

Puget Sound ESD
Early Learning

CONNECTOR



September 2020

Welcome to the 2020-2021 Program Year



Photo by fauxels from Pexels

With all the uncertainty in the world, we want to support you in the best ways possible.

Please check out these important resources for children, families, and staff!

[Anti-Racism Resources](#)

[COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Mental Health Resources](#)

[MyTeachingStrategies Distance Learning Webinar](#)

PSESD Early Learning
Connector

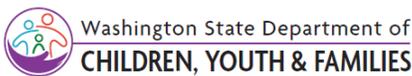
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The Early Learning Connector e-newsletter is produced monthly throughout the school year, providing information for the Puget Sound ESD Early Learning Program.



Deliverables/To-Do Lists:

[Center Director](#) | [Teaching Staff](#) | [Family Support](#) | [Health, Nutrition, Safety](#)



What's New in General

Top 10 Important Things to Know and Do in the First 30 Days

1- EarlyLearningWA.org

The [EarlyLearningWA.org](https://www.earlylearningwa.org) website has a new look and is now ADA compliant. This means that it has accessible design so that all the information is accessible for people with disabilities. The website contains all the forms, policies, procedures, resources, and communication you need to implement ECEAP, Head Start, and Early Head Start. If you have questions about the new design, please contact [Venissia Buyco](mailto:Venissia.Buyco@pse.wa.gov). Thanks to Venissia for taking the lead on the new website design!

2- Early Learning Program Manual

Within [EarlyLearningWA.org](https://www.earlylearningwa.org), you'll find the Early Learning Program Manual ([ELPM](#)) that contains policies, procedures, and forms that direct your work with children and families. There are new and revised documents for the 2020-21 program year so please make sure to review the [ELPM Updates](#). **Remember:** You don't have to request access – please click the **download icon** to fill out a form or to print.

3- COVID-19 Requirements, Guidance, Resources

Within [EarlyLearningWA.org](https://www.earlylearningwa.org), you'll find the [COVID-19 Information](#) page. Please pay close attention to the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that will provide all the up-to-date information needed to begin the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes. This page contains other important information such as screening procedures, exclusion notices, state and federal announcements and resources, etc.

4- Site Support Teams and PSESD Early Learning Directory

Check out our [photo directories](#)! Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Team that supports your district/agency for individual contact information. Each team directory also includes contact information for all other PSESD Early Learning Staff.

5- Online Courses - Availability Update

Due to PSESD's ransomware attack, online courses are not available until September 28. We will announce the availability of the online trainings when they open. Please complete the following:

- **Returning staff** should complete everything in their Learning Path as soon as possible.
- **New Staff** should complete the First Five courses in your Learning Path as soon as possible, and the remaining courses within 2 months.

The [online classes portal](#) can be found on the homepage of [EarlyLearningWA.org](https://www.earlylearningwa.org) or in [For Staff: Professional Learning](#). Questions can be directed to [Cheryl Habgood](#) or [Mike Condardo](#).

6- Training and Meeting Calendar

The [Training and Meeting Calendar](#) is found on the homepage of [EarlyLearningWA.org](https://www.earlylearningwa.org) or in [For Staff: Professional Learning](#) and contains all the information you need to know about trainings and meetings that are required and optional to attend. This document is updated regularly, so make it a practice to check in on a regular basis.

7- New Staff Training – Now New Staff Support

Our face-to-face sessions for new staff, formerly called New Staff Training, have been updated and modified beginning this year, including, as you can see, the name. We changed to "Support," because that's truly what it is and always has been. Training for each role is provided through online courses, conversations with Coaches, and support from Center Directors and colleagues. Support for staff learning their roles will be provided during sessions scheduled in January, February, and March. The timing of these sessions is deliberate—most new staff will have completed the online trainings and will have some context in which to transfer new learning and ask questions about the training content.

Given the need to transform these sessions into virtual meetings via Zoom, the dates for February and March are still in the works. We will add them to the Training and Meeting Calendar as soon as possible. For questions contact [Cheryl Habgood](#).

8- Staff Information Forms

It is vital for Center Directors to communicate information about all staff changes by using the electronic forms on EarlyLearningWA.org. This is the only way we can make sure each staff member receives the information and support necessary for their successful work with children and families. Staff members – please work with your Center Director.

[New Staff](#)

[Staff Departure](#)

[Changes to Existing Staff: Contact Information](#)

[Changes to Existing Staff: Position, Location, Funding](#)

9- Connector (Monthly PSESD Newsletter) and To-Do Lists (Deliverables)

The [Connector](#) is available online at the beginning of each month. You will also be notified via email each month when it's been published online. The Connector serves as a guide to help you implement your work. It is divided up into sections that will give all staff, including Center Directors, important information about program-wide expectations and changes, professional learning, education, health, safety, nutrition, family engagement and support, mental health, and disabilities. Make it your practice to read this publication each month.

