

Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter
February 2021

Advocacy Week, February 22-25



[Register Now!](https://bit.ly/wsaadvocacyweek) (<https://bit.ly/wsaadvocacyweek>)

[View the Agenda](https://bit.ly/wsaadvocacyschedule) (<https://bit.ly/wsaadvocacyschedule>)

[WSA Early Learning Advocacy 2021 FAQ](#)

Read more on page 2

PSESD Early Learning Connector

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



Deliverables/To-Do Lists

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

News Archive

[E-Alerts](#) | [Connector](#)

COVID-19 Information

[Information Page](#) | [COVID-19 Guidance](#)

Contents – click to jump

- [What's New in General.....](#) 2
- [Center Directors.....](#) 4
- [Education.....](#) 5
- [Family Engagement.....](#) 6
- [Health, Nutrition, & Safety.....](#) 8
- [Mental Health.....](#) 8
- [Resources.....](#) 9

What's New in General



= Information Series; look for this symbol each month!

Advocacy Week, February 22-25

Lori Pittman, PSESD Early Learning Policy and Advocacy Advisor

In partnership with the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP, and the Washington State Parent Ambassadors, we will provide an opportunity for parents, community members and others to participate in virtual Advocacy Training, Early Learning and Care Issue Discussions, Legislator visits, and a Rally! Please see the [Early Learning Advocacy page](#) on earlylearningwa.org for more information, registration, and other resources.

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Xinying He, Nurse Consultant | Joanne Tran, HNS Consultant

[This visual graphic](#) shows the approximate timeline and groups scheduled for vaccinations. We are currently in [Phase 1B tier 1](#), which includes people 65 and older, and people 50 and older who live in a multigenerational household. Anyone who was eligible in Phase 1A can still get vaccinated. Use [Phase Finder](#) to find out when you are eligible to receive the vaccine. For a list of organizations (by county) that may have vaccines, click [here](#).

The Washington State Department of Health has created a [Getting Vaccinated flyer](#) with basic information about the COVID-19 vaccine and what to expect when you get vaccinated. It is also available in the following languages:

[Amharic](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Burmese](#) | [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#) | [Chinese \(Traditional\)](#) | [Farsi](#) | [French](#) | [German](#) | [Hindi](#) | [Hmong](#) | [Japanese](#) | [Karen](#) | [Khmer \(Cambodian\)](#) | [Korean](#) | [Laotian](#) | [Marshallese](#) | [Nepali](#) | [Oromo](#) | [Portuguese \(Brazil\)](#) | [Punjabi](#) | [Romanian](#) | [Russian](#) | [Samoan](#) | [Somali](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Swahili](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Tamil](#) | [Telugu](#) | [Thai](#) | [Tigrinya](#) | [Ukrainian](#) | [Urdu](#) | [Vietnamese](#)

Per DCYF, vaccination will not be required for staff, caregivers, providers, or children in care. Discuss vaccination with your health care provider. Although the vaccine will prevent individuals from getting sick from COVID-19, medical experts believe a vaccinated individual can still transmit the virus to another person. Continue to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Webinar Series: Address Early Childhood Suspension by Addressing Implicit Bias

Shared by ECEAP & DCYF

Join us for a four-part webinar series with Dr. Rosemarie Allen, CEO of the Center for Equity & Excellence. Learn critical first steps to ensure equitable observation and assessment practices. Dr. Allen's approach supports and reflects many cultural ways of being for children in early childhood classrooms.

[Register here](#). All webinars are scheduled from 9:00 am to 10:30 am.

- Feb. 19: Implicit Bias and Color-Blind Ideology
 - Engage in activities that bring awareness in hidden biases. Strategies will be presented to avoid engaging in color blind practices and to reduce one's own implicit bias.
- March 19: Microaggressions and Cultural Humility
 - Examine 3 types of microaggressions and identify how they show up in early childhood classrooms and are reflected in assessments. Practice intervention strategies to disrupt and interrupt microaggressions to avoid biased assessments
- April 23: Anti-Racist and Anti-Biased Assessments
 - Engage in activities that bring awareness how bias impacts early childhood assessments. Strategies will be presented to avoid engaging in biased practices.

