

Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter
October 2021

Early Learning COVID Guidance – Ongoing Updates



Please take a few minutes to double check the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) to make sure you're up-to-date with recent changes. If you have questions, please reach out to the applicable staff referenced in Guidance or your Site Support Team

~ Your PSESD Early Learning Team

PSESD Early Learning Connector

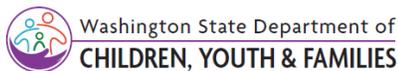
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The Early Learning Connector e-newsletter is produced monthly throughout the school year, providing information for the PSESD Early Learning Program.



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What's New in General

Online Classes

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

Returning staff should now **have all online trainings completed**. If you have not yet completed everything in your Learning Path, please make every effort to complete them today. Reach out to your Center Director if you need support in creating the time to complete these required trainings.

New Staff should now have the First Five trainings completed and be well on the way to having the remaining trainings in your learning path completed. It's important to find a balance between getting them done within the two months of time allowed, and a pace which allows you to understand and absorb the information presented. Reach out to your Center Director if you need support in creating the time to complete these required trainings.

If you have any challenges or questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to [Mike Conardo](#) or [Cheryl Habgood](#)

Pre-Service Recording Available

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

If you were not able to attend one of the live Pre-Service sessions, it's **required** that you view the [recording](#).

Access requires this password: **ELpreservicePSESD** (it is case sensitive)

If you have any challenges or questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to [Cheryl Habgood](#).

Family Rights and Navigating the Special Education Process

Tamara Griffith, Dani Hoffman, & Johna Rhooms | Disabilities Consultants

All programs must inform families of their rights to access referral and evaluation when 1.) the family has developmental concerns **or** 2.) when children screen **Referral Indicated** on their ASQ-3 or have sustained concerns even after rescreens. It is the family's decision to refer - the program partners with the family on their decision.

We also want to share new updates to the WAC for school districts regarding navigating the special education referral process. The [Washington State Referral and Evaluation Timeline](#) remains the same (see below for OSPI timeline) and the clock for the timeline begins when a referral in writing is received by the school district.

As of October 15, 2021, new WAC requirements (WAC 392-172A-03005) go into effect:

- "(b) The request must be in writing, unless the person is unable to write and/or communicate orally."
- "(c) Each school district must have an optional referral form for requesting an initial evaluation available to the general public and provide it upon receipt of any referral request in the requestor's native language or with the support of a qualified interpreter when needed."
- "(2) The school district must document the request for an initial evaluation, including the date the request is received, and: [...]"

What could this mean for families? The systems supporting referral and evaluation for each school district may look different. However, the WAC changes appear to encourage proper documentation and a paper trail of referral and evaluation requests.



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The timeline starts when an official referral is received, and now we have more specific guidance on how to inform and empower families to access their rights.

Timelines for Referral & Evaluation



Data



Enrollment & Attendance in ChildPlus

Tiffany Lyons, Data Systems Technician | ERSEA

A few reminders when processing enrollments and entering attendance in ChildPlus:

Head Start/Early Head Start:

1. Ensure there is a 2021-22 program term created in ChildPlus.
2. In the Enrollment tab, scroll down and select Accepted and enter date and classroom. Do not select Funding.
3. Once classes begin, enroll each child on the **first day they start class and not before they start.**
4. When you enroll in ChildPlus, it automatically enters an **entry date**. The entry date is the **first day the child starts in class.**
5. If you expect a child to start on a certain day and does not arrive, **you must wait to enroll.**

ECEAP:

1. Children entered in ELMS with an **Expected Start Date** must also be entered in ChildPlus with an Accepted Status.
2. Ensure there is a 2021-22 program term created in ChildPlus.
3. In the Enrollment tab, scroll down and select Accepted and enter date and classroom. Do not select Funding.
4. Once classes begin, you must enroll each child on the **day that they first attend.**
5. In ELMS, enter the **Actual Start Date.**
6. In ChildPlus, the enrollment date automatically enters an **entry date**. The entry date is the **first day the child starts in class.**
7. **The Actual Start Date in ELMS and the Enrollment/Entry date in ChildPlus must match.**

Thank you for your patience! For questions, please contact [Tiffany Lyons](#).



