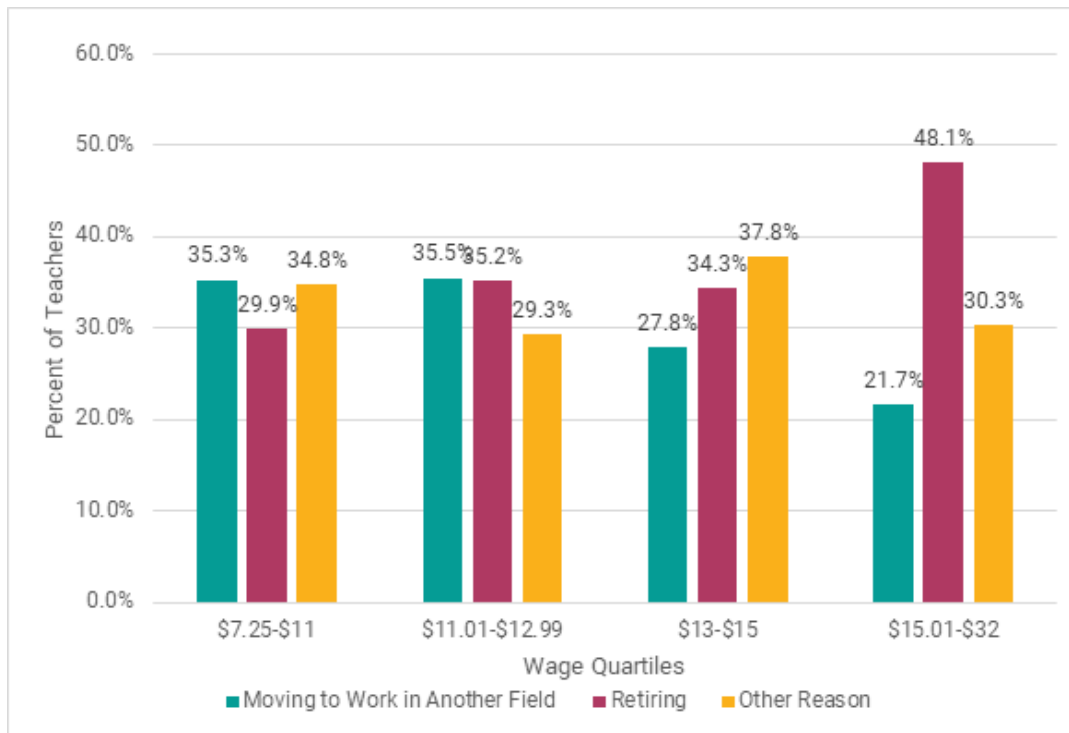
Another 24.5% of teachers reported an “other reason,” and these included: other career pursuits, such as going back to school, entering another field upon graduation, moving into elementary education, or opening their own group or family child care program; work environment factors, such as poor management, difficult schedules, stress or concerns with coworkers; and personal reasons, such as their own children aging out of child care needs, a family move, or the need to care for aging parents.

FIGURE 31: Anticipated Reason for Leaving Field by Teacher Role



Notes: N=1,542. Anticipated reasons for leaving the field varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 32: Anticipated Reason for Leaving Field by Hourly Wage Quartile



Notes: N=1,514. Anticipated reasons for leaving the field varied significantly by wage quartiles at  $p < .05$ .

### Commitment to ECE Field

To assess teachers' commitment to the ECE field, we asked them to respond to a set of four questions about their motivation for working in the ECE field—the extent to which they work in the ECE field because:

