On May 9th a national child care walkout will be taking place and we are asking you to join us. Wisconsin Early Childhood Action Needed is asking you to open late that day in order to draw attention to the direct impact early care and education has on every segment of the community.

The ECE teacher is one of the most impactful teachers a person will ever have in their lifetime. Given that 90% of brain development occurs during the first 5 years of life, making those years the foundation years of determining the type of person they will grow into.  When children experience quality early childhood education they are more likely to graduate from high school, more likely to be healthier both physically and mentally, and more likely to earn higher income wages.  Additionally, children are also less likely to enter the penal system and less likely to need public assistance when they receive quality early childhood care.  The research is unequivocal that it is the relationship between the ECE teacher and the child that determines the quality of care.  Furthermore, it is that relationship that can also buffer children against adversity like living in poverty, exposure to violence, and trauma.  The ECE teacher is extremely valuable.  With that said, in Wisconsin the average pay for a family child care provider after all hours are accounted for is $7.42 an hour, with 80% also not receiving benefits.  The childcare industry is supported on the backs of the educators and this approach is harmful to our children and our economy.  We cannot continue the dialogue that we do this for the love of the kids.  This sentiment is actually harmful for children. Childcare has one of the highest turn-over rates, which does not help for establishing quality relationships with children.  Many teachers are stressed, often working multiple jobs trying to make ends meet. The wage rate is poverty level for the industry, forcing many to rely on forms of public assistance, second jobs, or their partners wages. There are over 4000 fewer regulated family child care providers than in 2010. Our median age is 52 and most are looking at retiring or leaving the field within the next 5 years.

The childcare industry is built on a history of racism and oppression.  Imagine the wage rate if our field consisted of 98% white males?

We need to stand up, not only for ourselves, but for the children, families, and communities that we are supporting.  We need to demand more from our policymakers.  We need to be a unified voice in this effort and stand together on May 9th.

Facts;

-In Wisconsin, the median hourly wage for a worker with a high school education is $15.87

-80% of the ECE workforce have education coursework past high school.

-52% of ECE providers have an associates degree or higher

-In 2020, Wisconsin workers with an associate's degree earned a median wage of $21.45

-52% of ECE teachers have an associate or higher degree

-80% of ECE providers are not provided health insurance

-In 2020, Wisconsin's general public median wage was $20.24

-In Wisconsin, crossing guards and dog care workers earn more than childcare workers