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Rainbow Fleet increases pay for early childhood education professionals

OKLAHOMA CITY, Jan. 18, 2023 – An Oklahoma City child care agency has increased pay in an effort to address an industry-wide shortage of early childhood education professionals.

Rainbow Fleet Early Education Center (RFEEC) awarded its teachers a wage hike, resulting in earnings of at least \$15 per hour for full-time teaching staff.

The move comes as inflation and cost of living increases contribute to Oklahoma's status as a child care desert, an official status applied to all 77 counties. The Center for American Progress defines child care deserts as "any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots."

"Our staff works around the clock to support child care providers and provide a safe place for our RFEEC families," said CEO Carri Hicks. "We are excited to announce that we have increased the salary for all of our full-time employees so that we can continue to offer the highest quality care and education."

The pay increase already has had a positive effect on Rainbow Fleet's teacher retention efforts.

"Thank you to the board and management for the raise," said Rainbow Fleet teacher Lynnnosha Izevbingie, one of the staff members who benefited from the pay structure change. "I was able to quit my second job and continue to give my all. I am so grateful to be a part of a team that appreciates their staff!"

10 full-time early childhood educators benefited from the pay increase.

More About Rainbow Fleet Resource and Referral

For 50 years, Rainbow Fleet Resource and Referral has provided innovative child development programs to families and childcare service providers. Rainbow Fleet helps families locate quality childcare options and assists child care providers with a multitude of services including licensing and technical assistance as well as age-appropriate

activities and curriculum. Rainbow Fleet is an equal opportunity provider and employer. For more information on Rainbow Fleet, visit www.rainbowfleet.org.