

Funding Early Learning Activities in Washington State with Title I, Part A

Birth to Age 5



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INTRODUCTION

In December 2015, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized through Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The new act places special emphasis on early learning and prekindergarten education. Guidance issued in 2016 and 2024 by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) reaffirmed the emphasis.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is providing this guide to advise Local Education Agencies (LEAs) of the possible uses of federal funds for early learning activities. This guide is not meant to require LEAs to implement early learning activities, but to make LEAs aware of the possible uses of federal funds for those considering early learning activities.

Current research on the impact of prekindergarten programs illustrates short- and long-term benefits of quality preschool and early intervention programs. On average, high quality preschool programs help children “gain about a third of a year of additional learning” in reading and math skills, (*Yoshikawa, Weiland, et. al., Investing in our Future, p.1*). In some programs, children gained as much as a full year of additional learning.

In addition to preschools, students experience benefits in other settings and activities. Small-scale, intensive programs and activities can also increase positive outcomes. These programs and activities benefit both middle-class and low-income children; however, the benefits for low-income children are greater. One of the most significant benefits is improved school readiness, which can lead to long-term societal benefits. Research points to better high school graduation rates, more years of education completed, and greater occupation-related earnings for children who participated in quality early learning programs. There is a reduction in crime and in teen pregnancy among those who participated in these programs.

From a long-term investment perspective, this upfront early learning spending saves three to seven dollars in academic and social interventions for every 1 dollar spent on quality early learning programs. (*Yoshikawa, Weiland, et. al., Investing in our Future, and Phillips, Lipsey, et. al., Puzzling it Out*).

The following information illustrates early learning activities, the funding possibilities, resources, and examples from LEAs in the state that have already implemented some of those activities. The focus of this guide is narrowed to those activities supporting prekindergarten children from prenatal to age 5 but primarily focuses on serving children from three to five because in practice, that is the age frame most LEAs tend to utilize Title I funds.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A needs assessment of your LEA and community will provide a framework for identifying which early learning activities would be most helpful in your area. As part of that assessment, communication, and cooperation with early learning stakeholders such as parents, families, childcare providers, and community leaders, could add significant support to the program. In the book, *"Making a Difference: 10 Essential Steps to Building a PreK–3 System"*, Linda Sullivan-Dudzic, Donna K. Kearns, and Kelli Leavell provide strategies for implementing a needs assessment and community collaboration. (*Sullivan-Dudzic, p.7-17*) The following questions can assist the LEA with an early learning needs assessment:

- What preschool and early learning programs (public and private) exist in your community?
- Do the children in your community have equitable access to early learning programs? What gaps exist?
- Are there effective programs that you may want to extend or replicate?
- What skills are children excelling at or lacking when entering kindergarten?
- How do you plan, and work with early learning and community leaders in your area?
- What resources and time can you put into this effort?

If the LEA decides to use federal funds, such as Title I, Part A for preschool or other early learning activities, these activities should support the objectives and goals of the LEA. These efforts should also be included in the LEA plan and the building level Title I, Part A programs.

Resources:

- [Consolidated School Improvement Plan](#)
- [Comprehensive Needs Assessment Toolkit](#)
- *Coming Soon* - Please find an Early Learning Needs Assessment Addendum on the [Early Learning website](#).

Please Note – Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, LEAs **must** use the Washington Integrated Student Support Protocol (WISSP) to plan and implement evidence-based, data-informed, supplemental supports for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) starting in the 2025–26 ([LAP Guide](#)). An implementation guide with embedded self-assessment, district and school templates, and recorded video walkthroughs will be available on OSPI's WISSP website in August of 2024.

Tip

It is imperative that leaders of high-quality early learning programs understand child development and appropriate instructional practices to effectively support teachers. It is also essential to understand the needs of parents and caregivers when considering PreK program development. Working families may need year-round, extended day programs. See the [Washington State Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines – Birth through 3rd Grade](#) for more information.

OPERATING PRESCHOOLS

A Title I preschool program is a preschool program for which an LEA or school uses Title I funds, in whole or in part, to improve educational outcomes for eligible children from birth to the age at which the LEA provides a free public elementary education (*ESEA sections 1113(c)(5), 1114(c), and 1115(c)(1)(A)(ii); 34 C.F.R. § 77.1*). Such a program is designed to prepare eligible children with the prerequisite skills and dispositions for learning that will enable them to benefit from later school experiences. Any LEA or school that receives Title I funds may use Title I funds to operate a preschool program consistent with Title I requirements (*ESEA sections 1112(b)(8), 1113(c)(5), 1114(c), and 1115(c)(1)(A)(ii)*). An LEA or school determines whether to use its Title I funds to operate a preschool program based on the needs of its eligible students and the most effective use of those funds. The decision to use Title I funds for a preschool program is *made by an LEA or an individual school*.

Tip

The specific Head Start standards applicable to Title I preschool programs are in regulations at 45 C.F.R. § 1302 Subpart C — [Education and Child Development Program Services](#)

Preschools are operated at the building level, the LEA level, or in cooperation with community programs. LEAs and buildings operating a Title I, Part A preschool must comply with all Title I, Part A program requirements. When Title I, Part A funds are used for preschool programs, that program must meet Head Start education performance standards established *under section 641A(a) of the Head Start Act (ESEA section 1112(c)(7))*. Those standards can be found in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (Ages Birth to 5), (ESSA, Section 1112 (c)(1)(G))*.

- A Title I **school** may use all of the Title I funds it receives to operate a preschool program if the school determines that doing so holds the most promise for raising the achievement of its students and the school implements the preschool program consistent with all applicable requirements
- LEAs may reserve Title I funds to operate a districtwide Title I preschool program, however the LEA must ensure that there are enough funds remaining to make allocations to some or all of its eligible schools, so **LEAs may not** reserve its entire Title I allocation to operate a districtwide Title I preschool program.

An LEA that receives Title I funds is required to coordinate with Head Start programs and other early learning programs that serve children who will attend the LEA, regardless of whether the LEA uses Title I funds to operate an early education program (*ESEA section 1119*). An LEA is also responsible for developing agreements with Head Start programs to coordinate services, such as establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU/MOA) outlining a plan to share student information, data reporting and sharing, alignment of standards and curricula, and transition activities for children moving from Head Start into public school programs. Transition activities might include sharing assessment data, promoting summer learning programs, engaging families, and implementing joint professional development opportunities that involve both community-based providers and school staff.

Resources:

- [Transition to Kindergarten: Policy Connections at a Glance](#)
- [Early Childhood Coordination Requirements Toolkit](#)

Building Level Programs

LEAs may operate a Title I preschool program at any location that other Title I services may be provided, including public school buildings, public libraries, community centers, privately owned facilities (including facilities owned by faith-based organizations), and other appropriate settings. LEAs may choose to run their early learning programs in one or more of its elementary school buildings that is allocated Title I, Part A funds. Depending on whether that building is a Targeted Assistance or Schoolwide Program will determine what program the preschool will operate as. If the LEA chooses to run their early learning program in a building that is not allocated Title I funds, the LEA should use a district set-aside to fund the program (find more information about this under LEA Level Programs).