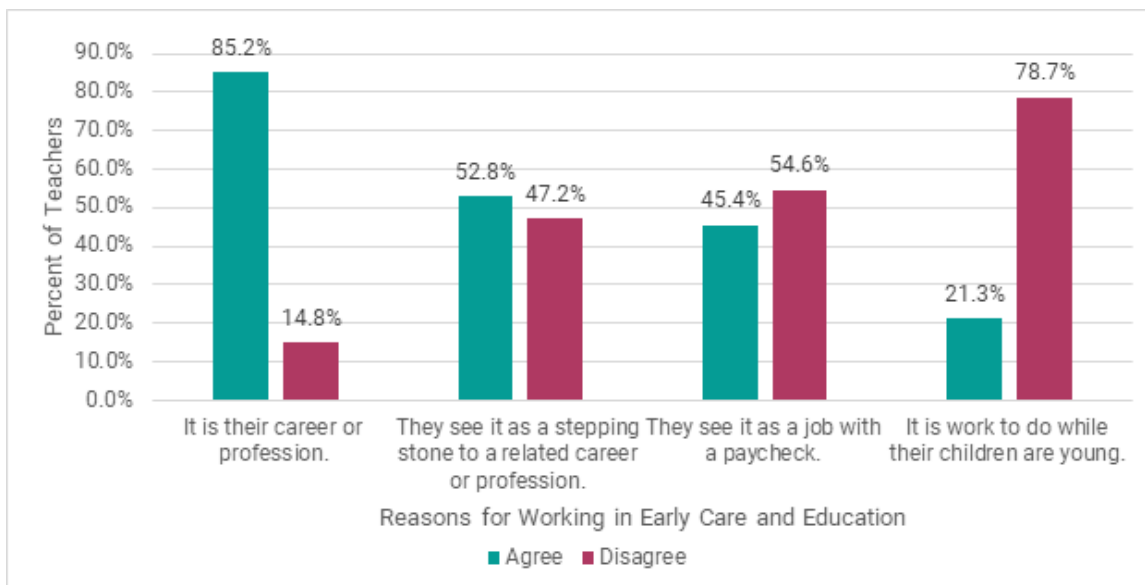
- It is their career or profession.
- They see it as a stepping stone to a related career or profession.
- They see it as a job with a paycheck.
- It is work to do while their children are young.

We report the percentage of teachers in our sample who agreed with each statement (responses of “a great deal,” “quite a bit,” or “somewhat”) and the percentage who disagreed with each statement (responses of “a little” or “not at all”). We interpret agreement with the first statement and disagreement with the other three statements as indicating higher levels of commitment to the ECE field.

With respect to working in the ECE field because it is their career or profession, 85% of teachers agreed with this statement, indicating high levels of commitment to the ECE field (see Figure

33). Yet, only around half of teachers disagreed that they see their work in ECE as a stepping stone to a related career or profession and that they see it as a job with a paycheck, indicating lower levels of commitment. We also note that three-quarters of teachers disagreed that it is work to do while their children—indicating high levels of commitment—but this is likely a less reliable indicator of commitment to the ECE field given that only 39% of teachers in our sample had children of their own.

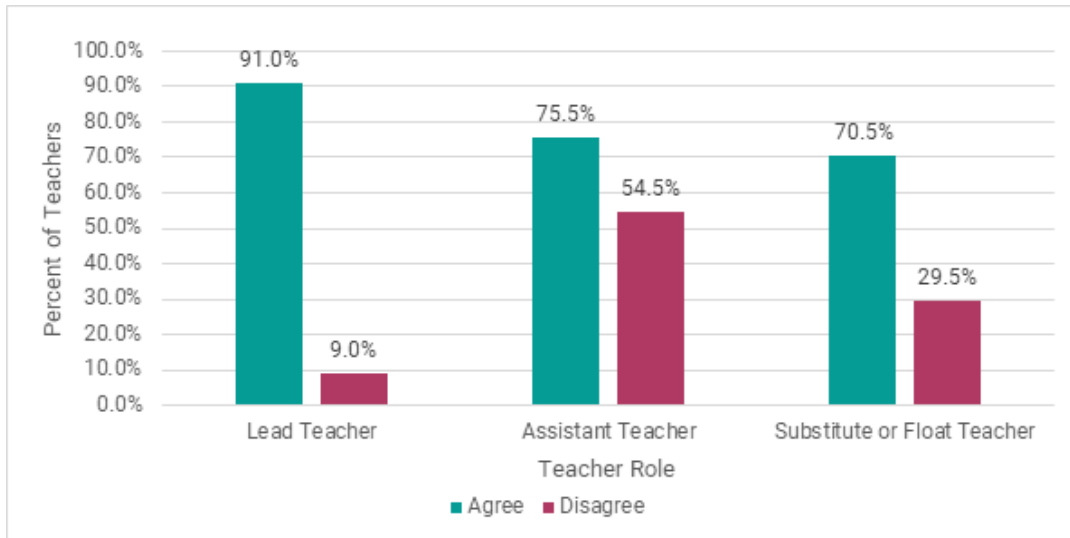
FIGURE 33: Reasons for Working in the Field of Early Care and Education



Notes: N=1,664 for a career or profession, N=1,630 for a stepping stone, N=1,617 for a job with a paycheck and N=1,605 for while children are young.

