

Preparing for ECEAP Entitlement

2023-35 Decision Package

This proposal addresses immediate needs for enabling the next phase of Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) expansion toward meeting entitlement in the 2026-27 school year. This includes funding for increasing rates to cover the actual service costs, funding for slots that more effectively serve the needs of families, and ensuring the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has adequate infrastructure to scale up the ECEAP system effectively.



OVERVIEW:

✓ Sustainable Rates: \$165,138,000

To move ECEAP School Day (SD) and Working Day (WD) slots to a more sustainable rate that reflects the requirements and resources needed to implement comprehensive services, a 20% increase on the current FY 23 rates is needed. This 20% increase is a placeholder as DCYF waits for Phase 2 of the ECEAP Cost Study.

✓ Expansion: \$123,153,000

DCYF is requesting 3,000 slots per year of the upcoming biennium for a total of 6,000 slots. This would result in 450 WD slots per year, and 2,550 SD slots per year.

✓ Conversion: \$24,600,000

To achieve better outcomes for children and more feasibility for working parents, DCYF is requesting to convert 2,500 Part-Day slots each year for a total of 5,000 converted SD slots in each year of the biennium.

✓ Entitlement Infrastructure Rate: \$12,296,000

DCYF requests to increase the entitlement infrastructure rate to \$576 per slot in FY24 and \$589 per slot in FY25. This rate includes the following sub-categories:

- Readiness Pathways:

To ensure adequate preparation, readiness, and capacity to provide high-quality ECEAP services, funding is needed to deploy Readiness Pathway technical assistance efforts. This will provide prospective ECEAP providers an equitable opportunity to establish a trained workforce, administrative systems, and other standards and regulations for program implementation.

- Quality Supports:

To ensure quality and child outcomes, DCYF is requesting an increase to the quality rate, received from the Legislature last year due to increases in costs for these key services. Quality Support resources fund required assessments, portfolios, curriculum, and online resources for the field. This would significantly impact what DCYF is able to report regarding child outcomes and training participation.

- ECEAP Support Rate:

To ensure adequate infrastructure to implement ongoing entitlement needs, the agency is requesting DCYF ECEAP Support Rate adjustments, formerly known as the “administrative rate.” This funding is necessary to support key elements, such as Continuous Quality Improvement Efforts, contractor relations, critical data and reporting elements, and more.





✓ ECEAP Complex Needs – \$11,084,000

DCYF was appropriated \$4,755,000 for Complex Needs grants to ECEAP providers in the 2021-23 biennial budget. The agency received over \$8M in grant applications for FY 23 which would serve approximately 8,300 children.

In order to meet the statewide need, DCYF requests additional funding to support Complex Needs for ECEAP providers.

✓ Scholarships - \$6,121,000

To develop an adequate and qualified workforce, DCYF requests funding for scholarships to meet needs following the COVID-19 pandemic, and to ensure that staff will be ready to provide ECEAP services by the entitlement deadline.

DCYF Strategic Priority Alignment

- Eliminate racial disproportionalities and advance racial equity
- Create a high-quality integrated B-8 system
- Improve quality and intention of our practice
- Improve quality and availability of provider services

COST:

2023-25 Biennium - \$306,737,000

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