



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

Washington State Interagency Coordinating Council April 2025 Quarterly Meeting State Lead Agency Report

ACORN & Data Management System (DMS) News



State leaders serving on the Data Systems and Analysis Team (D-SAT) are continuing to work towards data migration to our new data management system, ACORN. The team collaborates regularly with the contracted vendor, the Public Consulting Group, during weekly meetings to finalize (a) the development of required state and federal reports, (b) configuration of User Roles and (c) customization of the User Interface.

Examples of recently completed work include minor changes in the therapist panel, removal of obsolete data fields in the insurance section, migration of all progress notes into the ACORN training environment, and the removal of the screening tab. (Note: The screening tab section will be revised and is going to be part of the ACORN Phase 2 release expected in mid-winter quarter).

We are continuing to work on merging duplicative agencies in the current DMS, customizing the County Lead Agency role, and finalizing the sustainability of existing Data Exchanges. We are also partnering with volunteers for a “User Experience Pilot” where a group of users follows instructional scripts to discover and report bugs and glitches. Resolution of all bugs and glitches identified during this process will be achieved prior to Go-Live, as it is one of the seven readiness assessment criteria.

In addition to the ongoing work on ACORN, the D-SAT is engaging in the following activities highlighted below.

- ✚ FFY 2023 State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (submitted February 2, 2025) Clarification Window (April 8th – 22nd, 2025)
 - This is an opportunity to clarify and/or edit narrative, or correct data based on preliminary written responses from the federal Office of Special Education Programs
- ✚ FFY 2024 Annual Review and Analysis of SPP Compliance Indicators
 - These are braided tasks conducted as part of the Desktop Compliance Reviews in partnership with the Accountability & Quality Improvement Team.
- ✚ DMS Help Desk Support & Monthly State and Federal Reporting
- ✚ Preparation for the federal Differentiated Monitoring System 2.0 Activities

Please continue to reach out to Kim Hopkins, ESIT Data Systems & Analysis Manager at kim.hopkins@dcyf.wa.gov with questions or reflections.



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Early Support for Infants and Toddlers State Leadership Team News

There are three existing positions currently open for recruitment. Both the Partnership, Collaboration, and Family Engagement Manager and the Resource Allocations Manager positions are being opened for recruitment internally for 14 days with the option to extend for 21 days for external recruitment, as may be necessary. The hiring of a Strategic Innovations Administrator is also under development to meet unmet administrative gaps with the change in leadership structure made in July 2023. The ESIT State Administrator position is currently in open public recruitment status and closes Monday, April 21, 2025.

Diverse Interview Panels that include parents, external partners, and internal peers, are in the process of being formed for all three of the current openings. Members of the Interview Panel work together with support from the designated Hiring Manager, to make recommendations for advancing candidates in the process and ultimately hiring recommendations. All panel members receive an in-depth orientation that includes Anti-Bias Interviewing & Hiring Strategies and sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to serving on an Interview Panel.

Federal Update Shared by National Infant Toddler Coordinators Association



The National Infant Toddler Coordinators (ITCA) Association shared their most recent [ITCA Federal Update on April 14, 2025](#). The ESIT State Leadership Office has been posting these weekly federal updates on the ESIT Website. The ITCA Association has continued to provide weekly updates on activities taking place in Washington DC that relate directly to our mission and purpose. It was noted that Congress is on a two-week recess until April 27th after passing the budget resolution in both the House and the Senate. The Administration has already issued over one hundred executive orders in the first three months of the administration and one of these will be highlighted in this update.

Highlights from this week's publication include:

Budget Resolution: Before Congress adjourned for the two-week spring recess, the House passed a new budget resolution by a vote of 216-214. This budget resolution now serves as the framework for a reconciliation bill later this year designed to implement the administration's plans for tax cuts, about \$1.5 trillion spending cuts, increased military spending, as well as energy policy and border security provisions. The House Energy and Commerce Committee has been tasked with finding \$880 billion in overall budget cuts over 10 years. The challenge is to pass the necessary cuts to fund this plan. Based on the savings needed and the total size of programs under that committee's jurisdiction, the most obvious place to make the cuts is Medicaid. Medicaid provides health care coverage to more than seventy million people, including 40% of all children.

Right before the recess, the Senate also passed the budget resolution by a close vote of 51-48 after an all-night marathon. Several bipartisan amendments were considered addressing possible Medicaid cuts. None of these passed but the votes were very close. One amendment from Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR)

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and Josh Hawley (R-MO) would have eliminated the House's Energy and Commerce Committee's instructions to save \$880 billion and another amendment from Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) would have prevented Medicaid cuts that could lead to hospital closures or higher uncompensated care. The Speaker of the House and the President have suggested the necessary savings can be achieved through waste, fraud and abuse and cuts to other areas. Many advocates say these savings cannot be achieved without significant cuts to Medicaid benefits. Widespread advocacy efforts are planned throughout the recess to stop cuts to Medicaid. Leadership in the House and Senate plan to focus this committee budget work during May and June. The goal is to finish this work by the end of July.

