

Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter
March 2021

Your Feedback Matters!

Please share your thoughts on 3 surveys this month!

Look for this icon  or click below:

1. [Barriers to Accessing Early Intervention or Special Education Referrals, Evaluation, and Services](#)
2. [EarlyLearningWA User Satisfaction Survey](#)
3. [HS/EHS Eligibility Monitoring](#)



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

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News Archive

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

COVID-19 Information

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

Other Info

[Anti-Racism Resources](#) | [PSESD Press Releases](#)

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What's New in General

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Joanne Tran, Health, Nutrition, & Safety Consultant

We are currently still in [Phase 1B tier 1](#) of vaccine distribution. Sign up for [Phase Finder](#) to be notified of your eligibility for vaccination. Consider helping family members, friends, and neighbors who are eligible get connected to Phase Finder and find an appointment. To learn more, visit [Seattle-King County's COVID-19 vaccine website](#) or [Tacoma-Pierce County's COVID-19 vaccine website](#).

Visit Public Health's [Is It True?](#) page for facts on how the vaccine affects your body, vaccine ingredients, and vaccines and systemic racism.



[Survey: Barriers to Accessing Early Intervention or Special Education Referrals, Evaluation, and Services](#)

Tamara Griffith & Dani Hoffman, Disabilities Consultants

Disabilities Consultants recently sent a Survey Monkey to all centers asking about the barriers you have experienced in partnering with families for referral, evaluation, and services for early intervention and special education this 2020-2021 program year.

Please complete [this survey](#) by Friday, March 12. Both center leadership and family support can complete the survey.

[This survey](#) will help inform our approach on providing regional and localized support in removing barriers for families accessing their federally protected rights of referral, evaluation, and services under IDEA.

Reminder: You must document all your efforts this program year in partnering with families to support students with suspected and identified disabilities, including the referral and evaluation process.

Please reach out to your assigned Disabilities Consultant if you have further questions.



[Survey: EarlyLearningWA User Satisfaction Survey](#)

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

Your feedback matters! Now that [EarlyLearningWA](#) (ELWA) has been live for about 6 months, we'd like to know your thoughts on its usability, design, and content. **Please share your thoughts in [this survey](#) by Friday, March 12** so we can make improvements!

Please keep in mind that there are limitations to what we can produce (examples: search capabilities; ADA/Section 508 compliance; data and file security). Consider information provided in the [Website FAQ](#) and announcements/reminders via email, [E-Alerts](#), and the [Connector newsletter](#).



Monitoring Protocols

Natalia Juarez, Interim Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

This is a reminder that [Monitoring Protocols](#) are available on ELWA. Details on monitoring activities can be found here.

If you have any questions, please reach out directly to your Coach related to the content you are inquiring about.

Online Interpreter Training

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Thank you for your patience! We are in the final stages of creating our online interpreter training. We will keep you informed as to when the training dates will be available and the process to register.

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

Thank you to families and staff who joined us for our first-ever online/remote Advocacy Week!

We'll be sending a thank you and update soon.

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 January - February 2021

2.18 Topic: Advocacy Week – Act Now!

1.28 Topic: Updated ECEAP Monthly Report

Attachments:

- [Class Nontraditional Remote Services \(NTRS\) Instructions](#)
- [Site Nontraditional Remote Services \(NTRS\) Instructions](#)
- [Nontraditional Remote Services \(NTRS\) Tip Sheet](#)

Center Director Meetings

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

Please Spend COVID 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 One-Time Funds Request Form](#) 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

Early Achievers Updates

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

- The Early Achievers program has been completely “re-imagined,” and we’re just now receiving information about the new requirements.
- Data collection using the new requirements will begin as early as July 1, 2021.
- We will continue to submit a Request for Onsite Evaluation at the time it is due based on the rating renewal date, which keeps us in compliance with the mandate for ECEAP sites to participate in the EA program.
- As soon as we have complete information about the new requirements, we will provide you with that information. Until then, please respond when asked to complete a Request for Onsite Evaluation based on the renewal date for your site’s rating.
- All Early Achievers questions can be sent to [Cheryl Habgood](#).