Tip: Braided Classrooms

If an LEA chooses to braid funding, the classroom could include in-kind staff from Head Start or ECEAP and several Head Start or ECEAP students in addition to certificated Early Childhood Special Education teachers for an inclusive placement option.

Targeted Assistance Program

Like a K–12 targeted assistance program, preschool children must be identified most at risk of failing to meet state academic standards when they reach kindergarten based on “multiple educationally-related objective criteria.” Those criteria may include data from parent interviews, teachers’ progress reports, and developmentally appropriate measures of child growth. When there are limited Title I, Part A funds, family income can be used to prioritize who to serve but should not be the only criterion used to identify eligible children. The LEA should use existing information or other funds to identify eligible children. However, if the LEA has no appropriate existing information or funds for identification, Title I, Part A funds can be used to identify eligible children (*Preschool NRG, p.21 (G-1)*). There are, however, **children who are automatically eligible** (*ESSA, Section 1115 (c)(2)*) (meaning that the LEA does not need to identify the child as most at risk of failing). These include:

- Children who, at any time in the last two years, attended a Head Start program, or Title I, Part A preschool.
- Children who, at any time in the last two years, received services under Title I, Part C (Migrant Education).
- Children in an institution for neglected or delinquent children and youth.
- Children who are experiencing homelessness. (*ESSA, Sec. 1115(c)(2)(B)-(E)*)

Please note: Available Title I funds may not be sufficient for the LEA or school to serve all eligible children. In which case, the LEA or school selects those children who have the greatest need for additional supports to participate in a Title I early learning program. Based on a review of all

information available, LEA/school staff should use their best professional judgment in making these selections, often balancing the needs of different populations.

Targeted assistance schools can use Title I-A funds to provide eligible students with health, nutrition, and other social services that are not otherwise available to them if:

- The school has engaged in a comprehensive needs assessment and established a collaborative partnership with local service providers, if appropriate; and
- Funds are not reasonably available from other public or private sources.

Targeted Assistance programs may **coordinate (braid)** federal, state, or local funds to operate their programs. When funds are braided, two or more funding sources are coordinated to support the total cost of a service. Revenues are allocated and expenditures tracked by different categories of funding sources.

Resources for braiding funds in a TA program:

- [Braiding Federal Funding to Expand Access to Quality Early Care and Education and Early Childhood Supports and Services: A Tool for States and Local Communities](#)
- [Preschool Inclusion Finance Toolkit](#)
- [Haring Center Braided Funding Tip Sheet](#)
- [Unlocking Federal and State Program Funds to Support Student Success](#)

Schoolwide Program

A schoolwide program (SWP) is a comprehensive reform strategy designed to raise the achievement of the lowest achieving students by upgrading the entire educational program in the school. Accordingly, a school operating a schoolwide program may use Title I Schoolwide funds for preschool activities if the preschool activities support the needs of students in the school as identified through the comprehensive needs assessment and as articulated in the schoolwide plan. (*ESEA section 1114(b)*). A Title I school may operate a schoolwide program if it either:

- has 40 percent poverty level, regardless of the grades it serves; or
- receives a waiver from OSPI to operate a schoolwide program without meeting the 40 percent poverty threshold.

All preschool children residing in the attendance area of a schoolwide building are eligible to attend a preschool program at that building. A schoolwide building is not required to identify at-risk children. (*See Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in ESSA, Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners, January 2017, p. 9–10.*)

When LEAs are determining how to utilize their Title I, Part A funds in their early learning programs, they need to:

- Consider that all expenditures reflect allowable costs.
- Make sure they are supplementing and not supplanting existing state and local funding as detailed in the LEA's supplement, not supplant methodology.

- Use funds on activities that have been approved in their LEA's budget application to the state, and that expenditures are maintained for each Title area.
- Align all expenditures to the school's comprehensive needs assessment.

SWPs can **blend or consolidate** some funding sources creating a larger pool of more flexible funds which are expended according to their Comprehensive Needs Assessment. A SWP has flexibility in its use of Title I funds even absent consolidation. The uses of Title I funds described throughout this document are available to a schoolwide program school that does not consolidate its Title I or other Federal funds. Consolidation, however, affords even greater flexibility, as discussed above. Funds Available for Consolidation Include:

- Basic Ed
- Title I, Part A
- Learning Assistance Program (LAP)
- School Improvement (Comprehensive and Targeted Supports)
- Title II, Part A
- Title III, Part A
- Title IV, Part A
- IDEA, Part B
- IDEA, Part B Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)
- Title V, Part B Rural Education

Please note:

- Head Start, State Special Education, and ECEAP funds **cannot** be consolidated.
- If LEAs choose to use IDEA, Part B funds, OSPI's Special Education Office should be consulted.

LEA Level Programs

LEAs may use Title I, Part A funds to operate a preschool program in the entire LEA or in a portion of the LEA. Using Title I funds for early learning programs is different than for other set-asides like equitable services. Children do not necessarily have to reside in a low-income school boundary and be from a low-income household to be eligible. See more below.

Entire LEA

Preschool children identified as most at risk and who reside within the attendance area of the LEA are eligible to attend the LEA-operated preschool program. *Unless all elementary schools in the LEA are Title I, Part A schoolwide buildings, children must be identified as most at risk to be eligible for services.* Even if the preschool is in a building with a schoolwide program, the children must be identified as eligible for services by need via multiple, objective sources of data, because the attendance area for that preschool includes the entire LEA. *(Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in the ESSA, Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners, January 2017, p. 10)*

Portion of LEA

The LEA may choose to operate a Title I, Part A preschool program for children who reside in a specific portion of the LEA, such as within the attendance area of a high poverty school. These children must be identified as most at risk of failing state academic standards when they reach school age unless all elementary schools within that entire attendance area have schoolwide programs. (*Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in ESSA, Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners, January 2017, p. 10*)

Community Programs

An LEA that chooses to use allowable ESSA funds to provide early learning services for children in a community-based preschool program may only do so if these conditions are met:

1. The LEA provides the preschool services directly, or jointly with the community-based preschool provider (e.g., the LEA may not directly transfer ESSA funds to a community-based preschool program, for instance, by paying tuition, but instead must use funds to supplement or expand services).
2. The LEA meets all the requirements of the applicable program, other applicable federal laws, and regulations (e.g., ensuring that the use of funds is reasonable and necessary and allowable according to program requirements).
3. The LEA maintains control of the federal funds, ownership of materials, equipment, and property purchased with those funds, and ensures that funds are not used for religious purposes (*20 U.S.C. 8306(a)(2), (5); 34 C.F.R. §§ 75.532, 75.702, 76.532, 76.702*). Title I, Part A funds may be used to improve the quality, extend the day, or increase the number of days of a program in ECEAP, Head Start, childcare, or other community-based programs. Title I, Part A funds may be used to provide preschool services for children who:
 - Are not eligible for Head Start services based on income requirements,
 - Are eligible for but have not been served in a Head Start center due to unmet need.
 - Are enrolled in ECEAP, Head Start, childcare, or a community-based early learning program and need additional services (e.g., extending the day, increasing number of days, etc.).
 - Would benefit from home visiting because they are most at risk of failing to meet the state's challenging academic standards.