HELP Committee Hearing Planned: The Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee Chair Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Ranking Member Bernie Sanders (I-VT) have invited HHS Secretary Kennedy to testify before the Committee about the restructuring in the federal agency. The hearing was set for last week, but it has been postponed without a new date being set yet.

House Resolution to Get Plan for Education Reorganization: The House Education and Workforce Committee voted along party lines on a resolution, H. Res. 237 sponsored by Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA). The resolution requests the administration's reorganization plans for and documents related to closures, staffing cuts, and downsizing activities within the Department of Education. The resolution also requests information on how the Administration plans to meet its obligations under various education laws, including IDEA, if the Department were to close. The vote on the resolution was not technically a "no," but it sends the resolution to the House floor with a recommendation against passage. The resolution is located at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-resolution/237/text?s=6&r=1&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22H.Res.+237%22%7D>

Executive Order on Deregulation: A new executive order, "Directing the Repeal of Unlawful Regulations" has been issued. It can be found at: [Directing the Repeal of Unlawful Regulations – The White House](#). This order, in collaboration with a previous order, requires federal agency heads, in compliance with Supreme Court decisions, to determine unlawful regulations, and finalize new rules without notice and comment, when that process would be "impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest." Specifically, the order requires agency heads to:

1. After a 60-day review period ordered in Executive Order 14219, to identify unlawful and potentially unlawful regulations, and take steps to repeal such regulations, or portions of any regulation, that clearly exceed the agency's statutory authority or is otherwise unlawful; and
2. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the review period under Executive Order 14219 to identify unlawful and potentially unlawful regulations, agencies shall submit to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs a one-page summary of each regulation that was initially identified under the Executive Order, but which has not been targeted for repeal, explaining the basis for the decision not to repeal that regulation.



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Leadership in Early Support Update: Continuing to Plan for a Bright Future by Judy King

As you know, we have been engaged in planning for the retirement of our Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) State Administrator, Val Arnold, who is retiring at the end of June 2025.

As promised, we have planned and held several virtual opportunities for stakeholders and community partners to provide input on what is needed for the next era of Early Support/Early Intervention as we continue to shape the recruitment and hiring process for a new ESIT Sr. Administrator. Over the last quarter we have been doing work on planning for the transition/retirement of our cherished ESIT State Administrator.

Input offerings were held January-April 2025. This has included group gatherings with opportunities for weighing in about important considerations, leadership attributes, and focus areas for the new leader.

Future Planning Conversations Held:

- ESIT State Leadership Team at DCYF (January)
- Public Policy and Advocate Partners (February)
- Parent Institute for Engagement Leadership Academy Cohort 7 (February)
- State Interagency Coordinating Council (February)
- County Lead Agencies (March)

A survey is also open for anyone wanting to provide input. The link is published in the ESIT Weekly titled [Your Voice Matters: Help Strengthen Early Support Services!](#) The survey, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), will close on April 24, 2025.

---- Judy King, Director of Family & Community Support
judy.king@dcyf.wa.gov

Accountability & Quality Improvement Team Highlights

Tammy McCauley, Accountability & Quality Improvement Manager, continues to lead her team as they actively engage in multiple circles of engagement with multi-disciplinary partners across the state. Upcoming culminating activities are highlighted below.

- ✚ Implementation of the newest component for the ESIT-Statewide Integrated Monitoring System: Onsite Systems Analysis Program Review Phase One visits. Six monitoring visits will be conducted between April 1 2025 – June 30 2026.



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- ✚ May 20 & 21 – 2 statewide webinars are planned to introduce the Revised Early Childhood Transition Policy - Parental Opt-out of the notification to Part B for Special Education Preschool Services.
- ✚ June 5 & 10 Open Office hours for the Revised Early Childhood Parental Opt-Out Policy
- ✚ The revised System of Payments and Fees Policy and Procedures have been under federal review following interactive state development and submission. Final wordsmithing and format edit recommendations from the federal funding source are coming to a close. Information about a two-tier approach for notification, training, and technical assistance will be coming out soon.
- ✚ Preparing Fiscal Year 2025-2026 County Lead Agency & ESIT Provider Agency Contracts
- ✚ Wrapping up Desktop Compliance Reviews in Collaboration with D-SAT
 - Results of the compliance reviews are used for the upcoming FFY 2024 SPP/APR.
 - Letters of Findings will be issued to ESIT Provider Agencies by August 30, 2025
- ✚ Annual Determinations will be issued by November 30, 2025

Please feel free to reach out to Tammy McCauley, ESIT Accountability & Quality Improvement Manager at tammy.mccauley@dcyf.wa.gov with questions or reflections.

