



## Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2024 – 9 a.m. to Noon

Report Development Session | Virtual Meeting

### Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols and Introductions

DCYF Community Engagement Administrator Erin Kerrigan welcomed attendees, walked through virtual meeting protocols, and initiated introductions.

### Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) Status Snapshot

Members reviewed and asked questions regarding the FSKA Status Snapshot and Proviso Update.

- [FSKA Status Snapshot](#)
- [DCYF Early Learning Proviso Implementation Update](#)

<b>Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bill that doesn't seem to appear on the list is <a href="#">SB 6038</a> which is a tax exemption for providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We have made note of this. This document is specifically an update on implementation that DCYF is engaged in.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Regarding fingerprinting, DCYF is developing a position description for the person doing the fingerprinting and the sites that are listed in the document are currently being vetted with the vendors.</li> <li>• While thinking broadly about recommendations, this group has discussed opportunities to link our recommendations to the <a href="#">Early Learning Coordination Plan</a>. Is that still a possibility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We did share that document during our last report development session and made a note of the interest in using it to broaden the recommendations. That is a good reminder of the way we are organizing things on our end. We are using last year's categories as a starting point, but we can change them, add more, or take some away. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It was less about the document and more thinking about how to align with the work that the Early Learning Coordination Plan was focused on and how do we build on that and use it to move forward.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is there any more information on the inclusive mentorship program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are just beginning the contracting process for this and want to align with legislative intent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the federal government is sending more block grant funds to the state, could that money be redirected to the yearly licensing fees? Is that something the legislature could put into action? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DCYF is looking to ease payments for licensing providers. The federal government did appropriate more funding for the Childcare Development Fund (CCDF). Washington State received ten to eleven million dollars. However, those dollars do not cover the new CCDF requirements related to enrollment-based pay, prospective payments, grants, etc. We will need to ask for more funds to implement these new requirements and the legislature will need to make a decision about whether or not they were going to continue to waive those fees or direct us to use some of those funds to pay for them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Biennium budget might be a way to use the capital gains revenue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We do want to maintain funding and it's important to keep our eye on this.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ That will not be included as a decision package (DP) for 2025. It would need to come from elsewhere. But that doesn't mean we won't try in the future if it doesn't pass.</li> </ul>
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**Early Learning Decision Package Concepts**

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose and Assistant Secretary of Licensing Ruben Reeves provided an overview of timeline and preview of next steps for Early Learning Decision Packages.

<b>Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As you add increased eligibility for families will there be a new copay tier added for Working Connections Childcare (WCCC)?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Yes, there is a new co-pay tier and there may be additional tiers in the future. However, even as we look at those increased tiers, families will pay no more than seven percent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● You indicated 5900 providers being the current number. Any idea why Childcare check only shows less than 4500 providers?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We will follow up on this.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The number you mention Ruben is what we show at Child Care Aware Washington (CCA of WA).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● What factors do you feel are leading to the increase in Child Protective Services (CPS) and non-CPS investigations?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In the last two years, more people have called into the CPS intake line.</li> <li>○ The child abuse and neglect complaints could be related to the high turnover in the industry.</li> <li>○ I think a huge factor is often providers are told to call into intake by their licensors even when it's something we do not believe is child abuse or neglect.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are looking at adding more staff and hoping to strengthen our relationship with childcare providers while also changing some of our processes to improve the quality of work.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● CPS investigation letters should be standardized. I'm hoping it's not a racial component but some providers that are not of color are receiving more descriptive letters. We don't want people to feel like that are being singled out.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Those letters are supposed to use standardized language. Please send me that example and we will follow up.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What is the percentage of the complaints result in non-findings or non-issues?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CPS is about four percent founded. I am not sure about the licensed complaints.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps/Follow Up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Please reach out to Nicole Rose (<a href="mailto:nicole.rose@dcyf.wa.gov">nicole.rose@dcyf.wa.gov</a>) or Ruben Reeves (<a href="mailto:ruben.reeves@dcyf.wa.gov">ruben.reeves@dcyf.wa.gov</a>) with any follow up questions.</li> </ul>

**FSKA Recommendation Report**

DCYF Community Engagement Manager Marlene White led the group through a discussion regarding the ELAC Recommendation Report.

- [2023 FSKA Recommendation Report](#)
- [Fair Start for Kids Act \(FSKA\) Sec. 102 Spending Goals and Strategies](#)
- [Meeting Discussion Responses](#)

<b>Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regarding the strategy around this report, how do we make it more effective versus a laundry list? Is this the brainstorming time and are we going to think about strategy separately to identify our key messages? Where are we in the process?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Right now, we're brainstorming from everything you've heard and received from 2023 and putting ideas down. This work session is for members to jot down their priorities for 2024.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ We're hoping to get some content down and then ELAC can provide feedback on the organization and structure.</li><li>● Is this document just at a legislative nexus level or does it also include other things that may fall within the guise of operations or within agency cause? One is around rules and one is around procedures and the other is around statute and legislation. Is there a difference between those two in this report?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The stated scope of the report is DCYF and ELAC collectively making recommendations to the legislature.</li></ul></li></ul>
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**Closing Remarks/Adjourn**

<b>Next Steps/Follow Up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The June 4 ELAC Public Meeting has been cancelled.</li><li>● The next ELAC Report Development Session will be on July 9, 2024</li></ul>
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