

The Director's Link

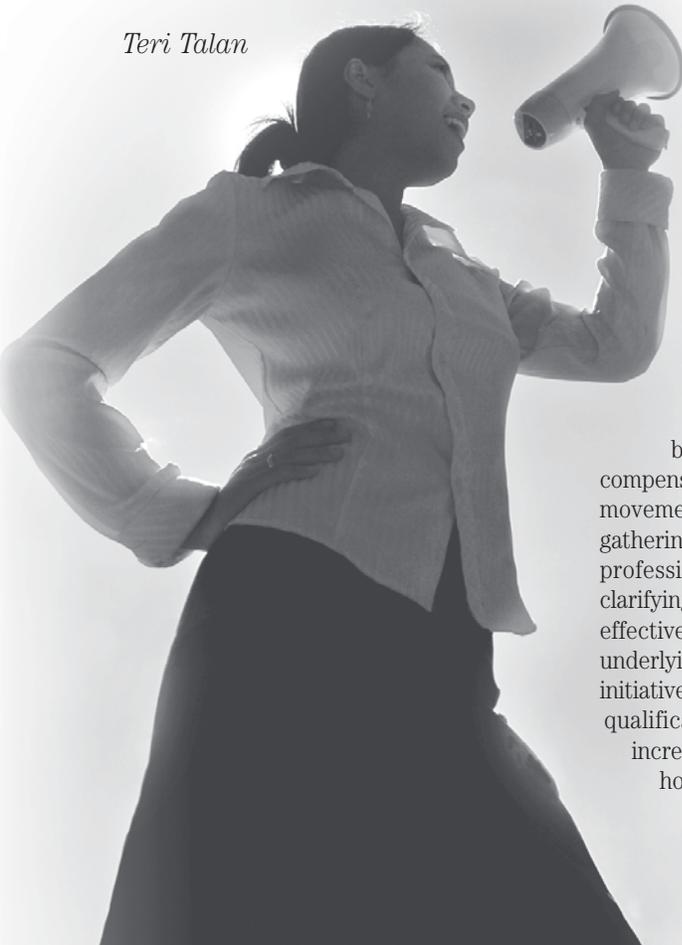
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Standing Up and Speaking Out:

The Need for Well-Qualified, Well-Compensated Directors

Teri Talan



When I changed careers in 1989 from practicing child advocacy law to directing a child care program, I was shocked to see firsthand how our society devalued this important work. I had experienced only high esteem in my work as an attorney. In sharp contrast, as an early childhood administrator I felt the important work I was doing was marginalized. In frustration, I wrote a *Chicago Sun-Times* guest editorial in which I stated, "I experience this low regard for the work of early childhood practitioners as a slap in the face." I have been engaged ever since in working to change the conditions of low respect and low wages that plague the early childhood profession.

Across the country, center directors have been strong advocates for publicly funded professional development initiatives such as T.E.A.C.H., WAGE\$, Great START, and C.A.R.E.S. that help the early childhood teaching workforce become more qualified and better compensated. The director credentialing movement, still in its infancy, is also gathering momentum as states seek to professionalize the director's role by clarifying core competencies needed for effective program administration. The underlying principle supporting all these initiatives is that increased professional qualifications should be linked to increased compensation. Early childhood administrators cannot assume

that good will in the public arena will drive these efforts; they need to become vocal advocates about the need for increased professional qualifications and compensation for program administrators like themselves.

Need for Qualified Early Childhood Administrators

Research has shown that early childhood administrators play a pivotal role in creating the context able to attract and retain qualified teachers that promote children's development and learning. The effective director needs to have knowledge and skills in both early childhood education and program administration. The role of the program administrator is complex, encompassing management tasks (implementing the curriculum, developing the budget, monitoring operations, and supervising staff) as well as leadership tasks (envisioning goals, affirming values, and achieving a unity of purpose).

Given the complexity of the administrator's role, it is astounding how little pre-service preparation is required to become a center director. The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) reports that only 38 states have any pre-service requirements for directors and only 8 states require pre-service training in program administration. Only two states, Indiana and Pennsylvania, require a director to have a minimum of an associate degree.

In contrast to center-based early childhood administrators, elementary school principals are required to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and specialized training in school administration. The comparison between center directors and elementary school principals is

Continued on page 2

appropriate given the scope of responsibility for each role. Both administrators oversee facility management; curriculum design, implementation, and assessment; staffing and human resource allocation; family and community relations; and fiscal matters relating to their programs.

