

# South Carolina Early Care & Education Workforce Study 2018



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of Social Services' Division of Early Care and Education

# **Insights from SC ECE Workforce Study 2018**

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## WAGES, SALARIES, AND BENEFITS

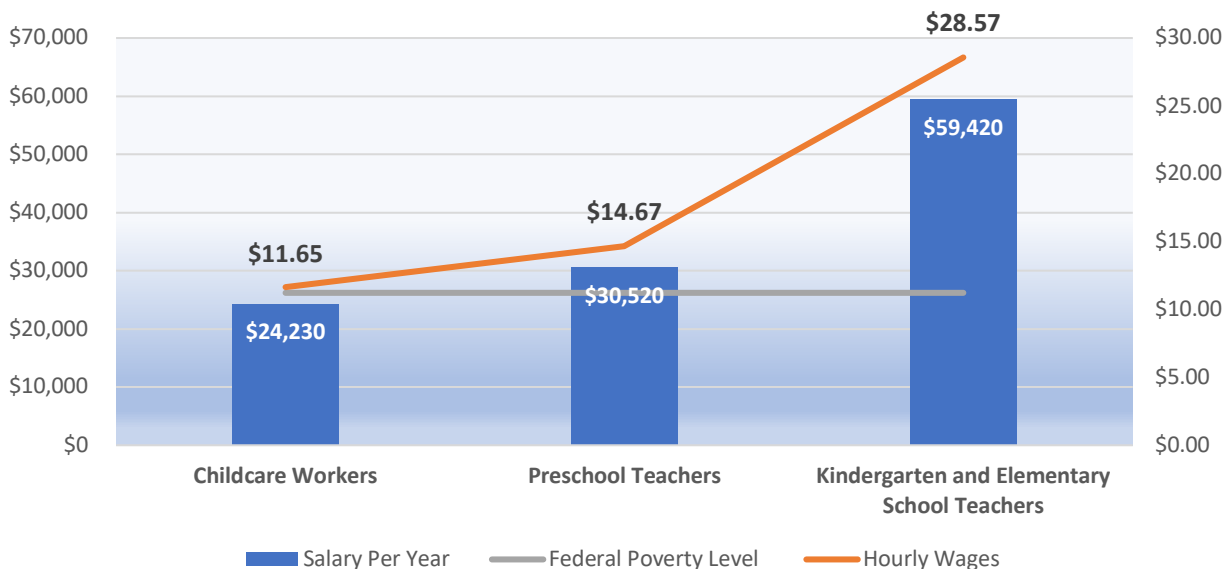
### Introduction

Public and private investment in early care and education (ECE) has been expanding over the last 25 years as an acknowledgment of research showing the positive impact of high-quality early learning on children’s school and future success. However, this increased investment in ECE has not trickled down to improve the wages of child care teachers, who are the most significant element of high-quality child care. The average hourly wage across all occupations for workers with a bachelor’s degree was \$36.27 and workers with an associate degree were \$26.41 (BLS,2019). In comparison, data from SC ECE Workforce study 2018 and other national studies show low compensation rates for the child care workforce.

### National Wages

Findings from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education show the median hourly wage for center-based teachers and caregivers responsible for children aged zero through five years was \$10.60 per hour, or about \$22,000 per year for full-time work (Goerge, Witte, Gennetian, & Brandon, 2010). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) collects annual data on salaries by occupation. Two occupational classifications, childcare workers, and preschool teachers in the early childhood workforce and their close counterparts, kindergarten teacher’s wages are more than double child care worker’s wages (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Median Annual Salary of teachers, by Student Age/Grade, 2019**



SOURCES: Occupational Employment Statistics Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>. Note: Hourly wages calculated by dividing the annual mean wage by 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Federal Poverty Guidelines for a family of 4 is \$26,200. The Federal Register notice for the 2020 Poverty Guidelines was published January 17, 2020

## State Wages

SC ECE Workforce Study 2018 collected data on salaries and wages. These data combined with benefits provided by employers provide a more complete picture of compensation received by the ECE workforce. Descriptive analyses were used to disaggregate the data by child care setting, ECE position (teachers only) and, race to reveal underlying patterns and insights. The survey did not use the Census classification of ECE positions as child care workers, preschool teachers, and kindergarten teachers. Instead, the analysis used a combination of ECE positions, specifically teachers, and child care settings for comparisons.