The [Deliverables/To-Do Lists](#) will tell you specifically what deliverables you must accomplish on an ongoing basis or for a specific month. These can be found in [Program Administration: Deliverables and To-Do Lists](#) on EarlyLearningWA.org.

10- E-Alerts

E-Alerts are important and/or urgent information that are sent via email. To review E-Alerts that have been sent, you can find them on EarlyLearningWA.org in the [News](#) page.

2020 Legislative Session Review – Preparing for 2021 Legislative Session

Lori Pittman, Policy and Advocacy Advisor

In the 2020 legislative session, we advocated for a comprehensive policy and budget agenda focused on addressing affordability and access to high quality and culturally and linguistically relevant early learning options. The policies and budgets passed by the legislature jumpstarted foundational elements of Representative Tana Senn’s Fair Start for Kids Act (HB 2661) and Senator Claire Wilson’s Early Care and Education Act (SB 6253), roadmaps for growing early learning in the future.

It would have been hard to imagine that just weeks after the legislature invested heavily in early learning, COVID-19 would be pushing an already strained system to the brink of collapse. With significant budget deficits on the horizon, Governor Inslee responded with vetoes to the legislature’s budget. The consequences of those vetoes are significant for communities across Washington State. Thankfully, Governor Inslee chose to preserve many investments in early learning that are essential to our immediate and long-term recovery from the devastating impacts of COVID-19.

The work is far from done as we need an urgent infusion of federal and state resources to ensure access to early learning and care for our children, families essential workforce (particularly low-wage earners who find it difficult to access and afford child care in the best of times), and for families in crisis. **There’s a long road ahead to make sure we have a healthy and functional early learning and care system in the future. Early learning and care are the backbone of so many of our communities – we can’t let COVID-19 break it.** We are awaiting the state economic forecast on September 14, 2020 to help us understand all the work we have ahead of us. Priorities will be to protect ECEAP, use the rate study to advocate for future increases, fix the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) co-pay structure, and cover all investments to assist in stabilizing early learning and care.

Priorities Signed into Law 2020

PSSED’s and Early Learning Action Alliance priorities will help communities respond to COVID-19. However, these changes were already sorely needed before we fell into crisis; they will not be enough on their own to provide for the needs of children and families, especially those farthest from opportunity.

- **Special needs enhancement for Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)**

Total supplemental budget investment = \$2.22 million

Funding is provided for a rate enhancement for ECEAP providers serving children with special needs. ECEAP is a comprehensive program meeting the needs of Washington families who are farthest from opportunity. Programs will be better equipped to serve children with special needs, including those with individual education plans or behavioral and social emotional challenges that require extra care.

- **Increased rates for providers accepting Working Connections Child Care (WCCC)**

Supplemental budget investment = \$31.904 million

Rates paid to family childcare providers and childcare centers accepting WCCC will be increased to reach the 65th percentile beginning at Early Achievers Level 2. The relationship between caregivers and children is cornerstone for development and learning, and yet it is increasingly challenging for early learning providers to make ends meet.

Increased rates will help preserve our high-quality and diverse community-based workforce and make it easier for families to find care options.

- **HB 2456: Ensuring continuity of care for families experiencing homelessness**

Supplemental budget investment = \$1.909 million

Sponsored by Representative Lisa Callan (Democrat, 5th Legislative District), HB 2456 will extend the childcare assistance grace period for families experiencing homelessness from 4 to 12 months beginning July 1. With only four months of childcare assistance, families experiencing homelessness have found it hard to access quality early learning environments critical to childhood development. Continuous access to care will help families have better access to nurturing and reliable childcare, while they have the time needed to resolve issues related to homelessness such as housing and employment.

- Access to professional development for providers, including through HB 2556

Total Supplemental budget investment = \$4.023 million

HB 2556, sponsored by Representative Tom Dent (Republican, 13th Legislative District), creates a community-based pathway for childcare providers to meet new education requirements (\$500,000). Funding is also provided for scholarships for students pursuing credits related to childcare licensing requirements or Early Achievers milestones (\$1.854 million), including one-time funding for scholarships for the current waitlist of 450 students (\$1.669 million). A range of professional development opportunities, including experiential learning, community-based training, and credit-bearing coursework, is essential for growing a highly qualified workforce. Community-based pathways promote linguistically accessible and culturally relevant instruction, and help preserve and expand a diverse workforce that reflects the children and families it serves.

- **Making Space for Growth - Investing in the Early Learning Facilities Fund**

Total supplemental budget investment = \$7.296 million

The supplemental capital budget makes critical investments in the Early Learning Facilities Fund (\$4.234 million) in addition to investments in named early learning projects (\$2.962 million). The Fund aims to enable high-quality early learning providers to expand, remodel, purchase, or construct early learning facilities and classrooms necessary to support state-funded early learning opportunities for low-income children. Importantly, the budget also includes an investment in technical assistance to ensure successful projects (\$100,000).

