

Public Meeting

January 30, 2026



T E X A S
EARLY LEARNING
C O U N C I L

Welcome!

Thank you for joining this meeting. We will begin shortly.

Members of the public are still able request to provide oral public comment today by emailing their request to catherine.davis@twc.texas.gov. Please include your name (as it appears in Zoom), email, organization you are representing, and agenda topic being addressed.

Agenda



1. Call to Order
2. October 2025 Minutes Approval
3. Public Comment
4. Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan Updates
5. Preschool Development Grant Update
6. Updates from TELC Members
7. Upcoming Early Childhood Events
8. Adjourn

Public Comment

Earlylearningtexas.org has a section called Meetings. This houses all the meeting information for past and upcoming meetings as well as the agenda once it's released. Public agendas are posted a minimum of one week prior to the meeting date, along with instructions for submitting public comment.

- Please provide your name, organization, and the agenda topic you are commenting on for the record.
- Each speaker will be allotted three minutes to provide your public comment. When you hear a chime sound at the two-minute mark, this indicates that you will have one minute remaining to wrap up comments.
- Council members may ask questions after each speaker concludes.



T E X A S
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Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan

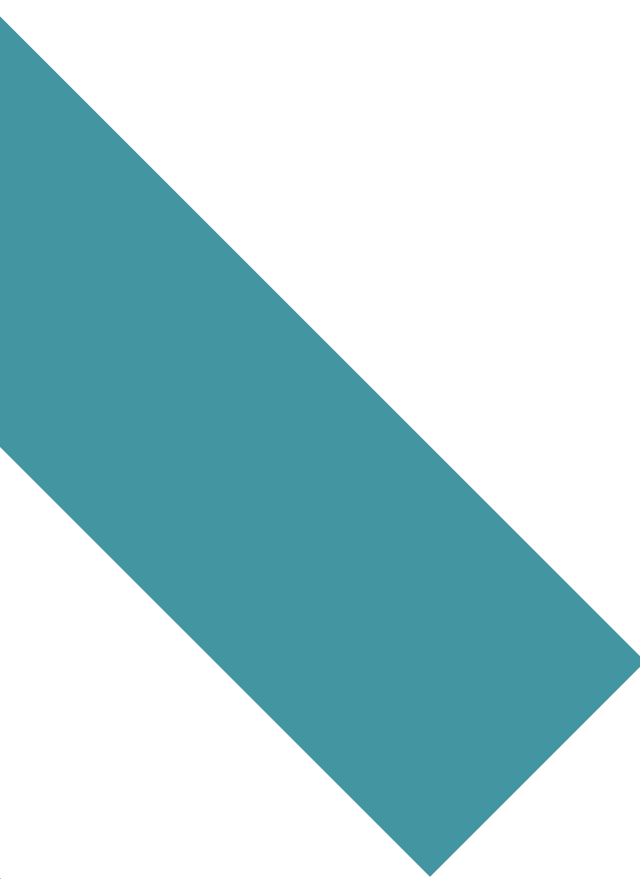
2024 – 2026



2024-2026 Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan Goals

Family Access, Navigation & Engagement	Goal 1	Families can easily meet their basic needs and access the early learning services, programs, and resources they need, and are meaningfully engaged to provide feedback on services.
Workforce Recruitment, Retention & Support	Goal 2	The early learning workforce is well-paid, trained and supported; can reach and obtain the professional development resources they need throughout their careers; and is large enough to meet Texans' needs.
Local Systems & Partnership Building	Goal 3	Local early learning systems are well-coordinated, appropriately resourced, and successfully support the children and families in their communities.
Integrated Data & System Coordination	Goal 4	State early learning system entities are collaborating to make family- and data-informed decisions to improve services, programs and resources for children and their families.

Update on Two and Four Year ECE Program Data Base from TECPDS



Information from Tracy Jones at TECPDS

As of January 12-TECPDS staff have:

- Created accounts for all 60+ Texas 2 and 4 year Colleges and Universities Provided on the list
- Accounts will be moved to active once they have made contact with each institution's designated administrator
- Staff are entering the program data provided for each institution



Information from Tracy Jones at TECPDS (cont.)

- Once the account is activated, the institution's administrator will be able to review, update and manage this information directly
- For institutions that have not yet contacted TECPS, staff will be reaching out to confirm participation, verify administrator details, provide a brief overview of the TECPDS searchable database and the information that can be displayed.
- A university test account will also be created to demonstrate what users will see in the searchable database.



Contact Us

- Contact Dr. Tracy Jones at TECPDS for more information:
 - Tracy.A.Jones@uth.tmc.edu
- Dr. Becky Huss-Keeler (TELC Higher Ed Rep)
 - huss@uhcl.edu



Preschool Development Grant No-Cost Extension Activity 1

Texas ECIDS Development

- *Accomplishments During Grant Period:*
 - ✓ Governance groups established with HHSC and TWC partnership.
 - ✓ Product Manager and IT team hired (funded by PDG) to deliver a minimum viable product.
- *Plans for Extension:*
 - Ensures completion of initial use cases.
 - Provides time to secure required data sharing agreements.
 - Allows for identification of sustainable, ongoing funding sources.
 - Funds Available December 30, 2025-March 30, 2026: \$532,188

Preschool Development Grant No-Cost Extension Item 2

Texas IECMHC Model Development & Pilot

- Accomplishments During Grant Period:
 - ✓ TIEMH (UT Austin) in Year 2 of developing a statewide IECMHC model.
 - ✓ Pilot program underway in 10 Texas counties across early intervention, home visiting, and early childhood care.
 - ✓ Program manual, outreach materials, key outputs/outcomes defined.
 - ✓ Caseload/dosage parameters defined; outcome definitions and measures identified.
 - ✓ IECMHC workforce development initiated.
 - ✓ Data collection (pre/post tests, interviews) ongoing; final evaluation pending.
- Plans for Extension:
 - Allows for more comprehensive data collection on pilot site interventions.
 - More complete final evaluation will inform future IECMHC efforts in the state.
 - Improves ability to seek sustainability funding for pilot sites.
 - Funds Available December 30, 2025-March 30, 2026: \$238,900

Preschool Development Grant: ECI Recap

ECI was awarded \$14.7 million for the three-year grant period, January 2023 through December 2025.

PDG activities included:

- Comprehensive service support, including eligibility determination.
 - Developmental Assessment of Young Children, Second Edition
 - Battelle Developmental Inventory, Third Edition
- Staff recruitment, retention, and mentoring stipends.
- Print materials for ECI provider recruitment.
- Training for child care and early learning programs.
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires kits for child care programs.
- Live, virtual autism support workshops for early childhood professionals.



Updates from TELC Members

Early Childhood Intervention Update

Texas Early Learning Council

January 30, 2026

Collaboration with Texas Education Agency

Transition from ECI to Early Childhood Special Education

Updated guidance for providers related to transition:

- New Q&A document
- New flowchart
- Updated sample forms and required elements

Webinar on December 11, 2025:

- New guidance materials
- Family perspectives on their ECI transition experience
- Recorded and posted on the [ECI Archived Webinars](#) page.

New Guidance for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have a Visual Impairment

New resources for providers to support eligibility determinations for children who are deaf or hard of hearing or have a visual impairment.

- Guidance document
- Flowcharts

Joint webinar with TEA on January 30, 2026, will be recorded and posted on the [ECI Archived Webinars](#) page.



ECI Family Stories Project

Family Stories Project

- Launched August 2025
- Conducted 8 interviews so far.
- Upcoming:
 - ▶ Agency newsletter article
 - ▶ New ECI video
 - ▶ Social media posts





Early Intervention Personnel Retention Grant Project

Project Overview and Context

- October 2020: HHSC ECI partnered with The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) for a three-year grant focused on the retention of early intervention personnel.
- October 2023: HHSC ECI and UTEP received a two-year extension on this grant.
- October 2025: The grant period ended.
- December 2025: HHSC ECI submitted the final report.



Grant Project Highlights

Highlights included:

- Personnel retention advisory workgroup.
- Four annual personnel retention summits.
- Three summer webinar series.
- Targeted stipends for programs with retention rates below 85 percent.
- Technical assistance to support action plan creation and implementation.
- Quarterly meetings and webinars for the Professionalism, Engagement, Empowerment, and Resource (PEER) Network community of practice.

Successes and Positive Outcomes

- Substantial targeted local improvements in retention.
- PEER Network participation correlated with longer retention among early intervention specialists and service coordinators.
- There were various unanticipated benefits, including deeper university partnerships, policy refinements, and the development of training and technical assistance outside of grant activities.



Sustaining Momentum

- UTEP is conducting research on the core knowledge and skills ECI leaders need to retain professionals.
- HHSC ECI is establishing projects to enhance pre-service and in-service training for ECI professionals.
- HHSC ECI is coordinating projects to improve faculty's knowledge of ECI at universities statewide.
- HHSC ECI continues to support EISes and service coordinators leading the PEER Network to sustain collaborative learning.





ECI Provider Recruitment

Provider Recruitment

- Updated website: texashhs.org/eci-careers
- New provider recruitment flyer
- Order the flyer: [ECI Materials Ordering System](#)

Make a Difference
with a Career in
Early Childhood Intervention



Are you looking for a career where you can create real change in the lives of children and families? At Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), every day brings a new opportunity to empower parents, support child development, and be a vital part of a child's success story.

ECI programs serve families with children from birth to 36 months who have developmental delays or disabilities.

At ECI, you work as a team with the family to find ways they can support their child's development within their daily routines and activities. Services are customized to fit the needs of each child and family and are delivered in-person, via telehealth or both.



ECI professionals include:

- * Counselors
- * Early intervention specialists
- * Physical therapists
- * Occupational therapists
- * Social workers
- * Speech language pathologists



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



Thank You

Meghan Young

Director of Early Childhood Intervention Services

meghan.young@hhs.texas.gov

Paving the Way to Quality

Analysis of Texas LWDB
Fiscal Spending of Child
Care Quality Investments

children
at Risk



Our Mission



CHILDREN AT RISK serves as a catalyst for change to improve the quality of life for children through strategic research, public policy analysis, education, collaboration, and advocacy.

Methodology

We conducted a qualitative content analysis of LWDB quality spending narratives, coding investments into consistent sub-themes within major categories to support comparable local and statewide analysis.

Data Sources and Collection

- Local Board Child Care Quality Funds Annual Plans
- Quarterly Expenditure Reports,
- Child Care by the Numbers
- Open Records Request
- C@R Child Care Desert Analysis



