

Preparing for ECEAP Entitlement

2024 Decision Package

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington State's pre-kindergarten program that prepares children ages 3-5 years old, who are furthest from opportunity, for success in school and life. ECEAP advances racial equity by serving a greater number of tribal families and families of color than are represented in the general state population. The funding requested in this decision package will increase supports for those children and families, while ensuring that ECEAP contractors can hire and sustain diverse and qualified staff.



OVERVIEW:

✓ Sustainable ECEAP Slot Rate

To reach the recommended full rate increase provided by the ECEAP Cost Study, DCYF proposes for FY 2025:

- A 19% increase in School Day ECEAP slot rates.
- A 28% increase in Working Day ECEAP slot rates.

✓ Expansion of Slots

200 School Day and 50 Working Day slots in addition to the 500 School Day slots already allocated in the 2023-25 Biennial Budget.

✓ Quality Supports Funding

Funding to cover quality requirements related to expanding slots to ensure child outcomes.

This request enables the next phase of ECEAP expansion toward meeting entitlement in the 2026-27 school year as required by the Fair Start for Kids Act. Funding will support sustainable slot rates to cover actual provider service costs, will cover quality requirements related to expanding slots, and will fund additional slots in fiscal year FY 2025 to immediately and effectively serve the needs of children and families.

Without this package, it is likely that families will continue to be unaware of services they are entitled to. Funding would provide ECEAP services for 250 additional families in FY 2025. This request would also fund assessment and outcomes data collection, quality education curriculum requirements for families statewide, and allow ECEAP contractors to keep classrooms open by paying quality staff a livable wage.

DCYF Strategic Priority Alignment

- Eliminate racial disproportionalities and advance racial equity
- Create a high-quality integrated B-8 system
- Improve quality and intention of our practice
- Improve quality and availability of provider services

COST:

\$37,039,000

Contact:

DCYF Office of Public Affairs
Melissa.cheesman@dcyf.wa.gov

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