(See *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in ESSA, Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners, January 2017, p. 8–10*)

Title I, Part A funds can be used to improve the quality (including providing PD for early childhood educators), increase the number of children served, extend the day, or number of days of the existing preschool program for eligible children. LEAs can use Title I, Part A funds to

Tip

Collaboration across agencies and organizations could open doors for an LEA to disseminate information about the importance of quality early education, how the LEA serves families, and what their early learning program has to offer via community venues like farmers markets, fairs, celebrations, etc.

compensate preschool teachers or paraeducators for their time working with eligible children in early learning activities. Coordination between vertical teams (e.g., private preschools and public kindergarten teachers) and horizontal teams (e.g., LEA preschool teachers and Head Start teachers) can be a productive use of Title I, Part A funds (*ESSA Section 1112 (a)(1)(B)*).

When working with the community, consider the possibilities for partnerships with other early learning providers and community organizations. If an LEA does not have adequate space for a preschool, Title I, Part A funds can be used for minor repairs or remodeling on existing spaces. They can also be used for renting a more appropriate space (*Preschool guidance, 2012, p. 27 and 34 CFR 77.1 (c)*). One could also work with other facilities to use their gym space or the library to enrich the program.

Example:

Moses Lake School District (MLSD) coordinates between the area preschools and daycare centers and MLSD's Early Learning Director to ensure awareness of necessary academic skills for students to be successful in entering kindergarten. Currently MLSD has nine integrated preschool classrooms that include ECEAP slots. School district sponsored professional development opportunities are available to outside teachers as space permits. Several district employees including, but not limited to, the executive and assistant directors of Teaching and Learning and the district's Early Learning Coach organize and take part in community forums that bring a variety of service providers together to coordinate existing community services and identify other areas of need in the transitional process from preschool programs to elementary school programs.

Private Schools and Equitable Services for Preschool-Not Allowed

Because Washington state defines elementary education as beginning with kindergarten, LEAs cannot provide equitable services to private preschools (state-approved, non-profit, private, and religiously affiliated schools).

"A private school is a non-public school that conducts a program of kindergarten and at least grade one, or a program of any or all grades one through twelve. All private schools must be approved by the State Board of Education as offering a program that ensures a sufficient basic education to meet usual graduation requirements and that meets reasonable standards for the health and safety of private school students."

-Definition provided by the Washington State Board of Education

Supplement not Supplant

An LEA or school operating a Title I preschool program must comply with the same supplement, not supplant requirements that apply to all Title I programs. (*ESEA section 1118(b)*). For additional information, see the Department's guidance [Supplement Not Supplant Under Title I](#).

EARLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In addition to preschool, other early learning activities are still possible and can be helpful and productive. Some activities are required when using Title I, Part A funds and others are optional, but each of these can improve the academic and social success of prekindergarten children. As discussed earlier, when using Title I, Part A funds in early learning activities, an LEA or building must comply with the same regulations as a K–12 program. In a schoolwide setting, there is more flexibility concerning who is eligible for services, but in a targeted assistance setting, only identified children are eligible for services.

Transition to Kindergarten

Transition to Kindergarten (TK) is a legislatively established and authorized kindergarten program for children who are at least 4-years-old by August 31, who do not have access to high-quality early learning experiences prior to kindergarten, and have been deemed by an LEA, through a screening process and/or other instrument(s), to need additional preparation to be successful in kindergarten the following year.

Because TK is reserved only for students who have been identified as needing additional supports prior to entering kindergarten, Title I, Part A can be used to fund supplies, curriculum, professional development, etc. for TK classrooms and staff.

When filling out the Title I, Part A Consolidated Grant Application, TK students should not be included in the enrollment numbers on the ranking and allocating page if the TK program is attached to an elementary school building. TKs *can* be funded out of a building allocation (if attached to an elementary school) or via a district set-aside when conducted offsite.

For up to date TK Information and resources please see the [OSPI TK Website](#).

Below are some examples of how Title I, Part A funds can be used to support some best practices for administering a TK program:

- For required Early Learning Collaboration – identify an early learning/extended learning contact in the LEA to

Tip

In an executive summary of Leading Learning Communities entitled [A Principal's Guide to Early Learning and the Early Grades](#), six competencies were identified that are essential to strong leadership of Early Learning Communities:

1. Understand Child Development and Early Learning
2. Develop and Foster Partnerships with Families and Communities
3. Embrace and Enact a Pre-K–3rd Grade Vision
4. Ensure Equitable Opportunities
5. Share Leadership and Build Professional Capacity
6. Promote a Culture of Continuous Improvement

serve as a point person between the community and LEA-based early learning programs. Visit [Child Care Aware of Washington](#) to request a list of childcare providers in your area.

- Design high quality TK instruction – to include behavioral support with [Washington Pyramid Model](#), Positive Behavioral Intervention Services, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).
- Hire teachers with backgrounds emphasizing child development and/or early childhood special education.
- Create an inclusive environment.
- Cultivate relationships with families.

Example:

Evergreen Public Schools expanded its Transition to Kindergarten program from six to seven elementary schools. Coordination with Title IA leverages an instructional para for each TK site who supports kindergarten with participating TK students for the initial month of their K school year. Additionally, Title IA is providing an early learning coordinator and half-time early learning specialist to coach and support TK programming, as well as collaboration with Early Childhood Special Education, kindergarten and community early learning programs (ECEAP, Head Start, private, faith-based and licensed family-based and center-based programs).

Infants and Toddlers

ED's "strategic goal for early learning is to improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through third grade (*Early Learning guidance, 2017, p. 4*).” (See also 20 U.S.C. 1003—*Additional Definitions*). *Beginning at birth*, infants and toddlers may be eligible for Title I, Part A services and may benefit most from services provided to their parents and families. Activities and information that give parents and families the skills to support their child’s early learning development are appropriate uses of Title I, Part A funds. The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages birth–5 provide details to support children’s growth. Information packets, parental training sessions, play and learn groups, and the modeling of teaching activities are acceptable activities for eligible parents, families, and children.

Tip

During times of nontraditional instruction, such as school closures or after school activities, online supports are an allowable expenditure for Title I, Part A funds for preschoolers to include live instruction, synchronous intervention groups, and Parent and Family Engagement activities.

- Early learning is woven throughout the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student a Success Act (ESSA), as a means of addressing

education equity in order to eliminate disparities in student achievement and support students' school success. With this reauthorization, the ESEA has been transformed from a K–12 education law to one which envisions a preschool through 12th grade (P–12) continuum of learning. (Non-Regulatory Guidance Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners p. 4)

- Title I, Part A of the ESEA allows LEAs to provide preschool programs to improve educational outcomes for eligible children from birth to the age at which the LEA provides a free public elementary education (Non-Regulatory Guidance Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners p. 9)
- An LEA may address the needs of children from birth through third grade as a school improvement strategy to improve student achievement, instruction, and schools (ESSA Sec. 1003).