Percent of Quality Dollars Spent Statewide

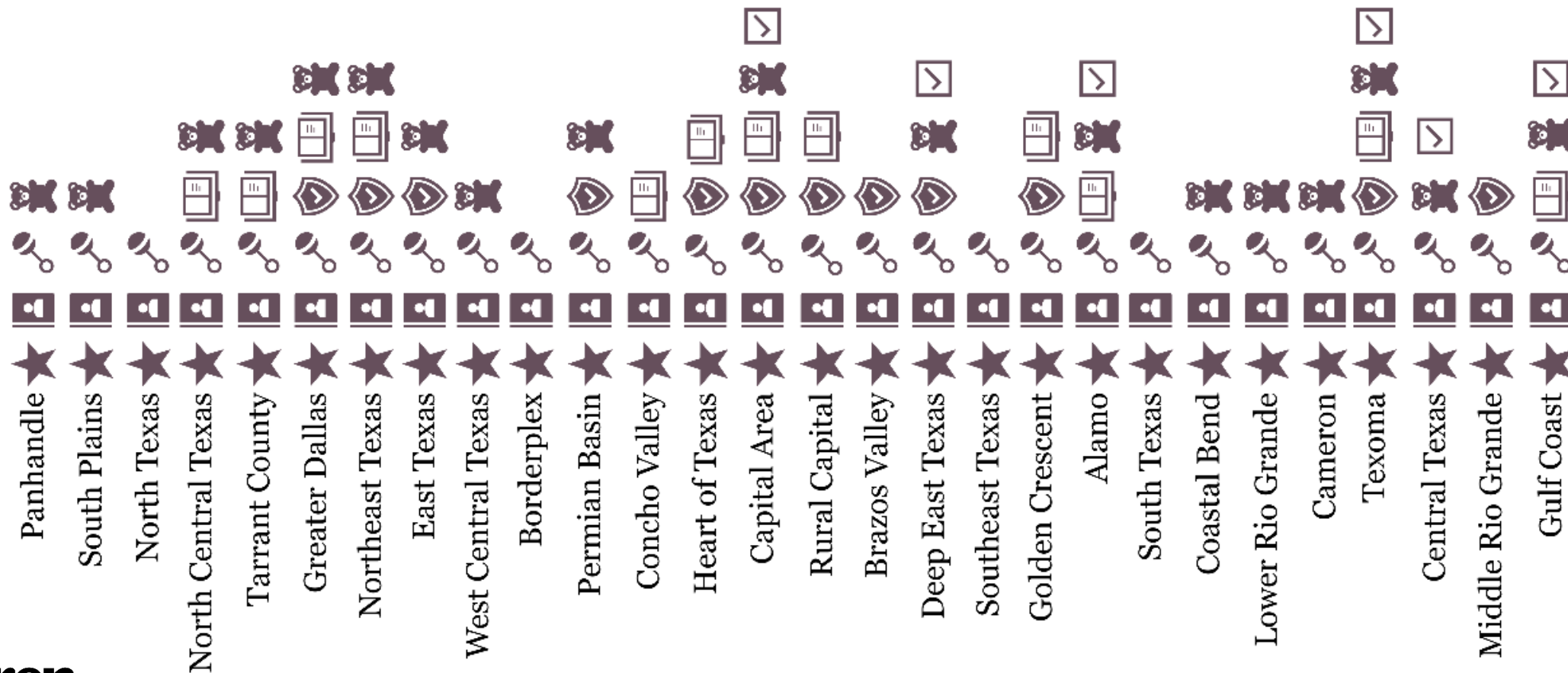
PERCENT OF QUALITY DOLLARS SPENT STATEWIDE		
Category	2023	2024
Infant & Toddler	5%	9%
Professional Development	10%	13%
Texas Rising Star	81%	42%
Health & Safety	1%	1%
Evaluation & Assessment	3%	1%
National Accreditation Support	0%	0%
Other	0%	35%

LWDB Investments from 2023 to 2024

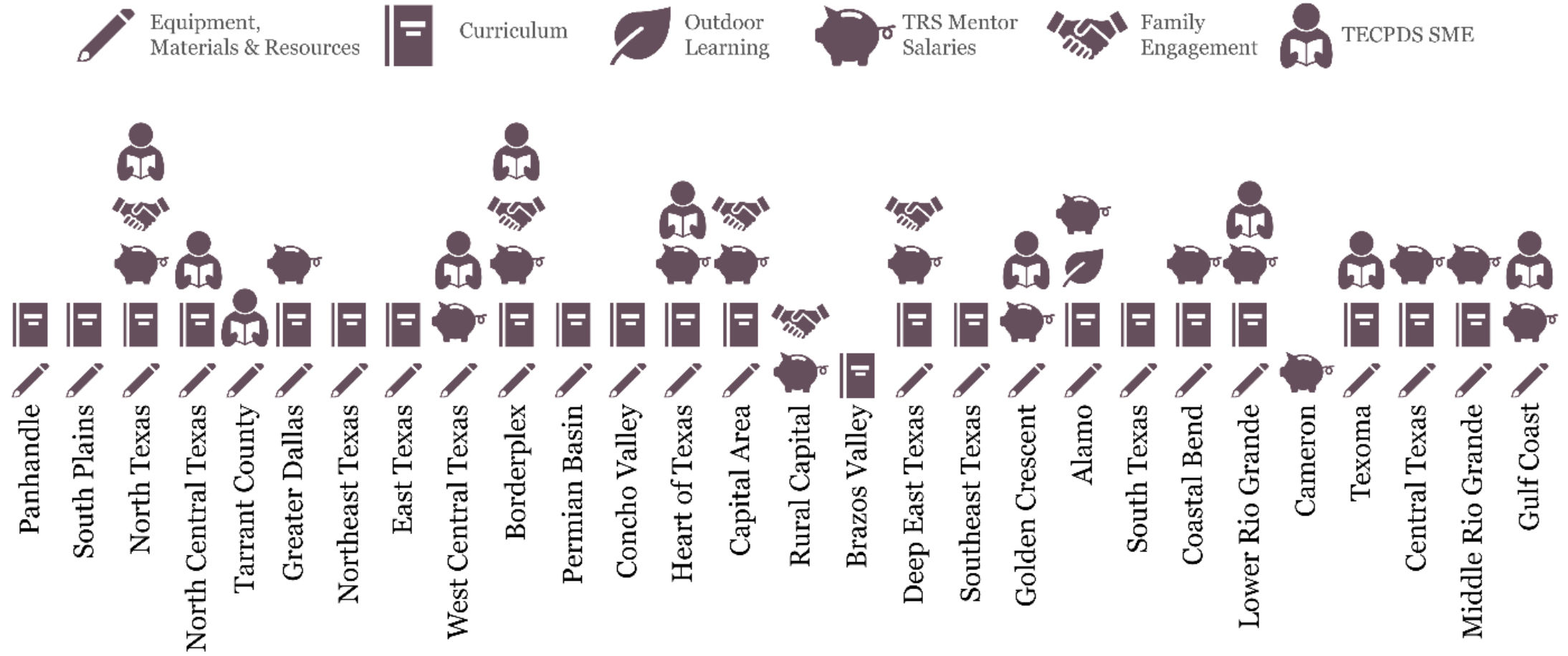
Category	2024 LWDB Investment	Change from 2023
Infant/Toddler	100% (28 Boards)	Largest Growth (from 79%)
Other	64% (18 Boards)	Increase (from 46%)
Health and Safety	43% (12 Boards)	Slight Decline (from 46%)
Evaluation and Assessment	43% (12 Boards)	Slight Decline (from 46%)
National Accreditation	21% (6 Boards)	Increase (from 14%)
TRS Supports	100% (28 Boards)	No Change
Professional Development	100% (28 Boards)	No Change

Statewide Spending of Quality Improvement Dollars

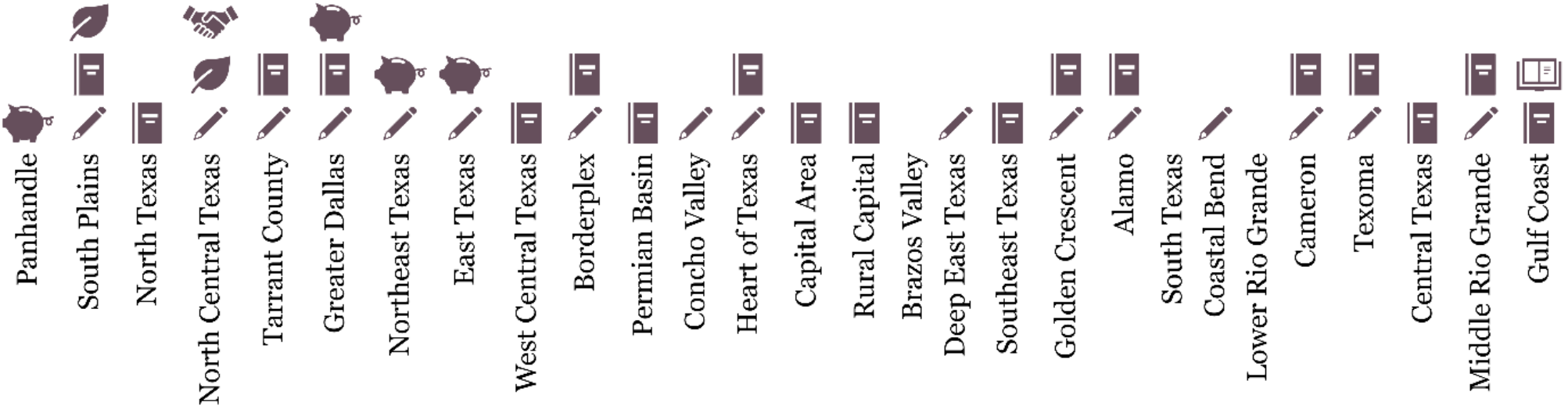
★ TRS Supports
👤 Professional Development
👶 Infants & Toddlers
🛡️ Health & Safety
📖 Evaluation & Assessment
🧸 Other
☑️ National Accreditation



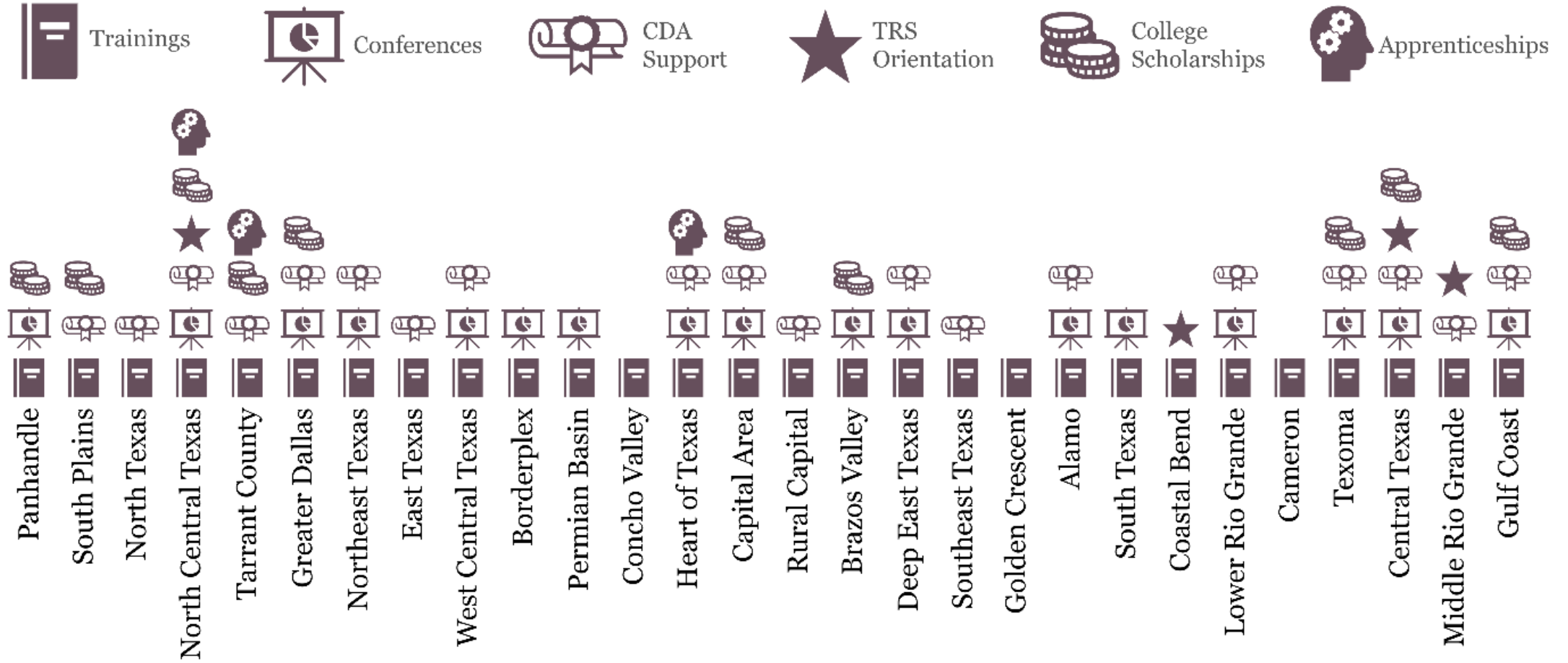
Statewide Spending Allocated to TRS Supports