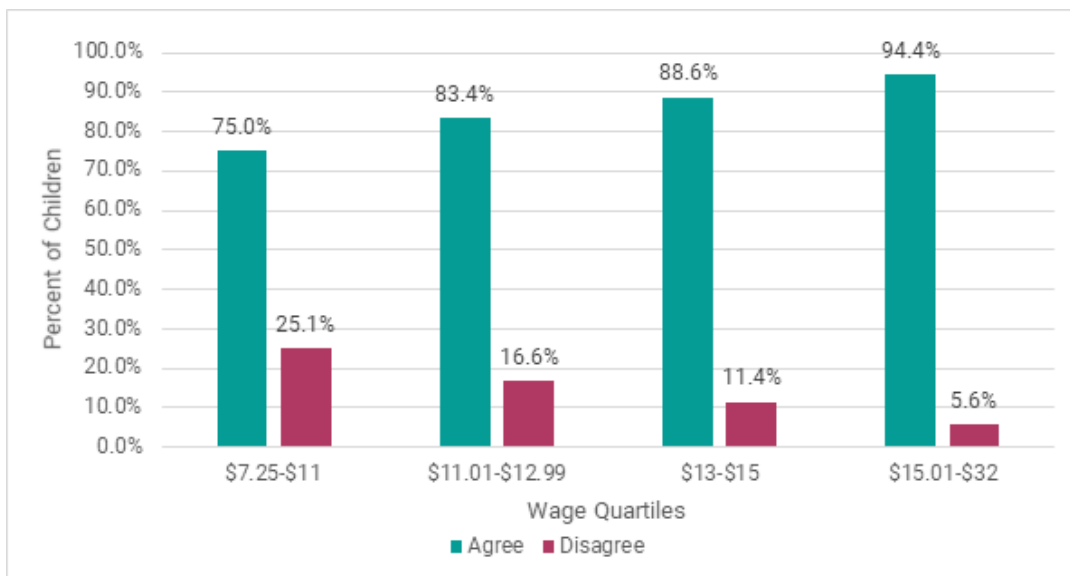
Teachers’ commitment to the ECE field varied significantly by teachers’ role, wages, and YoungStar rating, but not by region. The figures below show how teachers’ responses regarding working in the ECE field because it is their career or profession varied by teachers’ role, wages, and their program’s YoungStar rating, but we see a similar pattern across the other items. Lead teachers reported substantially higher levels of commitment than assistant and float/substitute teachers (see Figure 34) as did teachers with higher wages compared to those with lower wages (Figure 35). Teachers working in programs with 4 and 5 Star ratings and in programs not participating in YoungStar reported higher levels of commitment to the ECE field compared to those in programs with 2 and 3 Star ratings, and Not Rated programs (Figure 36).

FIGURE 34: Working in Early Care and Education as a Career or Profession by Teacher Role



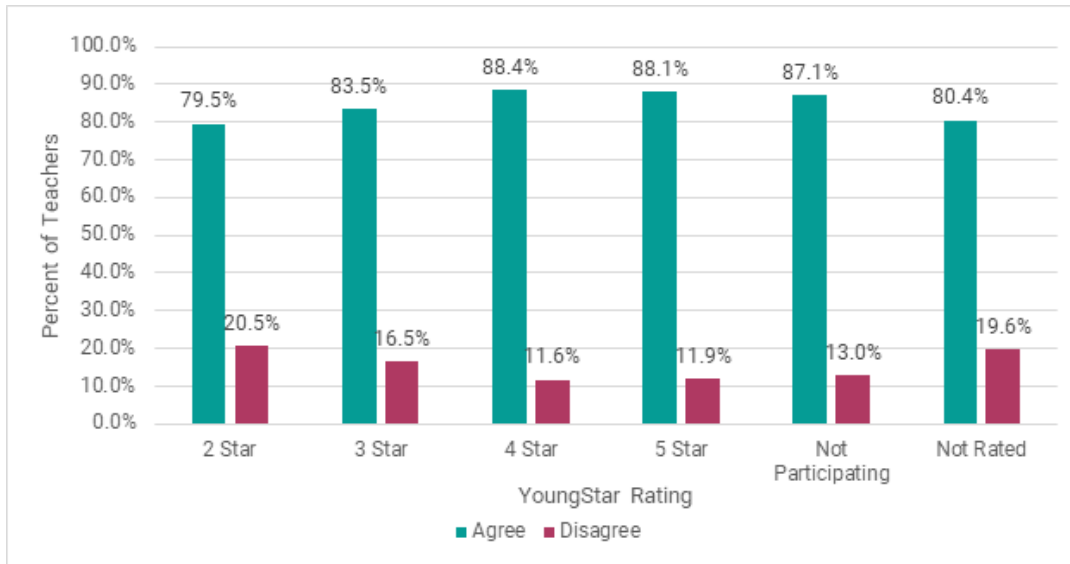
Notes: N=1,621. Percentage of teachers working in the ECE field as a career or profession varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 35: Working in Early Care and Education as a Career or Profession by Hourly Wage Quartile



