

A large, stylized green leaf graphic with five rounded lobes, centered on the page. The leaf is rendered in two shades of green, with a lighter green outline and a darker green fill. It is set against a light green circular background that is itself centered on the page. The overall background of the page is a solid light green color.

California Early Care and Education Workforce Study

Licensed Child Care Centers

Mono County 2006

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Introduction

Reflecting the growth in the number of working families with young children and the importance of early learning, the U.S. has witnessed an explosion of early care and education services in centers and homes over the last 30 years. What was once a relatively small, unnoticed sector of the economy is now viewed as a growing industry with substantial economic impact in terms of widespread use, consumer and public spending, and job creation (National Economic Development and Law Center, 2001). At the same time, researchers in cognitive science, psychology and education, among others, have expanded our understanding of the developmental significance of the early years, underscoring the importance of high-quality early learning settings to ensure that children realize their potential (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Evidence that the quality of early care and education settings can and does influence children's development during and beyond the preschool years (Gormley, Gayer, Phillips & Dawson, 2004; Henry, Gordon, Henderson & Ponder, 2003; Reynolds, Temple, Robertson & Mann, 2001; Schulman, 2005; Schulman & Barnett, 2005; Schweinhart et al., 2005) has increasingly shifted attention to the early care and education workforce, and the extent to which those who care for young children are adequately prepared to facilitate their learning and well-being.

Creating a skilled and stable early care and education workforce, however, has emerged as a daunting challenge. Reflecting a shortage of resources throughout the industry, employment in the field is characterized by exceptionally low pay, leading to high turnover that, in turn, undermines program quality and children's development (Helburn, 1995;

Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1998; Whitebook, Sakai, Gerber & Howes, 2001).

High turnover, coupled with the expansion of services, has led to a high demand for personnel in the field, and has also contributed to maintaining relatively low requirements for working with young children. As a result, employment qualifications in the field do not tend to match the level of skills and understanding truly needed to meet the demands of this work. This gap between professional challenges and regulatory requirements is further exacerbated by changes in the child population – notably the increasing numbers of children from immigrant families who are dual language learners, and the growing numbers of children identified as having special developmental needs. Many students of early childhood education still do not receive training related to serving such children (Whitebook, Bellm, Lee & Sakai, 2005).

The recognition that the workforce is the backbone upon which early care and education services depend has underscored many of the activities undertaken by First 5 commissions at the state and local level. Since the program's inception in 2000, for example, California has spent over \$240 million on the state- and county-level effort known as CARES, which has awarded stipends to over 40,000 ECE practitioners for pursuing further training and education. Increasing attention is also turning to institutions of higher education to assess the resources they will need, in order to adapt their programs and to support students in meeting more rigorous standards for working with young children (Whitebook, Bellm, Lee & Sakai,

2005).

This report is intended to identify the characteristics of Mono County's current center-based early care and education workforce, both in light of proposed new requirements, and to help assess the size of the task of training the next generation of workers to care for young children.

Licensed Child Care Centers in California

In California, child care provided outside of a home environment is called a child care center. A child care center is usually located in a commercial building, school or church. In a child care center, non-medical care and supervision can be provided for infants (birth to 23 months), preschoolers (two to five years) and school-age children (kindergarten students and older) in a group setting for periods of less than 24 hours.

Almost all child care centers are required to be licensed by the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services. Centers that are exempt from licensing include certain school-age and preschool programs run by Park and Recreation Departments and school districts; informal arrangements in which no money changes hands for care, such as co-ops and play groups; on-site military child care programs; and programs administered by the Department of Corrections.

To receive a license, child care centers must meet the requirements established in the Code of California Regulations Title 22 related to personnel, the facility, and the number and ages of children served.¹

Personnel requirements include the following:

- Child care centers must have qualified directors and qualified teaching staff. Directors and teachers must have 12 units in early childhood education. To be a qualified infant teacher, at least three of the units must be related to

the care of infants. Directors must have three units in administration or staff relations.

- Employees must have a fingerprint clearance from the California Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and have a Child Abuse Index Clearance.
- All staff must have a TB clearance and health report.
- At least one person on-site must have 15 hours of health and safety training approved by the Emergency Medical Services Authority. This includes a current CPR and First Aid Certificate.

Requirements for a child care facility include the following:

- 35 square feet of indoor play space per child, 75 square feet of outdoor space per child, and one toilet and one sink for every 15 children.
- Compliance with CCLD health and safety requirements pertaining to storage space, equipment and materials, drinking water, food preparation, storage of dangerous materials, adult/staff restrooms, isolation areas for sick children, and facility temperature.
- Compliance with all other state, federal, and/or local codes and regulations such as zoning, building restrictions, fire, sanitation, and labor requirements.

Number and ages of children served:

- The total number of children who can be served in a facility is called the licensed capacity of the center. The licensed capacity is based on the

¹ For more information about child care center licensing see: <http://cclld.ca.gov>.

physical space of a site (as described above) and the number of staff available to provide care.

- CCLD issues separate licenses for the different ages of children that can be served: infants, preschoolers, and school-age children. Each age group requires a specific ratio of children to adults:

Infants: 1 adult to 4 children

Preschoolers: 1 adult to 12 children

School-age children: 1 adult to 15 children

Additional regulations for child care centers

In addition to the Title 22 regulations described above, centers contracted with the California Department of Education (CDE) must meet the regulations set by Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Head Start centers are also required to meet additional regulations established by the federal Head Start

Bureau. Table 1.1 compares the educational levels for child care center staff required by Titles 5 and 22. Head Start educational requirements are not included in the chart, as the Head Start staffing structure is unique to that program. Fifty percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs, however, are required to have an AA, BA or advanced degree in early childhood education, or an AA, BA or advanced degree in a field related to early childhood education, in addition to experience teaching preschool children.