- May 21: Reflection and Planning
- June 4: Reflection and Planning

Priority will be given to ECEAP staff. Others will be placed on a waitlist. Non-ECEAP Staff will receive notification as space is available.

PSESD Releases 2020 Report to the Community

David Corby, PSESD Communications Program Consultant

PSESD has released its annual [Report to the Community](#), showcasing work for the first time in an interactive, web-based format. The report highlights opportunity gap-closing strategies the agency is implementing in service of its End, Success for Each Child and Eliminate the Opportunity Gap by Leading with Racial Equity. If you'd like to learn more about the stories and data shared in this year's report, you can find the interactive, web-based report in its entirety [here](#).

Using Interpreters in Virtual Spaces

Joanna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Reminder: When you need interpreter services please use the updated Interpreter Directory that is attached to your monthly Connector email. When scheduling an interpreter, consider the format and technical needs you may need for virtual spaces. This is the staff's responsibility – the technical assistance part of virtual learning is beyond the scope of our interpreters' expertise. If you have any questions, please contact [JoAnna Williams-Diggs](#) for assistance. Also, please remember to review the [September Connector \(page 9\)](#) for information about Interpreter timesheet documentation.

Language Link

Joanna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Reminder: Please **do not** use the Language Line. We are no longer contracting with this company. If you need an interpreter for a language not found in the Interpreter Directory. We have contracted with **Language Link** to provide over-the-phone verbal interpreter services. The number to call is listed at the end of the Interpreter Directory.

Policy & Legislative Updates

Updates: The 2021 Washington State Legislative Session

Lori Pittman, PSESD Early Learning Policy and Advocacy Advisor

As I am reviewing bills dealing with issues ranging from COVID vaccinations to limits on gubernatorial emergency powers, I was reminded there are a lot of state laws that have perhaps outlived their time. I found a website "[Weird Facts](#)" that contains some of the weirdest Washington state laws. This session will be different – very different! [Read more here](#).

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 for the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Review the E-Alerts for December 2020 – January 2021

1.26 Topic: Reminder - HS/EHS Enrollment Success Plan Due by 1-31-21

1.12 Topic: ECEAP Monthly Report Update

12.16 Topic: SPAM Alert: Do Not Open Emails from MCFHC

12.16 Topic: Change and Updates – December Center Director Meeting 12-17-20

Center Director Meetings

Check the [Center Director page](#) monthly for Zoom links, recorded updates, and recorded meetings.

Please Spend: COVID-19 One-Time Funds (HS & EHS Only)

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

HS and EHS programs, a reminder to please utilize the opportunity to support your program by using the federal CARES Act funding. The [COVID-19 One-Time Funds Request](#) outlines appropriate spending as well as the process to submit.

Any items purchased **must be received and be in-hand by the dates listed below**. Unfortunately, any spending or purchases received after this date will not be reimbursed.

- HS 715 TBD based on Carryover Request (Tukwila and KYFS, we will notify you with a date)
- HS 412 June 30, 2021
- EHS 412 June 30, 2021
- EHS CCP August 31, 2021

Staff Information Forms (SIFs) and Hiring Documents

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

Staffing Changes? Please take a moment to fill out the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#). For more information, refer to the slides regarding SIFs in the [November Center Director Updates PowerPoint](#).

New! We've created a [Document Uploads Only](#) online form! Due to Personally Identifiable Information (PII), we are transitioning from email submissions of hiring documents (background checks, transcripts, TB tests, etc.) to using this form. Use this form to upload required documents for new hires, staff who have changed positions, and for existing staff who have missing or expired documentation (monitoring). We are working to refine our procedures regarding hiring documents; until those are finalized, you may continue to email documents to [Venissia Buyco and/or Cheryl Habgood](#) or use the new form!

