
Early Achievers

House Human Service, Youth, and
Early Learning Committee Work
Session

March 28, 2023

*Nicole Rose, Assistant Secretary
Early Learning*



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Washington's Child Care and Early Learning Landscape



Child Care and Early Learning Universe – DCYF



Family Homes

- Children served in a residential home
- Ages 0-12
- Up to 12 children (waiver allowed)



Centers

- Children served in commercially zoned setting
- Ages 0-12
- Capacity based on sq. ft.



Outdoor

- Children served outdoors in public land
- Ages 4 -12
- Capacity based on sq. ft.



Schools

- Children served in district school settings
- Ages 0-12
- Capacity based on sq. ft.

Settings

Program Elements

Licensed child care: Foundational quality standards **ensure safe, healthy, and nurturing environments**. Serves children birth through age 12. Approximate capacity for 188,000 children.

Early Achievers: Washington's **quality recognition and improvement system**. Providers are licensed, eligible to receive subsidy through Working Connections Child Care, licensed certified, along with tribal and military sites. Private pay providers may also participate. Serves children birth to age 5.

Working Connections Child Care: Washington's **child care subsidy program**, helping low-income families pay for child care. Providers must be licensed or certified. Eligibility up through age 12 with a current ~24,000 caseload.

ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program): **Washington's state-funded pre-kindergarten** program for 3- and 4-year-old children from families furthest from opportunity with a 9 out of 10 NIEER quality rating. 15,866 slots in 2022-23 school year.

Head Start: Federally funded preschool program for 3- and 4-year-old children from families furthest from opportunity. 11,263 slots.

What is a QRIS and why do we have Early Achievers?



State and Federal Requirements for Quality

In order to receive **\$572M** from the Child Care Development Block Grant each biennium, DCYF must follow certain guidelines.

(b) Of the aggregate amount of funds expended by a [State](#) or Territory (*i.e.*, Discretionary, Mandatory, and Federal and [State](#) share of Matching funds):

(1) No less than seven percent in fiscal years 2016 and 2017, eight percent in fiscal years 2018 and 2019, and **nine percent** in fiscal year 2020 and each succeeding fiscal year **shall be used for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care as described at [§ 98.53](#)**; and

(2) No less than three percent in fiscal year 2017 and each succeeding fiscal year shall be used to carry out activities at [§ 98.53\(a\)\(4\)](#) as **such activities relate to the quality of care for infants and toddlers.**

In 2015, the Legislature passed the Early Start Act, mandating participation for early learning programs that receive state funds through Working Connections Child Care Subsidies and/or ECEAP funding. The participation and rating expectations are outlined in [RCW 43.216.085](#).

[§ 98.50 Child care services.](#)



Quality Activities

As Outlined in the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

- 1. Professional development**
- 2. Technical assistance (coaching)**
- 3. Quality rating and improvement system**
4. Improving the supply and quality of infant/toddler child care
5. Statewide system of child care resource and referral services;
6. Facilitating compliance with inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with licensing standards;
- 7. Evaluating and assessing quality and effectiveness of child care programs**
8. Supporting child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation
- 9. High-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development;**
10. Carrying out other activities, including implementing consumer education provisions to improve the quality of child care services provided.

