

# WASHINGTON'S EARLY LEARNING WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

Increased investments in our state's early learning system result in an important increase in quality requirements that support better child development and outcomes statewide.

A child's healthy growth and development hinges on high-quality and consistent caregivers. Without a stable, highly skilled and qualified workforce, our youngest learners won't get the great start they need and the opportunity gap will persist.



## 2016 WORKFORCE SURVEY RESULTS

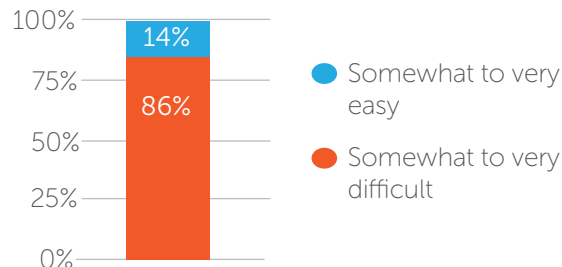
This survey was designed and run collaboratively by Thrive Washington, the Department of Early Learning and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The results represent responses from more than 650 program leads in charge of hiring, including child care centers, family home child care, Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program and Head Start. Responses were collected in April and May of 2016 from almost every Washington county.

### DIFFICULT HIRING PROCESS

Across Washington state, 84 percent of survey respondents had educator job openings during the last 12 months.

36 percent had two or more educator job openings, on average.

When hiring new educators, how difficult is it to find qualified applicants?



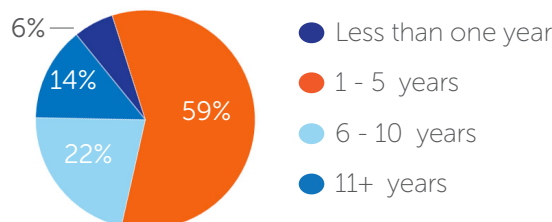
#### TOP HIRING BARRIERS CITED

- 71% not enough applicants
- 66% lack of applicant experience
- 65% applicants desired more pay
- 56% applicants did not meet education requirements

### LOW RETENTION RATE

Most respondents said that educators stay employed in their classrooms between just one and five years.

On average, how long do educators stay employed?



LOW WAGES were ranked by respondents as the **#1** reason educators left positions.

### UNDERDEVELOPED WORKFORCE

Nearly 60 percent of respondents indicated they hired an educator within the last year who did not have any prior classroom experience.

More than half of respondents indicated a non-educator program staff member substituted in place of a certified classroom educator. 37 percent indicated this occurs on a daily basis.

High-quality and consistent caregiving is key to a child's healthy growth and development.