



Provider Supports Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2023 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Introductions, Virtual Meeting Protocols, and Meeting Material Review

Provider Supports Executive Committee member Julie Schroath welcomed members and completed introductions. The group reviewed the February meeting minutes and Agency Updates.

- [February 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Agency Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It'd be super great if licensing is going to be putting out some new rules if they would just hold a webinar, maybe twice a year and say, here's what we're thinking of changing our Washington Administrative Code (WAC) to let's discuss. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is a recommendation in the Temporary Licensing Subcommittee (TLS) report. We are tracking it and can provide regular updates about the progress. There's also a rulemaking newsletter that you can sign up for here that will send updates and notifications for upcoming changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The licensing department can do a better job at communication and is currently looking at ways to improve this and transparency as well as getting more feedback from providers.
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Temporary Licensing Subcommittee (TLS) Recommendation Tracker Update

Members reviewed the current TLS Tracker.

- [TLS Tracker Update](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can someone talk about the process when it says "maybe" in the DCYF acceptance column? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As this is a working document, these are the initial responses from DCYF. The maybe's show where DCYF needs additional information before giving a concrete response and what the next steps would be. • Can we continue this topic at an expanded length at another meeting? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, I think that would be helpful. After the current legislative session concludes we will also have substantial updates which might dictate the direction of future conversations. • I was surprised that the InterRater Reliability (IRR) training tool is no longer optional; when did that change happen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was optional when IRR was a pilot but it is being implemented as standard practice now. • I hope any surveys will go into a database to see if there is a pattern of licensors having bad survey responses.
Next Steps/Follow Up	Please reach out to the Community Engagement Team (dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov) with any questions.

Early Learning Needs Assessment

DCYF Preschool Development Grant Administrator Tracie Kenney and Preschool Development Grant Specialist Delta Heiberg provided an update on the 2020 Statewide Early Learning Needs Assessment and the new Preschool Development Planning Grant.

- [Preschool Development Grant Presentation](#)



Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please find the 2020 statewide needs assessment here and the Executive Summary here. • I thought the work of the Task Force had ended? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I'm not sure where their work is at but this work is building off of their recommendations. • It's frustrating all this good work is going on but yet there is this other force at play which is Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and in some communities it has destroyed childcare. It's frustrating DCYF is supporting expanding TK without any rules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thank you for sharing that. We're trying to think about how to serve as many children as possible and supporting providers. The last version of the bill did have some pieces in there associated with rules. We're looking at how can we create this integrated system where children and families can have choices on where they go. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unfortunately, there are childcare centers that have closed because kids have gone to TK. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working with OSPI to follow up with centers that have experienced this. • There is a lack of the connection with the actual providers. Some of this will be brand new to the majority of providers who don't join these meetings. Voices need to be heard now for collaboration so we can work together and be a part of the work. • When will the needs assessment come out? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The changes should be out by the end of this year.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please reach out to Delta Heiberg (delta.heiberg@dcyf.wa.gov) or Tracie Kenney (tracie.kenney@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

Early Childhood Equity Grant Changes

DCYF Child Care Grants Manager Kelsey Boyce and Child Care Grants Coordinator Katie Szymanowski presented members with an overview of Early Childhood Equity Grant changes as a result of refinement activities.

- [Early Childhood Equity Grant Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last group listed that you engaged for feedback was "child care providers". How did you reach out to child care providers that are not part of the previously listed groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The survey was sent via email to every licensed or certified child care provider, license-exempt Family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) providers, and we also included other eligible service providers such as Play and Learn Groups. • WA Compass seems to be a hard program to work with as a provider. Is WA Compass going to be updated at all or is there going to be a new system in the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We're always working with the WA Compass development team to enhance the grants tool. When we realized that these grant applications can't be edited after submission, we did work with IT and now providers can save an application before submitting. We're also continuing to invest in technical assistance for providers. • It's nice to see the feedback was incorporated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, we had almost 300 survey responses and we are really grateful to get that feedback and incorporate it into this work. • When we look at the requirements for applying for this grant, our opportunities in this area are very limited. We have been trying to work with the Herring Center UW to set up trainings or extra support for teachers in the area to work with children and set up some priorities. Do you know if more funds are going to be put into that pot? It doesn't seem large enough for the needs of that state.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We asked and are waiting for the legislature to respond to our request for additional funding. ○ Are you also asking about funding for the statewide complex needs training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, that is what we are looking at. ● Also, on funding, the Northwest Center which provides coaching to teachers and classes through IMPACT lost its funding and now charges for all services. Centers would have to use funds to access their services that were once free. ● Regarding the email sent last week updating licensor access, why was that necessary and what does that mean as far as the request to have licensors set a period of time to visit as laid out in the TLS legislative report? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The WAC 110-300-0035 update about access added language about consequences. ○ Licensing will follow up about why this change was made. We did reach out to the federal government about this issue but the response was no. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is an equity issue when you consider the workforce is made up of women. Some of these rules go back to a time when early childhood educators were viewed as babysitters. I hope DCYF can take it back and try to get the feds to see the logic behind this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I will take this feedback and follow up on this. ● Where can we find the comments that were submitted about recent WAC changes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please find the current rule making webpage here but we will follow up on this.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to Kelsey Boyce (kelsey.boyce@dcyf.wa.gov) or Katie Szymanowski (katie.szymanowski@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

