



Delaware Education for a Global Economy:

Making Vision 2015 Work

***Transforming Early Childhood Education in Delaware:
Building Foundations of Change***

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Transformation



Olive Trees with Yellow Sun and Sky

Vincent Van Gogh

There are painters who transform the sun into a yellow spot, but there are others who, thanks to their art and intelligence, transform a yellow spot into the sun.

Pablo Picasso

Why Invest in Quality Early Childhood Care & Education?

- **400% to 700% Return on Investment**
 - Each dollar spent on early education saves society about \$4-\$7 down the road in other costs, such as incarceration and Medicaid.
- **Valued by Delaware Citizens**
 - 94% of Delaware citizens believe that all DE childcare and preschool educational programs should be held to high quality standards
 - 69% said they would be willing to pay more taxes to fund preschool for *all* children; 62% would be willing to pay more taxes to fund preschool for *low-income and poverty-level* households

Research on Quality Early Childcare and Education

- Contributes to children's readiness to learn and achieve as they enter kindergarten and elementary school;
- Contributes to a state's economic development by better enabling parents to pursue and retain employment as well as ultimately enabling children to be better prepared for the workforce and post-secondary education;
- Minimizes future social problems related to children's health and their need for special educational services; and,
- *Quality* teaching contributes more to children's achievement than any other single school factor.

Therefore.....

The short- and long-term benefits of *quality* early childhood education care and education are directly dependent upon how well teachers are prepared to care for and teach preschoolers.

Delaware's Challenge

In Delaware, too few pre-school educators are sufficiently prepared to effectively address the learning and development needs of children in their care.

Early Childhood Education Policy Tension



National Expectations

- “each group of children in an early childhood education and care program should be assigned a teacher who has a bachelor’s degree with specialized education related to early childhood.”

National Research Council Committee of Early Childhood Pedagogy

- Standards for ECE teachers
 - promoting child development and learning;
 - building family and community relationships;
 - observing, documenting, and assessing;
 - teaching and learning; and,
 - becoming a professional.

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Delaware Expectations

Learning experiences children ideally should have before they come to kindergarten

Seven developmental domains:

