

DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE OF EARLY LEARNING:

ADDRESSING THE CRISIS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD
WORKFORCE

Rhian Allvin, CEO, NAEYC — May 9, 2017
Cleveland, Ohio



NAEYC Vision

All young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.

NAEYC Mission

NAEYC promotes high quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate and work on behalf of young children.

Strategic Priority: High Quality Early Learning

Children birth through age 8 have equitable access to developmentally high quality early learning.

Strategic Priority: The Profession

The early childhood education profession **exemplifies excellence** and is recognized as performing *critical role* in society.

EARLY LEARNING AS A MARKET PLACE

Young Children in the United States

- 24.7 million children in U.S. ages 0-5 (6.3% of population)
- 12.5 million (61%) of the 20.4 million children under 5 were in some type of regular child care arrangement
- 42% of eligible children served in Head Start preschool
- Over 1.3 million children attended state-funded pre-K, 1.1 million of them were four accounting for 4% of 3-year-olds and 28% of 4-year-olds.
- 2013—third consecutive year CCDBG participation fell, resulting in a 15-year low. Fewer children served than any time since 1998.

Source: childstats.gov, census.gov,
nccp.org, clasp.org, nieer.org

Types of Early Learning Settings

School
Sponsored
Child Care

Public Pre-K

Center Based
Child Care

Head Start

Family Child
Care Homes
(licensed and
certified)

Family, Friend
and Neighbor

Military Child
Care

The Marketplace

- Primarily Private Sector Business (85-90%)
- Most are Small Business
- Publicly operated sites are fewer than 5% of industry
- Industry totals approximately 300,000 sites

Source: Alliance for Early Childhood Finance

Industry Revenue and the Cost of Care

- Consumer Fees (families): 57% of total receipts
- Private (non-public, non-family): 3%
- Government Funding: 40%

Infant Care:

Center based: \$4,863 to \$16,430

Family child care: \$3,930 to \$11,046

4-year old Care:

Center-Based: \$4,312 to \$12,355

Family child care: \$3,704 to \$10,259

Source: Alliance for Early Childhood Finance

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS

Professionals

- 2 million in the workforce
- 1/2 with advanced degrees
- Average wage is \$10.40 per hour.