2024 Legislative Session Look Ahead & Government Affairs Budget Update

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose and DCYF Government Affairs Advisor Genevieve Stokes provided an update and discussed the landscape and general potential outcomes from the 2024 legislative session, including the Governor’s budget.

- [Legislative Session Presentation](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please find the webinar recording for the Mid-Session Update: DCYF Investment Overview here and the slides here. ● Can you give an update about the background check and licensing fees legislation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regarding Bill 5316, the senate included this in their budget but it’s conditional on passing through the house or it will not become law. If it does not pass then beginning July 1st, all child care providers will have to start paying licensing fees again and there will be some combination of background check fees that some providers will have to pay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has DCYF talked about what would happen if the background check fee does not pass? While DCYF has been covering the fees, it has cut down processing time by about five days for providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have talked with lawmakers and staff but we are worried that they think that this isn’t important to providers because they have not received much input so they are focused elsewhere. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If it fails, how long do we have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ July 1, 2023. We don’t have any money or legal authority to waive it. If it does fail, we will put out a lot of communication on this. ● Please find the 2023-2025 Making Child Care Work for Families Decision Package here.
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- Please find the 2023-2025 Preparing for ECEAP Entitlement Decision Package [here](#).
- Please find the 2023-2025 Supporting Providers to Increase Child Care Access Decision Package [here](#).
- Is there any action that a person can take if someone is interested in the legislation listed today and they didn't have the time to previously testify?
 - If there is a bill you are interested in you should talk to your lawmaker about its importance. If the bill has passed out of all committees, you can look at contracted lobbyists who can communicate to lawmakers. In addition to your lawmaker, you can also look at the leadership in the senate or the house.
- For the TK bill the divisions leads testified in support of it. Whose request was that by or did they volunteer to testify?
 - Are you asking how is it determined who gets to testify on a bill?
 - Yes, exactly. I know there are times when DCYF says they can't advocate for things so how is it determined when divisions are brought in to testify? Is that done by the governor or the bill's sponsor?
 - What the agency can do is testify on the impact we think bills will have on the systems we manage. What we can't do, is ask you to testify on a bill or how to advocate in any way. How its determined which bills DCYF testifies for varies greatly; sometimes it's made just by the agency, sometimes with the governor's office or committees. It depends on the bill or topic.
- Is it possible for the survey to be included from the communications group or it be sent it out broadly to all providers?
 - We can make sure all the members of Provider Supports get this poll. However, we won't be sending it out broadly because this group has received a whole presentation and has a lot more context about the process. Later on, we will be sending it out more broadly to groups.
 - If there is a group that you think is missing from our outreach, please flag that for us and we will see if we can fit those in.
- Could you clarify this one from your list "Sustainable and Predictable Subsidy Payment"?
 - Think enrollment-based pay; paying providers based on enrollment aligns with the private market and allows providers to have a consistent source of payment. This is important in reducing the inequities between private pay and subsidy rates.
 - That is good. My understanding is that family home providers simply bill one for each month, rather than counting the number of business days in each month. I believe that's based on 23 days/month, which is how private pay families are billed. that would definitely help with having a predictable budget.
 - Licensed Family Home (LFH) do have a monthly unit and bill one, it is based on 22 days per month, not 23.
 - Thank you. That kind of billing would help with budget stability.
- Regarding the cost study that the task force put together, is DCYF waiting until the next biennial to put forward a bill or are you looking at the supplemental to start working on some of their recommendations.
 - We'll be engaged over this next year with the compensation design team from Childcare Aware of Washington and gathering feedback from ELAC and Provider Supports. We'll be taking that cost study and determining how we turn that into a proposed rate model and then submit it to the legislature for the 2025 session.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are losing infant and toddler spots like crazy through the state. What is DCYF proposing specifically for infant and toddlers and for providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have the rate enhancement and another idea is doing contracted slots. We think increasing the rate would be helpful but it would be great to hear what you think would be most beneficial. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any incentive enhancement is amazing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that's where the cost of quality care rate conversations become really important as well. We need to look at proposing and putting forward beyond what we're thinking about in supplemental session. • Our group wondered about getting feedback from others not on today's call. Today's attendance is not heavy in provider voice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, we'll be going to a number of groups that have provider representatives to get feedback, and hopefully there will be more providers at this group in the next meeting
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please reach out to Nicole Rose (nicole.rose@dcyf.wa.gov) or Genevieve Stokes (genevieve.stokes@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