Examples:

Valley SD is a year-round licensed childcare provider, serving children age 1-12. They have a toddler classroom, 3 preschool classrooms, and a before/after/summer care school age program. They use TSG and Creative Curriculum for toddler and preschool classrooms, collecting evidence daily and completing 3 checkpoints per year. Valley SD also uses ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE for developmental screenings. This data is used to track development of the children as they progress through their program. Valley SD partners with outside resources to allow SLP/OT/PT services to be done onsite for our birth to three kiddos. Next year they are making changes to be able to serve this age group directly. The impact of having this most amazing opportunity is that Valley is able to start intervention earlier, connect with families daily to build trusting relationships that create a sense of belonging and connectiveness that carries through the grades.

Olympia SD's Early Support Services (also known as "Infant-Toddler") program is located at McKenny Elementary School and provides services to families of children with disabilities from birth up to age 3. Services are primarily provided through a family coaching model. Services and supports are available to families of eligible students who reside within the district's boundaries. A combination of home visits, Toddler Groups, therapy appointments, and parenting education programs may be provided to children and families depending on their need. Our early learning office professional is partially funded using Title I to help identify and coordinate services for students who are at risk of failing to meet the State's academic achievement standards when they reach school age. That office professional helps schedule assessments to determine which students meet "at-risk" criteria, ensures that the district subsidizes their tuition (using general funds), and helps organize professional development for staff who serve those students in developmentally appropriate practices.

Everett SD's Play & Learn sessions are provided by staff for the birth to age five community children and their care givers to build a strong foundation and skills for kindergarten readiness.

Transition Activities

Title I, Part A encourages transition activities between grade levels and identifies early learning transition as a priority (*ESSA sections 1112, 1114 and 1115*). Research shows coordination across early learning programs and elementary schools results in improved short-term initial school adjustment, long-term social and emotional development, and academic outcomes for children. Sharing preschool data with kindergarten programs is a great initial step for Title I, Part A funds. An LEA could also use Title I, Part A funds to support the alignment of prekindergarten and K–3 curriculum to improve the transition process (*ESSA Sec. 1119 and Early Learning in ESSA guidance, 2017, p. 16-19*). Trainings for those involved in the transition process, such as private preschool, childcare providers, and public school kindergarten teachers are allowable. Title I, Part A funds can also be used to extend the day or number of days of an existing summer transition program or to implement a summer program such as JumpStart.

Example:

The Selah School District has a unique campus configuration for grades pre-k-5: Robert Lince Early Learning Center (pre-k), John Campbell (grades 1-2), and Selah Intermediate (grades 3-5). This has presented the district with the opportunity to create consistent pre-k-5 systems as well as a plan for staff from across buildings to communicate to ensure smooth transitions for both students and parents. The Teaching & Learning department facilitates spring Tier I & II transition meetings between buildings to talk about priority standards that are a strength and those that are points in need of growth. The teams will also share any prerequisite skills that are needed for the priority standards of the next grade level. Finally, teams look at Tier II and identify skills taught in each intervention group to help plan for fall intervention cycles. This information allows the next grade to have a plan ready to implement week 2 of school instead of waiting for the first round of fall data. Buildings replicate this process between each grade level in their building. Our preschool teachers will meet with the kinder teachers to ensure students have a smooth transition but also to shore up the preschool scope and sequence for the next year. Closer to the end of the year, the district will run the Tier III transition meetings between buildings and between each grade at the building level. During these meetings, teams will look at individualized data and plans so that systems of support that are successful follow the student into the next grade level.

Our preschool team works alongside the kinder team and building administration to promote the preschool program and kinder registration. They have registration pop-ups at grocery stores and daycares to hand out information. Both preschool and kinder have a Spring Parent night to inform parents of all opportunities in Selah for students who are 4 and 5 years old. Preschool teachers will fill out placement cards on each student and then cluster group them to plan for support and resources in Kinder. This helps balance classes and is a valuable starting point when it is time to add in all newly registered students. Selah finds value in spending resources and time on transitions, and preschool to kinder transition has benefited from those systems as well. ***See [Selah's Early Learning Transitions PowerPoint](#)*** for resources.

In a report entitled [*Cross Systems Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten: A Review of the Knowledge Base and a Theory of Change*](#), conducted by Head Start to Kindergarten Transition Project, participants emphasized innovative views on transition and practices strategies. The following table has examples of transition practices that may improve the overall outcome for students transitioning to kindergarten:

| Family- Program/School | Child-Program/School | Head Start- Program/School | Community- Program/School |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>*Collaborate on orientation events before and during the beginning of the kindergarten year to build relationships with children and their families in the new learning setting</p> <p>*Arrange for families to receive kindergarten registration materials in their home language; provide support for completing registration forms and enrollment requirements</p> <p>*Seek to understand and support the diverse cultural perspectives that families contribute and how they influence family expectations</p> | <p>*Organize visits to kindergarten classrooms and visits from kindergarten teachers</p> <p>*Incorporate familiar activities or routines from the early learning setting into the kindergarten year</p> <p>*Make books and interactive materials about kindergarten accessible to children, both at home and in the early learning environment</p> | <p>*Familiarize and comply with the Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding established between state early learning and K-12 education departments</p> <p>*Coordinate joint PD opportunities for education staff from Head Start programs and kindergarten classrooms</p> <p>*Participate in meetings between Head Start and kindergarten educators</p> <p>*Seek out and review strengths-based child progress data, including information provided by families</p> | <p>*Identify and promote the community's hopes and expectations for children</p> <p>*Engage in joint events and partnership activities between Head Start programs and receiving elementary schools</p> <p>*Identify and partner with community organizations, such as medical offices, grocery stores, libraries, popular restaurants, or meal programs, that could offer resources for families, children's books, or activities about kindergarten</p> |

See below for more information:

- [Early Learning Transitions Resources](#)
- [Supporting Transitions: Resources for Building Collaboration](#)
- [OSPI's PreK-3rd Grade Transition Resources](#)

Professional Development (PD)/Training

Title I, Part A funds can be used for the PD of all those who work with eligible children in an early learning setting. For example, public preschool teachers, public kindergarten teachers, and paraeducators can receive PD and/or training related to the development and/or transition of prekindergarten children. Private childcare and preschool providers can participate in that PD if the children they serve will attend kindergarten at a targeted assistance building and are identified as most at risk or will attend kindergarten at a schoolwide building when they reach that age. PD for early learning stakeholders could be as simple as early learning study groups, in which participants choose a book to read and discuss to improve the education of or transition of those students identified as most at risk of failing. (ESSA Sec. 1116 (a)(3)(D)(i))

Tip

As Washington implements Washington Pyramid Model, Title I, Part A funds can be used for systems-level and instructional coaching for Early Learning practitioners and administrators, in alignment with K-12 MTSS

ESEA section 8101(42) defines “professional development,” specifically noting that the professional development activities are sustained (not stand-alone, one-day, or short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused.