Nontraditional Remote Services (NTRS) Reporting (ECEAP Only)

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

Nontraditional remote services (NTRS) reporting: Reporting NTRS is now part of the Monthly Report in ELMS. This replaces Smartsheet data entry and is only done once each month. To find this, click the Monthly Report tab; select the Site link or Class link to see the new Step 4: Nontraditional Remote Services Reporting section on the bottom of the page. To complete reporting, click the “Report NTRS provided this month” button and answer the questions in the pop-up window.

- [December 2020 webinar](#)
- [Monthly Report Instructions](#)
- Email questions to elms@dcyf.wa.gov

Staff Information Forms (SIFs) and Hiring Documents

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

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

Due to Personally Identifiable Information (PII), we are transitioning from email submissions of hiring documents (background checks, transcripts, TB tests, etc.) to using the [Document Uploads Only](#) online 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 in the process of refining our hiring procedures and forms; 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



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.



= Information Series – Look for this symbol each month!



Series: Using Music to Enhance Second Language Learning!

Maha Shamdeen, Dual Language Learners Coach

Last month we shared how the “Affective Filter” can help or hinder a DLL’s (Dual Language Learner) language learning. Incorporating songs and chants is one way to lower the filter. Children love songs! Musical instruments and vocals are frequently used in the classroom to help Dual Language Learners gain confidence. The most important reason to use music is for pleasure and to be an authentic self. Dual Language Learners will display a lower affective filter when singing and chanting. Learners with a high affective filter experience lack of confidence, anxiety, and unmotivated will, which can lead to exhibiting low language acquisition interest. Music and songs are used in the classroom to promote positive emotions and build a sense of community. Visit [Using Music to Enhance Second Language Learning](#) and Affective Filter.

Spring Reminders from Your Disabilities Consultants

Tamara Griffith & Dani Hoffman, Disabilities Consultants

As centers are considering/making changes to service delivery model, please be reminded of the following:

- Individualizing is required for all service delivery models: Remote, hybrid, or in-person.
- Disabilities Consultants can support you through virtual consultation: Joining synchronous learning or live streaming a class through HIPAA compliant platforms.
- Continue to partner with families in the referral and evaluation process for early intervention or special education services.
- Document **all** efforts to partner with families in the referral and evaluation process.
- Obtain a copy of IFSPs or IEPs for all children eligible for services, document accordingly in ELMS or ChildPlus, and utilize the IFSP/IEP to inform individualized instruction, accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology.
- When you have questions about **any** aspect of supporting a child with a suspected or identified disability, please reach out to your assigned Disabilities Consultant.

Trauma Informed Care & Instruction Webinar Series

Ameillya Alexander, Education Coach

The next session of this free TeachingStrategies webinar series will be on March 10, 12 pm PST / 3 pm EST. [Register here](#). Links to previous sessions are included.

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



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

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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 Published!
Selection (Policy Council approval of Selection Pts in February, if needed) Eligibility Verification Form (EVF) and Selection Points Chart	March 15
Enrollment and Attendance (not related to USDA)	April 30

Eligibility Monitoring

Natalia Juarez, Interim Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

For HS/EHS, eligibility monitoring is wrapping up. [Survey: Please share back your experience!](#)

For ECEAP, eligibility monitoring is just beginning, and you will be notified with next steps via email.

Please reach out to [Lingsue Hwang](#) (Team A & B) or [Martha Waiters](#) (Team C & D) if you have any questions.