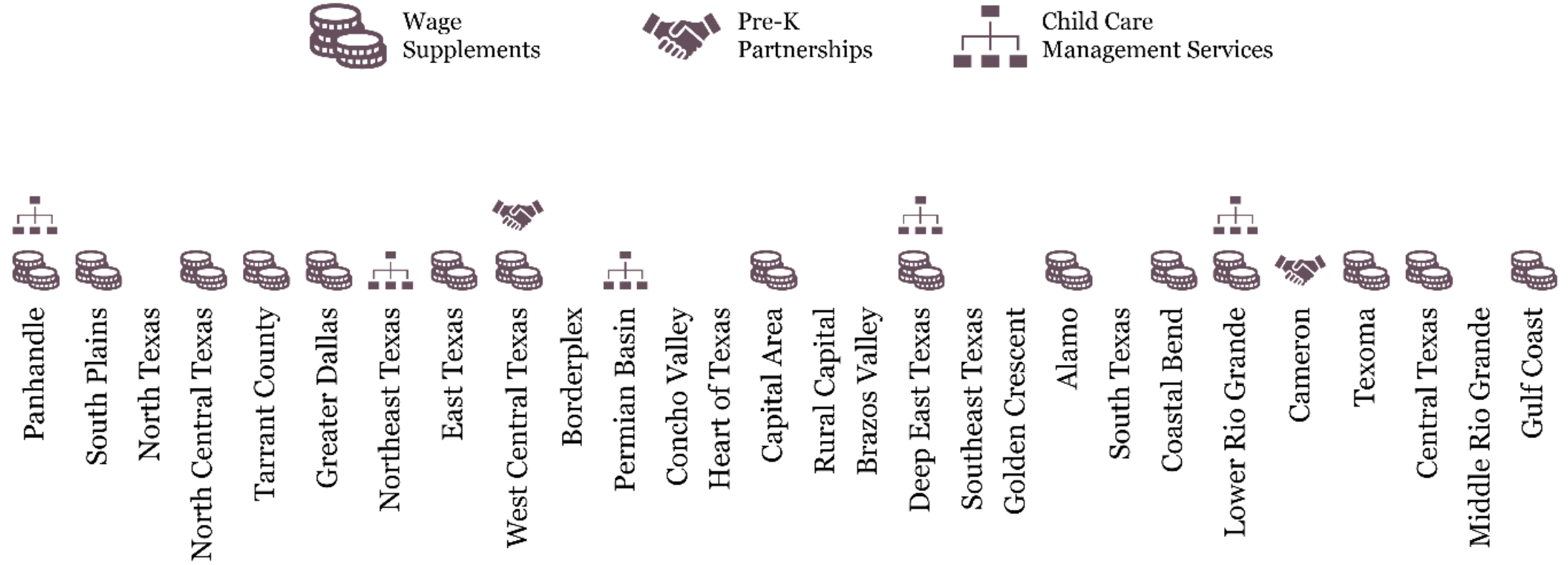
Statewide Spending Allocated to Infants & Toddlers



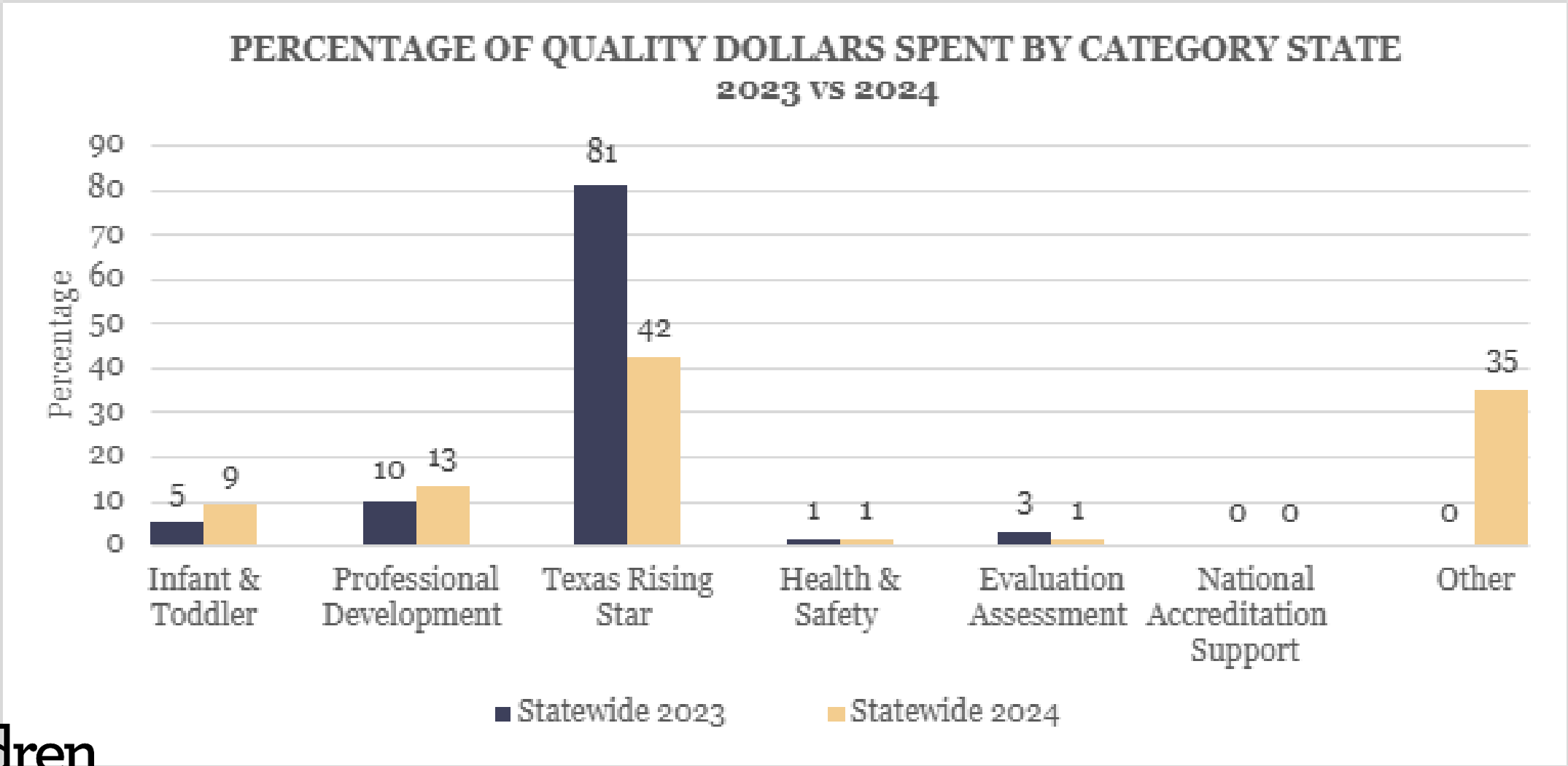
Statewide Spending Allocated to Professional Development



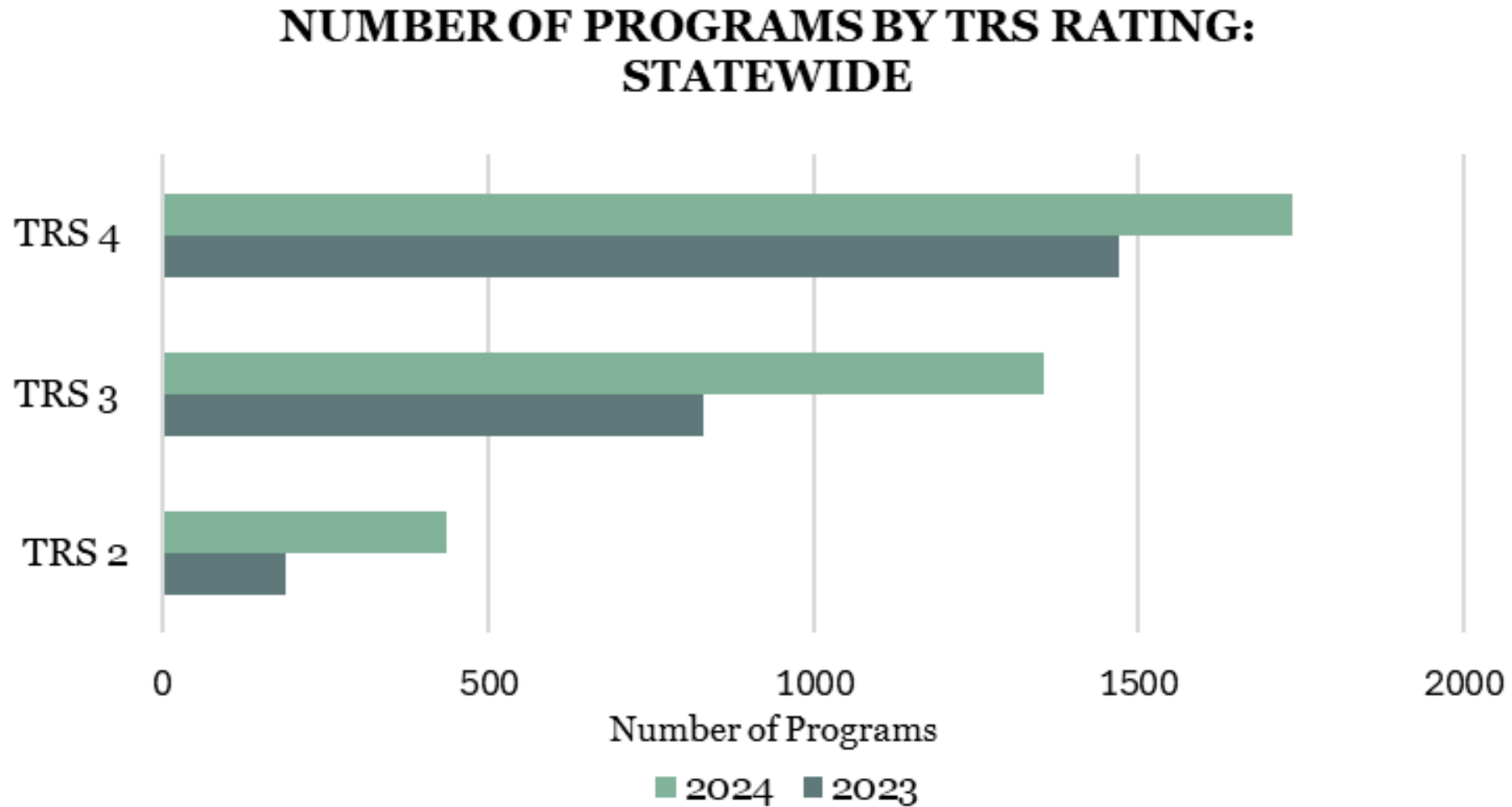
Statewide Spending Allocated to Other



Percentage of Quality Dollars by Category, 2023 vs 2024



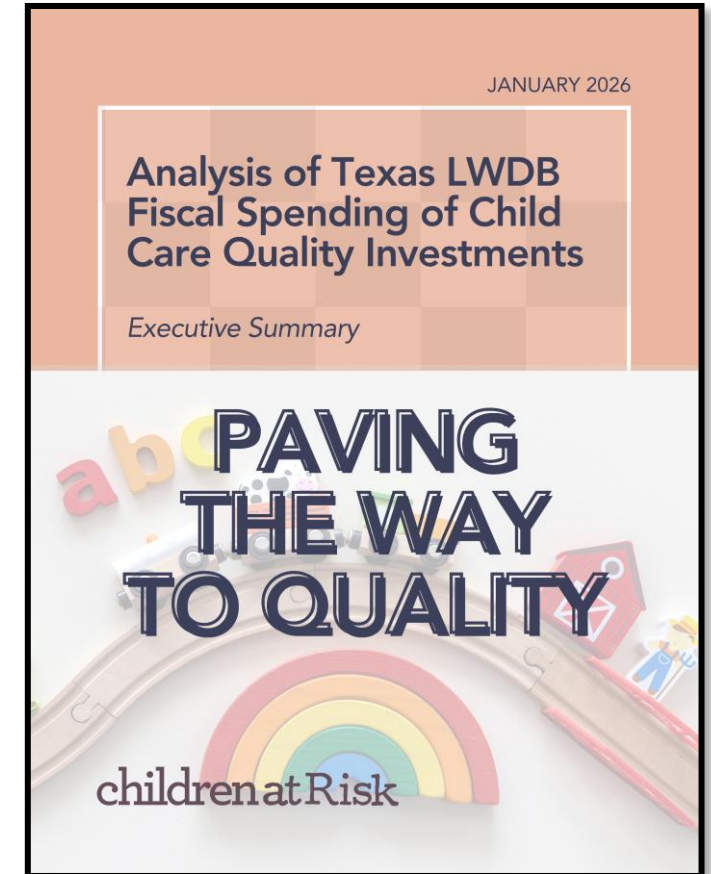
Number of Programs by TRS Rating, Statewide



Paving the Way to Quality

CHILDREN AT RISK has released its second analysis of Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) spending across Texas. Focusing on investments made in the 2024 Board Calendar Year, and noting statewide investment trends prioritizing professional development and training for child care teachers, improvements to infant and toddler classrooms, and staff retention strategies.

Read this year's report at
<https://childrenatrisk.org/paving-the-way-to-quality-2026/>



Thank You!