According to the *2005 California Child Care Portfolio*, there were 10,143 child care centers with 639,443 child care spaces (commonly referred to as “slots”) in the state in 2004. Six percent of these slots were licensed for infants, 70 percent for preschoolers and 24 percent for school-age children. Child care centers made up 64 percent of all licensed child care spaces, with family child care homes comprising 36 percent of the capacity (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2005).

Table 1.1. Comparison of Title 22 and Title 5 Regulations for Child Care Center Staff

Position	Title 22	Title 5 (CDE-contracted centers)
Assistant teacher	None	6 units of college-level Child Development (CD)/ Early Care and Education (ECE)
Associate teacher	Not specified	12 units of college-level CD/ECE
Teacher	12 units of college-level CD/ECE 6 months experience	24 units of college-level CD/ECE 16 units of General Education (GE)
Site supervisor	Not specified	AA or 60 units including: 24 units of CD/ECE 16 units GE 8 units administration
Program director	12 units of college-level CD/ECE 3 units administration	BA or higher including: 24 units of CD/ECE 8 units of administration

Mono County

Situated in the Eastern Sierras along the Nevada border, Mono County has one incorporated area, the city of Mammoth Lakes. Mammoth Mountain Ski Area is one of the county's main employers. Financial, insurance and real estate services as well as retail trade comprise the largest non-governmental economic sectors.

In 2004, Mono County's population of 13,500 represented a 5.0-percent increase over the 2000 Census (US Census Bureau, 2000a). The county is projected to increase in population by 13.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, with a 4.4-percent increase in the number of children from birth to age four (California Department of Finance, 2004).

Population estimates for 2005 describe the county as 74.7 percent White, Non-Hispanic; 19.5 percent Hispanic; 2.2 percent American Indian; 1.7 percent Multiethnic; 1.3 percent Asian; 0.5 percent Black; and 0.1 percent Pacific Islander (California Department of Finance, 2005). At the time of the 2000 Census, 82.3 percent of county households were estimated as speaking English, 13.2 percent Spanish, and 1.1 percent an Asian or Pacific Island language (US Census Bureau, 2000b).

Several demographic measures as

well as summary statistics concerning economic well being suggest the breadth of need for early care and education in Mono County:

- Median family income in 1999 was \$50,487 (California Department of Finance, 2003).
- In 1999, 11.5 percent of residents had incomes below the poverty level (California Department of Finance, 2003).
- These figures disguise families' economic stress, which increasingly is driven by high housing costs. The county's 2005 annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit was \$10,464 (US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2003).
- At the time of the 2000 Census, 11.6 percent of children 0-5 years of age lived in poverty² (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2003).
- In 2000, 2,270 children under the age of 14 resided in the county, 72.2 percent of whom had both parents or a single head of household in the labor force³ (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2003).
- Among those children were 876 children under age six, 72.5 percent of whom had working parents⁴ (California Child Care Resource and

² Data derived from 2000 U.S. Census (universe: population for whom poverty status is determined). Poverty threshold varies by family size and composition. For a family of four, two adults and two children under 18, the 1999 poverty threshold used for the 2000 Census was \$16,895.

³ Data derived from 2000 U.S. Census (custom tabulation). Number of children either with both parents or with a single head of household in the labor force (universe: own children in families and subfamilies).

⁴ Data derived from 2000 U.S. Census (custom tabulation). Number of children either with both parents or with a single head of household in the labor force (universe: own children in families and subfamilies).

Referral Network, 2003).

- 22.5 percent of children ages 0-5 resided in a single-parent household⁵ (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2003).

In 2004, 382 licensed child care slots were available in Mono County, 39.8 percent in family child care homes, and 60.2 percent in child care centers (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2005).

⁵ Data derived from 2000 U.S. Census (universe: own children).

Purpose of the Study

Recognizing the critical role that early childhood educators play in the lives of California's children and families, First 5 California commissioned in 2004 a statewide and regional study of the early care and education (ECE) workforce in licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes. The overall goal of the study was to collect information on the current characteristics of this workforce – particularly its educational background, and its potential need and demand for further opportunities for professional development.

The statewide study sample included centers from every county in the state, but there were not sufficient numbers of centers in the sample to generate county-specific reports. Counties were invited, however, to contract for additional local interviews in order to build a representative county sample, and First 5 Mono County was one of nine county organizations that agreed to commission a local study of its early care and education workforce, building on the statewide study. An identical procedure was used for statewide and county data collection, although the statewide study interviews were conducted earlier in 2005.

The following description applies to the sample and response rate for the Mono County-commissioned component of the study. For information about the statewide completion and response rate, see the statewide *California Early Care and Education Workforce Study* report at the First 5 California website, <http://www.cfc.ca.gov>.

In partnership, the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) at the University of California at Berkeley,

and the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (Network), have gathered this information to help Mono County policy makers and planners assess current demand at teacher training institutions; plan for further investments in early childhood teacher preparation; and gain a baseline for measuring progress toward attaining a well-educated ECE workforce whose ethnic and linguistic diversity reflects that of Mono County's children and families.

