

# 2021 Early Learning Legislation

## *Fair Start and Budget Highlights*

*June 2021*

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Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

# Fair Start for Kids Act Background



- Second year running the bill
- Evolved in response to COVID-19 crisis
- Built on work of Child Care Collaborative Task Force Workgroup
- Sponsored by Senator Claire Wilson and Representative Tana Senn



# Context & Legislative Findings



- Working parents in Washington forego \$14 billion each year directly due to child care scarcity
- This disproportionately impacts women
- Scarcity in child care will affect post-COVID-19 economic recovery
- The child care workforce is predominantly comprised of women of color, and structurally afflicted by low wages, limited health care, and severe lack of retirement benefits



# Fair Start & Budget Goal

Expand access to a comprehensive continuum of high-quality early childhood development programs.

- Expand eligibility for existing child care and preschool programs to increase access
- Make investments to increase access to high-quality early learning by eliminating copayments for low-income families and limit copayments for any family on subsidy to no more than 7% of their income
- Get parents back to work and provide every child with a fair start



# Fair Start & Budget Goal

## Stabilize child care market through supports to providers.

- Expand language access services to create an inclusive early learning system that supports underserved providers
- Stabilize, support, and grow the diverse early learning workforce by funding living wages, affordable health benefits, training, infant and early childhood mental health consultation, shared business services, etc.
- Accelerate Washington's economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 by dramatically expanding access to affordable, high-quality child care and preschool

# Implementation Planning

- DCYF teams are in the early stages of implementation planning for the many elements of the Fair Start for Kids Act. Building in stakeholder engagement is a key element of these plans
- More information will be provided soon on how to follow along and provide input on the various processes
- This summer, there will be a centralized web resource to learn about and follow implementation of major Fair Start for Kids Act initiatives



# Federal Child Care Stabilization Grant

- DCYF to distribute nearly \$400 million in grants, via the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), to child care providers to stabilize the child care industry as part of the state's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- DCYF to contract with an organization to provide language access support to child care providers during the grant application process
- Eligibility determined by ARPA (2021)



# Working Connections Child Care

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
WCCC Eligibility Expansion	Switch to an SMI metric, and increase percent eligibility (between 60 and 85%). <i>\$17,359,000</i>	60% by Oct. 1, 2021 75% by July 1, 2025 85% by July 1, 2027
WCCC Co-Payment	Changes the copayment schedule and reduces copayments. <i>\$76,731,000</i>	Copay Schedule Changes July 1, 2021, Jan. 1, 2022, July 1, 2023, July 1, 2025
WCCC Rate Increase	Increase subsidy base rates to 85 <sup>th</sup> percentile; develop and implement a CC cost est. model for full costs of care. <i>\$116,805,000</i>	July 1, 2021
WCCC Student Parents	Waives work requirement for some student populations. <i>\$8,833,000</i>	July 1, 2021
SSPS Migration	DCYF to migrate SSPS to a cloud-based system to implement grants, rate enhancements, and other payments. <i>\$2,487,000</i>	2021-23 Biennium





# Working Connections Child Care

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Collective Bargaining Agreement	<p>Compensation components of collective bargaining agreement for child care providers (rate increase for FFNs and level 3+ early achievers qualified providers, nonstandard hour care rate).</p> <p><i>\$6,390,000</i></p>	Rate Increases Begin July, 1 2021
Nonstandard Hours Rate Model	<p>DCYF, working with diverse stakeholders, must develop a rate model for nonstandard child care hours and submit the model to the Governor and the Legislature.</p>	Due Jan. 1, 2022
Caseload Restrictions	<p>DCYF shall manage the program so that the average monthly caseload does not exceed 33,000 households and the agency shall give prioritized access to certain groups.</p>	2021-23 Biennium



# Child Care Professional Development

- Implementation of trainings, Early Achievers scholarships, and other professional development activities
- DCYF shall provide professional development supports to aid eligible providers in reaching the professional education and training standards adopted by the agency
- Includes activities such as updating training content, data collection and reporting, trainer recruitment, retention, program monitoring, trainings, etc.