## Overall Wages

Respondents reported receiving compensation in salaries or hourly wages. An hourly wage was reported as the form of compensation for the majority of respondents (N=2,554), with 5% reporting that they are paid at or below the minimum wage of \$7.25 in the state of South Carolina. An annual salary was reported by 905 respondents. The frequency and distribution of wages can be found in Tables 1 and 2.

## Hourly Wages

**Table 1. Distribution of wages reported as an hourly rate in SC ECE Workforces Study 2018 (n=2544)**

Hourly Wages	Frequency	Percentage
\$7.00-\$7.25	118	5%
\$8.00	287	11%
\$9.00	363	14%
\$10.00	472	18%
\$11.00	275	11%
\$12.00	256	10%
\$13.00	177	7%
\$14.00	113	4%
\$15.00	124	5%
\$16.00-20	203	8%
\$21.00-\$25.00	63	2%
\$26.00-\$31.00	34	1%
≥\$31.00	69	3%

**48%\* of SC ECE workforce earn an hourly wage of \$10 or less**

*\*Note: This percentage is calculated only on respondents who reported their wages as an hourly rate*

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## Salaries

**Table 2.** Distribution of salaries reported as an hourly rate in SC ECE Workforces Study 2018 (n=905)

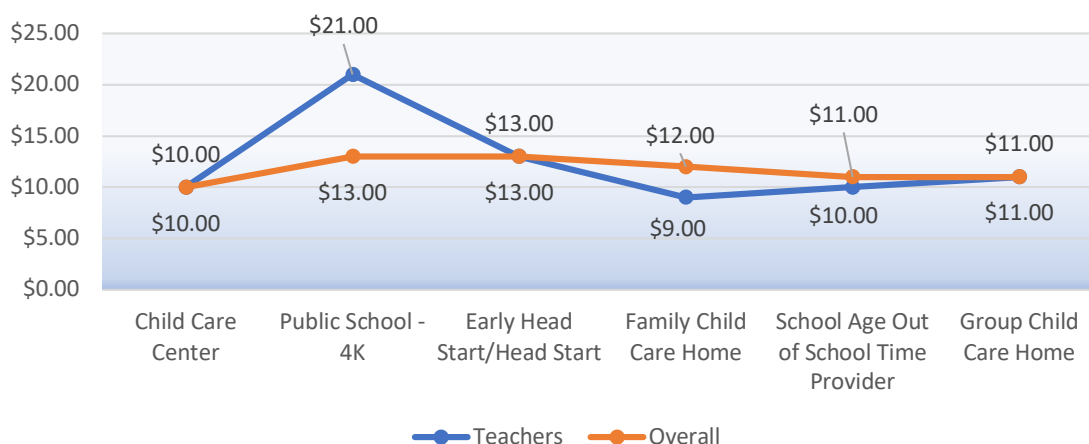
Annual Salary	Frequency	Percentage
\$15,000-\$25,000	162	18%
\$25,001-\$30,000	100	11%
\$30,001-\$35,000	139	15%
\$35,001-\$40,000	131	14%
\$40,001-\$45,000	95	11%
\$45,001-\$50,000	94	10%
\$50,001-\$55,000	47	5%
\$55,001-\$60,000	47	5%
\$60,001-\$65,000	21	2%
≥\$65,001	69	8%

