Summer Meals When School is Out

When schools are closed in the summer, families can still access meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), a USDA-funded program available to children under age 18. Read more in Health, Nutrition, and Safety.

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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.
News in General

It’s our last Connector newsletter for the 2022-2023 program year!
If you work during the summer, remember to check for any E-Alerts in July and August. We’ll be back in September!

Goodbye!
Cheryl Habgood | Systems Manager, Professional Learning
I started my professional early learning career 43 years ago, with the last 22 and a half years at Puget Sound ESD. I started out as a Child Development Coordinator (now called Education Coach) with Head Start sites, and over the years had the privilege of visiting classrooms and working with so many wonderful Site staff. As my role changed over the years, my relationships with folks have become primarily virtual through email and online trainings/meetings, but there are still some of you out there with whom I share a personal connection (and you know who you are!).

After all of this time, I’m retiring, and my last day with PSESD will be June 30. My wife and I are leaving on a road trip that same day! I’m looking forward to more time for traveling, spending more time with our kids and granddaughters, volunteering, and crafting (a hobby born during COVID). I may even become one of those old ladies who bowls in a weekly league! 😊

While I’m looking forward to this huge change in my life, I will miss the work, and I will especially miss the people I’ve worked with and for during these years. If you’d like to keep in touch (and I promise not to reach out and ask you for any documents or certificates!), my email is chabgood7955@gmail.com.

Cheryl’s Goodbye Celebration!
Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP
Please hold June 23, 2023, as the date we will come together to celebrate Cheryl Habgood. More information coming soon via email.

⚠️ Early Learning Program Manual (ELPM) Updates
Venissia Buyco | Senior Coordinator, Management Systems
A new (and hopefully improved) ELPM Directory is coming this summer! Online tutorials will be provided to help you navigate the new Directory. For now, below is a list of ELPM sections that had updates between April and May 2023. Reach out to your Coaches for more information.

- Documentation and Monitoring
- Education
- Mental Health
- Disabilities
- Multilingual Services

Attendance, Transitions, additional Health/Nutrition, Safety, and Family File documents will be updated by July 3. Family Support staff and Center Leaders, please also refer to previous ERSEA E-Alerts for a list of updated documents.

Remember that Word forms will now open in a new tab and give options at the top right of the window to Download (then Fill if it’s a fillable form), Print, or Download as PDF. Excel forms/templates are still able to directly download. Visit our Website Support page to learn more and contact Venissia Buyco with any additional questions.
Gardening with Grownups at The Lighthouse
Amanda Bockman-Pedersen | Director of Staff Services, The Lighthouse

Our teacher, Mr. Andy, hosted two “Gardening with Grownups” events with families. In April, we planted seeds indoors. In May, we invited families back to help us clean out our garden beds and transplant our newly grown plants outside! Our students had a great time talking about the plants and especially loved finding all the snails and worms that were hanging out in our garden beds.

Washington State Special Education Advisory Council: Recruiting Community Voices
Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, Malena Swarthout, & Tamara Rosario | Disabilities Consultants

The Washington State Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is accepting applications for new members for appointment to the Council, including individuals with disabilities, family members of children with disabilities from birth-26, and voices reflecting the community. SEAC members focus on statewide issues impacting special education and is established through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Staff and families are welcome to apply! See the SEAC website on OSPI for more information about SEAC and the application process. All questions should be directed to speced@k12.wa.us at OSPI (the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction).
Policy Council

Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager

Reminder: Policy Council meetings occur through the summer!

Newly Elected Representatives: Don’t forget to submit the online Policy Council Notice and Verification Form so we can connect with them prior to the next Policy Council meeting.

- Still recruiting? Check these out!
  - Policy Council Video for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents!
  - Policy Council recruitment flyer in 10 languages.

PC Reps are also available to speak at your in-person and/or virtual parent events. Contact Quincy Stone

Monthly Trainings and Office Hours: Connect with your Family Engagement Coach to learn more and how to attend.

- Policy Council Trainings provide interested parents and newly elected representatives with an overview of Policy Council and an opportunity to ask questions. Training takes place on the second Tuesday of each month.
- Parent Leadership Office Hours are open to PSESD and center/site staff only. Bring your Parent Leadership (Policy Council, Peer Programs, Advocacy Day) questions!

