Washington State Department of CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)
Feedback Loop

October 1, 2024

Recommendations, Input and Decisions Made, Status Updates
Follow Up Items from August 6 Meeting

Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ)
The outstanding questions from the ORESJ presentation were shared internally, and the below responses are from the Early Learning and Licensing Teams.

Q: How Are You Measuring Outcomes?
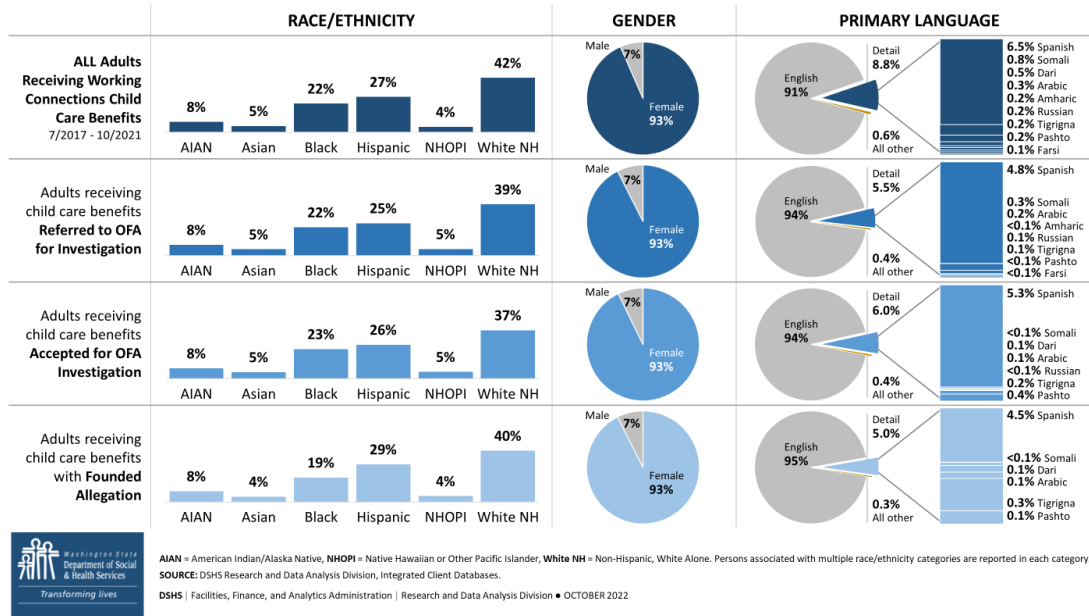
Data Collection and Reporting
- Utilizing WAKids scores, disaggregated by race and DCYF Data dashboards and Early Learning Data Store data on extreme access deserts, child maltreatment, foster care screened intakes, family income, overlaid with population data disaggregated by race.
- The Grants Team collects data on percentage of Early Childhood Equity Grant applicants who report working on the following outcomes:
  - preventing suspension and expulsion,
  - increasing the use of research-informed social-emotional teaching practices,
  - advancing culturally and linguistically responsive practices,
  - decreasing bias in the classroom,
  - offering ongoing child assessment and developmental screening, and
  - connecting families to services and supports that meet health, mental health, financial, or other needs.
- Grants data is reviewed on funding distribution by provider type, county, and primary language, to measure whether the funds were distributed proportionately.
- The Grants Team shares data with the Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) and OIAA measures more specific outcomes related to kindergarten readiness, impact of child care deserts, and whether funding has increased the number of licensed child care providers in areas of the state with racial disparities in Kindergarten readiness and those with high concentrations of children of color. OIAA's 2023 evaluation of the Fair Start for Kids Act (including grants) is here: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/reports/FSKA-EvalReport-2023.pdf.
- The MERIT Dashboard provides information about staff qualifications met or in progress and this report includes demographics to track increase in providers meeting education based on various data such as location, language, and race.
- The Dual Language Designation report shows us the number of programs and classrooms providing dual language care and learning.
- All training data report tells us provider demographic information related to training access and completion as well as training available in various languages. We can track the increase of these offerings as well as increase in providers who access training. Additionally, the training report can show us specific training such as Trauma-informed award eligible to track how providers who receive an award.
- In the ECEAP annual or outcomes report, we report on representation. ECEAP serves children who aren't white (children of the global majority) at a higher rate than they are represented in the statewide population. Similarly, ECEAP staff racial demographics are more like the communities they serve.
- The Child Care Subsidy Program has a number of measures that track data through a family's journey. DCYF reviews this data periodically to identify processed that may create disproportionate outcomes. For example, comparing caseload demographics to population demographics. This is completed on a variety of processes. The most recent includes reviewing referrals and outcomes of referrals to the Office of Fraud and

Accountability for fraud investigations. This data shows no disproportionately in referrals or outcomes for Child Care.

