

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ FY19 Final Report

“When I walk in the doors every day carrying the burden of financial stress, I know that the AWARD\$ program has helped me and so I’m more likely to stay in my position and leave the stress at the door. My children benefit from my positive attitude.” (Wake)

REPORT CONTENTS

The Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) final report includes a detailed narrative, data tables to support many of the findings discussed and appendices that showcase participant feedback. Please see below for more information on the report’s contents, which are listed in the order they are presented.

Program Description – Includes a brief overview of the program and its funding support.

Program Eligibility – Highlights primary requirements to participate in AWARD\$.

Program Impact – Provides information on the program’s impact overall (Table A: Median Hourly Rates by Education Level)

Outputs – Includes the contracted outputs in table format with additional information on the activities that supported output achievement. (Table B: Outputs)

Outcomes – Includes the contracted outcomes in table format. (Table C: Outcomes)

Program Evaluations – Highlights results from the AWARD\$ surveys.

Program Challenges – Summarizes the primary challenges faced within the reporting year.

Funding – Describes the notification procedures for recipients regarding supplement funding.

Table 1 – Provides a demographic profile of active participants. **Active participants are those who have been paid at some point in their participation and are still eligible based on their most recent employment confirmation.**

Table 2 – Lists the participation results of active participants by the star rating of employing child care facilities.

Table 3 – Identifies the number of participants funded at each education level.

Table 4 – States the number of individuals paid, their programs and the number of children impacted for the state and for each county with program participants. **Please note that these individuals may or may not still be eligible at the end of the year, so this number will likely be different than the number of active participants represented on other tables.**

Table 5 – Describes turnover reporting methods, summarizes turnover data and provides the demographic overview of those who left their programs.

Appendix A – Presents sample survey feedback regarding the AWARD\$ impact on retention.

Appendix B – Presents sample survey feedback regarding the AWARD\$ impact on education.

Appendix C – Presents sample survey feedback regarding the AWARD\$ impact on compensation.

Appendix D – Presents sample survey feedback regarding the AWARD\$ impact on recognition.

Appendix E – Presents survey messages for AWARD\$ funder.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers working full-time in infant-toddler classrooms in North Carolina. The program is designed to better compensate and retain well-educated teachers working with our youngest children. AWARD\$ is funded by the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE).

STATEWIDE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for at least one six-month payment during the fiscal year, applicants must:

- work at least 35 hours per week with infants, ones or twos.
- earn at or below \$18 per hour.
- work in a licensed child care program with at least three stars.
- have an Associate Degree plus or including at least 24 birth to five focused semester hours or higher.

PROGRAM OVERALL IMPACT

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ impacts the community by improving the quality of early care and education for young children. Most evidence suggests there are three primary factors associated with teacher quality: education, stability and compensation. Through graduated salary supplements, the program helps decrease turnover and encourages the continued educational pursuits of the child care workforce. The funding helps address financial stress that participants may experience, giving teachers a better opportunity to focus on the children in their classrooms rather than on the economic challenges they face. As of September 2019, 932 child care professionals in 516 child care programs were active AWARD\$ participants (those who have been paid and are still eligible based on their most recent employment confirmation).

Turnover

The turnover numbers of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ reflect active participants who left their child care programs during the fiscal year. In addition to regular monthly confirmation calls where staff contact employers to verify the employment and ongoing eligibility of recipients due payment at that time, each participating center was contacted to assess year-end employment. Information for FY19 has now been collected and is presented in these reports.

If a participant leaves her/his program and resumes eligibility at a new site, s/he will not be factored into the report until s/he has completed a full six-month period at her/his new site. Once s/he receives a supplement, s/he will again be recognized as an active participant. Only participants for whom AWARD\$ could have impacted the decision to stay or leave are factored into the turnover data. For example, participants who become ineligible for reasons other than leaving their child care programs (i.e. over the income cap due to raise, change of position within the program, elected Child Care WAGES® instead) are not considered turnover.

The turnover rate of AWARD\$ participants for FY19 was 13%, below the turnover rate of 25% established as the contract goal. It is also below the 21% of infant-toddler teachers who indicated in a 2015 survey that they anticipated leaving the field within three years (Child Care Services Association, 2017).

The turnover rate of early educators is impacted by the economy as in every other industry. When jobs are scarce, the decision to leave is more complicated and difficult. As the economy continues to improve and higher paying jobs are more available, the low pay in the field increases its vulnerability to turnover. The turnover of infant-toddler teachers, earning on average \$10.00 per hour in North Carolina, may increase, making the AWARD\$ supplements even more critical in order to compete with growing opportunities for better pay. The financial incentive makes it more possible for educated professionals to afford to teach young children and provide continuity of care.

In addition to statistical data showing an impact on retention, AWARD\$ participants shared through evaluation feedback that supplements play a role in the decision and ability to stay in the field. See Appendix A for selected survey comments regarding retention.

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it allows teachers who have a passion for educating young children to stay at a job that they enjoy by making the job more financially competitive.” (Guilford)

Education

In order to participate, teachers must have at least an Associate Degree with 24 birth to five focused semester hours, so this population, although poorly compensated, represents a well-educated segment of the early childhood workforce. Especially given these levels of education, the population is woefully underpaid. Table A below examines the median hourly rate of participants within each education level on the scale.

Table A: Median Hourly Rates by Education Level

Education scale level	Number of participants	Median hourly rate from employer
8	623	\$12.50
9	27	\$13.00
10	61	\$13.97
11	196	\$14.07
12	25	\$15.00

Though participants already have higher levels of education, 88% of the survey respondents still indicated that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ encourages or helps financially support additional coursework.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of the AWARD\$ active participants are people of color. Given the diverse population of children attending child care in North Carolina, this educational equity is very important.

Through survey feedback, participants took the opportunity to express the importance of education and how AWARD\$ supports, recognizes or rewards their efforts. See Appendix B for samples.

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has made me more confident in my job and has also helped in my decision to go back to school.” (Ashe)

Compensation

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ increases the compensation of participants through salary supplements. Despite obtained education, compensation in the field continues to be low and is not competitive with many other professions. With employers like Target paying entry level wages of \$12 per hour, it increases the challenge of keeping early childhood teachers in the field. This is particularly true when compared to the rate of \$23.89 that may be needed for one North Carolina employee with one child to meet basic, fundamental needs.¹ Thirty-four percent (34%) of the active AWARD\$ participants earn less than \$12 per hour. The poor compensation across the board highlights the need for salary supplements in order to attract and retain qualified staff. Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ survey results support this. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the respondents stated that AWARD\$ encourages them to stay with their current child care programs.

The average six-month supplement payment issued during FY19 was \$1,295. The scale ranges from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per year. **Ninety-nine percent (99%)** of evaluation respondents indicated that receiving an AWARD\$ supplement helps ease financial stress. When asked about the financial impact, recipients selected from a list of potential benefits. A sample of responses is below:

- 79% are better able to pay their bills
- 75% are more able to address the basic needs of their families (food/housing)
- 64% rely on the supplements to help address transportation costs
- 57% use the funds to provide additional resources for their classrooms or child care programs – in a separate question, a greater number of respondents (91%) stated that providing resources for their programs is a benefit of AWARD\$

Economic insecurity impacts teacher well-being, and can have consequences for the quality of interactions they have with the children in their care.² Studies continue to highlight how stress and adversity can affect the health of teachers and thus how effective they can be in promoting the supportive environments and engaging interactions children need. Easing financial stress is critical for the participants, their families and for the children they serve.

Throughout the survey, respondents discussed the importance of this additional compensation. Please see Appendix C for sample comments.

¹ Glasmeier, A. 2017. *Living Wage Calculator*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (See also <http://livingwage.mit.edu/states/37>)

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education). 2015. *High-Quality Early Learning Settings Depend on a High-Quality Workforce: Low Compensation Undermines Quality*. Washington, DC.

“The program is important and helpful for the children in the classroom and the teacher's personal life as well. I am able to de-stress and focus more on my children in the classroom and at home.” (Durham)

OUTPUTS

This section highlights the projected outputs of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ for FY19 and the program’s effectiveness in reaching these goals. Primary results are shown in Table B below, followed by additional detail as applicable.

Table B: Outputs

	Projected Output	Results
1	Approximately 987 eligible infant-toddler educators will receive Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ payments as of September 2019. (Includes amendment.)	Output exceeded. As of September 2019, 1,124 applicants had received AWARD\$ payments.
2	Staff will conduct 20 outreach opportunities to offer information about the program and recruit eligible educators.	Output exceeded. Staff conducted 37 outreach sessions where information about the AWARD\$ opportunity was shared.
3	Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ will send 2500 recruitment/informational emails or mailings to the workforce.	Output exceeded. Staff sent 12,120 AWARD\$ recruitment mailings and/or emails.

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ payments: One thousand one hundred twenty-four (1,124) participants were paid for completing at least one six-month period on Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ between October 2018 and September 2019. These participants worked in 591 facilities in 87 counties serving approximately 17,718 children. This number is an unduplicated count of supplement recipients for AWARD\$. Recruitment efforts to other counties suggest that they may not be participating yet for reasons including:

- Eligible staff are currently on the Child Care WAGE\$® Program (WAGE\$) and may be receiving a higher supplement amount
- Sites do not qualify due to star rating
- The infant-toddler teachers do not yet have eligible education

Outreach and recruitment: Thirty-seven (37) outreach sessions sharing Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ information were completed in FY19. When appropriate, staff discussed opportunities available through AWARD\$ and WAGE\$, and many sessions were completed in conjunction with the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program as well. The goal is to give audience members an opportunity to learn about multiple resources supported by DCDEE. Sessions were also completed in counties that do not participate in WAGE\$. Outreach activities included virtual and in-person presentations, informational tables directed toward early care and education professionals and site visits.

In addition to the field outreach, 12,120 recruitment emails or mailings were sent; over 2,500 facilities were reached through these efforts. A promotional flyer, the program fact sheet and application were shared. In counties that also have WAGE\$, a special fact sheet was provided to help explain the differences between the programs. AWARD\$ also sent information to key

partners including Smart Start partnerships, resource and referral agencies, community colleges, Education and Compensation Advisory Committee members and infant-toddler specialists. Follow-up calls were made to many of the non-participating sites to verify receipt of the email/packet, answer questions and encourage participation. During each employment confirmation completed with a participating site, the counselor also inquired about any possible eligible staff not yet accessing a supplement.

OUTCOME

Table C below details the primary outcomes for Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$.

Table C: Outcome

	Projected Outcome	Results
1	The turnover rate of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ participants for FY19 will be less than 25%.	Outcome met. The turnover rate for Infant-AWARD\$ participants was only 13%.
2	Eighty-five percent (85%) of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ survey respondents will state that the supplement helps ease financial stress.	Outcome exceeded. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of survey respondents said that the AWARD\$ supplement helps to ease financial stress.

