

# Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter  
**May 2022**

## Early Learning Program Manual

We are continuing our annual review and revision process for the [Early Learning Program Manual \(ELPM\)](#).

To prepare for the upcoming 2022-2023 program year, many procedures and forms have been updated.

Carefully read through this issue of The Connector for details!

### PSESD Early Learning Connector

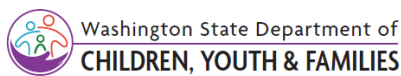
#### Editing

Venissia Buyco

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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



## ELPM Updates!

### Venissia Buyco | Senior Coordinator, Management Systems

Updates have been made to the following ELPM sections:

- ERSEA: Applications, Enrollment, Attendance, Transitions
- Health, Nutrition, and Safety: Health Enrollment, Child Health Plans
- Documentation and Confidentiality
- Education: Screenings and Assessments
- Multilingual Services
- Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Program Admin – 2022-2023 Center Calendar Template (Center Directors – due May 30 to your Team Manager), Medical Release Form

**Make sure to visit the [ELPM Directory and Updates](#) for a full list of what's changed!**

Based on our ECEAP Review results, **changes to *Family Connections*, *Restraint Documentation Log*, and *Site Readiness and Safety Checklist - Center Director* will be published on May 4.** Changes to the *Family Engagement Procedure* and other related forms have been postponed for a couple of months.

These forms will also be available in multiple languages (bilingual) very soon: *Emergency Treatment and Consent Form*, *Safe Arrival and Departure Agreement*, and *Family Connections*. We will work on additional forms throughout the year, as budget allows.

Our next round of updates in May through July will include food and classroom health practices, Safety, Fiscal, staff requirements and professional learning, etc.

## PSESD Early Learning Policies

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

PSESD Early Learning policies apply to the operations of all programs and staff funded by PSESD Early Learning, and support compliance of Performance Standards, regulations, and laws. PSESD Early Learning policies are approved by all governing bodies: Policy Council, Early Learning Governance Committee, and PSESD Board of Directors. Implementing and adhering to all policies and are referenced in the Letter of Agreement between PSESD and subcontractors. Subcontractors may have additional policies which are not in conflict with the PSESD Early Learning policies. PSESD Early Learning policies also apply to PSESD Early Learning staff.

### Policy Review Cycle and Revisions

PSESD Early Learning policies are reviewed on a three-year cycle. That is, one-third of all policies are reviewed each year with all policies reviewed at least once over a three-year period. The policy review and revision process involve PSESD Early Learning administration, including but not limited to Coaches, Consultants, Program Managers, Directors, and/or advisory groups. Drafted recommendations for updates or no changes then go to Policy Council for input and review, including using a racial equity tool. After the drafts are finalized, they then are presented for approval. If approved, the policy is forwarded to the Early Learning Governance Advisory Committee for recommendation (or not) to the PSESD Board of Directors. New policies may be submitted as needed and are developed and approved using the same process.

Any policy that requires more immediate revision may be presented at any point outside of the three-year cycle. Any PSESD Early Learning staff member, parent, or director can submit a proposal revision to a policy.



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For the 2022-2023 program year, we will review the following:

Policy #	Policy Name	Year of review	Policy #	Policy Name	Year of review
105	Blood Borne Pathogens	2022	305	Health Information Protection	2022
110	Child Abuse and Neglect	2022	420	Tobacco- and Smoke-Free Environment	2022
205	Animals in the Early Learning Environment	2022	530	Personnel Management	2022
220	Standard of Conduct: Active Child Supervision	2022	610	Parent Leadership Reimbursement	2022
235	Physical Activity	2022	115	Equity, Inclusion, and Classroom Celebration	Annual

## Data

Check back for reminders and updates next month!

## Policy Council 2021-2022

Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager



**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 their first meeting. Please see the [Policy Council Composition Chart](#).



**Still recruiting?** Visit the [Policy Council page](#) to see upcoming dates and these materials:

- Policy Council Video for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents.
- Policy Council recruitment flyer available in English and Spanish.
- Meeting date flyers available in English and Spanish.
- Parent Leadership Reimbursement – COVID-19 Guidelines in English and Spanish.



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



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## Policy & Legislative Updates

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

### Oh SNAP, We Did it! Health and Human Services Announces Expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start Eligibility to Include SNAP Benefits

Several months ago, parents from PSESD Early Learning and the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) raised the question (again) whether families receiving SNAP benefits could be categorically eligible for Head Start and Early Head Start. This work is part of a national workgroup that parents, WSA, and PSESD staff participated in. We highlighted the experiences we have in Washington due to a high cost of living and higher minimum wages making it challenging for families who are working to qualify for Head Start and Early Head Start. The work was an uphill battle; everyone involved pushed hard to get it done. This became a top priority for parents, PSESD, and WSA!