**Teachers were 3.5 times more likely to receive an hourly wage than a salary for their compensation.**

## ECE Position and Program Type

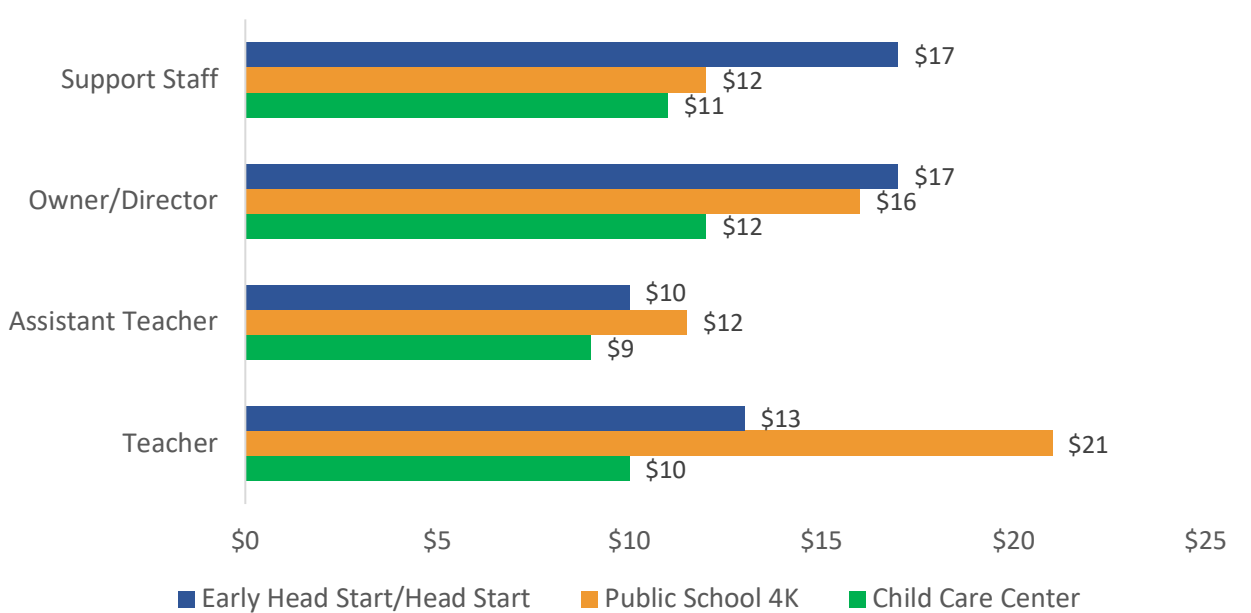
For the first time in SC, teachers, assistant teachers, and ECE workforce who held other positions in a child care facility were surveyed. Disaggregation of the results on wages by ECE position revealed some stark differences in teachers' wages who worked in child care centers and public school – 4k that was otherwise masked when looking at the overall differences among the entire workforce (see Figure 2). For example, the difference between median hourly wages for the overall workforce in child care centers and public school-4K is \$3.00 but the difference between median teacher wages (assistant teachers are not included) is \$11.00.