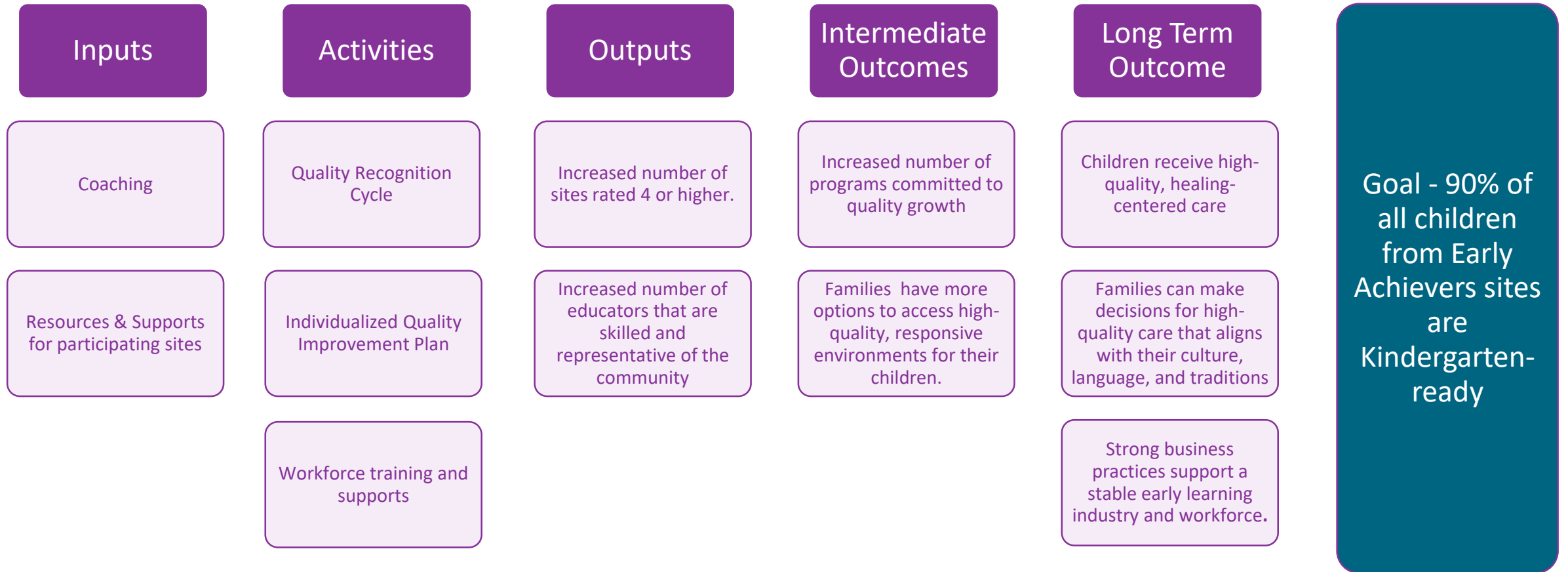
§ 98.53 Activities to improve the quality of child care.

Early Achievers is Washington's QRIS.

- A Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is a framework for increasing observable quality in child care settings.
- Early Achievers participation for subsidy child care providers was mandated by the Early Start Act of 2015.
- Early Achievers standards are part of a continuum of quality, from licensing through ECEAP requirements.



Early Achievers Logic Model



How does Early Achievers work?



Early Achievers Rating Status

- Total number of sites eligible for Early Achievers: 5,467
- 77.0% of eligible sites are participating in Early Achievers (4,210 of 5,467).
 - 57.3% of sites have received their rating (2,318 of 4,210)
 - 96.2% are rated at Level 3 or higher (2,235 out of 2,318)

Active Participants	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3+	Level 4	Level 5	Not yet Rated	Grand Total
Child Care Center	30	490	214	170	1	484	1,389
Family Child Care Home	48	1,043	155	15	0	1,282	2,543
HS/ECEAP	5	0	2	143	2	126	278
Grand Total	83	1,533	371	328	3	1,892	4,210

This data also includes providers not required to participate.