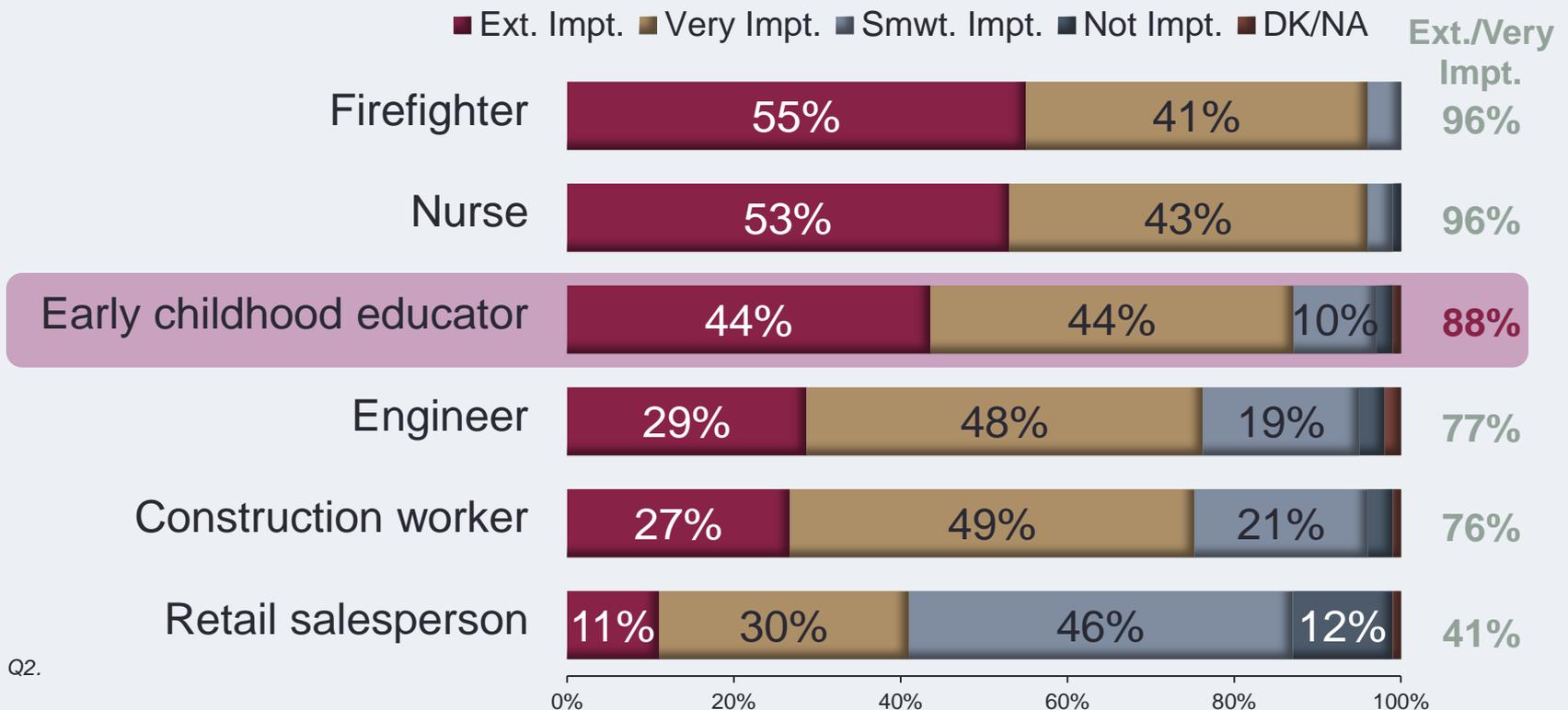
A Three-Pronged Approach



The Image of the Profession

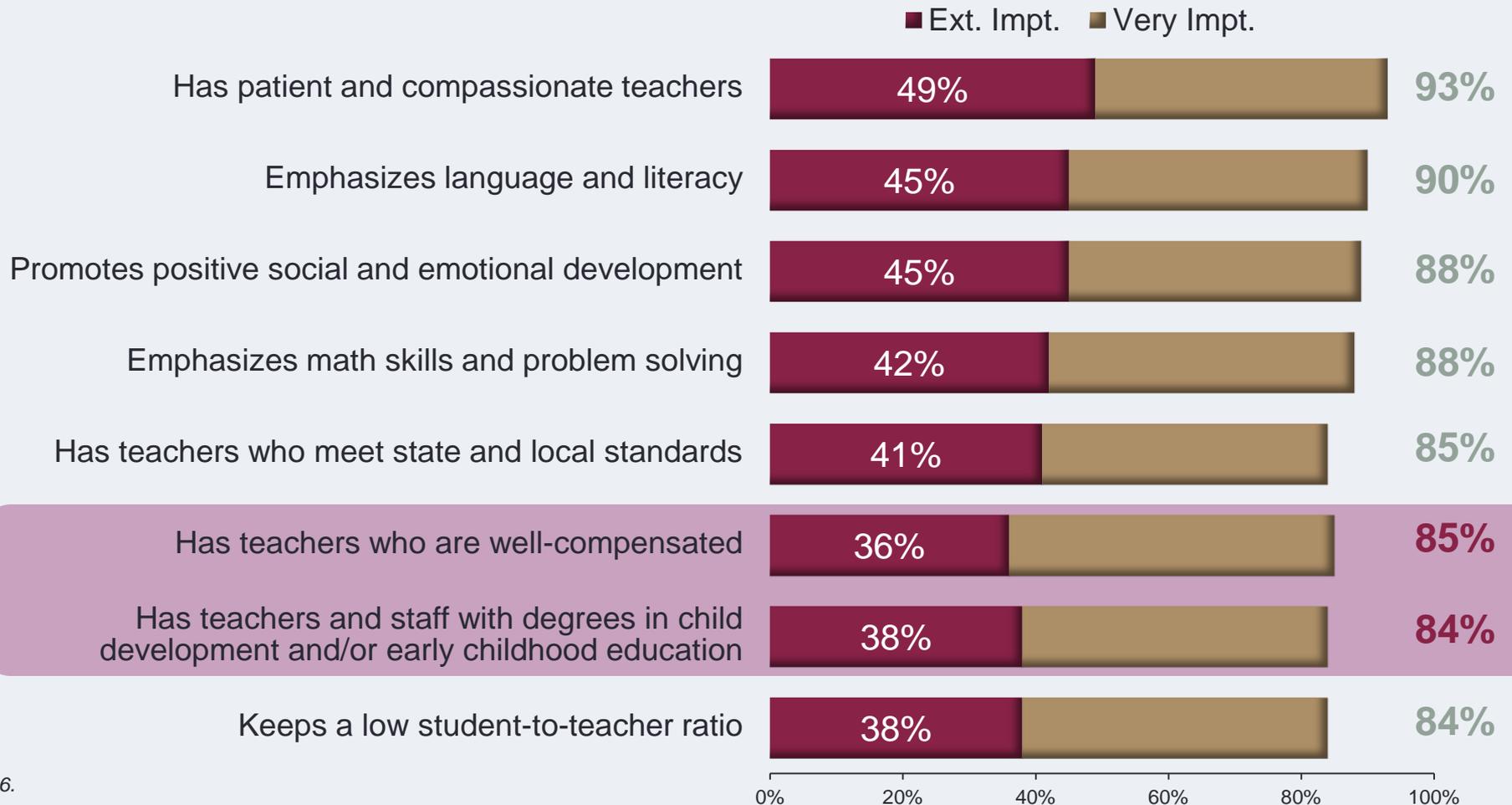
Voters view teaching young children as important work.

I'm going to read you a list of a variety of different kinds of workers that may be present in your community. Please tell me how you would rate the importance of each type of worker for your local community: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important.



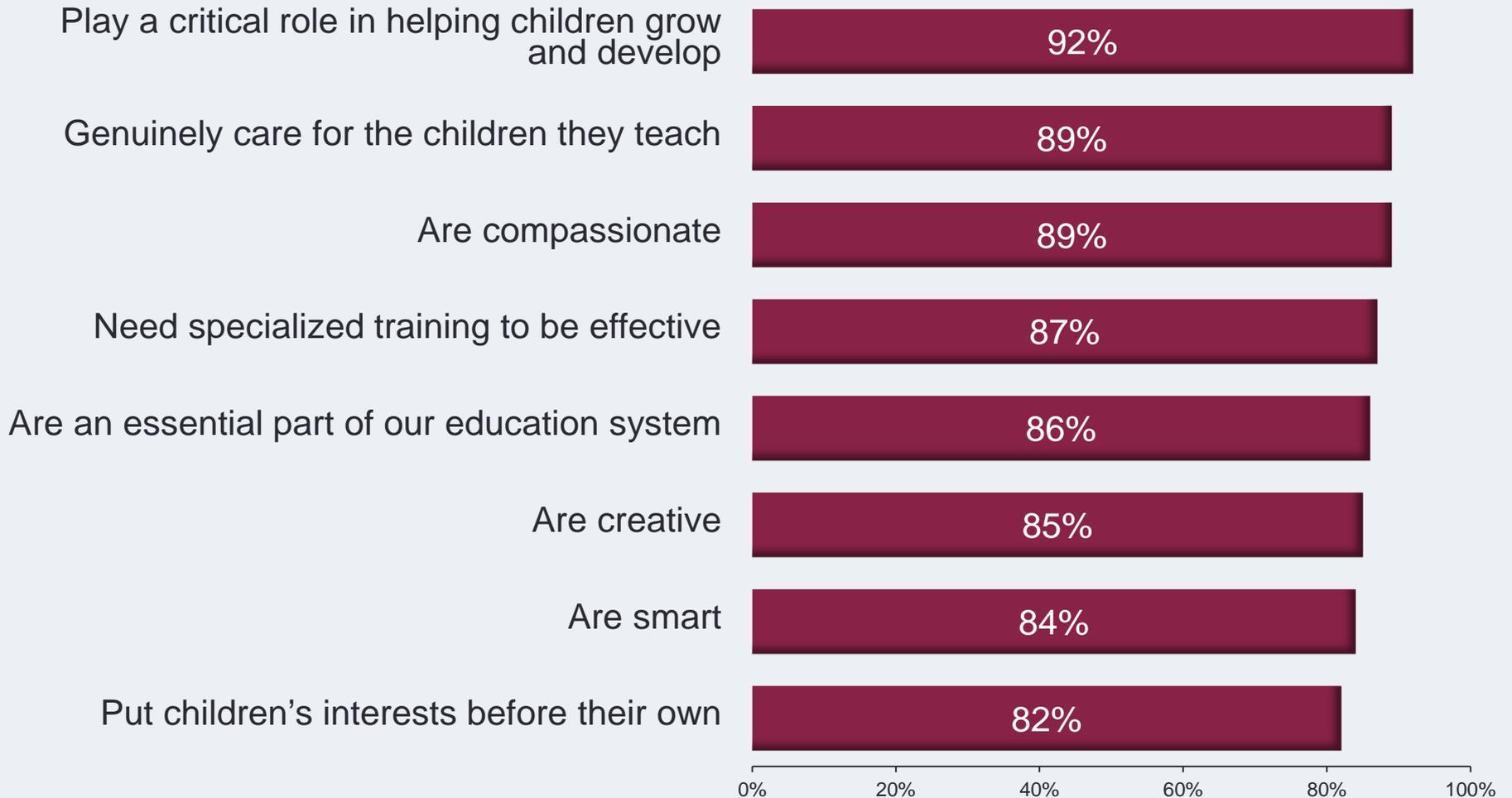
Voters recognize the connection between early childhood educators and quality – including compensation and degrees.

