

Building and Sustaining the Child Care and Early Education Workforce

IMPLEMENTATION STUDY

One-on-One Lead and Assistant Teacher Interview (Treatment Group Only)

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INTRODUCTIONS

Let's begin with brief introductions! Can you please share:

- **How many years have you worked directly with children?**
- **How long have you worked in your current job?**
- **What motivated you to start/continue serving children and families?**

EXPERIENCES LEADING UP TO THE LAUNCH/APPLICATION

Next, we would like to learn a little more about your experiences leading up to the launch and application for the Colorado Teacher Salary Increase Pilot.

First, can you describe how you first learned about the pilot initiative?

Probe:

- From whom? When?
- What do you understand as the purpose of the pilot initiative?

Can you share a little about how you initially felt about the pilot initiative?

Probe:

- What was the general attitude among other teachers or assistant teachers?
- What was the general attitude among other staff?
- What was the general attitude among program leadership and senior management?

Next, I'm interested to understand how you made your decision of whether to opt in or out of the pilot initiative.

First, can you tell me if you ever opted in to receiving the salary increase as part of the pilot initiative?

ASK/TAILORED QUESTIONS AND PROBES, IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN OR OUT:

- What factors led to your decision to opt in/opt out of the pilot initiative?
- What benefits did you feel the pilot initiative would provide you?
- What encouraged you to take-up or to opt in to the salary increase?
- Did you have hesitations about receiving the salary increase? [If YES, probe: What were your hesitations or concerns?]
- What would need to change in order for you to apply in the future?
- Did you receive any technical assistance, resources, or other supports to help you with making a decision about whether to opt in or out? If so, what were they? What was helpful/not helpful? If not, what would have been helpful? [INTERVIEWER: HAVE A LIST OF POTENTIAL RESOURCES ON HAND TO REMIND THE TEACHER, IF NEEDED.]
- Who did you consult with when making this decision?

- Did you have all the information you needed? What other information would have been helpful?
- Did you feel supported by your center administration in making this decision?
- Could anything have been improved to help you or other teachers make this decision [If YES, probe: How so?]
- Did any of your peers decide to participate in/not participate in the pilot initiative? If so, why/why not?
- If you had a magic wand to improve one thing about the pilot initiative, what would that be?

Once you decided to [opt in/opt out], what happened next? Probe:

- What did you expect would happen next?
- To what extent did you have back-and-forth communication with your center leadership or the state? What was discussed? Over what period of time?
- Did you receive any supports or information about what would happen or what to expect next? [If YES, please tell us more about what supports/information you received?]
- [IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN:] How long did it take to receive your first payment?
- [IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN:] What expectations did you have then about how the payments would be processed and when? [Probe: timing of, amount of payment]
- What could have been improved?

Once you decided to [opt in/opt out], did anything else change?

IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN TO THE INITIATIVE:

Once you decided to opt in to the pilot initiative, did you ever consider opting out? Probe:

- Why/Why not?
- When did you start to reconsider your decision to participate in the pilot initiative?
- Did you withdraw from participation in the pilot initiative?
- What factors led you to reconsider your decision to participate in the pilot initiative?
- Did you receive any technical assistance, resources, or other supports to help you while you were reconsidering your decision? If so, what were they? What was helpful/not helpful? If not, what would have been helpful? [INTERVIEWER: HAVE A LIST OF POTENTIAL RESOURCES ON HAND TO REMIND THE TEACHER, IF NEEDED.]
- Who did you consult with when making this decision?
- Did you have all the information you needed? What other information would have been helpful?
- Did you feel supported by your center administration in making this decision?
- Could anything have been improved to help you or other teachers make this decision [If YES, probe: How so?]

EXPERIENCES ONCE PILOT INITIATIVE STARTED

Next, I'd like to talk more about what happened once your program launched the pilot initiative.

ASK/TAILOR QUESTIONS AND PROBES, IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN OR OUT:

What are your experiences on the job, since the pilot initiative began?

How has the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] affected your experiences on the job (if at all)? Probe on whether there were changes related to:

- Job satisfaction or how you think about work or view your job?
- Professionalizing your position or feeling more respected?
- Workplace culture or climate?
- Your relationships with coworkers? Do these relationships differ with staff who are or are not receiving the salary increase?
- Workplace discrimination? (i.e., Have you observed ways that staff are treated differently or unfairly within your program/center?) How so?

How has the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] affected your work schedule or benefits (if at all)? Probe on whether there were changes related to:

- Affected other benefits received through this job (e.g., paid time off, health insurance)?
- Cutting back the number of hours you work?