The Need for Increased Compensation

There is considerable discussion at the policy table about what early childhood teachers should be paid. Numerous reports recommend that preschool teachers should be paid salaries and benefits comparable to those of similarly qualified teachers in K-12 education. The subject of directors' salaries and benefits is seldom even raised, however. Whether the discussion is about expanding state-funded pre-kindergarten or implementing a system of universal preschool, it is critical to include well-qualified and well-compensated center administrators in any plan for expanding access to high-quality early care and education.

Accurate data is needed in order to advocate for better qualified, better compensated administrators. What do we know about the current qualifications of center directors? What is their salary? Are directors' salaries linked to their role, professional qualifications, or program auspice? The 2005 Directors' Salary Survey recently conducted by the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership was designed to answer these questions.

Findings from the 2005 Directors' Salary Survey

Surveys were completed by 1,198 early childhood administrators representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Of this total, 982 directors identified

themselves as responsible for a single site and 216 directors identified themselves as responsible for multiple sites. Three-quarters of the administrators (76%) had achieved a minimum of a baccalaureate degree. As a group they have worked in early childhood for an average of 17 years, in an administrative position for an average of 11 years, and in their current positions for an average of 7 years. The sample comprised 7% African-Americans, 1% Asian, 88% Caucasians, 3% Hispanics and 1% others.

Analyzing data only for center directors spending 50% or more of their time in an administrative role, the 2005 Directors' Salary Survey found that the average annual salary for a center director of a single site is \$42,765. These data were further analyzed to determine the relationship between salary and role, professional qualifications, and program auspice.

- Directors' average salaries vary depending on their role: \$38,314 for a Director/Teacher, \$39,853 for an Owner/Director, and \$43,555 for a Director of a single-site program.
- The study found a positive relationship between directors' level of education and their salary. The average salary ranged from \$32,203 for an administrator with an associate degree; to \$37,743 with a bachelor's degree; to \$46,624 with a master's degree.
- There are differences in the average annual salary of center administrators depending on program auspice (ranging from \$34,570 per year for a director of a center run by a for-profit corporation or chain to \$52,250 per year for a director of a college or university-affiliated center).

Continued on page 6

Directors' Compensation by Program Auspice	Mean Hourly Wage
For profit—private proprietary or partnership	\$17.37
For profit—corporation or chain (e.g., KinderCare, La Petite Academy)	\$16.62
For profit—corporate sponsored (e.g., Bright Horizons Family Solutions)	\$24.56
Private nonprofit—-independent	\$19.94
Private nonprofit—affiliated with a social service agency	\$21.94
Public nonprofit—sponsored by federal, state, or local government	\$22.34
College or university affiliated	\$25.12
Military sponsored	\$23.71
Public school	\$23.89

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Our Mission

The McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership is dedicated to enhancing the management skills, professional orientation, and leadership capacity of early childhood administrators. The activities of the Center encompass four areas: training, technical assistance, research, and public awareness.



The Director's Toolbox

Link Your Program's Salary Scale to a Career Ladder

By using an index as a basis for salary increases, fair and equitable advancements can be incorporated into a center's organizational structure. Budget planning becomes easier as the present and projected salary needs become clear.

"Indexing" provides for a prorated system that maps salary increases as the staff member moves up the ladder during his or her career. In this example, an index of 1.00 is the baseline for the professional employee at Level 1, Step 1. If the salary index of 1.00 equaled \$7.00 per hour, the index of 1.25 would equal \$8.75 per hour. The highest paid position at an index of 4.00 would be \$28 per hour or the annual equivalent of \$58,240.

PROFESSIONAL CATEGORIES

Level	Step	Index	Education	Experience	Roles
V	1	4.00	PhD or EdD in early childhood education or related discipline	5 or more years	Administrator Education Coordinator
IV	3	3.75	Master's degree, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 21 s.h. in area of specialization	3 or more years	Administrator Education Coordinator Family Resource Coordinator
	2	3.50	Master's degree, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 15 s.h. in area of specialization	2 or more years	Administrator Education Coordinator Family Resource Coordinator
	1	3.25	Enrollment in master's degree program, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 9 s.h. in area of specialization	1 or more years	Administrator Education Coordinator Lead Teacher
III	3	3.00	Baccalaureate degree, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 21 s.h. in area of specialization	3 or more years	Administrator Educational Coordinator Lead Teacher
	2	2.75	Baccalaureate degree, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 15 s.h. in area of specialization	2 or more years	Administrator Educational Coordinator Lead Teacher
	1	2.50	Baccalaureate degree or 90 s.h. college credit, 21 s.h. in cd/ece, and 9 s.h. in area of specialization	1 or more years	Lead Teacher Teacher
II	3	2.25	Associate degree or 60 s.h. college credit with 30 s.h. in cd/ece	2 or more years	Teacher
	2	2.00	Associate degree or 60 s.h. of college credit with 21 s.h. in cd/ece	1 or more years	Teacher
	1	1.75	30 s.h. of college credit with 12 s.h. in cd/ece or CDA/CCP		Teacher Apprentice Teacher/Aide
I	3	1.50	15 s.h. of college credit with 9 s.h. in cd/ece with 9 s.h. in cd/ece	2 or more years	Apprentice Teacher/Aide
	2	1.25	9 s.h. of college credit with 6 s.h. in cd/ece	1 or more years	Apprentice Teacher/Aide
	1	1.00	High school diploma or GED plus enrollment in cd/ece course		Apprentice Teacher/Aide