(% Rating Components of ECE Programs as Extremely/Very Important for Ensuring Quality)



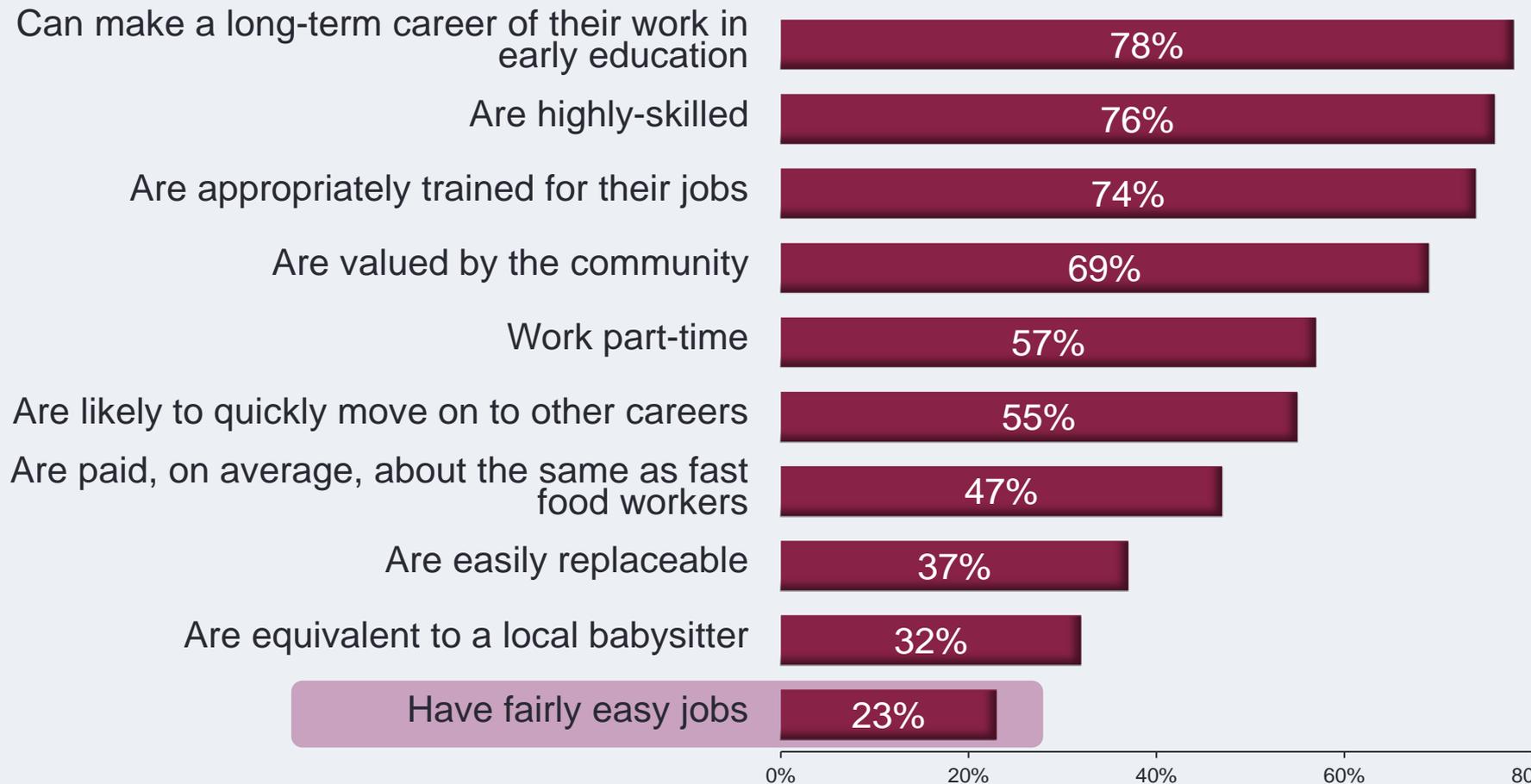
Voters recognize many positive attributes of early childhood educators and the role they play.

(% of Voters Saying Various Phrases are Accurate Descriptions of Early Childhood Educators)



Voters overwhelmingly *reject* the idea that early childhood educators have “easy jobs.”

(% of Voters Saying Various Phrases are Accurate Descriptions of Early Childhood Educators)



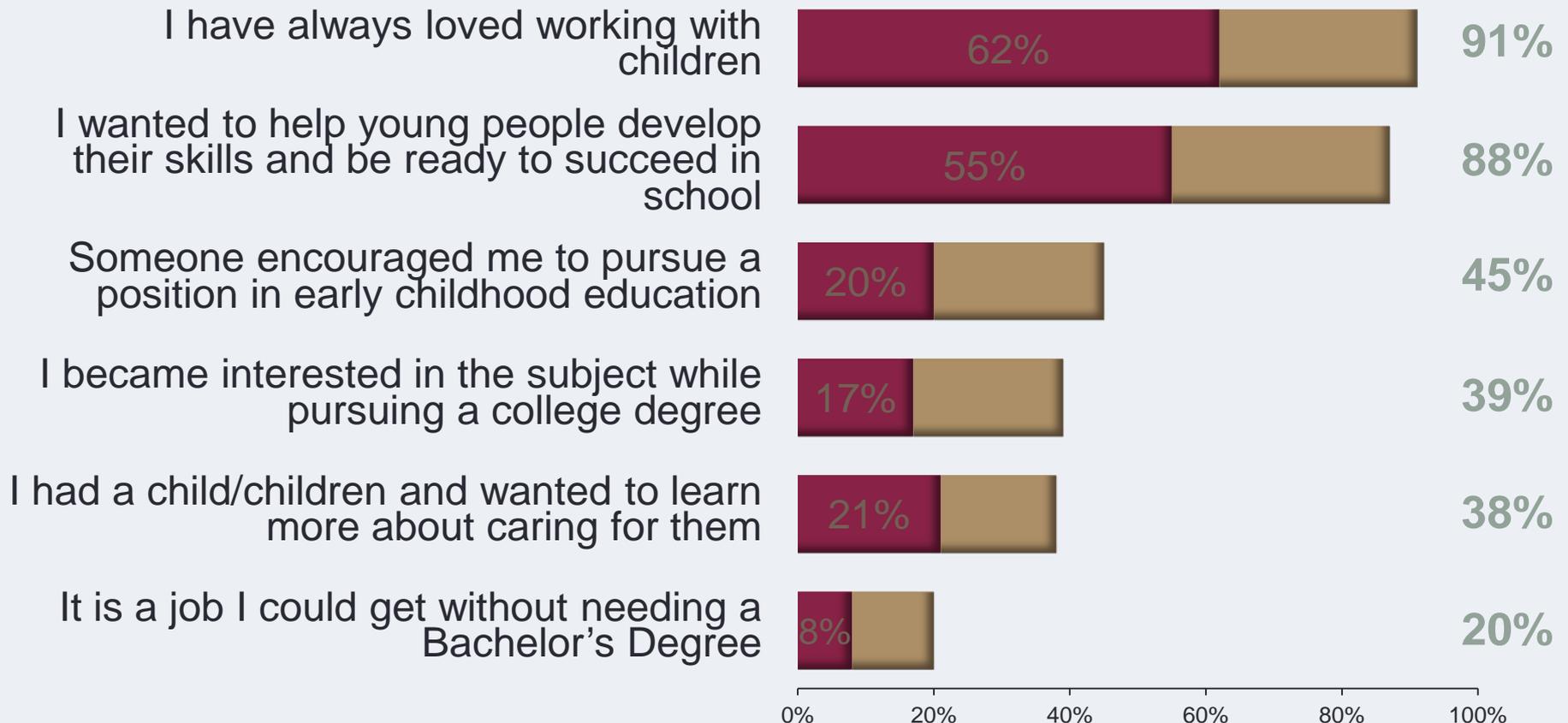
Q11. I'm going to read you a list of phrases that may or may not describe people who work as early childhood educators. Please tell me whether you feel each phrase is generally an accurate or an inaccurate description of early childhood educators.

