



Provider Supports Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

August 14, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols, and Introductions

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer welcomed members and completed introductions.

Review of Meeting Materials

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer led the group in the review of meeting materials.

- [June 11, 2024, Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Feedback Loop](#)
- [Agency Updates](#)

Discussion	<p><i>Agency Updates</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For rule making updates, rather than putting in a link, please bullet point the updates or summarize it so providers can easily identify the changes. • What should we expect for an agenda or engagement at the Community Child Care Forums. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These are meant to be open forums. There is no structured agendas or list of items for DCYF to speak about. The purpose of the forums is for providers to ask questions and engage in conversations with their local licensing staff and DCYF leadership. • When the emails go out about the forums are they geographic targeted or do they go out to all licensed providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They out to the whole mailing list regardless of where they are located. • Are they still having a professional development staff attend the forums? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We still do some of our professional development webinars. At the forums, the DCYF staff in attendance include Nicole Rose and Amy Russell from Early Learning, Jason Ramynke from Subsidy, and Tiffany Lee with Professional Development.
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DEVELOP Update

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose discussed and answered questions regarding the DEVELOP update.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has the financial commitment to DEVELOP been and how is that resource to be allocated to the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Much of this work was done either within existing resources or with one-time preschool development grant funds. We will be working within our existing resources to do some of this analysis. • I was disappointed to hear this wasn't moving forward. In the beginning, did you foresee that this was going to be bigger than you thought? Who made the decision to stop the process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When the process first started, DCYF looked at this on a broad scale, but the intent was to start with early learning. This was a joint decision made across DCYF leadership (deputy secretary chief of staff and chief information officer) that was made after some IT analysis was done. • This has been requested a lot already but can MERIT link to some of the other programs we have to log into. We are not asking for a single sign up, but it would be helpful to have one place to link everything.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can follow up on this. ● I appreciate that DCYF made the decision to reverse course on DEVELOP. Unless the outcome is better and more efficient, providers benefit from less work, not more. ● Besides MERIT and the learning Portal we also log into WA Compass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ And Coach and Educator Community Interface (CECI). ● When you were looking at DEVELOP, did you account for providers who cannot use technology and have challenges with technology in general? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are in a space where technology is part of our daily lives. Part of what we want to do is make the use of that technology as user friendly for providers as possible. ● How much longer will we have to wait for them to prepare another program that has all of the access that they find innovative to benefit providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will share more information as it becomes available.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to training@dcyf.wa.gov with any follow up questions.

Early Learning Licensing WAC Revisions

DCYF Child Care Policy and Change Management Specialist Brett Skinner and Policy and Change Management Program Supervisor Ann Radcliffe provided a preview of a list of upcoming Washington Administrative Code (WAC) revisions.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Related to capacity waiver - what about sprinkler system? Is this a state building code requirement? or local? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is going to be some flexibility. A lot of local building codes will require it but there's going to be more communication coming out as some of these processes get finalized. You have to check into your local codes to see how that will work in your county or city. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It's local but you will also want to talk with the state fire marshal. ● How quickly does the WAC change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are hoping these three sections will move forward by the end of this calendar year. ● Regarding the negative behavior exhibited by parents, is that quotation going to be included in the WAC? I'm concerned that a provider might read that and think terminating a parent is limited to what is in the quote. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The phrase "may include" leaves it a little open. It could be this or it could be other things and leaves it up to the provider to put into their policies. ○ This is a WAC that already exists. The quote is a reminder that if a parent were being inappropriate that you could show them this WAC. The quote is included to be helpful. Sometimes, in family home settings it can be hard to have those conversations with parents. ○ I have a Parent Code of Conduct in my parent handbook that clearly states what we expect and can be at risk of disenrollment ● Are there additional in-person opportunities to hear about the draft language? The comment portal does not give any response so providers aren't given any response or acknowledgment through the comment portal. Providers have also attended community events in the past, but the DCYF staff present could not answer questions, they only collected feedback. Will it be different? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The policy and rules office is very diligent on collecting and tracking anything that comes in. All of those comments do come before childcare leadership, and they are all very seriously considered.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings like this are collaborative and helpful. Anytime you offer something that is collaborative and can answer questions in real time is helpful to all providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standards Alignment road show! • Providers need to be at the table after DCYF receives feedback and is discussing it. Providers or reps from Washington Childcare Centers Association (WCCA) might be able to clarify any misinterpretations because DCYF staff don't have that day to day lived experience. • At the June meeting I asked if there was a way to renew the Pathogens Certificate annually, and have the same renewal time as first aid, because it can be hard to find them (trainings) and renew them in a short timeframe." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) requires annual Bloodborne Pathogen (BBP). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information can be found in L&I's Bloodborne Pathogens Training & Resources. • Will new language come to this committee for discussion before it is finalized? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, this is the very beginning of the process. We will also be connecting with tribal partners for input and scheduling additional webinars. • I'm surprised DCYF would remove language about not leaving a child unattended on a changing table. I disagree with that change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strongly disagree with this change and believe that it is crucial to maintain clear guidelines that prioritize child safety. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We've made a note of this and can look into this. • Is there any change to Licensing Orientation being required when someone is opening an additional center? I've heard some folks have been told they have to retake that class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I had to retake it, even though I was running a current center for 20 years. ○ We will follow up on this. • We should also seek full feedback from Family Home Childcare providers as well, for full transparency.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please contact Brett Skinner (brett.skinner@dcyf.wa.gov) and Ann Radcliffe (ann.radcliffe@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Legislative Update/Early Learning Decision Packages

DCYF Senior Policy Advisor Melissa Cheesman provided an update on Early Learning Decision Packages