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Data

September ELMS Monthly Report Reminder

Sue Gettmann, Data Systems Technician

As you may be aware, **PSESD Early Learning must submit the required ELMS Monthly Report to DCYF on the 15th day of every month.** The primary purpose of the Monthly Report is to document the program activities you are billing for. The secondary purpose is to verify or update specific ELMS child and staffing information that may change from month to month.

To meet this requirement, the following steps must be completed:

1. Family Support **submits** each class by the 5th day of each month.
2. Center Directors, or their designees, **confirm** the staff at the site **and submit** their Site Level report to PSESD by the 10th day of each month.

For questions, please contact [Sue Gettmann](#).

Policy & Legislative Updates

Fair Start for Kids Act Update

Lori Pittman, Governance and Advocacy Advisor

Shared from the Office of Secretary Ross Hunter: Beginning Oct. 1, 2021, DCYF will initiate changes that allow up to an additional 6,000 families in our state to afford that care. We are implementing two child care policies provided under the Fair Start for Kids Act, which makes child care more accessible and affordable for all families in Washington State. [Read more.](#)



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Photo by PSESD Early Learning

Policy Council Updates

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

Policy Council 2021-22

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

We know that you're busy recruiting and voting-in your Policy Council Parent Representatives for the 2021-22 year! Below are some reminders about upcoming dates and useful materials:

Policy Council recruitment flyer available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)!

[Meeting date flyers](#) are available in English and Spanish

PC Reps are available to speak at your in-person and/or virtual parent events, contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Info sessions and Trainings are coming up this month. All meetings will be held virtually until further notice. For guidance on parent reimbursement, please see Parent Leadership Reimbursement - COVID-19 Guidelines (English and Spanish) on the Policy Council webpage.

Info Sessions (for interested parents or staff looking to learn more about Policy Council)

Thurs., October 14 — 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Trainings (For elected and/or prospective parent representatives)

October 26 — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

November 9 — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Note: We know that new parents are excited about PC and would love to visit a meeting. However, we ask that you please refrain from inviting them to the October PC meeting as we are wrapping up our current PC year and the density and pace of this meeting may be overwhelming. Please encourage new parents to attend an info session and/or training to learn more about Policy Council.

Spanish interpreters will be available. If other languages are needed, contact [Quincy Stone](#).



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Center Directors

Review the E-Alerts for September 2021

Also check your inbox for any additional emails sent by your Team Manager.

10.1 Topic: October 1 Deadline for Background Check Clearance

9.28 Topic: Important Updates & Reminders

9.20 Topic: ASQ Online Training Video and Resources

9.14 Topic: COVID-19 and Other Updates

9.08 Topic: Submit Operating Budget and Staff Compensation Worksheets

Center Director Meetings

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

Foundational Training on Race Series for Center Leadership

Heather Kawamoto & Michelle Morse | Equity in Education Program Managers



Join us as we bring together Center Leadership to reflect on how to lead sites and centers with racial equity. Explore how to create nests for staff at the center, the historical constructs of race, how to recognize our own implicit bias and its impact on our work, what it means to be a center leader and hold positional power, and interrupt white supremacy cultural characteristics while leading with racial equity.

The series will be held over 6 consecutive Tuesdays, November 2 – December 7, from 9:30-11:30 am.

Please register using the [Training and Meeting Calendar](#).

Please feel free to reach out to [Heather Kawamoto](#) and [Michelle Morse](#) with any questions.

Staff Information Forms

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

Reminder: Please complete the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#) as soon as you know of any staff changes.

Contact the following with questions:

Qualifications:

[Cheryl Habgood](#)

Portable Background Checks/ Staff Member Safety Plans:

[Beth Larsen](#)

All Other Hiring Questions:

Your Team Technical
Assistance Coordinator
(Monitor)

Assistance with Document Uploads:

[Venissia Buyco](#)



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Child Care Stabilization Grants Coming Soon

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operation & ECEAP

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is providing direct support through Child Care Stabilization Grants. Grants will be available for licensed child care providers and license-exempt Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers. Child Care Stabilization Grants will support providers in sustaining their child care business and ensuring affordable, high-quality child care services are available to families.