From: Bloom, P.J. (2005). *Blueprint for action: Achieving center-based change through staff development*. Lake Forest, IL: New Horizons. Reprinted with permission.

Planning Ahead

Professional Development Opportunities

Computer Training for Early Childhood Administrators – Beginner Course

March 21, 22, 28, 29 and April 4, 5, 2006

This six-session training experience provides basic instruction in computer technology as an administrative tool in the management of child care programs. Made possible by funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the course is designed to improve early childhood administrators' computer skills and increase their access to management resources via the Internet. Previous experience with computers is not required.

Location: Lewis and Clark Community College
Bethalto Community Education Center, East Alton, IL

Fee is \$65, includes text and all course materials.

Participants may receive 2 s.h. of graduate credit (ECE534, Technology in Child Care Administration I) by paying an additional fee.

For more information, contact Tim Walker at tim.walker@nl.edu or (800) 443-5522, Ext. 5054.

Family Child Care Institute – Best Business Practices

March 3, 4 and May 13, 2006

Managing a high-quality family child care program and sustaining a viable business can be challenging. This family child care institute, presented in collaboration with the Illinois Association for Family Child Care (IAFCC) and sponsored by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), will provide participants with the tools and techniques they need to improve their family child care business practices and get on the path toward accreditation.

Location: McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership
National-Louis University, Wheeling Campus Annex

Fee is \$149, includes all institute materials, breakfast and lunch

Hotel accommodations are available at the Candlewood Suites adjacent to the Center. Call (847) 520-1684.

For an additional fee, participants may take the training for 2 s.h. of college credit.

For more information, contact Ida Butler at ida.butler@nl.edu or (800) 443-5522, Ext. 5155.

Program Administration Scale Assessor Reliability Training

March 27-29, 2006

The *Program Administration Scale* (PAS) measures leadership and management practices of center-based early care and education programs. Assessor reliability training includes an overview of the reliability of instrument, interview protocol for collecting data, how to score indicators and items, and how to develop a computer-generated program profile. Individuals who successfully complete the training are eligible to become certified PAS assessors.

This three-day training is designed for technical assistance specialists, quality monitors, management consultants, researchers, and other professionals interested in using the PAS to reliably assess early childhood leadership and management practices and help center directors improve the quality of their programs.

Location: McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership
National-Louis University, Wheeling Campus Annex

Fee is \$650, includes all texts, handouts, breakfast and lunch.

Hotel accommodations are available at the Candlewood Suites adjacent to the Center. Call (847) 520-1684.

For an additional fee, participants may take the training for 2 s.h. of graduate credit (ECE582C Workshop/Early Childhood Program Evaluation).

For more information, contact Jill Bella at jill.bella@nl.edu or (800) 443-5522, Ext. 5059.

NLU Courses for Directors

Winter Term begins January 9, 2006

Online Courses

ECE538 (2 s.h.)

The Early Childhood Administrator:
Individual and Organizational
Perspectives

ECE582I (2 s.h.)

Workshop: Leadership Connections

EPS500A (3 s.h.)

Human Development with a Focus
on Early Childhood

FND503 (3 s.h.)

Historical & Philosophical Foundations
in ECE

**For more information
about the Early Childhood
Administration degree program,
contact Douglas Clark
at douglas.clark@nl.edu or
(800) 443-5522, ext. 5062**

Take Time Out to Chat with the Experts Online!

Once again, the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership will host a series of online discussions with nationally renowned early childhood experts. Join the discussion to chat with the people who have written the books and helped shape early childhood policy and practice. Each expert will be the featured guest for a week-long open discussion on issues of interest to early childhood center administrators.