New DCYF Training Site

DCYF Professional Development Coordinator, Marlene White, and DCYF Learning System Coordinator, Karma Hugo, provided members with an update and provided feedback on the new training site.

- [DCYF Training Site Presentation](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can stay up-to-date with DCYF's New Training Site through a dedicated webpage. • Please provide feedback here. • Every training organization active on the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT) should be contacted early so we can be responsive about the anticipated changes and ready to go live on that site. • Is this going to eliminate MERIT, link up to MERIT, will merit live on the new site? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The components of searching for trainings in MERIT is the piece that will be taking place in the new site. Everything else with MERIT will stay as it is now. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That sounds good. Are you able to put a link to MERIT on the new site and vice versa? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, we have received that feedback and will be doing that to automatically directly people. • The training search in MERIT is difficult because your search has to be so specific. How will the new search be broader as to topic or level of training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The new site will allow trainers to provide key words, so that people can search by key words or age groups of children served and introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. • I'm looking forward to seeing the new site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We would be happy to come back to another meeting to showcase the new site when it is ready.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please reach out to Marlene White (marlene.white@dcyf.wa.gov) or Karma Hugo (karma.hugo@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.



Licensing Investigation Process

DCYF Statewide Licensing Administrator Travis Hansen and Licensed Resources Program Manager Melissa Sayer provided an overview of the DCYF Investigation Process within a licensed center or family-home.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Melissa Sayer is the safety administrator for the Licensing Division (LD) Child Protective Services (CPS) program. Ron Effland and Travis Hansen are senior statewide administrators. Under each of them are three area administrators across the state and then supervisors and investigators.• Is there any discussion about changing the rules about when self-reporting is required, especially in medical situations?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We are looking at that for intake, screening it in for child abuse and neglect if there is follow up.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Do you have a specific self-reporting list or is it provided throughout the WACs?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I think we could put guidance together to help providers.• To have a staff person named when something is unpreventable, can that be changed?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We would be looking at who was responsible for supervising at that particular moment in time.• Talking to staff is challenging while they are working. Do you request a meeting so we can schedule it when they are not needed in the classroom.?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We can do that if we know who the subject is ahead of time. We're also able to talk with someone over the phone as well.• Also, wondering about the request for contact information for ALL families.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The investigator will be asking for lists of parent information when there are multiple victims. Most likely if we were doing collaterals with other parents or notifying parents of a situation. Typically, those are for very serious allegations.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I am aware of staff complaints and it's not good practice for providers to hand over family contact information to CPS. I understand what you're saying but sometimes it has been for more minor things.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In that case, I would encourage you to have a conversation directly with the investigator or their supervisor.• Is there a way to obtain the written policies around investigation procedures?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Absolutely, you can obtain them from the DCYF website. Some of the handbooks are being re-written but they are online. Our WACs and RCWs are searchable.• Is it protocol to ask questions regarding personal health information?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Yes, we are required to ask about mental health and substance abuse.• Often when we start asking questions, we get told that we are trying to impede the investigation and we are not assisting the investigation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ If you have any questions or concerns regarding a CPS investigative process or how it was done, you can go directly to the Supervisor. We also have the Office of Ombuds and constituent relations where you can make a formal complaint. If your concerns are not addressed then you can move up the chain to the area administrator.• How quickly should an investigator be contacting families after a complaint?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ If it's an eminent risk, the policy is 24 hours otherwise it is 72 hours for a standard intake. The complication is we have to have parental permission which might extend the timeline. We want to interview the specific parties involved before bringing in any other families.• Do you have to have parent permission to interview the child at a center?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Yes, unless the allegations include that the parent is the subject or if the child is in foster care.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is an issue where the procedures were not followed, we've already talked to the investigator, supervisor, area administrator, and Ron is gone, who do we go to?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ You can contact Ruben Reeves, Acting Assistant Secretary Licensing Division (360) 280-3958 - Ruben.Reeves@dcyf.wa.gov.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please reach out to Travis Hansen (travis.hansen@dcyf.wa.gov) or Melissa Sayer (melissa.sayer@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2023.
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