Policy & Legislative Updates

Lori Pittman | Early Learning & K to 12 Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations

Check back for updates in September!
Inclusion Corner

Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, Malena Swarthout, & Tamara Rosario | Disabilities Consultants

Outdoor Play

Summer is just around the corner! This means more outdoor time to play, move, explore, and enjoy nature. Playing and spending time outdoors benefits all children and all areas of development, yet data show that children with disabilities often have fewer opportunities for rich outdoor play. For this month’s Inclusion Corner, we want to bring information that sparks creativity in creating and facilitating rich and diverse outdoor experiences that are inclusive for all children!

Read more in this month’s full Inclusion Corner.

Thank you to all who showed up to each of our Inclusion Corner PLCs this 2022-2023 Program Year. We learned a great deal about what topics are of interest, how you all want to engage, and times of day that work best to join these spaces. We are looking forward to providing these opportunities for community building and learning alongside each other in the coming 2023-2024 Program Year. Keep an eye out for where to register and please reach out to the Disabilities Team if you have ideas, questions, or input you would like to share about our Inclusion Corner PLCs!

Data and Monitoring

ELMS Reminders: ECEAP Teachers and Center Directors
Sue Gettmann | Application Specialist

Teachers:

- Remember to have all attendance entered in ChildPlus, including for the last week of school, before leaving for summer break.
- All Teacher Conference Notes must be entered in ELMS before the FSS submits the last ELMS Monthly Report.
- You can add Conference Notes after children are exited, but it needs to be completed before your ELMS Monthly Report is submitted.
**Data and Monitoring**

**Center Directors or Designee:**
- **Summer Contacts:** In May/June please make sure Summer Contact Information for ECEAP Directors is correct in ELMS. If Directors will have time away from the office, please make sure you’ve provided email and phone numbers to reach you or your delegate if there is critical new ECEAP information. Enter these from the Staff page of ELMS by clicking Edit next to the Director’s name. You can also send Summer Contact information to Sue Gettmann for ELMS entry.

Read about [Starting the New Year in ELMS for 2023-2024](#).

**ECEAP Child Entry into ChildPlus for 2023-24 Program Year**

**Taryn Kyle | Program Manager, Monitoring & Compliance**
The PSESD Data Team will be completing the ECEAP child entry into ChildPlus for the 2023-24 program year!

Please ensure all ECEAP children are entered in ELMS for the 2023-2024 school year with a start or expected start date before the first day of class. The Data Team will enter the children listed in ELMS into ChildPlus starting August 22. **ECEAP site staff will not need to enter children into ChildPlus for this program year.** If you notice a child in ELMS is not appearing in ChildPlus in September, please send the ELMS ID# to your Data Technician.

Thank you so much for your help in getting children into systems and ready for the new school year! Remember: enrolling them on time and requesting Drops and Transfers as they occur will keep attendance entry and rosters more accurate.

**2023-2024 Returning Applications**

**Dawn Patterson | Data Systems Technician**
Now is the time for HS/EHS part year classes to send in your Returning Apps for next program year. Any program that closes for the summer should be getting those Returning Applications completed by parent/guardians and sent in for entry in the next couple of months. If you start that process now, it won’t be such a rush later in the year when you are busy with so many transitions. Thanks for thinking ahead!

**Attendance Entry in ChildPlus – All Programs**

**Tiffany Lyons | Data Systems Technician**
As we approach the end of the school year, please ensure attendance is entered in ChildPlus for every child before you leave for summer break.

**Program Information Report (PIR)**

**Carol Weaver | Information Systems Consultant**
As we get close to the end of services for the year for some of our HS/EHS classes, we need to be sure we have all the PIR data for every child (and their adults) that was enrolled at any point during the program year. PIR should be entered throughout the year. Please take some time now to catch up with anything still needed.

Please run report #9800 with the following criteria:
Data and Monitoring

- The report will show which fields are still blank and let you access them by clicking on links within the report.
- Please remember you still need to add both Race and Ethnicity for all children.
- Check that both adults (if two parent family) have Education Level and Employment Status entered.

Center Directors

E-Alerts from May 2023

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

5/31 Electronic Attendance
5/25 Hearing Vision Equipment Collection
5/22 Required Head Start PIR Survey
5/15 Update to PPE Ordering
5/11 Excessive Heat Watch
5/01 Enrollment Documents Now Available! (Plus Other Updates)

Center Director Meetings

Check the Center Director page monthly for Zoom links, recorded updates, and recorded meetings.
New Staff Eligibility Training
Martha Waiters | ERSEA Consultant
The format for New Staff Eligibility Training is changing starting in July. New Eligibility Staff will watch a training video, then attend an in-person Eligibility Practice Session. The first required practice session will be on July 20 at Renton PSESD. Please contact me at ERSEA@psesd.org with questions and to sign up your staff for the practice session.