Well, after a lot of advocacy, the Department of Health and Human Services announced on April 22, 2022, that Head Start and Early Head Start programs can enroll families who receive SNAP. Parents, staff, and the team at WSA spent countless time with the Office of Head Start, Senator Murray's office, committee staff, and policy folks at ACF and the White House to get this done.



**Make sure to read the [ERSEA section](#) for updates to 2022-2023 eligibility.**

You can read Dr. Futrell's (Executive Director, Office of Head Start) [official announcement](#). We are busy planning for the implementation of this awesome update for 2022-2023 program year.

Advocacy really makes a difference!



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# Center Directors

No E-Alerts from April 2022!

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

## Center Director Meetings

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

## Staff Information Forms

**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's Technical  
Assistance Coordinator  
(Monitor)

### Assistance with Document Uploads:

[Venissia Buyco](#)

## Early Achievers Update

### Cheryl Habgood | Systems Manager, Professional Learning

Early Achievers and all its timelines and deadlines marches on. While there has been some confusion regarding a possible delay, the word directly from the folks at DCYF indicate there are no further delays or postponements. All milestones must be up to date.

We're all still learning about this new system, so please don't hesitate to check in with me or with your Education Coach. When you hear from your Community Liaison, don't hesitate to request information and direction from them—it's their job to help you through this new process. They have much more information about it than any of us at the ESD! 😊

Please refer to this [Early Achievers Timeline Requirements](#) document, issued by DCYF. It's a great resource.

Thank you in advance for responding quickly to any requests by me for the completion of certain EA activities. I appreciate that it's "one more thing," and it's required by DCYF for all ECEAP programs.

## Focus Area 2 Review: Head Start/Early Head Start Only

### Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP

Just a reminder at some point this year, PSESD will undergo a Focus Area 2 HS/EHS review. This review will focus largely on health, safety, eligibility, and fiscal. We will receive a 45-day notice of the review. Please keep any eye out for further communication once we get notice from OHS.



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## ECEAP Slot Conversion & Summer Services

**Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP**

Just a quick reminder that we should hear about the outcome of ECEAP slot conversion requests and summer services. We will connect with those of you who applied as soon as possible after hearing from DCYF.

## HS/EHS COVID Spending & Summer Services

**Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP**

Thank you for those of you who submitted spending plans. We prioritized funding summer services and are currently creating a system to prioritize funding other requests. Stay tuned for more in the next few weeks.

## Center Leaders Foundational Series on Race Series

**Heather Kawamoto and Michelle Morse | Equity in Education 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. This training is geared toward leadership: Center Directors, Center Coordinators, Site Supervisors.

The series will be held over 7 consecutive Tuesdays, April 26 – June 7, 2022, 1:00 – 3:00 PM.

[Register through Constant Contact.](#) Please reach out to [Heather & Michelle](#) with any questions.

## Free Job Postings for Open Teacher Positions!

**Shared from National Head Start Association**

To support efforts to recruit staff, NHSA has opened their job board to all Head Start programs to post open teacher positions for free. To get started on free postings, visit [NHSA's job board](#) and use the coupon code: **FREE TEACHER**.

## Underspent Grant Funds & Staffing Crisis

**Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP**

Many subcontractors are currently underspent largely due to understaffing. As well, subcontractors currently have staff who are working long hours and covering for more than one position. Please work with your organization to compensate staff for additional responsibilities and work hours. We recently learned from our funders that it is permissible to use contract funds to give retention bonuses to staff.

If you are underspent at this point in your grant cycle, please work with your organization's fiscal staff, as well as our EL Fiscal Team, to project where your spending is and should be. If you determine that you won't spend all your contract funds, please begin a conversation with your Team Manager right away so they can support you as you think about programmatic needs where funds could be spent. As always, Team Managers will reach out to other PSESD staff to support this conversation when needed. Please remember that for anything over \$5,000, we must get approval from funders prior to purchasing.



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# Education

## Spring Checkpoints

### Lisa Vamvas | Education Coach

It is Spring Checkpoint time! Please ensure all checkpoints are complete and finalized for all children by May 15, 2022. Keep the following in mind:

- All children must have completed checkpoints.
- Children who score a two or more on the Home Language Survey are also required to have completed checkpoints for objectives 37 & 38 (English Language Acquisition).
- An age/grade (color band) is required prior to checkpoint completion.
- If a child has been enrolled for less than two weeks and you do not have enough documentation or data to complete one or more checkpoints for that child; you must indicate that for each missed checkpoint.

