



Joint Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) and Provider Supports Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2021 – 9:00 am-3:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Introductions, and Member Share out

DCYF Deputy Director of Community Engagement Deanna Stewart welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.

Feedback Loop & State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

ELAC'S Regional Advisor Enrica Hampton led members in reviewing the Feedback Loop & State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates and provided time for members to ask questions.

- [Feedback Loop](#)
 - [March 30 Joint ELAC and PAG Integrated Pre-K Q&A](#)
 - [April 14 Provider Supports Integrated Pre-K Q&A](#)
- [State Agency/Partner Updates](#)
 - [Vroom Materials Flyer](#)
- [Regional Coalition Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all questions were addressed on the Integrated Pre-K Q&A's. There needs to be more clarity on some questions. Possibly in the next meeting. • How many attendees were there at the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Community meetings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We had a total of 65 people participate in these meetings.
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Preschool Development Grant

DCYF Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Administrator Tracie Kenney provided members with an update on the Preschool Development Grant.

- [Preschool Development Grant Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At-A-Glance list of goals and strategies and full versions for the statewide Early Learning Coordination plan can be found here. • Are you working with a graphic artist who knows user experience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will be in the future. We are taking all the information and feedback and putting it into a write up for the developer/artist. • Wondering what Department of Health (DOH) has learned related to their work on COVID-19 and vaccines. That would be helpful to learn from and look at in the creation. • Is the equity consultant DCYF working with, assisting with this language and guidance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Equity Project and yes we are working with the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Team and there is an LGBTQ+ advisory group too.
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Stabilization Grants and Fair Start Act Updates

DCYF Eligibility and Provider Supports Director Nicole Rose provided updates on the Stabilization grants and Eligibility and Provider Supports components of the Fair Start Act and members had the opportunity to ask questions.

- [Stabilization Grants and Fair Start Act Updates Presentation](#)
- [Draft DCYF Public Engagement Plan – Stabilization Grants Document](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would it include license exempt Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the ECEAP site is not licensed by DCYF they would not be eligible at this time.
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- I'm wondering how, at the federal level, DCYF will identify families who are struggling to pay?
 - DCYF does not have enrollment data on every child and family that goes into a child care, we just know those families are accessing subsidy and providers would need to look at that and make that determination themselves about who was struggling to pay.
- What do you mean the application is "likely" to be available fall of 2021? It is critically important that providers get the funding soon.
 - We want to acknowledge that getting dollars out the door to providers is important and the legislature has asked us to try and get 75% of the funds out the door by January of 2022 and the rest of those funds by June of 2022. We are working as quickly as we can and want to get feedback from you all and other provider groups.
- What is the avenue for communicating the grant itself and technical support to providers? We have many providers that don't get the grant information until well after the opportunity closes.
 - That is the feedback we are hoping to get from you today.
- How much of the \$400 million will go to DCYF for administration and technical assistance costs?
 - Administration is about \$27 million and technical assistance is \$12 million.
- Is this only for Early Achievers (EA) providers?
 - This grant is not only for EA providers, it is for all licensed, registered, or certified or licensed exempt Family, Friend, or Neighbor (FFN) providers.
- Which would you prefer: one-time payment, monthly, quarterly?
 - One-time payment would be good.
 - One-time payment for "larger" providers with fixed monthly expenses.
 - A choice would be best. Providers have different needs and situations.
- Could people have a choice?
 - That is a great question and certainly something we are exploring.
- If it's one time, what happens if a provider closes after receiving that payment?
 - We are also working through what that would like and we don't anticipate that we would ask for return of those funds because if the provider is open during that time. These grants are about stabilizing the child care provider community and about how providers provide care now and in the future.
- Will the turnaround time be faster for providers receiving the funds?
 - That is all something we are continuing to look at.
- On the WA compass page, the drop down box blocks the site selection. This makes it really hard for sites with multiple locations to select the site.
 - Thank you for this feedback. We really like specific feedback on how to improve services for providers.
- During the pandemic I was an FFN provider. With Section 8 housing, there are policies that create barriers to being an FFN provider and not everyone has access to internet which makes distance learning very difficult. How can we support families and providers that live in these kind of circumstances where we have the resources to support them?
 - This question is more of a licensing question and has been noted and will be brought up with the licensing team.
- Are their people of color involved in writing these definitions of communities of color and low income families?
 - That is a great question and we will follow up with Vickie Ybarra the Director of DCYFs Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA). We are not sure how that definition was created with the Preschool Development Grant.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the information be reported in aggregate - like we are able to do with Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans - so we are not sharing employee's personal information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is a piece we are working through. A lot of it is what can we get on the back end on administrative data, meaning what is it that we can see in WA Compass and Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT) or other places accepting subsidy. • I know that EA coach is a benefit of being a part of EA system but I have been around long enough to remember that Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA) role was technical assistance to all licensed providers. Maybe time to look at this still being a part of CCA role. They do know how to do this work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is something in general that CCA has done in the past and they have been a big part of this work and we do not have dedicated funds to technical assistance. Looking at technical assistance over all it is something the agency can reexamine. • When will the child care deserts information be updated? I imagine it has changed quite a bit because of the pandemic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We had a note from Vickie Ybarra that this will be updated quarterly. We will reach out to see when that first quarterly update will be. • Does mental health support for children include additional staff to support them in program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, it would be whatever you think would be needed to support that work. Increased access to support in early childhood mental health passed as part of the Fair Start Act as well. • What does Birth-to-three ECEAP look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I will leave that to my ECEAP colleagues to answer. • For trauma informed care support, Professional Development support and training - is that DCYF doing training for us or will we be able to apply and receive funding for specific trainings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It could look like all of the above and that will be a part of the stakeholder work we are doing right now and hearing what providers need in the community.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Engagement team will send out DCYF Public Engagement Plan word document.

