



Joint Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) and Parent Advisory Group (PAG)

Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2021 – 9:00am-2:30pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome & Introductions

- DCYF Deputy Director of Community Engagement Deanna Stewart welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.
- Members voted to approve the [February 2, 2021](#) meeting minutes.

Feedback Loop & State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

Members reviewed the Feedback loop, the State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates.

- [Feedback Loop](#)
- [State Agency/Partner Updates](#)
- [Regional Coalition Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) representative shared that there is some collaboration with child care in regards to the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), but there are few details at this time. More information will be shared as it becomes available.
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Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

DCYF Child Care Administrator Matt Judge provided an overview and gathered feedback on the CCDF Plan.

- [DRAFT CCDF Plan](#)
- [CCDF Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the dates of the public hearings been determined? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No, not yet. We are still determining the process of the hearing as well. • Do you know how many responses to the survey there have been? As a percent of total providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 34% as of March 26. We are aiming to get to 50% of total providers. • Can you share a little about Market Rate versus Cost of Care models? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CCDF rules say you need to set your rates according to an objective standard, and we have always used a Market Rate Survey to set that standard, but that is not the only option. Subsidy rates drive the market, and the market may not be functioning in a way to support providers to provide the best level of care. There is an increasing interest in a Cost of Care model to focus on the actual cost to run the business at a certain level of quality. The Child Care Collaborative Task Force and certain legislation are requiring us to move to a Cost of Care model by 2025. • If we were to comment on expanding education to be more than a two year or certificate program, do you have an idea if the department would support this move and think of ways to fund it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There has been recent expansion of education as an approved activity. There is all this CCDF funding from Arc, but it is one-time funding. I do think commenting on the CCDF plan is a great way to get that information up the chain and to legislature about the priorities. • In terms of aligning periods of eligibility, we've been gathering info from Early Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Head Start with very low income families with infant
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	<p>and toddlers who benefit from comprehensive services. In the performance standards the federal government expects that if you are doing a model that serves low income working families, then you also blend funding with Working Connections Child Care (WCCC). If a family loses the subsidy, it's a huge financial burden on the grantee in terms of continuing to serve the family without funding. CCDF does align so that a family can keep going for the child until they would go into a Head Start program. This only affects about 750 slots, but it would be a huge benefit for the grantee to not have that burden. The best place to address this is in the state CCDF plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the state plan to address this compliance issue? How will the process for background checks change? Are there updates to MERIT in the works? Is there a plan to bring on more staff to improve the turnaround time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I am working with background checks; they are aware of the upcoming requirements.
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Preschool Development Grant

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Administrator, Tracie Kenney and Preschool Development Grant Specialist, Delta Heiberg provided an update on the Statewide Needs Assessment and the Statewide Early Learning Coordination Plan, as well as end of year activities for the Initial Grant and the Renewal Grant.

- [Preschool Development Grant Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the seamless transition strategy look like? Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It can be WaKIDS. I was using the Kindergarten transition as an example. They are working with some of our schools that have high Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations, so that all children get served. WaKIDS is a state level opportunity and that would be one action to that seamless transition. Anything in service to that goal would be an action.
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Strengthening Families

DCYF Primary and Community Prevention Lead, Erinn Havig provided an overview and gathered feedback on April's Child Abuse Awareness campaign.

- [Child Abuse Prevention Month Handout](#)
- [Coloring Page](#)
- [Strengthening Families Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you envision when you think of a happy and healthy childhood? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grandparents ○ Stability ○ Play time ○ Going to library ○ Enough food ○ Consistency ○ The smell of dirt and sunshine ○ Food security ○ Free play with good friends ○ Smiling children • How are these materials being shared with so many places currently closed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A lot of libraries around the state have been ordering materials. A lot of early learning centers, Curricular Alignment Tool (CAT) programs and home visiting programs have been ordering materials to distribute to their families. Individuals are downloading it via the website, as well.
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Integrated Pre-K

DCYF's Director of Early Learning Programs, Kelli Bohanon and Integrated Pre-K Administrator, Alicia Brender provided an update on Integrated Pre-K.