ESIT State Leader Being Recognized for 30 Years of State Service!



We are very thrilled and pleased to share exciting news! We will soon be celebrating **Debbie Kirby's 30 Years of State Service!** Yes --- a State Service Award is being bestowed on Debbie in recognition of her 30-year work anniversary on May 18, 2025. As part of this momentous State recognition, Debbie will be receiving a 30-year pin, a Certificate of Appreciation signed by Secretary Tana Senn, and a very special Vase. We are so honored to have Debbie in the DCYF family and are looking forward to many more years of engagement!

While these celebratory items are genuinely being gifted to Debbie, they will simply not begin to express the multitude of gratitude we all hold for everything that she has done over the last three decades, and particularly these last eight years with the ESIT State Leadership Team. Debbie currently serves as a Quality Improvement Specialist with the Accountability & Quality Improvement Team. In this leadership role, she is responsible for coordinating and managing complex and multi-dimensional accountability structures and assisting the Accountability & Quality Improvement Manager in development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive ESIT-Statewide Integrated Monitoring System (E-SIMS) with a balanced focus on

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compliance, continuous quality improvement, fiscal accountability, and child and family outcomes throughout the state.

Debbie is well-respected among her colleagues across the state and has a reputation for being an exemplary, compassionate, well-organized leader. She is a systems thinker and collaborative problem-solver who values the voices of parents, practitioners, and local leaders and intentionally seeks to create inclusive and engaging environments.

Thank you for your state service, Debbie!

Workforce Development Team Updates

The Workforce Development Team has continued to be collaboratively engaged with diverse community partners on several developments related to the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Dr. DeEtte Snyder, Workforce Development Manager, is pleased to share new milestones in this important work.

Announcing Changes to the DCYF ESIT Qualified Personnel Guidelines, Including the Newest ESIT Credential

- The existing [Qualified Personnel Guidelines](#) have been revised to reflect the newest ESIT credential and will retire June 30th. The new Qualified Personnel Guidelines are posted on the [DCYF ESIT website](#) and will take effect July 1, 2025. The updates include revised language summarizing each ESIT Service and qualified ESIT Provider, as well as removing references to OSPI as no longer needed.
- Key changes regarding current Special Education Teachers and Paraprofessionals under Supervision:
 - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C service named Special Instruction will be changed to “Developmental Services” in Washington.
 - Current and future providers known as a Special Education Teacher will be called “Developmental Specialist” and Paraprofessional under Supervision will be called “Developmental Associate”.

The new ESIT Credential for Developmental Specialists and Developmental Associates is now available! Please refer to the [ESIT Credential Guidance](#) for more information.

- The credential will:
 - Provide consistency across our diverse ESIT system and more accurately define how both the ESIT provider and the ESIT service supports overall child development in family friendly language.
 - multiple pathways to current qualifications for Developmental Specialists and establish qualifications for Developmental Associates.

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- Align more accurately to the necessary qualifications of both providers in our ESIT system.
- Allow flexibility for ESIT provider agencies to continue to require additional requirements for agency personnel beyond the DCYF ESIT minimums.

Public Comment Open for IDEA Part C State Application for FFY 2025

DCYF Annual State Application Under Part C of IDEA for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025

Public Comment Now Open

Washington state has adopted policies and procedures to ensure public participation in the annual grant application (including any policies, procedures, descriptions, methods, certifications, assurance, and other information submitted with the application) for the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C funds. The annual grant Application and related documents will be published in a manner to ensure circulation throughout the state for at least a 60-day period, with a 30-day opportunity for public comment and public hearings, as appropriate, during that period per [34 CFR § 303.208\(b\)](#).

For Public Review

DCYF's ESIT State Leadership Office posted the following materials for public review:

- [Annual State Application Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for Federal Fiscal Year \(FFY\) 2025](#)

Submit Public Comment Online (April 1 – May 1)

DCYF is committed to adopting rules – also known as Washington Administrative Code or WAC – in an open manner. We welcome your input.

[Submit Rules Comments Online](#)

Virtual Public Comment

Opportunities for public comment will begin April 1 and end May 1, including two virtual public hearings.

- **April 17** | 1:05 – 2:05 p.m.
[Join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 224 598 508 668
Passcode: mV2Fi69g

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- **April 22** | 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
[Join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 267 248 664 822
Passcode: ym2Wb2zS

If you would like to receive this notification in an alternate format or language, or have questions please email dcyf.esit@dcyf.wa.gov.

Service Delivery & Technical Assistance Team Highlight

Laurie Thomas, Service Delivery & Technical Assistance Manager, with the ESIT State Leadership Team, is pleased to highlight a collaborative initiative underway with the King County Lead Agency's ESIT Team.