If you have questions or need support, please reach out to your Education Coach.

## Meaningful Science Inquiry for Dual Language Learners

### Lindsay Belden | Dual Language Learners Coach

Science in early learning is full of questions and “what ifs” that build curiosity in young children about the world around them. Unfortunately, many science activities require a certain level of academic vocabulary that some dual language learners don’t yet have in English. A lack of attention to these specific language needs can lead to a lack of interest and confidence in learning, which can impact children’s understanding of science, but also their vocabulary and reading comprehension as they move through school. Fortunately, educators can support dual language learners in their science inquiry through activities that are hands-on and engaging, by drawing on relevant background knowledge and reinforcing science vocabulary in multiple contexts throughout the day, and by partnering with families. Check out [4 Key Factors for Laying a Foundation for Rich Science Inquiry with Young Multilingual Learners](#) for a more in-depth look at how to fuel an interest in science in your multilingual students.

## Kindergarten Transition

### Jesse Acosta, Lindsay Belden, Michelle Williams-Nelson, and Maha Shamdeen | DLL Coaches

Kindergarten is an exciting and essential event for children and families. The idea of a “big school” might come with a load of the unknown for many families, especially the parents of Dual Language Learners. Many teachers are getting ready to help parents prepare for a smooth transition process into kindergarten by providing adequate information. To assist in the transition process, explore [Helping Kids Transition to Kindergarten](#) and learn about different skills children are expected to gain when they start Kindergarten. Visit [The Kindergarten checklist](#).



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## Dual Language Programming

### Jesse Acosta, Lindsay Belden, Michelle Williams-Nelson, and Maha Shamdeen | DLL Coaches

On March 4, 2022, DLL Coaches started the initial Dual Language Programming session. It consisted of information about planning and opening a dual language classroom. The session was informative, and we highly appreciate center leaders' participation. A [recording of the March 4, 2022 session](#) is available if you are interested and were unable to attend. Please reach out to your DLL coach for access info.

The sessions aim to build a professional learning community with other center leaders and programs that share the same interests and be able to exchange ideas. It will provide information, resources, and discussions about the DL program.

**Our next Dual Language Program session is scheduled for May 6, 2022, 1-2 PM;** we look forward to seeing you!

# Multilingual Services



## Interpreter Directory

### JoAnna Williams-Diggs | Senior Coordinator, Multilingual Services

Make sure to click the orange Interpreter Directory button **in your monthly Connector email** to get the most up-to-date information.

Connector emails are no longer able to include physical attachments.

Interpreter Directory  
(Click me for Updated List!)

## Multilingual Services Updates

### JoAnna Williams-Diggs | Senior Coordinator, Multilingual Services

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.

## Effectively Using Interpreters

### Lindsay Belden, Jesse Acosta, Maha Shamdeen, and Michelle Williams-Nelson | DLL Coaches

The Multilingual Services (MLS) team would like to invite you to review [how to effectively use interpreters](#). There are several steps to ensure a successful meeting included in this document, such as understanding what an interpreter is, how long to schedule meetings, and a helpful diagram showing how the participants in the meeting should sit for the best relationship building between site staff and families. Interpreters provide equitable services to families, and we want to ensure that everyone gets the best experience while utilizing this service!





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# ERSEA

Martha Waiters | ERSEA Consultant

## Selection Plans

*Selection Plans* are due (due date was April 30)! Your [Selection Plan](#) must be submitted and approved before you can begin selecting children for the 2022-2023 School Year. Submit to [ERSEA@psed.org](mailto:ERSEA@psed.org).

## 2022-2023 New Eligibility for Head Start and Early Head Start

SNAP Eligibility – Families receiving SNAP food benefits are now eligible for HS/EHS under the Public Assistance status! See highlights in the [2022-2023 ERSEA Procedure](#). Refer to [Policy and Legislative Updates](#).

## 2022-2023 ERSEA Updates Summary

New for 2022-2023! There have been a lot of changes to ERSEA for the upcoming 2022-2023 program year. For a summary of the major changes, see [2022-2023 ERSEA Updates Summary](#). Changes will also be briefly reviewed at the May Family Support Staff Training. See [Family Engagement](#) for training details.

## ELMS Update

The new 2022-2023 update to ELMS is expected to be published by mid-May.