Data from MERIT Early Achievers Monitoring Report, March 2023

Supports for Early Achievers Participants

Coaching

Tiered
Reimbursement

Professional
Development

Scholarships

Needs Based
Grants & Quality
Improvement
Awards

Shared Services

Birth to 3 Quality
Initiative

Substitute Pool

Infant and Early
Childhood Mental
Health
Consultation



Early Achievers Quality Standards

Learning Environment

Child Outcomes

Interactions and Curriculum

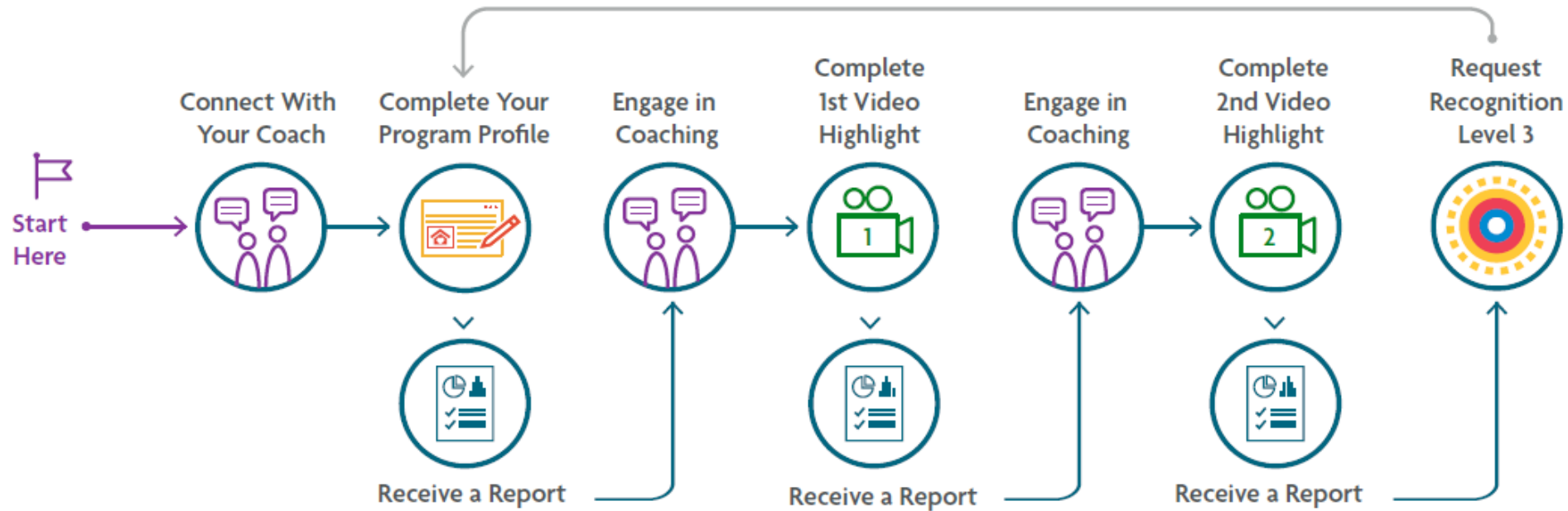
Family Engagement and Partnerships

Professional Development and Training

Accreditation



Quality Rating Cycle



Sites that wish to reach higher quality levels may submit additional evidence such as:

- Records Review (required for ECEAP)
- Professional Development
- National Accreditation
- Additional Video Highlights
- School-Aged Video Highlights



Provider Experience

Family Home Provider in Central Washington

"El programa de Early Achievers ha sido un gran ayuda para seguir desarrollándome profesionalmente y poder ofrecer un ambiente de alta calidad a los niños/as que asisten mi programa de aprendizaje temprano. Gracias por apoyarnos."

"The program Early Achievers has been a huge help in continuing my professional development and being able to offer a high-quality environment to the children. They assist in my early learning program. Thank you for helping us."