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CHILDREN AT RISK

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children
atRisk



Rider 165

- **Authority:**

- ▶ HHSC was granted Rider 165 during the 89th Legislative Session.

- **Purpose:**

- ▶ Contract with an independent entity to conduct an external evaluation of child care rules and minimum standards for:
 - ◇ licensed day care centers,
 - ◇ licensed before and after school programs,
 - ◇ licensed school aged programs,
 - ◇ licensed child care homes, and
 - ◇ registered child care homes.

Rider 165 (cont.)

- **Evaluation Focus:**

- ▶ Alignment with federal and/or state laws
- ▶ Relevance to child health, safety, and welfare
- ▶ Consistency with best practices in regulated child care

- **Status:**

- ▶ Texas A&M was awarded the contract in October 2025.

- **Provider and Stakeholder Feedback:**

- ▶ Texas A&M will conduct focus groups and distribute surveys. HHSC encourages participation and honest feedback if contacted.

Rider 165 Timeline

- **Timeline:**

- ▶ The assessment report and recommendations are due to HHSC in August 2026.
- ▶ HHSC will provide a response to the assessments and recommendations issued from Texas A&M within 90 days from receiving the assessment report. December 2026.
- ▶ Rule development will begin in January 2027.
- ▶ To stay updated on all CCR information, please sign up for GovDelivery.





Texas Workforce Commission Updates

TWC Early Childhood Professional Development Scholarships



- The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) published [RFA 32026-00115 Early Childhood Professional Development Scholarships](#) on December 12, 2025. It closes January 29, 2026.
- Selected grantee will administer the Early Childhood Professional Development Scholarships (ECPDS) Program. ECPDS is designed to improve the quality of Texas child care programs by supporting Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing and relevant educational attainments of Early Childhood Educators and certain high school students, and by assisting Early Learning Programs to retain well-qualified staff and meet Texas Rising Star staff qualifications.

TWC Legislative Updates



SB 462:

Prioritize children of child care workers on subsidy waiting list

Other TWC Updates



Early Childhood Interagency Coordinator position is open until filled:

<https://aa270.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=826636>

[TELC website](#): Domain is now under TWC. No changes to URL or content.

Quad Agency Child Care Initiative Commission



Website:

[Quad Agency Child Care Initiative - Texas Workforce Commission](#)

1st Meeting: 11/17/25

Next Meeting: 03/24/26

Comments/Suggestions:

QuadAgencyChildCare@twc.texas.gov

Members:

- Joe Esparza, Chair – TWC Chairman and Commissioner Representing Employers.
- Mike Morath - TEA Commissioner of Education
- Jordan Dixon – HHSC Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
- Clint Cox – DFPS Director of Child Care Investigations



TECPDS Career Pathways Study

Cheryl Varghese, April Crawford,
Kelly Vaughn, Reese-Anna Cummins,
Emily Crossman

About This Study

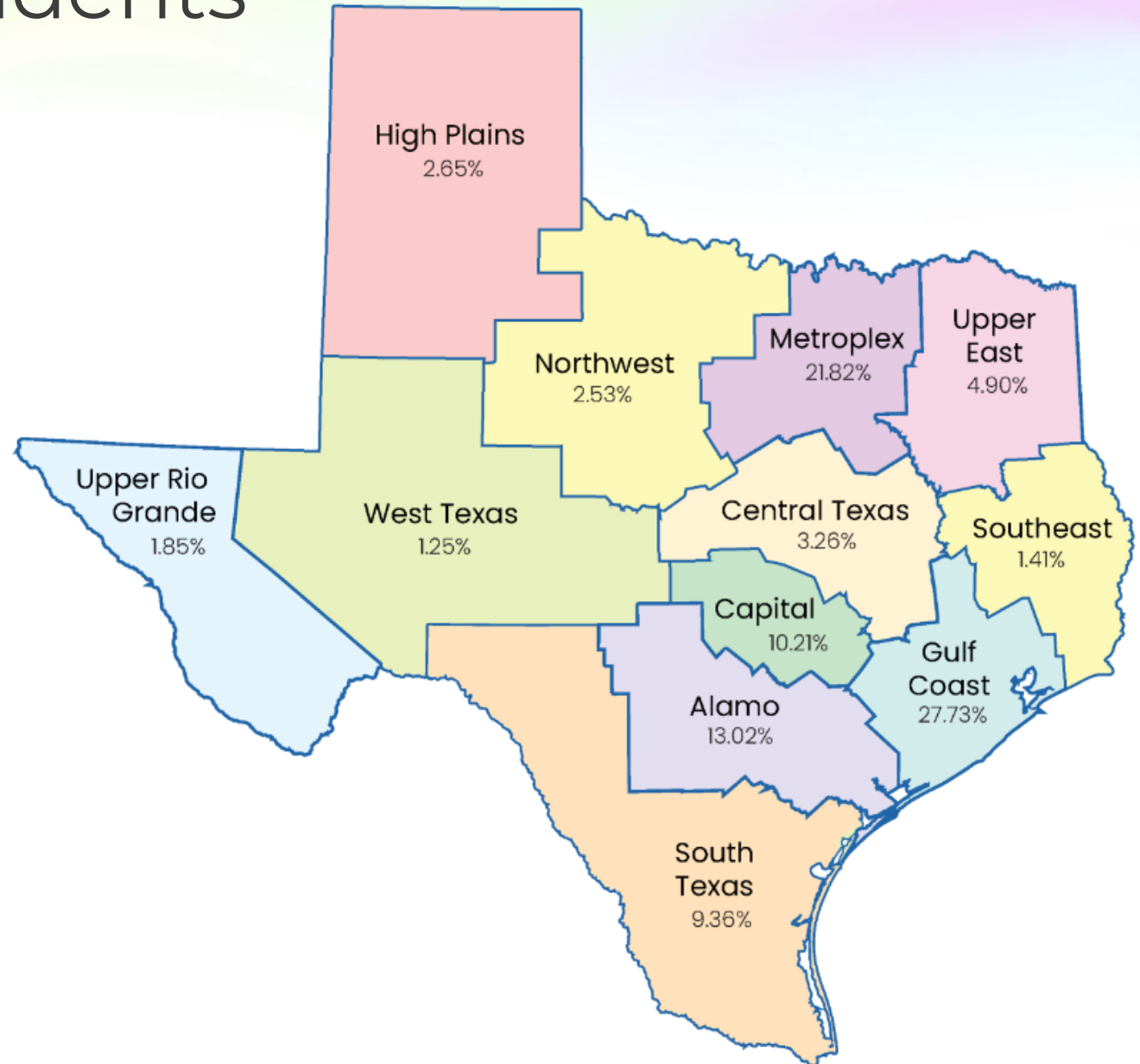
We used surveys and one-on-one interviews to understand the **characteristics, roles, and professional experiences** of individuals working across the early childhood field.

We examined a wide range of positions to understand the available **career pathways and trajectories.**



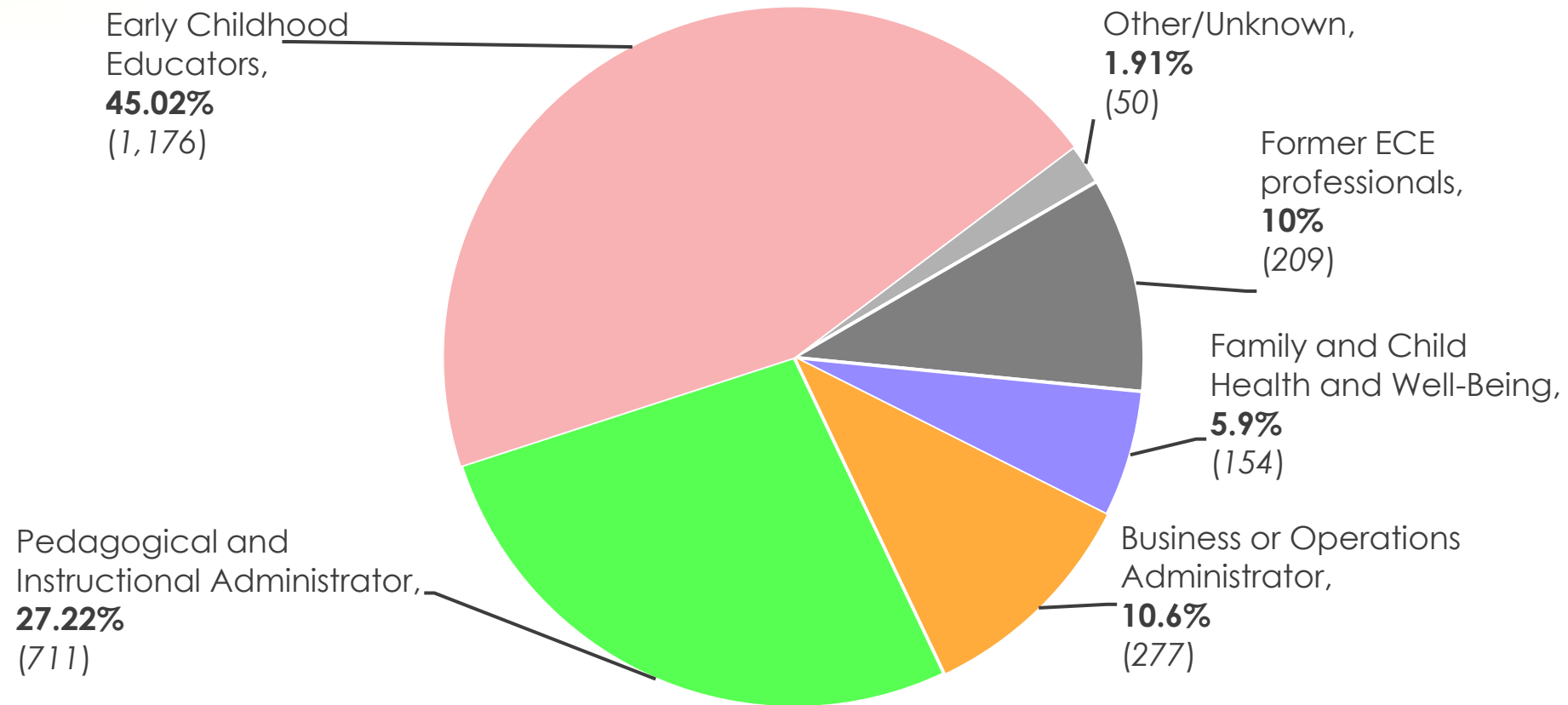
Locations of Respondents

Survey respondents were represented across the **12 economic regions** of Texas.



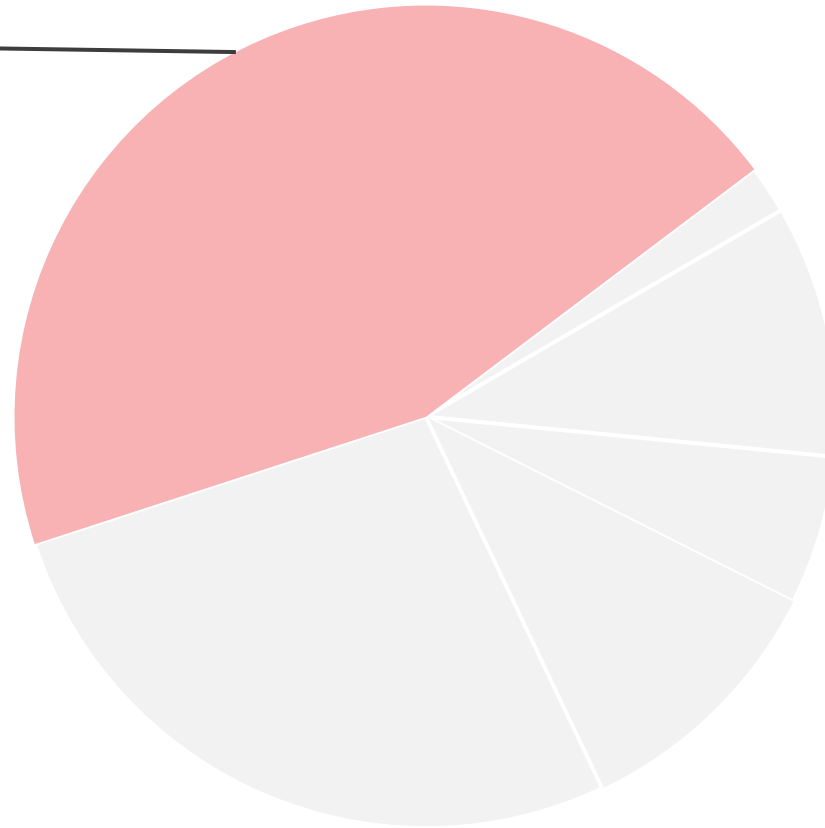
Who was included in the study?

