Connector

PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter
May 2021

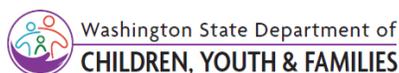## Budget Summary and Fair Start for Kids Act Update

A virtual conference committee meeting was held on 4/21/2021 for the purpose of signing the conference committee report on E2SSB 5237: Expanding accessible, affordable childcare and early childhood development programs. Senator Hawkins, Senator Billig, Representative Bergquist, Representative Senn, Representative Dent, and Senator Wilson were appointed to attend.

Conference meetings can be viewed on TVW. Conference documents on budget bills are available on the LEAP website. Conference documents on other bills are available on the Legislative Information Center (LIC) website.

Read more in Policy and Legislative Updates.

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.

Editing
Venissia Buyco

Production
Cammy Ariola-Moku

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Head Start

psesd
excellence & equity in education
Puget Sound Educational Service District

Deliverables/To-Do Lists
Center Director | Teaching Staff | Family Support | Health, Nutrition, Safety

Contents – click to jump

News Archive
E-Alerts | Connector

COVID-19 Information
Information Page | COVID-19 Guidance

Other Info
Anti-Racism Resources | PSESD Press Releases

What's New in General

Early Learning Program Manual (ELPM) Updates
Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems
Good news - ELPM forms on EarlyLearningWA are now available to direct download! Just click on a form and it will download directly to your computer.

Many ELPM procedures and forms have been updated in most content areas. **Make sure to review ELPM Directory and Updates.** Please reach out to any of your Coaches with questions or for additional support. All To-Do Lists/Deliverables have also been updated to ensure alignment with ELPM.

Don't forget to check out our new and improved Website Support (FAQ) page and leave feedback!

Collecting Staff Information/Demographics
Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance
To collect specific staff information for HS/EHS and ECEAP reporting requirements, there will be an online course assigned to **Center Leaders/Coordinators, Teaching Staff, and Family Support Staff** this month. You will receive an email when this is available. Please take time to complete the short course. Information collected will include race/ethnicity, languages spoken, current or past HS/EHS/ECEAP parent, and site support feedback.

COVID-19 Vaccine Update
Joanne Tran, Health, Nutrition, & Safety Consultant
As of April 15, all Washington residents age 16 and older are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. To make an appointment, use the Department of Health (DOH)'s Vaccine Locator. On April 24, DOH resumed use of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine across the state. Read the full news release.

ELMS 2021-2022 is Available!
Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance
The new 2021-2022 school year is now accessible in ELMS. This means you can now update your sites and classes for 2021-2022 and begin entering child data and enrolling children. Be sure to check the upper right of your ELMS screen to ensure you are in the correct year before entering data. **Working Day classes must be set up by July 1. All other classes must be set up by August 15.**

- Child records for this year's 3-year-olds rolled forward to the next school year. You can find them in Child Search or on the waiting list for the site they were associated with in 2020-2021.

- Child records for this year's 4-year-olds rolled forward for summer Working Day enrollment only. You will not be able to enroll these children after August 15 because they are Kindergarten-eligible in the Fall.

For slot movements in ELMS, refer to the 4/27 E-Alert.

Refer to these resources:
- Starting the New School Year in ELMS
- ELMS Data Entry Minimum Requirements
- ELMS Administrator's Manual
- ELMS Eligibility and Enrollment Manual
- ELMS Tips

📋 Survey: HS/EHS Only – Attendance Worksheets

Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

We are collecting input on potential changes to the HS/EHS ChildPlus Attendance Worksheet. These potential changes may be put in place soon to continue process improvement and support confidentiality. Thank you for sharing input in this quick 2 question survey!

Cheers for Sue Gettmann!

Sue has been with us in Early Learning for 10 years in a variety of roles. She has always worked hard to meet the needs of the program and all of us working directly with or for children and families. Over the past few years Sue has spent hours and days attending classes, workshops, and seminars to hone her school business office skills, and that hard work and homework has paid off.

Sue will be leaving us in Early Learning to move to the PSESD Business Office as a Program Coordinator. While we were in tears when we found out, they were tears of sadness for us, but tears of joy for Sue! She has worked so hard for this and deserves this promotion and shift in the focus of her work. She had an interest, explored and researched ways to educate herself in that interest, did the work, and now has a promotion to show for it.

Cheers, Sue. Cheers to you!

