



Early Achievers Accreditation Policy

What: The Early Start Act of 2015 requires Early Achievers to accept national accreditation that meets specified requirements as a qualification for Early Achievers ratings.

Who: All child care providers that are fully accredited by agencies that have been formally recognized by the Early Achievers Accreditation Review Team. At this time, the agencies that have been formally recognized are: the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) and the American Montessori Society (AMS).

When: Accreditation will be considered during Early Achievers data collection and in rating. This policy will only impact ratings conducted after July 16, 2017. Rated sites accredited by recognized agencies will be eligible for the accreditation alignment points on their next scheduled rating, re-rating or renewal rating.

Why: The Early Achievers accreditation policy recognizes participating providers who have shown a commitment to quality through the accreditation process.

How: Eligible participants will receive five accreditation points toward their rating, as well as an Accreditation Area of Specialization on their Early Achievers Certificate. To be eligible for accreditation points, providers must:

- Have a current, verified certificate of accreditation from a recognized agency.
- Participate in full data collection, including records review, and meet the threshold requirements in ERS and CLASS.

Frequently Asked Questions

My accredited facility has already been rated. Am I still eligible for the accreditation points?

Programs that are accredited by agencies recognized by the Department of Early Learning will be eligible for accreditation points and recognition on their next scheduled rating, re-rating or renewal rating. The accreditation policy is not retroactive. **However, participating rated providers may apply for the Accreditation Area of Specialization, which is a certificate of recognition that will be mailed to qualifying facilities. To request the Area of Specialization, please send a copy of your current accreditation certificate to the Early Achievers inbox at QRIS@del.wa.gov.**

My facility’s accreditation program is not on your list of recognized agencies. Will this policy apply to me?

Not at this time. The accreditation pilot recognized NAEYC, NAFCC and AMS as meeting Early Achievers criteria for accrediting programs. The application process is now open to all accreditation agencies. Please contact your accreditation agency to see if they have begun the Early Achievers Application for Accreditation Agency Recognition.

I am an AMS-accredited provider and am getting ready to rate. What do I need to do to receive the accreditation points and Area of Specialization?

You must indicate that your site is accredited on the Interactive Rating Readiness Tool (IRRT) and provide a current accreditation certificate for review by the data collector. The accreditation points will automatically be added to your final rating score.

I was accredited at the time of my last rating but am not currently accredited. Can I still receive the points?

Your program must have a current accreditation at the time of rating to qualify for the accreditation points. If you choose to renew your accreditation, you will be eligible for these points during your next rating.

Are the five points applied to a specific area of evaluation?

No. These points are intended to serve as recognition of your hard work and commitment to quality through the accreditation process. They will be added to your program’s overall points.

I am an NAEYC-accredited provider that was just rated a Level 2. Why didn’t I receive the accreditation points?

In order to qualify for the accreditation points, you must meet the designated minimum scores on CLASS and ERS. If you meet the minimum scores during a re-rate you will receive the accreditation points at that time.

I represent an accreditation agency that is not represented on DEL’s approved list. How can my agency become a recognized accrediting body?

An Application for Accrediting Agency Recognition is available to national accrediting bodies that have been in operation for a minimum of three years and oversee at least 100 accredited sites in multiple states, including Washington. Applications can be requested through the Early Achievers inbox at QRIS@del.wa.gov.