DSHS Labels

Noelle Hoori, Program Manager | Family Engagement, Mental Health, ERSEA

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

Documentation Webinar – Family Support (ECEAP Only)

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 a 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

Peer Health and Peer Literacy training is complete! The newly trained parent educators will be ready to facilitate virtual teachback presentations by mid-March. A teachback is an opportunity to share information and distribute tools parents can use to help their children and families succeed in school and life. Support our trained parent educators and [schedule your teachback today!](#)

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

Policy Council 2020-2021

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

In February, Policy Council participated in training on Increasing our Awareness and Knowledge of Race. PSESD has an agency-wide goal to become an anti-racist, multicultural organization. Broadening our understanding of race is essential to accomplish the program goal of eliminating the opportunity gap. Please remember to support your PC representative in sharing-back what they've learned at your next Center Parent Committee meeting.

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 March PC meeting.

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.

Expanded P-EBT Benefits

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition, & Safety Consultant

Starting January 22, 2021, the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) was increased and extended to many children under age 6 who are enrolled in school or childcare facilities. If a child receives SNAP benefits and their school or childcare is closed or operating only reduced hours, they may be eligible for increased P-EBT. Children who are homeschooled are not eligible for P-EBT. [Read more in this article.](#)

No Onsite Toothbrushing? Try This...

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition, & Safety Consultant

Brushing teeth in the physical classroom has been discontinued to reduce the spread of COVID-19. I applaud your many efforts to continue modeling, encouraging, and teaching children about oral health. Perhaps we can create one more healthy habit: Until brushing resumes, consider adding the daily post-meal **swish and swallow**. Before each meal place a small 'rinse' cup filled with 2 ounces of water at each child's place setting (offer pre-meal instructions about the swish cup). When the meal or snack ends, remind children to rinse their teeth with a swish and swallow of fresh water.

- [Caring for Our Children](#) reminds us to rinse after meals when brushing occurs earlier in the day.
- [The American Dental Association](#) shares reasons water is good for teeth.
- [3-year-old demonstrates the swish \(video\)](#)



Mental Health

Mental Health Resources and Updates

Noelle Hoori, Program Manager | Family Engagement, Mental Health, ERSEA

Laurel Benz, Alex Clifthorne, & Melissa Russell, Mental Health Consultants

Mental Health Lunch and Learn Calls

Many of you may have already heard about our monthly Mental Health Lunch and Learn calls. We started these at the beginning of the summer as a space for staff to think about, reflect on, and discuss various topics important to our collective work. These topics have included anti-racism work, trauma and its manifestations, and maintaining virtual relationships. All these are relevant to your work with families and children, and with other direct services staff across external sites.

Our last call on February 2 featured a collaborative discussion and brainstorming on how to talk to children and families about hard topics. We were also available to answer questions regarding mental health supports available through PSED.

Our next Mental Health Lunch and Learn is on **Tuesday, March 2, 12:00 – 1:30 pm** and will feature a conversation about stress and coping. **An email invitation was sent with more information.**

Encouraging Mask Wearing Through Fun Social Stories

We know there are many adjustments to having children in our programs in person. One of these is having young children wear masks. [Little Learners](#) is a blog that offers supports to children on the Autism Spectrum. Some of their ideas work well in teaching all children to wear masks through social stories.

Resources

For Staff and Families

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

Early Math and Numeracy Book Ideas for Early Math Learning

[Erikson Institute Early Math Collective Series: Book Ideas for Early Math Learning](#) is a series that encourages using stories to infuse the early years with mathematical learning. From the infant years until children are putting together more advanced numeracy concepts in elementary school, books can be a gateway for early math discussions.

Webinar Series: Address Early Childhood Suspension by Addressing Implicit Bias

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.

- **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.

ELMS and GOLD Resources (ECEAP Only)

- [ELMS Administrator's Manual](#) and [ELMS Eligibility and Enrollment Manual](#)
- [ELMS Support](#)
- [GOLD® Getting Started Checklist 2020-21 for ECEAP Teachers](#)
- [GOLD® Getting Started Checklist 2020-21 for ECEAP Administrators](#)
- [Teaching Strategies GOLD® Support](#)

Staff Strategies

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