Priorities Vetoed

Unfortunately, Governor Inslee did veto important investments made by the legislature as a cost saving measure. The loss of these investments will make it harder for already strapped families and programs to make ends meet in these challenging times.

- \$6.903 million for a 5% across-the-board rate increase for **Early Childhood Education and Assistance (ECEAP) programs**
- \$6 million to smooth the **Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) co-payment cliff** by capping co-pays at 12% of family income and creating a second tier of eligibility for families between 220% and 250% of FPL
- \$246,000 for development and administration of the **Early Learning Dual Language Grant Program**

What's New for Center Directors



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review [Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables](#).

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed to begin the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Review the E-Alerts for August 2020

[8.12](#) **Topic:** Submit claims to EL Fiscal

[8.14](#) **Topics:** COVID Operations Plan, updated guidance

[8.21](#) **Topics:** PSESD services restored - annual timelines adjusted, COVID-19 info & expectations, Census, PSESD staff availability

[8.27](#) **Topics:** ECEAP summer contracts, increased accountability from DCYF*, new say to sign contracts, Center Director deliverables, USDA EFs, COVID Guidance

Reminder to Read, Listen, and Take Action

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

1. **E-Alerts:** Much of the information that is typically on this page is contained in the E-Alerts above. **Please re-read to make sure you are up to date with urgent/emergent information.**
2. **Connector:** Read from beginning to end. This is our primary way for you to fully understand current program updates and expectations at all levels.
3. **COVID-19 Guidance:** [Read](#) from cover-to-cover initially. Updates will occur as information changes and will be highlighted within the document to indicate a change.
4. **To Do/Deliverables:** Read the [Center Director list](#) as well as all other content areas.
5. **Anti-Racism Resources:** Access [resources](#) for children, families and staff provided by [Heather Kawamoto](#) and [Michelle Morse](#), our Educational Equity Managers.
6. **Center Director Zoom Meeting:** Listen to any [meetings](#) you may have missed.

Good News! – USDA Extends Summer Feeding Program

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health & Nutrition

OSPI Superintendent Chris Reykdal announced via [press conference](#) that the USDA waivers extend the Summer Food Service Program through December 31, 2020 or until funds run out. OSPI will continue our advocacy efforts to get the USDA and Congress to fully fund this program through the entire 2020–21 school year. This means all children age 0-18 in communities will have access to meals at no cost through school districts, and they don't have to be enrolled.

Center Director Meetings

Implementation Team & Team Managers

We will continue to hold our monthly 1-hour Center Director touch base the third week of each month, as well as our longer meetings that are typically the fourth Thursday of each month. Both meetings will be held via Zoom until otherwise notified. We are working on sending out Zoom invites to you. Please use the [Training and Meeting Calendar](#) to hold dates.

Staff Information Forms (SIFs) and Hiring Documents

Venissia Buyco, Sr. Coordinator | Management Systems

Staffing Changes? Please take a moment to fill out the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#). For new staff and position changes, hiring documents may be uploaded with the electronic form or emailed directly to [Venissia Buyco](#). For new Head Start staff, transcripts must be uploaded with the [New Staff Form](#) so that qualifications can be verified. New Head Start staff will not be entered into any of our systems until qualifications are determined.

Questions about Staff Qualifications: [Cheryl Habgood](#) Questions about Hiring Documents: [Venissia Buyco](#) Questions about Center/Site Rosters: [Pam Bunker](#)