Defining and Growing the Profession

Educators say the opportunity to work with children and help them succeed was what attracted them to the field.

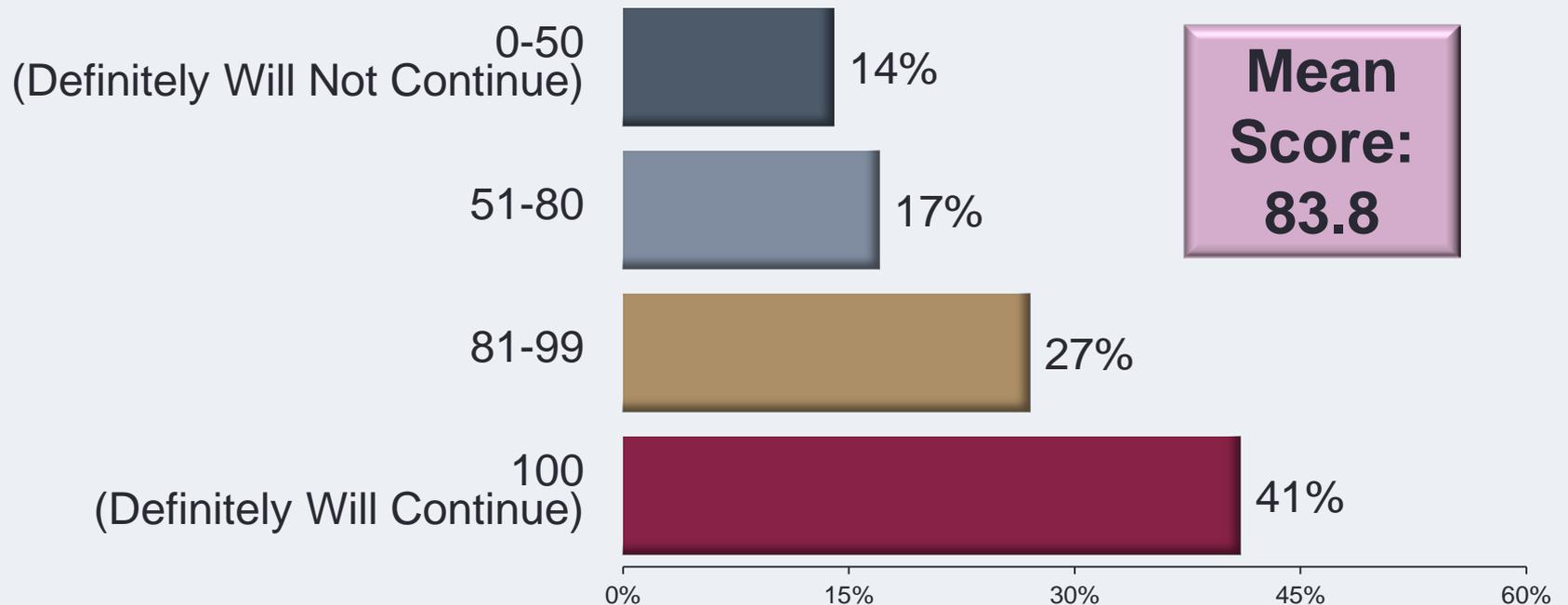
For each of the following reasons, please choose how important they were for you in choosing to become an early childhood educator?

■ Ext. Impt. ■ Very Impt.



The vast majority of educators say they want to make early childhood education their long-term career.

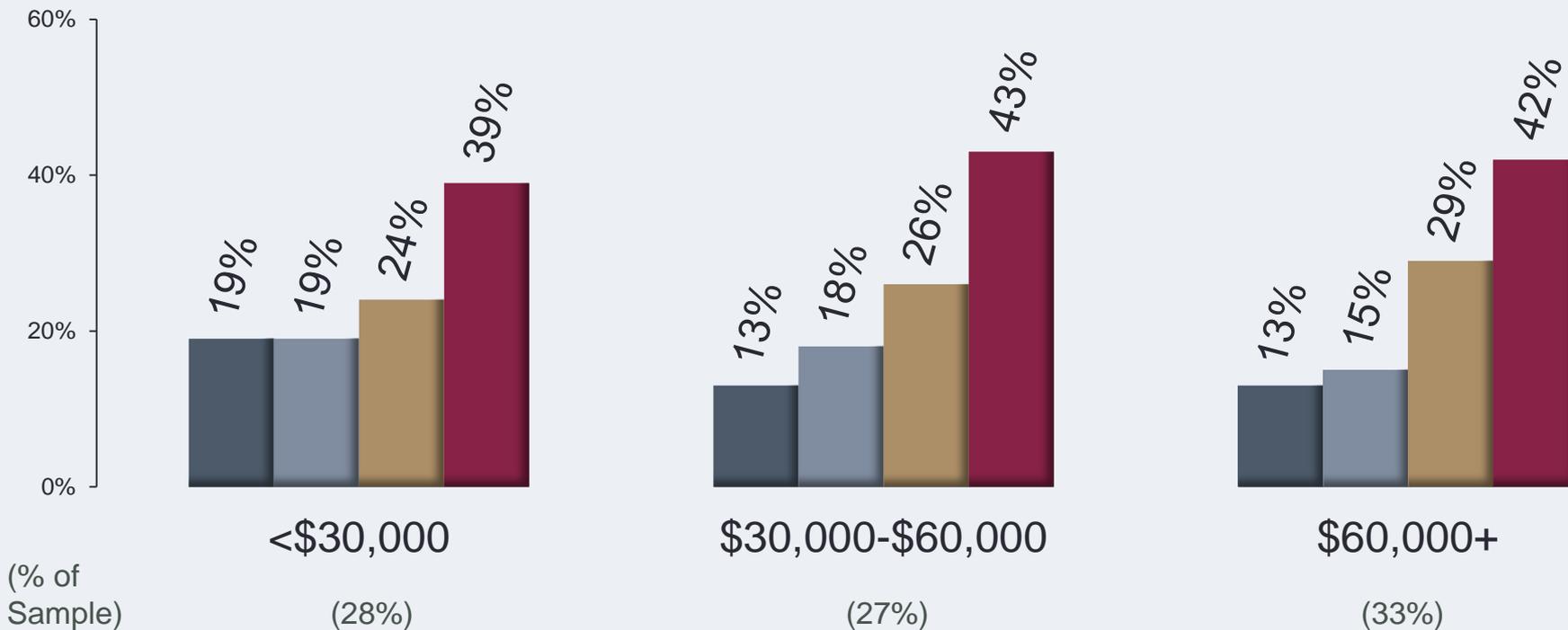
Do you plan to keep working for the long term as an early childhood educator serving children five or younger? Please rate the likelihood of early childhood education being your long-term career on a 0-100 scale, where 0 means you definitely will not continue in the field in the long term, 100 means you definitely will and 50 means you are unsure.



