

DCYF Integrated Strategic & Racial Equity Plan: Create High Quality B-8 System Webinar Q&A

Q: Will we be taking into consideration and value the race/ethnicity of some of our providers and not require some or all of the education qualifications? There is such value with Tribal providers and others that should have much more value placed on it than some of the education requirements.

A: This is something that came up during Negotiated Rule Making and when we went to negotiate staff qualification work. One actually can meet the qualifications with experience. There are a lot of different components to staff qualifications, and we have been looking at Community-Based Training and how one can meet the staff qualifications through that. For more information on staff qualifications, visit [here](#).

Q: Seattle public schools is opening in spring to kindergarten and first grade. Will all the preschools that have been remote learning open up for in-person learning too?

A: Unfortunately, we do not have a straightforward answer for that. Community is community and we are tracking that and watching where trends are happening. It depends on what decision the particular school district decides.

Q: How can we support communities and providers who do not have or cannot afford internet access?

A: We are working really hard to have programs provide the tools the community needs in order to continue virtual services successfully. It is also something we are talking with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) about – available funds for internet access. We do have the state free internet sites supported by the governor around the state.

Q: When would the current draft of goals become available for review?

A: We had hoped to have it up by today's webinar, and we apologize it is not available yet. We hope to have it up by next week, the week of January 18.

Q: Given the acknowledged need for trauma-informed and healing-centered services, as well as the acknowledgment that this takes increased capacity, how do you see that integrated into the Strategic Plan or focused work areas?

A: We are looking at how to best support this across our systems. A few examples of some of our current work include training and support for community providers and DCYF staff to understand trauma, healing, and resiliency. In early learning settings, we are supporting child care providers with infant, early childhood mental health consultation. We are looking at



opportunities communities have to plan for what is needed to best support families. Some of our programs are working to build in reflective practice and supervision. And a great deal of energy is looking at how to ensure we can tailor services and supports for what families need. We do that by listening and engaging with families and providers in our communities. Trauma-informed care is one overarching value of the plan and has been from our first draft that is posted on the DCYF website.

Q: How will child care providers access and navigate grant applications and support programs being implemented in their language?

A: Through the last two child care grants we have done, there have been translations in English, Spanish, and Somali. We have worked with Child Care Aware to help walk people through the child care grant process/application. We would love to hear feedback on what you would like to see that would be helpful.

Q: Each of these are great outward actions or things we hope we do better, and yet the internal work feels missing, particularly how decisions are made, how leadership defines its role, how the organization is structured – all of which carry the racism and inequity of our thinking and culture. And maybe this shows up elsewhere? What do you think?

A: We are a work in progress, and leadership's dedication is genuine and true. Also, to appreciate the conversations we are able to have as we try and navigate this together and as we go through this together.

Q: It would be great to see more recruitment in child care communities seeking Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) providers. Communities really want to see staff race/ethnicity reflected in their child care.

A: This is an area we would like to explore and figure out who really are the trusted messengers as we move forward with that. Involving key leaders in BIPOC within those communities is key.

Q: Early Support for Infant and Toddlers (ESIT) providers, State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) committees, and ECDAW and WEECARE presented very specific edits to the Strategic Plan. How have they been included? Will we hear from an ESIT staff member on today's panel?

A: As we recall, many of those suggestions spoke to including specific names of funded programs. We had many of those types of suggestions to include examples of great programs we fund around the state. In the end, leadership made the decision to not include names of specific funded programs – only because if we include some we will inevitably miss the opportunity to include many. The plan document does acknowledge how we value our funded partners and those programs that serve children and families across the state, but simply are unable to include specific program names in this document. Please reach out to ESIT staff members if you have any other questions.

Q: Is there a timeline for updating the limited race and ethnicity choices available in our early learning systems? Seems like that is an important step as we try to recruit racially diverse field staff.

A: You'll be interested to know that the Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) is releasing our first agencywide [equity data report](#) that includes recommendations for agencywide racial data collection and reporting.

Q: DCYF's Washington Administrative Codes (WAC's) now ask programs to track and report expulsion of children from licensed child care programs. Has this practice decreased expulsion, and is there a way to share statistics and trends from this reporting?

A: We are tracking it and have not pulled any data on it yet.

Q: Russian speaking population is not necessarily white. How are the Russian-speaking demographics collected?

A: We do have the Managed Education Registry Information Tool (MERIT) where providers can provide that information, but it is optional. We are tracking some of those demographics through MERIT.

Q: Are we tracking if BIPOC children are being expelled at higher rates? And also, are we tracking if Child Protective Services (CPS) calls are made more on BIPOC families?

A: Yes, we are tracking that, and BIPOC children are being expelled at higher rates. We don't have much control over the CPS calls when they first come in.

Q: With the Community-Driven Plan Model and implementing equitable practice in B-8 – will “whole child approaches” be used in the learning environments, sourcing staff, and services?

A: Yes, we are looking at this, and we want to think about the whole child and how they exist within their family and in their community in which they reside. Thank you for this suggestion.

Q: The different groups that met with you across the state seem to be the same people in these groups (child care leaders and leadership from Child Care Aware). Is there a way to think about diversifying who attends your planning meetings? Are there coaches/other leaders who are BIPOC that can be more present?

A: From a lot of directions from the agency, we are continuing this process. We are trying to make sure we have conversations with the right people on what implementation should really look like.

Q: Offer training opportunities for community members and natural family supports to provide peer/parenting support, child care services that families can access in the least restrictive/most supportive method.

A: There has been a lot of exciting conversations about how to support peer/community-based supports that may not be programs or services. Much of the support families want is informal.

You can see some of that reflected in the draft Early Learning Coordination Plan. Please review and feel free to add comments.

Q: How is DCYF taking into account unique community data from assessments (like the state NFP needs assessment) to support implementation of equity strategies across the state and the unique needs of communities?

A: As we have looked at risk indicators in communities, it has helped us look more carefully at what communities may be in line for more services. Communities really have the opportunity to develop their proposals on what they would like to see.

- Encourage DCYF to invite teachers who are in the child cares and on the front lines to get their input and reach out to children via a survey to get their input as well to embrace community voice.
- Some ideas: Collaborative in the sense that DCYF can be open and honest about barriers in our own systems change; educational in that our access to research-based effective practices be shared because only listening does not empower communities as much; and also with enough capacity to support relationship-building, healing as well as community design processes.