Policy & Legislative Updates

Lori Pittman, Governance and Advocacy Advisor

Legislative Session is Over. Next Up: Bill Signings. The Legislature adjourned just after 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 25. It was a legislative session to remember! At the press conference following adjournment, Democratic leadership reminded the press of the four goals they brought into the legislative session: 1) economic recovery, 2) COVID response, 3) addressing racial equity, and 4) addressing threats to climate, noting significant progress in each of these areas.

What's Next? Attention now turns to the Governor's office where the Governor has 20 days (Sundays excluded) to sign and/or veto bills. On April 26, the Governor signed ESHB 1370 relating to Early Learning Facilities and we are expecting the Fair Start for Kids Act to be signed in early May.

Big Early Learning Wins! Highlights include:

- A 10% rate increase for ECEAP starting this fall **and** automatic inflationary increases over the next several years!
- 1250 new ECEAP slots (500 this fall and 750 in 2022) – 80% school day, 20% working day.
- $3.7 million for Early ECEAP.
- $9 million for the complex needs fund with half going to childcare providers and the other half for ECEAP and Early ECEAP contractors. About $2.4 million per year will be available to ECEAP contractors.
- $900K for Summer ECEAP for about 400 children. Services would be available in July and August.
- Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) funding to support the new expanded student parent policy starting July 1. Two-parent families and all AA degrees are okay.
- Increasing income eligibility for WCCC.
- Subsidy rate increases for childcare to the 85% percentile, up from 65%.
- Capping of co-payments at $115 and then later to $90. That's a huge savings for low-income parents!

Policy & Legislative Updates
Lori Pittman, Governance and Advocacy Advisor

For a deeper dive, see this summary of key early learning investments. Rough math shows over $850 million in new operating and capital budget investments. Much of this is federal money and a good portion is one-time for childcare stabilization grants ($400 million), but over $300 million is intended to be ongoing. The goal is for this one-time federal money to be replaced by revenue generated from the new Capital Gains tax. The biggest investments are in our state's WCCC system, with an increase in rates to the 85th percentile of market rate, reforms to the broken co-payment system, and increases in income eligibility.

Budget Update. After release of budget details on April 24, both the Senate and House adopted the $59.2 billion 2021-2023 biennial budget prior to adjourning on April 25. The budget contains an additional $10 billion in federal money, spends down the state's Rainy-Day Fund, and holds back $1.1 billion in federal dollars to account for unanticipated needs.

Capital Gains on its way to Governor Inslee. In one of its final actions, the Senate approved the Capital Gains bill, ESSB 5096, on a 25-24 vote on April 25, sending the bill to Governor Inslee for his expected signature. On April 23, a conference committee comprised of three Senators and three House members adopted a compromise that made two key changes to the bill: 1) it created a charitable donations deduction and 2) capped annual distribution to the Education Legacy Trust Account at $500 million with remaining tax proceeds being deposited into the Common School Construction Account.

The compromise kept language stating that the tax is necessary for the support of state government and its existing public institutions. This language could serve to limit the option of a referendum on the ballot to repeal the law.

Multilingual Services Updates and Reminders
JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Interpreter Program Changes
Janet Hinrich, the Program Specialist for our Interpreter Program, retired on March 15. She has been an integral part of the Interpreter Program for many years. I am going to miss her and all that she added to the program. Best wishes to Janet on the next chapter in her life.

Update: Please **do not** email Janet your interpreter time verifications. She will no longer keep track of interpreter timesheets. Please email them and any questions you may have to JoAnna Williams-Diggs.

Online Interpreter Training
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
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

Multilingual Services Updates and Reminders
JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

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
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.**

Bilingual Instructional Assistants
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.

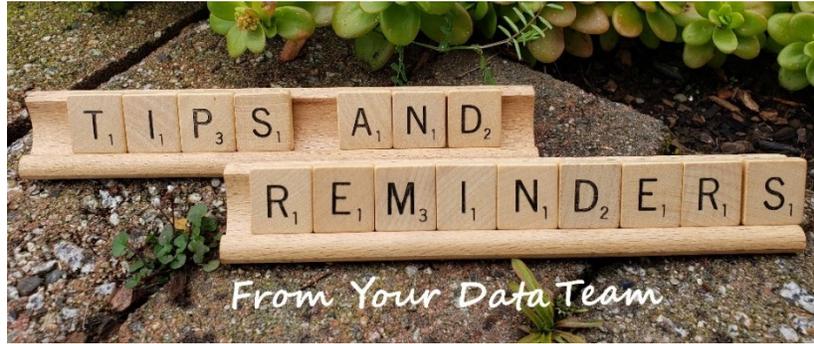## Head Start/Early Head Start Attendance Trends
Tiffany Lyons, Data Systems Technician | ERSEA
Incomplete attendance sheets submitted to the attendance line are on the rise. Some common trends include:
1. Attendance sheets missing signature and date.
2. Attendance is not documented for all children.
3. Meal totals missing or partially complete.
4. Children showing in the wrong classroom (i.e., classroom transfer).