Family Support Recruitment & Enrollment Hours Summer 2023
Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP
In past years, we’ve had some additional funds available for FSS summer hours; however, there are no designated additional funds this year. As a common practice, if there is a need for summer hours, please make this a part of your budget. As we move toward summer, if you haven’t budget for summer hours, please work with your fiscal staff to consider if your current contract can afford to pay for the summer hours. If you have a unique need such as new ECEAP slots, or significant recruitment challenges, and need additional hours, please work with your Team Manager to submit a One-Time Fund request. Your Team Manager will also coordinate with your Family Engagement Coach and Program Manager.

E-Alert: Required Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Survey
Education Services
Thank you for your leadership in promoting systems that center and implement inclusive practices for children with disabilities in all aspects of your program. For Early Head Start and Head Start grants, please complete the Required Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Survey as noted in the E-Alert sent on 5/22/23 by Friday, June 9. If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to contact Aeryn King, Education Services Program Manager.

Reporting Staff Leaves of Absence
Cheryl Habgood | Systems Manager, Professional Learning
We have added two new Staff Information Forms (SIF) to our gallery of forms: Leave of Absence and Return from Leave.

- At the point you know that a staff member is going on leave for longer than 2 weeks, please notify us using the Leave of Absence form.

- When they return to work, use the Return from Leave form.

Any questions about this process should be directed to Cheryl Habgood.

Hiring New Staff?
Taryn Kyle | Program Manager, Monitoring & Compliance
Please complete the appropriate online Staff Information Form as soon as you know of any staff changes. Please refer to the Hiring and Personnel Management Guide in ELPM: Program Administration when submitting SIFs for any new hire or changes that have occurred. As new SIFs are being submitted, PSESD staff are working hard to get new staff access to the platforms that are needed. Our Monitoring Team will also be following up via email regarding any missing documents.

Per the requirements of our funders, we do require VPP (Verification of Parent Participation) for all HS/EHS/ECEAP funded positions. Please submit those with all New Staff SIFs.
We have also noticed many MR (Medical Release Forms) being submitted are outdated. Please use the most recent Medical Release form when submitting your SIFs.

**Important Reminders**

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

- **HS Deliverable:** [Staff Compensation and Operating Budgets](mailto:ELfiscal@psesd.org) are due to ELfiscal@psesd.org. Your Operating Budget should represent real costs; therefore, it is likely that it may not balance. We want representation of your real costs so we can understand what it takes for you to operate.

- **Spending One-Time Fund Requests:** For those who have approved One Time Funds Requests, please work on spending right away. All HS/EHS COVID and ECEAP orders must be received by June 30.

- **Claims:** Please connect with the fiscal staff in your organization to ensure that claims are sent in within 45 days. Additionally, to help with the PSESD year-end, we will be asking all subcontractors to be caught up on claim submissions by August 2023, and the August claim by end of September.

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**Education**

- **Please Complete Any Preschool/PreK Interrater Reliability Work Prior to August 1**

**Education Coaches**

We are excited to announce that MyTSG is enhancing the Interrater Reliability Certification! These enhancements will improve the learner experience by providing:

- A shorter, simpler exam
- New professional development courses to support curricular review and exam best practices
- Exams for three age groups, in English and Spanish
- A new location on the Quorum platform

The enhancements will begin with Preschool/PreK Interrater Reliability. We want to make sure that this is a smooth process for staff. To ensure that this is the case, please make sure you complete your Preschool/PreK Interrater Reliability by August 1. **If you begin your Interrater Reliability and do not complete it by August 1, you may have to start over!**

**Thank You!**

**Education Coaches**

We are so grateful for your dedication to the children and families we serve! Your hard work and passion make a real difference in helping children reach their full potential. We are proud to have you on our team and appreciate all that you do. Thank You!
Supporting DLLs and Their Families Through the Transition to Kindergarten
Lindsay Lowry, Michelle Williams-Nelson, Jesse Acosta & Maha Shamdeen | Dual Language Learners Coach
Thank you all so very much for the hard work and supports you have implemented to best support your DLLs this school year! We are so proud of you all and can’t wait to continue collaborating! As children go off to summer vacation, and many transitioning to kindergarten, what can we do to ensure that the process is a positive experience? Please visit Supporting Children Who Are DLLs and Their Families for tips and information!
We also encourage you to continue sharing the Speak Your Language website that explains the many benefits of being bilingual and the importance of home language. Please reach out to your DLL Coach if you have any questions.

