

Budget & Policy Priorities

LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2024



Start Early Washington works with public and private partners to promote comprehensive prenatal-to-age 5 experiences for children and families in Washington state. It is our position that all policy and budget decisions must advance racial equity and meet the needs of children and families in rural and other under-resourced communities.

START EARLY WASHINGTON'S 2024 BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

Supporting Families with Home Visiting and Child Care (\$3.2M)

- As the state looks at approaches to combat the fentanyl/opioid pandemic, supporting parents through expanded home visiting is a sound policy in the state's effort to keep families together. Specifically, we support funding of up to **150 targeted contracted home visiting slots** in locales with historically high rates of child welfare screened-in intakes. (\$1.6M)
- Additionally, we support \$1.6M in funding to support **contracting of Working Connections Child Care slots for child protective services-involved infants**. Access to child care can be a valuable resource for families and also serve as a valuable component of a safety plan.

Early Learning Facilities (\$35M)

- **Support HB 2195 (Callan)** that facilitates the co-location of affordable housing and early learning facility space; increases the threshold of grant and loan funding amounts for the Early Learning Facilities (ELF) Fund; adds translation services as an eligible administrative cost; and clarifies ELF funding.
- Additionally, to address the ever-growing need for child care, we support a Capital Budget investment of \$30M into ELF grant-eligible projects, as well as an additional \$5M into minor renovations that maintain facilities' child care capacity. The current demand for funding far outweighs the allotted resources for both programs.

Transition to Kindergarten Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment (\$1.4M)

- Provide funding to implement the Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment components of the Transition to Kindergarten legislation, allowing local partners to coordinate and communicate to increase access to pre-K through our state's mixed delivery system.

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For more information, please contact:

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