Notes: N=1,595. Percentage of teachers working in the ECE field as a career or profession varied significantly by wage quartiles at  $p < .05$ .

FIGURE 36: Working in Early Care and Education as a Career or Profession by YoungStar Rating



Notes: N=1,664. Percentage of teachers working in the ECE field as a career or profession varied significantly by YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

## Section 7: Emotional, Physical, and Economic Wellbeing

Because we surveyed teachers nearly one year into the COVID-19 pandemic that has had detrimental effects on many families' mental health and financial security, we included several questions to assess teachers' emotional, physical, and financial wellbeing. We found that a substantial proportion of teachers, between 25% to 29%, reported experiencing feelings of burnout from their job a few times per week or every day. Lead teachers were more likely to report feelings of burnout from their job and also reported lower overall health compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers. Between 20 to 27% of teachers reported experiencing food insecurity within the past month, and 22% reported that it was very or extremely difficult to live on their household income. Lead teachers were more likely to report difficulty living on their household income compared to assistant and float/substitute teachers; however, teachers in the Southeastern region reported higher levels of food insecurity compared to teachers in other regions, and teachers in programs not participating in YoungStar reported lower levels of food insecurity compared to teachers in rated and not rated programs. Finally, while a majority of teachers reported receiving a COVID-19 related government payments, the receipt of benefits from other public programs was relatively low.


### Emotional and Physical Wellbeing

We first asked teachers to report on their feelings of burnout from their job: how often they feel used up at the end of the workday and feel frustrated by their job, ranging from never to everyday. We found that a substantial proportion of teachers report feeling burnout from their job more than once per week: 38.7% said they feel used up at the end of the workday a few times per week or every day and 24.9% said they feel frustrated by their job a few times per week or everyday (see Table 8). Feelings of burnout varied significantly by role, but not by YoungStar rating or region. Lead teachers (41.5% & 28.6%) reported more frequent feelings of burnout compared to assistant (33.7% & 17.2%) and float/substitute teachers (32.3% & 19.9%).

Self-reported health varied significantly by role, but not by YoungStar rating or region (see Table 8). About half of teachers (52.4%) reported that their health is excellent or very good (versus poor, fair, or good). Lead teachers were less likely to report excellent or very good health (49.3%) compared to assistant (58.3%) and substitute/float teachers (57.8%). We found relatively small differences by YoungStar rating (ranging from 47.6% of those in programs with 4 Star ratings to 58.9% of those in not participating programs) and by region (ranging from 48.2% in the Northeastern region to 56.7% in the Western region).

### Food Insecurity and Economic Wellbeing

A substantial minority of teachers reported experiencing food insecurity within the past month (see Table 8). More than a quarter (27.0%) reported being worried food would run out before they have money to get more, and 20.4% reported that the food they bought just didn't last and they didn't have money to buy more. Reported food insecurity varied significantly by region and



YoungStar rating, but not by teacher role. Teachers in the Southeastern region reported higher levels of food insecurity (32.6% & 25.1%) than teachers in other regions, and teachers in Not Participating programs reported the lowest levels of food insecurity (17% & 11.4%).

