



**DCYF/OSPI Joint Agency
Integration and Inclusion Work Special Webinar
Meeting Minutes**

July 21, 2022 – 11:00am-12:30pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols and Introductions

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

DCYF/OSPI Joint Agency Integration and Inclusion Work (previously referred to as Integrated Pre-K)

DCYF’s Pre-K Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Administrator, Karin Ganz and ECEAP Assistant Administrator, Nicole Parker along with Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, Ryan Guzman provided an update on Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment and the progress on the Joint Agency Report.

- [DCYF/OSPI Joint Agency Integration and Inclusion Work Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there access to assessment and observations for outside evaluators that support families and programs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is a great additional component and those are topics that did come up as part of the Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment (CRE) work. This is an ongoing process and we can add in the future. We can also add this into the report as a key focus area. • Head Start programs aren’t able to meet children’s developmental needs. The child gets sent home and moved to a childcare program. But there is a year wait for outside evaluator assessments so the child is removed because they can’t meet developmental needs. At the legislative level, funding is being funneled primarily through Head Start, but then Head Start isn’t meeting those needs. On the legislative level, we need funding for early learning. Where are these programs that we can access and who is offering assistance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head Start is federal funding, different from today’s activities. But to your point, this does address promoting quality across programs and inclusive services to meet the needs of children and not have disruption to families. ○ The way our systems are funded for early childhood programming does not take into consideration special education. We are having these conversations regarding how are we communicating and working together in our systems to keep children enrolled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It’s just making funding equitable across the board. Consistent care is required by the state. ▪ And equitable practices too. Where all families have the same access, not dependent on socioeconomic status. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will begin to address this in the report and hopefully there will be enough awareness to increase funding • I'm wondering if there has been any communications or work with our military bases and the Child Development Centers (CDC) and Child Development Home (CDH) programs they support in our communities. Often times, children in these programs are transitioning between their programs and community child care or Head Start/ECEAP programs. Have
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they been involved in any conversations around supporting community efforts for expanding inclusion options?

- Are tribal programs being considered as well?
- It would be beneficial if the state would focus on creating programs that do not compete and put community early learning programs out of business.
- Some school districts are terrific partners and others are struggling so much themselves that they are not able to be good collaborators.
 - That is what the CRE work is hoping to address. We want there to be more consistent collaboration. We know that some funding could help to make that possible. We want to hear what some of the key areas are that we should make sure we highlight.
- Once this free option comes to a community, families have withdrawn from early learning programs to enroll in the free option through the school district.
- I also heard that some ECEAP programs have been forced out of some schools when the school has decided to open a Transitional Kindergarten (TK).
- Where is the concern about competition? Are you referring to the Integrated Pre-School (IPK) vs licensed care?
 - There are ECEAP, Head Start, and tribal programs that are having enrollment struggles because TK has opened in communities. This creates competition and we're trying to open communication and get more collaboration.
 - The intention is to create systems that work collaboratively together to reduce competition and meet the needs of families. We are looking at current services and providers to figure out how we can have regional support and local coordination that increase availability and best place for families. We are looking at programming in early learning and tried to be inclusive across mixed delivery systems so all voices are heard to solve this complex problem of serving all eligible families.
 - Regarding universal preschool, reach out to your local school districts to see if they are implementing Bright K Programs and see how you can work together to meet the needs of children.
 - Yes, through the CRE work, we're trying to create openings and opportunities for conversations to better serve children and families.
 - That's exactly what is happening within my school district and I am blessed to have built that relationship and bridge of collaboration.
 - So happy to hear that! We have roughly 40 districts engaged this year and anticipate much more in the next year, so I am hopeful your experience will be that of others soon.
- Early learning rules are very different from K12.
- Is this program intended to replace Head Start, ECEAP and private preschools? I am also concerned that OSPI would not have to adhere to the same Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) for Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs
- ECEAP has to follow early learning rules, just like licensed providers. Why is OSPI exempt?
 - It is in law that government entities have robust regulations so they're trying to ensure duplication of regulation does not occur. We can create a document that shows regulation requirements for different programs throughout the state that has them covered beyond DCYF programming.
 - If that is true, why aren't public school teachers required to have the same background checks as child care teachers?
 - These are the conversations that we need to have regarding what are the regulations that our different programs are required to comply with.