Representatives from the DCYF-ESIT Service Delivery and Technical Assistance (SDTA) Team have been collaborating with leadership staff from the King County ESIT Team to address concerns expressed by providers related to supporting the families that they serve. Both the ESIT State Leadership Office and King County have received numerous questions related to immigrant rights and how best to respond and provide support. This group has combined these into a Frequently Asked Questions document with statutory and regulatory references that are currently going through the approval process within both the state and county structures, prior to distribution and publication. This group is also working on resources and supports for Spanish speaking staff and providers working with immigrant families and will be exploring various options for statewide supports and resources.

If you have questions or would like more information about this work please reach out to one of the project co-leads: Molly Stryker molly.stryker@dcyf.wa.gov or Norma Renteria-Lobo nrenteri@kingcounty.gov.

Spotlight on 2024 State Interagency Coordinating Council Structure [Retained]

The Washington State Interagency Coordinating Council has a rich history of consulting, advising, and assisting not only the IDEA Part C State Lead Agency, but partner state agencies serving on the council as well. The SICC advises and assists the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, (DCYF) and other participating agencies in implementing a collaborative and comprehensive statewide system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers who have disabilities and their families, including identifying sources of fiscal and other support for services for the early intervention programs, assigning financial responsibilities to the appropriate agency, promoting interagency agreements and providing appropriate services for children.

Operating under [Executive Order 19-02](#), the SICC responsibilities include assisting DCYF in effective implementation of the statewide early intervention system by establishing a process that

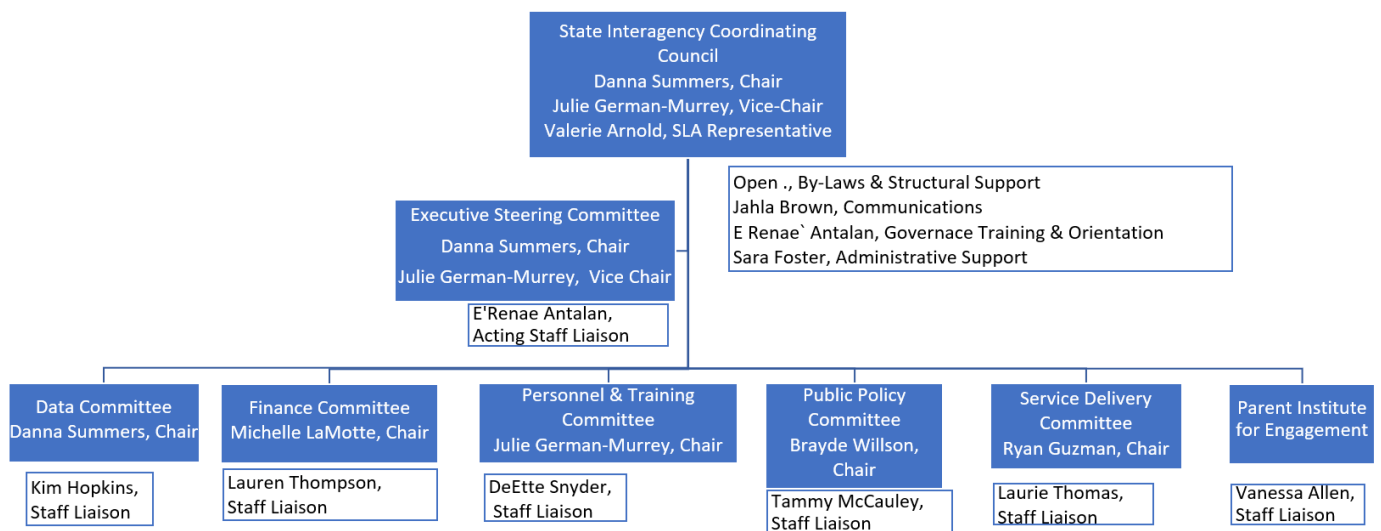
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includes seeking information from service providers, family resources coordinators, parents/caregivers, and others about any federal, state, or local policies that impede timely service delivery; and engaging in planned steps to ensure that any policy problems are resolved. One of the primary strategies for addressing this responsibility is the Council's creation of six sub-committees. The six sub-committees, reflected on the graphic below, operate under the direction and instruction of the full SICC. Diverse sub-committee membership is recruited from across the state and comprised of influencers at all levels of the early support community. The sub-committees engage in work priorities guided by the Council, in between the four quarterly SICC meetings. Chairs of the sub-committees, which must be currently seated Council members, collaborate with a designated ESIT Staff Liaison, to establish an annual work plan, which in turn drives the frequency of meetings, and ultimately committee agendas.

All sub-committee Chairs submit a SICC Quarterly Report to the Council to help ensure strong communication loops and that work plans are aligned with established Council priorities. For more information about the SICC and its sub-committees, please contact E'Renae Antalan, Community Collaboration Coordinator at erenae.antalan@dcyf.wa.gov.



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