**Figure 2: Overall ECE workers vs. ECE teachers median pay (in hourly wages)**

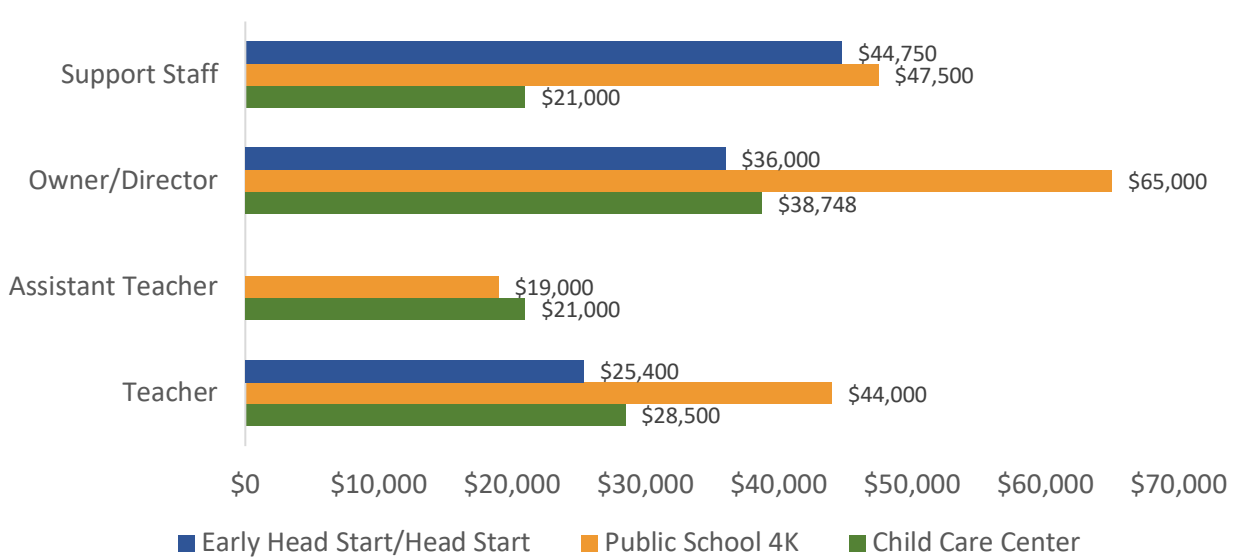


Differences in hourly wages and salaries of the ECE workforce by the ECE position held and the child care facility type are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

**Figure 3. Median Hourly Wages by Position and Program Type**



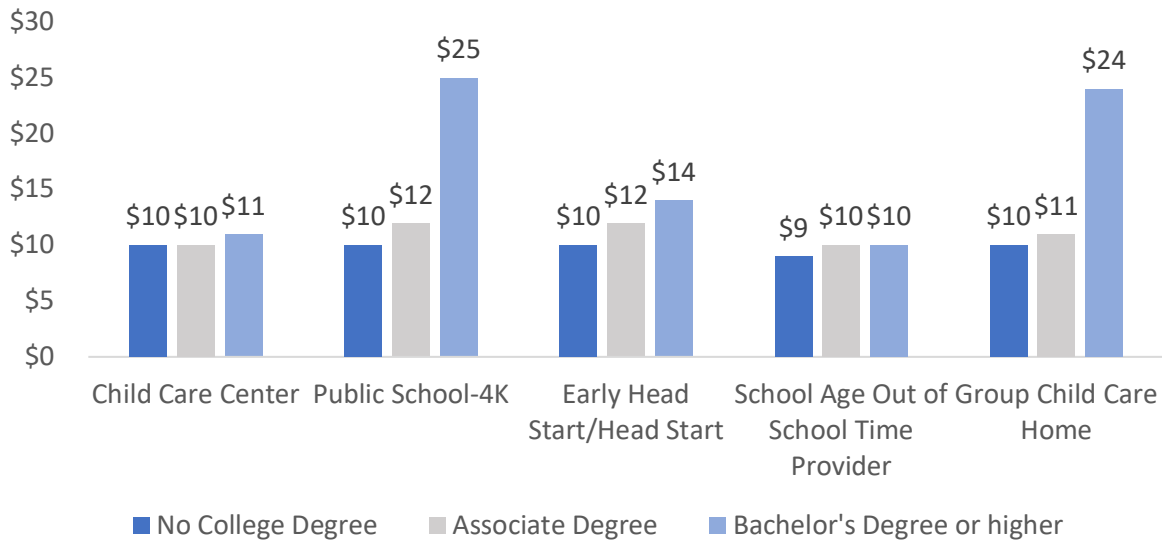
**Figure 4. ECE Workforce Salary by Position and Program Type**