[OSPI’s Washington State Fellows’ Network](#) - is a group of instructional leaders convened by the OSPI and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) to support district and community implementation of state learning standards in Mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), Science, and the Early Learning Guidelines.

Example:

Hockinson School District uses Title I funds to utilize a certificated staff member to support their Transition to Kindergarten program with the pyramid model in academic readiness through coaching and evaluation.

Parent and Family Engagement

Parent and family engagement (PFE) has an increased emphasis in ESSA. Engaging parents and family can improve the early learning program dramatically, and Title I, Part A can support these activities. To meet the Head Start performance standards, a preschool program supported by Title I must engage in some specific parent and family engagement practices. Title I, Part A funds can be used for reasonable activities that bring families of eligible children into the building to participate in the learning/teaching process. They can also be used for strengths-

based parenting groups to support the transition process. In some cases, Title I, Part A funds can be used to transport parents to these training meetings (*see Parent involvement guidance, E-7, p.* if these are parents of eligible children and the training includes an educational component (e.g., techniques for reading with children, home math activities, etc.). However, the availability of other sources should be considered before Title I, Part A funds are used for transportation. (*ESSA Sec. 1116*) Keep in mind that PFE is more than merely inviting families into the learning space. PFE is a meaningful and two-way conversation that leads to welcoming the family's voice and power.

Tips:

- Build relationships with families at the rate of trust
- Infuse classrooms and school with families' home languages and cultures, and embrace multiple modes of family involvement in the school community
- Intentionally coach parents and staff that families are full partners in their children's education
- Offer authentic family leadership opportunities
- Make space for family voice
- Create opportunities for two-way meaningful conversations
- Maintain a strengths-based approach. Each family and child has something valuable to share

Resources

- Learn more about [Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement](#)
- Find guidance about early learning classrooms partnering with families of Multilingual Learners: [Six Strategies for Partnering with Families of ELLs](#)
- Find more information on compliance, improvement, and ideas for using Title I, Part A for PFE Activities on our [PFE website](#).
- [Family Engagement Framework](#) Pyramid Model Consortium - Positive Solutions for Families
- [RAPID Latest Data and Trends](#) - providing actionable data on the experiences and well-being of the important adults in young children's lives to inform immediate and long-term program and policy decisions.

Example:

Sultan School District (SSD) coordinates with Snohomish County Early Head Start and SSD developmental preschool and transition to kindergarten programs to provide parent training. Title funds will support annual training and coordinate early learning activities in addition to other community preschool providers. Sultan Elementary school advertise preschool programs in monthly newsletters and gives out information to families when they enroll. Transition visits and meetings are held with kindergarten teachers at both schools in the spring. Parents, staff, and students tour and visit kindergarten classrooms in the spring. Developmental-preschool transition meetings involve members from the Student Assistance Team (Care Team), including parents, teachers, administrators, school counselor, and general education teachers. When there are cognitive or other disability concerns, special education staff also attend the meetings, including the school psychologist, special education teachers, SLP's, OT's, and PT's. Parents in local preschools and community members will be notified of all family nights, open houses, and school events that pertain to transition to kindergarten readiness.

Family Visits

Visiting the families of eligible children has shown great success in the Head Start program, but can also be used under Title I, Part A, *PFE (ESSA, Section 1116 (c)(2))*. These visits are also expressly mentioned to support children and families in Title VI (*ESSA, Section 6304 (a)(3)(C)(i-ii)*) for Alaskan Native children.

Family visits can promote school readiness and the transition to kindergarten and are especially helpful for providing information and support to parents and families in an environment in which they are comfortable. While “Family/Home visits” typically take place in a student’s home, the visit can take place anywhere that is convenient for everyone involved. The fundamental goals of home visiting are to build positive relationships between the school and families as well as learn how to best support student progress.

- OSPI’s [Home Visit Toolkit](#) provides practical tools to support classroom teachers and other educators in conducting home visits to increase collaboration with parents and families.
- OSPI’s [Funds of Knowledge Toolkit](#) is an excellent resource for putting home visits to the best possible use.

Example:

Grandview School District partners with the Save the Children Organization to build capacity and provide expertise in building partnerships with birth-3 families. This partnership has helped Grandview to continually improve transitions for early learners into kindergarten. Grandview begins by promoting their preschool program and kindergarten registration at spring conferences. Then in May they hold Early Learning Orientation meetings where they meet with children and families, sending home an Early Learning Toolkit to complete together at home. In August, kindergarten teachers and their building principals hold short, informal **home visits** with all registered kindergarten families. At these visits they get to know their in-coming learners in their home environment and collect information from the Early Learning Toolkits the families completed. Home visiting along with Taste of Kinder (a half day meet-your-teacher event), a migrant Jump Start program, and a variety of other informal orientation events has made a big impact on readiness for kindergarten, as discovered through WaKids data compared throughout the years. Grandview also holds an open invitation to parents, community preschool providers, and private care providers to visit kinder classrooms. Local early learning providers are also invited to Friday PLC’s with kindergarten teachers to encourage and strengthen vertical alignment. With the help from Save the Children Organization, Grandview has been able to support and create a robust transition process for early learners.

Social Services

Children learn best when they have all of their health and nutritional needs met. Title I, Part A provides a way to support those needs when other public or private sources of these services are not reasonably available. Title I, Part A can, as a last resort, provide basic medical equipment such as eyeglasses or hearing aids, compensation for a social services coordinator, family support services, integrated student supports and PD related to the students' needs (*ESSA, Section 1115 (e)(2)(A-B)*).



Inclusive Classrooms

As LEAs plan to expand the availability of high-quality preschool programs, special attention should be paid to how preschool children with disabilities will be identified and meaningfully included. Children with disabilities and their families continue to face significant barriers to accessing inclusive high-quality preschool, even though under IDEA, children with disabilities ages 3–5 are entitled to a free appropriate public education. Therefore, LEAs should examine their policies, procedures, and practices in supporting preschool children with disabilities in their systems and consider how funding can be used to ensure access and participation in inclusive preschool classrooms. Administrators can serve as a community-wide leader for inclusion, by convening a diverse coalition who can implement a culture of inclusion across entire communities. Title I, Part A funds can be used to purchase necessary supplies and provide PD for staff to implement an inclusive classroom. Inclusive classroom settings integrate each child's individual needs into the instructional setting. This includes adaptive supports, environmental modifications, and ongoing teaming to meet the individual needs of the child.

"Inclusion is the belief that all students have a right to meaningfully participate in the general education setting, both academically and socially. Inclusion is realized when all students, regardless of their designation to receive special education services, are provided with targeted services, supports, and accommodations; allowing them to learn in the general education classroom, interact with peers, and engage the core curriculum. Inclusive instruction rebukes the problematic perspective that students receiving special education services need to 'fit in' or 'earn their way' into general education classes. The belief that general education instruction is not malleable and that students should be making adaptations to be included in the general education setting has contributed to the continuation of two parallel systems of education in which students receiving special education services are marginalized and devalued because of their environmental segregation."

