



## Early Achievers Needs-Based Grants Overview

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Needs-Based Grants are available to support Early Achievers participants with purchasing curriculum development and instructional materials, supplies and equipment to improve program quality, in an effort to achieve a rating of a Level 3 or higher.

Child care providers participating in Early Achievers may be eligible to receive a one-time Needs-Based Grant in the following amounts:

- Up to \$750 for Family Home Child Care
- Up to \$1,000 for Child Care Centers

### **Eligibility Criteria**

**Early Achievers participants may be eligible for a one-time grant.** In order to be eligible, Early Achievers participants must meet the following criteria:

- Be registered for Early Achievers and participating in Level 2, or
- Be registered for Early Achievers and rated a Level 2

**AND** meet at least one of the following:

- Enrolled in the Tier 1 food program, or
- Live within a school district that serves at least 20% low income children based on OSPI data (for more information on how to determine if your school district meets this criteria, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions section below)

### **Prioritization**

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) may prioritize applications for those participants who provide services to non-school age children accessing Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidies, by the estimated percentage of children accessing services in a center or family home child care, and for those who demonstrate a culturally diverse program.

Needs-Based Grants can be used to purchase the following types of items:

- Materials to improve scores on the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) or Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- Curriculum development and instructional materials
- Substitute time
- Trainings/professional development
- Other supplies or equipment to improve program quality, as approved based on the application spend plan

Expenditures may not be used for capital improvements, gift cards, salary increases, bonuses of any kind, or religious activities. For more information on disallowed costs, please reference the Early Achievers Operating Guidelines, Section 8: Pre-Rating Supports and Incentives.

## **Application Process**

1. Applicants must complete all of the forms in the application package: the Needs-Based Grant Application form, the W-9 form and the Washington Statewide Vendor Payee form. *Incomplete application packages will not be accepted, so please ensure there are no areas left blank or incomplete.* Forms can be found on DEL's website at <https://del.wa.gov/EarlyAchievers-PreRatingToolkit>.
2. Completed application packages may be mailed or faxed to DEL. *Applications sent electronically (by email) will not be accepted,* due to the sensitive information collected in the application package.

### **MAILING ADDRESS**

Department of Early Learning  
Attn: Early Achievers Needs-Based Grants  
PO Box 40970  
Olympia, WA 98504-0970

### **FAX**

**(360) 725-4417**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How does a participant know if they are in an eligible school district?**

Eligible school districts include those where at least 20% of students receive free or reduced-price meals. To determine if a school district is eligible, visit the Washington Public School Data for Area Eligibility Report on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website web site at: <http://k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/pubdocs/2016-17WaPublicSchoolDataAreaEligibility.pdf>.

### **Can a participant apply for a Needs-Based Grant, even if they do not work with a Child Care Aware of Washington representative?**

Yes, a participant may still submit a completed application package on their own.

### **Can ECEAP on the Early Achievers licensed pathway apply for a grant?**

Yes.

### **Can a participant apply for a Needs-Based Grant, even if they do not serve children accessing Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidies?**

Yes.

### **Can a grant be used to reimburse a participant for purchases already made?**

No, this funding may only be used for resources identified in the Needs-Based Grant application once the grant has been approved.

### **Can a participant request more than the allowable amount?**

No. \$750 is the maximum amount for family home child care participants and \$1,000 is the maximum for child care center participants and ECEAP licensed pathway participants. A grant will not be issued for higher than the maximum amount.

### **Can a facility be rated and receive a Needs-Based Grant?**

Yes, however, only sites rated at a Level 2 are eligible.

**Does a provider need to save receipts?**

Yes. As outlined in the Terms and Conditions on the Needs-Based Grant application, the recipient facility must keep all receipts documenting purchases related to the grant funds for 7 years, and agrees to provide receipts and documentation to the Department of Early Learning for any/all items purchased associated with this grant, upon request. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in the facility having to repay part, or all, of the grant to DEL.

**Why does the Statewide Vendor Payee and W-9 form need to be completed and submitted?**

Needs-Based Grants are paid to grantees directly from the state. The State of Washington requires that anyone receiving payments from the state register as a vendor.

**What if I already have a Statewide Vendor Payee number?**

If you think you have a Statewide Vendor Payee number, please be sure to write it on the form that you submit as a part of the grant application package. If you are not sure if you have a number, you can check the online database here:

<http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/VendorPay/Pages/VL.aspx>. If you do not have a number, one can be generated for you by filling out and submitting the Statewide Vendor Payee/W-9 form with your grant application.

**I filled out my Statewide Vendor Payee paperwork, why don't I have a number yet?**

Due to the sensitive nature of these forms, scratching out, white-out or any type of edits made to these forms will prevent them from being processed. Please ensure that the forms are filled out completely and accurately, without any crossing out or white-out. If you do not receive a Statewide Vendor Number or any information within 10 business days after submitting your Statewide Vendor Payee paperwork, contact [del.fiscal@del.wa.gov](mailto:del.fiscal@del.wa.gov).

**Can a provider receive more than one Needs-Based Grant?**

Participants rated Level 2 or participating in Level 2 are eligible to apply for an initial, one-time Needs-Based Grant. If a participant rates a Level 2 after their initial grant award, they are eligible to apply for a second grant to support their efforts in achieving a Level 3 rating.

**What can a participant expect once a Needs-Based Grant application packet is submitted?**

Upon receiving Needs-Based Grant application forms, the Department of Early Learning performs a quality check to ensure the forms are filled out completely. A notification of receipt is then sent to the participant. If the forms are incomplete, the participant will be notified with instructions on re-submitting.

Completed forms are processed for approval and payment. Generally this process takes 4-6 weeks. If there are issues with a Statewide Vendor Identification number or other fiscal documents, the participant is contacted during this time as well.

Once the forms are processed for payment, an additional notification is sent to the participant. Notifications are typically sent by email (when possible).

**Who can I contact if I have questions about eligibility or spending?**

A participant can email DEL at [Needs.BasedGrants@del.wa.gov](mailto:Needs.BasedGrants@del.wa.gov).