There's an extra layer when we're talking about supporting students with disabilities.

- With regard to TK, OSPI is asking districts to communicate with community providers and work together. We can do a better job of clarifying regulations.
- Is there an application process for TK?
- If children are already participating in an early learning environment through licensed care they should not be able to qualify for TK (Bright K).
- What is missing in this review so far is a comparison of age groups served and a focus on the experience for the child. A licensed center that serves a child in a 3 year early childhood program offers a developmental setting that allows variations in development as well as a stable setting in a community of peers. That is lost to any child bouncing around programs.
 - There is required reporting within the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) and districts must follow the Full Day Kindergarten WACs. Districts currently engaged in the Inclusive TK Grants must submit applications to engage and will be matched with an Educational Service District (ESD) Coach to support success implementation that includes engagement with child care and community partners.
- It feels like we need a meeting with whoever is in charge and making decisions about implementing TK.
- Maybe providers need to speak to their state representatives and let them know their concerns about TK.
 - Any questions regarding TK will be gathered and taken back to Samantha Bowen who will be the new OSPI executive director of early learning and will start in August.
- The challenge with TK in this circle is that the rest of the programs have guardrails, regulations and requirements. TK currently has pillars and they are not being followed consistently (a little Wild West). It would be interesting to learn what steps are being taken to bring OSPI and DCYF together to create consistency, especially since Karma Hugo has left and there does not seem to be a point person that is working towards a solution.
- "Yes for success" through our SEIU 925 is working towards creating ECEAP positions for Licensed childcare providers. Allowing the opportunity to have a seat at the table for potential universal preschool implementation.
- IPK is DCYF's program to put all of early learning under one umbrella. But TK is OSPI and doesn't fall under IPK correct?
 - TK is kindergarten and is not preschool and is funded under basic ed and follows the same WAC's as kindergarten.
 - How low does TK go, what age?
 - The expectation would be for 4 year old's (same as Bright K).
 - I love the implementation of this but we need to bridge the collaboration between school districts and early learning programs.
 - That's the intent, working with school districts bringing them together and including community partners.
- This is spurring from our proviso: "DCYF and OSPI must collaborate to complete a report with options and recommendations for administrative efficiencies and long-term strategies that align and integrate high-quality early learning programs administered by both agencies"
- Our state constitution mandates basic K-12 education. This sounds like one way to fund preschool with state funds by calling it TK. Has the train left the station if the feedback is



this is a terrible idea and will collapse the child care sector? Or is this moving forward no matter what?

- What we have heard from the governor's office and state legislature is because we have local control for school districts, OSPI has approved and allowed K-12 funding to be spent on 4-year olds who would otherwise not be ready for kindergarten. We are trying to come up with solutions that will be successful instead of decimating certain parts of our sector. We're working to pull as many people and perspectives together to create informed recommendations.
 - How is it determined that a child will not be ready for Kindergarten? If a child is enrolled in an EA rated program and is being assessed by the child's teacher as being on track, is that family turned down if/when they apply for TK?
- We're looking at how and where ECEAP is expanding so that childcare and family home providers are part of becoming ECEAP providers or are working with their community to determine where slots will go so as not to fundamentally disrupt business at the level where they would not be able to continue.
 - So basically, you're saying we're doing this and just trying to figure out how to cause the least amount of harm.
- Family child care providers want to be a part of this.
 - From the ECEAP perspective, you can provide ECEAP services as a family childcare provider. If you don't want to provide ECEAP services that's ok too. We want to create a system where private childcare and family home providers are part of the local decision making on where slots are placed so that private providers have viable businesses.
- Has parent choice been considered? What if a family who qualifies for TK was able to choose where to enroll?
 - Yes, that is one of the core pieces of the coordinated recruitment and enrollment work. Back to the circle graphic: parent and family choice and need is centered in this work.
 - We also talked about building on existing coalition work vs. creating something completely separate and new
- Regarding the regional and state teams, as we think about creating these structures for greater collaborations, purposefully look at power dynamics to truly create equitable spaces for everyone's voice, especially smaller providers.
- It's TK that providers want more collaboration with, and explanation about TK being exempt from early learning rules.
- We will be sure to let Samantha Bowen and her supervisor know about the interest in connecting with them. Chat suggestions have been made note of and will be incorporated into the Joint Agency Report and ECEAP Entitlement Report.