## Education

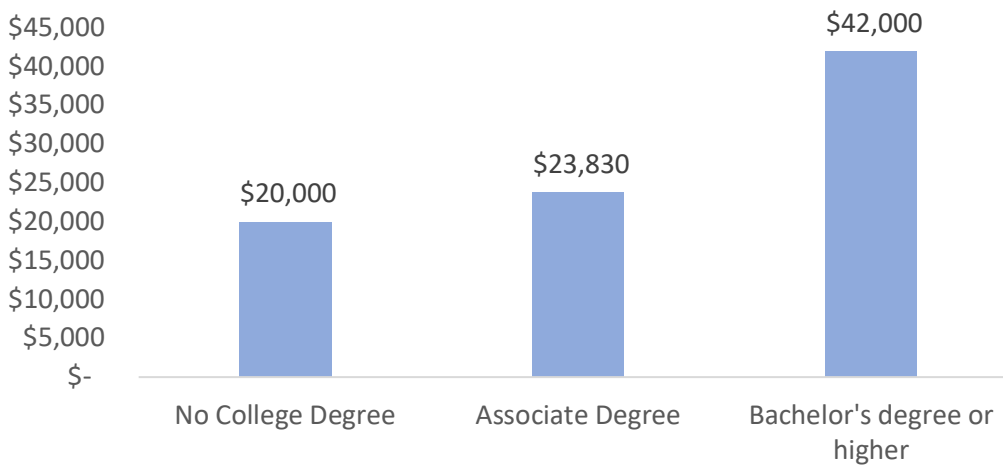
Typical entry-level education in early care and education programs varies by setting. While workers in child care settings are expected to have a high school education, preschool teachers can have an associate degree and kindergarten and elementary school teachers have bachelor's degrees (BLS, 2019). An examination of teacher wages and their education levels could be indicative of the value placed on education by the various settings (see Figure 5 and Figure 6).

**Figure 5. Median Hourly Wages of Teachers by Facility Type and Level of Education (assistant teachers are not included)**



*Note: Family child care was removed from this analysis because very few FCCH respondents identified themselves as teachers.*

**Figure 6. Median salary by education level for teachers only (assistant teachers are not included)**

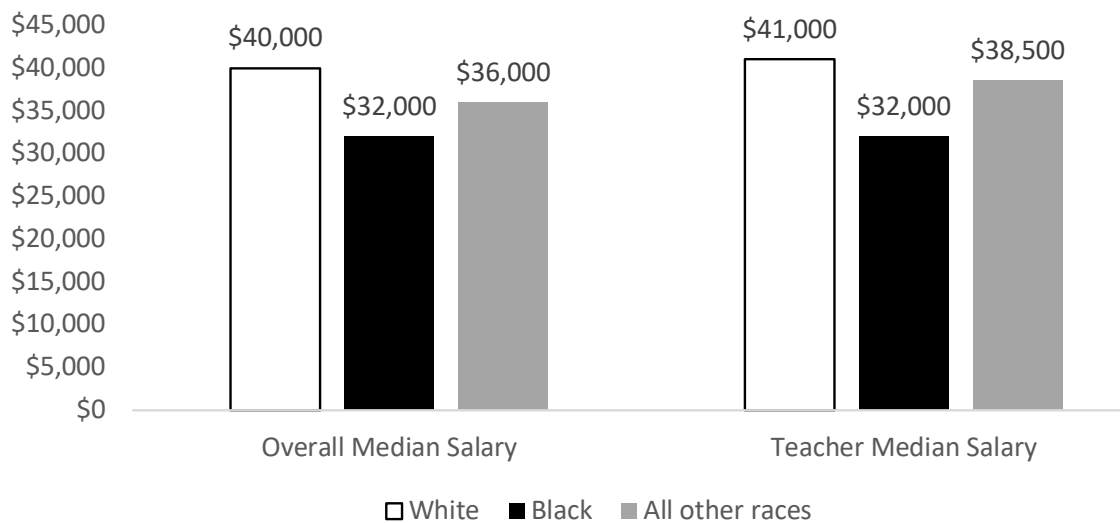


## Race

Respondents who identified as Black/African Americans are over-represented in the ECE workforce, encompassing 39% of survey participants, as the Black/African Americans comprised 27% of the population in SC (US Census, 2019).

