

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge

May 2013 update

Dear Early Learning Leaders,

With summer on the way, Early Achievers is nearing the end of its first year of implementation. We have learned so much as we implement and get feedback from the early learning community. The Department of Early Learning (DEL), along with our partners at Child Care Aware of Washington and the University of Washington, are looking at ways to encourage more providers to enroll and move more quickly through the quality levels. In line with our philosophy of learning, listening, and improving as we go forward, DEL is expecting to make some programmatic improvements to Early Achievers based on feedback from the field. Stay tuned.

One important part of Early Achievers is to provide more information to families to help support their choices for child care and early learning opportunities. DEL is partnering with the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) and the Washington State Library to support two innovative approaches to engaging parents.

Parent Navigators

For many years, WSA has been supporting parent advocacy in ECEAP and Head Start programs. Now WSA is expanding their reach to communities around the state through Parent Navigators.

Parent Navigators have been trained to reach out to parents about the importance of high-quality early learning and Washington Early Achievers. With the goal of increasing parent awareness of and demand for high-quality early learning, Parent Navigators are available to support parents one on one, or in larger group settings. In addition, Parent Navigators are able to work in a variety of settings that are already reaching parents to help ensure that the importance of high-quality child care is highlighted, such as Community Service Offices, WorkSource centers, elementary schools, resource fairs, community events, college student WorkFirst Orientations, and other WorkFirst program provider orientations.

Early Learning and Public Libraries

Local libraries serve as a key hub of community activity and are deeply connected with families with young children. DEL is partnering with the Early Learning Public Library Partnership to further engage families in early learning through their local libraries. A central part of this partnership is ensuring that early learning initiatives are supported and promoted at the local level, including the use of the Early Learning Guidelines, Love.Talk.Play materials, and Early Achievers resources for parents. To support this work, 25 local libraries will receive between \$500 and \$1,000 to help promote their early learning activities. These mini-grants will be announced in June.

Thanks for all you do to support young kids in Washington!

Connecting with Parent Navigators

"Parents hear best and learn best from other parents," said Katy Warren, Deputy Director at the Washington State Head State and ECEAP Association (WSA). Parent Navigators started as ECEAP or Head Start parent leaders and, with training and support, developed the tools to help other parents support their children's growth and development.

"Parent Navigators are true believers in the importance of high-quality early learning," Katy said. "They've seen first-hand the impact of quality care with their own children and want to help others know what to look for and what resources are available."

Parent Navigators are located around the state. If you'd like to request a Parent Navigator to speak with parents or present to community groups, please contact Katy Warren at (425) 453-1227 or katy@wsaheadstarteceap.com.

Washington's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Performance Tracker

Early Achievers: Levels 2 to 5			
	April 30, 2013	2013 Year-End Targets	2013 Year-End Progress
Total Programs	1,268	2,227	57%
Head Start and ECEAP Sites	181	388	47%
Licensed Child Care Programs	1,087	1,839	59%
Family home child care	625	1,291	48%
Child care centers	462	548	84%
Total Children Served			
	40,561	53,324	76%
Head Start and ECEAP sites	11,189	13,640	82%
Licensed child care	29,372	39,684	74%
Family home child care	4,225	8,282	51%
Child care centers	25,147	31,403	80%
WaKIDS: 2012-13 school year			
	2012-13 School Year	2012-13 School Year Targets	Progress to Date
Districts	102	N/A	N/A
Schools	308	N/A	N/A
Teachers	1,003	1,138	88%
Students	21,811	25,714	85%

Learn more!

www.del.wa.gov/government/racetotop