Educators with the lowest household incomes are somewhat more likely to expect to pursue other careers.

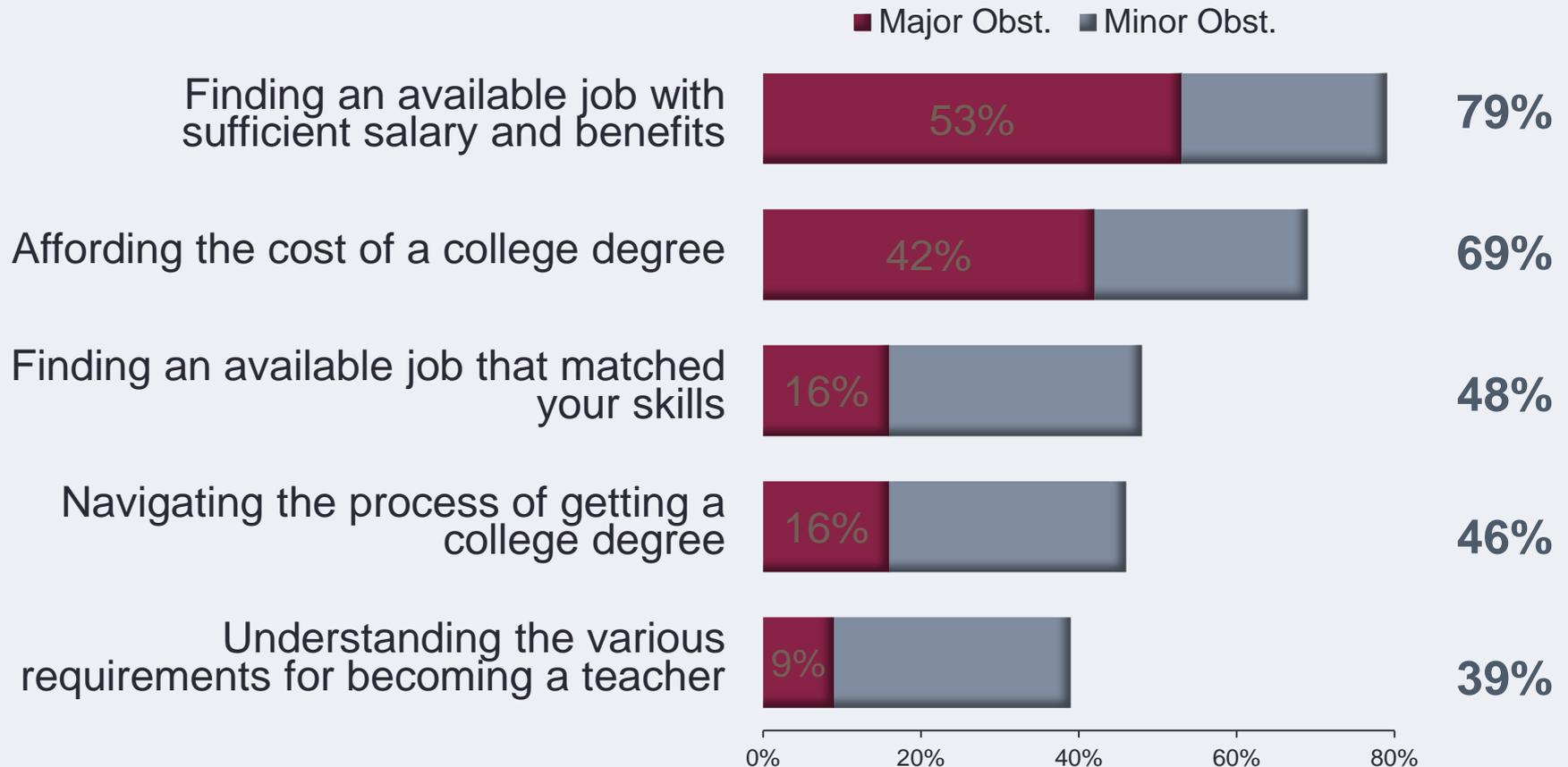
Interest in Continuing as an Educator, by Household Income

■ 0-50 (Definitely Will Not Continue) ■ 51-80 ■ 81-99 ■ 100 (Definitely Will Continue)



Educators say the lack of sufficient pay and benefits were the major obstacles to becoming an early childhood educator.

How much of an obstacle were each of the following challenges you faced in the process of becoming an early childhood educator? Would you say they were a major obstacle, minor obstacle, not an obstacle at all or you think it does not apply to you?



Low pay is seen as by far the biggest challenge facing current early childhood educators.

(% of Educators Labeling Factors a Challenge to Continuing in Their Profession)



Q23. Below you will find a list of things that some people consider to be challenges facing early childhood educators that have led some to switch to other professions. Please rate them in terms of how challenging they have been for you personally. The choices are: one of the biggest challenges, a big challenge, a small challenge, not a challenge at all.

Educators of color express more concern than do whites about mentoring and training.