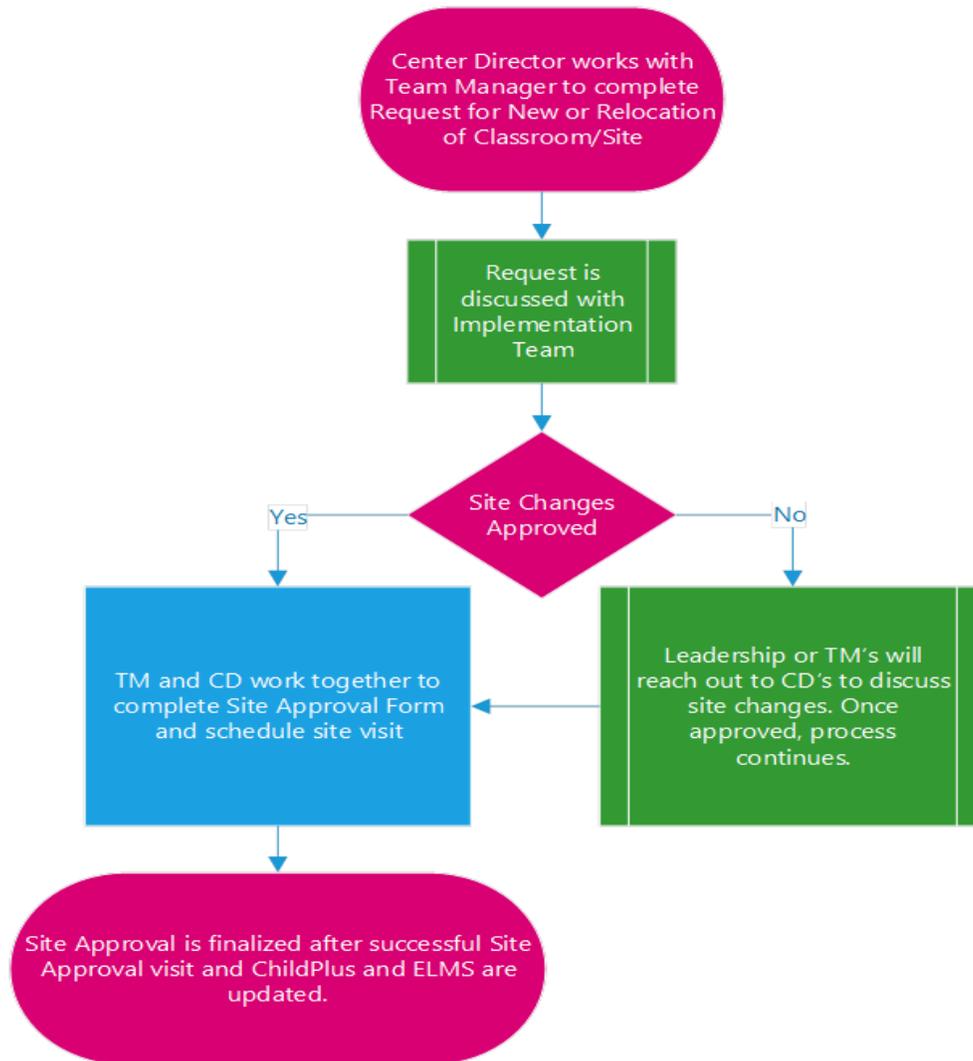
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Site Approval Process

Beth Larsen, Program Manager | Safety

In the ever-changing world of Early Learning, sites need to move spaces. Communication regarding any site moves is critical information to share. The following steps and flow chart outline the communication process for approval of site moves.

1. Center Director works with their Team Manager to complete the [Request New or Relocation of Classroom/Site](#)
2. Request is received and approved by Implementation Team and approval shared with the Team Manager
3. Team Manager works with the Center Director to complete the Site Approval Form
4. Team Manager schedules site visits with Health, Nutrition, Safety Coaches and Education Coaches to ensure the site is ready for children to safely learn in the new classroom/site environment.





Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables.

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed to begin the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

The Education Services Team Is Here for You!

Ezra Stoker-Graham, Education Coach

Teachers, as a new school year approaches amidst the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, Education Coaches, Dual Language Learner Coaches, and Disabilities and Mental Health Consultants want you to know that we are here to support you. Whether you are working in the classroom with children, or providing remote services, we understand that it is important to be open-minded and flexible in the way we provide support. Coaches and Consultants can meet teachers in large groups, small groups, and one-on-one. We can have face-to-face contact through Zoom, talk on the phone, and can exchange detailed emails with you. Coaches and Consultants are happy to join meetings that are already part of your program's schedule and we are eager to create meeting times that work best for you. We will also have set office hours so that we are sure to be available when you need us. We know that this an extremely challenging time to teach young children so please know that all PSESD staff take very seriously the opportunity to offer you a wealth of encouragement and support.

Welcome Back!

Michelle Williams-Nelson and Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learner (DLL) Coaches

Multilingual Services is excited to kick off this new school year. Dual Language Learner Coaches are available to support you in implementing DLL best practices. To find out who your assigned DLL Coach is, please refer to the [Site Support Team Directory](#).

ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 Online

Lisa Vamvas, Education Coach

We are excited to announce the ASQ-3 and the ASQ:SE-2 (Head Start) will be available on an online platform no later than September 14. Staff will invite families to complete the screenings via Family Access. Parents can complete the ASQ questionnaires online at their convenience from any device they choose in their home language (currently English, Arabic, French, Spanish, and Vietnamese). The online system automatically scores the questionnaire and stores the data in English on the platform for staff to access. You will still have the option to use the screenings on paper and manually enter results into the platform. Your Education Coach will be contacting you with additional details and to share training opportunities.

