# ECE College Programs During COVID-19

In November 2020, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) reached out to colleges in our state who support DCYF-funded Early Achievers Grant students in an effort to identify what supports were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of all Early Childhood Education (ECE) students in Washington, 40% receive the DCYF-funded Early Achievers Grant. Here is a snapshot of the colleges' responses:

## Colleges That Participated in the Survey



1. Bates Technical College
2. Bellevue College
3. Big Bend Community College
4. Centralia College
5. Columbia Basin College
6. Everett Community College
7. Grays Harbor College
8. Green River College
9. Highline College
10. Lake Washington Institute of Technology
11. Lower Columbia College
12. North Seattle College
13. Olympic College
14. Peninsula College
15. Pierce College
16. Skagit Valley College
17. South Puget Sound Community College
18. Tacoma Community College
19. Wenatchee Valley College
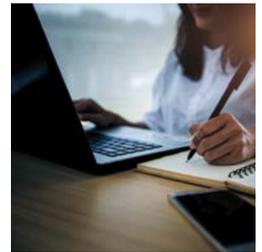20. Whatcom Community College
21. Yakima Valley College.

## Enrollment Rates and Future of Programs

- College-wide enrollment decreased this fiscal year (2020-21) as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.
- ECE enrollment remained steady or, at some colleges, increased during the COVID-19 timeframe.
  - This includes course offerings in languages other than English

## Adaptations Provided by Colleges As a Result of COVID-19

Colleges are doing their best to meet student needs and balance safety during COVID-19. Colleges moved their courses to an online format with the exception of a few high priority labs. The high priority lab courses are held in-person with proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) enforced. These practices will continue for the remainder of the school year.

Learning styles are being considered with professors using software such as Zoom and Panopto to hold live lectures, information sessions, or class times. These are also being recorded for students in case they are unable to be present during live sessions. Additionally, instructors are utilizing resources from Early Ed-U, including lesson ideas and the media library. Instructors are also holding flexible virtual office hours for assignment support, and extended deadlines for students who are struggling.

Additional supports that colleges reported offering are Wi-Fi hotspots, Chromebooks, laptops, and other technologies to students to support learning as needed, and mailing textbooks to students when needed.

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## Strategies to Support Students with the New Virtual Space

The colleges surveyed reported implementing the following strategies:

- Zoom support, one-on-one or with a small group, with additional support for Canvas and Zoom, especially in their first quarter.
- I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) instructor offers technology assistance and dedicated class time, outside of ECE classes, to support students persuing the ECE Initial or Short Certificate through I-BEST.
- Use of Zoom applications to support interaction and the fight against feeling of isolation. Students miss in-person classes, however, they report that they are doing alright with remote learning.
- Courses are offered either asynchronously (traditional fully online) or synchronously (with required virtual class attendance).
- The college's early alert system is used to support faculty in meeting students' individual needs, whether they be financial, academic, advising, or mental health.
- Colleges with courses in languages other than English continue to offer Short Certificate classes using the same format of asynchronous Canvas instruction and optional Zoom sessions.

- Students are encouraged to use resources available to them, some include:
  - Virtual Writing Center
  - STEM tutoring
  - Food pantry
  - Library services (textbook rentals, laptop rentals, printing services)
  - Counseling services
  - Emergency funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (**tinyurl.com/CARESFunds**)
- Students are using various tools and methods to help with schoolwork:
  - Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT) method for transparency in assignments
  - The use of creative assignments to help cut down on the amount of writing assessments, such as: Jamboard, graphic organizers, Flipgrid, slides, etc.
  - Using apps such as Remind to connect with professors outside of office hours



- Additional strategies for English Language Learners (ELL):
  - Additional bilingual instructors were hired to aid students
  - Flexibility of instruction —ELLs enjoy the self-pace that remote classes offer
  - For classes taught in English, the use of screen-casting software with closed captions made available in Spanish
  - Web-based application are often in English –colleges are working on a solution for navigation assistance for ELL students

## Learn More

For information about the DCYF-funded Early Achievers Grants, please read the publication *Early Learning Scholarships* (EPS_0018) available online:

- English: **tinyurl.com/EPS0018**
- Spanish: **tinyurl.com/EPS18Span**
- Somali **tinyurl.com/EPS18Somali**