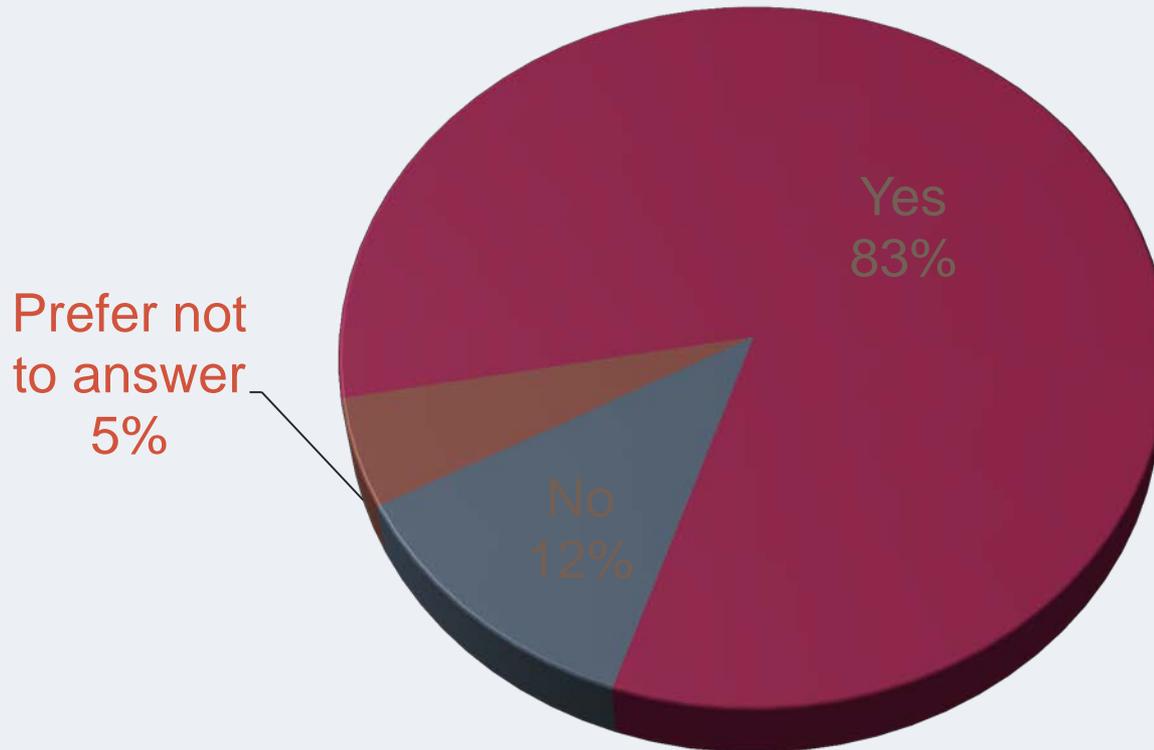
(% Labeling Each “A Big Challenge”)

Program Characteristics	All Educators	Latinos	African-Americans	Asians/ Pacific Islanders	Whites	Educators of Color
Low pay	84%	85%	84%	86%	84%	85%
Lack of respect for the importance and difficulty of the work you do	72%	65%	68%	75%	74%	69%
Lack of employment benefits, such as health care	62%	65%	61%	60%	62%	62%
Paperwork and bureaucracy	53%	58%	52%	57%	52%	55%
Lack of defined opportunities for professional advancement	53%	59%	57%	64%	51%	59%
Lack of mentoring and career guidance	40%	50%	44%	56%	37%	48%
Difficulty balancing the needs of your own family and working as an early childhood educator	38%	40%	36%	46%	37%	39%
Lack of opportunities for education and training to help prepare you to be a teacher	32%	47%	41%	37%	27%	43%
Difficult work schedule	29%	31%	28%	42%	27%	31%

Q23. Below you will find a list of things that some people consider to be challenges facing early childhood educators that have led some to switch to other professions. Please rate them in terms of how challenging they have been for you personally. The choices are: one of the biggest challenges, a big challenge, a small challenge, not a challenge at all.

Educators are very open to the concept of increased requirements...

The government may increase funding for early childhood education, including increasing pay for educators. Do you think it is fair to require current and future early childhood educators to meet a baseline set of qualifications in order to receive this higher salary and benefits?



Educators respond strongly to messages emphasizing their ability to make a difference in the lives of young children.

(% Very Convincing)

(REWARDING) Early childhood education is a very rewarding career. Educators have the ability to nurture, educate, and lay a foundation that will last a lifetime. Early childhood educators do not simply teach – they transform lives. **72%**

(ROLE MODELS) Early childhood educators are role models in the lives of the children they serve. Educators support children’s natural curiosity, help them solve problems, provide them with comfort, help them make new friends, follow rules, set boundaries, be an example in their lives and have fun. **71%**

(SCHOOL SUCCESS) Becoming an early childhood educator is an opportunity to lay the foundation for children’s school success. Studies routinely show that children who attend early childhood education programs with well-trained teachers enter kindergarten ready to learn, do better in school and have more productive lives. **69%**

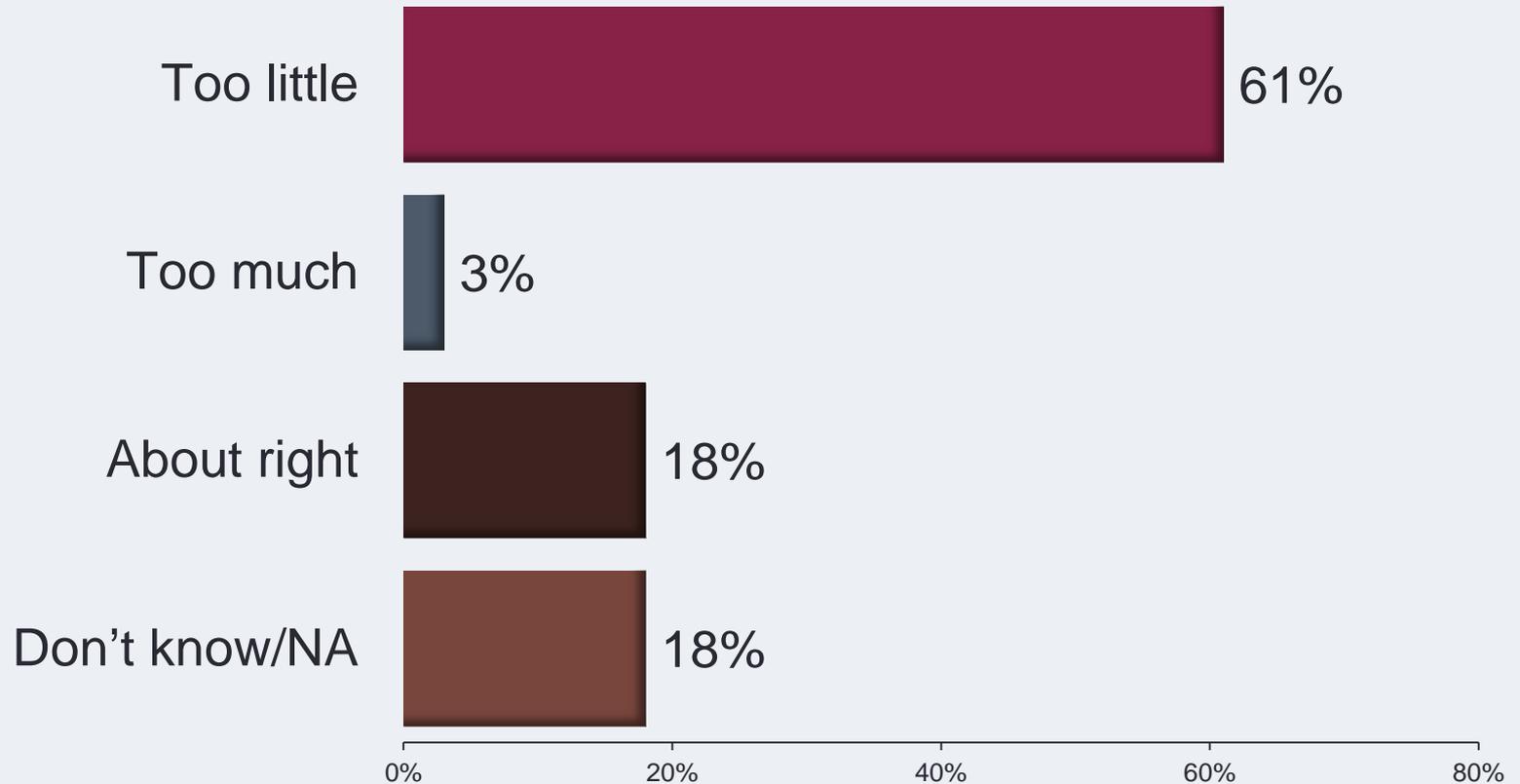
(MAGIC MOMENTS) Early childhood educators get to experience many magical moments every day when they see the pride on the face of a young child who has learned a new skill and they know they have made a difference in that child’s life. **67%**