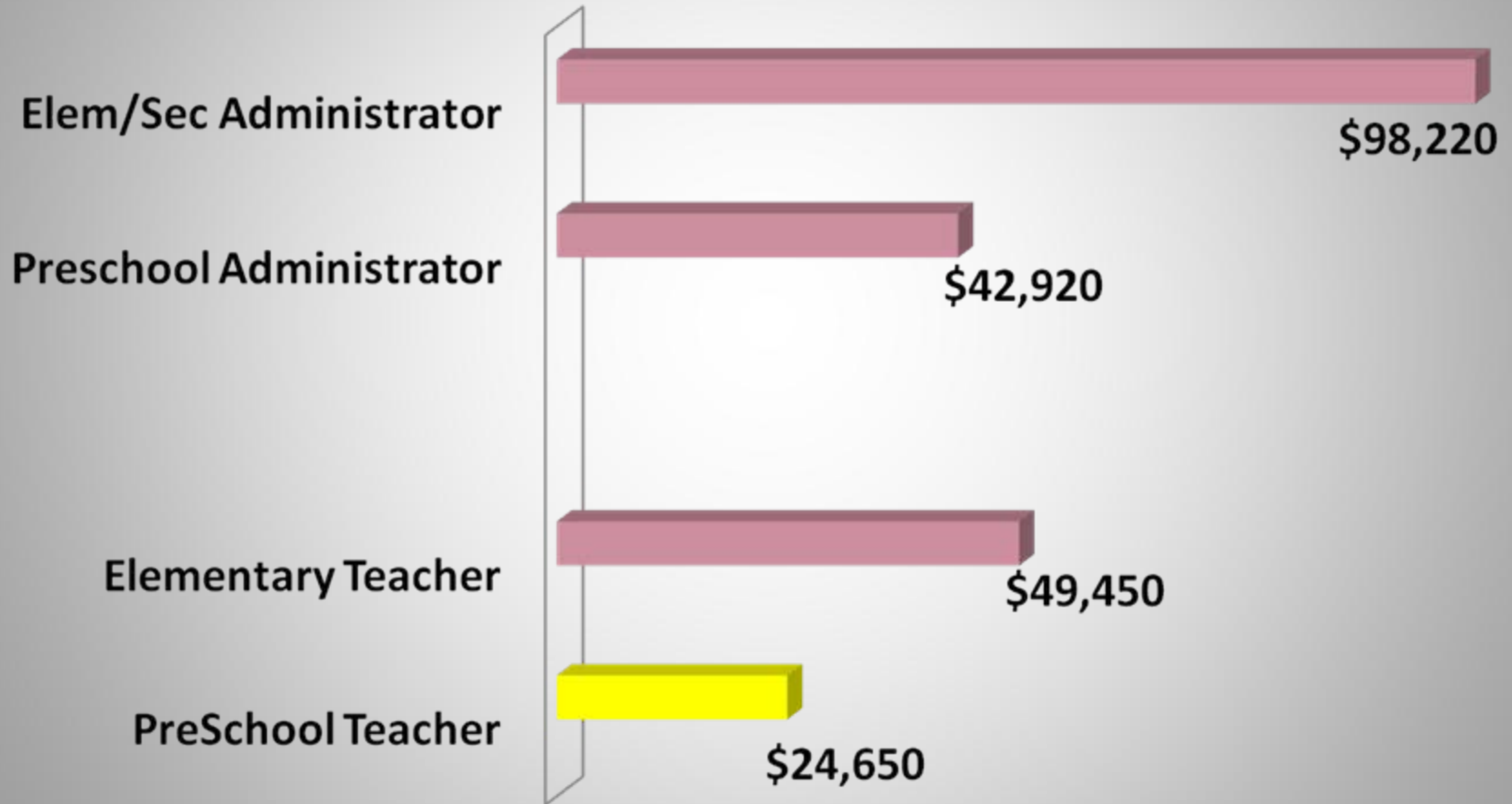
- language development
- mathematics
- science
- creative arts
- emotional & social development
- approaches to learning
- physical health & development