-Definition provided by OSPI's Inclusionary Practices Professional Development Project

For ideas on ways to create an inclusive setting consider these resources:

- [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org)-offers support for both families and educators. For educators,

Understood.org provides information around understanding differences, partnering with families, connecting with children, and teaching strategies for learners with disabilities.

- [Research on Parent Involvement with Diverse Families](#)-includes a representative list of recent research literature on multicultural parent involvement and engagement, particularly those which address the interests and needs of educators.
- [ECTA Center: Inclusion](#) and [Preschool Inclusion Finance Toolkit \(ectacenter.org\)](#)
- [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations NCPMI \(usf.edu\)](#) [Early Childhood Inclusion \(parastorage.com\)](#)
- [OSPI and DCYF's Advancing Integrated and Inclusive Programs for Preschool-Aged Children Guide](#)
- [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#)
- [Braided Funding to Promote Preschool Inclusions](#)
- [Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network](#)

Example:

Yakima School District (YSD) utilizes their Title I funds to provide Title I pre-school services at one location within the district (Discovery Early Learning Center). P-3 alignment efforts continue across the district, and the district has partnered with ECEAP/EPIC to provide Title I pre-K classrooms running full-day programs. Yakima is a member of the Preschool Inclusion Champion Network (2020 to present) and joined the B17 [State Systemic Improvement Plan \(SSIP\) Implementation](#) project in the 2021-2022 school year to further their efforts of creating inclusive early learning environments with multi-tiered systems of support, race and equity considerations, and trauma informed practices. Additionally, YSD is one of two local districts in Washington state participating in year one of the [Learning Experiences an Alternative Program for Preschool and Parents](#) (LEAP) Replication model for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years. YSD is also one of four local districts establishing Community Inclusion Teams (CITs). CITs will bring together district leadership with community partners to assess current early childhood systems and the unique needs of children and families with disabilities, utilizing the fidelity metric known as the [Community Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion](#). This project work is included in the intensive technical assistance provided by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center as part of the scale up and sustainability grant awarded to Washington state in the fall of 2023 to increase inclusion and inclusionary practices across the complex mixed delivery system for children ages 3-5 years, enrolled in integrated programs. YSD is currently codesigning a Early Education Fellowship for Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging with the University of Washington's Cultivate Learning Department. YSD is currently planning to braid ECEAP, Title 1, and Special Education funds to increase the number of ECEAP classroom which increases the number of full day preschool classrooms available to all students, including students with IEPs.

Creating a Best Practice Learning Environment

A requirement of **RCW 28A.150.315** is to establish Kindergarten learning environments that are developmentally appropriate and promote creativity.

While this is a requirement for full day kindergarten and TK classrooms, consider this when developing and planning your program. Title I, Part A funds can be utilized to supply and establish a safe, child-centered early learning classroom. Children's environments are considered the "second teacher" where young learners are provided opportunities to experiment, explore, discover, inquire, challenge, and interact.

You can find a list of suggestions for equipping, cultivating, and maintaining a best practice Early Learning classroom in the TK/K Best Practices Guide found on OSPI's [Early Learning Website](#).

Tip

Children learn through attitudes as well as content; therefore, attention should be given to methods, emotional climate, environment, and teacher-child interaction.

See resources below for more considerations:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children ([NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice \(DAP\) Position Statement](#))
- [Considerations for Outdoor Learning](#)
- [Kindergarten Readiness and 3rd Grade Outcomes: A Predictive Analysis Using 2015-16 WaKids and 2018-19 3rd Grade SBA Data](#)
- [Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute](#) – Advancing knowledge to transform children's lives
- [Since Time Immemorial Early Learning Curriculum](#)
- [Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines Birth Through Third Grade](#)
- [Washington State Comprehensive Literacy Plan: Birth to Grade 12](#)
- [Washington State Full-day Kindergarten Guide](#)
- [Washington Open Educational Resources Hub](#)

Dual Language Programs

Washington State is committed to providing dual language learners with effective programs that support their home languages and build English skills. Effective June 6, 2024, [3SHB 1228 \(2024\)](#) ensures support for the expansion of dual language programs for every student in Washington.

Dual Language instruction has numerous benefits, including:

- Improved linguistic and cognitive abilities,
- better academic performance,
- cultural enrichment and preservation of heritage,

- the ability to communicate with more people,
- increased self-awareness and empathy,
- enhanced creativity, and
- understanding of diverse perspectives.

Early learning is fundamental for multilingual students, and dual language learning is the most effective way to meet their needs. Children are built to learn multiple languages, starting from birth. When exposed to different languages, they begin developing different brain patterns and linguistic skills. Being bilingual and biliterate opens doors to new experiences, connections, and opportunities, and it is an asset in today's globalized world!

Dual language programs in early learning can be two-way, with students from each language community working together to learn both languages, or one-way, where the whole class is developing their home language while learning English. Programs may begin in preschool, TK (Transition to Kindergarten), or Kindergarten. Research shows that dual language education is highly effective. Students who have participated in dual language score above average on English reading assessments for both native English-speaking students as well as multilingual learners (Collier & Thomas, 2004). They also perform well in other academic content areas, including when the content was learned in another language but is tested in English. The following resources provide more information on developing and implementing dual language programs for early learning and K-12.

- [Dual Language Program Standards for Early Care and Education \(DCYF\)](#)
- [OSPI Dual Language Website](#)
- [Dual Language Program Guide \(ospi.k12.wa.us\)](#)
- [Common Core State Standards en Español](#)

These resources provide guidance on supporting young children who are learning a second language while continuing to develop their home language.

- [Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)
- [Dual Language Learners | NAEYC](#)

Example:

Kennewick SD uses a portion of their Title I, Part A funds to pay for the Center for Teaching for Biliteracy consultant to provide training for our in-district ECEAP program as they begin a dual language program. They also use funds to purchase SEL curriculum for their developmental preschool. They also conduct transition meetings in the spring with each elementary principal and kindergarten team.

Homeless Children

Children experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible to receive early learning services under Title I, Part A (ESSA, Section 1115 (c)(2)(E)) and the McKinney-Vento Act. These children are at a very high risk of failing to meet state standards and have many academic and social

obstacles to overcome. As a result, the homeless liaison should determine the services needed by the child—both academic and non-academic. Because there is often a waiting list for participation in an early learning program, homeless students rarely have the ability to sign-up on those lists early enough to be able to participate. LEAs and early learning staff are encouraged to work with the homeless liaisons in their area to reserve participation slots for homeless students.