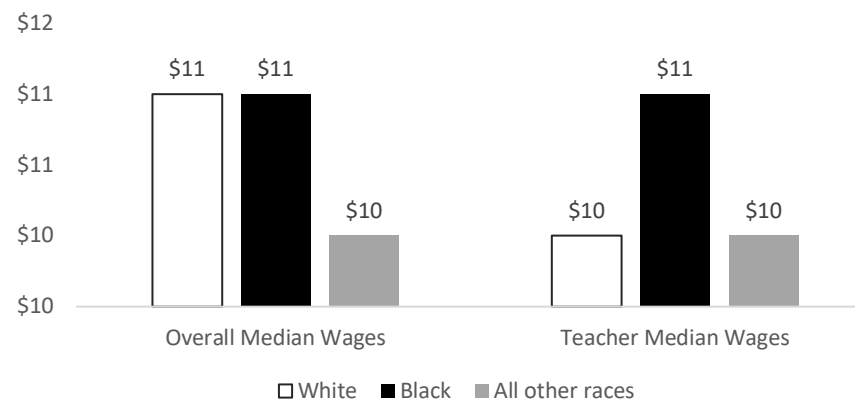
Only 23% of SC ECE Workforce reported getting paid in salaries. Examining differences in the median ECE workforce salaries by race indicated that Black/African American workforce members earned 20% less than White/Caucasian workforce. Specifically surveying teacher salaries, there was a 22% difference in the median salaries earned by Black/African American teachers when compared to their White/Caucasian counterparts, with Black/African American teachers earning less. Salaries of the workforce who identified themselves as Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native and respondents who identified with more than one race were grouped to form an “Other races” category. In comparison to the White ECE workforce, they earned 10% less, and teachers of other races as a group earned 6% less than White teachers in ECE.

**Figure 7. ECE salaries of the overall workforce and teachers only, by race**



Most of SC ECE Workforce (63%) reported their compensation in hourly wages. Analysis of the hourly wage data showed no difference in median wages of White and Black/African American ECE workforce members and a \$1.00 lower median hourly wage reported by the workforce identified as “Other” race. Since the overall workforce is a diverse group holding various positions, a comparison of the median hourly wages reported by teachers was examined. Results showed that Black/African American teachers earn a median wage of \$1.00 more than their White/Caucasian counterparts and other races.