Reminders: Supporting Students with Disabilities

Tamara Griffith, Disabilities Consultant

As the new program year starts, we want to remind you of systems and processes in place to support students with identified or suspected disabilities. **Please review the systems and processes [resource](#).**

Remote-Based Services

Carolyn Burke, Education Coach

Programs offering virtual services to children enrolled in a center-based option should consider how they will individualize these services and how this service delivery will differ from the typical model (where children are served for 3-6 hours or more in classroom environments). Programs should consider staffing needs, the availability and capacity of parents, and ensure a clear understanding of how virtual services can be engaging and impactful. If parents or other adults in the home are not able to support their child's participation in the virtual environment, programs must consider alternative services that are appropriate for those families. Please also note that remote service delivery must be comprehensive and support the whole child and family. PSESD understands that the virtual learning experience will differ per program and per family depending on program and family dynamics. Keep in mind that as children and families grow to understand the purpose of engaging in this way and the expectations from the program, the more stamina they will develop for each learning opportunity. Please adjust your content, method of delivery, and flexibility to accommodate families as they engage with the opportunities that you have prepared for them. Read more about remote learning minimum requirements and what is expected of sites and centers in the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) (pages 4 and 5). You may also reach out to your education coach for clarity.

The Creative Curriculum Cloud

April Bowen and Julie Gretchen, Education Coaches

PSED is in the process of purchasing the Creative Curriculum Cloud license for all classrooms, including ECEAP. The Cloud features digital resources with 24/7 access, powerful planning tools, and two-way communication with teachers and families while focusing on the whole child approach. Digital resources include teaching guides, Mighty Minutes and much more! [MyTeachingStrategies Distance Learning Webinar](#) is a great tool to help understand the Distance Learning Solution. Teachers will use their same login information to access the new cloud features, which will be available mid-September. Please reach out to your Education Coach for additional questions.

Interpreter & Bilingual Instructional Assistant Updates

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Sr. Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Due to the high language diversity of the children and families enrolled in our Early Learning Program, we provide two types of language supports to sites and centers. The Interpreter and Bilingual Instructional Assistant (BIA) programs both enable us to provide higher quality services to families and children impacted by the opportunity gap.

Bilingual Instructional Assistant Program Updates:

If you have at least one Dual Language Learner enrolled in your classroom, you might need BIA support. BIAs are available to support classrooms delivering services remotely as well as in person. If children need language support this year, read the [BIA Support Procedure](#) and fill out an electronic [BIA Request](#). Once submitted, all BIA Request forms will automatically be sent to JoAnna Williams-Diggs. See [Working Effectively with a Bilingual Instructional Assistant](#) for more information on how to work effectively with a BIA. Please note that BIA placement and start date will depend on BIA availability.

Interpreter Program Updates:

Teachers and staff have access to a list of internal interpreters to provide language support for all non-English speaking families. The interpreter list is sent out every month as an attachment to the Connector Newsletter. Please disregard any previous list as changes have been made over the summer. The following are reminders for staff accessing interpreter support:

1. Interpreters are available for both remote and in-person services.
2. Teachers and staff are responsible for calling and making appointments with interpreters directly.
3. Interpreters are instructed to leave a pink copy of the timesheet with sites/centers for their records if they are providing services in-person. For staff that are using interpreters remotely, please email [Janet Hinrichs](#) the name of the interpreter, date worked, and total hours worked. **All sites and centers (both remote and in-person) are required to adopt and maintain a timesheet collection system for audit purposes.**
4. If an interpreter is not available, staff may have access to a new over the phone interpretation service called Linguistica International. Please contact your DLL Coach for information on how to access Linguistica International. Contact [JoAnna Williams-Diggs](#) for any further assistance. PSED Early Learning no longer has a contract with World Language Service. **Do not access this over the phone interpretation service.**

Supporting Sites through Monitoring

Mary Beth Edmondson, Education Coach

Due to the continuing circumstances around the pandemic, we are limiting on-site monitoring at this time. This includes Active Supervision, on-site file reviews, CLASS, and Environmental Rating Scale observations. We are updating monitoring protocols to include procedures that will be done virtually. The protocols will be available by October 14.

The 45-day Screenings deadlines (ASQ's and Health) are still in effect, but social distancing barriers will be considered and PSED staff are available to provide any needed support. Remember to document all your efforts to complete screenings on time.

Reminder: Complete the "Home Language Survey" in *MyTeachingStrategies GOLD* within two weeks of the child's enrollment in the program. Respond to each question by using the scale ranging from "only English" to "only home language." Do not check "N/A" for any of the questions. See your DLL Coach for questions.

Take care of yourselves and we hope to see everyone face-to-face again soon!



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review [Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables](#).

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed to begin the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Supporting Families in Uncertain Times

Antoinette Bunkasem, Family Engagement Coach

As we prepare for the start of a new school year, social media is one way to engage families and share a feeling of connectedness. Here are [15 positive social media messages](#) you can send to parents to let them know you are thinking of and supporting them. Please feel free to tweak the messages as you see fit. These messages may be the catalyst to deeper conversations as you start to build your relationship with families.