A total of **2,612** Texas early childhood professionals completed surveys:

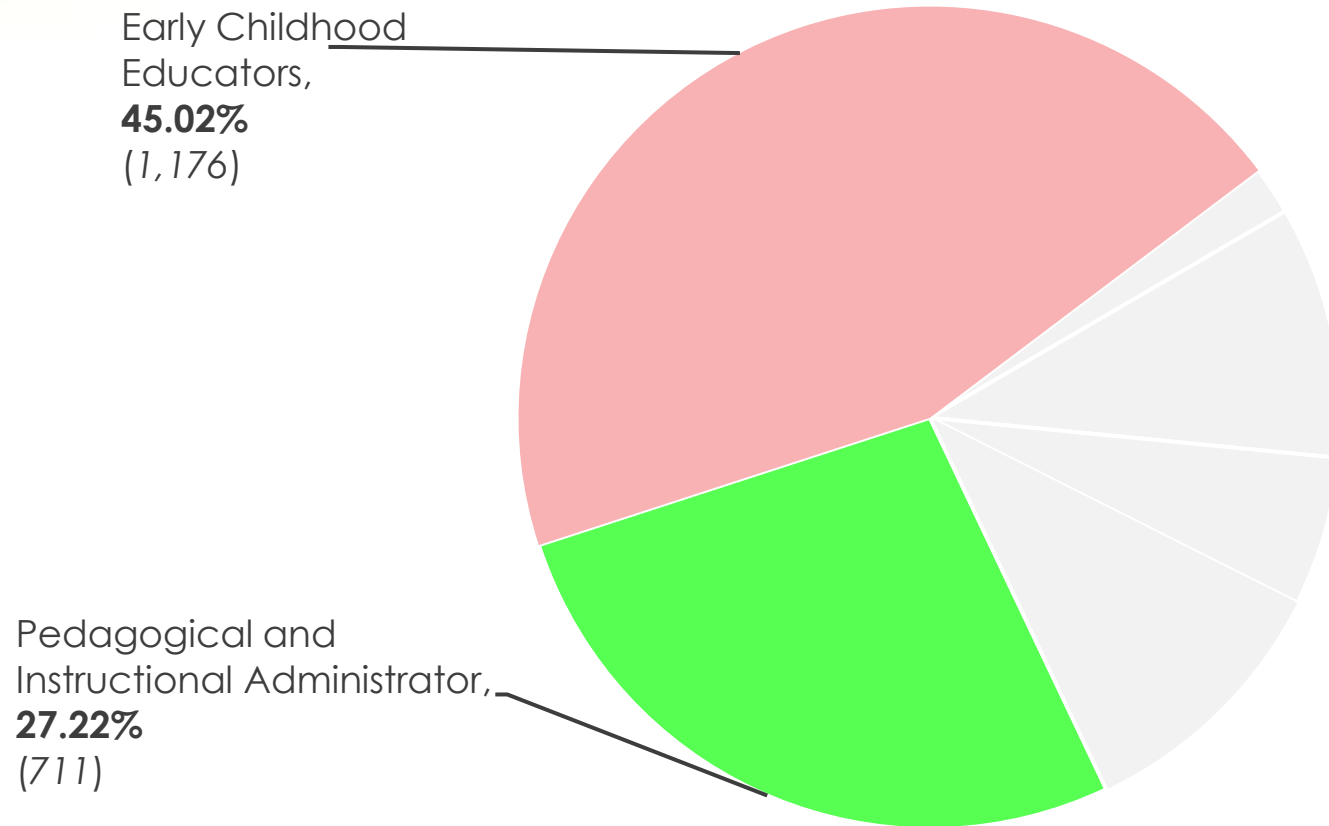


Who was included in the study? Early Childhood Educators

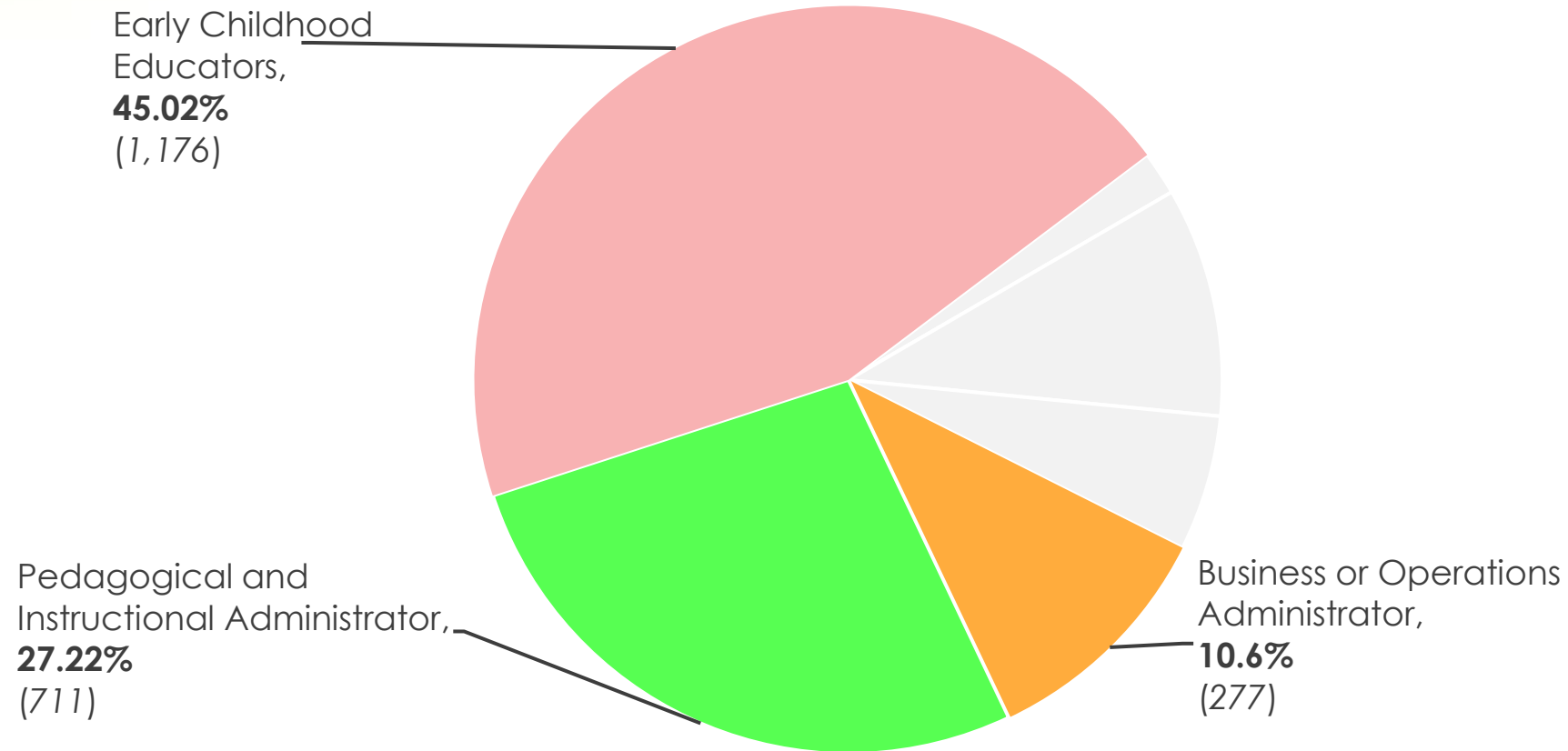
Early Childhood
Educators,
45.02%
(1,176)



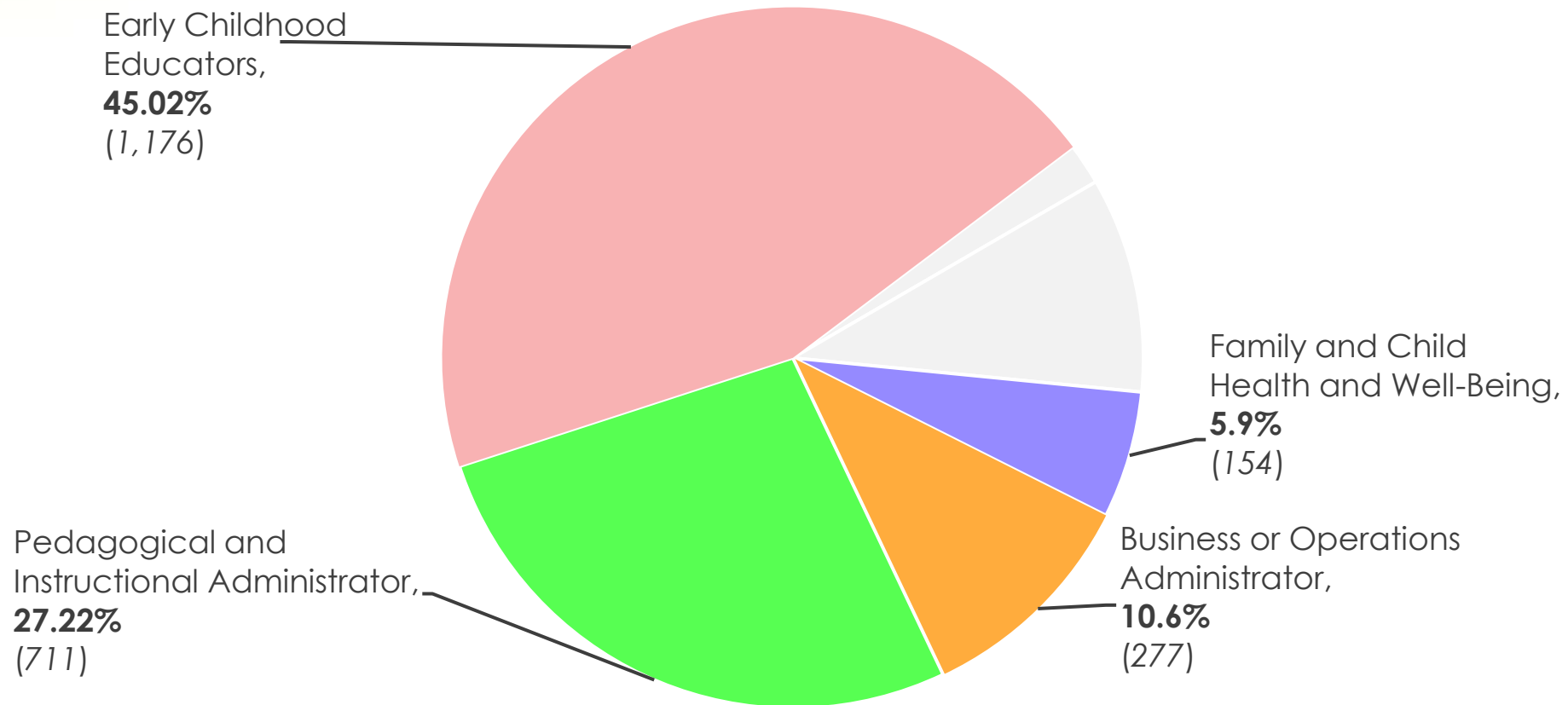
Who was included in the study? Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators



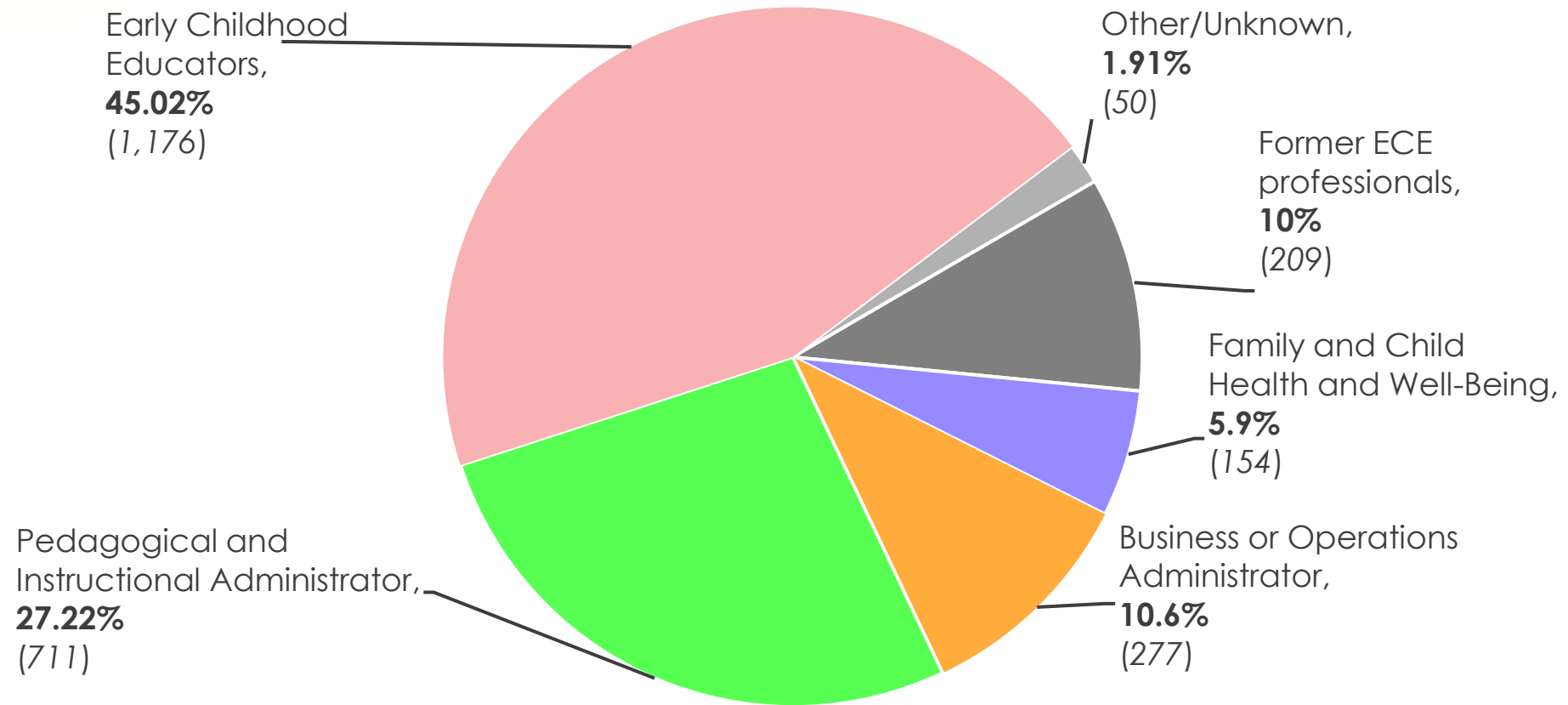
Who was included in the study? Business or Operations Administrators



Who was included in the study? Family and Child Health and Well-Being



Who was included in the study? Former ECE Professionals and Others



What were the respondents' highest levels of education **across all occupational categories**?

	Early Childhood Educators	Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators	Business/ Operations Administrators	Family and Child Health and Well-Being	Other Roles
Doctoral Degree	1.53%	1.55%	2.17%	13.64%	3.45%
Master's Degree	10.89%	20.99%	16.97%	34.42%	29.06%
Bachelor's Degree	26.21%	28.31%	30.69%	38.31%	45.32%
Some College	25.02%	21.97%	22.74%	5.84%	6.90%
Associate's Degree	13.36%	15.63%	14.08%	5.19%	10.34%
High School Diploma	18.98%	8.59%	10.47%	1.95%	4.43%
GED	3.74%	2.96%	2.89%	0.65%	0.49%
None of the Above	0.26%	0%	0%	0%	0%

What were the respondents' highest levels of education for **Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators**?

	Early Childhood Educators	Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators	Business/ Operations Administrators	Family and Child Health and Well-Being	Other Roles
Doctoral Degree	1.53%	1.55%	2.17%	13.64%	3.45%
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None of the Above	0.26%	0%	0%	0%	0%

What were the respondents' highest levels of education for **Business/Operations Administrators**?

	Early Childhood Educators	Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators	Business/Operations Administrators	Family and Child Health and Well-Being	Other Roles
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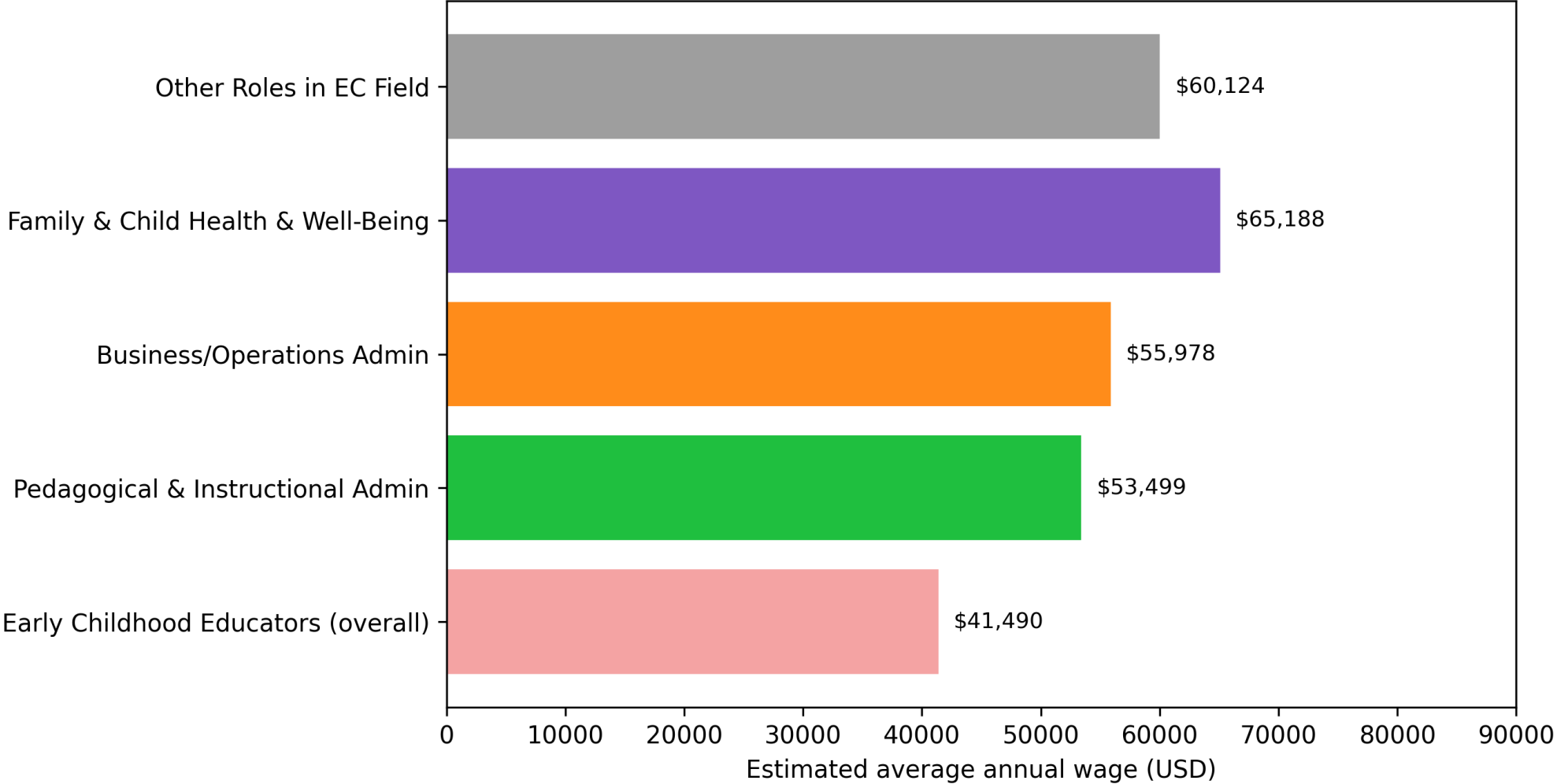
What were the respondents' highest levels of education for **Family and Child Health and Well-Being**?

	Early Childhood Educators	Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators	Business/ Operations Administrators	Family and Child Health and Well-Being	Other Roles
Doctoral Degree	1.53%	1.55%	2.17%	13.64%	3.45%
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Bachelor's Degree	26.21%	28.31%	30.69%	38.31%	45.32%
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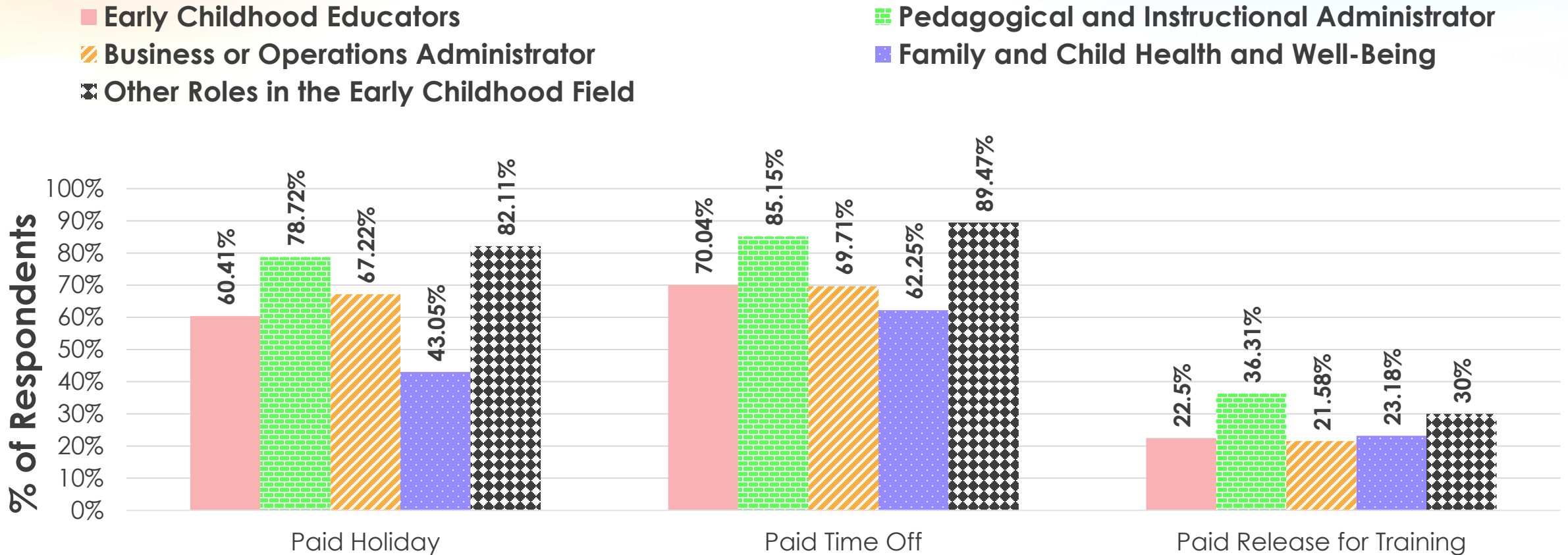
What were the respondents' highest levels of education for **Other Roles**?