Q29. Below are a series of statements encouraging people to consider a career as an early childhood educator. Please choose whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing as a reason to pursue a lifelong career in early childhood education. If you do not believe the statement, you can choose that also.

Investing in the Profession

Most voters believe that early childhood educators are paid too little.

Thinking of the early childhood educators who serve children in your community in the years before they enter kindergarten, do you think they are paid too little, too much or about right?



Voters are split on requiring degrees first or increasing pay first.

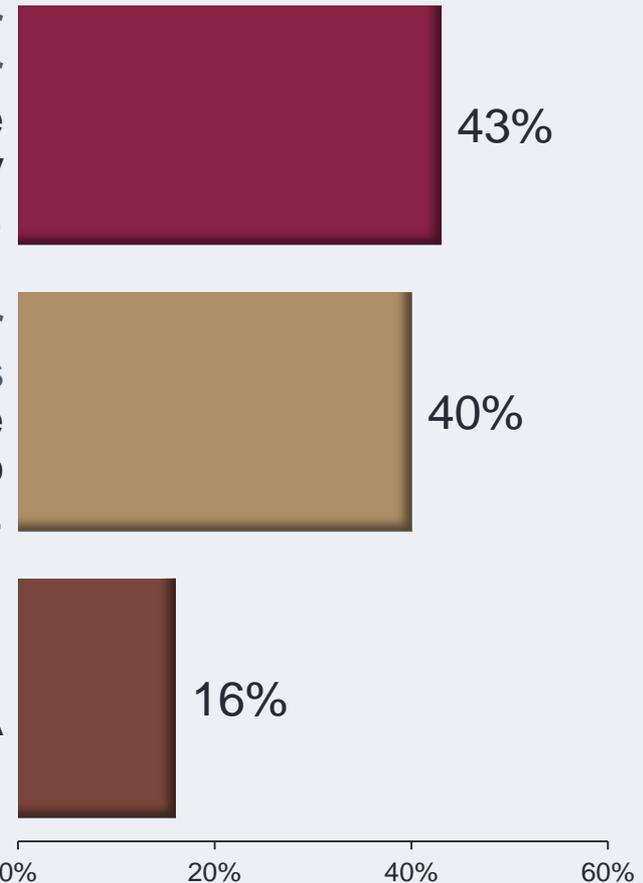
Which of the following statements about this idea comes closest to your opinion?

SOME/OTHER PEOPLE say we should **increase wages for early childhood educators before we require higher educational standards.** Talented people will never seek the education or training to be educators unless they know they can make a reasonable living at it.

OR

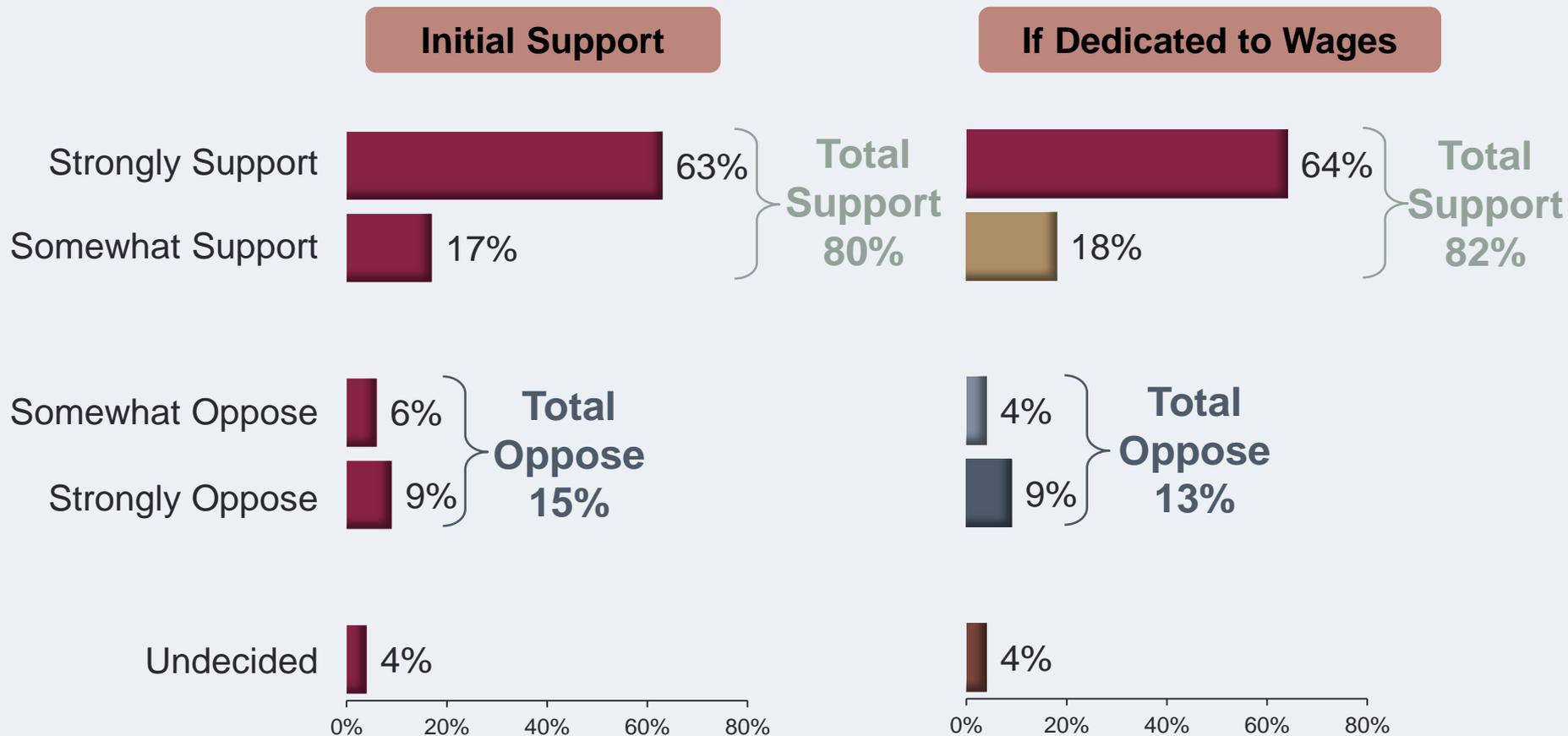
SOME/OTHER PEOPLE say we should **require higher educational standards for early childhood educators before we increase their wages.** We should be sure we have enough skilled and trained workers before we start to pay them more.