Monday, February 13 – Saturday, February 18, 2006

Guest expert: Nina Sazer O'Donnell

Families and Work Institute

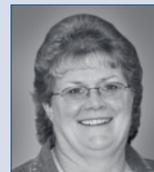
What Science Has to Say About How Children Learn

Monday, March 6 – Saturday, March 11, 2006

Guest expert: Barbara Sawyer

National Association for Family Child Care

Family Child Care Accreditation



Monday, May 22 – Saturday, May 27, 2006

Guest expert: Mary Louise Hemmeter

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundation for Early Learning

Strategies for Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development

Check out the Center's Web site (<http://cecl.nl.edu>) for information about how to log on and updates about future online guests.

Special Tour Highlights Preconference Agenda

**Wednesday, May 10, 2006
11:30am – 5:30pm**

Enjoy a box lunch and bus ride to explore the extraordinary Kohl Children's Museum. Then tour the 46,000 square foot world-class Abbott Laboratories child care campus. End the day with a dessert reception at the Marriott.

**\$60 per person,
pre-registration required**

Space is limited – Sign up soon!



Register online at <http://cecl.nl.edu>

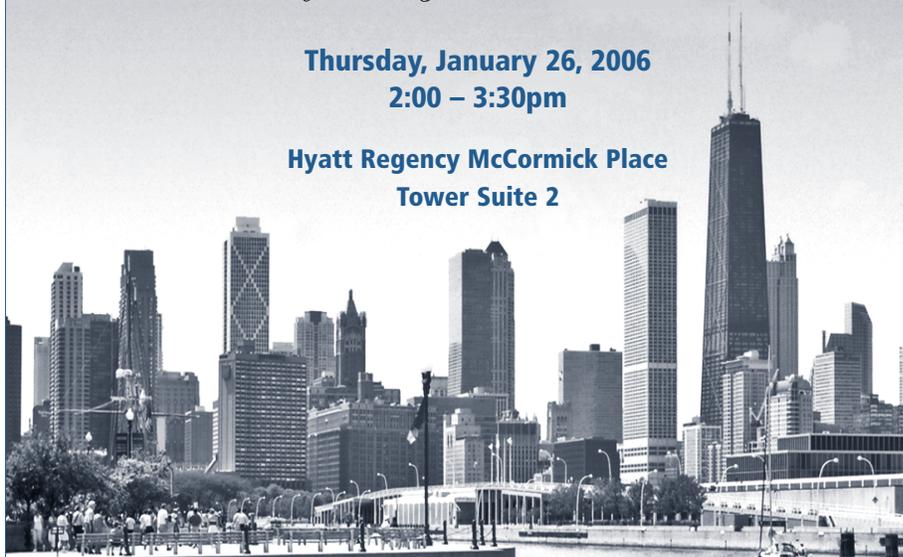
"Opening the Doors to Opportunity"

Join us at the
Chicago Metro AEYC Conference

At a suite talk for early childhood administrators

**Thursday, January 26, 2006
2:00 – 3:30pm**

**Hyatt Regency McCormick Place
Tower Suite 2**



McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Standing, left to right:

Charmaine Farmby,
Linda Butkovich, Teri Talan,
Ida Butler, Douglas Clark,
Angel Chavez, Lila Goldston,
Helen Talo, Jill Bella,
Paula Jorde Bloom,
Donna Jonas

Seated, left to right:

Tim Walker, Janis Jones,
Eileen Eisenberg

Absent:

Cory Eisenberg and
Debra Trude-Suter



*Happy
New Year
from the faculty and staff*

Continued from page 2

The Need for Parity with Other Educational Administrators

Are center directors who have comparable qualifications with their elementary school counterparts paid similar salaries? Not surprisingly, early childhood administrators' annual salaries lag far behind other educational administrators. For example, the average salary of elementary school principals in 2004-05 was \$76,144 for 233 days on duty, the equivalent of \$42.68/hour. This is considerably more than the average hourly rate of compensation that directors with comparable education receive. An early childhood program administrator with a master's degree earns \$22.42/hour. Even with a doctorate degree, an early childhood administrator earns only \$26.20/hour.

Conclusion

The findings of the 2005 Directors' Salary Survey demonstrate that differences in

role and professional qualifications are the primary cause of variance in the salaries of center-based program administrators. When compared to the salary of principals with comparable qualifications, however, it is clear that center-based early childhood administrators are not paid a comparable salary for comparable work.

As states continue to expand their early education programs, whether through state-funded pre-kindergarten or a system of universal preschool, the role of the center administrator is critical to achieving school readiness outcomes for children and families. Center directors must begin to speak out about the need for improved administrator compensation linked to professional qualifications. As is true for early childhood teachers, program administrators with comparable qualifications and scope of responsibility should earn comparable salaries to their counterparts in the public schools.

Sources:

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Teri Talan is Director of Research and Public Policy for the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership.