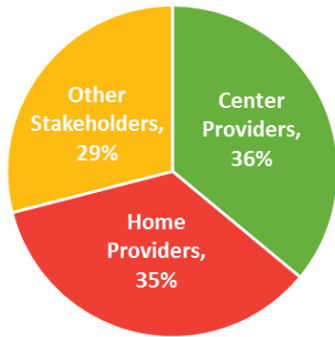


Weighted Standards Focus Group Process

After being legislatively mandated to complete a standards alignment process as part of the Early Start Act, the Department of Early Learning decided to go a step further and weight the proposed licensing standards. One of the first steps in that process was to conduct focus groups of key stakeholders in the child care and early learning field. These groups helped decide which regulations from the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) should be included in the next step – the weighting survey.

How were the focus groups organized?

Each of the 10 Early Learning Regional Coalitions coordinated at least one focus group in each region. There were also focus groups conducted for each of the following groups: parents, Head Start/ECEAP providers, and DEL licensors.



Who participated in the focus groups?

In addition to ensuring family home and center providers were well represented in the groups, 22% of participants were members of SEIU 925, and 5% were Tribal providers.



Washington's 10 Early Learning Regional Coalitions

Section of the Regulations (WAC)

Percentage to Include in the Survey

Section of the Regulations (WAC)	Percentage to Include in the Survey
Child Outcomes	100%
Family Engagement and Partnerships	80%
Professional Development, Training, and Requirements	83%
Environment	92%
Interactions and Curriculum	54%
Program Administration and Oversight	56%
Intent and Authority	29%

What Made it Into the Survey?

As a result of the focus group process, the length and content of the survey to weight the standards was limited to approximately 450 questions. The table to the left shows the percentage of each group of regulations that are included in the survey. For a full list of the draft proposed standards, visit www.del.wa.gov/standards-alignment.

Weighted Standards Survey Process

In order for the Department of Early Learning to weight its proposed standards in a way that is inclusive and reflective of the providers currently working in the field, a survey process was used. Roughly 425 participants took part in an extensive survey experience. During the survey they looked at the standards chosen by the Focus Groups for weighting and rated each one for the level of risk of harm to children if the rule isn't followed. The process of weighing licensing standards helps identify those regulations that are most critical to ensuring the safety and protection of children. Weighting standards will allow for an enforcement system that matches the level of risk to children, and is consistent and equitable for providers.



When did the survey process happen?

The survey was conducted at the end of February to the beginning of March 2017. For a full list of the draft proposed standards, visit

www.del.wa.gov/standards-alignment.