Before you submit the attendance, take time to review the information to ensure it is complete, accurate, and legible by checking the following:
- Attendance sheets are signed and dated.
- Children are showing in the correct classrooms for the week being recorded.
- Children are marked correctly.
- Meals are documented with a checkmark and totaled.
- Attendance totals and percentages are calculated correctly.

Submit attendance each week as a PDF attachment to the Head Start attendance line. Please do not attach as a picture in the body of an email. Review page 4 and 5 of the Attendance and Meal Count Procedure for additional guidance. For questions, please contact Tiffany Lyons.

45-Day Health and Development Screenings
Anjanette Abbe, Data Systems Technician | Health, Nutrition, & Safety

Health and Developmental screenings are due within 45 days of each child's first day of attendance. Please make sure to include the screening or assessment date for every result.

For HS and ECEAP, when submitting growth screenings:
- Height should be recorded in inches and rounded down to the nearest quarter inch.
- Weight should be recorded in lbs. as displayed on the scale.

Please refer to the Early Learning Program Manual for instructions. Here is a list of the most recent screening results forms:
- Instructions for 45-Day Screening Results Head Start & ECEAP
- Health and Developmental Screening Results Form Head Start & ECEAP
- Instructions for 45-Day Screening Results Early Head Start
- Health and Developmental Screening Results Form Early Head Start

For forms questions, contact your Health, Nutrition, and Safety Coach. For data questions, contact Anjanette Abbe.

Applications
Dawn Patterson, Data Systems Technician | ERSEA

It is time to send in Returning Applications for the 2021-2022 program year. Please start working on them if you have not already done so. Make sure to read the ERSEA Procedure before submitting your applications.

Please upload them in ChildPlus as soon as possible:
1. Print and upload all pages of the Early Learning Application, the Eligibility Verification Form, and Selection Points Chart into ChildPlus.
2. Upload all proof of eligibility documents (proof of income, age, family size, and authority to enroll) to the ChildPlus Application Module.
3. If you have uploaded an application into ChildPlus and do not see it within 2-3 business days, check the Apps Status section in ChildPlus for any notes that may require your attention.

For questions, please contact Dawn Patterson.

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 April 2021

[4.28](#)   **Topic:** 412 Grant Talking Points (HS/EHS 412 Only)

[4.27](#)   **Topic:** ECEAP Slot Movement in ELMS (ECEAP Only)

[4.13](#)   **Topic:** Statement from DOH on Pausing Johnson & Johnson Vaccine

Center Director Meetings

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

2021-2022 Documents
Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance
Please note the documents listed in the [Center Director Deliverables](#) due by May 31.

New Inventory Procedure for ECEAP & HS/EHS Funded Equipment
Jayme Estep, Systems Manager | Operations
A new inventory procedure was rolled out in April at the Center Director's Meeting. Please take time to [review the procedure](#) carefully. Each Center should have a plan in place to report new purchases within 5 days of purchasing or receiving the items. Per your Contracts with PSESD and DCYF/Office of Head Start, documentation and request for approval must be submitted to surplus any grant funded equipment (that meets the criteria outlined in procedure). Please reach out to [Jayme Estep](#) to provide feedback on this new process or share any concerns or questions.

Staff Coverage and Notifications During Return to In-Person Instruction
Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning
We know that due to COVID-19 and hybrid models, many substitutes are being used to provide coverage for classrooms. If you are fortunate enough to have substitutes working long term (longer than 2 weeks), please submit information about them using the [Staff Information Form (SIF) process](#). If your substitutes are varied from day to day or week to week, just be sure they have gone through all the appropriate background checks, etc., through your organization before they work with our students.

For staff going on Leaves of Absence for any reason (FMLA, Maternity Leave, etc.) please email a list to [Mike Condardo](#) including the following:

- Staff person's name
- Position
- Type of Leave
- Leave Start Date
- Anticipated Return Date

If you have staff that are currently on unemployment due to COVID-19, please submit an electronic [Staff Departure Form](#) for each staff member. This will enable us to remove from tracking pieces like Monitoring and Online Classes until they are active again.

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

On Time Fiscal Claims
Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

It is imperative that you turn in your monthly fiscal claims on time. We are always assessing where we are with program-wide spending on each grant. When we don't receive claims in a timely way, we can't project future spending to know how we fair with our budgets. If you have a pattern of late claims, please work with the fiscal staff in your organization to remedy this. Thank you! We know this isn't always easy.