New ChildPlus Enrollment Process

Carol Weaver, Information Systems Consultant

To align with Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Standards, the definition for “Enrolled” has been updated in PSESD procedure. “Enrolled” means a child has been accepted **and** has attended at least one class (for center-based or Family Child Care option) or at least one home visit (for Home-Based option).

- Previously, any child/expectant mother in an accepted status and assigned to a class would be automatically enrolled on September 1. For this program year, a child/expectant mother will be enrolled in ChildPlus as attendance worksheets are submitted. Please follow the instructions in the [ERSEA Procedure: Enrollment - Before Starting Class/Home Visits](#) and the [Attendance and Meal Count Procedure](#). Connect with [Tiffany Lyons](#) for any questions.
- When running Attendance worksheets in ChildPlus, use the “Accepted”, “Enrolled” and “Drop/Accept” statuses to capture all children/expectant mothers that are expected to start.
- Please make sure that everyone expected to enroll is marked as “Accepted” and “Assigned” to a Classroom before the first day of your site’s start date.

Happy New Program Year! We are living in difficult times, but remember it is temporary. Here’s to 2021 and hopefully a better and healthier year. Thank you all for being brave front-line workers and caring for our most vulnerable and precious children and families.

2020-2021 How to Determine Eligibility (including virtually)

La’Tanya Brooks, Sr. Coordinator | ERSEA

ERSEA’s eligibility process can be a bit confusing, but please know that help is always available from learning how to recruit, how to receive and review an application, conducting phone interviews, determining eligibility, building a waitlist, entering the application and eligibility data into Child Plus or ELMS, selecting children and offering enrollment. And that is just the first part.

The good news is, we have the [ERSEA Email](#) where all Eligibility, Selection, Waitlist and Approving Over Income help happens. The ERSEA Coordinator can provide tips, resources, and guidance to help teach staff how to navigate the [ERSEA Procedure](#) and use the forms to process children’s applications and determine eligibility seamlessly.

The hot topic is how to determine eligibility virtually, meaning to use techniques not normally used to enroll children. You may revisit the Connector published in May 2020, but please feel free to send the inquiry for technical assistance to ERSEA@psed.org.

New Staff Eligibility Training is held on the third Friday of each month. The first training will be Friday, September 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via RingCentral (program identical to Zoom). This training is designed to give new Family Support Staff a foundational knowledge of determining eligibility for children before offering enrollment in Early Head Start, Head Start or ECEAP. This is a required training for new staff responsible for implementing the eligibility process at their site. Please sign up through the [Training and Meeting Calendar](#).

ERSEA Committee is held the first Wednesday of each month. This committee belongs to all Family Support who are responsible for implementing the eligibility process at their site. This team of professionals provides feedback, reviews changes, reviews trends and data, and consults with other PSESD Early Learning partners to review systems for continuous program improvement. All Family Support wanting to learn ERSEA or be a part of this think-tank are welcome. The committee also includes parents and Policy Council representatives.

Peer Programs Updates

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Peer Teachbacks:

Considering the current pandemic, Peer Programs has pivoted to offer virtual Health and Literacy Teachbacks via Zoom beginning in October! We are currently not offering Math or Money Teachbacks. Teachback presentations are a great opportunity to support community building and to provide families with valuable information to start the year strong. We have an amazing group of Parent Educators that are excited to practice their presentation skills and share their knowledge with other families.

Peer Educators gain the experience and skills to strengthen their communities and to advocate for themselves and their families. As you connect with families, please remember to share Parent Leadership opportunities, and encourage them to participate.

Peer Programs "Print & Post" Flyers make it easy to share the details of your virtual event with families! These will be available soon!

Peer Training:

- **Health & Literacy**

- We're offering virtual Health and Literacy training via Zoom, for 8 consecutive Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm beginning in January (see dates below). Parents will be reimbursed an hourly rate for their time, a technology reimbursement of \$10, and a dinner allowance of \$34 per meeting.
- **Training Dates:** January 14, 21, and 28 | February 4, 11, 18, and 25 | March 4

- **Math & Money:** We do not have Math & Money training scheduled at this time, more details to come.

Need help recruiting? We can help you line up a current or past parent representative to speak at your virtual orientation or parent meeting. A Peer Programs promotional video is coming soon, as well as Peer recruitment flyers to email or print. Peer Programs brochures can also be mailed to your site and a request form will be available soon.

To schedule Teachback presentations and register parents for Peer Educator training, go to the [Parent Professional Learning page](#) on [EarlyLearningWA.org](#).

Spanish interpreters will be available at each training session. If you would like support scheduling an interpreter for your Teachback, or if other languages are needed, please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Policy Council

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

[Policy Council](#) is a key decision- and policy-making body for PSESD Early Learning and promotes parent engagement and leadership development. Parent representatives are elected by their peers and participate in the decision-making processes that directly impact our children and families. Policy Council members work in partnership with program administrators and the PSESD Board to develop, review, and approve the following: policies, strategic directions, criteria for ERSEA, funding applications, budget recommendations, personnel, and much more!