Early Learning Facilities Fund Applications Open Now

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

The 2021-23 Early Learning Facilities (ELF) grant application is now open. Please visit the [website](#) for the link to the Zoom, Grants application, and to access supporting materials.

Before beginning your application, please be sure to read the Program Guidelines, Notice of Funding Opportunity, and Frequently Asked Questions documents. We also encourage you to review the September 15 recording of our ELF informational [webinar](#).

DCYF to Resume In-Person Child Care Licensing Visits

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

DCYF was recently notified by the Administration for Children and Families Office of Child Care that the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program will no longer allow state agencies to request waivers linked to COVID-19.

As a result, DCYF must return to child care operations as required by CCDF **by Oct. 1, 2021**. This means that the temporary waiver allowing DCYF to conduct virtual monitoring visits will no longer be in effect, and no additional waivers or waiver extensions linked to COVID-19 will be considered at this time. If you have more questions, please reach out to dcyf.welcome@dcyf.wa.gov.

Education

Emergency Planning for Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learners Coach

As you're planning emergency procedures for your classroom or site, it's important to consider your Dual Language Learners. Visit [Considering Children who are DLLs in Emergency Planning](#) for tips and ideas to incorporate into your plans. Please feel free to reach out to your DLL Coach with any questions.

Virtual Observations

Disabilities Consultants, Mental Health Consultants, and Education Services

Virtual Observations are an invaluable way to experience your classroom space with you, in which we can thought-partner strategies and support. Reach out to your Education Coach, Dual Language Learners Coach, or primary Disabilities Consultant to schedule a virtual observation for either child/children specific supports or classroom-wide



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strategies. After the virtual observation, PSESD staff will schedule a debrief with the teaching staff to discuss highlights and recommendations for supports. See this [Virtual Observations Flyer](#) on what to expect in setting up a virtual observation.

For Mental Health Consultation, the family will need to give consent through the [Request for Mental Health Observation or Consultation](#) (see the [Mental Health Consultation Procedure](#)).

Temporary Classroom Assistant (TCA) Hours Requests

Disabilities Consultants and Mental Health Consultants

Thank you for your focus on fostering nurturing relationships and creating a safe, inclusive environment with all children and families. As you are building relationships and establishing routines, you may be identifying a need for further support.

TCA hours are available to use as a bandwidth creator in the classroom, and may be an option to consider as you assess classroom needs. TCA's can free-up time for permanent classroom staff by taking on general classroom duties (cleaning tables, leading small group, assisting in zoning, etc.). This helps Lead and Assistant Teachers have some extra hands as they individualize for children and implement sustainable and inclusive practices that address various or cumulative classroom needs for the long-term. Because Temporary Classroom Assistant Hours are **temporary** in nature and are not a permanent fixture, it is essential that, during the initial planning session with your Coach or Consultant, a support plan is developed with the temporary nature in mind. Center staff can submit a [Request for Temporary Classroom Assistant](#) and within two weeks, center staff must meet to develop a strategic plan for use of TCA Hours. A PSESD Coach or Consultant will reach out to staff to schedule an initial virtual meeting to discuss the request. To develop a sustainable support plan, a virtual observation is likely to be recommended to consider all classroom needs and strategies.

Review the [Requesting Funding for a Temporary Classroom Assistant Procedure](#) for further information and requirements.

ASQ Online Training Video and Resources on EarlyLearningWA.org

Education Coaches

Education Coaches have added an [ASQ Online training and resource hub](#) on EarlyLearningWa.org. All Providers and Administrators (Teachers and Center Directors) should watch the training video and explore the resources to support the use of ASQ Online and Family Access.

The **case sensitive** password to access the training video is: **ELASQOnline**

This year, many teachers and programs have started using paper forms for many reasons (lack of access to the platform during enrollment visits, parent request or other factors). Teachers can manually enter the child and caregiver information utilizing the data on the front page of the paper questionnaire and enter the questionnaire results utilizing the "Short Form" answer. Child and Caregiver information must be entered prior to adding a screening. This will continue to be an option going forward and teachers should provide hard copies of screenings upon caregiver request.