With respect to teachers' economic well-being, we asked teachers how difficult it is for them to live on their household income. Overall, 25.7% of teachers said it was not at all difficult, 52.9% said it was a little or somewhat difficult, and 21.5% said it was very or extremely difficult (Table 9). Economic well-being varied significantly by teacher role, but not by YoungStar rating or region. Lead teachers were more likely to report it being very or extremely difficult to live on their household income compared to assistant teachers.



TABLE 8: Percentage of Teachers Reporting Physical, Emotional, and Food Insecurity Outcomes

	<b>Overall Health (Excellent or Very Good)</b>	<b>Feelings of Burnout from Job (Few times a week/everyday)</b>		<b>Food Insecurity (Sometimes or Often)</b>	
	<b>Excellent or Very Good Health</b>	<b>(Sometimes or Often)</b>	<b>Feel Frustrated by Job</b>	<b>Worried Food Might Run Out</b>	<b>Food Bought Just Didn't Last</b>
<b>All</b>	52.4%	38.7%	24.9%	27.0%	20.4%
<b>Teacher Role</b>					
Lead	49.3%	41.5%	28.6%	28.5%	21.5%
Assistant	58.3%	33.7%	17.2%	26.1%	19.8%
Float/substitute	57.8%	32.3%	19.9%	23.2%	16.8%
<b>YoungStar Rating</b>					
2 Star	55.2%	35.0%	25.3%	28.4%	21.9%
3 Star	51.2%	38.8%	25.0%	30.5%	22.4%
4 Star	47.6%	42.2%	26.2%	28.3%	25.3%
5 Star	52.4%	39.6%	26.0%	24.4%	17.6%
Not rated	54.9%	35.3%	19.6%	32.0%	30.0%
Not participating	58.9%	37.6%	19.9%	17.0%	11.4%
<b>Region</b>					
Northeastern	48.2%	42.2%	26.9%	24.0%	17.2%
Northern	53.4%	39.5%	27.6%	29.1%	21.6%
Southeastern	53.6%	37.6%	25.0%	32.6%	25.1%
Southern	52.8%	40.3%	24.1%	25.1%	19.8%
Western	56.7%	31.3%	20.7%	23.6%	17.7%
<b>N</b>	1,680	1,676	1,669	1,676	1,674

Note: Self-reported health varied significantly by role at  $p < .05$ ; feelings of burnout varied significantly by role at  $p < .05$ ; and food insecurity varied significantly by region and YoungStar rating at  $p < .05$ .

TABLE 9: Percentage of Teachers Reporting Difficulty Living on Household Income

	Very or extremely difficult	Somewhat or a little difficult	Not at all difficult
<b>All</b>	21.5%	52.9%	25.7%
<b>Teacher Role</b>			
Lead	23.7%	53.1%	23.2%
Assistant	16.3%	53.5%	30.2%
Float/substitute	19.7%	50.8%	29.5%
<b>YoungStar Rating</b>			
2 Star	20.3%	55.9%	23.8%
3 Star	22.0%	52.6%	25.4%
4 Star	28.5%	47.9%	23.6%
5 Star	20.3%	55.5%	24.3%
Not rated	29.4%	39.2%	31.4%
Not participating	14.3%	50.7%	35.0%
<b>Region</b>			
Northeastern	19.9%	53.9%	26.2%
Northern	21.8%	48.3%	29.9%
Southeastern	26.3%	50.1%	23.6%
Southern	19.7%	55.3%	25.0%
Western	17.9%	55.0%	27.1%

Notes: N= 1,672. The percentage of teachers reporting difficulty living on household income varied significantly by teacher role at p<.05.

Finally, we asked teachers about their participation in public benefit programs and their receipt of COVID-19 related government payments. The questions asked whether they or someone in their household were receiving each of the benefits listed in Table 10. A majority of teachers reported receiving a COVID-19 related government payments, but otherwise benefit receipt was relatively low. About one in four teachers reported that they or someone else in their household received BadgerCare or Medicare benefits. Additionally, about 15% of teachers reported that they or someone else in their household received benefits from Unemployment Insurance or FoodShare. Fewer than 10% of teachers reported receiving benefits from disability insurance, Wisconsin Shares, housing assistance, or W-2.