Both/Neither/Don't know/NA



Voters continue to support an investment in ECE with the understanding that it would increase wages.

I'd like to return to the idea I mentioned a few moments ago, of increasing federal/state to support early childhood education services, and make high-quality, affordable early education more available to parents. Suppose you knew that this additional funding would be primarily dedicated to increasing wages for early childhood educators, with the goal of reducing turnover in the field and recruiting and retaining more highly-qualified teachers.



Q7 Total/Q12 Total. Would you support or oppose this proposal to increase funding for early childhood education?

Voters see several compelling reasons to support wage increases for early childhood educators.

(% Very Convincing)

(BRAIN DEVELOPMENT) Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically during the first five years of life. This critical period is a window of opportunity to lay the foundation for all of the years that follow.

It takes appropriate salaries and benefits to recruit and retain the best educators to work with our children during this critical period of their development.

61%

(ROLE MODELS) Early childhood educators are role models in the lives of the children they serve. Educators support children's natural curiosity, help them solve problems, provide them with comfort, help them make new friends, follow rules, set boundaries, be an example in their lives and have fun.

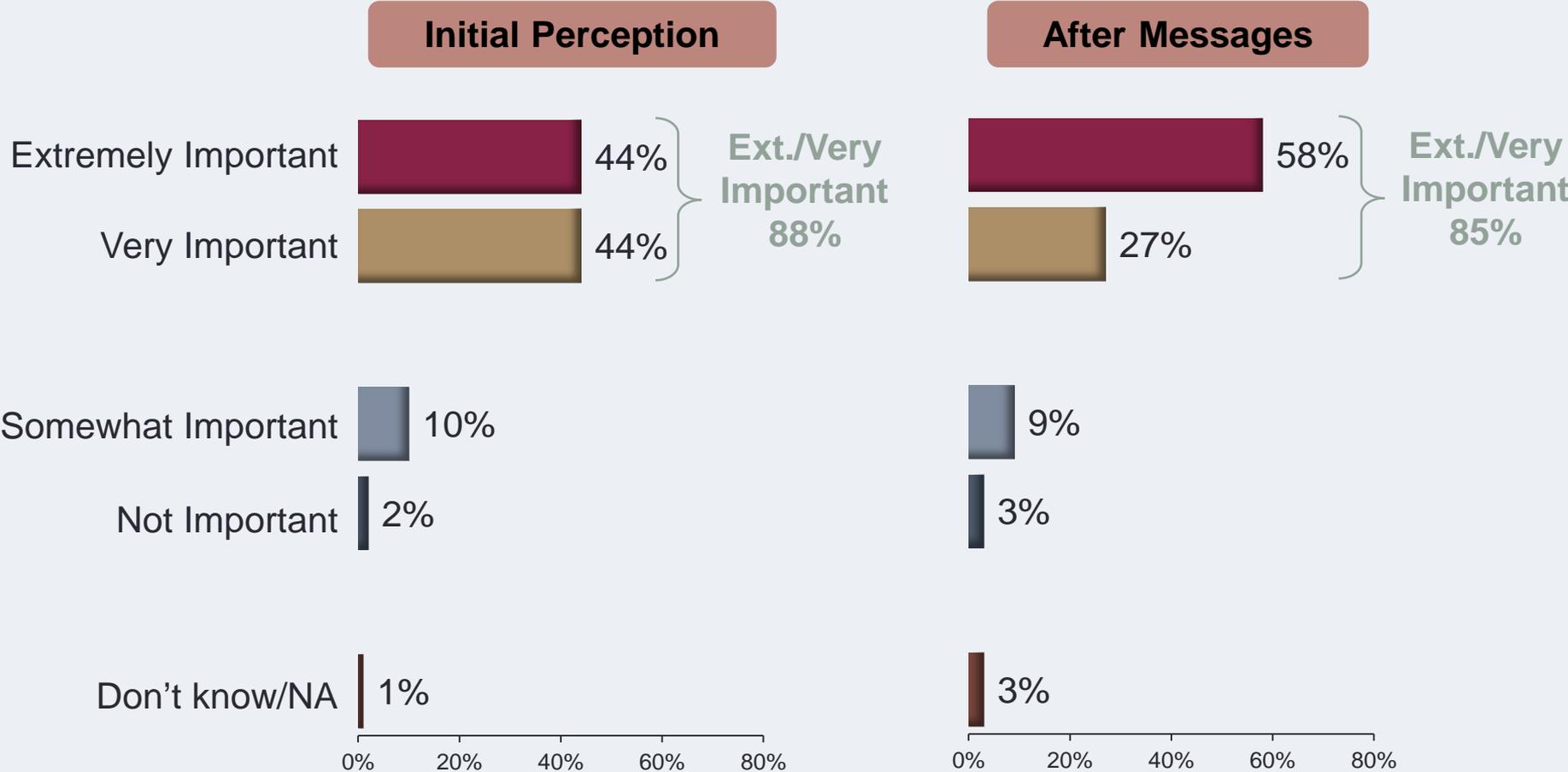
58%

(SCHOOL READINESS) Paying our early childhood educators fairly will improve the quality of preschools, which will strengthen K-12 education. Studies show that kids who go to pre-school are better prepared to learn, more likely to read by the fourth grade and more likely to graduate and go on to college.

58%

Voters are more likely to call early childhood educators “extremely important” after messaging.

How important would you say early childhood educators are to your local community?



Q2a/Q17.

POWER TO THE PROFESSION

GOALS

Establish a shared framework of career pathways, knowledge and competencies, qualifications, standards and compensation that unifies the entire early childhood education profession, ages birth through 8, across all settings.

Develop a comprehensive policy and financing strategy for the systemic adoption and implementation of the shared framework.

How Do We Get There? Structure



How Do We Get There?

8 Decision Cycles

1. Professional Identity and Boundary
2. General Competencies (know, understand and demonstrate)
3. Specialized Competencies (know, understand and demonstrate)
4. Competency Attainment Source (IHE/Non-IHE)
5. Qualifications and Pathways (Levels of Mastery)
6. Compensation Recommendation (per Mastery)
7. Required Accountability and Quality Assurance (certification/approved competency source)
8. Required Support and Infrastructure

Recommendations

- Science drives the agenda (IOM/NAS Report)
- Professional Field of Practice
- Take advantage of existing systems
- Marketplace is unique—not K-12
- Essential role of higher education
- Alignment between access and quality
- Simultaneous effort on knowledge, skills and competencies and wages and compensation

Additional Resources

- National Academies—Transforming the Workforce
- NAEYC (www.naeyc.org/profession)
- P2P@naeyc.org (sign up for our mailings)
- Center for the Study of Child Care Employment