



Program Contact:

Bonnie Beukema

DEL Assistant Director for Outcomes
and Accountability

360.725.4695

bonnie.beukema@del.wa.gov

Bob Butts

OSPI Assistant Superintendent for
Public Policy and Planning

360.725.0420

Bob.Butts@k12.wa.us

More information about the Early
Learning Technical Workgroup:

[www.del.wa.gov/legislature/
voluntary.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/legislature/voluntary.aspx)

Our state's 10-year Early Learning Plan includes a strategy to support school readiness for all children by implementing voluntary, universal preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds (strategy #13). High-quality preschool is shown to help children start school ready to succeed, and reduce costly interventions such as grade-level retention and special education.

Our state-funded preschool program—the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, or ECEAP—serves about 6 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds in Washington. Preliminary data from the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) show that more than half of children start school unprepared in all four measured developmental domains.

The 2010 Legislature passed Senate Bill 6759, which required an Early Learning Technical Workgroup convened by DEL and OSPI to develop preschool recommendations. The final workgroup recommendations were delivered to the Quality Education Council (QEC) and the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) on November 1, 2011. After getting feedback from ELAC, the QEC is required to submit its recommendations to the Legislature by January 1, 2012.

The workgroup focused on the dual goals of substantially improving educational attainment for children in Washington and exercising prudence in light of the economic climate.

The **workgroup's recommendations** include:

- Improve access by opening a Washington Preschool program to all 3- and 4-year-old children. Voluntary for all 3- and 4-year-olds with graduated co-pays for families over 250 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Provide high-quality and adequate intensity through program quality standards:
 - Increased intensity (more classroom hours, smaller ratios).
 - Increased degree and ongoing professional development requirements for teachers.
 - Tiered child health and family support services based on child and family needs.
- Ensure accountability through evaluation and performance goals.
- Institute mixed-delivery system of high-quality public and private providers through contract.
- Clarify governance responsibilities: DEL manages the Washington Preschool program in collaboration with OSPI to promote preschool through third grade (P-3) educational alignment, and create an Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) subcommittee to guide development of new program.
- Merge the existing Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) into Washington Preschool upon full implementation.
- Create Washington Preschool as a statutory entitlement program.
- Phase in Washington Preschool gradually, with full implementation by school year 2024-25.

Implementation:

- Planning phase: Two years
- Phase I: 8-10 initial sites
- Phase II: Expansion and full ECEAP conversion
- Phase III: Full implementation
- Make no reduction to number of ECEAP slots during Washington Preschool phase-in except slots that are directly converted to Washington Preschool slots.
- Phase-in is based on community need
- During phase-in, 50 percent of slots are held for high-risk children; remaining 50 percent from applicants by lottery

Phase 1 Costs		
Fiscal Year	Description	Cost
2012-13	DEL: Develop program standards, evaluation plan and data systems. Complete facilities survey. Conduct competitive statewide RFP for 936 slots/10 to 15 preschool providers in full-day kindergarten elementary school attendance areas underserved by current publicly funded programs.	1 FTE + related goods, services, travel \$98,267 Facilities Survey \$20,000 Total \$118,267
2013-14	DEL: Develop evaluation plan and data systems, train providers. Preschool providers: Hire and train site supervisory staff, prepare facilities and classrooms (about 26), hire program staff and enroll children.	1 FTE \$76,817 Goods, services, etc. \$21,450 Facilities \$500,000 Program development \$350,000 Total \$948,267
2014-15	Begin Washington Preschool for 936 children at 10 to 15 sites around state.	PreK services \$4,540,623 Equipment/materials \$195,000 Program evaluation \$290,460 Total \$5,026,083

The Early Learning Technical Workgroup included child care providers, parents, private school representatives, special education directors, legislators, program directors and state agencies. A membership list is available at www.del.wa.gov/publications/laws/docs/6759Membership.pdf.