TABLE 10: Percentage of Teachers Receiving Benefits

Wisconsin Shares	4.7%
W-2 or TANF	2.4%
FoodShare WI or SNAP	14.1%
BadgerCare or Medicare	25.6%
Section 8 Housing	2.3%
Unemployment Insurance	15.7%
Disability (i.e. SSI)	8.3%
COVID-19 pandemic government payment	59.3%
Note: N= 1,564 - 1,657	

## Section 8: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teachers' Jobs

We asked teachers about how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected their job with respect to their pay, their concerns about COVID-19 exposure at their job, and their job-related stress. A substantial minority of teachers (25%) reported receiving a temporary pay increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but only 4% of teachers were still receiving the higher pay at the time of the survey. At the same time, most teachers (57%) reported that COVID-19 made their job more stressful, and many reported COVID-19 related job worries. For example, more than one-third were very or extremely worried about being exposed to COVID-19 at work. Lead teachers were more likely to report increased job stress due to COVID-19 and COVID-19 related worries than assistant and float/substitute teachers, and teachers who worked in programs that were more highly rated by YoungStar also reported more job stress, and in some cases more COVID-19 related worries, than teachers in lower-rated programs. Teachers in the Southeastern region consistently reported higher rates of COVID-19 related worries than teachers in other regions.

### Temporary Pay Increase Due to COVID-19

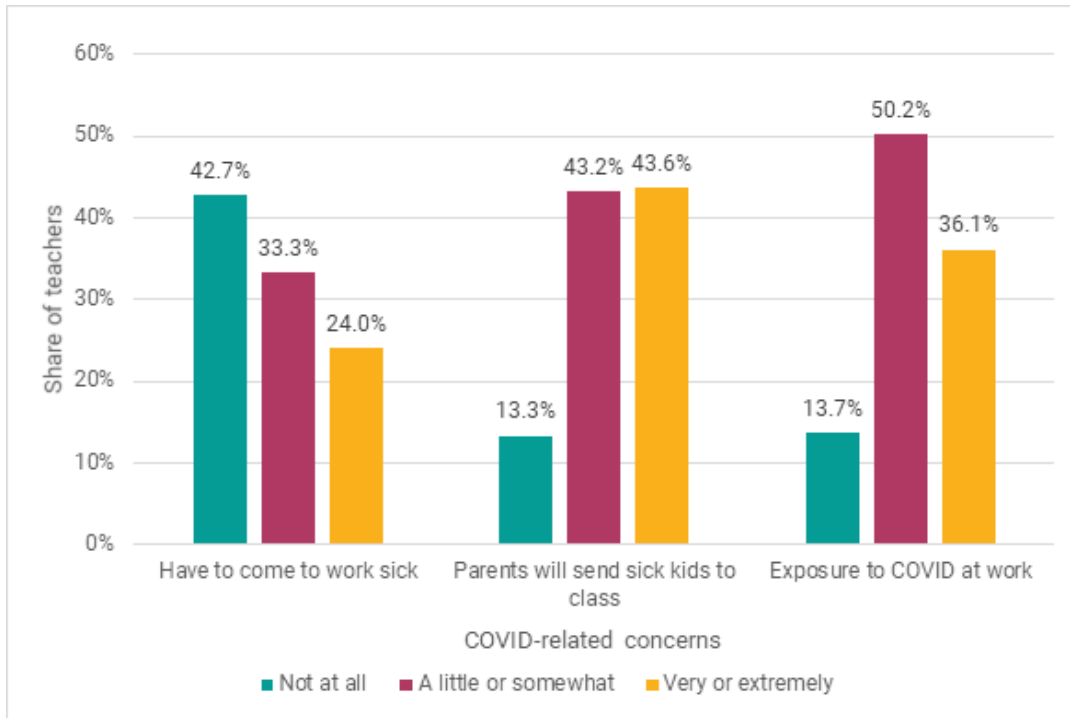
About one in four teachers (24.6%, N=407) reported that they received a temporary pay increase due to COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. But of those approximately 400 teachers who received a temporary pay increase, only 70 (17.5%) were still receiving the higher pay in early 2021; this is equivalent to only 4% of teachers in the full sample. Receipt of COVID-19 pay increases varied significantly by YoungStar rating, but not by region or teacher role. Teachers at programs rated 3 and 4 stars were the most likely to report receiving a pay raise due to COVID-19 at 28.4% and 30.7%, respectively. Teachers working at programs not participating in YoungStar were the least likely to receive a COVID-19 pay increase at 10.6%.