Outcome #1 is measured through employment confirmations completed as each participant concludes a six-month commitment period on the program and at the end of the fiscal year. The information regarding turnover is entered into a database that produces the percentage. Outcome #2 is based on survey responses collected and calculated by the research department at Child Care Services Association (CCSA).

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

The information below reflects the impact of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ from the participant perspective. While a sample may be used in the future, for FY19, all respondents who had received a payment as of May with email addresses on file were invited to participate in the evaluation process. The response rate to the online survey was high. To further increase responses, CCSA’s research staff completed phone surveys. Respondents were given the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for professional resources. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the participants eligible for inclusion completed surveys (679 of 880), a high percentage for program evaluation.

Survey recipients were asked to examine a list of possible benefits resulting from AWARD\$ and indicate whether or not each benefit is true for the respondent. Responses to the individual options were as follows, with many providing additional examples of assistance:

- AWARD\$ helps me feel more satisfied with my job. – **96%**
- AWARD\$ is an incentive for me to seek additional education and/or it helps make pursuing coursework more financially feasible. – **88%** (participants must have at least an Associate Degree with 24 hours of birth to five focused coursework to be eligible)
- The AWARD\$ supplement helps ease financial stress. – **99%**

- AWARD\$ encourages me to stay with my current program. – **97%**
- My AWARD\$ supplement helps me to provide more resources for my program or classroom. – **91%**
- Receiving the AWARD\$ supplement makes me feel more appreciated and recognized for my work. – **98%**

Additional survey results are listed below:

Ninety-nine percent (99%) of all respondents stated that they are satisfied with the program and its administration.

While some respondents stated that they have not had the opportunity to speak with the Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ staff, nearly 100% of those who have had interactions found the staff to be pleasant and helpful. Many respondents took the opportunity to share additional comments about their interactions with AWARD\$ staff. Not only did the respondents report that they received helpful and pleasant customer service, but many also talked about how important the encouragement from AWARD\$ staff has been in terms of participation in the program and pursuit of education. A few examples of participant feedback are listed below:

“Each time that I have had to call and contact the staff, they have been very helpful in answering my questions and patient in helping me understand how the process works.”

“I appreciate the way they keep me informed every step of the way. This is a great program.”

“Each and every phone call that I made, the staff was pleasant and professional. The information was very helpful and clear to understand. Thanks for all your help!”

“I cannot say enough about how patient the AWARD\$ staff was with me. I called a lot, and never once did I feel that my call was not of importance to them.”

“Any question I had was answered respectfully, timely and professionally.”

• **Ninety-eight percent (98%) of responding participants indicated that, as a result of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$, they feel more appreciated and recognized for their work.** Recipients emphasize the importance of the recognition and appreciation associated with the receipt of the AWARD\$ supplements and the impact this has on self-esteem, professionalism and morale. Not only are these things significant in themselves, but they enhance the likelihood that participants will stay in the field and seek additional education. See Appendix D for a sample of their feedback.

“Early childhood educators provide the foundation for everything, yet I feel we are the most undervalued and underpaid profession. I also feel that many see us simply as ‘glorified babysitters.’ I absolutely love my job and I feel that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped to give us credibility and much needed recognition.” (New Hanover)

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

CCSA is grateful to DCDEE for funding this new grant. Although every inaugural year is likely to include challenges, we are proud of the introduction of Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ and pleased that over 1,000 infant-toddler teachers received increased compensation as a result of this program. The primary start-up challenge was the positive and immediate response of the workforce. Hundreds of applications arrived quickly and staff were tasked with processing them in a timely fashion and fielding a great many calls on a daily basis. CCSA had the structure in place to address this response, yet it was an overwhelming uptake, particularly since there was no planning time available in the grant. We began the program on October 1, 2018. Based on the experience of administering other statewide programs, CCSA advertised from the beginning that first checks would be issued in January, and payments were successfully sent at that time.

While AWARD\$ staff joined a veteran WAGE\$ team at CCSA, the new staff did need extensive training and orientation to become effective support for a large and growing program. CCSA is very excited about the capable and caring staff it was able to hire and the survey feedback suggests that participants have been pleased with their service.

In order to meet DCDEE's requirement that no duplication occurs with other comparable salary supplement programs, AWARD\$ developed detailed internal policies and procedures. To date, these appear to be working well for all partners involved, yet it is also the case that applicants move back and forth between WAGE\$ and AWARD\$ due to their changing eligibility. This has required additional unplanned database development to help enable accurate management and ensure no duplication.

The program requirement that teachers must work at least 35 hours with infants and toddlers has been the most challenging eligibility component. AWARD\$ staff have received conflicting documentation, necessitating additional information gathering and greater oversight and quality control. Many applicants who do not qualify initially ultimately submit documentation to verify their full-time employment.

FUNDING

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ implements several strategies to publicize that its funding comes from DCDEE. This is highlighted in every check letter and labels are now affixed to the outside of each check envelope to identify the funder. The AWARD\$ fact sheets and application-based program agreements identify DCDEE as the funder and AWARD\$ representatives explain the funding for the program in field presentations across the state. Finally, the program evaluations give respondents the opportunity to share messages with the funder of their supplements. See Appendix E for a sample of those messages for FY19.

"Thanks so much for your generosity and support. I would not be in this field at the present without this supplement." (Mecklenburg)



Table 1
Demographic Profile of the 932 Participants in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS
October 2018 - September 2019



	# of Participants	% of Participants
Ethnicity		
American Indian	19	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	14	2%
Biracial	6	1%
Black/African American	475	51%
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	42	5%
White/European American	351	38%
Not Given	18	2%
Other	7	1%
Gender		
Female	929	100%
Male	3	0%
Age Range of Participants		
20-24 years	34	4%
25-34 years	246	26%
35-44 years	242	26%
45-54 years	217	23%
55-59 years	85	9%
60-64 years	69	7%
65 and over	38	4%
Not Given	1	0%
Position		
Teacher	853	92%
Teacher (Head Start In Home Educator)	13	1%
Teacher (Assistant Director)	8	1%
Teacher (Director)	12	1%
Teacher (Director Owner)	11	1%
Assistant Teacher	31	3%
Small Facility (<13) Operator	4	0%
Education Level		
AAS including 24 birth to five sem. hours	623	67%
BA/BS including 6 birth to five sem. hours	25	3%
MA/MS including 6 birth to five sem. hours	2	0%
90 sem. hours toward BA/BS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	43	5%
BA/BS including 12 birth to five sem. hours	18	2%
BA/BS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	193	21%
MA/MS including 12 birth to five sem. hours	3	0%
MA/MS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	25	3%
Wage Rate*		
Below \$7.25 per hour	11	1%
\$7.25 - \$8.99 per hour	34	4%
\$9.00 - \$11.99 per hour	271	29%
\$12.00 - \$14.99 per hour	396	42%
\$15.00 - \$18.00 per hour	220	24%

**Table 1 (cont.)
Demographic Profile of the 932 Participants in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS
October 2018 - September 2019**

	# of Participants	% of Participants
Years in Child Care Program: Participant's Start Date to Report End Date		
0 to .99 Years	25	3%
1.00 to 1.99 Years	158	17%
2.00 to 2.99 Years	124	13%
3.00 to 3.99 Years	86	9%
4.00 to 4.99 Years	67	7%
5.00 or More Years	472	51%

* The first category under Wage Rate reflects those earning below North Carolina's minimum wage, typically teacher/owners whose income is dependent upon revenue. Pay rates will also reflect bonus compensation if awarded by the employer.



Table 2
Child Care Center Profile for North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS
October 2018 - September 2019



	Programs	Participants
Facilities	516	932
3 STAR	54	66
4 STAR	130	190
5 STAR	329	673
PROB*	1	1
PROV*	1	1
Temporary	1	1

*Individuals working in these site will receive a partial payment for eligible time worked prior to the center's change to an ineligible status.



Table 3
Educational Award Levels Profile of the 932 Participants
in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS
October 2018 - September 2019



	# of Participants	% of Participants Out Of Active
Eight	623	67%
Nine	27	3%
Ten	61	7%
Eleven	196	21%
Twelve	25	3%



Table 4
Total Participants that Received a Supplement in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS\$
October 2018 - September 2019



1,124 unduplicated participants received a supplement for completing a six month period that ended during this reporting period; these participants worked in 591 different child care programs in 87 counties, serving approximately 17,718 children.

*Note that the sum of participants by county could be greater than the total participants paid. The total participants listed above is an unduplicated number. Participants can be paid by more than one county in any given year.

	Total Paid*	Total Programs	# Of Children 0 to 2
	1,125	591	17,718
Alamance	4	4	121
Alexander	3	2	46
Anson	6	4	41
Ashe	12	3	86
Avery	1	1	41
Beaufort	14	6	162
Bertie	9	5	44
Bladen	8	5	77
Brunswick	2	1	36
Buncombe	18	12	476
Burke	29	9	236
Cabarrus	19	13	641
Caldwell	9	4	97
Carteret	2	1	7
Caswell	3	1	24
Catawba	18	11	303
Chatham	9	5	54
Cherokee	4	3	78
Chowan	4	3	14
Clay	1	1	14
Cleveland	11	8	108
Columbus	5	4	103
Craven	9	4	133
Cumberland	64	23	659
Dare	2	2	28

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	Total Paid*	Total Programs	# Of Children 0 to 2
	1,125	591	17,718
Davidson	22	13	311
Davie	3	3	83
Duplin	13	5	136
Durham	21	15	415
Edgecombe	1	1	3
Forsyth	19	10	427
Franklin	2	2	45
Gaston	9	7	148
Gates	1	1	10
Graham	1	1	6
Granville	8	6	165
Guilford	114	45	1,182
Halifax	4	3	64
Harnett	5	4	78
Haywood	8	6	123
Henderson	6	6	100
Hertford	4	3	30
Hoke	1	1	29
Iredell	12	8	280
Jackson	3	3	52
Johnston	15	11	262
Lee	2	2	18
Lenoir	15	7	175
Lincoln	7	6	131
Macon	15	2	103

Table 4
Total Participants that Received a Supplement in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$
October 2018 - September 2019

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*Note that the sum of participants by county could be greater than the total participants paid. The total participants listed above is an unduplicated number. Participants can be paid by more than one county in any given year.