- [Integrated Pre-K Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What outreach efforts are planned to ensure the providers reflect the served communities? Is the assumption that families want children to access services versus families making other choices for cultural, religious or other reasons? Wondering if the state is looking at filling a gap that may not exist.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This isn't about creating a new program. It's about ensuring quality, efficiencies, and reducing barriers. This first phase is focused on district settings where they are working closely with community providers to better use funding so children can be in inclusive spaces.• When do children become eligible to start Transitional Kindergarten (TK)? Is it at age 5, or is it in a particular month?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Currently, TK enrollment is targeting students who are 4 by August 31 and who don't have other options.• I heard it won't run all year. What month can a district start to hold classes?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Districts may begin in September with the start of the school year. Requirements for TK are listed here: https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/support-programs/early-learning-washington-state/state-funded-full-day-kindergarten/transitional-kindergarten• TK is a new program to many of us in the early learning space, and we do not have a clear understanding of its place, how it originated and how it is meant to serve communities without negatively impacting the early learning spaces that already exist.• There might be a whole lot more demand for Working Connections if there were more money there. School districts have a guarantee they will get the dollars attached to their students, so with more children in the school district, more money could be funneled away from ECEAP or WCCC. That is a concern for providers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ I agree. We do have to create appropriate guardrails.○ I just hope there's some consideration given to children in poverty who have been successful in programs like ECEAP or in Early Achievers rated sites with WCCC that the state has some interest in funding those at higher levels, while school districts can still get money for traditional kindergarten.• Is there a plan to make WaKIDS available to private schools?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Once you accept funding for full day Kindergarten, you are required to implement WaKIDS. It is tied to the basic education funding that districts receive for full-day kindergarten. You accept the funding; you do these things. The same is true of TK. TK is an early entrance kindergarten program. It has to follow those same requirements.• So is the focus going to be serving students 3-5 with disabilities? Is that the focus? If so, with more BIPOC children receiving Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) than other children, I am now concerned this will be another way to push BIPOC children into a K-12 system, that is trying to remove systemic barriers, but yet is still failing our Black and Brown children.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We have to build ways for community partners and school districts providing pre-K to be able to come together on a regular basis around recruitment and retention of families. Looking at what there is to offer in a given community for children and families, we want the children served where it's best for them to be and where their families choose for them to be. The funding may go through Office of the
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	<p>Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), but that doesn't mean all will be served in the K-12 system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that what the group that's convening is doing isn't creating a program. Is it an additional year of K-12? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TK is an additional year of K-12. • Do schools receive additional federal funds for hosting TK programs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They may utilize some funding through special education if they are an inclusive environment, but they receive the basic education allocation and any grade level enhancements based on qualification. • What is the process a school district must follow to ensure Pillar Five is followed and has considered the current early learning system? Is this transparent, and if so, how does one find this information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pillar Five is the requirement for coordinated recruitment and enrollment. We had a work group today, of folks just really discussing this issue. Coordinated enrollment is really important and through this work group, we will suggest and bring forward examples where we know coordinated enrollment is working really well. We will identify some of the elements that we would recommend need to be a part of it, and work with communities where it's working to create resources that will be supportive. Then we then we think about scaling that out. • With King County starting its own child care program, how will Transitional Kindergarten (TK) connect with that effort? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I'm not sure what is happening in King County? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As part of the new Best Starts for Kids levy, King County is developing a child care program. Are you taking the 3-5 program that OSPI, the state (ECEAP/Working Connections) and blending those to give more parent choice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TK is a program, just like ECEAP, but as a whole this is about creating recommendations. • What are the top three things that providers should know going forward? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It's not a new program. It's really complex. And we are doing the best we can to hear from different provider bases and communities to find out what barriers are being faced and how we can serve children in a more holistic way. • In North Thurston they added 3 TK classrooms and we couldn't get ECEAP expansion. • What's the timeline for the first draft of recommendations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will have something more official really soon. By early summer. • How will these new program impact providers who accept 3 and 4 year olds who are not ECEAP/Head Start providers? Will WCCC families be automatically directed to this new program? How will it impact parent choice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is not a program. We are creating recommendations around an approach or enhancements to the system.
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Policy Development and Review

DCYF's Deputy Director of Government Affairs, Allison Krutsinger provided updates on the 2021 legislative session.

- [Bills of Note](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know why Child Care is exempt from applying for Working Washington Round 4 Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program from Commerce? Are there going to be separate child care specific grants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I do not know why Child Care is exempt. I can follow up. I wonder if it has to do with the Child Care Stabilization grants that are coming from the federal
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	<p>government over the next few fiscal years. Yes, other grant opportunities specific to child care are coming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I hope you can present on that next time you come to ELAC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think the capital gains bill is going to be a viable funding source? Can you share a little bit with ELAC about it and how it connects to early care and education funding? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I'm optimistic that it will be a good thing for the early care and education field ongoing. I don't know enough to speak to the revenue trends. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is Plan B? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is a great question for lawmakers! That has been on my mind, since a number of these investments are one-time. Having the commitment from the legislature to continue to fund is critical. • What does funding for Early Learning (EL) Facilities grants look like in the budgets? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After the webinar on Friday, we will have this all posted. Both budgets include dollars for minor works or smaller projects.
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Dual Licensing

DCYF’s Dual Pilot Project Manager, Michelle Giard and Licensing Analyst Sonya Stevens will receive an update and provide feedback on the Dual Licensing Pilot.

- [Dual Licensing Presentation](#)
- Dual Licensing Pilot Overview: [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Somali](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the DCYF Dual Pilot project team diverse? How do you plan to be accountable to dual language communities? BIPOC individuals need to be a part of this conversation, so they are not left to the margins. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I believe our team is diverse. We have two bilingual staff on our team. All of our formal forms are translated into three languages. ○ Sometimes having one person from each cultural/racial background is “enough” by some standards, hoping there is continued rich outreach to dual language community members. ○ We could report back to this group to show you that we actually do have an incredibly diverse group of people who have been interested in this program, from quite a few different ethnicities. We can share information on that once providers enroll. We can also share that info on our support team. • I'm curious from this group, what information do you want going forward as well? Do you want some more updates as we continue to onboard folks, finding out where those barriers are? Are you happy with just reading it? How would you like us to present that in the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have there been any connections with different programs like Casey family programs to look at recruitment tools? ○ On the foster care side that was easy. We haven’t had a lot of recruitment on the child care end. Service Employees International Union (SEIU) has provided us partners, but we aren’t entirely sure how to continue that on this end. • Any connection with groups like Casey Family program? Voices of Tomorrow? Grandparent groups? Black Child Development Institute? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have talked to Casey Family program. No, we have not reached out to Voices of Tomorrow. Would you recommend that? ○ Yes. • Can you share who your community partners were on this work and did you receive parent input/feedback from the pilot?
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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The pilot has just started. We are gathering parent feedback as we go. In the planning phase we reached out to tribes, Foster Parent Association of Washington (FPAWS), DCYF Licensing staff, etc.○ All of our pilot participants are providing feedback through surveys at each step and speaking with DCYF monthly about their experience.
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Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The next meeting will be a joint ELAC and Provider Supports meeting taking place virtually on June 1, 2021.
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