### COVID-19 Related Job Concerns and Job Stress

Teachers expressed being concerned about COVID-19 at their job. The survey asked teachers to report on the extent to which: 1) they feel worried about having to come to work if they are sick because they cannot afford to not work; 2) parents may send sick children to their job; and 3) they will be exposed to COVID-19 at work. As shown in Figure 37, nearly half of teachers worried a lot about parents sending sick kids to their program, more than one-third worried a lot about being exposed to COVID-19 at work, and about one quarter worried a lot that they would have to go to work sick because they cannot afford to take time off.

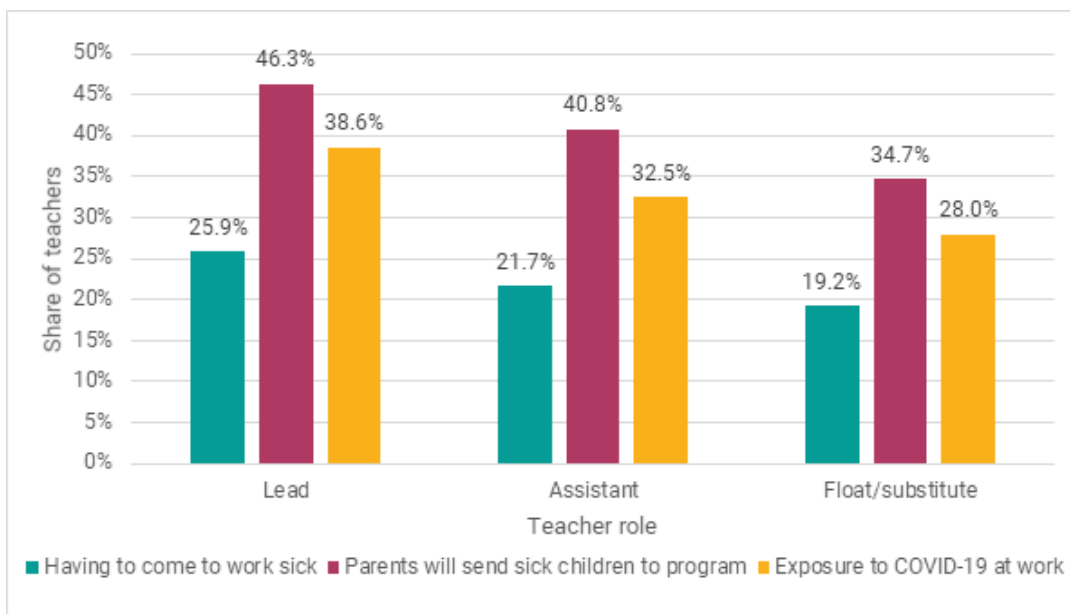
The percentage of teachers who were very or extremely worried about COVID-19 varied significantly by teacher role (Figure 38), but not by YoungStar rating or region. Lead teachers consistently reported higher rates of COVID-19 related worries. For example, 38.6% of lead teachers were very worried about being exposed to COVID-19 at work compared to 32.5% of assistant teachers and 28.0% of float/substitute teachers.

FIGURE 37: ECE Teachers' Concerns about COVID-19



Note: N=1,676-1,680

FIGURE 38: ECE Teachers' Reports of Being Very or Extremely Worried about COVID-19 by Role



N = 1,633-1,637; Percentage of teachers reporting being very or extremely worried varied significantly by teacher role at  $p < .05$ .

Most teachers (56.8%) reported that COVID-19 has made their job more stressful as opposed to less stressful (2.8%) or having no change (40.5%) on stress. This varied significantly by YoungStar rating and teacher role but not by region (see Table 11). More lead and float/substitute teachers (58%) reported increased job stress due to COVID-19 compared to assistant teachers (50%). Teachers in higher-rated programs were also more likely to report that COVID-19 made their job more stressful. For example, 64.8% of teachers in programs with 5 Star ratings reported that COVID-19 made their job more stressful compared to 46.2% of teachers in programs with 2 Star ratings and 52.5% of teachers in programs with 3 Star ratings.