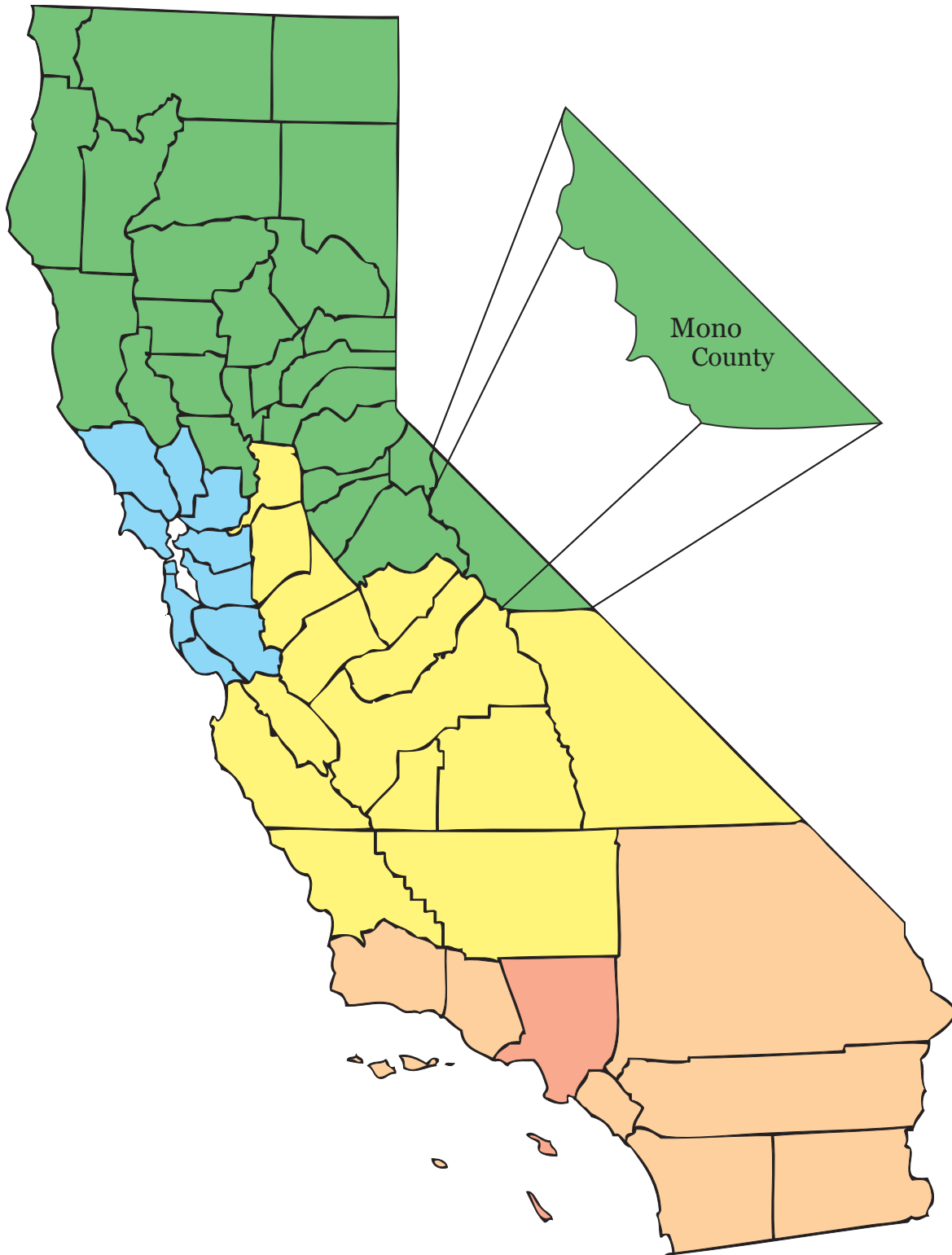
The present report contains the study's findings for licensed child care centers that have infant and/or preschool licenses. Some of these centers have school-age licenses as well. This study, however, does not include data for centers that have a license to serve school-age children only.

A separate report containing information about licensed family child care homes in Mono County can be found at the First 5 California website, <http://www.cfc.ca.gov>.

In studying the county's population of licensed child care centers, our primary objectives were to:

- Compile baseline data on the demographics, wages, tenure, and educational characteristics of child care center directors, teachers and assistant teachers;
- Identify the extent to which their educational backgrounds vary with respect to ethnicity, language and age;
- Profile the business and program characteristics of centers, including organizational status and participation in various subsidy programs;
- Profile the children that staff with varying characteristics serve, in terms of numbers, ages, subsidy status, and

- special needs; and
- Document the professional preparation of licensed child care center staff to work with children who are dual language learners and/or have special needs.



Study Design

Survey Population and Study Sample

First 5 Mono County sought countywide information about directors, teachers and assistant teachers employed at licensed child care centers in Mono County. The survey population included all seven licensed child care centers serving infants and/or preschoolers that were listed as of January 2004 with the state-funded child care resource and referral (R&R) agency, IMACA - Community Connection for Children. These data were cleaned and verified by the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (Network) and updated in August 2005. Centers licensed to serve only school-age children were not included in the survey population.

Because of the small number of child care centers, we attempted to interview all the centers. The final number of three completed interviews included the interviews conducted in Mono County as part of the statewide study. We were unable to complete any additional interviews during the county study. (See Table 2.1.) This is explained in more detail below.

Survey Instrument

The Child Care Center Survey used in this study was the same questionnaire used in the statewide study. It built upon numerous workforce studies conducted by

the Center for the Child Care Workforce over the last three decades (Center for the Child Care Workforce, 2001). Specifically, the survey instrument was adapted from the 2001 California Child Care Workforce Study, an eight-county effort funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation as a pilot for this statewide survey (Whitebook, Kipnis, Sakai, Voisin, & Young, 2002).

Certain changes were made to the 2001 survey to capture specific information requested by First 5 California to assist in its workforce development planning related to local and statewide efforts to expand preschool programs in California. Prior to data collection, the survey instrument and data collection procedures were approved by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California at Berkeley, and were then pre-tested in the field.

Telephone interviews were conducted in English with directors of child care centers. The directors answered questions about themselves as well as on behalf of their teaching staff. None of the eligible centers were unable to complete the interview because of a language barrier.

For the three groups of child care center staff – directors, teachers and assistant teachers – the questions in the survey addressed:

Table 2.1. Mono County Sample Composition

	Mono County licensed centers	Percentage of final sample
Completed interviews: statewide study	3	100.0%
Completed interviews: county study	-	0.0%
Final sample	3	100.0%

- *Demographics*: age, ethnicity, and languages spoken in addition to English;
- *Levels of education and training*: highest level of education; type of degree, if any; credit related to Early Childhood Education; credit and non-credit training related to children with special needs and English language learners; permits and credentials; and participation in the local CARES program;⁶
- *Employee characteristics*: staff wages, tenure, and turnover; and
- *Business and program characteristics*: number and ages of children served, including children with special needs and participation in government subsidy programs; public contracts with the California Department of Education or Head Start; and organizational status, including private for-profit, private nonprofit, or public.