– *Delaware's Early Learning Foundations for School Success*

Early Childhood Education Policy Tension

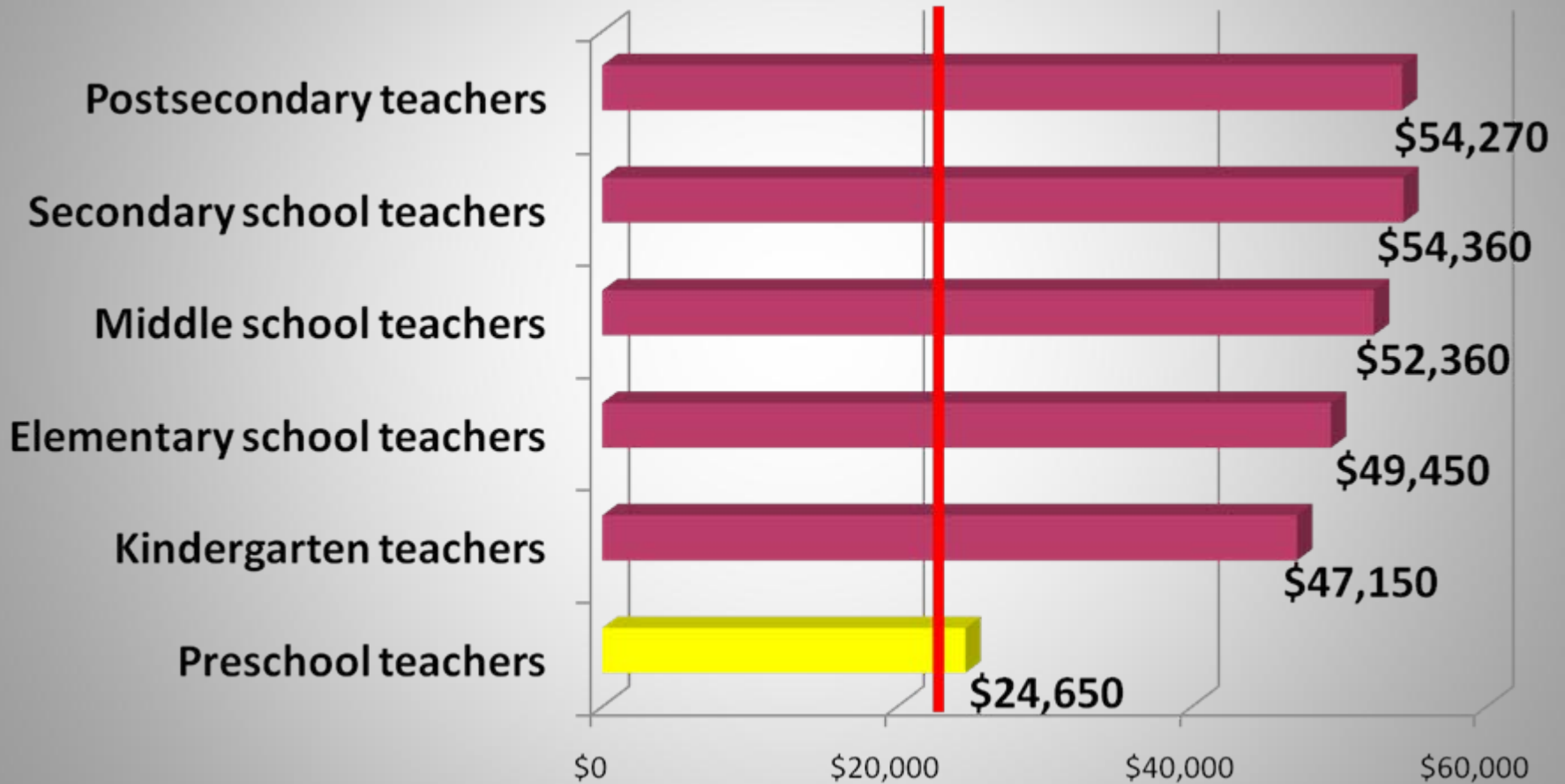


Preschool and k-12 Educators' Compensation Levels



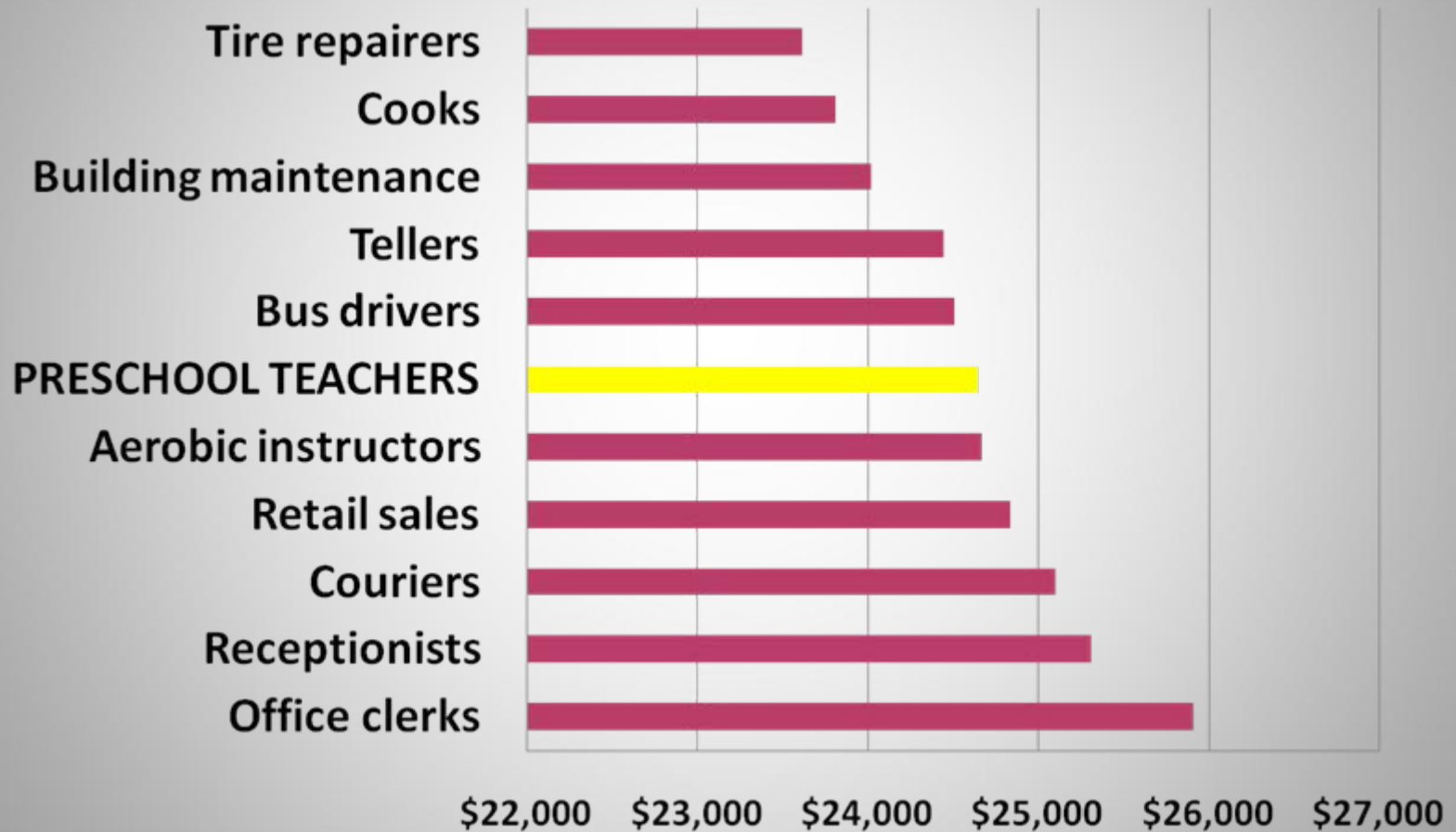
Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment & Wage reports for Delaware (May 2007)

Delaware Teachers' Compensation Levels



Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment & Wage reports for Delaware (May 2007)

DE Occupational Groups Similar to Preschool Teachers



Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment & Wage reports for Delaware (May 2007)

A Possible Result of Low Compensation?

“Programs have difficulty hiring qualified teachers...

93% of infant and toddler teachers, and 58% of teachers of children ages 3-5, have only a high school education; some lack literacy skills beyond a sixth grade level.”

– *Delaware’s Young Children: Early Success or Future Failure? -A Call to Action (May 2008)*

Next Steps

The education level of Delaware's early care and education workforce needs to be increased, at least to the associate degree level for all teachers and at least to the bachelor level for all lead teachers;

Education and training initiatives begun by the Delaware Early Care and Education Council need to be fully supported and funded.

Next Steps

Comprehensive education and training for early care and education directors needs to take place.

This includes training that is comparable to the leadership training available to school leaders through such programs as the Delaware Academy for School Leadership.

Next Steps

The direct compensation of the early care and education workforce needs to be restructured to bring their compensation in line with the expectations of their positions.

The expectations of early care and education professionals now mirrors that of teachers in the public school system. Their compensation should be commensurate to what is expected of them.

A Basic Foundation of Change

“If we want to dramatically increase the percentage of children ready to enter college or the workplace, we must ensure that all children have a fair start.”

A Vision 2015 Priority

“No genuine equality, no real freedom, no true manhood or womanhood can exist on any foundation save that of pecuniary independence.”

Susan B. Anthony