Assessing Disparities Among Adults Receiving Child Care Referred to OFA for Investigation
July 2017 to June 2022

AIAN = American Indian/Alaska Native, **NHOPI** = Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, **White NH** = Non-Hispanic, White Alone. Persons associated with multiple race/ethnicity categories are reported in each category.
SOURCE: DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, Integrated Client Databases.
DSHS | Facilities, Finance, and Analytics Administration | Research and Data Analysis Division ● OCTOBER 2022   10

System, Program, and Process Improvements
- Early Achievers recently shifted from a quality rating and improvement system to a Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS). This shift allows Early Achievers participants multiple ways to demonstrate quality in their programs, and to receive strength-based feedback on their practice. The goal of the QRIS is first and foremost to promote high quality early learning programs for all children. The revisions process focused on developing a quality recognition system that is culturally respectful, responsive and centers racial equity.
- In accordance with the legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, 43.60A.200, 39.26.240 and 39.26.245, the State of Washington encourages participation by Small Business, by veteran-owned business enterprises and by the Office of Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (OMWBE). Participation may be either on a direct basis in response to this Solicitation or on a Subcontractor basis. *While the state **does not** give preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from the small business community.*

Provider and Partner Engagement
- The Early Learning Division hosts regular webinars in English, Spanish, and Somali. We track the number of participants registering and attending each and work with partners serving Somali and Spanish-speaking providers to help get the word out about these events. These groups also provide recommended topics for the webinars based on provider feedback.
- We host Somali Language Partner meetings to assess language access needs and help inform our efforts. We rely on feedback from this group to measure our outcomes related to engaging and communicating with Somali-speaking providers.

Q: Can You Give a Concrete Example of Racial Equity Progress Within the Early Learning Work for DCYF?

Data Collection and Reporting
- Grant applications have all identifying information removed before panel review.

System, Program, and Process Improvements
- Community-Based Grant Technical Assistance is available in multiple languages.

- Language access for grant applications has improved since 2020, with multiple languages now available within the online application platform.
- The monthly Early Care and Education newsletter includes RESJ resources for providers to use and share with children and families. The newsletter is also intentional about featuring diverse providers, as well as those serving diverse children.
- All publications and outgoing messages are reviewed for plain language and cultural responsiveness and are translated into Spanish and Somali (and other languages as needed).
- Child Care Stabilization Grants helped to stabilize the child care provider supply in Washington, with a disproportionately positive effect on providers serving those communities identified as high priority and furthest from opportunity.
- At the moment we are in the very early states of developing a plan/curriculum for division staff. We are working with the Office of RESJ and the ELD RESJ Advisory committee to do so.
- We recently piloted adding an annual narrative deliverable for Racial Equity and Social Justice which asked the Contractor to submit a report reflecting the work of their organization and subcontractors regarding Racial Equity and Social Justice efforts to ensure racially equitable, culturally relevant services were being provided through DCYF funding.
- Payments are focused on removing barriers that may keep providers from accessing funds for which they are eligible – we partner within Early Learning, Finance and other teams both internal and external to ensure all funds are delivered
- Payments team assists providers with completing and submitting forms that expedite and ensure proper payment in various languages, enlisting help from others as needed.
- Subsidy has implemented verification procedures to help improve application approval rates. This reduces the number of cases that are pended for additional information. When DCYF does have to request information, the information needed is reduced. This supports families by reducing burden of participating in the program. This is especially important for families whose primary language is not English.
- Each year, DCYF provides set aside funding to the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) specific for developing responsive pathways. For FY25, we are using the funds to translate online courses for the Initial and Short Certificates into Spanish. Courses on WAOL are system shared so that all colleges can access Spanish courses based on need.
- In the chart below you will see the changes that were made to Early Achievers based on participant feedback. Highlights include removing barriers, so systems are easier to navigate, adding more options for recognition related to program interests and expertise, and a focus on stakeholder feedback as part of the ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Early Achievers now includes Program Profile, Video Highlights, Records Review, Accreditation and on-going Professional Development.

Participants Shared	We Listened and Implemented
It feels like the system is "one size fits all" or wants "cookie cutter" programs.	Program Profile is a provider-led process that to help identify strengths and opportunities for improvement that can be used to support coaching conversations and quality improvement goals. Video Highlights allow programs to work on and receive recognition for the high-quality practices that are important to them.
In person data collection did not always allow you to showcase your full quality— since you had "one shot" to demonstrate quality.	Program Profile is a provider-led process that recognizes sites for their specific approaches using a culturally sustaining and supportive framework. Video Highlights allow programs to choose teaching practices that align with an area of the Early Learning Development Guidelines.

	There are flexible ways to earn more points and reach higher quality levels.
The rating process is stressful and high stakes since visits are unannounced and there are an overwhelming number of indicators to prepare for.	Program Profile, Video Highlights and Records Review components can be submitted over time and not all at once. Participants select evidence to submit that demonstrates their quality.
Early Achievers processes lack transparency.	The ability to see your points before submitting a request for quality recognition. A Quality Level is automatically generated when a request is made. We are developing a community engagement process that will inform ongoing system improvements.