Data Collection Procedures

The Network mailed a notification letter, describing the purpose of the survey and encouraging participation, to all the centers in the survey universe. The letter was signed by representatives of First 5 California, CSCCE and the Network. In addition to the letter, directors received an Interview Worksheet, outlining the survey questions, to help them prepare for the telephone interview. Centers were informed that they would receive a copy of the latest version of First 5's Kit for New

Parents as an incentive for completing the interview.

Field Research Corporation, Inc. (FRC), a professional public opinion research firm, conducted the interviews using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). During the CATI process, the interviewer reads the survey question from a computer screen and enters the survey data directly into the computer. This promotes uniformity of interview technique as well as accuracy and consistency during data input.

Center directors were contacted during the work day, and whenever they requested it, were called back at an appointed time, including in the evening or during the weekend, to complete the interview. Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete. FRC made up to eight attempts to complete an interview with each center director.

Survey Completion and Response Rate

The Network provided FRC with contact information for seven centers in the survey population. Three of these centers had completed an interview during the statewide survey, and one of these centers had been coded ineligible. Thus, FRC released three infant and/or preschool centers for the county survey. Unfortunately, we were unable to interview any of the centers in the released sample.

Of the three center contacts released for the county survey, one center was determined to be ineligible due to an unusable phone number. Among the two eligible centers, one respondent was never available to complete the survey, even

⁶ Over 40 counties in California have implemented professional development stipend programs for child care center teachers, administrators, and family child care providers based on the California CARES program model. These initiatives are intended to help build a skilled and stable early education workforce by providing monetary rewards, based on participants' education levels and continued commitment to their professional development.

after eight attempts by the interviewer to do so. The respondent at the second center informed the interviewer that she would not be available at all during the study period. (See Table 2.2). To increase the likelihood of interviewing as many directors as possible, the Network did attempt to correct all incorrect phone numbers and contact all directors with answering machines or voice mails to encourage them to participate in the study.

While we were unable to assess whether the centers that participated in the study differed from those that did not participate with respect to all the variables of interest in the study, we compared the county center population to the centers that completed interviews along three important variables. We calculated the extent to which centers participating in our study represented the county overall in terms of 1) geographical distribution, 2) contract status with Head Start or the California Department of Education, and 3) licensed capacity to serve infants. As shown in Table 2.3, there are variations in the distribution of these factors between the universe of centers and the sample of interviewed providers.

Table 2.2. Survey Response Rate of County Sample

	Mono County number of centers	Percentage of sample	Percentage of eligible
Sample released and dialed	3	100.0%	
Ineligible: out of business	-	0.0%	
Presumed ineligible*	1	33.3%	
Eligible	2	67.7%	100.0%
County surveys completed	-	0.0%	0.0%
No response, presumed eligible**	-	0.0%	0.0%
Refusals	-	0.0%	0.0%
Multi-site refusals***		0.0%	0.0%
Respondent not available	2	66.7%	100.0%
Communication barrier	-	0.0%	0.0%
Other reasons for non-completion	-	0.0%	0.0%

* Disconnected, wrong number, changed phone number, or no answer.

** Answering machine, voice mail, or busy signal.

*** Answered for some centers in multi-site agency but not all.

Table 2.3. Comparison of Survey Respondents and County Population of Centers, by Communities Served and by Regulation

	County population (N=7)	Survey completed (N=3)
REGULATION		
Licensed for infants	14.3%	33.3%
Head Start/CDE contract	42.9%	0.0%
COMMUNITY		
Bridgeport	14.3%	33.3%
Coleville	14.3%	0.0%
Lee Vining	14.3%	0.0%
Mammoth Lakes	57.1%	66.7%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%

Findings

Who are the teachers, assistant teachers and directors in Mono County's licensed child care centers?

Age. Directors were asked to report the age range of their teachers and assistant teachers; we did not collect data on the age of directors for this study. Assistant teachers were somewhat younger than teachers. About two-thirds of the teachers (66.7 percent) and four-fifths of assistant teachers (80.0 percent) were under 30. (See Figure 3.1.)

Ethnicity. The centers we interviewed reported that all of the assistant teachers and directors currently working at their centers were White, Non-Hispanic. Almost all of the teachers (91.7) were White, Non-Hispanic, and the remaining 8.3 percent of the teachers were American Indian/Alaskan Native. Center staff were less diverse than the female adult population in the county, which is 80.0 percent White, Non-Hispanic and 14.8 percent Latina. Center staff were also less diverse than children ages birth to five years, who are 56.3 percent White, Non-Hispanic and 37.6 percent Latino. Center staff closely match the proportion of K-12 teachers (94.0 percent) who are White, Non-Hispanic. (See Table 3.1.)

Linguistic Background. We also found that the population of children served by Mono County's licensed centers was linguistically diverse. Our information on the language backgrounds of young children is based on 2004-05 data from the California Department of Education (CDE), which reports that more than one-third (38.4 percent) of kindergarteners attending Mono County public schools spoke Spanish as their first language and were classified as English Learners (California Department of Education, 2005).

Directors were asked whether they or any of their teachers or assistant teachers could speak fluently with children and families in a language other than English. If they answered affirmatively, they were asked which language(s) they or their teaching staff would be able to speak fluently with children and families if necessary.⁷ The directors we interviewed reported that none of the directors, teachers or assistant teachers could speak fluently with children and families in a language other than English.

Turnover and Tenure. Center staff stability has been linked to overall program quality, the ability of a program to improve its quality, and children's social and verbal development (Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1998; Whitebook & Sakai, 2004). Turnover rates provide one important index of center workforce stability; namely, how much change in staffing a center has undergone in the previous year. Information on tenure offers a longer-term perspective on the level of staff stability over time within centers.