Policy Council is made up of parents with currently enrolled children, parents with previously enrolled children, and community agency representatives drawn from organizations which provide services, support, and resources to the children and families we serve. At this time, **Policy Council meetings for the 2020-2021 representative term are scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom**. Representatives will be reimbursed an hourly rate for their time, in addition to a \$10 technology reimbursement and a lunch allowance of \$23 per meeting.

What's New in Family Support - Continued

The first Policy Council meeting for newly elected parent representatives is Tuesday, November 17 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm. Please submit the required [Policy Council Representative Notice and Verification Form](#) for each of your site's representatives so that we can have everything prepared for them at the first meeting.

Policy Council Information Sessions

Do you have parents interested in Policy Council? As staff, do you want to learn more? Attend a virtual information session!

September 29 – 11:00am – 12:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98204833431>

Meeting ID: 982 0483 3431

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,98204833431# US (Tacoma)

+16699006833,,98204833431# US (San Jose)

October 8 – 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91732381755>

Meeting ID: 917 3238 1755

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+16699006833,,91732381755# US (San Jose)

Policy Council Training

This is where parents learn the foundation of Shared Governance and what Policy Council is all about! All parents, whether they have been elected or not, are welcome to attend training.

October 13 – 11:00am – 1:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97407706856>

Meeting ID: 974 0770 6856

One tap mobile

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+13462487799,,97407706856# US (Houston)

October 27 – 11:00am – 1:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94407022803>

Meeting ID: 944 0702 2803

One tap mobile

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+16699006833,,94407022803# US (San Jose)

Spanish interpreters will be available at each info session and training. If other languages are needed, please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Need help recruiting? We can help you line up a current or past parent representative to speak at your virtual orientation or parent meeting. Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

A Policy Council promotional video is also available and Policy Council recruitment flyers to email or print are coming. Policy Council brochures can also be mailed to your site and a request form will be available soon.



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements.

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed to begin the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

USDA Enrollment Forms Process (for sites with meals on PSESD USDA contract only)

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health and Nutrition

Whether you are providing site-based or remote-based services, if you are serving meals that will be claimed on the PSESD's USDA Contract, please review this important information. We have just received some clarity from USDA regarding completion of USDA Enrollment Forms.

For Families Receiving Site-Based Services: Complete the [USDA Enrollment Form](#) and obtain parent/guardian signature within 5 days of the first day of class.

For Families Receiving Remote-Based Services:

- Complete the [USDA Enrollment Form \(EF\) Template](#) for your "usual" class days and meals.
- For purposes of remote services, this does not have to match exactly with days services are provided or actual days the meals are distributed.
- Be sure to still obtain an original parent/guardian signature by October 31 through porch pick-up, secure drop box, US Mail or by individual appointment.
- There is no need to make any changes during the year, if the child remains at the same HS, EHS or ECEAP site—even if meals or class days change.

Send all USDA EF's by class (alphabetical by last name) to the USDA Fax Line at 855-236-2902. If you are unsure if your meals will be claimed on PSESD Contract, please contact [Colette Dutton](#).

Good News! – USDA Extends Summer Feeding Program

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health and Nutrition

OSPI Superintendent Chris Reykdal announced via [press conference](#) that the USDA waivers extend the Summer Food Service Program through December 31, 2020 or until funds run out. OSPI will continue our advocacy efforts to get the USDA and Congress to fully fund this program through the entire 2020–21 school year. This means all children age 0-18 in communities will have access to meals at no cost through school districts, and they don't have to be enrolled.

What About Mealtime?

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition, Safety Consultant

For those of you wondering, the answer is, "Yes"! Meals will be part of the 2020-2021 school year. This year, mealtime will look different. Plans will need to be developed based on many factors specific to your site. Food service contracts, reopening plans for onsite or remote learning, transportation, individual needs and changing circumstances all play a role in this year's mealtime design. Check the following resources and share your site mealtime plans with your PSESD team manager:

1. **Onsite meals** – No family style meals or toothbrushing, food and drinks must be pre-plated and served by staff.
 - [Reopening Mealtime Resources](#)
 - [Reopening Guidebook](#)
 - [School Nutrition Guide](#)
 - [Documentation / Record Keeping](#)
 - Purchasing for bulk food and protective gear
 - [US Foods](#)
 - [Restaurant Depot](#) – Business required
 - [Cambro](#) - Offers food service equipment at cost to sites with federal funding
 - [School Health Supplies](#)
 - [Magid Safety Products](#)
 - [MacGill School Nurse Supply](#)
 - [Kaplan Co.](#)

2. **Remote Meals** – May be offered as 'grab-n-go' in quantities aligning with scheduled days for enrolled children. Attendance must be taken. ID must be verified at pick up.
 - [CACFP Remote Meals Guidance](#)
 - [Forms and Procedures](#) – Meal distribution plans for issuing more than 1 meal, record keeping, waivers, Washington Information System (WINS)
3. **New Plant-Based Milk Approved by USDA** – In addition to cow's milk or soy milk, families may complete the milk substitution form and choose Ripple® Original Pea Milk. Only the individual 8-ounce original flavor cartons contain adequate nutrition and qualify for USDA reimbursement. Larger cartons from the grocery store and flavored varieties do not qualify. See [Ripple Dairy-Free Milk](#).