Provider and Partner Engagement
- We also have quite a few engagement strategies centered around equity in Early Achievers, Including:
  - We meet monthly with our **Early Achievers Equity Advisory Group**. This is a group of employees from across our Early Achievers system at DCYF, University of Washington, and Child Care Aware of Washington. The meeting agenda and notes are shared on the webpage. (Box on right side listing meeting agendas and notes)
  - We participate in **stakeholder and partner committees**, such as the Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) and the Indian Policy Early Learning (IPEL) Committee, to present updates and solicit feedback before decision-making.
  - We have representation from our team on the **DCYF Inclusive Racial Equity Change Team (DIRECT)**. DIRECT is a group of employees from across DCYF working to lead, design, coordinate, and organize DCYF's equity action plans and systems change efforts.
  - We periodically engage with other regional and state groups, including the Washington Child Care Center Association, Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA), and Early Learning Regional Coalitions (Washington Communities for Children).
- The ELD content development team is working with contracted partners to revise Child Care Basics in three languages simultaneously. This work began with provider design groups who received compensation for sharing their insights about what works in the current training, organization and design of training, and what is needed at the start of a provider joining the workforce. The contractor is writing Child Care Basics in all three languages with examples and videos matching the language of the training. This will result in content more relevant and accurate than translating an English training after the fact with video subtitles.

Q: What is DCYF doing to support systems or programs that would be most beneficial for Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) child care providers in our community? Including immigrant providers who may face language barriers, in our community?
- *The preferred language spoken by the FFN provider is included in the system of record (WACompass) that houses their account. By having this information on the provider account the License exempt team works to ensure an interpreter is available for all communication. Use of interpreters is key to successful communication between the provider and the team. When the provider indicates the need for other support, such as with electronic attendance, the team member will send communication to the other team indicating the preferred language spoken by the FFN provider.*

Q: How are we ensuring that child care providers whose second language English have access to understandable information about laws and policies, restrictions etc. (which are way too many) and what steps are being taken to make these resources more accessible for them?

- *Child care licensing attempts to assign same language licensors to providers.*
- *Child care licensing has prioritized hiring staff who speak multiple languages.*
- *Child care licensing orientation is offered in English, Spanish, and Somali. If an interested party asks for delivery in a different language, we offer that service either within our licensing staff and the use of interpretive services, or as contracted through Imagine U.*
- *Providers can request translation of written materials and notice of such request is attached to legal letters.*
- *DCYF is exploring translation of WAC.*

Community Child Care Forums

Child care providers have asked for regular meetings with DCYF to discuss their challenges and receive timely answers to their questions concerning child care policy, rules, and other relevant topics. In response, DCYF has organized community child care forums across the state.

Vancouver:
- **Time:** 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Date:** Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2024
- **Location:** Marshall Community Center, Oak and Elm Rooms, 1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd., Vancouver, WA 98663
- **Parking:** Free parking available on-site.
- Register here

Tacoma/Lakewood:
- **Time:** 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Date:** Monday, Nov. 4, 2024
- **Location:** Clover Park Technical College, McGavick Conference Center, Building 23
- 4500 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood, WA 98499
- **Parking:** Free parking available on-site. See campus map for directions and parking information.
- Register here

Additional Forums in 2024:
- **Dec. 10** *(Virtual)* – Register here

To ensure we can plan accurately for interpretation needs, please register only for the location you intend to attend. Please make sure you have the correct location before registering.

If you require an alternative format for this information, need language interpretation services, or need another accommodation or modification to participate in the events listed above, please contact dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov.

About the Forums

Community Child Care Forums aim to:
- Strengthen relationships between providers and the agency;
- Make a space for providers and DCYF to share and celebrate what is going well; and
- Foster opportunities for ongoing collaboration.

These forums are open to licensed child care centers, licensed family homes, outdoor nature-based providers, and school-age providers, including certified providers, who may be located on tribal lands.

Visit the Community Child Care Forums webpage for information on additional forum dates and locations.

Questions?

For questions, email dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov.

If you require an alternate format for this information, need language interpretation services, or need another accommodation or modification to participate in this event, please contact dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov.

Child Care Health Consultation

- In response to requests from child care providers and Members of the Provider Supports Subcommittee, a Child Care Health Consultation Fact Sheet has been posted on the ELAC webpage here.

<u>Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability (OIAA) FSKA Data Update</u>

OIAA created a FSKA evaluation and analysis page on the agency performance site under supplemental measures. Here is a link to the new website: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/oiaa/agency-performance/fska. The site includes a link to the 2023 FSKA evaluation report, a video summary, and accompanying PowerPoint slides. OIAA hopes to add stand-alone analyses and dashboards to this site in the future. We are also in the process of convening a report team comprised of DCYF staff who will use their subject matter expertise to review the 2025 FSKA evaluation legislative report. A scoping meeting has been scheduled for September 2024. OIAA will be reaching out to this team in spring of 2025 to begin reviewing the draft report, which is due to the legislature on September 15th, 2025. Finally, we continue conducting supplemental analyses (e.g., child care continuity), as well as updating some of the existing analyses with 2024 data (e.g., provider churn) for the FSKA evaluation.