Two of the three centers reported no teacher turnover, with the remaining center reporting that all the teachers had left or stopped working at the center in the previous 12 months. One center reported no turnover among assistant teachers, while one center reported 100-percent turnover among assistants. Similarly, one center reported no turnover among

⁷ Our description of center staff fluency in these other languages is based entirely on directors' assessments. Note that the directors' reports do not permit us to assess whether those who spoke a language other than English also spoke English fluently.

Figure 3.1. *Estimated Age Distribution of Teachers and Assistant Teachers*

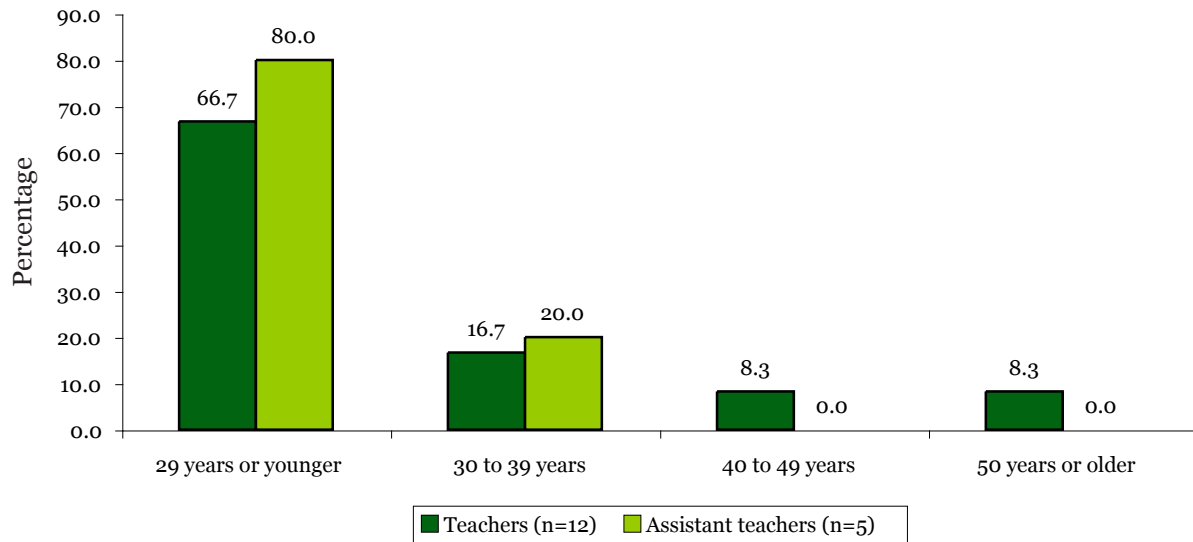


Table 3.1. *Estimated Ethnic Distribution of Directors, Teachers and Assistants Compared to the Mono County Female Population, Mono County Public K-12 Teachers and Children 0-5 Years: Countywide*

	White, Non-Hispanic	Latina	Other	Total Number
Directors	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3
Teachers	91.7%	0.0%	8.3%	12
Assistant teachers	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5
Adult female population	80.0%	14.8%	5.2%	3,727
Mono County public K-12 teachers	94.0%	3.6%	2.4%	166
Children 0-5 years	56.3%	37.6%	6.2%	910

Table 3.2. *Estimated Distribution of Assistant Teachers, Teachers and Directors Working with Infants and/or Preschoolers: Countywide*

	Assistant teachers	Teachers	Total
Total number	12	28	47
Percentage	25.5	59.6	100.0

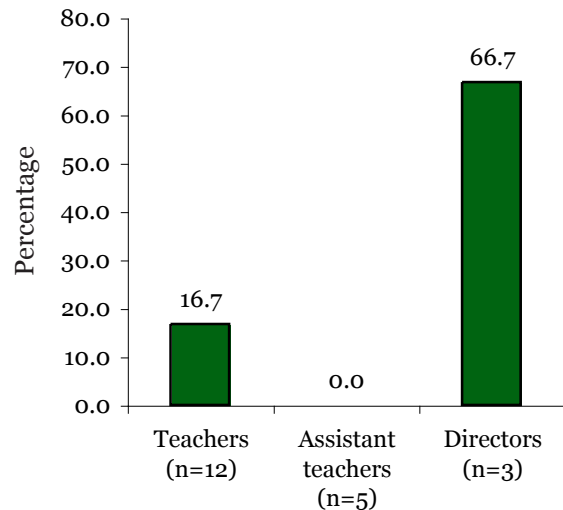
directors in the previous 12 months, while one center reported that one-half of the directors had left or stopped working in the last 12 months.

To measure rates of tenure, we asked directors to report how many teachers, assistant teachers and directors at their centers had been employed for less than one year, from one to five years, or more than five years. Among various positions within centers, directors were the most stable group of employees, followed by teachers and assistant teachers. (See Figure 3.2.) Approximately two-thirds of directors (66.7 percent) had been employed for more than five years at their centers, compared to 16.7 percent of teachers and none of the assistant teachers.

Wages. We sought to document the current compensation of teachers and assistant teachers working in Mono County child care centers licensed to serve infants and/or preschoolers. Because of the length of the survey, we focused our investigation on two categories of teaching staff: teachers with BA or higher degrees, and assistant teachers. We did not collect information about benefits such as health coverage or retirement plans. As none of the teachers in the Mono County sample had a BA or higher degree, we did not collect any wage data for teachers. The wages for the highest-paid assistant teachers ranged from \$9.50 to \$13.22 an hour.

Size of the Center Workforce in Mono County Centers Licensed to Serve Infants and/or Preschoolers. Directors were asked to report the overall number of teachers, assistant teachers and directors employed in their centers, and then to report how many teachers and assistant teachers worked in classrooms with

Figure 3.2. *Estimated Percentage of Teachers, Assistant Teachers and Directors Who Have Worked in their Current Centers for More than Five Years: Countywide*



infants and/or preschool children, and how many worked in classrooms with school-age children (if any such children were enrolled in their centers).

