



2019-2020 ECEAP CASELOAD FORECAST REPORT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



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Summary

The Washington State Caseload Forecast Council (CFC) is required by **RCW 43.88C** to forecast the number of children who are eligible to participate in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) as defined in **RCW 43.216.505 (4)**. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) provides this narrative report annually to describe the November ECEAP caseload forecast.

By the 2022-23 school year, all eligible children shall be entitled to enroll in ECEAP, per **RCW 43.216.556 (5)**. Pursuant to this expansion toward entitlement, the Legislature has allocated funding for 5,609 additional slots for ECEAP children since 2013. In the 2019-20 school year, there are 14,000 slots.

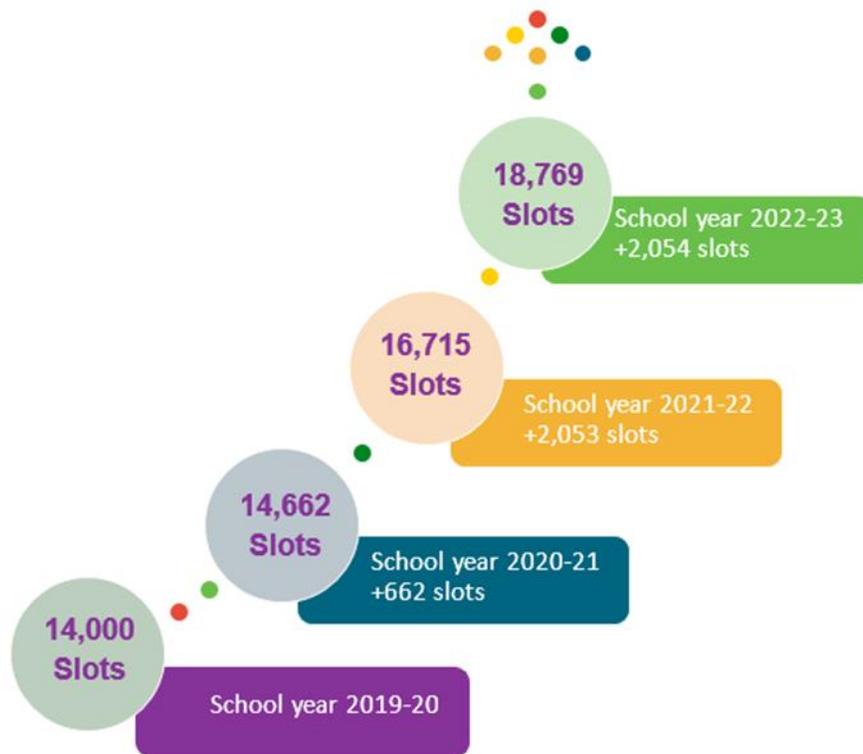
Based on the November 2019 CFC forecast, during the 2019-20 school year, ECEAP serves 53 percent of eligible children and 84 percent of children likely to participate.

- 20,165 children are eligible for ECEAP and not served by ECEAP or Head Start.
- Of these, 4,271 would likely participate this year if space were available.
- By 2022-23, 4,769 more slots are needed to serve all eligible children likely to participate.

The Legislature has already awarded 662 new slots for 2020-21. This means we would need slightly more than 2,050 new slots in each of the next two years to fully fund ECEAP entitlement.

ECEAP Expansion

Slots needed for statutory entitlement



Based on the November 2019 ECEAP Caseload Forecast

Description of ECEAP

ECEAP is Washington’s pre-kindergarten program that prepares 3- and 4-year-old children furthest from opportunity for success in school and in life. ECEAP focuses on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive education, health and family support services to the most vulnerable of Washington’s young children – those in intense poverty, experiencing complex trauma or both.

Children are eligible for ECEAP if they are 3- or 4-years-old on August 31 of the school year, not simultaneously enrolled in Head Start and meet one of these requirements:

- From a family with income at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) – \$28,325 annually for a family of four.
- Qualified for special education services under [RCW 28A.155.020](#). All children with a school district Individualized Education Program (IEP) meet this requirement.
- From a family with an income that exceeds 110 percent of the FPL and impacted by specific risk factors identified by DCYF that are linked by research to school performance. Children eligible in this category must not exceed 10 percent of total statewide ECEAP enrollment.