If you have further questions or need technical assistance, please contact your Education Coach. Please look for communication from your Education Coach regarding upcoming Office Hours and availability for ASQ Online support.



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ERSEA

Martha Waiters, ERSEA Consultant

Recruitment Opportunity: Families Arriving from Afghanistan

King and Pierce County Refugee Resettlement Agencies will be welcoming evacuees from Afghanistan. Please see [Supporting Families - How ECEAP Can Help Afghan Evacuees](#) for agency contacts and eligibility information. This document is from ECEAP, but the information also applies to Head Start and Early Head Start.

New ECEAP Allowable Children

These children will need an approved [Over Income Request](#), but are now allowable for ECEAP enrollment with or without additional research-based risk factors:

- Families with income at 110% to 140% federal poverty level (FPL).
- Children who are tribal per parent report with income between 110% and 384% FPL.
- Families experiencing homelessness.
- Children who meet ECEAP age eligibility and have participated in: Early Head Start, Early ECEAP, Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), IDEA Part C services from another state, ECLIPSE (Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services)

ERSEA Procedure and EVF Changes

The [ERSEA Procedure](#) and [Eligibility Verification Form \(EVF\)](#) have been updated to reflect the recent changes to allowable children for ECEAP and various other updates. Please see highlighted changes in the [ERSEA Procedure](#).

Over-Income Request Reminders

- Please be sure to accept or enroll all eligible children before requesting approval for an over-income child.
- If you are unsure of the classroom the child will be enrolled in, please use TBD. Once the [Over Income Request](#) has been approved, email Sue Gettmann with the class you would like the child enrolled in. This allows time for you to meet with parents, get their classroom preference, and arrange transportation if needed. This will ensure the most efficient process for enrolling over-income children.

Survey for Experienced ERSEA Staff

Please take the [Survey for Experienced ERSEA Staff](#) and let us know if you would like us to set aside some times to provide you with updates and refreshers.



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Multilingual Services

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Multilingual Services Updates

Bilingual Instructional Assistants (BIAs), Interpreters and DLL Coaches are excited to work with you, families, and children in your program. If you have a child in your class in need of language support, please complete a [BIA Request](#)

We are experiencing a shortage of available BIAs. Multilingual Services (MLS) is looking for new BIAs to be a part of our program. If you know anyone who may be interested in part time employment, please ask them to [email me](#).

Please review the [September Connector \(page 13\)](#) for Interpreter and BIA updates. The updated monthly Interpreter Directory is linked in your Connector email.

Family Engagement

Increased Income Eligibility and Lower Family Copayments

Antoinette Bunkasem, Family Engagement Coach | Team B

For families with Working Connections Child Care subsidy: **increased income eligibility and lower family copayments start October 1, 2021.** [Please click here for details.](#)

October Family Support Training

Family Support Training Team

Please visit the [2021-22 PSESD Early Learning Training and Meeting Calendar](#) to register for one of the Family Support Training sessions happening October 20, 10am-noon or October 21, 1-3pm.

Peer Programs

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Schedule a Virtual Teachback Today!

A great way to involve your families at the start of the year is to have another parent share about the available opportunities to currently enrolled families in Early Learning. This is easy to do with a Fall Teachback event! Get your parents connected with each other and excited about being involved in the program!

Health & Literacy Training begins in January!

Peer Programs is going virtual for 2022 - meetings will be held via Zoom for 8 consecutive Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17, 24, and March 3.

Parents will be reimbursed an hourly rate for their time, and a technology reimbursement and a dinner allowance per meeting.

To request a virtual teachback, please complete the [teachback request form](#).



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The [Peer Programs promotional video](#) is a great way to share about Peer Programs.

Peer Programs recruitment flyers available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)!

Questions? Contact [Quincy Stone](#) at 425-917-7875.