As shown in Table 3.2, the teacher, assistant teacher and director workforce in Mono County’s centers licensed to care for infants and/or preschoolers comprised an estimated 47 people. None of the directors reported that any teachers or assistants were currently working with school-age children. Because some centers also employ cooks, custodians, social workers, family support workers, educational coordinators and office staff (Brandon et al., 2002), the total early care and education workforce for centers licensed to serve infants and/or preschoolers may approach or exceed 64 members. We estimate that centers in Mono County licensed to serve infants and/or preschoolers employed, on average, four teachers, two assistant teachers and one director.

What are the characteristics of children in Mono County child care centers licensed to serve infants and/or preschoolers?

According to the *2005 California Child Care Portfolio*, Mono County child care centers are licensed to care for a total of 28 children under the age of two, 196 children ages two through five years, and six children ages six and older. Enrollment and capacity typically differ: capacity is defined as the number of children of a particular age group that can be legally served at any time, while enrollment refers to the number of children actually being served at a given time. Enrollment can be less than the capacity if the director does not serve the total number of allowable children or greater than capacity if the directors allows children to attend their center on a part-time basis. Because we were unable to interview directors of all the centers in the county, we did not estimate the current enrollment.

Centers reported a variety of age configurations:

- All three centers reported caring for children between the ages of three and five.
- Two of the three centers reported caring for children across the entire age span from infancy through school age.
- Two of the three centers reported caring for at least one child attending kindergarten or a higher grade.
- One of the three centers enrolled children under age two, and none of the centers enrolled infants exclusively.
- One of the three centers reported enrolling two-year-old children.

Centers and Public Dollars for Child Care Assistance. Typically, centers subsidize the cost of services for children of low-income families enrolled in their programs in one of two ways. They can serve such children and receive public dollars for their care as a condition of a contract the center holds with Head Start or the California Department of Education (CDE), or they can accept vouchers available to families through CalWorks and Alternative Payment Program funding. Thus, to determine whether programs enrolled any children who received public child care assistance, we asked whether the program held a contract with Head Start or CDE, or enrolled at least one child who received a voucher. None of the centers we interviewed held a contract; two received public funding through vouchers; and one did not receive any public funding. Two of the three centers in the sample were private for-profit centers and one center was nonprofit.

In centers that held contracts with Head Start or CDE, most if not all children received public assistance for child care.⁸ Since vouchers “follow” specific children, however, centers without contracts that reported enrolling at least one child receiving public child care assistance may or may not have enrolled additional subsidized children. We therefore asked directors who reported enrolling at least one subsidized child through a voucher, how many such children they enrolled. Only one of the two centers receiving vouchers responded to the question

⁸ These centers may also accept vouchers, but we did not explore whether this was the case, as we knew that most enrolled children were subsidized.

about the number of children currently receiving vouchers. This center reported that 18.8 percent of enrolled children were currently receiving vouchers.

Children with Special Needs. Center directors were asked how many children (if any) with disabilities, or with special emotional or physical needs, were enrolled in their centers.⁹ One of the three centers reported that it was currently caring for children with special needs.

⁹ Interviewees were told, “By disabilities or special needs, we mean any child who is protected by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).” If asked for clarification, interviewers added, “This would include children who are considered at-risk of a developmental disability, or who may not have a specific diagnosis but whose behavior, development, and/or health affect their family’s ability to find and maintain services.”

What is the level of educational attainment and early childhood development-related training among teachers, assistants and directors in Mono County's child care centers?

Research has indicated that the presence of better-trained adults enhances the quality of child care services for children (Whitebook & Sakai, 2004; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Because of the critical role that teachers' skill and knowledge play in promoting children's optimal development, considerable effort and investment have been devoted to encouraging and supporting teachers, assistants and directors to pursue professional development through CARES and other programs. With the movement toward expansion of publicly funded preschool services, there is also an increased need to assess the size of the task of recruiting and preparing a sufficient number of teachers and assistants who meet higher educational and training standards – i.e., a bachelor's (BA) degree and early childhood certification for teachers, and 48 college credits for assistant teachers. While not all teachers and assistants in publicly funded preschools will be drawn from the current early care and education workforce, many no doubt will come from its ranks. The educational and training background of the current workforce therefore becomes an important factor in planning the level of resources needed to ensure a well-prepared workforce for preschool classrooms.

Overall Educational Attainment of Teachers, Assistants and Directors

As is true nationally (Herzenberg, Price & Bradley, 2005), we found that center-based teachers in Mono County typically had completed some college credits, and were more likely than the

average woman in the county to have done so. As shown in Figure 3.3, all teachers (100.0 percent) had completed some college-level work, compared to 71.8 percent of women in Mono County. Teachers had a higher completion rate for an associate degree (25.0 percent) than is true for the average adult female in the county (9.4 percent). No teachers had completed BA or higher degrees, compared to 28.2 percent of women in the county as a whole.¹⁰ All teachers had completed some college, as shown in Figure 3.3.

As shown in Figure 3.4, all assistants had also completed some college-level work, and they were more likely than the average woman in the county to have done so. No assistants had completed a two-year or higher degree.

Two directors had completed an AA or higher degree, and one had completed a BA or higher degree, as shown in Figure 3.4. All three directors had completed 24 or more units related to early childhood development.

Education, Training and Certification Related to Early Childhood Development

Research findings on the contribution of education and training to teaching staff competence and sensitivity suggest that formal higher education with a specific focus in early care and education leads

¹⁰ We asked directors whether teachers had obtained four-year or higher degrees, but we did not collect independent information on the percentage of teachers with graduate degrees.

