

# Regular Early Childhood Program: ECEAP Information Sheet

## ECEAP

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington's pre-kindergarten program that prepares 3- and 4-year-old children from families furthest from opportunity for success in school and in life. ECEAP provides high-quality comprehensive services that focus on the whole child and supports children and families.

## Definition

**“Regular Early Childhood Program”** means a program that includes fifty percent or more children who do not have an IEP per WAC 392-172A-01152.

Programs may include, but are not limited to, the following: Head start; Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP); transitional kindergarten; kindergarten; preschool classes offered to an eligible prekindergarten population by the public school system; private kindergartens or preschools; group child development centers; or child care.

The Lead Education Agency (LEA) uses this definition in identifying the least restrictive environment for a child with an Individualized Education Plan.

## ECEAP Performance Standards

The definition of Regular Early Childhood Program and related references to this definition are not included in ECEAP Performance Standards. This information sheet is designed to provide ECEAP contractors with resources and guidance about this definition, and how it may interact with ECEAP programming.

ECEAP Performance Standards do include requirements for non-discrimination (IA-2) and inclusive environments (IC-1). ECEAP does not deny service to eligible children per ECEAP Performance Standard IA-2 Non-Discrimination.

## ECEAP Classroom Experience

ECEAP serves children with a wide range of abilities. ECEAP classrooms provide a space where children with special needs can access their typically developing peers.



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## Guidance for ECEAP Contractors

- DCYF ECEAP does not require a minimum or maximum number of children on IEP's served in a classroom.
- ECEAP contractors must follow eligibility, enrollment, prioritization and availability for enrollment per ECEAP Performance Standards.
  - Programs must offer slots to the children with the highest priority points first.
  - Contractors may assign children to classes to balance the ratio of children on IEP's and typically developing peers to keep classroom capacity at least 50% or more children who do not have an IEP.
  - Contractors may not deny enrollment to any child based on their disability per ECEAP Performance Standard IA-2 Non-Discrimination.
  - Contractors may assign a child to a classroom at another location to maintain balanced classrooms. Contractors must make all attempts to keep children at a site close to where they live.
  - ELMS will not limit enrollment of children on IEP's enrolled in a class. You can view your class list in ELMS to see this information.
- Eligible children on an IEP of any kind, fill one ECEAP slot.
- When a classroom is at 50% enrollment of children on IEP's and a child without an IEP at the time of enrollment, becomes eligible for special education services and an IEP is initiated, contractors may continue to serve the child in the classroom they are currently placed within to ensure continuity of service. We recognize this can occur any time throughout the school year and DCYF ECEAP will not require children to be displaced and moved to a different preschool classroom.

Contractors may reach out to [dcyf.eceap@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.eceap@dcyf.wa.gov) for questions.