*\$8,021,000*

# Grants & Rate Enhancements

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Complex Needs Funds	DCYF will administer two complex needs funds (one for ECEAP/birth-to-three ECEAP; one for child care) to promote inclusive, least-restrictive environments and to support contractors and providers serving children who have developmental delays, disabilities, behavioral needs, or other unique needs. <i>\$9,674,000</i>	Beginning July 1, 2021
Dual Language Rate Enhancement	DCYF will create a dual language designation and provide subsidy rate enhancements or site specific grants to support staff who provide bilingual instruction, professional development training, the purchase of dual language and culturally appropriate curricula and accompanying training programs, instructional materials, etc. <i>\$3,380,000</i>	Beginning July 1, 2022

# Grants & Rate Enhancements

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Trauma-Informed Care Supports	DCYF will provide supports to providers to provide trauma-informed care, including PD and training, purchase of screening tools, or additional compensation for staff with child development specialty credentials. <i>\$2,802,000</i>	Beginning July 1, 2022
Early Childhood Equity Grants	DCYF to create a grant program to support inclusive and culturally and linguistically specific early learning and early childhood and parent support programs across the state. <i>\$5,309,000</i>	N/A
Infant Rate Enhancement	DCYF to implement an infant rate enhancement for child care providers accepting subsidy or birth-to-three ECEAP. <i>\$2,531,000</i>	Beginning July 1, 2022

# Child Care Health Benefits

- DCYF to establish a process for informing, upon clearance of required background checks, employees of licensed family home, center-based, and outdoor nature-based child cares about available financial supports and options for accessing health coverage
- DCYF to help facilitate outreach from Health Benefits Exchange navigators and eligible employees

*\$40,000*

- The Health Benefits Exchange will implement a health care insurance premium assistance program for employees working at licensed child care facilities

*\$30,266,000*



# Child Care Licensing

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Organization License Pilot	DCYF to establish a pilot project to determine the feasibility of a child care license category for multi-site programs operating under one owner or one entity and submit recommendations to the legislature. <i>\$414,000</i>	Due July 1, 2024
Employer-Supported Child Care	DCYF to collaborate with the Department of Commerce on technical assistance to employers interested in providing child care to employees. <i>\$829,000</i>	2021-23 Biennium
Early Learning Facilities	DCYF to provide technical assistance to early learning providers interested in applying for, or who have received, funding from the Early Learning Facility Grant or Loan Program. <i>\$956,000</i>	2021-23 Biennium
Licensing Subcommittee of ELAC	ELAC temporary subcommittee to provide feedback and recommendations on increasing the number of licensed child care providers in the state. <i>\$271,000</i>	Report Due Dec. 1, 2022



# ECEAP Changes

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
ECEAP Slots	Increases the number of slots to 15,162 in FY 22 and to 15,912 in FY 23. (100 reserved for foster children) <i>\$329,727,000</i>	2021-23 Biennium
ECEAP Eligibility	Expands the entitlement groups to 36% SMI, then 50% SMI; adds specific populations.	36% Until 2030 50% Beginning 2030-31 School Year
ECEAP Entitlement	Moves entitlement to the 2026-27 school year. Directs DCYF to report on integration of early learning systems and develop a methodology for predicting ECEAP slot needs post-entitlement. <i>(-\$57,929,000)</i>	Integration Report & Methodology Due: Sept. 1, 2022
ECEAP Rates	Increases ECEAP rates by 10%. <i>\$29,819,000</i>	Beginning July 1, 2021

# Indian Child Definition

- DCYF must consult and obtain the advice and consent of the governing bodies of the state's federally recognized tribes in developing an agreed-upon definition of the term "Indian" for the purposes of RCW 43.216.505 and, by July 1, 2024, must adopt the definition in rule
- Indian families, using the definition created by the process above, will be entitled to ECEAP beginning 2026-27 school year





# Early ECEAP

- Early ECEAP program for children under 36 months is made permanent
- Funding provided to expand number of slots
- Income eligibility increases to 50% SMI