Figure 3.3. *Estimated Educational Attainment of Center Infant and/or Preschool Teachers Compared to the Mono County Adult Female Population*

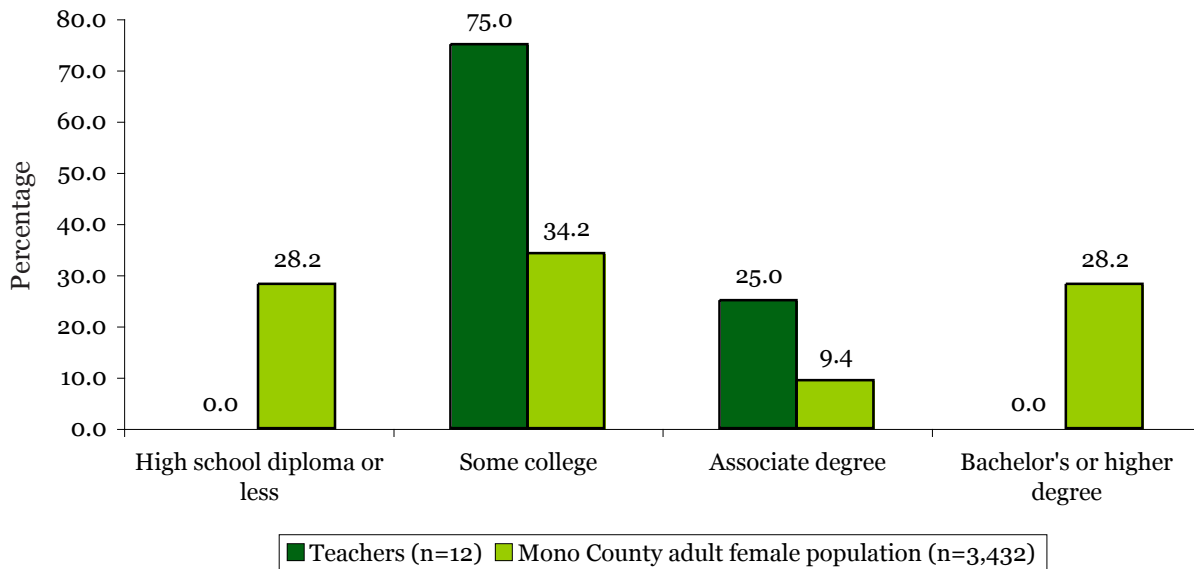
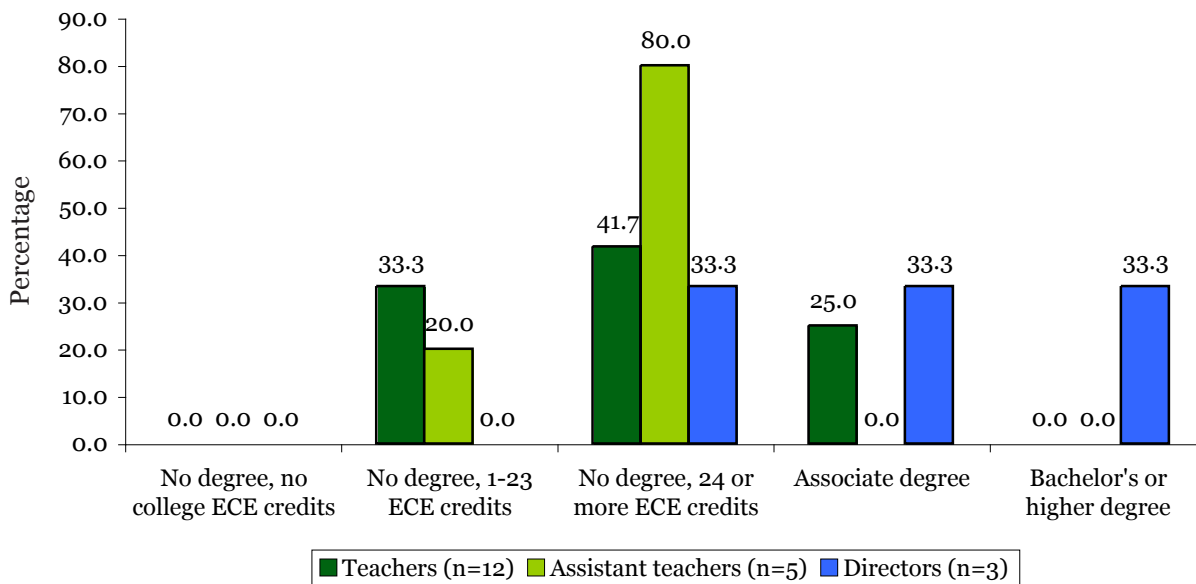


Figure 3.4. *Estimated Educational Attainment of Center Infant and/or Preschool Teachers, Assistant Teachers and Directors: Countywide*



to more effective care and teaching with children (Barnett, 2003; Whitebook, 2003; Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2005). Thus, another important aspect of professional preparation is the extent to which teachers and assistants have received training, completed coursework, or participated in activities specifically focused on issues related to early childhood development. Research also suggests the important contribution played by director education and stability to overall center quality (Whitebook & Sakai, 2004; Helburn, 1995). To acquire a picture of the professional preparation of teachers, assistants and directors, we asked directors whether they or their teaching staff:

1. had completed a two-year or four-year degree related to early childhood development;
2. had taken college courses related to early childhood development if they had not completed a two-year or four-year degree; and/or
3. had participated in a professional development program or obtained a professional credential.

1) Degrees Related to Early Childhood Development

We examined the percentage of teachers, assistant teachers and directors with AA and BA degrees whose degree was related to early childhood development, and whether those with an AA or BA degree were more likely to have completed such a degree.

No teachers had completed a BA degree or higher, but 25.0 percent had completed an AA degree. One-third of teachers with an AA degree (33.3 percent) had obtained an early childhood-related degree. No assistant teachers had

completed an AA, BA or higher degree. One director with a BA degree and one with an AA degree had obtained a degree related to early childhood development.

Among infant and preschool teachers across all levels of educational attainment, 8.3 percent had earned an AA degree with an early childhood focus. Among directors across all levels of educational attainment, 33.3 percent had earned a four-year degree or higher, and 33.3 percent an AA degree, with an early childhood focus.

2) College Credits Related to Early Childhood Development

We were interested in knowing the extent to which teachers, assistant teachers and directors who had *not* completed degrees had participated in specialized early childhood-related education, and thus examined what percentage had completed from one to 23, or 24 or more, early childhood-related college credits.

