

# T.E.A.C.H.

Early Childhood® Florida

## IMPACT REPORT

2016-2017

**\$7.8**



million invested in  
T.E.A.C.H. scholarships

**18,404**

credits taken

**65**



colleges,  
universities and  
training organizations

**2,219**

employer sponsors



**99%**

of scholars and  
sponsors would  
recommend T.E.A.C.H.

**4%** turnover rate  
for T.E.A.C.H. scholars.

National rate is **30%**

**58%**

increase in  
applications



**3.32**

average GPA

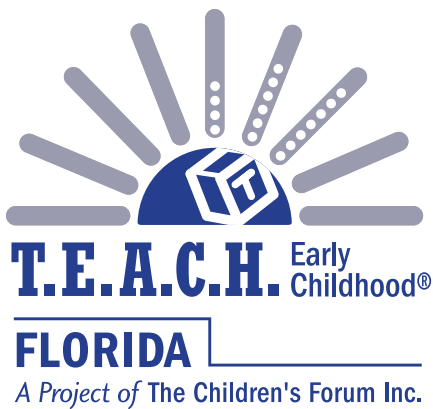
**5,535**

scholars



**185,884**

children  
benefitting



## T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program

Action Requested: Support for the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program at \$10M consistent with the Office of Early Learning request. The full appropriation will fund approximately 8,000 total scholarships in 2018-19.

**Issue:** Brain research makes it clear that early experiences are critical for successful brain development, and making sure these quality early experiences are possible is far more effective than trying to address problems at a later age. It takes a qualified, educated, stable and effective early childhood educator to provide the types of experiences that are needed to build trust and promote learning. Children, particularly those from low-income, vulnerable families, who receive quality early care and education, are more likely to be readers by third grade, graduate high school, pursue secondary education and go on to be contributing members of society. Unfortunately, many of those working in VPK and early learning programs throughout Florida do not have the education and training to ensure that children receive the maximum benefit from their experiences, a fact exacerbated by low wages and high staff turnover.<sup>1</sup> The T.E.A.C.H. program successfully addresses these three key issues (**teacher education, turnover, and compensation**) to improve the outcomes for Florida's children. To increase the supply of well-prepared teachers, continuation of funding is needed to serve early childhood educators who are eligible and receiving scholarships.

**Background:** The T.E.A.C.H. program (F.S. Chapter 1002.95), first received statewide funding in 1998 to assist early childhood educators and 29,200 scholarships have been provided since that time. The program was level funded for 13 years at \$3M annually. Tuition costs since 2002 have more than tripled, which means fewer students can be served. The program received an appropriation of \$10M for 2016-17, which included \$3M recurring and \$7M non-recurring dollars, making it possible to serve many more early childhood educators. The appropriation for 2017-18 was reduced to \$3M in recurring funds and provided the ability to re-program an additional \$3.1M from the 2016-17 appropriation. This reduction in annual funding resulted in a freeze on new scholarships in 2017-18. Early childhood educators typically earn very low wages making higher education unattainable without help. The T.E.A.C.H. program consistently produces data-informed, measurable outcomes that address the challenges of the field (**teacher education, turnover, and compensation**) and provides access to well-trained and qualified counselors through the T.E.A.C.H. office to help them navigate the often confusing landscape of professional development and higher education options.

**How T.E.A.C.H. Works:** The T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program is a successful three-way partnership between the employer, the teacher and the T.E.A.C.H. program addressing the problems of **teacher education, turnover, and compensation** in the child care and early learning field. The employer agrees to pay a portion of the costs for tuition and books and provides paid release time weekly for the teacher to handle duties such as attending classes and completing homework assignments. The employer also agrees to provide at least a 2% raise or bonus at the end of a successful contract. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipient (scholar) agrees to pay a portion of the tuition and books, and agrees to remain employed at their sponsoring center for one year beyond the end of the contract. The T.E.A.C.H. program agrees to pay a majority of the costs and provides a bonus upon successful completion. The T.E.A.C.H. program, created and licensed by the Child Care Services Association in North Carolina, operates in 22 states and the District of Columbia. The Children's Forum in Tallahassee, FL holds the license to administer the T.E.A.C.H. program in Florida. For additional information, contact the Children's Forum at (850) 681-7002 or visit the website at: <http://www.teach-fl.com>.

<sup>1</sup>Citations for supporting research are available upon request.