Once ECEAP staff establish children’s eligibility, staff prioritize children for enrollment in the available ECEAP slots using a statewide weighted priority point system. When available eligible children are enrolled in a community and there are unfilled ECEAP slots, staff may enroll additional children with specific characteristics. These “allowed” children are not part of the group that will be entitled to ECEAP in 2022-23.



Methodology

The CFC estimates the population of children eligible for ECEAP who are not served by Head Start and would likely participate if space were available. To do this, the CFC calculates the number of 3- and 4-year-olds in Washington at or below 110 percent of FPL, then discounts a percentage in future years to account for minimum wage increases.

They add the estimated number of children on IEPs who are above the income threshold. From that total, the CFC subtracts the children served by Head Start, then adds 10 percent for children who are not income-eligible but have specific risk factors. This determines the estimated total number of children eligible for ECEAP, from which they calculate the number whose families are likely to choose to participate.

The CFC uses the following data sources and assumptions:

- The base population of 93,667 3-year-olds and 94,229 4-year-olds in 2019-20 is from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) Population Forecast, November 2018.
- An estimated 17.3 percent of each of these age cohorts is at or below 110 percent of FPL and therefore eligible for ECEAP by income. This is based on the American Community Survey, Combined 2015-17. This factor is updated each year in the February forecast.
- The state **minimum wage** rose to \$12 in 2019 and will rise to \$13.50 in 2020. Starting Jan. 1, 2021, minimum wage increases will be tied to the rate of inflation. The CFC estimates that 0.3 percent of families that would have been eligible for ECEAP in fall 2018 are not income-eligible in fall of 2019 because of the minimum wage increase.
- An additional 2.93 percent of 3-year-olds and 4.45 percent of 4-year-olds are on IEPs for special education services and over 110 percent of FPL and therefore eligible for ECEAP. This is based on the total number of each age group on IEPs from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the proportion of children on IEPs who are above 110 percent FPL currently in ECEAP.
- In addition to children who are eligible by income or IEP status, another 10 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds who are above 110 percent of FPL are eligible based on specific risk factors.
- The CFC estimates 51 percent of eligible 3-year-olds are in families who would choose to participate if ECEAP slots were available (the uptake rate), based on literature review of participation in states and countries with universal prekindergarten programs. For 4-year-olds, the CFC assumes 82.5 percent participation, based on literature review and the uptake rate for public kindergarten in Washington. The CFC Technical Workgroup revisits estimates of uptake rates periodically as we move toward full ECEAP entitlement.
- Head Start slot counts and age distributions are from the Program Information Reports from Head Start grantees to the federal Office of Head Start, including the slot counts for Region X Head Start and American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start and excluding Migrant/Seasonal Head Start which operates only during summer months and serves some duplicate children.

ECEAP Slot Progress Toward Entitlement

This chart assumes:

- 662 new ECEAP slots in SFY21
- 2,053 new ECEAP slots in SFY22
- 2,054 new ECEAP slots in SFY23

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total ECEAP-eligible 3- and 4-year-olds	42,679	42,877	42,753	42,931
Served by ECEAP ¹	14,000	14,662 ¹	16,715 ¹	18,769
Served by Head Start ²	8,514	8,211	7,919	7,637
Total ECEAP-eligible served by ECEAP or Head Start ¹	22,514	22,873	24,634	26,406
Percent of ECEAP-eligible served by ECEAP or Head Start ¹	53%	53%	58%	62%
Percent of ECEAP-eligible, likely to participate, served by ECEAP or Head Start ^{1,3}	83%	85%	93%	100%
Unserved, ECEAP-eligible ¹	20,165	20,667	20,834	21,294
Unserved, ECEAP-eligible, likely to participate ^{1,3}	4,271	3,895	1,901	0

¹Based on proposed ECEAP slot ramp up in chart on page 1

²The Head Start school year preschool-age slot count decreased from 10,603 in 2013-14 to 8,514 in 2019-20, as some Head Start slots shifted from part-day to full-day classes and to Early Head Start for younger children. We assume the same percentage decreases in the coming years.

³Likely to participate is based on the CFC assumption that 51% of eligible 3-year-olds and 82.5% of eligible 4-year-olds will participate. Parents may choose other early learning services or choose to keep children home with them.