Three-quarters of all teachers across the county (75.0 percent) had completed such college credits but had not completed a degree. Two-fifths (41.7 percent) of teachers had completed 24 or more credits, and 33.3 percent had completed from one to 23 credits of early childhood-related coursework. Directors also reported that all assistant teachers (100.0 percent) had completed some early childhood-related college credits; 20.0 percent had completed one to 23 credits, and 80.0 percent had completed 24 or more credits.

The one director in the county who had not completed an early childhood-related degree had completed 24 or more early childhood-related credits.

3) Participation in Professional Development Activities or Certification

Another measure of professional preparation is involvement with professional development activities and/or certification processes. We asked directors:

- whether they had heard of the local CARES program, and whether their teachers or assistants currently participated in it;
- whether they or their teachers held a Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing; and
- whether they or their teachers held a Teacher Credential issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and/or by an equivalent agency in another state.

CARES

We asked directors whether they were familiar with CARES, and two of the three directors were. We then asked whether their teachers or assistant teachers were currently CARES participants, and directors reported that 36.6 percent of teachers and no assistant teachers were. Two reported employing at least one teacher who was a CARES participant.

Child Development Permits

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing issues Child Development Permits for teachers, assistant teachers and directors that reflect different levels of education and specialized training. These permits are required in programs holding contracts with the California Department of Education (CDE), and are increasingly required of participants in CARES programs. We asked directors

what percentage of their teachers and assistant teachers with two- or four-year degrees also held a permit.

All teachers with an AA held a Child Development Permit, according to directors' reports. We did not collect information about permits for non-degreed teachers.

Directors were asked whether they held a Site Supervisor Permit intended for program or site directors; all directors with a two-year or higher degree did.

Teaching Credentials

A teaching credential, in contrast to a Child Development Permit, requires the holder to have completed a BA degree at a minimum, and typically the equivalent of a fifth year of college coursework. We asked whether directors or teachers who had completed a BA or higher degree held a teaching credential issued by the State of California or another state.¹¹ Only one center in the county employed a director with a BA or higher degree, and that director did not have a teaching credential from California or another state. No teachers had BA or higher degrees, and therefore none qualified for a credential.

¹¹ See Bellm, Whitebook, Cohen & Stevenson (2004) for a description of the credentialing options in California related to early care and education. For this question, we did not ask respondents to specify the type of credential that teachers or directors held; thus, their answers could include early childhood-related or K-12 credentials. While the Standard Early Childhood Credential is no longer issued, the credential is still honored, though not required as a condition of employment, in most, if not all, settings.

How well prepared are center-based staff to care for and educate children who are dual language learners or have special needs?

As Mono County considers how best to prepare its workforce to meet the needs of its young children, particular concern centers on two groups of children:

- the growing number who are dual language learners, many of them from immigrant families; and
- the growing number who have been identified as having special developmental needs.

A pressing question is whether the current early care and education workforce has sufficient skill and knowledge to meet the needs of these children. While it was beyond the scope of this study to assess the overall knowledge and competencies of center-based teaching staff, our interview did allow some initial exploration of teachers'¹²professional preparation related to dual language learners and/or children with special needs.

Preparation to Work with Young Children Acquiring a Second Language

In 2005, more than one-third (38.4 percent) of children entering public kindergarten in Mono County were estimated to be dual language learners (California Department of Education, 2005). According to recent projections of the growth of this segment of California's population over the next several decades

¹² Directors were asked the number of teachers in their centers who had participated in credit-bearing coursework or non-credit training focused on working with children who were dual language learners and/or those with special needs. Because of concern about the length of the survey, these questions were not asked with respect to directors or assistants.

(Hill, Johnson & Tafoya, 2004), it is likely that soon the majority of young children receiving early care and education services in the state will be dual language learners and/or living in families in which some or all of the adults do not speak English.

In this survey, we were able only to investigate which languages teachers spoke, not the languages spoken by children in their care. Our goal was to ascertain the extent to which teachers had received any training focused on this topic, by asking directors whether their teachers had participated in relevant credit-bearing courses and/or non-credit training related to dual language learners. Directors reported that none of their teachers had participated in such training or education.

Preparation to Work with Young Children With Special Needs

Over the last 30 years, the deepening understanding of and ability to identify developmental challenges, coupled with changes in federal law,¹³ have led to the

¹³ Two federal laws in particular have contributed to the inclusion of children with special needs in early childhood programs. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal civil rights law passed in 1990, prohibits discrimination by child care centers and family child care providers against individuals with disabilities. The ADA requires providers to assess, on a case-by-case basis, what a child with a disability requires in order to be fully integrated into a program, and whether reasonable accommodation can be made to allow this to happen. In addition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, passed in 1975 and reauthorized in 2004, requires public schools to meet the educational needs of children as young as three with disabilities, guarantees early intervention services to infants and toddlers up to age three in their "natural environments," and addresses the transition of infants and toddlers from early intervention services to preschool programs. California's equivalent law, the Early Intervention Services Act, is also known as Early Start (Child Care Law Center, 2005).

increased involvement of early childhood settings in providing services to children with special physical and developmental needs and/or disabilities (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Recognizing that the early care and education workforce was being increasingly called upon to provide such services, the California Legislature passed SB 1703 in 2000, supporting local child care resource and referral programs and child care planning councils in providing training related to children with special needs. This funding was renewed in 2005.

For this study, we were interested in determining whether center teachers had received professional preparation related to children with special needs. Specifically, we determined:

1. whether or not centers employed any teachers who had participated in special needs-related training or college courses, and
2. the average percentage of teachers in centers who had participated in special needs-related training or college courses.

Overall, two-thirds of the teachers had participated in non-credit training, and one-third had participated in credit-bearing courses, related to children with special needs. The two centers that reported that at least one of their teachers had such non-credit training, and the one center that reported that at least one of their teachers had participated in credit-bearing courses, all reported that all of their teachers had participated in such training or education.

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