	Early Childhood Educators	Pedagogical and Instructional Administrators	Business/ Operations Administrators	Family and Child Health and Well-Being	Other Roles
Doctoral Degree	1.53%	1.55%	2.17%	13.64%	3.45%
Master's Degree	10.89%	20.99%	16.97%	34.42%	29.06%
Bachelor's Degree	26.21%	28.31%	30.69%	38.31%	45.32%
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None of the Above	0.26%	0%	0%	0%	0%

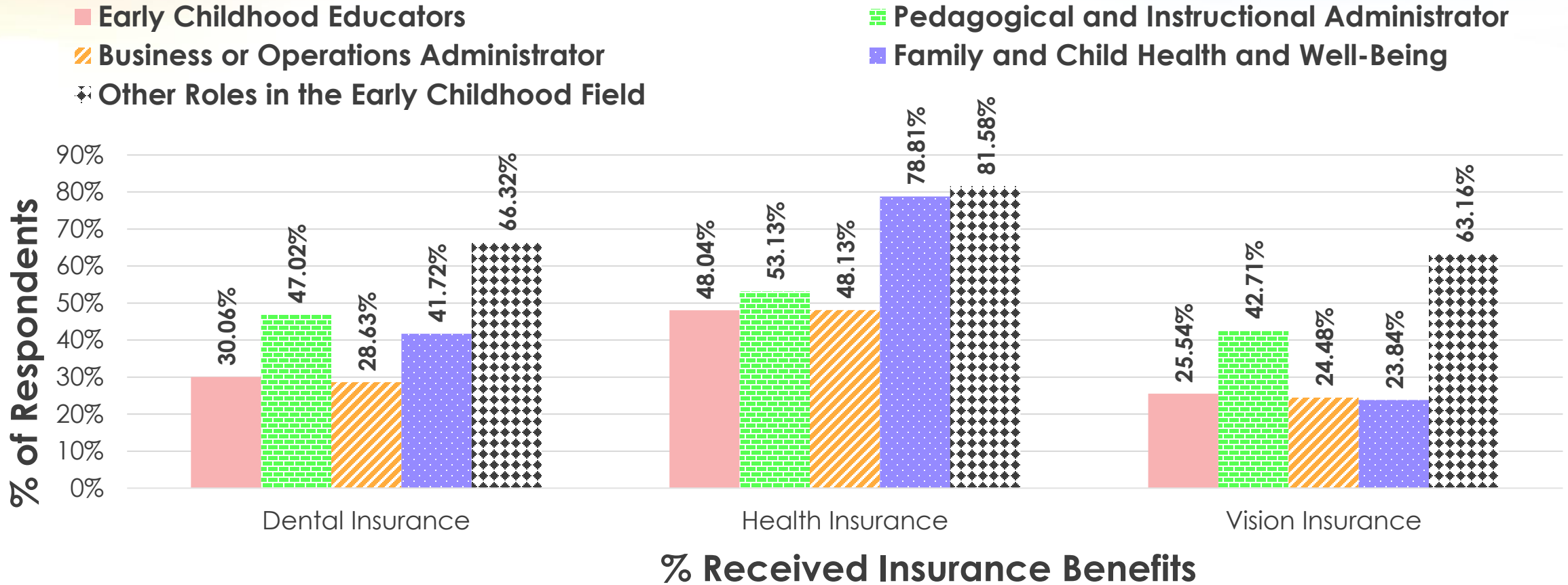
Annual Wages of Early Childhood Professionals



Benefits across Early Childhood Occupations



What percentage of respondents **across all occupational categories** received insurance?

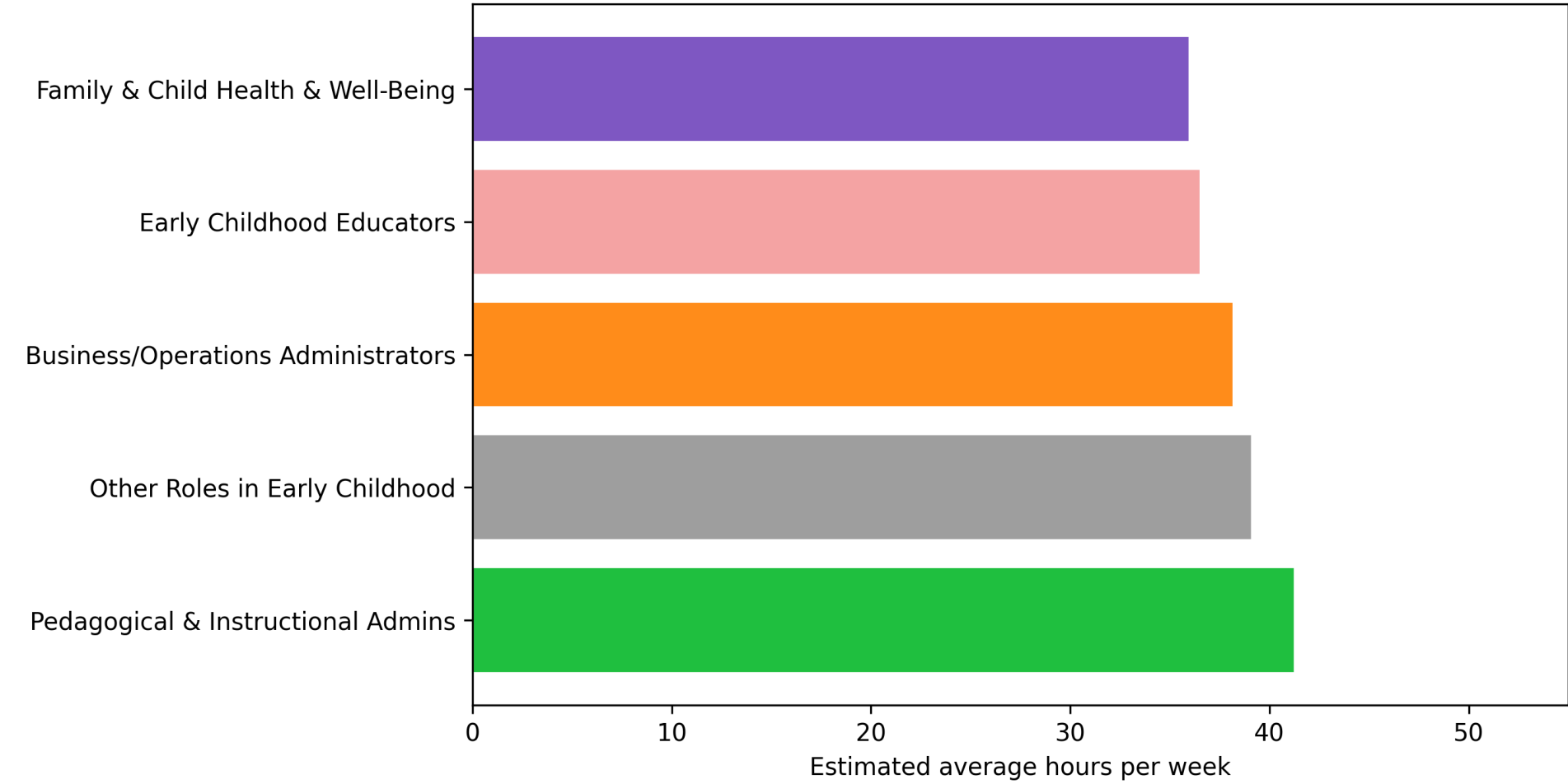




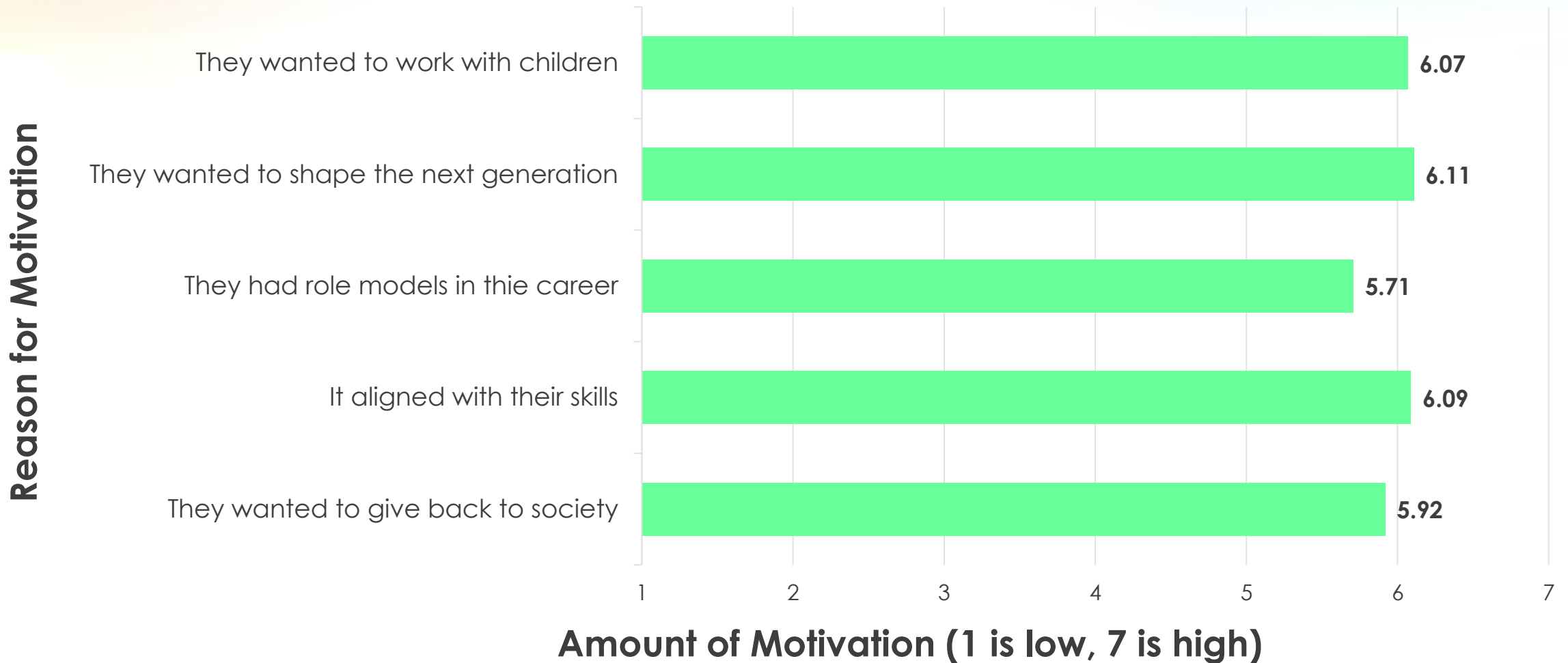
One interviewee described her experience with the pay and benefits as an assistant teacher and lead teacher in a Head Start program:

“When I was a teacher, first as an assistant teacher, the pay was hard to live off... I was promoted to lead teacher and... it was still hard to live off... They had paid time off, sick pay, health insurance, holiday pay, so they had quite a few benefits that... offset the pay being low. That kind of helped me stick it out.”

Average Hours Worked per Week by Occupational Category



What were the **top five factors** that respondents reported as influencing their ECE career choice?





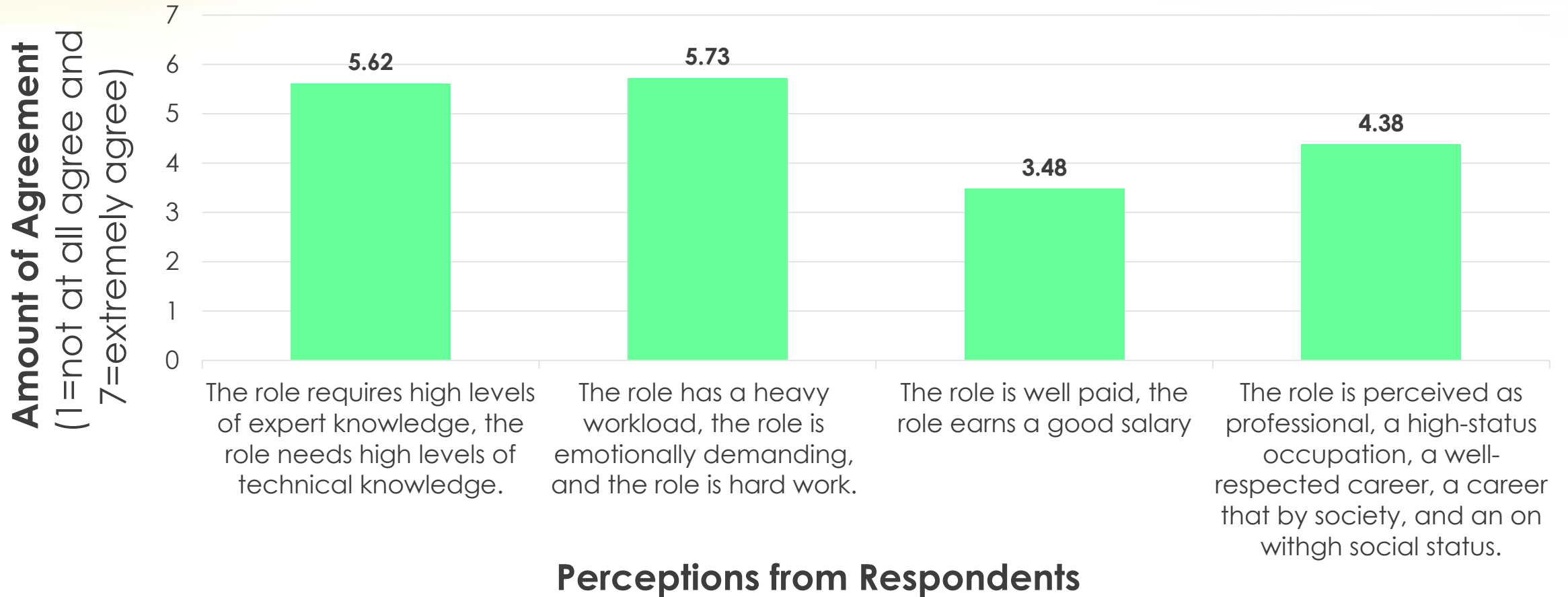
One interviewee described her motivation to join the field:

“Part of my initial idea of working with children was to contribute to society and do something meaningful.”