DCYF Portable Background Checks

Nicole Rose and DCYF Provider Supports Administrator Chris Parvin provided information on the transition to a new fingerprint vendor and members had the opportunity to provide input.

- [DCYF Portable Background Checks Presentation](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the turnaround time improve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We don't have that information right now. This is just replacing one fingerprint vendor with another and we are not sure if it will improve turnaround time. • If they get the sites up, this seems like a great switch. Thank you for being careful and thoughtful about switching companies. • One of the issues is the wait between payment of the initial portion of the background check and receiving an email with instructions to schedule fingerprints. Is there a possibility of this being automated, like a popup on the screen after payment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is a great question, but the payment system and process would not allow for that. • What are the fingerprint fees, not the background check fee? Those are two different payments.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The total cost includes a state patrol fee, a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fee and a fingerprint vendor fee. The state patrol and FBI fee will stay the same but the fingerprint vendor fee will be reduced to \$8.95. ● Would it be possible for the Director to receive updated notifications for employees undergoing the fingerprinting process that are listed under their site? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Before the creation of DCYF, there was a decision made that one does not have to have their employer identified in the system in order to have a background check completed. There is an option in the system where we can turn this on or off and it is currently off. ● Switching vendors seems like a good idea - more sites. I think one of the biggest concerns is the timeline of background check clearance with the federal rule looming. ● Is there an advancement that these notifications during the background check process cannot go to people's junk mail? This happens often. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is great feedback and we will work with the vendor on this. ● Can there be some fixes to improve this process for providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is not about all the fixes that need to be made, it is about switching vendors. ● Since DCYF has a chance to reimagine the system that would be a great update. Also, wondering if the federal funds can be used to make improvements since this really would be provider supports. ● If the turnaround time isn't improved though, then it may not be worth the time and energy to move vendors. What if they wind up taking longer to process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can't speak to that at this time but that is really great feedback and we will work towards improvement. ● Do they need to pay again if their fingerprints are rejected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no charge if one's fingerprints are rejected. ● How smooth will the overlap of three months with both vendors be for child care workers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will be very deliberate in informing that this is a new vendor and instructions on how to complete a portable background check.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Community Engagement team will send the PowerPoint Presentation in the follow up email.

Policy Development and Review

DCYF's Deputy Director of Government Affairs Allison Krutsinger and Government Affairs Advisor Genevieve Stokes provided DCYF updates to include but not limited to legislative session, Fair Start Act, etc.

- [Fair Start Act and Budget Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Will this change the direction of ELAC in that it no longer focuses on DCYF proposed policies, but spends its time trying to meet report deadlines? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ELAC will be looking ahead to upcoming changes that are being put in place because of the Fair Start Act and looking backwards and looking at how did things go and did we meet our goal? ● Can you speak more about how the changes to ELAC will impact inclusion of community voice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is really important for communities to choose who should represent them and be a reflection of the community. There is new representation too, new communities to be involved. ● Why are only two languages being supported? It seems that there need to be more to include more languages.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Great question. Those two languages are the top two languages spoken in Washington state. We will be looking at broadening the languages in time. Simultaneously, DCYF as a whole will be undergoing a language access planning process. ● Is anything being done to bring Transitional Kindergarten (3-5 year olds) under the authority of licensing? Does the Governor support K-12 running these programs without the licensing oversight all other early learning programs have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DCYF has been working very closely with the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and there are a number of cases where school districts are providing child care that have a license exemption. We see how two programs overseeing child care can be cumbersome and redundant. Thank you for bringing that up. ● Why are they licensed exempt? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is of interest and the team that oversees that will be able to provide more in depth information in regards to that.
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Early Achievers

DCYF Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Administrator Rachael Brown-Kendall provided an update on Early Achievers.

- [Early Achievers Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● My understanding is one state agency cannot actually license another state agency. ● General question. Once ratings begin again, how will EA account for hybrid or fully online offerings during the pandemic? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This new model is so much more flexible and different types of programming to accommodate for COVID-19. We will take this back to the team and put this on a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and share in the future. ● Will ECEAP providers still be required to be at a level 4 or higher? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, that is written in law. ● What Professional Development degrees will be accepted? For example, if a director has a Masters in Psychology would that count as being relevant to the field? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I don't have the Professional Development table right now but we can share with the Provider Supports group. ○ Agendas for the Equity Advocacy Group can be found on the Equity webpage as well found here.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CQI Page: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/early-achievers/cqi ● Equity in Early Achievers page: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/early-achievers/equity ● Share Professional Development table of degrees accepted.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The next virtual ELAC advisory group meeting will be held on August 3, 2021 and the next virtual Provider Supports Subcommittee meeting will be held on August 11, 2021.
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