Questions about Staff Qualifications and MERIT/PBCs:
[Cheryl Habgood](#)

Questions about Hiring Documents:
[Venissia Buyco](#)

Education



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MyTeachingStrategies GOLD Winter Checkpoints

Education Coaches

As stated in the recently updated [COVID-19 Guidance](#), Winter Checkpoints (February 15, 2021) will not be required. Documentation and Family Conferences are still required as part of ongoing assessment and individualization. Spring Checkpoints will still be mandatory. Please contact your Education Coach with any questions or for further information and guidance.



Series: Support Dual Language Learners (DLLs) by Lowering the Affective Filter

Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learners Coach

The “Affective Filter” encompasses a child’s attitudes and feelings that either hinder or promote their second language acquisition. When a DLL has a high affective filter, they can experience stress and anxiety that reduces their willingness to produce a new language. When the filter is low, DLLs feel open to take risks in producing the second language. Visit [Collaborative Classroom](#) for tips on how to lower the affective filter.

Disabilities Consultants – IEP/IFSP Counts and Natural Proportion

Dani Hoffman & Tamara Griffith, Disabilities Consultants

At the beginning of the month, we sent out updates of current IFSP/IEP counts per grant and center. This is a reminder of the intention behind checking this number often and meeting this requirement across all grants. According to Head Start and Early Head Start Performance Standards, **“a program must ensure at least 10 percent of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA.”**

Where did they get 10%? Great question! This number is based on the concept of **Natural Proportion**, meaning in any group of people, 10% of that population is likely to have a disability of some kind. This imagery is helpful when we remind ourselves that the children are likely already in our programs, but it is up to us to do the following:

- Find them (using the ASQ, talking with parents, observing our classrooms, etc.)
- Support them (targeted activities, individualized curriculum, etc.)
- Inform their families of their federally protected rights under IDEA to receive all services that might be available to them (IEP/IFSP supports can include occupational therapy, speech and language, physical therapy, etc.)
- Commit to supporting those services, inclusively – everyday, and for every child

Whether you are in a Head Start, Early Head Start, or ECEAP classroom, that 10% exists. Partnering with families to locate these children and navigate the referral process, as well as individualizing each child’s education inclusively, is essential to our goal of eliminating the opportunity gap. The referral process can be overwhelming and intimidating for any parent, so this is an important opportunity to educate families on how to be life-long advocates for their child’s educational needs.

We know that COVID has made many of these processes more complicated, but children with disabilities are still in our care and we are still obligated to get them the support they need. **Despite many things looking differently with the**

virtual-world, school districts and Birth-to-Three agencies are still obligated to be providing referrals, evaluations, and services.

If you have questions or need support in this and any other area concerning children with suspected or identified disabilities, please reach out to your Disabilities Consultant. Whether you have questions about how to enter your IEP/IFSP counts, how to support a family through the referral process, how to integrate services into your curriculum, or any other questions, we would love the opportunity to think with you and support all the incredible work you do each day.

Bilingual Instructional Assistants

Joanna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Reminder: Due to COVID-19, there is a shortage of available Bilingual Instructional Assistants (BIAs). However, if you have a child in your class in need of language supports, you can still complete a [Bilingual Instructional Assistant \(BIA\) Request](#) form (found in [Forms Library](#) and [Multilingual Services](#)). If a Bilingual Instructional Assistant is available, we will place them. If not, please reach out to your Dual Language Learners (DLL) Coach for additional classroom language supports.

Family Engagement



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ERSEA 2021-2022 Publishing Dates

ERSEA Team

Anticipated publishing dates for ERSEA documents are listed below. If you have any questions, please email ERSEA@psed.org.

ERSEA Section	Publish By
Eligibility and Recruitment	February 1
Selection (Policy Council approval of Selection Pts in February, if needed)	March 15
Enrollment and Attendance (not related to USDA)	April 30

DSHS Labels

Noelle Hoori, Program Manager | LaTanya Brooks, Senior Coordinator, ERSEA Consultant

DSHS label data has not been released yet. When released, Center Leaders will be notified on how to request.

