

Early Achievers Accreditation Policy



What is accreditation?



Accreditations are voluntary processes where the services and operations of early learning programs are evaluated, verified, and recognized by an external body to determine whether certain standards are met. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has incorporated certain national accreditations into Early Achievers. This policy lists the recognized accreditations and details the process for requesting an accreditation review.

The policy applies to:

Fully accredited Early Achievers participants. Participants must be accredited* by agencies and programs recognized by the Early Achievers Accreditation Review Team, which comprise the following:

-  National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
<https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation/early-learning-program-accreditation>
-  National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
<https://nafcc.org/accreditation/>
-  American Montessori Society (AMS)
<https://amshq.org/Educators/Montessori-Schools/AMS-Accreditation>
-  National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)
<https://www.earlylearningleaders.org/accreditation/accreditation-process/>
-  Cognition Early Learning Accreditation
<https://www.cognia.org/accreditation/>
-  Accreditations recognized by the Department of Defense (DOD)
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/leaders-service-providers/children-youth-and-teens/accrediting-organizations/>

* **Please note:** Documentation must show full accreditation. Membership with an organization does not satisfy the accreditation requirements.

When should participants request an accreditation review?

Accredited programs can submit a request to review and recognize their accreditation certificate at any time after earning the points for the second Video Highlight. The Accreditation component can only be submitted once per Recognition Cycle.



Why should participants request an accreditation review?

The Early Achievers accreditation policy recognizes programs that have shown a commitment to quality through the accreditation process. Accredited programs will receive an additional 10 points toward their Quality Recognition Level.

For those eligible participants who receive the additional points, an Accreditation Area of Specialization is included on their recognition certificate.

How can participants earn accreditation points?

To earn accreditation points, participants must:

-  Submit an Accreditation Recognition Request in CECL.
-  Submit as evidence a current certification or other documentation that states the facility is fully accredited by an agency that meets the Early Achievers accreditation requirements.
-  Accreditation must be valid on the date that the Accreditation Recognition Request is submitted.

Refer to the Early Achievers Participant Operating Guidelines (<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ea/OperatingGuidelines.pdf>) to learn more. If you have questions, please contact your coach, your community liaison, the QRIS inbox at QRIS@dcyf.wa.gov, or the Cultivate Learning inbox at CQEL@uw.edu.

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