**Figure 8. ECE hourly wage of overall workforce and teachers only, by race**

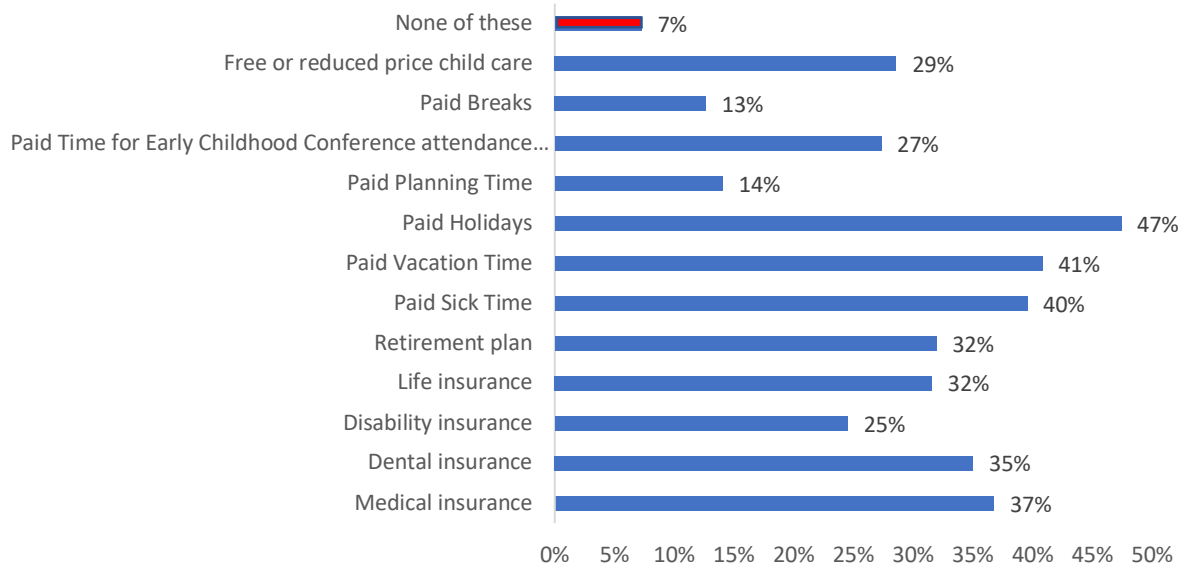




## Benefits

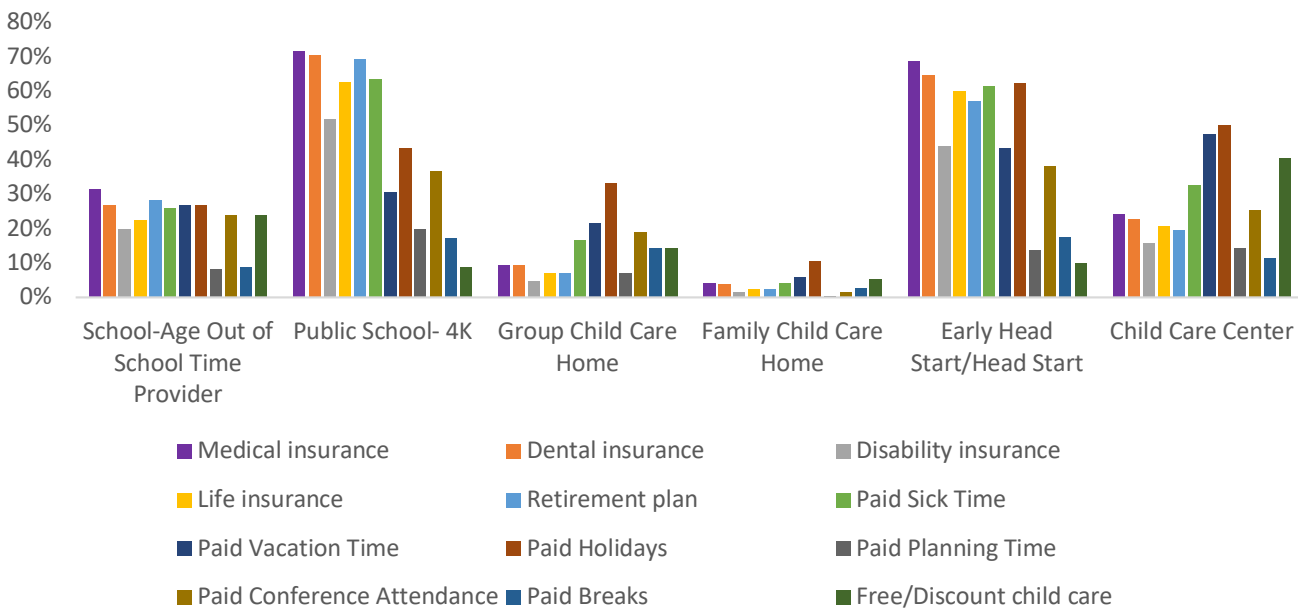
Some ECE employers offered benefits to their employees. The overall percentage of respondents who reported receiving benefits ranged from 47% reporting receiving paid holidays to 13% receiving paid breaks. Several respondents selected the Other category to include membership in a local association (see Figures 9 and 10).

**Figure 9. Benefits provided by the employer**



*Note: This percentage is calculated on all respondents of the survey (n=4,002).*

**Figure 10. Percentage of SC ECE workforce reporting benefits, by provider type (2018)**



## Discussion

Over nearly four decades of workforce data collection efforts have supported advocacy efforts to increase wages for the ECE workforce (Whitebook, Phillips & Howes, 2014). As seen in this report, there has been some progress within some areas of the ECE field such as wages for the kindergarten workforce while others such as child care, have remained stagnant. The data in this report could be used for evaluation studies by setting a baseline for the state of South Carolina to measure progress on investments and initiatives addressing the issue. Some comparisons, such as teacher wages in child care and public school-4K, highlight disparities and the need for equity of pay. We hope that the data in this report will be used to address such advocacy efforts and research.

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