Provider Experience

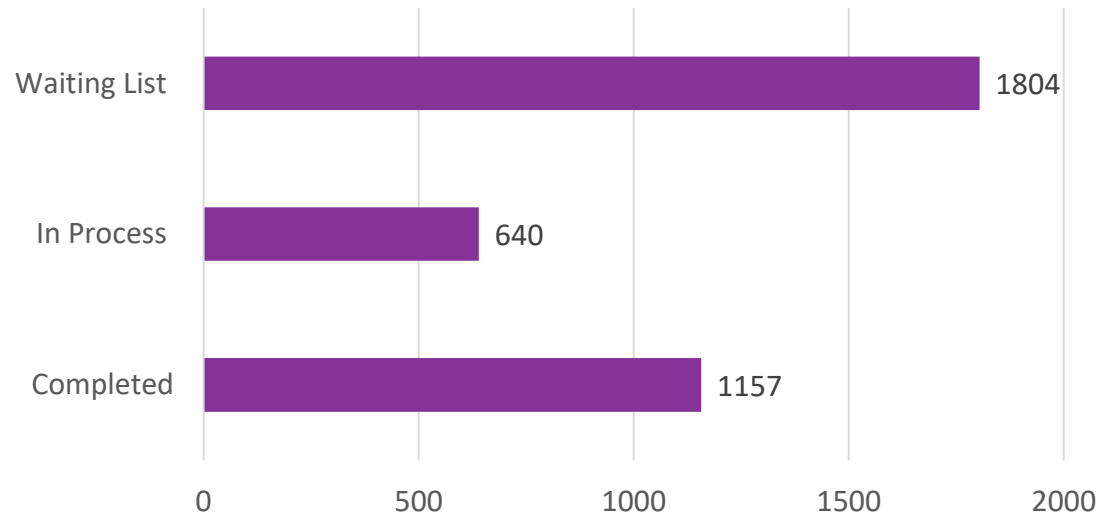


youtube.com/watch?v=FMnut2YeyWo

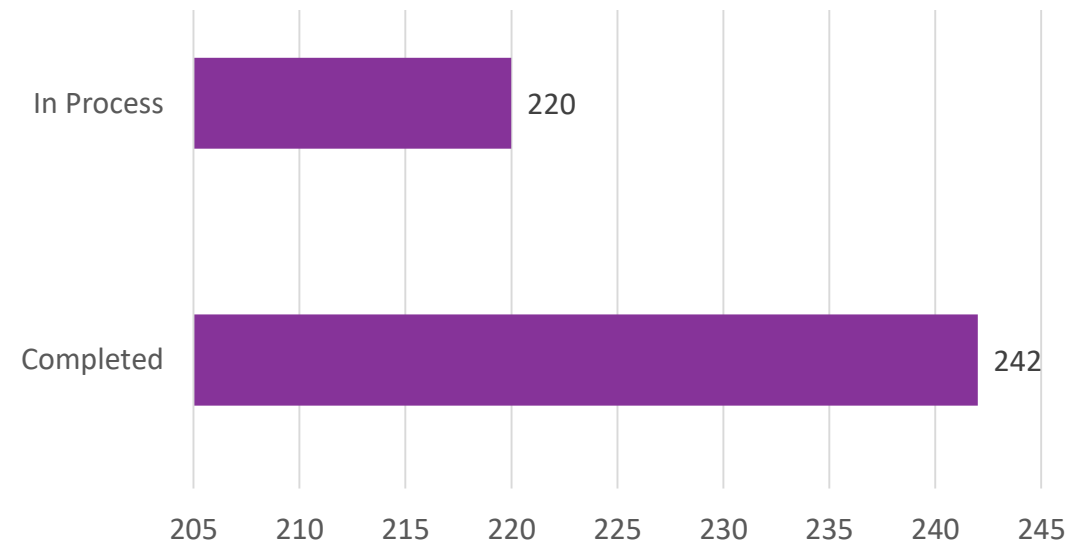


Provider Activities – Status Update

Program Profile



Video Highlights



Cultivate Learning Quality Recognition Report, March 2023

Who participates in Early Achievers?