How has the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] affected the services you provide to children and families (if at all)? Probe on whether there were changes related to:

- Affected amount of time you have for planning (while not also being responsible for children)?
- The staff you work with (e.g., new staff hired, staffing configurations changed)?
- Services provided to children/families?
- Group size or adult-child ratio?

IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN TO THE INITIATIVE:

What are your experiences with receiving the salary increase? How do you feel about receiving the salary increase? Has there been any pilot initiative documentation or additional required paperwork that you have had to complete after the initial application was accepted? IF YES, probe:

- Who do you submit this paperwork to (e.g., your center, the state)?
- How much time does it take to complete?
- How often do you complete this paperwork?

ASK/TAILOR QUESTIONS AND PROBES, IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN OR OUT:

Next, I would like to ask you some questions about how the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] may have affected your day-to-day life outside of work.

First, has the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] affected your wellbeing at all? Probe:

- Mental wellbeing?
- Physical wellbeing?
- Relationships with family or friends?

Next, I would like to ask you some questions about how the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] may influence your financial situation. I want to remind you that everything you tell me will be kept private.

How would you describe your financial situation before the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] started? [Probe for examples about financial situation.] For example:

- How often did you worry about being able to meet your monthly living expenses? Would you say you worry all the time, very frequently, occasionally, rarely, very rarely, or never?
- Were you able to pay for essentials/basics (food, rent, bills)?
- Did you have emergency funds set aside for something like a car repair that might cost \$400-\$500?
- Were you able to splurge or treat yourself when you wanted?

IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN:

Next, we're interested in how your financial situation may have changed after you started to receive the salary increase?

Has the pilot initiative affected the number of jobs you work? [IF YES:] How so?

Has the pilot initiative affected your ability to pay for things? [IF YES:] How so? [Probe for examples.] For example, has it affected your ability to:

- Pay for essentials/basics (food, rent, bills)?
- Splurge or treat yourself?

Has the pilot initiative affected your ability to save money? If YES, How so? [Probe for examples.] For example, has it affected your ability to:

- Set aside emergency funds for something like a car repair that might cost \$400-\$500?
- Set aside emergency funds that would cover your expenses for 3 months in case of sickness, job loss, economic downturn, or other emergencies?

Has the pilot initiative affected your ability to pay off debt? If YES, How so? [Probe for examples.] For example, has it affected your ability to:

- Pay off money you might owe for medical expenses, school, credit card, home, car, or other loans?

Was the salary increase what you had expected?

- Was it more/less money than you expected? **If YES, How so? [Probe for descriptive examples.]**
- Was it more/less frequent than you expected? **If YES, How so? [Probe for descriptive examples.]**

ASK/TAILORED QUESTIONS AND PROBES, IF RESPONDENT OPTED IN OR OUT:

Next, I have a few questions about income you may have received other than the income you earned as a teacher. Did you receive income from any of these sources before the [pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative] began? [IF YES:] Where was the income from? [Probe for examples.]

- Another regular full-time job
- Another regular part-time job
- Odd jobs (e.g., babysitting)
- Cash assistance from my family or friends to help pay for basic needs
- Assistance with child care costs (If yes: from employer or government program like Head Start, child care subsidy?)
- Food assistance, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Energy assistance to help pay for home heating costs, such as the Colorado Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)
- Cash assistance through government programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Disability assistance through Colorado's Disability Determination Services (DDS)
- Employment assistance through Colorado training and employment programs
- Housing assistance from the government, such as Colorado's emergency rental or mortgage assistance, housing vouchers, etc.
- Health insurance assistance, such as Health First Colorado, Child Health Plan Plus, Connect for Health, etc.
- Other (Please specify): _____

Did these additional income sources change after you began participating in the pilot initiative?

Did anything surprise you (good or bad) about [your participation in the pilot initiative/your program's participation in the pilot initiative]? [IF YES:] How so? [Probe for examples.] For example:

- Create opportunities you didn't have before?
- Exacerbate inequities among certain groups of staff (i.e., ways that staff are treated differently or unfairly within your program/center)?
- Making you ineligible for other benefits?

Has the pilot initiative affected how you think about what it means to be a teacher? [IF YES:] How so? Why?

What is your outlook on the future with respect to the pilot initiative, given that this is a 2-year pilot, ending in [insert date]?

- What concerns you?
- What makes you feel optimistic?
- If the pilot initiative were to end, how do you anticipate this affecting you?

LOOKING AHEAD

If you could change one thing about the pilot initiative, what would you change? Why would you make this change?

WRAP-UP

Is there anything we didn't get to discuss that you think would be important for us to know about the pilot initiative?

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise with us today. On behalf of our whole team, we are grateful for your contribution to this study.