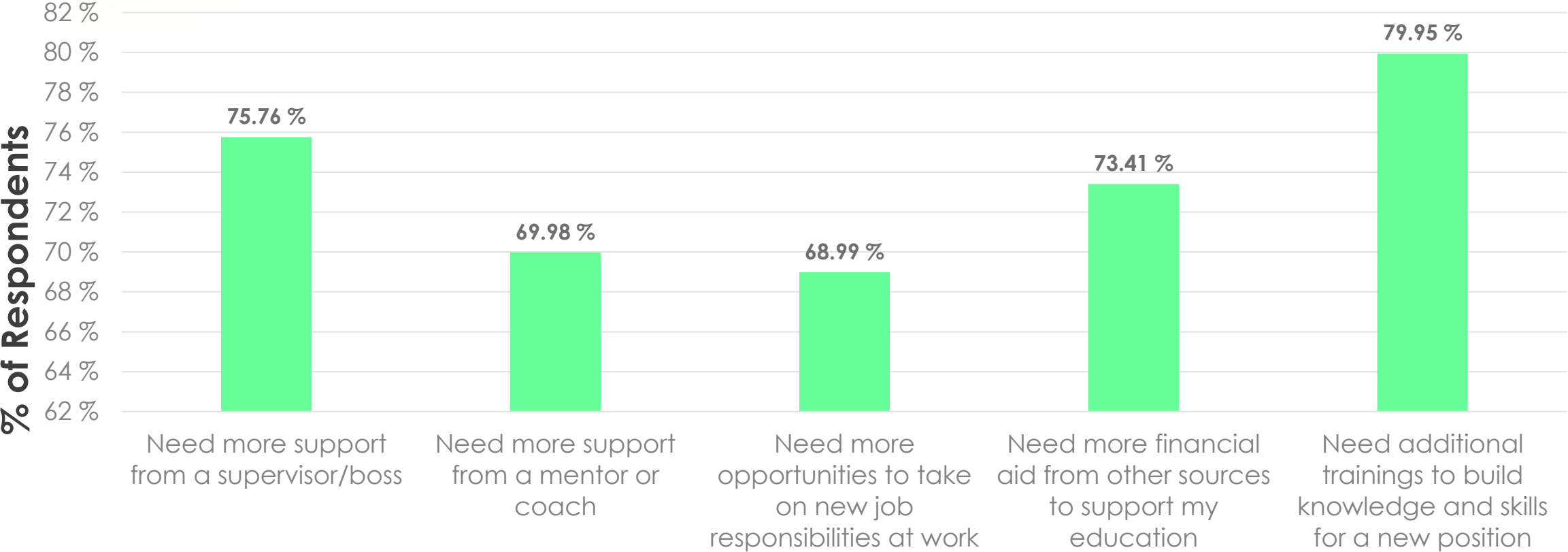
Another described her motivation:

“It was just natural. I've always been good with kids. I've always enjoyed teaching.”

How do the respondents perceive their careers?

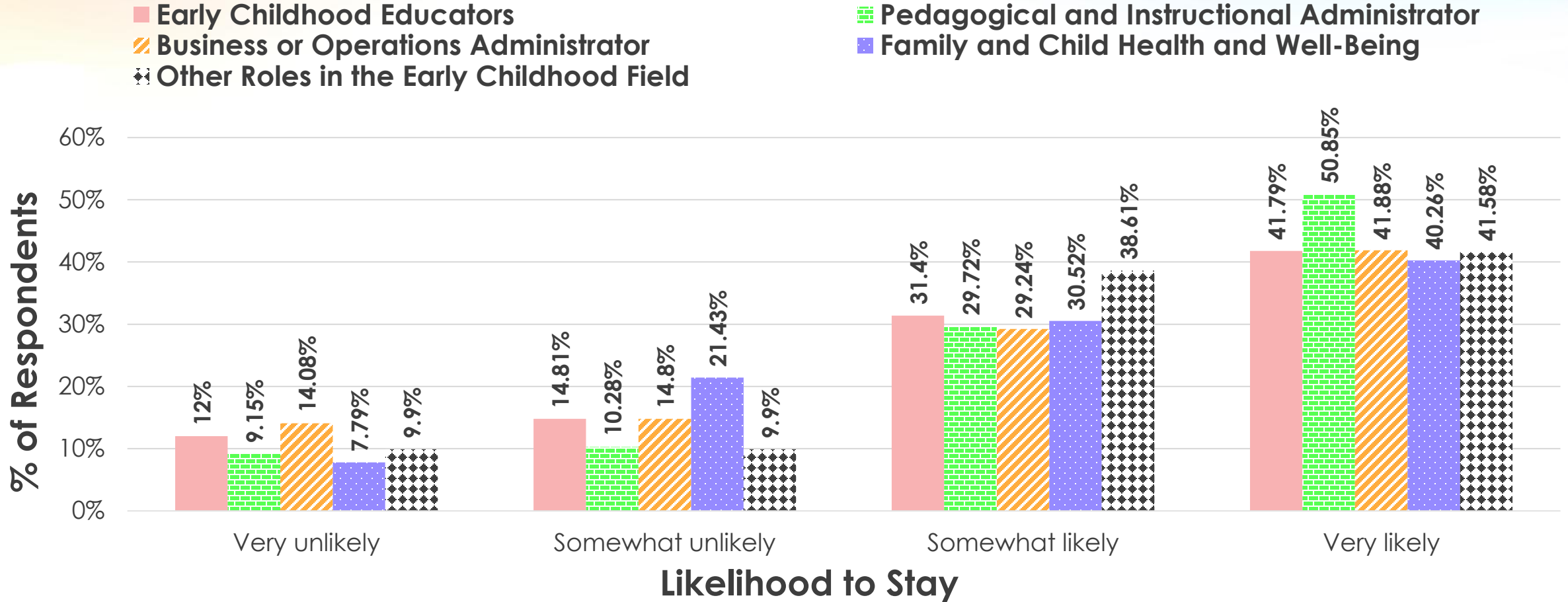


What percentage of respondents perceived the following barriers?



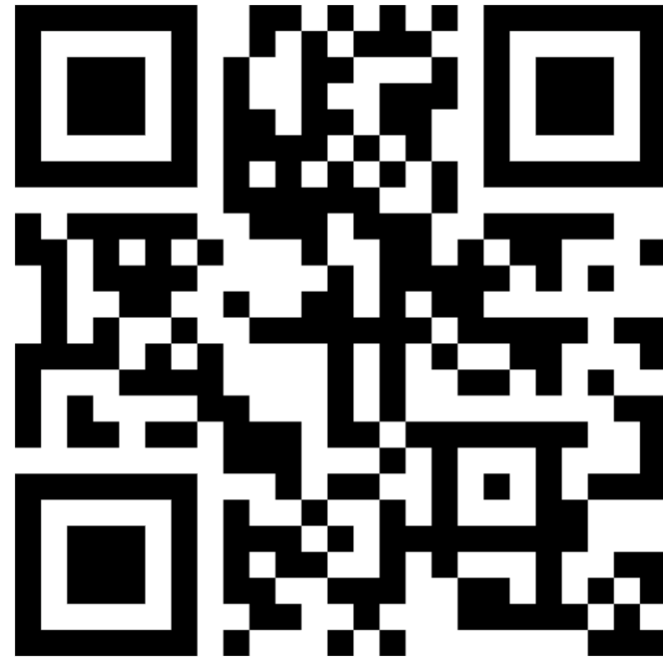
Perceptions from Respondents

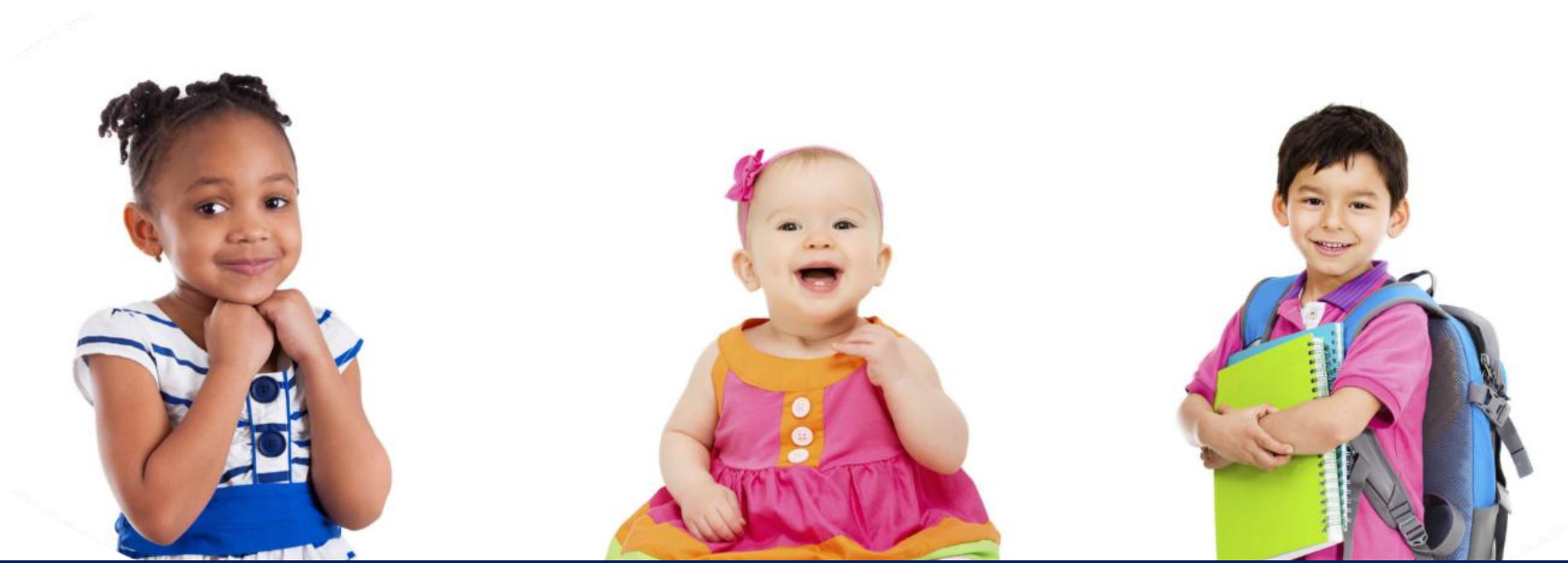
How likely were respondents **across all categories** to **stay** in their current job for the next two years?



Thank you!

Interested in the full report? Scan this QR code!





Other Updates from TELC Members



Upcoming Early Childhood Events

February Early Childhood Events

[For the Love of Children Conference:](#)

Child Care Providers in HHSC Regions 5 & 6

February 7, 2026, at San Jacinto College, Pasadena TX

[Texas Developmental Screening and Surveillance \(Tx DSS\) ECHO](#)

Friday, February 13, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. CT. My Health My Resources (MHMR) of Tarrant County will be presenting “How to Support Antecedent/Positive Behaviors.”

(2nd Friday of each month from 1-2pm)

[Texas PN-3 Open Meeting:](#)

February 25, 2026 @ 10am

Later Early Childhood Events

[Quad Agency Child Care Initiative Commission Meeting:](#)

March 24, 2026, 1:30-3:30pm

[Texas Rising Star Early Educator Conference](#) (by invitation)

April 7-9, 2026, Grapevine

[ECI Advisory Committee:](#)

April 29, 2026

Next TELC Meeting Date

Next Meeting:

April 17, 2026

Adjourn



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Thank you for your time! The meeting slides and recording will be posted at:

www.earlylearningtexas.org/

Next meeting:

April 17, 2026 from 11am to 1pm