



2016-17

ECEAP Caseload Forecast Report

Revised November 2016



**Early
Childhood
Education &
Assistance
Program**



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Summary

The Washington State Caseload Forecast Council (CFC) is required by [RCW 43.88C](#) to forecast the number of children who are eligible, as defined in [RCW 43.215.405\(5\)\(a\)](#), to participate in and the number of children actually served by the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). This report is provided by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to describe the November 2016 ECEAP caseload forecast.

By the 2020-21 school year, all eligible children shall be entitled to enroll in ECEAP, per [RCW 43.215.456](#). Pursuant to this, the Legislature added 1,700 slots to ECEAP in the 2013-15 biennium and 1,600 in 2015-17. In the 2016-17 school year, ECEAP has 11,691 enrollment slots.

- There are 23,445 children eligible for ECEAP who are not served by ECEAP or Head Start. Based on the November 2016 CFC forecast, 6,314 of these would likely participate if space were available.
- We are serving 50 percent of eligible children and 78 percent of children likely to participate.
- By the 2020-21 school year, an estimated 7,429 more children would participate if space is available.

Description of ECEAP

ECEAP is Washington's state-funded prekindergarten program that prepares some of the State's most vulnerable 3- and 4-year-old children for success in school and in life. DEL oversees the program which, since 1985, has focused on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive nutrition, health, education and family support services to Washington's most at-risk children. To be eligible for ECEAP, children must be 3 or 4 years old by August 31 of the school year, not simultaneously enrolled in Head Start, and meet one of these requirements:

-  Qualified by their school district for special education services under [RCW 28A.155.020](#).
-  Receiving Child Protective Services under [RCW 26.44.020\(3\)](#) or Family Assessment Response Services under [RCW 26.44.260](#).
-  From a family with income at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 2016, this is \$26,730 for a family of four. This category includes all children in foster care and all families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash grants.
-  From a family that exceeds income requirements, but is impacted by specific risk factors that are linked by research to school performance (for example, child has a parent who is incarcerated or impacted by substance abuse). No more than 10 percent of ECEAP children can be in this "over-income" category, and most children enrolled under this provision are from families under 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines.

Once eligibility is established, children are prioritized for enrollment in the available ECEAP slots using a weighted statewide priority point system.

Methodology

The CFC uses the following methodology and data to estimate the population of children eligible for ECEAP who are not served by ECEAP or Head Start, and those who would likely to participate if space were available.

-  The base population of 89,466 three-year-olds and 90,091 four-year-olds for 2016-17 is from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) Population Forecast, November 2015.
-  Based on the American Community Survey, Combined 2012-14, an estimated 22.2 percent of these age cohorts are at or below 110 percent of federal poverty level (FPL) and therefore eligible for ECEAP. This factor will be updated in the February forecast.
-  An additional 1.76 percent of three-year-olds and 2.23 percent of four-year-olds are on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and over 110 percent of FPL and therefore eligible for ECEAP. This is based on the total number of each age group on IEPs from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the proportion of children on IEPs who are above 110 percent FPL currently in ECEAP.
-  In addition to children who are eligible by income or IEP status, another 10 percent of three- and four-year-olds who are above 110 percent of FPL are eligible based on their developmental or environmental risk factors.
-  Based on literature review of participation in states and countries with universal prekindergarten programs, the CFC estimates 51 percent of eligible three-year-olds and 77 percent of eligible four-year-olds are in families who would choose to participate if ECEAP slots were available. Parents may choose early learning services other than ECEAP or Head Start for these children. The CFC Technical Workgroup plans to revisit these participation rates periodically as we move toward full ECEAP entitlement.
-  Head Start slot counts and age distributions are retrieved from the 2014-15 Program Information Reports from Head Start grantees to the federal Office of Head Start for Region X Head Start and American Indian/Alaska Native-Head Start. Summer Migrant/Seasonal Head Start counts are not included. The Head Start slot counts will be updated for the February forecast.

Caseload Estimates

It is estimated that 7,429 additional enrollment slots beyond the 2016-17 level of 11,691 are needed by state fiscal year 2021 (school year 2020-21) to serve the eligible children whose families would choose to participate. DEL recommends a gradual ramp-up, as displayed in the table below, to support a solid foundation for program quality.

Recommended ramp-up of new ECEAP slots

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Estimated new enrollment slots needed		1,857	1,857	1,857	1,858
Total ECEAP slots	11,691	13,548	15,405	17,262	19,120

Projections, assuming ECEAP ramp-up

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total ECEAP-eligible 3- and 4-year olds	47,014	47,110	47,368	47,760	48,213
Served by ECEAP¹	11,691	13,548	15,405	17,262	19,120
Served by Head Start²	11,325	11,325	11,325	11,325	11,325
Total ECEAP-eligible served by ECEAP or Head Start	23,016	24,873	26,730	28,587	30,445
Percent of ECEAP-eligible served by ECEAP or Head Start	49%	53%	56%	60%	63%
Percent of ECEAP-eligible, likely to participate³, served by ECEAP or Head Start	77%	83%	89%	95%	100%
Unserved, ECEAP-eligible	23,998	22,237	20,638	19,173	17,768
Unserved, ECEAP-eligible, likely to participate³	6,703	4,933	3,185	1,613	0

¹ Based on proposed ECEAP slot ramp up.

² The Head Start count is updated annually as part of the February forecast.

³ Likely to participate is based on the CFC assumption that 51% of eligible 3-year-olds and 77% of eligible 4-year-olds will participate. Parents may choose other early learning services or choose to keep children home with them.