	Total Paid*	Total Programs	# Of Children 0 to 2
	1,125	591	17,718
McDowell	16	6	108
Mecklenburg	95	49	2,055
Mitchell	3	2	12
Montgomery	11	3	70
Moore	31	9	252
Nash	1	1	12
New Hanover	29	13	568
Northampton	2	2	18
Onslow	4	4	130
Orange	25	11	377
Pamlico	2	2	23
Pasquotank	1	1	66
Pender	3	2	52
Person	3	2	37
Pitt	21	12	301
Polk	2	1	19
Randolph	5	4	89
Richmond	5	3	56
Robeson	36	17	431
Rockingham	4	3	96
Rowan	8	5	150
Sampson	10	4	65
Scotland	6	3	70
Stanly	13	6	200
Stokes	1	1	14

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Total Participants that Received a Supplement in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$
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*Note that the sum of participants by county could be greater than the total participants paid. The total participants listed above is an unduplicated number. Participants can be paid by more than one county in any given year.

	Total Paid*	Total Programs	# Of Children 0 to 2
	1,125	591	17,718
Surry	2	1	46
Transylvania	1	1	13
Union	14	5	156
Vance	3	3	52
Wake	138	80	3,403
Washington	4	3	46
Watauga	5	3	109
Wayne	20	12	270
Wilkes	4	2	58
Wilson	16	7	258
Yadkin	1	1	18
Yancey	3	1	13



Table 5
Annual Turnover Summary of the 1,071 Participants
in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$
October 2018 - September 2019



The annual turnover percentage is based on an overall population of 1071 participants. This population includes those individuals that were active during the reporting period of 10/1/2018 - 9/30/2019 (932) and those who left their centers during this time (139). Active participants meet all eligibility requirements and have worked at least six months in their child care programs. Active participants might also include individuals who have left a child care program, but have since worked six eligible months in a new site. (These "reactivated" participants are not factored into the report at all until they have completed this six month period.) The annual turnover percentage is obtained by dividing the total number of participants who left their center into the total number of participants.

People who became ineligible for other reasons (i.e. position change within center, became over-income due to raise, center closure, noncompliance with the program's income documentation guidelines, failure to obtain necessary coursework) are not included in the table. They have been removed from the overall total and the turnover numbers since they were no longer eligible for Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ and the supplement could not have been an incentive for them to stay.

Individuals who left their child care programs and those who became ineligible due to other reasons may or may not have been paid during the current fiscal year for completing one or more commitment periods. However, they have all been paid at some time during their participation on AWARD\$ and thus earned active status prior to becoming ineligible.

Annual Turnover (October 2018 - September 2019)	
North Carolina	
Total Participants	= 1,071
Active Participants	= 932
Left Center	= 139
Turnover Percentage	= 13%



Table 5
Profile of Participants who Left their Programs in North Carolina
Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS\$
October 2018 - September 2019

Infant-Toddler Educator
AWARDS\$

	# of Participants	% of Participants
Ethnicity		
American Indian	1	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1%
Black/African American	79	57%
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	2	1%
White/European American	54	39%
Not Given	2	1%
Gender		
Female	139	100%
Position		
Teacher	130	94%
Teacher (Head Start In Home Educator)	1	1%
Teacher (Assistant Director)	1	1%
Teacher (Director)	1	1%
Teacher (Director Owner)	2	1%
Assistant Teacher	4	3%
Education Level		
AAS including 24 birth to five sem. hours	68	49%
BA/BS including 6 birth to five sem. hours	5	4%
90 sem. hours toward BA/BS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	6	4%
BA/BS including 12 birth to five sem. hours	3	2%
BA/BS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	48	35%
MA/MS including 12 birth to five sem. hours	2	1%
MA/MS including 18 birth to five sem. hours	7	5%
Wage Rate*		
Below \$7.25 per hour	1	1%
\$7.25 - \$8.99 per hour	7	5%
\$9.00 - \$11.99 per hour	31	22%
\$12.00 - \$14.99 per hour	64	46%
\$15.00 - \$18.00 per hour	36	26%
Years in Child Care Program: Participant's Start Date to Date Ineligible		
0 to .99 Years	103	74%
1.00 to 1.99 Years	6	4%
2.00 to 2.99 Years	11	8%
3.00 to 3.99 Years	3	2%
4.00 to 4.99 Years	5	4%
5.00 or More Years	11	8%
Regulation Type		
3 STAR	15	11%
4 STAR	22	16%

* The first category under Wage Rate reflects those earning below North Carolina's minimum wage, typically teacher/owners whose income is dependent upon revenue. Pay rates will also reflect bonus compensation if awarded by the employer.

**Table 5 (cont.)
 Profile of Participants who Left their Programs in North Carolina
 Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$
 October 2018 - September 2019**

	# of Participants	% of Participants
5 STAR	99	71%
Temporary	1	1%
PROB*	2	1%

*These applicants were working in three to five star sites when they applied. They were not paid for time worked after the center changed to an ineligible status.



Appendix A: Retention

Sample Feedback Collected from AWARD\$ Surveys FY19

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$* promotes continuity.” (Beaufort)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me to stay with the program.” (Bladen)

“The AWARD\$ supplement encourages teachers to stay in the field.” (Bladen)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me to stay in child care and not have to seek employment elsewhere.” (Buncombe)

“AWARD\$ is important because it benefits:

- The educators by providing economic support.
- The children in our care by keeping a stable teacher in the room (security feeling and bonding is stronger).
- The community by helping parents feel relieved knowing that their children are with safe, caring, experienced, knowledgeable, trusted people while they are at work. This helps parents in some ways to be more productive; therefore, it benefits the whole community.” (Buncombe)

“I am able to buy classroom materials, books, and things to make learning fun. I feel less stressed and AWARD\$ has given me the incentive to stay an infant-toddler teacher.” (Burke)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps improve resources and materials for our classrooms. It also encourages good teachers to stay in child care.” (Burke)

“The AWARD\$ supplement is a great incentive to continue working with children. It compensates for the low wages teachers receive.” (Burke)

“The AWARD\$ supplement offers teachers an incentive to remain in the field of child care.” (Cabarrus)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps teachers stay at the same program. It is very important for the children to have familiar people there for them every day.” (Caldwell)

“AWARD\$ enables day care teachers to stay in this field. It has helped my family and me achieve goals and dreams.” (Catawba)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has enabled me to stay in this field of work.” (Catawba)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped encourage me to stay in this field and want to continue my education.” (Catawba)

* Respondents referred to Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) in a variety of ways. Throughout the quotes, the name has been corrected when necessary.

“AWARD\$ helps to keep teachers in place and not jump from one center to another seeking higher pay.” (Catawba)

“I feel AWARD\$ is important because it keeps quality teachers in early childhood, which benefits the children through stability.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped to provide a sense of security in my employment. The supplement lightens a financial burden and makes it possible for me to continue doing what I love. I am very effective in the classroom. This supplement helps me to remain in the field that I am in.” (Cumberland)

“AWARD\$ is important because it helps encourage teachers to be better teachers and stay in the field.” (Cumberland)

“It helps acknowledge a person that works with this age group and it is an incentive for people to stay with the age group.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important to me. It helps me be stable not only in my home life, but work life as well. It provides me with the opportunity to continue to work in the center where I am at and it gives me the chance to stay at my job.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me want to stay in this field of work.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps teachers stay longer at one job. Children bond with teachers better when the turnover is less.” (Davie)

“AWARD\$ encourages you to persevere in your job. It also helped relieve stress due to everyday financial obligations.” (Durham)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes you want to continue what you are doing because you know that there is an incentive to help.” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ gives more stability in order to meet the eligibility.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it allows teachers who have a passion for educating young children to stay at a job that they enjoy by making the job more financially competitive.” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ is important because it supplements my income. I no longer consider leaving the company I am employed at to find better pay.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ gives teachers incentive to stay at our job and it helps balance our pay rate.” (Guilford)

“I was thinking of changing jobs to get more money but now with this supplement I have decided to stay in my early childhood classroom.” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ helps me to stay in the position I am in because the job doesn't pay that much. It really helps because I love my job.” (Johnston)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it helps teachers feel appreciated and they are more willing to keep working.” (Lenoir)

“AWARD\$ helps me to keep going in my child care career.” (Lenoir)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me to be more stable and happy with my position and it helps it be more rewarding.” (Lenoir)

“AWARD\$ gives you more incentive to stay where you are at.” (Lincoln)

“Teaching young children is exhausting and being recognized financially is encouraging. Both education and experience are important and hopefully AWARD\$ will help retain teachers and help with burnout and turnover in this field.” (McDowell)

“AWARD\$ helps supplement my income to better care for my family financially and encourages me to maintain employment with my current company.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ helps good teachers stay with young children.” (Mecklenburg)

“I think it is important because it encourages the educators to stay in the field. It shows them that they are appreciated for what they do. It helps them to provide for themselves, their families and the children in their care without having to struggle and figure things out. It gives the teacher that extra added stability to do the things they want to do for themselves and the children.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ has helped me stay with the same company.” (Mecklenburg)

“The extra financial help has been tremendous!!!! Such a blessing! I hope you keep this program going for many years to come! Not only do I look forward to the money, but I would be hesitant to leave my current place of employment (not that I want to) because of the 6-month qualifying requirements!” (Mecklenburg)

“I believe AWARD\$ is an aid in lower teacher turnover. It allows for lower paid early childhood educators, like myself, to be able to make ends meet.” (Mecklenburg)

“I think it is important because it gives teachers that extra motivation to keep teaching younger children. The program has shown me that I am important, my job to teach younger children is important and it shows that someone cares about the field I chose.” (New Hanover)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very important due to the fact that it is hard to keep qualified teachers in infant-toddler classrooms. I have been working with toddlers for many years and have a Master's Degree in Education. Most teachers want higher age classes and won't work long term with young children. The program has helped prove the importance of teachers of younger children.” (New Hanover)

“AWARD\$ has kept me from seeking a job that would pay more. I have also been able to put money away for savings and later retirement.” (New Hanover)

“I have four step kids and my husband is in school. The extra money has meant that I could stay in child care, which is my preferred field.” (New Hanover)

“AWARD\$ helps out with finances. It strengthens your growth and makes you want to stay in your field.” (Orange)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ encourages people to come into the child care field and stick with it.” (Pitt)

“I think Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it provides an incentive for those in the field to stay in the field. Continuity is very important for infants and toddlers, so this is very beneficial.” (Pitt)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ gives me a reason to stay in the early childhood field and afford things that I wasn’t able to afford without it.” (Sampson)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps you do a better job and stay in your field.” (Union)

“AWARD\$ helps because you don't get paid what you should and the incentive encourages you to continue on in your field.” (Union)

“This is a great incentive that encourages me to stay at my job. It also helps meet the needs at home with my income. I don’t have to worry about how I am going to pay for something. This helps me to be able to focus on my job.” (Union)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ encourages teachers to stay in their positions, further their education, and helps them financially with their families.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ is a good incentive to stay in our career.” (Wake)

“This Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has motivated teachers to stay at their current child care center, which has given children consistency.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ keeps me motivated and encouraged to keep going.” (Wake)

“I think that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it helps teachers in the early education field receive money and educational assistance that is needed to help offset some costs. I feel that the program is also great because it helps give them an incentive to stay in the field (career) that they love.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is something that will hopefully motivate early childhood educators to stay in the field. By receiving the funding, I was able to relieve some financial stress.” (Wake)

“I really feel appreciated and the little extra money will always help big time. It encourages you to work and stay at the same center.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ has helped encourage me to stay in the field. It has shown me that I really am making a difference and that it's being recognized.” (Wake)

“With a low pay disparity, it will encourage others to enter and stay in this field. There is a high turnover in staffing.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ gives me encouragement to stay in my field of teaching two-year-olds.” (Wake)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes me feel good about my job. It also allows me to remain at my current job without having to seek a part-time job for extra cash.” (Wake)

“The Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ came at a time when I was ready to give up. Thank you.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is an incentive that motivates me to continue working in early childhood since the salaries are relatively low.” (Wayne)

“Day care teachers are not paid a lot of money. The AWARD\$ supplement helps teachers like myself stay in our current program and to feel like we matter.” (Wayne)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ means a lot to me and gives me value. It helps me stay with my program and provide resources for my classroom.” (Wilson)



Appendix B: Education

Sample Feedback Collected from AWARD\$ Surveys FY19

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$* has made me more confident in my job and has also helped in my decision to go back to school.” (Ashe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement is very helpful in financial areas. Working with a bachelor’s degree and getting paid little is hard. We should get recognized for what we do and get paid more.” (Ashe)

“I think it’s important because it shows the importance of teachers. Most teachers are paid minimum wage and cannot afford to further their education because we are trying to make ends meet. I think this AWARD\$ program encourages teachers to strive for more to have something to look forward to, and to help with the cost of furthering our education so we can help children build on their education.” (Catawba)

“It has given me the opportunity to better provide for my family, helped me to meet basic and recreational needs, and it has also helped me decide to further my education. Children need stability and this program helps promote that.” (Catawba)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes me feel more satisfied and motivated in my career. It is important because it is helping to meet the teachers’ needs and helps lead teachers want to be educated.” (Cleveland)

“I think Infant Toddler Educator Awards is important because for one, we need educated teachers to care for our youth, helping nurture them for where they are lacking during the hours that parents are at work. The next thing is to help educators meet their needs at home and work because we are underpaid even with a degree.” (Cumberland)

“AWARD\$ is important because it encourages teachers to stay in school or go back to school. It helps tremendously with life expenses and such. It is also nice to be recognized as an infant-toddler teacher.” (Granville)

“It has helped me in the decision to further pursue my Master's in Education.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ supplement gives us an incentive to continue working and finish school.” (Guilford)

“Infant- Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it helps bridge the gap of lack of pay. The AWARD\$ program has helped me to expand my education as a teacher, my children’s education, and my experience. It has also helped me to provide more resources for the children in my classroom.” (Guilford)

* Respondents referred to Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) in a variety of ways. Throughout the quotes, the name has been corrected when necessary.

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has allowed me to pay off student loans faster so I can stress less about finances.” (Guilford)

“I just feel like all this education I have is appreciated!” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to go higher in my education.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps me to pay for my bachelor’s degree.” (Guilford)

“I believe the AWARD\$ program is important because I can pay for my schooling and pay off my debt faster.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to feel more appreciated and validated as an educator. Having a BS in Early Childhood Education finally has been recognized.” (McDowell)

“It is fantastic to know that every six months I will be receiving a bonus that allows me to feel appreciated and compensated for continuing my education in this field and obtaining my degree.” (Mecklenburg)

“It has helped me pay for additional early childhood education classes. I was able to get my Birth to Kindergarten Degree with the funds allotted to me.” (Mecklenburg)

“The AWARD\$ program has made me more interested in continuing my education.” (Mecklenburg)

“I am 60 years old. For the longest time, I have been on the fence about going back to school to take additional EDU classes to raise my EEC Level from a 10 to an 11, the highest I can go without getting a master's degree. Had the AWARD\$ program not come along, I probably would not have had the incentive or the nerve to do it.” (New Hanover)

“I used my AWARD\$ supplement to help with my education. I paid for my books with that money. I go to UNCG.” (Orange)

“AWARD\$ helps me to pursue more education.” (Pitt)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ encourages people to press forward with their education.” (Robeson)

“Infant Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it gives a boost to continue doing what you love. Extra income helps you continue to go through school.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ is an awesome incentive for educators that love their job to pursue it even more and educate yourself further.” (Wake)

“I think that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it takes some of the stress off of educators when it comes to the thought that I love working with children but I can’t pay my bills with what I make. It also helps educators fund their education if they are currently trying

to finish their degree to become a better teacher. In my life it has meant that I don't have to stop going to school, but that I can complete my degree in early childhood education. AWARD\$ may even allow me to complete a licensure in Birth through Kindergarten. AWARD\$ has allowed me to be more focused at work and not worry about how I am going to pay for tuition. Overall, I am able to work towards becoming a better teacher for my students.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ has actually helped me pay for my summer semester of courses in early childhood education and it will also help me pay for my last semester in early childhood education. I was actually trying to figure out how I was going to pay for my tuition and then I received my AWARD\$ supplement and I no longer had to worry. I am now able to focus on providing quality care at work and enjoying my job.” (Wake)

“Completing my degree as an adult working full-time took 12 years, off and on. The time taken away from my family had a negative impact at times. This Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ program helps me and my family in ways that my degree alone does not. It is nice to feel recognized and appreciated for the effort and sacrifice. I don't feel as overlooked in this vocation. I feel more appreciated for my hard work and dedication to this field.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it helps to make teachers feel important and appreciated for all of our hard work in getting our education, continuing education, and staying in this field.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ allows more teachers to want to go to school to earn degrees.” (Wake)



Appendix C: Compensation Sample Feedback Collected from AWARD\$ Surveys FY19

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$* helps me to live a financially stress-free life.” (Alamance)

“Financially Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has been a great help to me. It has allowed me to catch up with bills that were behind and buy some badly needed clothes. I now have money in the bank to help keep gas in my car for work.” (Ashe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps me to pay bills, which helps make my life less stressful.” (Ashe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps teachers and assistant teachers make payments on bills that would be difficult to do without this extra money.” (Beaufort)

“I think Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is an excellent way to recognize and encourage us as early childhood educators. It allows us as teachers to supply a little more material toward our classrooms while also helping to ease financial obligations within our private lives. Thanks once again for this awesome program!” (Beaufort)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very important. It means a lot to me, especially at times when I’m struggling. Sometimes my paycheck is not enough to cover all my bills. This is why the supplements are helpful.” (Beaufort)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps me to get through with paying all my bills. I’ve been working for over 20 years and still don’t make a lot of money.” (Beaufort)

“The AWARD\$ supplement has helped me while I was struggling financially.” (Beaufort)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because we are an extremely underfunded career. The supplement allows us to be able to support our families and ourselves in an ever-growing economy.” (Buncombe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement has helped me provide for my own children.” (Burke)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps relieve stress of the rising cost of living.” (Burke)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes up for the lack in hourly wages.” (Catawba)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is helpful when you’re living paycheck to paycheck.” (Chatham)

* Respondents referred to Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) in a variety of ways. Throughout the quotes, the name has been corrected when necessary.

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me provide materials for my children in the classroom and it has put food on my table. I'm truly thankful and grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this program.” (Chatham)

“Child care just doesn't pay a lot. This supplement has helped me be able to pay my bills when I didn't know what I was going to do.” (Chatham)

“AWARD\$ has helped me feel financially secure, so that I can work with the children I adore without feeling so stressed about money.” (Cherokee)

“I feel that it's important because we are not paid enough for the time and work we put in as child care providers. It has meant a lot to me because I am able to buy supplies for my classroom, helping me to give back to the children in my care.” (Chowan)

“I believe the AWARD\$ program is important because it helps teachers take care of their families and do the things they need to get by.” (Cleveland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because early childhood teachers are grossly underpaid and very unappreciated.” (Craven)

“The AWARD\$ program is important because it helps people who enjoy working with children receive financial assistance so that they are more focused in their work.” (Craven)

“The early childhood community is the foundation of everything great. All levels of learning start with early education. Therefore, our society's monetary focus is way off point, because teachers and education professionals are not appreciated or valued. Teachers are known to use their own money to supplement materials and supplies in support of the children. So, this money helps replace the money they spend or spent during the school year.” (Cumberland)

“The AWARD\$ supplement has helped me with the stress of thinking about getting a second job.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because many of my fellow teachers that are receiving it for the first time are so excited about having the extra money to do special things for their classrooms. The AWARD\$ supplement also helps when a teacher needs something that they don't have to wait for administration to get it. AWARD\$ reminds us that we have our degrees and that our hard work was worth it and appreciated!” (Cumberland)

“AWARD\$ has made it easier for me to do my job. I do not have to worry about anything else but my job.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me financially to pay my bills. I now have more money available to do more in my classroom.” (Cumberland)

“AWARD\$ helps me put forth more effort in my classroom. This gives my students the best education possible for the age group I teach. I love what I do. This incentive also helps me get

things that I know my classroom needs and that will help me educate my students.”
(Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to really make ends meet financially. Thank you all so much for the program!” (Davidson)

“I think Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is necessary because it helps ease financial hardships. Teachers like myself feel more appreciated and recognized for the work we do. It’s tough trying to maintain everything alone and this supplement has given the opportunity to not have to live paycheck to paycheck.” (Durham)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful with reducing financial anxiety.” (Durham)

“The program is important and helpful for the children in the classroom and the teacher's personal life as well. I am able to de-stress and focus more on my children in the classroom and at home.” (Durham)

“I have been able to purchase things needed to complete daily activities without stressing as I was before the AWARD\$ program.” (Gates)

“It has not only helped me financially, but also helped me love my job more and want to succeed. It encourages me to continue seeking opportunities that better myself as an early educator.” (Granville)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me stay afloat above the water.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ program has been very important because sometimes in this field it can feel like your living paycheck to paycheck. It’s been a long time since I’ve been able to put some money up for an emergency. I was able to save some of my supplement funds for that purpose. So it definitely helped ease my mind knowing I have some money put away for my family and for unexpected costs that come up. For example, my daughter’s school will be going on field trips all next week. The total cost was \$27.50. Normally last-minute events may not have been possible, especially at the end of the month when a lot of bills are due. But because of the AWARD\$ program, my family is able to allow her to go and not feel like we are financially in a bind. My family and I are very grateful for this program!!!” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to be able to pay month to month bills.” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ reminds me that I’m teaching for a reason.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ program means a lot to me, because I am able to provide for my family without living paycheck to paycheck.” (Guilford)

“I don’t have health insurance so the AWARD\$ supplement helps pay for appointments.” (Johnston)

“AWARD\$ helps teachers who may not be making enough to make ends meet.” (Johnston)

“AWARD\$ helps with things that I want for my classroom that the agency can't get me. When I need it, I have extra money to get my own.” (Lee)

“The AWARD\$ program has been a life saver for me. I use this extra income to help with my medical issues and I get things for my babies if we need it. I appreciate it so much that no one would even understand.” (Lenoir)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it really helps with getting the resources you need for your classroom. As teachers we have to take money out of our pockets to make sure that we can provide a better environment for the students. Sometimes it gets rough, when your personal funds get low, it can be stressful. Having this fund helps out a lot. It definitely helps me with paying a couple of bills that get behind.” (Lenoir)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has provided necessary funds that allowed me to take care of financial responsibilities that I would have otherwise borrowed funds to help cover my expenses.” (Mecklenburg)

“It allows me to feel more satisfied with my field and eases the financial strain.” (Mecklenburg)

“It motivates teachers, because early childhood doesn't pay enough money to sustain a basic living.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ provides quality care for the children through the teacher. It allows me to purchase additional materials to enhance the children's learning and purchase additional materials the director would not buy.” (Mecklenburg)

“It is important because as a teacher in the child care industry we are paid on the low end of the scale, coming in at \$7.50 an hour and making no more than \$15.00. This program has meant more income and given me more satisfaction in knowing that someone cares about us and that they are attempting to help us financially meet our needs. I also feel better about working with the children knowing that I am appreciated.” (Mecklenburg)

“The AWARD\$ program has helped me to get bills paid and to keep food in my house.” (Mecklenburg)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has definitely helped me pay my bills and get through the year. I love my job and have no desire to leave, but as we all know, the pay for an early childhood provider is low compared to the standard of living and trying to get ahead. I live paycheck to paycheck with zero savings or retirement funds. So the extra money has helped to relieve a little bit of monthly tension and will easily provide our Christmas money for my children this year.” (Mecklenburg)

“I think the AWARD\$ program is important because it helps meet the financial needs of teachers. Also, it is important because it gives me hope that my work is not in vain. It makes the

educators stay with the same company and it feels better to serve the community.”
(Mecklenburg)

“I think the AWARD\$ program is important because a lot of teachers, especially those who are at an hourly rate, are underpaid. Being underpaid makes it hard to enjoy your job if you’re stressing about financial issues in your personal life.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ has eased the financial burden and has helped relieve stress so I am more at ease and able to do my job.” (Mecklenburg)

“Being a single parent is a struggle. AWARD\$ helps those of us that are single parents to lift those burdens.” (Moore)

“When I was informed of the AWARD\$ program I got excited because it gives a bit of relief and less stress financially to look forward to the supplement twice a year.” (Moore)

“I love children and I cannot see myself doing anything else but the pay is always bad. It is not enough to pay the basic needs of my household. Now I can pay off bills and still have some to put away for a rainy day.” (Moore)

“It is an awesome program that helps the teachers take a little financial stress off of them.”
(Moore)

“Most importantly, the AWARD\$ supplement has relieved a lot of stress.” (New Hanover)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has made me able to add more books and classroom supplies that focus on diversity in my classroom. I was able to use some of the money to add new toys to my classroom.” (New Hanover)

“AWARD\$ helps my financial burdens and helps me focus more on the children.” (Onslow)

“AWARD\$ makes it so much easier to afford child care for my child.” (Orange)

“I am extremely thankful for this program. It provided me with some extra cash for gas and getting my car fixed so that I could get to and from work. I was also able to buy some extra supplies for my classroom that I have been asking for, for over a year.” (Orange)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to better provide for my family and kids I work with. I have been less stressed with a little help.” (Robeson)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me get caught up on some bills because I’m a struggling mom.” (Robeson)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is an incentive to current and new teachers. I have talked to some early childhood educators who are considering returning to the field because of the AWARD\$ program. This is an opportunity to also recruit others to specific age groups that might have been underserved. I will use part of this money to sponsor an end of summer wild west

themed party for my toddlers, complete with activities, dramatic play, and healthy snacks. This will also be an opportunity for my families to feel that they can participate without the worry of its costs.” (Robeson)

“It gives teachers with more schooling extra help. It all around helps to be able to provide for my family and toward my classroom.” (Robeson)

“Through the many resources that have opened up, my classroom has been enhanced and a positive atmosphere is present daily!” (Stanly)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel like someone understands that these young children need good teachers. The children are capable of learning many things and I use some of the money to get materials for them.” (Union)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helped me meet basic needs of caring for my family, which reduces stress.” (Wake)

“Working as an infant toddler teacher is hard work and exhausting. The low pay adds stress in our lives that affects our overall life, including the classroom. We are expected to give so much, but so little is returned, especially in our pay.” (Wake)

“The field of early childhood has become very demanding and challenging. This incentive helps to offset some of the stresses that come with being overworked and underpaid. It also helps in retention of teachers to a program.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has allowed me to purchase items for my classroom that has and will enhance the children's learning experience.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ helped with bills that were late.” (Wake)

“I think the Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very important because it help teachers with their financial burden.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ gives me peace of mind and allows me to afford things that can enhance my ability to grow. It helps me to afford beneficial workshops, has paid for gas, and respite for me as a teacher. Thank you. God bless. I felt excitement, laughing, screaming, and thanking God.” (Wake)

“I’m able to go into my job each day, knowing that the AWARD\$ program will assist me financially. This helps relieve some of the stress from low pay and allows me to be fully present and there for my children in the classroom.” (Wake)

“We, as early childhood educators, even ones with degrees, do not get compensated at levels that sustain our lives. A lot of us depend on our spouses to have much better paying jobs to be able to pay the bills. The AWARD\$ program has helped me and others around me become more financially stable. I’m able to contribute to the monthly bills in my household. It gives an added sense of security. I was able to compensate myself after a surgery that required me to be out of

work for a week. When I walk in the doors every day carrying the burden of financial stress, I know that the AWARD\$ program has helped me and so I'm more likely to stay in my position and leave the stress at the door. My children benefit from my positive attitude." (Wake)

"Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very important because it helps to ease some of the financial burdens that low income workers face." (Wake)



Appendix D: Appreciation/Recognition

Sample Feedback Collected from AWARD\$ Surveys FY19

“The AWARD\$* supplement makes me feel more appreciated. It gives me a sense of purpose. Our job is one very important job, however the pay is sub par. This supplement helps to make me feel that people understand what we are doing is important.” (Ashe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement helps me to feel more appreciated for the work I do. I want to help the families of my children to feel comfortable knowing I am with their children.” (Ashe)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel like I am wanted in this field. It has been a blessing to me, my family, and in my classroom.” (Ashe)

“The AWARD\$ supplement is important because it's an incentive that shows you're valuable at what you do.” (Bertie)

“I feel Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it makes me feel that we are important and appreciated. We are very underpaid. With the help of the AWARD\$ program, I am able to fund supplies for my classroom. It also helps me financially.” (Bertie)

“I feel that child care workers are underpaid for all that we do. I love my job and I know I am great at what I do. This AWARD\$ program has made a big difference. It is a wonderful incentive. It has made me feel appreciated and lets us as child care workers feel important because our job is very important. The AWARD\$ program has helped me financially. It makes me love my job even more!!!! I'm doing what I love and getting an awesome AWARD for it!!!!” (Burke)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has made me feel better about my career choice and how I am appreciated. Money is not why anyone chooses this career. When someone recognizes your value and rewards you, it makes you feel good. The children benefit by little classroom extras, as well as a happier teacher with a little less stress in her life. People perform better when valued! Thank you.” (Burke)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ gives us a sense of pride that our hard work is not going unnoticed. It gives us the push to continue to strive to reach higher goals for the communities that depend on us to care for their children.” (Burke)

“The extra money has helped me feel more appreciated. It has encouraged me to see that the importance of my job is being noticed. I feel more comfortable with my way of providing for my family, friends and classroom. The children deserve the things that I purchase in order to strengthen their interest, creativity and education for their future. The early childhood community is extremely happy when the teachers are shown to be important.” (Catawba)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel more valuable.” (Catawba)

* Respondents referred to Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) in a variety of ways. Throughout the quotes, the name has been corrected when necessary.

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me stay motivated during my job and excited about teaching.” (Craven)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel extremely appreciated for the work I do with infants and toddlers. It has motivated me to do more activities with them and has helped me supply the materials needed for the activities. It has also helped me financially. Thank you so much!” (Craven)

“The AWARD\$ program gives incentive and appreciation to a job that people feel is nothing more than glorified babysitting.” (Cumberland)

“Child care is overlooked. It’s still looked at as babysitting in some people’s eyes and it’s way more than that. It’s not appreciated enough.” (Cumberland)

“AWARD\$ makes me feel like a valuable asset to the early childhood profession.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it boosts staff morale. It lightens the burden of the low wages associated with early education staff.” (Cumberland)

“As an educator, AWARD\$ has made me feel like I’m an important facet of early childhood education.” (Cumberland)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes me feel more appreciated and recognized for my work. It helps me feel more financially secure.” (Durham)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has definitely made me feel like what I do in the classroom and with the children in my care matters.” (Gaston)

“The AWARD\$ supplement keeps me wanting to achieve higher goals for my classroom and makes me feel that someone cares about what I am trying to achieve.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel appreciated and I’m happy to go to work every day.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ allows me to feel like I make a difference!” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ gives me a feeling of importance and that I made the right career choice.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ program gives me extra confidence to do a good job.” (Guilford)

“AWARD\$ encourages me to be proud of my position and share with others the benefits of an educator’s role.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ program makes me feel that what I am doing is worth it.” (Harnett)

“It is a wonderful program that makes me feel appreciated in my work with young children. I was able to help my children get eyeglasses.” (Macon)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel more valued. Early childhood education does not pay well but working for our children's future is important. This makes it seem like someone besides me recognizes the importance of me being in the classroom every day.” (Macon)

“I have realized that not just what I do is important, but who I am is important!” (McDowell)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes me feel more appreciated & that I am recognized for my work.” (McDowell)

“It means that I am valued as integral part of the early childhood education field. The program realizes the needs of all educators in a field with high demands but low wages.” (Mecklenburg)

“The AWARD\$ program has helped me to be a better teacher and feel more secure as a professional.” (Mecklenburg)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it values the early childhood profession and then benefits the community with caring and committed teachers. Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“The AWARD\$ program has made me a better provider to the children I serve. It makes me feel self-worth and that I am appreciated.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ makes me feel more appreciated and keeps me aware of how important my role is to my children and their parents.” (Mecklenburg)

“AWARD\$ makes me feel appreciated for my hard work and dedication to my education and my job.” (New Hanover)

“The AWARD\$ program appreciates teachers when others don't. A few look down on us and believe we don't deserve higher pay. Thank you for acknowledging us and helping us. Being a teacher can be stressful when you can't make ends meet, this program makes it possible. I am now able to afford a home, etc.” (New Hanover)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ shows me that I am an important part of the child care field and I make a positive impact on young children's lives.” (New Hanover)

“Early childhood educators provide the foundation for everything, yet I feel we are the most undervalued and underpaid profession. I also feel that many see us simply as ‘glorified babysitters.’ I absolutely love my job and I feel that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped to give us credibility and much needed recognition.” (New Hanover)

“I felt valued!” (New Hanover)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped me to know that we as teachers matter.”
(Orange)

“It has helped me feel that I matter and that there are people who care about my needs financially.” (Orange)

“It allows teachers to feel important, needed, and that they’re rewarded for hard work.”
(Randolph)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has made me feel like the work that I do is important! I work long hours with numerous families and this supplement allows me to take care of my family as well! I would personally like to say thank you for the opportunity to participate!”
(Robeson)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me to know that I’m being recognized and valued as an early childhood educator.” (Rowan)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel like a teacher and not just a babysitter.”
(Union)

“Educators don’t get a lot of recognition and the AWARD\$ supplement helps lift them up.”
(Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ encourages teachers to stay in their positions, further their education, and help them financially with their family.” (Wake)

“Teachers have always been overworked and underpaid. Especially infant and toddler teachers. This program recognizes this and lets us know we are appreciated.” (Wake)

“I think Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ boosts the morale of any teacher receiving it. When it comes to funds, it always seems as though teachers and child care aren’t regarded as being important. Child care and schooling are the foundation of our community as a whole, but don’t get the funding that they need.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important because it gives a person a sense of belonging and recognition. It encourages one to work harder and encourages someone to learn and grow as a teacher.” (Wake)

“The incentive made me feel valued as an infant teacher.” (Wake)

“As everyone knows, child care educators don’t get paid much. This Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ program really made me feel appreciated. I can feel the encouragement to be more productive and dedicated.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has made me feel like I am valued and truly have a purpose for serving the children and their families.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ definitely creates an atmosphere of appreciation for early childhood teachers.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ emphasizes how important the job of teaching infants and toddlers is.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel great pride for the job I do, seeing how children at an early age can soak in all they are learning.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ makes me feel good about what I do and appreciated. It makes me feel like an educator, not a babysitter.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has encouraged and inspired me to continue doing a great job. The program makes me feel appreciated.” (Wayne)

**Appendix E: DCDEE Messages
Feedback Collected from AWARD\$ Surveys FY19**

“Thank you, keep it coming.” (Alamance)

“I would like to thank them for providing the supplements.” (Alamance)

“Keep the AWARD\$* supplement coming because it really helps in upgrading my facility.”
(Anson)

“Thank you for believing in the infant and toddler teachers that work within child care centers.”
(Ashe)

“Thank them for the AWARD\$ supplement.” (Ashe)

“Thank you for recognizing the importance of the infant-toddler program.” (Ashe)

“Thank you for helping take stress off with extra money so I can enjoy life and enjoy working
with children.” (Ashe)

“Thank You!” (Ashe)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a huge help to teachers, but should be available for all
teachers with degrees, not just infant and toddler teachers.” (Beaufort)

“Thank you for making a way to help the teachers that don’t get paid for the job they do every
day. Every little bit counts and helps out.” (Beaufort)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has a great impact on the early educators in our area! Please
know that it is highly appreciated! It gives us the extra incentive to strive harder in a field that we
already love.” (Beaufort)

“Together, we can help make a difference in the lives of children!!!” (Beaufort)

“I want to say thanks and that I hope you continue to provide us with supplements.” (Beaufort)

“Thank you.” (Beaufort)

“It's helpful and greatly appreciated.” (Bertie)

“Thank you all very much!! It is a life saver!!” (Bertie)

“It was very needed.” (Bladen)

* Respondents referred to Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ (AWARD\$) in a variety of ways. Throughout the
quotes, the name has been corrected when necessary.

“Thank you, it really does help.” (Buncombe)

“Thanks for the incentive and recognizing toddler teachers.” (Buncombe)

“It's great to get it every six months.” (Buncombe)

“Thank you for all you do for all of us: children, educators, parents, and the community in general!!!” (Buncombe)

“Thank you so much for providing extra benefits to early childhood teachers like myself!” (Buncombe)

“I am extremely appreciative of the supplement and it has helped my family tremendously.” (Buncombe)

“I appreciate it.” (Buncombe)

“It helped greatly and came at a good time.” (Burke)

“Thank you so much, this has affected both my home and my classroom.” (Burke)

“Thank you for being our advocate.” (Burke)

“It has helped out substantially. This field does not pay what it should but with this program I believe it will change the way current and possible child care workers stay in the field.” (Burke)

“Thank you!” (Burke)

“That is very much appreciated.” (Burke)

“Thank you for thinking about us child care providers.” (Burke)

“This money is greatly appreciated. Thank you for recognizing and rewarding what we do each day to shape little minds and mold the future!” (Burke)

“I appreciate this supplement very much. Thank you.” (Burke)

“Please continue the program. It is very important to have financial help.” (Burke)

“It is a wonderful award and I feel so lucky to be involved.” (Burke)

“Thank you.” (Burke)

“Thank you.” (Cabarrus)

“Thank you for the supplement income.” (Cabarrus)

“Thank you!” (Cabarrus)

“I greatly appreciate it.” (Cabarrus)

“We appreciate every penny awarded to us and it makes us want to work harder.” (Cabarrus)

“Thank you.” (Caldwell)

“The supplement helps my family and me.” (Caldwell)

“Thank you so very much.” (Caldwell)

“I am very pleased and grateful for this award.” (Caldwell)

“AWARD\$ is the best thing that they have ever done.” (Catawba)

“Thank you! My family, children in my classroom, and I really appreciate your thoughtfulness.” (Catawba)

“It helps me feel appreciated.” (Catawba)

“I want to say thank you so much for the supplement. It is very helpful and so much appreciated. This funding means so much to me for helping my program out with items and for helping my future. I am truly thankful. Please keep the AWARD\$ supplement coming. I believe this will help build teachers into better teachers and educators.” (Catawba)

“Please keep this program.” (Catawba)

“These funds help educators continue to provide stability in children’s lives. Some of these children only see this stability in the child care settings.” (Catawba)

“Thank you for considering teachers who work hard with this age group. They are not getting paid for the time they put into helping mold young children.” (Catawba)

“Thank you so much!!!! I truly appreciate it!!!! It's nice to feel appreciated!!! Y'all are awesome!!!” (Catawba)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is great.” (Catawba)

“I appreciate the supplement and am grateful for this program. I missed out on WAGE\$ when I started working in NC so AWARD\$ is a nice benefit to have.” (Catawba)

“THANKS A LOT.” (Chatham)

“THANK YOU.” (Chatham)

“Thank you!!” (Chatham)

“It is truly a blessing to have such a program that helps our hardworking teachers.” (Chatham)

“Thank you for remembering people who work in child care.” (Chatham)

“Thank you for helping me work at a job I enjoy, without worrying too much about money.” (Cherokee)

“Thank you.” (Chowan)

“I would like to say thank you for helping me by providing me with the supplement, it has helped me to give back to the children in my care.” (Chowan)

“Thank you for helping us with the job we do.” (Chowan)

“I am very grateful.” (Clay)

“I’m thankful.” (Cleveland)

“Thank you for this AWARD\$ program for teachers of early childhood education. Thank you for thinking of us.” (Cleveland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is helpful and thank you so much!” (Cleveland)

“The supplement is like a grant that you can get to help you improve your classroom.” (Columbus)

“I’m very satisfied.” (Columbus)

“It is a life saver for a lot of people and a huge financial help for a lot of families.” (Craven)

“Thank you so very much for providing the funds for the AWARD\$ supplement. I am so grateful that you appreciate me and my fellow infant-toddler teachers!” (Craven)

“I really appreciate all the effort that you put into providing us with funding.” (Craven)

“Thank you for the assistance so that I can better focus on the job at hand and the children.” (Craven)

“Thank you.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you!!!” (Cumberland)

“I have to pay my rent and keep the electricity on, so thanks.” (Cumberland)

“I so very much appreciate it, it helps out a lot.” (Cumberland)

“Thanks for understanding and fighting for teachers, children and education.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you, I feel appreciated.” (Cumberland)

“I would encourage them to continue to fund this program. It is beneficial to early educators. We need positive, happy teachers in these classrooms. It is unfair to the children and staff when teachers have to seek other employment because they cannot afford to pay their bills because of the low salary that they receive.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you so much for showing child care providers that you can see our job can be very challenging but also very rewarding.” (Cumberland)

“I would like to say thank you for creating something like this, it shows you care!” (Cumberland)

“Thank you, this supplement goes a long way. It helps me buy some supplies when there aren't funds available anywhere else.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you, it really helps out a lot.” (Cumberland)

“I just wanted to thank them for all they have done with helping families in our community.” (Cumberland)

“Thanks, just thanks. When I got my degree, I didn't think the pay would be this low an hour, but the supplement does help out a bit.” (Cumberland)

“I am honored to receive the supplement. Thank you so much, it has been a tremendous help.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you. I'm very appreciative of the supplement.” (Cumberland)

“I thank you to the moon and back again!! Bless you, bless you, bless you!!!” (Cumberland)

“I would like to thank you for the supplement. It is greatly appreciated.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you. I am grateful for this program.” (Cumberland)

“Awesome.” (Cumberland)

“More money, more money!” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is wonderful - a big help.” (Cumberland)

“I would like to say that this supplement really helps the teachers that were working two jobs just to make ends meet. It also provides us with stability at our current employment.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you for thinking of us, our betterment, and the children’s as well.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you for all you do to help us as educators and for getting us where we need to be.” (Cumberland)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful and a great idea. It really helps the teachers to feel more appropriated.” (Cumberland)

“Thank you, the AWARD\$ program really has made my personal life and work life easier.” (Davidson)

“Thanks.” (Davidson)

“Thank you for supporting programs like this.” (Davidson)

“Thank you very much.” (Davidson)

“Thank you for providing the extra income.” (Davie)

“I look forward to getting the money and have plans for it before it arrives.” (Davie)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful and much appreciated. Thank you.” (Duplin)

“I appreciate Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$.” (Duplin)

“Thanks, it means a lot.” (Duplin)

“Division of Child Development and Early Education is doing a wonderful job.” (Duplin)

“I’d like to tell the Division of Child Development and Early Education to continue funding the program and let them know how much of a financial difference they are making in teachers’ lives. Are there other programs to help with advanced degrees like a MA?” (Durham)

“Thank you for such a great gift. I hope it continues because it’s a huge help and great recognition!” (Durham)

“Thank you and it truly does help a lot.” (Durham)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very useful and I’m grateful for it!” (Durham)

“I want to say thank you.” (Durham)

“I’d like to thank the Division of Child Development and Early Education for the program and for making early childhood educators feel appreciated.” (Durham)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a great way to let staff know they’re appreciated.” (Forsyth)

“Reconsider the 6-month time period requirement and find a way to just reward teachers without all the requirements that don’t involve education continuation.” (Forsyth)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps pay for classes when you have reached your financial limit.” (Gaston)

“The AWARD\$ supplement makes it more rewarding to work in a field of education that gets overlooked. Teachers don’t make large amounts of money each check and this is greatly needed when it comes.” (Gates)

“Thank you.” (Granville)

“Thank you so much for seeing us for what we’re worth and helping take some financial stress off our plates. I truly feel well taken care of and appreciate the much-needed funds.” (Granville)

“I really appreciate the AWARD\$ supplement!!” (Granville)

“Thank you so much. The one check I have received so far has been life changing.” (Granville)

“Thanks very much.” (Guilford)

“Keep it coming.” (Guilford)

“Thank you very, very much!” (Guilford)

“I love the AWARD\$ supplement, it is very helpful and seems to come right on time.” (Guilford)

“Thanks. It is very comforting to know that we are really appreciated.” (Guilford)

“Keep it coming, very much appreciated.” (Guilford)

“Keep it coming.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a wonderful thing. It has helped out the kids and me.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful.” (Guilford)

“It’s an awesome opportunity to help teachers and to help their families.” (Guilford)

“The Division of Child Development and Early Education is great at what they are doing and hopefully they can serve more people.” (Guilford)

“Keep it coming, it helps.” (Guilford)

“Perfectly timed.” (Guilford)

“I would like to say thank you, it’s a big help. In most cases we are children's beginning to pre-kindergarten and head start.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ truly helps me feel appreciated.” (Guilford)

“I appreciate the incentive to continue providing excellent care and education to young children.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ supplement is a blessing! Thank you!” (Guilford)

“It has been a life saver in terms of paying bills and helping maintain my household.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for the supplement, it is a very big help.” (Guilford)

“I really appreciate what they are doing to help our struggling teachers in the early childhood classrooms.” (Guilford)

“Thank you and I hope it continues.” (Guilford)

“Thank you, it's very important.” (Guilford)

“I’d just like to say thank you very much.” (Guilford)

“I thank you for making funds available for hard working educators.” (Guilford)

“The AWARD\$ supplement has been very beneficial to my livelihood and to the support of my classroom. It has also helped me to feel like someone is standing up for me as a toddler teacher and that my job does matter and makes an impact.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for offering the supplement and for recognizing the importance of providing additional income for hard working infant-toddler teachers.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for making me feel worthy and appreciated.” (Guilford)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a good program.” (Guilford)

“It’s a great way to show early childhood educators that they are awesome and the incentive is much appreciated.” (Guilford)

“Thank you so much for this bonus. It has helped me to have money for my wedding coming up. Without the AWARD\$ check, I doubt we could pay for it on our own.” (Guilford)

“Thank you!” (Guilford)

“Are there other programs for infant and toddler teachers?” (Guilford)

“Not only did it help my classroom but it makes me feel like someone sees my good work and I deserve something a little extra. I really appreciate it. It also makes me feel like all my education isn't a waste.” (Guilford)

“It is a start in the right direction for the help that child care teachers need.” (Guilford)

“Thanks!!!” (Guilford)

“Thank you!!!!” (Guilford)

“Thanks for supporting our voices about funds to help educators feel appreciated.” (Guilford)

“I would like to tell them thank you! It is well appreciated!” (Guilford)

“This AWARD\$ supplement helps me as a single mother raise my children. I have my Education and this supplement helps make up for the lack of pay my company offers me.” (Guilford)

“The other recipients, my family, and I are so grateful for this program. Thank you so much for offering this program for teachers in the early childhood field. It is truly a blessing.” (Guilford)

“I would like to say this AWARD\$ supplement helps with bills that occur during the year and it also helps supplement our income.” (Guilford)

“Please keep supporting us!!!” (Guilford)

“Keep it going. It is a great program for those that qualify.” (Guilford)

“It’s very helpful to infant and toddler teachers, it makes us feel appreciated.” (Guilford)

“I appreciate everything that you all do and are going to do.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for appreciating early childhood teachers, especially infant-toddler teachers.” (Guilford)

“Thank you. This supplement has helped me to purchase materials and helped me to teach the children.” (Guilford)

“Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart. This supplement has blessed my family financially. Thanks to you, I am able to repair my car this year. I hope the AWARD\$ program will continue to be available to dedicated infant-toddler teachers in the future.” (Guilford)

“Thank you so much.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for thinking of us and helping us see there is more out there.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to continue my education and for allowing me and my family to be almost debt free.” (Guilford)

“Thank you for all that you do.” (Halifax)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a blessing.” (Harnett)

“Thanks.” (Harnett)

“This supplement is very helpful in many ways.” (Harnett)

“Thanks.” (Haywood)

“Thank you, this has really helped my family.” (Haywood)

“Thank you so much!!!” (Henderson)

“Thank you so much, it has really helped me.” (Iredell)

“I am very appreciative.” (Iredell)

“It is very helpful.” (Johnston)

“Thank you!!! It is greatly appreciated!” (Johnston)

“Thank you!” (Johnston)

“Thank you so much for your support and supplements that are being awarded to the teachers who are eligible for the program. It helps them financially and with school resources/materials for classrooms, etc. Thank you for recognizing our hard work of teaching little minds to succeed in a big world!” (Lee)

“Thanks.” (Lee)

“Thanks.” (Lenoir)

“It is great that we get one to help in certain areas.” (Lenoir)

“Thank you so much for coming up with this program. It helps make our lives a little better in more than one way.” (Lenoir)

“The supplement that you provide is very helpful. It helps teachers with buying resources for their classroom.” (Lenoir)

“Thank you so much, it has helped me a lot.” (Lenoir)

“Thank you! It is appreciated.” (Lincoln)

“I hope it keeps going!” (Lincoln)

“I would like to thank them for this supplement. The supplement has been a great benefit because it has helped me not only to get materials for my classroom, but it has also helped me financially.” (Lincoln)

“Thank you so much.” (Macon)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful, and I want to say thank you for the help financially.” (Macon)

“I thank you.” (Macon)

“Thank you so much for a wonderful program. It is very much appreciated.” (Macon)

“Thank you.” (Macon)

“Thank you so much for this program.” (Macon)

“It has meant so much to me. I have told others about it so they feel encouraged to complete their studies and become even better teachers.” (Macon)

“Thanks.” (McDowell)

“Well done. It is very much appreciated.” (McDowell)

“It’s a great reward.” (McDowell)

“Thank you!” (McDowell)

“I am very appreciative of the funds for AWARD\$ and hope it will continue to be offered.” (McDowell)

“Thank you for helping me with my self-esteem. It is even noticed by the children in my classroom. Being a little happier, we sing and create more songs!” (McDowell)

“Thank you for remembering us as teachers.” (McDowell)

“Thank you!” (McDowell)

“Thank you so much for helping make our pay better.” (McDowell)

“Keep this AWARD\$ supplement for teachers, but also find a way to help other teachers in 3 to 5 year old classes as well. All teachers could benefit from this supplement.” (McDowell)

“Thank you for recognizing the important work of teachers who work with infants and toddlers.” (McDowell)

“Thank you for being there for me, the support is very needed.” (Mecklenburg)

“It’s helpful, beneficial, and motivational.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank You!!!!” (Mecklenburg)

“The supplemental income is a blessing to those who have dedicated their time and energy into a field with lower pay than most other careers.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you for the supplement.” (Mecklenburg)

“The supplement should also be based on the number of years in the field along with education.” (Mecklenburg)

“In this field we are often underpaid despite educational backgrounds. It is so great to have that balanced out through these bonuses. I feel like obtaining my degree was worthwhile financially. My degree bettered me as a teacher, and now I can see the monetary reward as well.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“It’s a great benefit for teachers in the field that are passionate about their job but are struggling to make ends meet.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“I’m thankful and satisfied with the AWARD\$ funds that are given. It’s good to be recognized in this manner.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thanks so much for your generosity and support. I would not be in this field at the present without this supplement.” (Mecklenburg)

“I would like to say thank you for starting Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$. It is a financial blessing, because I don't make much money, and it helps me get caught up on my bills throughout the year.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you and it is truly appreciated.” (Mecklenburg)

“I think that Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a wonderful program and I hope it continues.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you very, very much for helping us!!! Teaching has always been my passion, unfortunately it isn't a job that lets single mothers thrive. The supplements are very nice and greatly appreciated!!” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you. I really appreciate you giving out this award.” (Mecklenburg)

“I truly appreciate it.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you for making teachers like myself feel appreciated for all that we do in early childhood.” (Mecklenburg)

“It's great!” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“I am very thankful for the award and please continue the incentive.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank You!” (Mecklenburg)

“It is greatly appreciated.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you so much. It is really a blessing to get this supplement. I really appreciate it!!” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you so much for helping infant-toddler teachers.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thanks for all your support!” (Mecklenburg)

“I want to thank all of the people that make this important help possible. Thanks and God bless you and your family.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thanks so much for helping such an unappreciated profession get more of what it deserves. More financial compensation!” (Mecklenburg)

“We really appreciate your efforts in helping teachers, especially infant-toddler teachers. It has helped me a lot in many ways I can't explain.” (Mecklenburg)

“It is good and a start to hopefully get better each year.” (Mecklenburg)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is an excellent way to assist teachers. Child care teachers' pay is very low so this does help in more ways than one. Thanks.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thanks, I will be working towards my master's degree.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you for giving us the opportunity to receive extra funds and help better our program.” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you!!!! This has been a huge help to my family and me!” (Mecklenburg)

“Thank you.” (Mecklenburg)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is appreciated very much.” (Mecklenburg)

“I would like to thank them for the AWARD\$ incentive, because it does make you feel more appreciated, and that you are making a difference in a child's life.” (Montgomery)

“It meant a whole lot to me to know someone is on our side.” (Montgomery)

“Thank you for the opportunity and for giving out the AWARD\$ supplement.” (Montgomery)

“Thank you!” (Montgomery)

“Continue to do the great job that you are doing. I thank you so much for everything.” (Montgomery)

“Keep up the good work.” (Moore)

“It is very helpful and greatly appreciated.” (Moore)

“Thanks for caring about our needs.” (Moore)

“I would like to say thank you for everything that you have done with the program, it has blessed me.” (Moore)

“The supplement is very appreciated.” (Moore)

“I am so thankful and appreciative of the program. I hope it continues to give educators hope and faith in the field they love so much.” (Moore)

“Thanks for working hard to make this AWARD\$ program available for us.” (Moore)

“Thank you for appreciating us as teachers.” (Moore)

““Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has been a big help to me.” (Moore)

“Thank you. I really appreciate the help.” (Moore)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ comes in handy for all your needs.” (Moore)

“Thank you for caring enough to show that we are appreciated and that sometimes there is a need even when the individual never says anything, again thanks.” (Moore)

“I think is a great to have this extra money. It makes me feel important and appreciated working in early childhood education.” (Moore)

“Thank you for this program.” (Moore)

“Thanks.” (Moore)

“We truly appreciate the AWARD\$ supplement. Thank you for caring for us. Please keep it going, you just don’t know how much you're helping.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for adding financial value to my chosen profession!” (New Hanover)

“I appreciate the recognition for the importance of early childhood education and my job.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you, thank you, thank you.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for all you have done!” (New Hanover)

“Thank you, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart!!!! I truly hope you will be able to continue the AWARD\$ supplement.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for your support. It has been a big financial help for my family.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for recognizing my field. I love working with younger children and to have someone take part in helping the teachers is a big deal to me.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you.” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for doing this! I feel like the money benefited not only myself and my family, but my classroom and school!” (New Hanover)

“Thank you for seeing the importance of infant and toddler teachers!” (New Hanover)

“Thank you.” (Northampton)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is extremely helpful.” (Onslow)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very beneficial.” (Orange)

“Thank you very much.” (Orange)

“Thank you, I’m hoping that it is something you will continue.” (Orange)

“It is very important to me and helpful.” (Orange)

“It is a great program.” (Orange)

“Thank you for believing in us and giving us help.” (Orange)

“Thank you so much! It really meant a lot to receive this supplement!” (Orange)

“Thank you so much.” (Orange)

“Keep up the great work.” (Orange)

“Thanks for speaking out for teachers.” (Orange)

“Thank you.” (Orange)

“I think it’s a wonderful program.” (Pasquotank)

“This has been the best thing that's happened to me since working with day care centers. Thanks for seeing the need to provide this supplement.” (Person)

“Thanks.” (Pitt)

“Thank you.” (Pitt)

“Thank you so much!!! It is very much needed and appreciated.” (Pitt)

“Thank you so much for lifting my financial situation off my shoulders.” (Pitt)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very much appreciated.” (Randolph)

“Thanks very much.” (Robeson)

“Thank you.” (Robeson)

“I want to thank you for this program, it brought a lot of ease to my home. I was honored to receive the AWARD\$ supplement for doing a job that I love.” (Robeson)

“Thanks for making this possible.” (Robeson)

“I think this is a good award that they are providing for teachers.” (Robeson)

“It’s great for the teachers. It's helpful for their needs.” (Robeson)

“I would like to thank you for the supplement.” (Robeson)

“Thanks so much for being a blessing for myself and other teachers who appreciate this award as well.” (Robeson)

“Thank you, it is well needed.” (Robeson)

“It has made a huge difference for the teachers that have received these funds. I say well done and thank you.” (Robeson)

“Thank you so very much, this supplement helps me in so many ways.” (Robeson)

“I would love to thank you for choosing me to receive the AWARD\$ supplement, because as a struggling teacher, it comes in handy.” (Robeson)

“Thank you! Please help advocate for the future of this supplement! It supports my family and my job!” (Robeson)

“Thanks for your help and all you do for us as teachers and parents.” (Robeson)

“Y'all are great people and y'all have made a difference in a lot of lives.” (Robeson)

“Thank you very much.” (Rockingham)

“Thank you for AWARD\$.” (Rowan)

“It is greatly appreciated!” (Rowan)

“It is greatly appreciated. Our families and the children in our care benefit from it a great deal.” (Rowan)

“The AWARD\$ is a stress reliever in many ways! Thank you!” (Rowan)

“Thank you, it is appreciated.” (Sampson)

“Thank you for the opportunity.” (Sampson)

“Thank you. It’s a blessing and it helps out a whole lot.” (Sampson)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a great help.” (Sampson)

“Thanks and you’re greatly appreciated.” (Sampson)

“Thank you!” (Stanly)

“I am very grateful.” (Transylvania)

“Thank you for the incentive.” (Union)

“Thank you, it’s more than appreciated.” (Union)

“It was a great idea to remember all underpaid teachers, because they are unappreciated for the hard work they do.” (Union)

“Thank you so much!” (Union)

“Thank you!” (Union)

“I think Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a good program that helps supplement teachers’ salaries.” (Union)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has helped get new materials for my classroom, like books and also outside activities. We also bought plants to grow with the children. Thank you so much! I got myself a new coffee maker.” (Union)

“I truly appreciate you making this possible and it is a great benefit for my family and the children I provide care for. This is a great supplement to help balance the pay we receive.” (Union)

“I am grateful for the supplement I was awarded.” (Vance)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is a very rewarding program.” (Wake)

“Thank you, it is much needed and very appreciated.” (Wake)

“Thank you. Keep it coming because it is rewarding to the kids as well as us as teachers.” (Wake)

“It has helped me out a lot. I’ve only received it once but it is very helpful.” (Wake)

“Thank you.” (Wake)

“Thank you for providing Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ for myself and other educators.” (Wake)

“Keep it coming.” (Wake)

“It has helped my financial issues.” (Wake)

“Thank you so much for recognizing early childhood educators. It is important to do what you can to supplement our low pay.” (Wake)

“Thanks for thinking about those who often feel unnoticed.” (Wake)

“I would like to simply say THANK YOU!!! It has allowed me to continue to be a superhero for my students and take on the world through education.” (Wake)

“Please continue this incentive! It is much needed as the requirements of early childhood educators continue to grow but the projected salaries do not!” (Wake)

“Thank you!!!” (Wake)

“Thank you.” (Wake)

“I am so very thankful for the AWARD\$ supplement! I love my work as an educator, however the cost of attending school is so expensive. I wish I had known about this program before my student loans!” (Wake)

“Thank you very much for the supplement and thinking about the infant-toddler teachers. Your program is very helpful.” (Wake)

“Thank you!” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ can help teachers in the right situation with financial needs if they receive their compensation.” (Wake)

“Thank you so much for the creation of this program.” (Wake)

“Thank you.” (Wake)

“Thank you very much. What a blessing!” (Wake)

“Thank You.” (Wake)

“Thank you, I give you a hands up.” (Wake)

“Please don't stop! This was very helpful to my family.” (Wake)

“I would like to thank them for recognizing me and providing me with the supplement.” (Wake)

“Thanks for the help.” (Wake)

“AWARD\$ is just great.” (Wake)

“I believe Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful and a great idea to help those working in the classroom to stay motivated and appreciated.” (Wake)

“I really appreciate the supplement. The pay incentive really makes you feel good about staying in the early education field.” (Wake)

“I want to thank you because Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ has been very helpful in my life when I was struggling with financial debts. It has been a blessing for my family.” (Wake)

“I’m very thankful for this supplement.” (Wake)

“It helps me financially.” (Wake)

“Thank you.” (Wake)

“As everyone knows, child care workers do not make much money. I was very disappointed when WAGE\$ was cancelled in my county, but I am so happy that you started this AWARD\$ program. It really makes me feel appreciated. I am still working in the same center and same two year old class that I have been for the last 12 years, and when one can get this kind of award, it is really encouraging me to stay at this center.” (Wake)

“I would like to tell them I appreciate their prompt service in processing all the applications. I am so thankful and grateful for their diligent service. Thank you so much for this extra incentive. It makes me feel so appreciated. God bless and I pray the funding will continue in the future.” (Wake)

“Thank you for all your support. I love my job and working with my kiddos!” (Wake)

“Thank you so much. It really means a lot to me to be recognized.” (Wake)

“I would like to thank you for seeking such a grant to help assist teachers that are normally overlooked when it comes to funding.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is important and very needed. It makes people like me feel like what we do does matter, that it is important, and that others see it.” (Wake)

“The supplement has helped me pay for tuition and I am also going to be able to start a savings, which is something that I could not afford to do before. I also have been able to maintain insurance for myself with the help of the supplement.” (Wake)

“Thanks.” (Wake)

“Thank you.” (Wake)

“I appreciate your help in helping my family be more stable.” (Wake)

“Thanks.” (Wake)

“Thank you so much! Every bit helps!” (Wake)

“I really appreciate the funding.” (Wake)

“Thank you very much. The supplement has helped me tremendously. I love my job and my children, but the hourly rate of pay at my five star center is just not enough. I was making \$3.00 an hour MORE in retail. The supplement helps me find the motivation to stay in my position and be a part of the children’s lives. Thank you so very much.” (Wake)

“I really appreciate it, thank you very much!!! It feels good to be appreciated because I feel like most days we as early educators and good professionals are undervalued.” (Wake)

“I feel like you should give the AWARD\$ supplement to a person that has changed schools if they are still in the field.” (Wake)

“Thank you for recognizing the difference in recognition and pay in regards to working in an infant-toddler program.” (Wake)

“Just thank you!” (Wake)

“I’m very thankful!” (Wake)

“Thank you for this program.” (Wake)

“I greatly appreciate the program and I do hope that WAGES for Wake comes back, because all early childhood educators need the resources.” (Wake)

“I am very grateful and thankful for it.” (Wake)

“I feel it's a great program and very helpful. I just wish the funds were more.” (Wake)

“It feels good to be appreciated.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ made me feel appreciated.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps and a big thank you!!” (Wake)

“Thanks so much for this program. Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ helps me tremendously to provide for my home and classroom.” (Wake)

“These awards have helped me financially and takes the ease off of the stresses of my bills.” (Wake)

“Thank you!!” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is very helpful to my family.” (Wake)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is greatly appreciated and helps in numerous ways.” (Wake)

“I think it’s wonderful and encouraging.” (Watauga)

“I am extremely grateful for it.” (Watauga)

“Keep it coming, I’m so thankful.” (Wayne)

“Thanks.” (Wayne)

“Thank you so very much. This has helped me tremendously. Being a single parent, my income is strenuous sometimes. I appreciate any assistance I can get. It has also helped me bring new items into my classroom.” (Wayne)

“Thank you for making us feel like we are important to the community like school teachers.” (Wayne)

“Great job! Keep up the good work of supplying teachers with all that they need and can use in their lives and classroom!” (Wayne)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is helpful.” (Wayne)

“Thank you for thinking about me and encouraging me to soar on and grow with grace.” (Wayne)

“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ is great and I really appreciate it.” (Wilson)

“Very well done, but it needs to be distributed out into shorter months.” (Wilson)

“Thank you.” (Wilson)