



Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) Temporary Licensing Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2022- 9:00am to 12:00pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols & Introductions

DCYF Deputy Director of Community Engagement, Deanna Stewart welcomed attendees, walked through virtual meeting protocols and initiated introductions. Participants took a few minutes to review the feedback loop.

- [Feedback Loop](#)

Recommendation Tracker Activity

Providers broke into small groups to review recommendations developed, to date, and worked in groups to identify gaps and additional recommendations.

- [Discussion Question Responses](#)

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| Discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding MERIT, has there been any attempt to correct or fix the problems? What can we expect from this feedback? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will follow up on the group’s recommendations and develop a draft recommendation document for the group to review at the July 27 meeting. • I have a question on guns allowed in family home child care versus centers. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) references guns in family homes needing to be locked up, but child care centers are not allowed to have guns on the premises. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I would like some feedback on that topic as well. We are concerned about our safety and how we can protect ourselves. Guidance from licensing would be helpful. ○ We have had homeless individuals with knives/machetes threaten our staff. We called the police however, it took them two hours to respond. We need to know our options. ○ We have had to call the police approximately four times in the last couple months due to threats, however, the police have not responded to our center. ○ There is no reporting agency that shares with police where we are. Our agency was behind a recent standoff, and we had no alert system. Police did not notify us that we were unsafe. We are concerned about the lack of communication between DCYF and police. ○ There should be a mandate that police call centers in the area if lockdowns are necessary, similar to how they notify schools. ○ What is the timeframe of hearing back? This matter is urgent. ○ I have camera footage of police raiding houses next to our playground, and they claim to not know where we are located <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thank you for sharing. We will work with licensing and look into having a conversation about this before the July 6 meeting. • Will we be going over the jamboards as a group? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not today. Our next meeting, scheduled for July 6, will be similar to today’s meeting for those individuals who were not able to attend. We will then gather everyone’s feedback from both meetings and go over the recommendations during the following meeting. |
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- In regard to recommendations, there have been several comments about separating Early Achievers from licensing. What if you guys don't agree with recommendations?
 - The Community Engagement team only facilitates the recommendations to the agency. The recommendation document will be submitted to the agency in the fall, with a response to follow.
- After the document is submitted to DCYF, we will continue to push for responses for all the recommendations, when they will be implemented and if not, why. Is there a way to appeal decisions?
 - Because this is a temporary licensing subcommittee of Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC), there will be a presentation towards the end of this group to ELAC prior to submittal. ELAC has a duty to report on the FSKA topics, so if they want to embed any of your recommendations, or all of the recommendations in a supplemental document, to the governor and legislature, they can do that. That would be in addition to the group submitting their recommendations to DCYF. A formal appeal would have to be submitted legally, there is no appeal in regards to recommendations. However, there is another group called the Provider Supports (PS) Subcommittee, that you could present to as well, prior to ELAC. PS could then take on some of these topics and embed them into their own agenda, to elevate these concerns to the agency.
- In our jamboard group, we talked about providers being able to use the licensing tool and go visit other providers. This would be a way for providers to use the tool and go through other facilities as a mentor, and have sights on each other to share ideas, etc.
- Would like a meeting do address over regulation more in depth due to it being such a large topic.
- We had a lot of discussion regarding solutions, what they will look like, and what follow through will look like. As providers, we feel there is no follow through.
- I am not sure what is on the checklist. I am told it is long and comprehensive, and as a provider, that makes me nervous to not know what I am supposed to be working on and have to complete. I want the entire checklist to know what licensors are monitoring.
 - Licensing just sent out an email saying they will be doing unannounced monitoring visits as of July 1. The email also stated that they will provide a link to the checklist they will be using.
 - During the last meeting we provided a link to the checklist. We can send a link to those materials and where they can be found in the follow up email.
- Licensing was trying to suspend one of my employee's background check clearance without evidence, saying they were not allowed on the premises; however, this was being said without any evidence. I have been told by providers this happens all the time.
 - I have never heard of this happening without a criminal investigation. There should be consistent, clear rules if this is to happen.
 - This happened to my facility as well. It seems like they just pick someone out of a hat to place the blame on. If they do not have a description of the suspected individual, they will blame the lead teacher.
 - I had an employee that left a while ago because of a similar incident. She wants to return, however, has to go through the certificate of guarantor improvement in order to do so, based on an accusation. had an incident where two parents said their child was spanked, however, were not sure where it occurred at. They ended up blaming my center and had a list of alleged staff. I offered camera footage, however, was told it would do no good because there were no specifics to the allegation, but they still needed to list someone.
- I would like to receive a 60-day window for providers to expect a visit, even if it was still unannounced. Many sites are still being conservative about who we allow in our centers



due to COVID concerns, and the idea of someone coming in who has been to multiple other facilities, is concerning.

