



Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA)

Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2022 – 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Introductions and Feedback Loop

DCYF Community Engagement Manager, Emily Morgan, welcomed attendees. Deputy Director of Community Engagement, Deanna Stewart initiated introductions and reviewed the Feedback Loop.

[Feedback Loop](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm wondering how hearing from presenters is going to move forward the work of writing a report about licensing barriers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers had mentioned wanting to hear further information about topics before giving feedback. All feedback and recommendations from previous meetings have been tracked and at the May 25 meeting, we will start talking about moving forward and working on recommendations. • How are policy requirements being communicated to the average providers who will need to implement this work? Providers understand that there are rules and regulations that are required through Washington Administration Codes (WAC), but there are also requirements for every funding source. How is the application being presented to providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds like you are making a recommendation that DCYF rules need to be more clear and outlined better for providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, but how do we also make the requirements a shared understanding? ▪ In regards to CCDF requirements, today's presentation should help address any confusion about the impacts on providers, WAC and federal requirements, etc. This meeting is to help provide a better understanding of the CCDF process, because there have been a lot of questions and confusion from providers.
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The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

DCYF Child Care Administrator, Matt Judge provided an overview of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).

[CCDF Presentation](#)

[Licensing Requirements Resource](#)

[Meeting Reflection Question Responses and Feedback](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that our state has a much brighter revenue outlook, why are so much of the CCDF funds allocated to paying for licensors instead of being used to increase Working Child Care Connection (WCCC) rates? There was a time when the state funded licensors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be addressed further in the presentation, however, even with all the money, there is nothing left over. The CCDF funds, which is the largest funding source for DCYF, are used to pay for licenses and the WCCC rates. • Here is a link for those who are interested in the history of welfare reform. • Given that we often hear responses that say "this is because of CCDF", I think it would be helpful to have a presentation on the CCDF language that informs licensing rules and/or policy, particularly as it relates to education requirements and quality indicators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a couple slides later in the presentation addressing licensing requirements. However, in terms of the Quality, Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) in Early Achievers, CCDF does not require that states have a quality rating for QRIS. States can exceed the requirements of CCDF but they have to meet the requirements on a minimal level.
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- I think any time during this work if we hear that the answer is "because the block grant requires it", we should submit a written list of those to the Child Care Administrator for clarification.
 - There might be flexibility in regards to CCDF, however, it is best to ask and have the requirements clarified.
- Can you share how Early Achievers (EA) meets the requirements?
 - The CCDF framework is broad and does not have specific requirements, however, it does encourage states to promote quality and spend a certain amount of CCDF funds on initiatives that advance quality.
- Is there any funding received by DCYF that is predicated on EA? In other words, if EA didn't exist or was different than it is, would DCYF lose any funding?
 - There are not state requirements for a quality improvement system, and that is what EA is, so there would not necessarily be a loss of money. There are requirements that state 12% of CCDF discretionary funds (part quality and part infant/toddler quality) are spent on quality activities, similar to what Early Achievers accomplishes.
- Can you detail the requirements for match funds from the state for CCDF and WA's compliance to this funding requirement?
 - This is addressed in the PowerPoint.
- For engaging stakeholders like the Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC), is there guidance or specific requirements in the CCDF or does it simply state "engage stakeholders"?
 - It states that you have to engage your advisory committee, and more broadly, that stakeholders need to be engaged.
- Regarding the 12-month eligibility, is this a blanket eligibility or is it tied to income and can be revoked when a parent receives an increase in pay?
 - CCDF requirements state that as long as the family's income does not exceed 85% of the state's median income, then the family should stay in the subsidized child care program.
- Based on that algorithm, states like Mississippi or Alabama receive more CCDF funding?
 - If they have more kids, more children receiving reduced price lunch, lower average income, etc., that leads to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) amount which would mean they receive more CCDF funding.
- Is Washington in compliance on Maintenance of Efforts (MOE) now and historically?
 - Yes.
- I really appreciate the presenter attending, but I feel like this is an avalanche of information when we don't even have a list of specific questions about if something can/can't be changed to address a licensing barrier.
 - I am hopeful that the breakouts will be an opportunity to address specific questions about any of these topics.
- Can you share how the current Cost of Care work is associated with the CCDF Funding?
 - CCDF requires that the states determine what the pay rate is for providers for subsidized child care. Cost of Care Work is supposed to be a more rational process than the Market Rate Survey, which is the current methodology.
- You mentioned that 12% is set aside for Quality Improvement. Is this 12% of the CCDF amount or the total including the state match total?
 - The 12% is a requirement within the federal only discretionary funds, and means that when the agency spends the discretionary funds, at least 12% has to go to activities that meet this definition.
- Providers hear that the CCDF is the reason for the Professional Development requirements. Can you clarify this?
 - CCDF says that there should be a framework based on best available research for professional development training, but it does not specify what it needs to look like.



