

2023 Early Educator Legislative Agenda



Through continued investments in the Fair Start for Kids Act, legislators can make important progress toward stabilizing Washington’s child care industry and improving access for children and families:

1. Raise Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) rates so families most in need have more care options.

Raise rates to 85 th percentile for center-based care	\$271,740,971
Raise rates to 85 th percentile for family child care	\$107,482,246
Increase infant rate enhancement	\$24,342,000
Increase non-standard hour bonus	\$41,464,000

2. Implement enrollment-based pay for WCCC to make revenue predictable in alignment with the private market.

Transition from attendance-based pay to enrollment-based pay	\$114,397,000
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3. Streamline WCCC eligibility requirements so more families have access to affordable care.

Authorize full-time care for children in WCCC	\$17,533,000
Allow participation in ECEAP/Head Start as an approved activity for WCCC	\$5,019,000
Exclude child support, Social Security, and Supplemental Security as countable income	\$12,649,000
Allow job search as an approved activity for WCCC at application and reapplication	\$33,569,000

4. Reduce financial overhead for licensed child care so limited resources can be used for program costs.

Background check fees program	\$3,161,000
Child care licensing fees program	\$3,358,000

Legislators should also provide modest resources from DCYF to identify mechanism(s) and develop implementation plans for delivering publicly funded wage supplements and benefits to the entire child care workforce in conjunction with the transition to cost of quality care rate-setting model.

“Children—and perhaps the ability to access quality childcare—are playing a different, and more significant, role than in past recessions and recoveries.” -Federal Reserve of Atlanta, September 2021