Nontraditional Remote Services (NTRS) Reporting (ECEAP Only)
Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

Reporting Nontraditional Remote Services (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. 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:	**Questions about Hiring Documents:**
Cheryl Habgood	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.

Supporting Dual Language Learners Transitioning to Kindergarten
Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learners Coach

As we get closer to the end of the school year, many staff, children, and families are preparing for the transition process into kindergarten. For Dual Language Learners, there may be additional information you can provide for their families to ensure a smooth process. For example, does the family know about language tests their child may have to take or what ELL (English Language Learner) services their school will offer? [Read more about other transition tips and information](#).

Haring Center Externship: Register Now!
Tamara Griffith, Dani Hoffman, & Johna Rhooms | Disabilities Consultants

The UW Haring Center is offering a remote 2-half day internship. Topics covered include creating an inclusive classroom, anti-bias education practices, preventing challenging behaviors, increasing family engagement, and modifying environments and interactions. [Read more about the internship here](#).

Virtual Internships are Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 - 3:30 PM. [Disabilities Consultants](#) encourage you to sign up for these amazing (and free!) opportunities by emailing [Phoebe Yeung](#) **or** following the [registration link](#). The Haring Center is an amazing local educational resource that centers inclusion in Early Learning. We hope this is a great opportunity to see visual supports (among many other strategies) in action. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Family Engagement

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.

Family Engagement & ERSEA Updates

- **Change to Eligibility Process – Securely Return/Destroy Eligibility Documents:** Refer to ERSEA Procedure section EL-7. Staff will need access to a Cross-cut Shredder.

- **DCYF Recruitment Labels:** Refer to email regarding labels. For any questions, please reach out to Carrie Parman.

- **Home Visit Requirement:** Please keep in mind the quarterly home visit requirement for HS/EHS and ECEAP. ELMS tracks this information for ECEAP only. Currently program wide, we are at 61% complete.

- **Reminder:** 2021-2022 Recruitment & Selection Plans were due April 30. Please submit ASAP if you have not already done so.

ERSEA Committee on May 19, 2021
Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

There will be an additional ERSEA Committee meeting scheduled for May 19, 9:00 – 11:00 AM. Feedback was given at the last meeting to host another in May that could be dedicated to Q&A's. **To prepare for this meeting, please submit any ERSEA-related questions to ERSEA@psesd.org by May 14.**

ELMS 2021-2022 is Available!
Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

The new 2021-2022 school year is now accessible in ELMS. For more information, please refer to News in General. There will be additional guidance sent through email this month on how to re-enroll returning children that are considered Over Income (over 110% with no IEP).

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!

Policy Council Updates
Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Policy Council 2020-2021
Policy Council completed a two-part training on Race and the Opportunity Gap. Members explored the concept of equity versus equality, gained knowledge on the opportunity gap and the lack of equitable learning opportunities afforded to children of color, and discovered what it means to be color brave rather than color blind. This transformative work enables parents to reflect on their own experiences with racial injustice and to deepen their understanding of structural inequality.

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.

Peer Programs
Peer Health and Peer Literacy training are complete! The newly trained Parent Educators are excited to facilitate teachback presentations. Our Peer Educators need opportunities to practice their leadership and presentation skills. Teachbacks provide an excellent opportunity to engage the families at your site/center, impart education in health and literacy, and increase the proficiency of our Parent Educators!

Support our trained parent educators and schedule your teachback today! Questions? 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.

COVID Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Sarah Carter, Nurse Consultant
This document addresses common questions regarding the symptoms of COVID-19 and the reasoning behind the screening procedure. The FAQ sheet has answers to these questions, along with many resources/links from the Washington State Department of Health and CDC. The FAQ sheet is a great resource to share with site staff for their own reference, or as a tool they can share with families who might have these questions and want to learn more information.

Updates to DOH Guidance for Childcares
Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety
On April 14, 2021 Guidance from Washington State DOH for Child Care, Youth Development and Day Camps During COVID-19 was updated. Key updates include physical distancing and cohorting guidance, quarantine guidance for fully vaccinated individuals, and resuming sensory play and the use of outdoor sandboxes. Please see the Comparison Chart for Health Practices as a reference document. Anything in blue is a recent change/update.