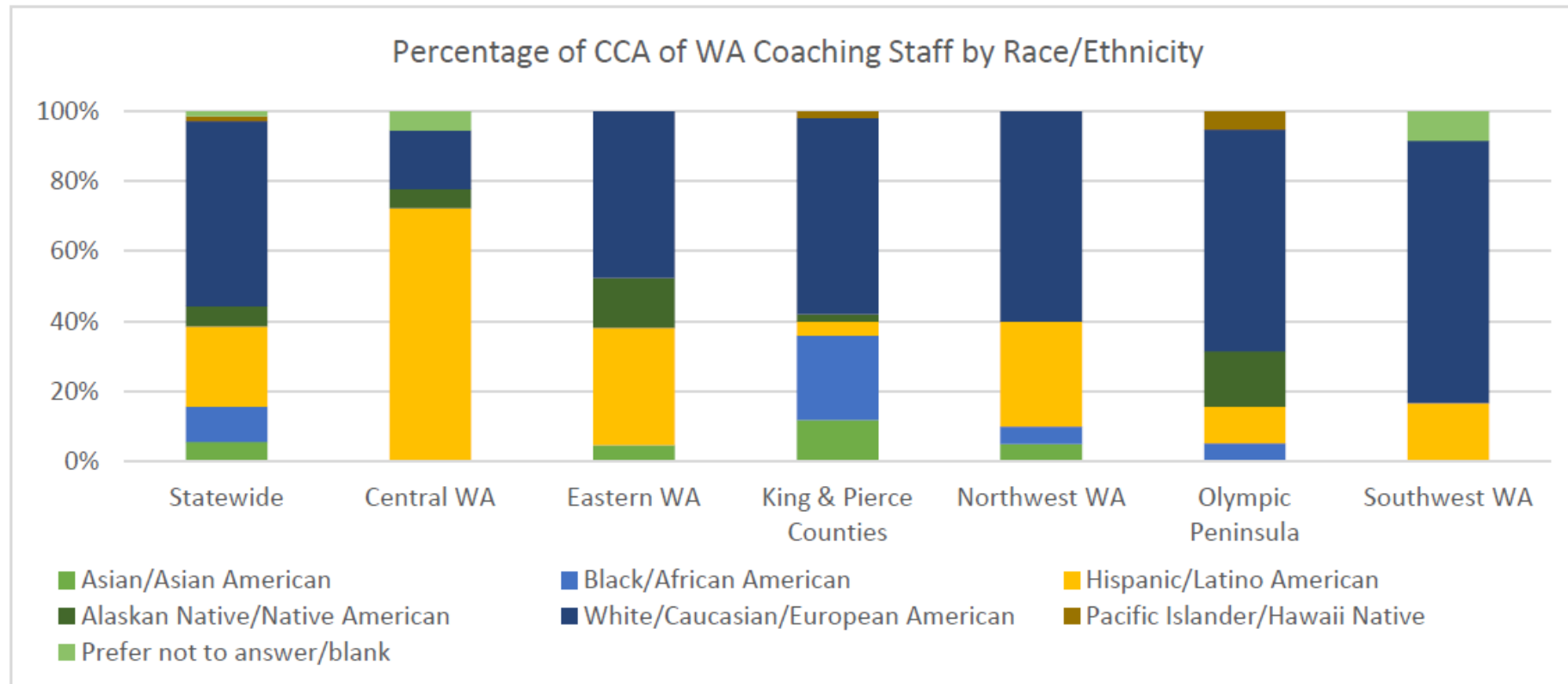


Early Achievers Primary Contact Demographics

Race/Ethnicity	Hispanic/ Latino	Not Hispanic/ Latino	No Response	Grand Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	7	32	1	40
Asian	2	230	12	244
Black or African American	11	809	23	843
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	27	1	30
Other	459	141	6	606
White	413	1,544	21	1,978
No Response	194	44	231	469
Grand Total	1,088	2,827	295	4,210