MyTeachingStrategies® Product Tutorials and Certifications Now in Quorum
Education Coaches
You can now find product tutorials and your certificates for previously completed online professional development in Quorum.

Multilingual Services

⚠️ Interpreter Directory
JoAnna Williams-Diggs | Senior Coordinator, Multilingual Services
Make sure to click the orange Interpreter Directory button in your monthly Connector newsletter email to get the most up-to-date information!
Returning OI/ESE Children

Before you leave for the summer, remember to send a list of ID numbers for your returning children who are over-income or ESE. Send to ERSEA@psesd.org. If your program runs through the summer, please send the list by June 30. Thank you! And thank you for your dedication to children and families and your persistence in completing ERSEA tasks!

Family Engagement

Peer Programs

Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager

Peer Programs has successfully completed all Training sessions for the 2022-2023 Program Year. All 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 center/site, impart education, and increase the proficiency of our Parent Educators!

To request a virtual teachback, please complete the Teachback Request Form. Questions? Please contact Quincy Stone.

Parent Leadership Office Hours

Parent Leadership Office Hours – open to PSESD and center/site staff only. Bring your Parent Leadership (Policy Council, Peer Programs, Advocacy Day) questions and we’ll ensure you get the support you need! Our next Office Hours is June 15, 8:30 am to 10:30 am. Come join us!

Mental Health

Alex Clifthorne, Laurel Benz, Melissa Russell, & Maureen McDonald | Mental Health Consultants

Check back for updates in September!
Health, Nutrition, & Safety

Immunization Resource: Care-a-Van (CAV) Expansion to Offer Childhood Vaccines
Xinying He | Nurse Consultant
The Care-a-Van (CAV) is a mobile health clinic that serves people across Washington State. CAV can provide all COVID-19 vaccines, flu vaccines, Mpox vaccines, childhood vaccines, blood pressure screenings, and blood glucose screenings. Please consider requesting a service for the children and families at your center!

Summer Meals When School is Out
Rebecca Finkel | Health, Nutrition & Safety Consultant
Many families rely on the meals and snacks offered at school. For children in early learning settings, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition and anti-hunger program that ensures healthy foods are offered daily to children. When schools are closed in the summer, families can still access meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), another USDA-funded program available to children under age 18. Free summer meals are offered at sites across King and Pierce Counties, with no application, identification, or registration necessary. To find locations in your area visit:

Pierce County Summer Meals  ||  King County Summer Meals

In addition to free summer meals, consider these seasonal programs that can also boost household nutrition:
- **WIC Farmer’s Market Program** – offers up to $28 per WIC participant, $84 per family
- **SNAP Produce Match** – now through June 30, earn $10 when you use SNAP to purchase $10 of fruits and vegetables
- **Summer P-EBT** – DSHS is working on approval for Children Under 6 and Summer P-EBT benefits

Have a safe, fun, and healthy summer!
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!
- **Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) News**

Staff Strategies

EarlyLearningWA Quick Links

- Website Support (FAQs)
- Early Learning Program Manual (ELPM)
- Website Feedback Form

ELMS and GOLD Resources (ECEAP Only)

- ELMS Administrator’s Manual
- ELMS Eligibility and Enrollment Manual

- Find a Classroom and Find a Classroom Update Form
- Staff Professional Learning, ERSEA Committee, HSAC, etc.
- ELMS Support
- Teaching Strategies GOLD® Support

Center/Site & Classroom Activities

We would love to know about the awesome work at your center/site and in your classrooms!

If you’d like to be featured in the next Connector issue, email Venissia Buyco and Cammy Ariola-Moku. Please ensure the following before submitting:

- **Photographed children must have initialed and signed parent consent** on the Emergency Treatment and Consent Form (“Photo/video to build partnerships with community agencies”). You do not need to submit proof of consent, but make sure it is on file.
  - If any child in a photograph does not have consent, please conceal their face(s) using shapes or smiley face emojis. Or use a different photo 😊
- **Center/site and classroom celebrations must not be associated with religious and commercial holidays or birthdays**, in accordance with the Early Learning Equity, Inclusion, and Classroom Celebration Policy.

Questions? Contact Venissia Buyco.