Ventilation Guidance
Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety
Public Health Seattle & King County has developed new [Ventilation Guidance documents](#), which include strategies and technologies to improve indoor air quality to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19

Outside Time for Young Children
Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety
Springtime is here! As the days are now becoming longer and rays of sunshine increase, playing and learning outside is an essential part of early childhood. During outside time remember to be alert for potential hazards by scanning the outdoor play space and checking for areas that may compromise children's safety, such as worn structures or toys, or inadequate surfacing under play equipment. It is not recommended for children to wear masks outside yet keeping small classroom cohorts together is best practice during the pandemic. [Getting Children Outside during COVID-19](#) includes some ideas for outside time.

Please note [COVID-19 Guidance](#) is being updated frequently to reflect the changes from Public Health and the CDC. Please review it often for updated information!

Safe Arrival and Departure Monitoring
Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety
Safely transitioning children to and from transportation continues to be a critical safety focus. Transition times can be very hectic with many moving parts and communication may be unclear. Monitoring safe arrival and departures will continue for the 2020-2021 program year and during the summer for full year programs. Team Managers are managing these schedules. Please check in with your Team Manager if you have questions about your site's monitoring expectation.

Fit 5 Seattle Children's Research Study
Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health & Nutrition
The Fit 5 Study is in year three of the four-year study. Analysis and results will be reviewed in year five. Thank you, Lake Washington School District, for agreeing to participate in the study! We are looking for other Head Start programs to participate for the 2021-2022 school year. If your site is interested or for additional information, please contact [Cheryl Polasek](#).

What's New in Whole Grains?
Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition & Safety Consultant
Beginning October 2021, Early Learning food service programs will be required to use ounce equivalents for all grain products. An ounce equivalent tells how much grain is in a portion of food. Ounce equivalents are designed to measure grains more accurately than the current measuring cup estimations, and to ensure our children are receiving a standard serving of grains.

Early Learning Programs receiving funding through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) may notice food service make the change to ounce equivalents. Grain items on the menu might possibly be labeled in ounces. Sizes of pre-packaged foods may change to match the age group being served. Families may also have questions about portion sizes.

The following USDA resources are available to help staff better understand and answer any concerns about standard measurements and ensure their children are receiving adequate amounts of whole grain with each meal and snack:

- [Grain Measuring Chart for Children](#) helps staff see the minimum required amounts of crackers, pretzels, or pasta to be served at each meal or snack.

- [Pre-Packaged Grain Measuring Chart](#) compares typical package size requirements for age 1 to adult.

- [Measuring Grains for Infants](#) reminds staff that iron fortified infant cereal is currently the only reimbursable grain during meals. Other grains are allowed for snacks as infants become developmentally ready.
- [These additional resources, training sheets, and videos](#) offer staff further examples and explanation of the new ounce equivalent requirements.

Your Health, Nutrition, Safety Coaches and Consultants are available for any additional questions.

Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health & Nutrition

The pandemic continues, affecting not only our physical health but also jobs. Many people are finding themselves in need of health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period](#) for free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – **Washington Healthplanfinder**. The enrollment period is open until **May 15** and is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

Mental Health

Virtual Training Opportunity

Laurel Benz, Alex Clifthorne, and Melissa Russell | Mental Health Consultants

Mental Health Consultants have been hard at work updating our trauma and trauma-informed practice training, as well as making it virtual! Our hope is that this training will build upon the knowledge base that staff have, as well as provide new ideas and strategies to help guide kids and families through the ongoing healing process. The training itself is designed to take approximately six (6) hours over three (3) sessions, however, can be modified for time constraints.

Please contact your site's [Mental Health Consultant](#) with questions, or to schedule a training!

Resources

For Staff and Families

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

- **Webinar Series: Addressing 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.

  - **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.

- **Free Online Professional Learning Opportunities** with Office of Head Start

- **WSA Head Start and ECEAP virtual Birth to Three Institute and 30th Annual Summer Institute**

  - Birth to Three Institute (May 17-28): For home visitors and classroom teachers, with some sessions for supervisors. Classes are two 90-minute sessions on consecutive days, and STARS is available. Two courses will be offered in both Spanish and English.

  - Summer Institute (June 7-25): Primarily for Pre-K staff (teachers, supervisors, coaches) and family support. These are 10-hour courses on a single topic, offered on 4-5 consecutive days.

Staff Strategies

EarlyLearningWA Website Links
- Website Support (FAQs)
- Early Learning Program Manual (ELPM) Directory and Updates
- Website Feedback Form
- Find a Classroom and Find a Classroom Update Form
- Staff Professional Learning, ERSEA Committee, HSAC, etc.

ELMS and GOLD Resources (ECEAP Only)
- ELMS Administrator's Manual
- 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