Mental Health Resources and Updates

Noelle Hoori, Program Manager & Alex Clifthorne, Vanessa Davis, and Melissa Russell, Mental Health Consultants

Self-Care Is Not Selfish

As we come back to our school year that is anything but typical, we want you to know that we are thinking of you and we care about you, your wellness, and the wellness of our program families. Consider viewing or listening to a 15-minute [podcast](#) from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child, or view the transcript. This is the second episode of their special COVID-19 series of *The Brain Architects*. In this podcast, host Sally Pfitzer speaks with Dr. Rahil Briggs, National Director of [Zero to Three's HealthySteps program](#), about how pediatricians are serving their patients during the pandemic, including using telehealth, why caregiver health is child health, and what she hopes the healthcare system can learn as a result of the pandemic.

Classroom Connections

How do you continue to support the Mental Health of children in your classroom? Consider reviewing the article "[Keeping Classroom Connections Alive](#)" where three ways to build and ensure relationships continue are discussed.

Updates and Reminders

- Look for your goody bags! Mental Health participated in the materials distribution. Included are these items for each site/classroom: posters on stress to guide management strategies, stress balls, and bubbles. Also in the bags are the board books "[Calm Down Time](#)" by Elizabeth Verdick and "[Worries Are Not Forever](#)" by Elizabeth Verdick which can be shared virtually with parents or read aloud to children in the classroom. These tools are meant to support you and your program children in managing the stress of our current situation.
- We are facilitating monthly Zoom meetings for direct service staff to reflect on racism and talking with young children about racism. Please look for invitations to join us on the last Tuesday of each month from 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm, and the first Friday of each month from 10:00 am - 11:30 am.
- All Early Head Start and Head Start centers have an assigned PSESD Mental Health Consultant. ECEAP only sites have access to their own contracted Mental Health Consultant. Sites who are combined with EHS, HS and/or ECEAP also have access to a PSESD Mental Health Consultant. Please contact your Center Director if you are unsure who to contact regarding mental health concerns.
- Mental Health Consultants are available to meet virtually with staff and talk with parents about child or family concerns. We are also hosting a monthly "Lunch and Learn" which covers a variety of different topics with a focus on racism.
- We can refer **enrolled children** in our programs to individual therapy paid for by the PSESD on an individual basis. If you would like to request that a family be referred to individual therapy funded by PSESD, please contact your assigned Mental Health Consultant.

Behavioral Health Toolkit for Children and Teens

The Washington State Department of Health created a [toolkit](#) that provides tips on how to navigate some of the emotional responses that families may experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this toolbox is to provide general information about common emotional responses of children, teens, and families during disasters. Families, parents, caregivers, and educators can use this information to help children, teens and families recover from disasters and grow stronger.

Family Features

- [What Currently or Formerly Incarcerated Parents Would Like Educators to Know About Their Children and Families](#) – A resource for supporting current and formerly incarcerated parents.
- [Pandemic EBT Help](#) – Less than 20% of eligible families have applied for P-EBT benefits. Please encourage families to apply before the start of the school year.
- [Free \\$25 ORCA Card](#) – Families living in South King County may complete the application for a free Metro Bus Pass.
- [Read Aloud Story/Census](#) – Why is it important? Passionate readers tell the story about receiving more funding for their neighborhood fire stations, hospitals, and schools. October 31 is the census final date. Also available in multiple languages are [Census Color Books](#).
- [UNICEF](#) – Offers encouraging benefits of early learning, parents as first teachers and play time. Below are videos to help understand UNICEF's vision.



The Beginning of Life Pt.1



How Babies Learn Through Play



The Beginning of Life Pt.2

Staff Strategies

- [Healthy People Healthy Nation](#) – Offers resources.
- [Epi Pen Safety Check](#) – Certain models of epi pens may not work correctly. Share this info.
- [Hand Sanitizer Recall](#) – Sanitizers with Methanol may cause toxic danger to children.
- [Cooking with Kids](#) – Nutrition and story ideas for parents and teachers.
- [Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, Stay Vaccinated](#) – Fliers are available in multiple languages.
- [Oral Health](#) – Find resources on healthy snacks and toothbrushing tips. Below is a video to share for remote toothbrush instruction.



Routine-Toothbrushing Story