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the 25.5 FTEs all for the complaint unit? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is specifically for meeting Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) entitlement. I believe the complaint unit is 20. • Does any funding come from the federal government for our ECEAP program to meet entitlement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I will follow up on this. • Regarding income eligibility, is 75% of the state medium income a fixed point in time or does it change every year? At what point in time is that based on? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We do update the state medium income annually around October. We have that listed on our eligibility charts and then it gets updated again when we get that information. • Regarding subsidy payments before rather than after, what will that mean if a family decides to leave, or they disappear after 5 days into the month? Typically, we can bill for the whole month. Will there be any change to that, especially if they enroll in another center?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is something we will follow up with regard to enrollment-based payment and prospective payment. ● Currently we have to jump through hoops to try and request payment for our children with disabilities. I hope that as you look at the decision package, I hope you will work to make it easier for providers to access those funds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have had a lot of requests about special needs. That wouldn't be part of this decision package, but it is something we are thinking about. ● Since DCYF houses both licensing and CPS, could you have a third party oversee the CPS investigations so you can reduce conflict of interest? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The conflict of interest is in relation to separation of duty. A common business practice to reduce bias and risk within an organization is separation of duty. ○ In DCYF's licensing division we have our childcare and foster care licensors as well as our CPS unit. In foster care, licensors do not do complaint investigations. There is a whole separate unit that does that. We are trying to take a look at that model which seems successful and beneficial for providers in early learning. Right now, we have 85 licensors across the state who are doing technical assistance, regulation, and complaint investigation. We've really heard from providers that having that complaint investigation separated out from the licensor's duty. It allows the licensors to focus on the technical assistance as they go out on monitoring visits.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to Melissa Cheeseman (melissa.cheeseman@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

Complex Needs Fund Updates and Feedback for Refinement

DCYF Child Care Grants Manager Kelsey Boyce and Child Care Grants Coordinator Melinda Waite gathered feedback on the Complex Needs Fund.

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How diverse is the committee that oversees the Complex Needs Fund proposal? Are there members on the committee with lived experience related to the issues the fund addresses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review panel that makes funding determinations is made up of subject matter experts that work in the field. I don't believe that's data that we collect but we will follow up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are they subject matter experts within DCYF or outside of DCYF? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They are within DCYF. ● DCYF staff on the review panel represent infant and early childhood mental health, tribal licensing, and various other representation within DCYF who work closely with complex needs. ● How many family childcare providers received the complex fund? Most family childcare providers apply every year but do not get the funds and received the email that we responded that we did not have special needs kids. When we have special needs children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Of the 162 awardees in Fiscal Year 2024, 69 of them were Licensed Family Homes. ● Are there any parents or community members involved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We do not have parents or community members in involved in this grant opportunity.
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- After applying several times for the Complex Needs grants, and there is always something missing. Technical assistance has not given clear answers. What are those outliners that allow a participant to receive the fund or not? What are the criteria?
 - Eligible providers include open licensed certified or certified for payment only childcare providers, and licensed exempt family friend neighbor (FFN). Providers need to have served at least one child on subsidy in four of the past six months or two of the past three months and claim for subsidy through the social service payment system (SSPS) at the time of the application. To be eligible, providers must have children currently enrolled in their care who have behavior needs, development delays or disabilities or any other unique needs. When all applications are received they go through a scoring rubric that is posted on the [Child Care Complex Needs Website](#). All of those providers must have an average score of 9 points or higher before moving on to the review panel.
 - We do contract with the Imagine Institute for technical assistance, and they do have the ability to review previous applications and offer feedback.
- Is Imagine technical assistance only for home providers?
 - The Imagine Institute is available to assist all applicants, including licensed family homes and centers
- If a provider offers care for children with special needs but currently does not have anyone enrolled, then they would not be eligible to apply. Is there some way to put an exception to the rules so that providers can access some dollars for the kids that enroll in their centers throughout the year?
 - We will make note of that. Right now, as it stands currently, the funding we have is so limited, we drew the eligibility line for providers that currently have children enrolled in their care who have these needs.
- Is Technical Assistance (TA) free and available for providers? If so, it would be helpful to clearly state this in the proposal. Additionally, it would be valuable to survey those who have utilized TA services to understand how effective they found it. Specifically, the survey could ask which TA they chose, how the process went, and what outcomes they experienced.
 - Technical Assistance is available at no cost to the provider through Imagine, and information on this is provided on the grant application as well as all grant materials. Great feedback on surveying applicants about their experience with TA.
- With regard to the technical assistance, when a grant is denied, is there an opportunity to get support and reasons why it was denied and what can be done to make grant applications stronger the next round?
 - Yes, providers can take their applications to the imagine institute. They will review them with you one on one.
- How do you collect feedback? Clearly some providers here did not have a similarly positive experience.
 - After the grant awards are given out, we send out a quarterly progress update where providers complete ten questions regarding the status of their grant.
 - We have started adding questions about technical assistance in the grant application itself.
- Can you please share how the team is trained, is it one hour, a day and does it include utilizing a racial equity lens?
 - We did a train the trainer with the Imagine Institute but can provide additional details in the feedback loops.
 - I would like information about how you are using a racial equity lens in the trainings.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where does the negative feedback go?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We do share that feedback with the imagine institute and work with them.• What is breakdown between centers and homes in receiving this grant?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 162 total grants in 2024: 86 Centers, 69 LFH, 5 FFN, 2 Tribal• With regard to reviewing the grants, do you remove whether it's a family home or center or any identifying factors?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We do remove all identifying information before the scoring process and before the review panel.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please contact dcyf.childcaregrants@dcyf.wa.gov with any follow up questions.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9, 2024.
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