- Was there any notice to providers that this message would be going out today?
 - It is because the federal waiver expired and we need to meet Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) requirements. All licensing staff are vaccinated and will be wearing masks and administrators are working with licensing staff to reduce time on site. If anyone has more questions, please feel free to pass them along to me at Aliza.yair@dcyf.wa.gov.
 - Will licensors be following our safety protocols? We have shoe covers and other steps in place.
 - I do not see why not, but we will have additional questions be put back through the feedback loop to follow up on them.
 - It seems that after the first conversation the group had with Travis, that they would have given providers a time period of when standards would be changing. The timing is interesting with the background check issues and this email going out about unannounced visits. These are the types of actions that do not build trust.
 - I am not aware of the timing of conversations regarding unannounced visits, however, unannounced visits are a federal requirement. I am not sure about timelines, but I am checking in on this.
 - I do not feel that is a good enough reason. COVID is still going on and it is not safe.
 - We do not have the benefit of working from home. We have been frontline from the beginning. There is a lot of concern around licensors going from place to place and putting our centers at risk.
 - Concern for licensors bouncing from place to place. I feel licensors should have to test weekly, to not put centers at risk.
 - If licensing knew that this was expiring, and there is no way they did not know, why did they wait until two weeks prior of it taking affect, to let providers know?
 - We will add this recommendation to our notes, that communication to providers occurs in a timelier manner.
 - Does someone have a link to that announcement that they can send to me, please?
 - <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADEL/bulletins/31a591d>.
 - We will follow up with these questions and work on bringing the monitoring visits topic to the July 27 meeting.
- There should be a distinction between licensing requirements for safety versus best practice. Division between best practice and basic safety have gotten lost and there needs to be a separation.
- There should be two separate systems to help clarify steps and actions that need to be taken. New providers have a very difficult time navigating one system and not knowing where to go for guidance.
- I am disappointed this group does not have real power.
 - I like the ideas being presented today, however, I worry about our ideas not being implemented. Where is oversight to make sure licensing is implementing our concerns and recommendations?
 - Or if they aren't accepted, explain, in detail, why not.
 - Can some happen prior to the report?
 - We had talked about next steps earlier in the meeting. Our plan is to follow up with the licensing division to gather feedback from recommendations and what can be changed, when, and if not, why. We



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| | <p>are following up with MERIT to see what can be changed now, instead of waiting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are all experiencing licensing in the same way. I do not want DCYF to continue doing the same thing and expect different results. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I appreciate that feedback. Change has been slow but we are trying to implement recommendations made by the group. • The Community Engagement (CE) team makes sure information is shared between groups and pushes for change from the agency. It does make a difference. We need to continue working together to change the system. • It is important that DCYF knows center providers need a voice also. Home providers have a union, center owners cannot join the union. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS was created in early learning to provide a voice to providers. Anyone is able to participate in these meetings. • Is there a belief that our recommendations are irresponsible or not appropriate? How are these recommendations being received? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Licensing will have a look at the recommendations and follow up with any clarifying questions. Sometimes recommendations can be very broad, or are unclear, and they need follow up. • Have any the DCYF staff making the rules been a provider? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I have been an early childhood teacher and a director. Many other licensors have worked in early learning, as well. • We are spending a lot of time verbalizing recommendations. We have stayed open and figured out what to do on our own to address concerns regarding COVID. We provide suggestions on how to fix this to address safety and are giving reasonable solutions. We do not have time for this to linger on. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This temporary licensing subcommittee was created to meet and make recommendations by December 1. If this group wants to submit the recommendations document half way through, then submit a second document later on, that is fine. We want to do check ins to make sure we are on the same page and we are hearing the group’s recommendations correctly. ○ Could you draft the document for the next meeting, that would be submitted, then the group votes on it? These topics are serious and should not wait until December. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, we can create that. We will work on sending out the document after the July 6 meeting to ensure all feedback is included, and prioritize the requests. • I want to thank the group in helping elevate our voices because we work hard to keep the kids safe. |
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2022 Meetings, Closing Remarks and Adjourn

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| Next Steps/Follow Up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) Temporary Licensing Subcommittee meeting will be July 6, 2022. |
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