Documentation Webinar – Family Support

Shared by DCYF ECEAP Family Engagement Team

Please join an interactive webinar about Family Support and Mobility Mentoring notes in ELMS hosted by the DCYF ECEAP Family Engagement Team on Wednesday, March 31. [Read more and register here.](#)



Photo by PSESD Early Learning

Policy Council

Visit the [Policy Council page](#) regularly for calendar of Policy Council events, information, recruitment tools, meeting materials, and more!



Stock image via Microsoft

Parent Professional Learning

Peer Health & Peer Literacy Training start in January! Check out the [Parent Professional Learning page](#) for information, recruitment tools, registration, teachback requests, and more!

Peer Programs

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Health and Literacy training is underway, and participants are engaged and learning! We are midway through virtual training and parents are feeling welcomed, informed, and valued.

Trained parents are excited for the opportunity to facilitate Virtual Teachback presentations via Zoom. A Teachback is an opportunity to share information and distribute tools parents can use right away to help their children and families succeed in school and life.

To request a Virtual Teachback, please complete the [Teachback Request Form](#). Questions? Contact Quincy Stone at 425-917-7875.

Policy Council 2020-2021

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Policy Council is in full swing for the 2020-21 term! Do you have a recently elected representative? Don't forget to submit the online [Policy Council Notice and Verification Form](#) so we can connect with them prior to the February PC meeting.

Please see the [Policy Council Composition Chart](#) to learn how many parent representatives should be elected from your site. **Note: We no longer have "alternates". Please elect only the number of representatives indicated on the composition chart.**

Still recruiting? We have a great [Policy Council Video](#) for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents! [New Recruitment Flyers](#) can easily be shared with your families through email or print and post on-site.

Need more recruitment ideas? Current Policy Council Reps are available to speak at your virtual parent meetings. Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Health, Nutrition, & Safety



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

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

Eating Tips From the USDA

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition & Safety Consultant

Have you been anxiously waiting? The [Dietary Guidelines](#) are updated every five years and the newest version is now available. The guidelines focus on four main recommendations:

1. “Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage.” The 2020 edition is the first to include [Pregnancy, Infant and Toddler](#) Dietary Guidelines.
2. “Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect **personal preferences, cultural traditions** and budgetary considerations.” If cultures are not represented in school menus, the new Dietary Guidelines can be used as leverage to influence [change](#).
3. “Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages and stay within calorie limits.” [Make every bite count](#).
4. “Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars and saturated fat and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.” [Top Ten Ideas](#).

Mental Health

Mental Health Lunch and Learn

Noelle Hoori, Program Manager | Alex Clifthorne & Melissa Russell, Mental Health Consultants

Join us on [Tuesday, February 2, 12:00-1:30 pm](#) for discussion, collaboration, and support on how to talk to children and families about difficult topics. We will also answer questions regarding mental health supports available through PSED. We look forward to seeing you!

Resources

For Staff and Families

Most resources will be moved to their respective content area pages on [EarlyLearningWA](#) at the end of each month.

- [Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)
 - [Resources for Self-Care and Stress Management During COVID-19](#)
 - [Resources for Supporting and Engaging with Children, Families, and Staff During COVID-19](#)
 - [Resources for Supporting and Understanding Trauma During COVID-19](#)
 - [Resources for Supporting Child Welfare During COVID-19](#)
 - [Responding to Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
 - [Keeping Them Safe Video Series](#)
- [The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#)
 - Richard Rothstein of the Economic Policy Institute lectures on his book: [\[YouTube\] Richard Rothstein: The Color of Law](#)

Staff Strategies

- [EarlyLearningWA Website Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual Updates](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual Google Drive](#)
- [EarlyLearningWA Website Feedback Form](#)
- [EarlyLearningWA Staff Professional Learning, ERSEA Committee, HSAC, etc.](#)