*\$3,781,000*



# Language Access for Early Learning

- DCYF to hire two temp. language access coordinators with specialties in Spanish and Somali to address immediate language access needs at DCYF related to COVID-19 child care relief and recovery in agency programs, including:
  - a) Translation
  - b) Outreach to community organizations serving multilingual children and families
  - c) Webinars and other technical assistance
  - d) Other means of increasing language access and equity for early learning providers and caregivers

*\$500,000*

# Home Visiting Expansion

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Expansion of Services	DCYF to contract with local implementing agencies to expand Home Visiting services. <i>\$10.7 million</i>	By Oct. 1, 2021
HVAC Updates	DCYF to provide semi-annual updates to the Home Visiting Advisory Committee, including number of families served in home visiting programs and a status of the Home Visiting Services Account balance.	2021-23 Biennium
HVAC Recommendations	HVAC will make recommendations to DCYF and the Legislature on strategies for supporting home visiting providers and serving additional families, including enhancing data system collections and reporting, professional development supports, and rate adjustments to reimburse for the true cost of service delivery.	Due July 1, 2022

# ECLIPSE Expansion

- DCYF to contract for ECLIPSE services to provide therapeutic care and specialized treatment
- Funding provided for the expansion of services is intended to serve new geographic areas not currently served by ECLIPSE services. These must focus first on children and families furthest from opportunity as defined by income and be delivered by programs that emphasize greater racial equity

*\$14,281,000*

## IECMH-C Expansion

- Increases the number of state-funded Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultants from six to 12, plus one coordinator position
- The IECMH Consultants must support Early Achievers program coaches and child care providers by providing resources, information, and guidance regarding challenging behavior and expulsions and may travel to assist providers in serving families and children with severe behavioral needs

*\$3,946,000*

# Help Me Grow

- Funding was provided to continue the Pierce County pilot program, with a report due to the Legislature on Sept. 1, 2022

*\$1,742,000*

- Funding also provided to the statewide family resource and referral linkage system (WithinReach) to provide a coordinated access point of resource navigators who will connect families with children prenatal through age 5 with services, programs, and community resources through a facilitated referral and linkage process

*\$530,000*



# Family, Friend, and Neighbor: Play and Learn Groups

- Funding was provided for expansion of FFN Play and Learn Groups that offer parents and other caregivers culturally responsive opportunities to support their children's early learning, build relationships that reduce isolation and encourage socialization, and promote kindergarten readiness

*\$860,000*



# Data & Accountability

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
ELAC Expanded Purview	Gives ELAC the purview of providing guidance on the Fair Start for Kids Account, expands membership. Includes temporary licensing subcommittee. <i>\$272,000</i>	N/A
ELAC Report	ELAC to work with DCYF to provide annual updates on phased implementation of strategies and priorities.	Aug. 31, 2022
ELAC Report	DCYF, in consultation with ELAC, submits a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature describing how the investments funded by the Fair Start for Kids Act have impacted specific policy objectives.	Sept. 15, 2023





# Data & Accountability

Topic	Details	Relevant Deadlines
Data Dashboards	Develop public-facing regionalized data dashboards and reports. <i>\$300,000</i>	N/A
ECEAP Methodology	DCYF to develop a methodology to identify, at the school district level, the geographic locations of where ECEAP slots are needed.	September 2022
Integrated EL Report	DCYF to collaborate with OSPI on report with options and recommendations for aligning and integrating high-quality early learning programs administered by both agencies. <i>\$1,010,000</i>	Sept. 1, 2022



# Authorized One-Time Federal Increases

Grant	Grant Award Amount
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)	\$477 Million
Child Care Stabilization Grant	\$391 Million
Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)	\$5.6 Million
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	\$5.5 Million
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)	\$2.2 Million
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)	\$3 Million
FMAP Increase (CCDF, Title IV-E, Title XIX)	Entitlement – additional 6.2% federal earned on allowable expenditures

Thank you!

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