Example:

Highland School District coordinates with the principal and staff at Highland's elementary school to provide a half day preschool program that is inclusive serving students on IEPs, Migrant students, McKinney Vento (MV) students and students in pre-academic need. When a new preschooler enrolls during the school year, the staff at Marcus Whitman Elementary School (MWC) immediately notifies Highland's McKinney Vento Liaison/Migrant recruiter to see if the enrolling preschooler qualifies for the Migrant or McKinney Vento Program. The MV Liaison/Migrant Recruiter also notifies MMC staff immediately when she is interviewing families and finds a four-year-old that is eligible for preschool. We also have two classrooms of full-day Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and the same process above is followed and the elementary staff in collaboration with the parent/guardian decide which program is best for the preschool child. During Spring registration for preschool the following Fall, Migrant and MV students are identified and given priority for enrollment. Space is saved during the school year in both the half day preschool program and the TK program for preschool students that are new to the district and qualify for the MV, foster care or Migrant programs.

The overall impact of the half day preschool program shows that our inclusive preschool program has been beneficial according to data and observation. The Speed Dial assessment is given to each student in the program at the beginning, mid-year and end of year showing student growth in percentile scores. In addition, data has shown that our preschool and TK students are scoring higher on WA Kids assessments/observations than students that attend kindergarten before we had preschool and TK. Also, data shows that students on a speech only IEP in preschool or TK are exiting Special Education speech services at a higher rate than students not attending preschool or TK. In addition, Highland's Spring Intersession invites all incoming Kindergarten students to come to a half day four-day Kinder Camp. Students are introduced and practice school routines, rules, riding the school bus and school expectations as well as being administered the WIDA screener and Speed Dial if needed. Kinder Camp is funded out of LAP Basic funding as well as Title IV funds. The overall impact is also demonstrated in that our preschool students and families enter Kindergarten already navigating our school system, know the rules and expectations of the school and have already experienced an inclusive environment in which all students are accepted and included.

Recruitment and Enrollment

Affordability concerns of preschool programs, lack of transportation, enrollment requirements, need for nontraditional child-care hours, and/or a desire for family members to care for their children at home may serve as barriers to families enrolling in early learning programs. Additionally, parents may not know what signifies high-quality early care, that their LEA offers it, or the benefits of early childhood education for their children. The active recruitment of these families and students is essential in getting underserved populations enrolled in preschool programs, whether in LEA or community-based settings. Title I, Part A funds can be used to:

- Fund an LEA coordinator to recruit and help families enroll and partner with other community-based childcare and preschool programs to develop referral plans and shared transition practices.
- Provide training for parents of children who have enrolled in early childhood programs to act as ambassadors and reach out to other families via community events.
- Provide interim services for families who are wait-listed e.g., weekly activities close to families' homes exposing adults and children to early childhood education activities like coloring, reading books, rhyming, etc.
- Advertise services through recruitment fliers, information packets, websites, videos etc.
- Pay staff to check-in and make regular phone calls to families who are new to the area and are waiting for their child to be eligible for enrollment.



Example:

Evergreen School District created The Preschool Interest Survey. Developed as a regional effort for coordinated recruitment and enrollment with Vancouver PS, Evergreen PS and their three community agencies who provide Head Start and ECEAP. A representative from each of the agencies monitors the survey (below) and then, based on parents' responses, one of the agencies contacts the parent about early learning options and resources (ex. Child Find screenings, Vroom app, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Ft. Vancouver Library "Grow a Reader" events, private or faith-based preschool). The graphic can be used for digital advertising on district and school social media, as well as printed as a flyer or double-sided card for distribution in school district buildings and in the community (ex. health clinics, Chuck E Cheese).

Evergreen PS credits this effort in helping more families find preschool options and the marked increase in the percentage of their kindergarten students who had preschool experience.

See [Evergreen SD Early Learning Website](#) for more ideas.

BLENDING AND BRAIDING WITH OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Blending and braiding funds to maximize opportunities for our youngest learners involves a coordinated effort on the part of States and local communities to support preschool programs across a range of quality settings, building on the expertise and capacity of existing providers and leveraging existing Federal, state, and local funding in conjunction with Title I funds to serve more of our youngest learners in high-quality programs. Improving access is particularly critical for young children impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency and for families who continue to struggle to find affordable, high-quality preschool opportunities. In fact, only 17% of three-year-olds and 41% of four-year-olds in the United States attend a public preschool (Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Hodges, K. S., Garver, K. A., Weisenfeld, G., Gardiner, B. A., Jost, T. M. (2023). *The State of Preschool 2022: State Preschool Yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research).



When effectively layered and braided, federal, state, and local funds can support greater access to preschool, provide full-day, full-year high-quality services to meet families’ needs, provide adequate wages and benefits to staff, and improve quality across programs.

As the LEA performs a needs assessment, the results can be used to help decide which of these funds should be used to support the entire early learning program and benefit the local prekindergarten children. An LEA could strategically examine the needs and possible funding sources, considering which sources overlap and develop a funding plan based upon those available sources. The following Federal programs generally can be used to support preschool activities, though allowability determinations may vary depending on the program.

Title I, Part C (Migrant Education Program)

Title I, Part C, Migrant Education Program funds can be used to provide preschool services to eligible migrant students ages 3–5 not yet in kindergarten. Funds can also be used for training parents and families on strategies to support their children’s learning in the home and increase PD to enhance understanding of the migratory lifestyle.

Title II

Title II, Part A funds can be used to support supplemental professional learning activities for **teachers and principals** involved in early learning (*ESSA section 2103(b)*). Activities may only include ongoing and sustained activities of **four or more days**. Activities that meet the purpose of Title II, A have outcomes focused on:

- Increasing student achievement consistent with state standards,
- Improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers and principals,
- Increasing the number of teachers and principals who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools, and
- Providing low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

TRANSFERABILITY

Please note that both Title II and Title IV funds can be transferred directly into the Title I, Part A budget in the yearly Consolidated Grant Application. Transferring these funds into Title I, Part A can create a larger and more flexible pool of funds LEAs can spend according to their School Improvement Plan (or Schoolwide Plan) as informed by their Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Title III

In Washington State, prekindergarten services cannot be funded with Title III because there is no state screener for prekindergarten English learners. However, Title III can fund PD for early learning educators who teach these English learners. Funds may be expended on PD that is specifically related to English Language Development for English learners. LEAs are encouraged to coordinate with early learning programs to identify students’ home language and any necessary supports to develop and retain the home language, including parent and family engagement, while also supporting English proficiency and fluency.

Title IV

Title IV, Part A funds can be used to help fund early learning programs and activities. The Student Support and Academic Enrichment (Title IV, Part A) program provides funding to improve students’ academic achievement by increasing school district capacity to:

- Provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;
- Improve school conditions for student learning; and
- Increase the use of technology to enhance the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.



General preschool purchases may include obtaining supplemental curriculum, books to supply a program

focused on providing families with reading material for home, SEL programming and additional materials, etc. Purchasing technology and training teachers and other staff on how to use the technology is also allowable i.e. to assist with coordination and outreach by establishing a data base to coordinate and connect with other providers to support the transition to kindergarten. The Title IV A program is a flexible source of funding that is aimed to meet LEA’s unique needs and provides ample opportunities for maximizing the use of the LEA’s pot of federal funds.