Families Eligible to Receive Up to \$3,600 With New Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Lori Pittman, Early Learning and K to Career Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations

All Early Learning families are eligible to receive up to \$3,600 with the new Child Tax Credit (CTC). However, **they must enroll by November 15, 2021.**

Many families may not be aware, have access to apply for, or will need assistance to successfully apply for the CTC. Below are links to a variety of CTC Toolkits and more:

- [GetCTC.org](#)
- [IRS CTC Toolkit](#)
- [thesocialpresskit.com/ctcoutreach](#) – Find outreach messages for social media, text messages, emails and more
- Code for America's [Navigator Resources](#) - Organizations interested in helping families use the GetCTC.org portal can also access, featuring training guides, videos and frequently asked questions

Health, Nutrition, & Safety



Upcoming Health/Nutrition Events

- **October 1** begins USDA menu requirement to use **ounce equivalent** serving sizes. Your food service director will be ensuring the required serving size for whole grains. To verify correct amounts, check the [Whole Grain Serving Guide](#).
- **October 4** is the last day to receive the Johnson & Johnson Vaccine and be fully immunized to meet the state COVID-19 vaccination requirement. Contact your employer for Religious or Medical Exemption options. Lost or damaged vaccination cards? Check for a copy of your records at [Washington State My Immunization Records](#).
- **October 20** (10 am-12 pm) **or** **October 21** (1-3 pm)
This year's FSS fall training is with [James Whitfield](#), Founder of 'Be Culture'. Join us for an engaging presentation designed to inspire, motivate, and empower your work with families.



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Accessing Your COVID Records Online

Xinying He, RN, BSN, Nurse Consultant

If you've misplaced or lost your card, don't worry! You can get official, verified proof of your COVID-19 vaccination online, for free. To get your copy, visit [MyIRMobile](#) to sign up. This is the same portal parents use to access their children's immunization records. For language assistance, or additional help getting your records, please call 833-VAX-HELP (833-829-4357) or contact by email at waiisrecords@doh.wa.gov.

Reminder for Sites with Sea Mar or Community Health Dental Screenings

Leticia Salcido, Health Nutrition Aide

Schedule + Host Dental Event + Enter Results into ChildPlus

Please attach all Sea Mar or Community Health dental screening results into ChildPlus immediately following a visit so our data team can record your site compliance. Thank you and Happy Smiles!

Mental Health

Mental Health Reminders

Melissa Russell and Laurel Benz | Mental Health Consultants



- Mental Health Consultants are here to support your Early Learning team in a reflective group, training, or consultation. We are also getting ready to schedule virtual observations and are open to take referrals for contracted mental health services!
- Mental Health Therapists are available for up to **10 sessions of free** counseling for enrolled Early Learning program families.
- Mental Health Lunch and Learns are the **last Tuesday of each month from 12 - 1:30 pm**. Next one is **October 26!**

Staff Resiliency

Melissa Russell and Laurel Benz | Mental Health Consultants

Many of us had the pleasure of hearing Nefertiti Poyner from the Devereux Foundation speak at our preservice training this fall. She did a wonderful job of helping us focus on our "Occupassions" with the idea to "Pause, Reflect, Focus and Take Action". As programs are up and running and we prepare for increased demands and ongoing flexibility we want to feature the importance of identifying and building on our own strengths.

The [Devereux Adult Resiliency Survey \(DARS\)](#) is a great way to take stock of your strengths and build upon them. Consider taking a moment to complete the DARS and share your results with a co-worker. You may be surprised at the



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strengths of yourself and those among us. Nefertiti also led us in a grounding exercise and asked us to learn to pause in our busy lives. Consider the importance of mindfulness and the impact it can have on our lives as you watch this video: [How Mindfulness Empowers Us: An Animation - YouTube](#)

Also, check out the new [mindfulness toolkit](#) from Zero to Three, specifically designed for Early Childhood Organizations.

Resources

For Staff and Families

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

- [DCYF ECEAP Reminders and Links – September 2021](#): Read for training/webinar opportunities!
 - [Subscribe to this newsletter!](#)
- [Head Start News via Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center \(ECLKC\)](#)
 - [Subscribe for email updates!](#)

Staff Strategies

EarlyLearningWA Website Links

- [Website Support \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual \(ELPM\)](#)
- [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](#)
- [Teaching Strategies GOLD® Support](#)