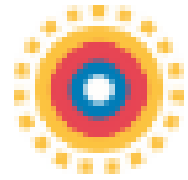
Early Achievers Coach Demographics



RBPD Staff Overview, CCA October 2022

Connecting Families to High-Quality Child Care

i Early Achievers
Quality Level 4

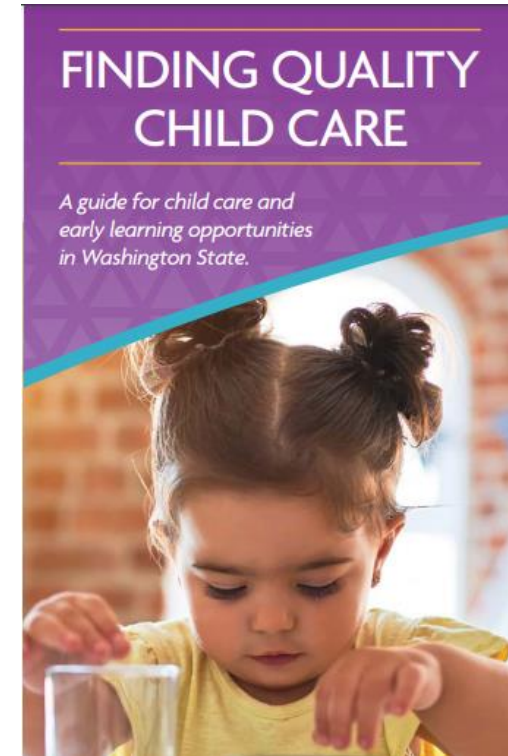


[DCYF's Child Care Check](#)



Family Center: 1-800-446-1114

[Online child care search tool](#)



*[Finding Quality Child Care brochure](#)
sent to all families in WA as part of the
Dept. of Health child profile mailers*