# Family Engagement

## May Family Support Staff Training

### Family Support Staff Training Committee

#### May Family Support Staff Training Hosted by PSESD Family Support Staff Training Committee

**Wednesday, May 25, 9-11 am**

**Wednesday, May 25, 1-3 pm**

We are excited to join you for the last Family Support Staff Training of the 2021-2022 Program Year, which will be held on Wednesday, May 25. Presenters will include our ERSEA Consultant, Nurse Consultants, Mental Health Consultants, and Dual Language Learners Coaches. **This training is required for all FA/FSS roles.**

**The trainings will be hosted 9 am – 11 am and 1-3 pm on Wednesday, May 25, 2022.** Please choose either session and see the [PSESD Early Learning Training and Meeting Calendar](#) for event registration. These two live sessions will be offered to accommodate availability. One session will be recorded for those who cannot attend either live session. The recording will be published on the [Professional Learning page](#).

**Topics will include:**



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May Family Support Staff Training			
Hosted by PSESD Family Support Staff Training Committee			
ERSEA	Multilingual Services/DLL	Health/Nutrition/Safety	Mental Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to procedures and forms</li> <li>• ECEAP eligibility changes</li> <li>• Head Start eligibility changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition planning with the school district around ESL placement and testing</li> <li>• Use of interpreters while planning for transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HNS updates</li> <li>• Immunizations</li> <li>• Online Courses updates</li> <li>• ELPM document changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grounding</li> <li>• Updates</li> <li>• Transition info</li> </ul>
<b>Time will be allotted for interdisciplinary questions and answers.</b>			

## EHS/EHS-HB/HS: Evaluation and Services for IFSPs and IEPs

### Tamara Griffith | Disabilities Consultant

Thank you so much for your commitment in honoring family’s choices **and** partnering with families for referral and evaluation processes and services. Navigating these systems can feel daunting, and I deeply appreciate all who work to empower families of their rights and walk with them through the process.

Children with disabilities are a [priority population](#) for our grants. As we recruit children with disabilities and partner with families in the identification process, keep in mind the Head Start requirement to enroll and document a minimum of 10% of children who qualify for early intervention or special education services ([1302.14 Selection Process](#)). Throughout the program year, you should have received communication from your primary Disabilities Consultant of your site’s current IFSP and IEP counts per grant. Disabilities Consultants will be reaching out soon to confirm PSESD’s records of children eligible for IFSP and IEP services.

For the month of May, Family Advocates and Family Support Specialists do the following:

- Confirm you have all IFSPs and IEPs data entered and uploaded to ChildPlus (see [IFSP and IEP Data Entry in ChildPlus](#)). This includes children with Initial IFSPs/IEPs and those due for Annual/Subsequent Review.
- Respond to and clarify IFSP/IEP counts with your primary Disabilities Consultant via email.
- Reach out to your primary Disabilities Consultants for questions about the referral and evaluation process or for technical assistance in IFSP and IEP data entry in ChildPlus.

## Peer Programs

### Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager

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

Support our trained parent educators and schedule your teachback today! To request a virtual teachback, please complete the [teachback request form](#). Questions? Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Parents participating in the second session of Peer Programs training in Math and Money are engaged and learning! Parent Educators are feeling informed, supported, and valued.



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# Health, Nutrition, & Safety

## First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Training

**Joanne Tran | Health, Nutrition, and Safety Consultant**

PSESD has a contract with Merit Emergency for in-person First Aid/CPR training. To schedule a training, Center Directors should email [Bill Merritt](#) and copy [Joanne Tran](#). The minimum class size is ten participants.

## Immunization Requirements Update

**Xinying He | Nurse Consultant**

There will be changes for school and childcare immunization requirements for the 2022-2023 school year that may affect your program. Please see the [quick reference guide](#) and watch the recorded webinar posted on the [DOH website](#) for further information.

## Nurse Consultant Office Hours

**Sarah Carter and Xinying He | Nurse Consultants**

Meet your nurse consultants Sarah Carter and Xinying He on **Thursday, May 19, 10-11 am:**

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#) or  
call in (audio only) [+1 323-813-7247,685628494#](#)

Phone Conference ID: 685 628 494#

# Mental Health

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

## PSESD Counseling Session Updates

The 10 free counseling sessions provided to families by PSESD currently have a waitlist, but we are still taking referrals. Families can continue to do sessions up until August 31, so please continue to refer families through June.

To refer families, ask your Mental Health Consultant to help you fill out the [Release or Exchange of Confidential Information](#) and the [Referral for Mental Health Services](#) (found at the bottom of Mental Health page of the ELPM). If you have any questions, please contact your Mental Health Consultant.



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# 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 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](#)