- Our goals are to reduce barriers, so when you say to pick a CCDF goal, I would prefer to choose a barrier goal.
 - You are more than welcome to look at it through a CCDF lens, or you can focus on goals that you think the state should have, or ones that we do have and not meeting as well as we could.
- Is it okay if the answers are framed around licensing barriers?
 - Yes.
- Our group had several questions about how things connect with one another, such as transitional kindergarten, and the licensing requirements that have been talked about, how all of this comes together.
 - The next section might answer some of those questions and provide more clarity.
- There is no process to apply for exemption, so how does DCYF hold exempt providers to these standards?
 - DCYF does address licensing exemption questions with providers. It is specified in state law and Revised Code of Washington (RCW), which are the frameworks that DCYF uses when answering exemption questions. We can have someone from licensing come present to provide more information about the exemption process.
- Is this all CCDF outlines regarding the health and safety standards list, and then the state gets to decide the language to comply with that statement?
 - Yes, you can get more specific information from the Washington Administrative Code (WAC).
- Is the required annual unannounced visit defined? If they gave a window of time, is that acceptable?
 - There is no discussion of specifics regarding the annual unannounced visit. There are concerns about announcing the visit and it being less bona fide, and how that might impact risk to children.
 - Providers are not looking different on a day-to-day basis. The state should have more faith in what providers are doing.
 - It would be interested to hear what Region 10 has to advise about what is bona fide unannounced and what is not. We will turn to Region 10 for guidance when we do not know the answer for gray areas.
- As a private organization, I understand the compliance expectation of the unannounced visit, but I am struggling with understanding the assumption that providers would act in a safer approach if they were given notice. If we are doing this from a partnership approach, the idea of the unannounced is unprofessional in the business world.
 - I would be happy to follow up with Region 10 to see if they could provide guidance and learn what other states are doing that is less strict.
 - It would be nice to get some guidance from Region 10. Being able to have a time frame would give providers a chance to accomplish tasks outside of work, especially family home providers. Family home providers might forget to update their licenser about vacation time, and then there is worry about ramifications. This might help to encourage more of a partnership.
 - I am happy to support with research on any guidance that Region 10 can provide.
 - The Office of Head Start also allows for programs to identify times during the year when a program review would be problematic. It seems providers should also be able to provide some blackout dates when the center director will be on vacation. Especially when a licensing visit requires access to personnel Human Resources (HR) files.
- Are there private organizations that don't take state subsidy?
 - CCDF requirement is that we do it for licensed providers, whether they accept subsidy or not.
- Are there exemptions for private organizations that do not take state subsidy?
 - Exemptions would be for exempt providers. If you meet the definition of an exempt provider, then you do not necessarily have to have an unannounced visit.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a provider receives corrective action, are their stipulations in CCDF requirements that states it has to stay on a provider’s license, or on the child care check? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, the child care check information has to be there for a minimum of 3 years. • Is there a timeframe requirement of having to post the correction to child care check? Is this something you can research then provide information on at a later time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I will ask about what the internal policy is with DCYF, but I do not believe there is a requirement around CCDF beyond the three years. • We could recommend as a group that Child Care Check be cleared at the CCDF min. requirement of 3 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good recommendation. • With Governor Inslee rescinding the background check order, do you know if DCYF plans to continue the policy of hiring and working under supervision? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Office of Government Affairs is working out what we can do with the background check piece. It’s a great question and we hope to have something to share asap. • How much more can be paid above a private pay rate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CCDF rules state that the base rates we pay in the subsidized child care program are not supposed to exceed the private pay rates the provider charges a family without reauthorization. The rule is: you cannot pay above private pay, except to support quality and meeting licensing standards. • When did that federal rule change? I know that it was trying to be changed through legislation a couple sessions ago, but I heard it was vetoed. I thought that was a state rule. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is the state’s implementation of the federal requirements. • Thank you for those efforts. That is huge for providers in our state and has significance. • I hope DCYF engages stakeholders and is mindful of feedback when making the plans to address this issue. • Couldn't certain sections come to Provider Supports committee for feedback? • I think DCYF should be transparent and share what stakeholder feedback was every time they say they have received stakeholder feedback. • This has been great info. My biggest takeaway is that we may need to understand more about where WA state has added more stringent or additional requirements to the minimums what the thought process was, and if it is still a reflection of current processes and needs.
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Closing Remarks/Adjourn

[Meeting Reflection Question Responses and Feedback](#)

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2022. The agenda topics will be MERIT and the Washington Compass Provider Portal. • If you know of any Family Home, Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) or Child Care Center providers who would be interested in participating, please have them send their emails to the Community Engagement Team (dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov).
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