Early Learning Workforce



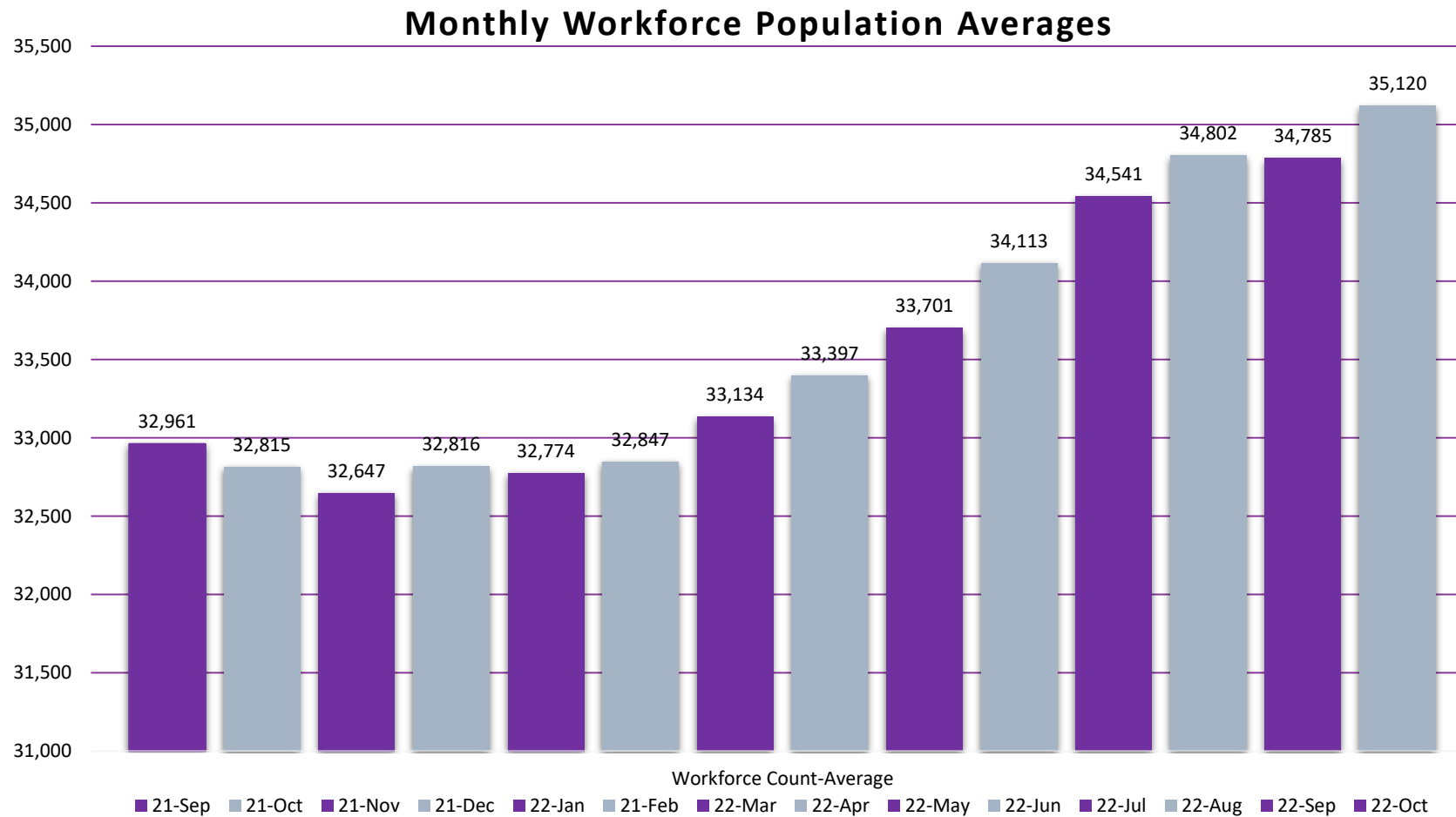
Licensed & FFN Early Learning Workforce

JOB ROLE - April 2022	COUNT
Assistant or Aide	14,463
Lead	13,698
Director/Program Sup/FCC	9,721
Support Roles	2,070
Other (cook, bus driver)	4,846
Household Members	5,013
FFN Provider	4,042
Volunteers	1,426
Grantee/Contractor Staff	1,053
Substitutes (DCYF/Imagine)	605
Currently Applying	1,976
Direct Service/On-Site Workforce	58,913



Data from MERIT. Not shown are an additional 60K of coaches, trainers, and ESIT workforce making a combined estimate of 120K

Licensed Early Learning Workforce



Data from MERIT, covers direct service roles only.



Staff Education and Classroom Requirements for birth-5 yr. olds

Role	Staff Education
Assistant Teachers	Hiring: High School Full: Initial Certificate (12 credits) or an equivalent
Lead Teachers	Hiring: High School Homes: Initial; Center: Short Certificate (20 credits) or an equivalent
Director/ Program Supervisor	Hiring: Variable ECE Credits based on site capacity State Certificate
ECEAP Assistant	Initial Certificate (12 credits) or an equivalent
ECEAP Lead	Associate in ECE

Example Ratios	
Setting	Class max size and teacher to child ratios
Family Homes	12 (2:12)
Centers	20 (1:10)

Staff Requirements are informed by Early Learning Competencies. Pathways are designed to support the cultural, linguistic, and learning needs for educators in order to be responsive and developmentally appropriate for children.



Options for meeting licensing role requirements

Based on their role, Early Learning Providers have multiple ways to meet their education requirement.

- Experience-Based Competency
- PACE: Community-Based Training Series
- Other Earned Credentials
- Other Degree Major (Micro-credential)
- Some College Credits
- Related Degrees



THANK YOU

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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

A photograph of a white rectangular card with the words "Thank you" written in a blue, cursive script. The card is placed on top of a brown, textured envelope. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Thank you

Appendix: Federal Requirements for Quality

The Child Care Development Block Grant requires lead agencies (DCYF) to expend funds from each fiscal year's allotment on quality activities pursuant to Child Care Services ([98.50\(b\)](#)).

(1) Professional development

(2) Improving upon the development or implementation of the early learning and development guidelines and Provide technical assistance to [eligible child care providers](#) in order to enhance the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development and overall well-being of participating children;

(3) Tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care [providers](#) and services;

(4) Improving the supply and quality of child care [programs](#) and services child care licensing regulations or early learning and development guidelines;

(5) Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services;

(6) Facilitating compliance for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with licensing standards;

(7) Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care [programs](#) and services offered, including evaluating how such [programs](#) positively impact children;

(8) Supporting child care [providers](#) in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high-quality;

(9) Supporting [Lead Agency](#) or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development;

(10) Carrying out other activities, including implementing consumer education provisions to improve the quality of child care services provided.

§ 98.53 Activities to improve the quality of child care.