TABLE 11: Percentage of Teachers Who Report Their Job is More Stressful Due to COVID-19

<b>All</b>	56.8%
<b>Teacher Role</b>	
Lead	58.4%
Assistant	50.1%
Float/substitute	58.1%
<b>YoungStar Rating</b>	
2 Star	46.2%
3 Star	52.5%
4 Star	54.6%
5 Star	64.8%
Not rated	51.0%
Not participating	64.5%
<b>Region</b>	
Northeastern	59.7%
Northern	55.8%
Southeastern	55.4%
Southern	58.6%
Western	51.3%
Notes: N= 1,631-1,674. The percentage of teachers who reported that their job is more stressful due to COVID-19 varied significantly by teacher role and YoungStar rating at $p < .05$ .	

## Section 9: The Registry

This study aimed to link data from the Registry with our teachers' responses to the workforce survey in order to provide more detailed information about teachers' education and credentials. Although we were able to make this data linkage for approximately half of the teachers in our sample (839 teachers), the information in the Registry data was limited. Very few teachers (6% or fewer) had a Registry credential. When comparing teachers' level of education in the survey to that in the Registry data, we consistently found that teachers had a lower level of education in the Registry, suggesting this information might be outdated. This is likely because teachers are not required to maintain updated information on their education in the Registry, and nearly one-quarter of teachers in our sample reported that they did not have or had not recently renewed their Registry membership. Teachers who had not recently renewed their membership most commonly cited lack of information, the cost of the membership, or it being too much of a hassle as reasons for not renewing. These results suggest the need for efforts to reduce barriers to Registry membership and renewal. Although teachers must attain a membership in order to initially obtain a Registry level and programs must have an updated profile in the Registry in order to obtain a YoungStar rating, there is less incentive for teachers to keep their membership and information current. Yet, this impedes the use of the Registry data for tracking the education and training of the ECE workforce.

### Teachers' Education and Credentials in The Registry

We examined teachers' education degrees, ECE credits, and credentials in the Registry data. For these analyses, we focus on the 839 teachers who responded to the survey and who we were able to link their Registry data; this is about half of the teachers in our full survey sample. Teachers' level of education was lower in the Registry data compared to their self-reported level of education in the survey. For example, according to the survey, 216 teachers had an associate's degree and 262 had a bachelors' degree, but in the Registry data only 146 had an associate's degree and 199 had a bachelor's degree. On average, teachers had 22 ECE credits in the Registry, but we are unable to compare this with teachers' reports since our survey did not ask about credits. We also found that very few teachers in the Registry data had a Registry credential. For example, only 50 teachers (6%) had an infant/toddler credential, 19 (2%) had a preschool credential, 21 (3%) had a director credential.

### Teachers' Membership in The Registry

We were interested in understanding which teachers had recently renewed their membership to The Registry and for those that had not, we wanted to understand their reasons for not doing so. Overall, 77% of teachers reported that they had renewed their membership to The Registry within the past two years, but this varied significantly by teacher role, YoungStar rating and region. Lead teachers were much more likely to report that they had renewed their Registry membership (83.6% compared to 60.7% of assistant teachers and 73.4% of float/substitute teachers). Teachers working in programs with 2 Star (77.9%), 3 Star (80.7%), and 4 Star (84.3%) ratings and

those not yet rated (80.4%), reported renewing their memberships at higher rates than those working in programs with 5 Star ratings (73.4%) or in programs not participating in YoungStar (66.0%). Teachers in the Southeastern region (82.0%), and the Northeastern region (78.7%) reported renewing at higher rates than teachers in the Southern (75.0%), Northern (73.3%) and Western (71.2%) regions.

Among the 358 teachers who had not recently renewed their Registry membership, teachers' main reasons for not starting or renewing their Registry membership were mostly related to lack of information, the cost of the membership, or it being too much of a hassle (see Table 12). Other personal reasons included not having time to renew, not renewing because their education is not changing or they are still pursuing education, not being old enough because they are not yet 18 years of age or still in high school, or needing to take care of other priorities, like family or health.

TABLE 12: Main Reason Teachers Have Not Started or Renewed Registry Membership

Lack of information	23.7%
Membership fee is too expensive	22.1%
Other personal reasons	18.2%
It is too much of a hassle	17.3%
It is too difficult to use the online system	4.2%
Other programmatic reasons (e.g. child care program hasn't required it, program no longer part of YoungStar, not eligible for REWARD )	8.7%
In process or not yet time	2.5%
Membership processing time is too long	1.7%
Other concerns with The Registry	1.7%
Notes: N=358.	



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