Rochester, New York

City Population: 210,565
Median Family Income: $30,784
Race/Ethnicity Demographics:
43.7% White  41.7% African-American  16.4% Hispanic  3.1% Asian  6.5% Other
Number of School Districts: 1

Early Childhood Workforce Landscape

- Rochester has a robust network of child care centers that are accredited, quality star rated and have high levels of professional development.
- The city school district is a key player in providing supports to the early childhood workforce.
- The Children’s Institute in Rochester offers training and support for trainers and other individuals who are responsible for assessing children.
- The Early Learning Training Academy provides a higher level professional development for trainers, early childhood education specialists and administrators.
- A local child care resource and referral agency has 37 trainers offering professional development.
- In 2012, two core knowledge documents were released defining common understandings about what professional development is needed for early educators.
- The Early Childhood Development Initiative is a cross sector group that meets every month. One of the subcommittees focuses on professional development and has higher education and community stakeholders represented.
- There is a toddler-teacher support group that is facilitated by an advisor to the Early Childhood Education Quality Council, a collaboration of accredited early childhood centers.
- Neighbor Works is a national private organization that the City of Rochester has a formal agreement with, to help provide assistance and support to Rochester residents who need help with mortgages and credit. Early childhood leaders have met with Neighbor Works and are thinking about how this program can be used to support the early childhood workforce, specifically home child care providers.
- During the Week of the Young Child in April, an event included a ceremony in which a representative from the mayor’s office and a representative from Monroe county highlighted the important role of the early childhood workforce. This ceremony recognized nine exemplary early educators in Rochester.
- The Rochester team for this project identified a concern related to the early childhood workforce: that many early educators do not have the proper hands-on training and skills when they walk into a classroom because there are not pre-service requirements. To address this need, the team is working to create an 8-hour curriculum to get local stakeholders to buy in to the idea of a pre-service requirement. They are meeting to discuss what the elements of the pre-service requirement should be. While the city does not have the authority to govern child care credential requirements, they are going to try to meet with leadership of the early learning community in Rochester to get their buy-in for this and then hold a
partners meeting with the leaders of community based early childhood organizations to agree on a pre-service requirement.

Challenges

• The undervalued status of the early care and education workforce.
• Insufficient public understanding of the science of child development and best early learning practices.
• Individuals and programs lack the financial means to fund the necessary training.
• Most early educators do not have sufficient paid time during work hours for continuing education and do not have time outside of work given other personal responsibilities.
• The loss of trained workers to private sector jobs with higher compensation.