Title VI

There are a variety of effective early learning activities and strategies that can have a positive impact in the education of Native prekindergarten children. Title VI funds can support those activities, but each Native group has specific differences. The chart below illustrates the most recent federal guidance can help understand the differences.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>American Indians and Alaska Natives</p> | <p>Under the Title VI, Part A Indian Education Grants to LEAs formula grant program, funds can be used for early childhood programs that emphasize school readiness (<i>ESEA Section 6121 (b)(3)</i>). Also in Title VI, Part A, the Indian Education Demonstration Grants program authorizes the use of grant funds to support preschool and kindergarten programs as long as those programs are effective in preparing children to make sufficient academic growth by third grade (<i>ESEA Section 6121 (c)(7)</i>).</p> |
| <p>Native Hawaiians</p> | <p>Under the Native Hawaiian Education program (Title VI, Part B) funds can be used to support a Statewide Native Hawaiian early education and care system, and to operate family-based education centers, including those that provide services for parents and children from ages birth–3, preschool programs, and research on such programs (<i>ESEA Section 6205 (3)-(A), 6205 (3)-(B), and 6205 (3)-(C)</i>).</p> |
| <p>Alaska Natives</p> | <p>The Alaska Native Education program (Title VI, Part B) allows funds to be used to support early childhood and parent education programs that improve the school readiness of Alaska Native children (<i>ESEA Section 6205 (3)(A), 6205 (3)(B), and 6205 (3)(C)</i>).</p> |

Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in ESSA, Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners, January 2017, p. 16. (ESSA Section 1119).

Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS)

Rural and Low-Income Schools grant funds may be used for any of the expanded opportunities allowed under ESSA in Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, Title III, and Title IV, Part A. This includes early learning services.

Head Start

Most Head Start programs use a variety of added funding sources to operate their early learning program. LEAs that receive Title I, Part A funds are required to coordinate with Head Start programs and with other early learning programs when practical. That coordination could include sharing student information, transition activities, PD, family engagement activities and summer learning programs (ESSA Section 1119).

The Office of Head Start awards grants to public and private agencies on a competitive basis. Head Start grant recipients provide comprehensive early learning and development, health, and family support services to low-income families in a variety of settings including centers, family childcare, school, and children's own homes as described in the Head Start Program Performance Standards and in accordance with the Head Start Act of 2007. Please see the [Office of Head Start](#) and [Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center](#) websites.

Tip

Using multiple funding sources in a braided manner can help ensure consistency and eliminate duplication of services. If an LEA chooses to braid funding, the classroom could include in-kind staff from Head Start or ECEAP and several Head Start or ECEAP students in addition to certificated Early Childhood Special Education teachers for an inclusive placement option.

Please find a Braiding Funds Matrix later in this document.

Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

LAP funds may support early learning transition activities through a number of different strategies provided in the Menu of Best Practices and Strategies. LEAs are encouraged to set up data-sharing opportunities with early learning providers and families to identify the children who may need additional transition support prior to the start of the kindergarten year.

Please note Washington state statute starts LAP eligibility at kindergarten. As such, kindergarten transition strategies funded with LAP should start after a child has enrolled in kindergarten. They may start prior to the first day of school. Examples of allowable LAP funded options after a child has been identified as needing extra support are:

- In late spring/summer, conduct family engagement activities and home visits.
- In summer, before kindergarten starts, early start programming. This could be an earlier start to the year (extended time) or a more informal play and learning group held weekly.

LAP funds could be used throughout the year for professional learning between early learning providers (preschool and childcare) and kindergarten teachers to focus on strategies to improve the academic readiness of students arriving kindergarten. LAP funds for this professional learning should be focused on initial early skills alignment (social emotional, numeracy, and literacy) and focused on the providers serving students most in need of kindergarten transition support. WaKIDS has great resources for LEAs to use for transition to kindergarten and support for locating childcare providers.

More examples of kindergarten transition and readiness support can be found in the [Menu of Best Practices](#).

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

Washington state ECEAP can provide prekindergarten services for 3- and 4-year-old children. To be eligible, a child must fit in one or more of the following categories:

- Qualified by a school district for special education services;
- Currently experiencing homelessness as defined by the federal [McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act](#);
- participated in Early Head Start (EHS) or a successor federal program providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two years of age, the early support for infants and toddlers program (ESIT) or received class C developmental services, the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program (Early ECEAP), or the early childhood intervention and prevention services program (ECLISPE);
- From a family with income at or below 36% of the state median income (SMI) or is a tribal child as defined in rule by the Washington State's federally recognized tribes and DCYF and at or below 100% SMI; or
- From a family with income that exceeds 36% of the SMI and impacted by specific prioritization factors such as receiving Child Protective Services or similar tribal services, Indian Child Welfare or Family Assessment Response (FAR) services.

School Improvement Funds

A school may use ESEA section 1003 funds awarded to the school's Local Education Agency (LEA) to operate an early learning program in that school if it is aligned to the identified school's [School Improvement Plan](#) (SIP). ESEA authorizes an LEA to use section 1003 funds for [Evidence Based Practices](#) (EBP) that support the implementation of the SIP for schools identified as eligible for supports in Tiers 3 and 3 Plus per the [Washington School Improvement Framework](#) (WSIF), and other entities as funds are available. An identified school may use section 1003 funds awarded to the LEA for that school to implement a high-quality early learning program that is designed to improve school readiness if it is aligned to the identified school's SIP. Please see OSPI's [Continuous School Improvement Resources](#), for more information.

Special Education Funds

LEAs should examine their policies, procedures, and practices in supporting preschool children with disabilities in their systems and consider how funding can be used to ensure access and participation in a regular early childhood program or general education setting. A school may build an integrated preschool setting by utilizing IDEA Part B alongside other funding sources.

[WAC 392-172A-01152](#) Regular early childhood program. Regular early childhood program means a program that includes fifty percent or more children who do not have an IEP. Programs may include, but are not limited to, the following: Head start; early childhood education and assistance program (ECEAP); transitional kindergarten; kindergarten; preschool classes offered to an eligible prekindergarten population by the public school system; private kindergartens or preschools; group child development centers; or childcare.

Braided Classrooms

The following matrix can guide LEAs braiding funds.

Funding Matrix

| LEA Level Activities | Title I, Part A | Learning Assistance Program (LAP) | Title I, Part C | Title III | Special Education Funding IDEA, Part B | Career Technical Education & GRADS | Head Start | Child Nutrition Program | ECEAP | Working Connections Child Care Subsidy | State Special Education Allocation | Student Transportation | Private Pay/Parent Tuition | Small rural schools and REAP |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|--|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Classroom and Instructional Supplies | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Child Transportation Services | * | X | X | | X | | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Computer/Information Services | X | X | X | | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Consultants, Training, and Professional Development | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Facilities: Rental and Leases - Land and Building | * | | | | * | | X | | X | X | * | | X | |
| Facilities: Rental and Leases-Repairs, Alterations and Maintenance | * | | | | | | X | | X | X | | | X | |
| Family Support Services | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Food and Kitchen Supplies | | X | | | | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X |
| Furnishings and Equipment | * | | X | | * | X | X | | X | X | * | | X | |
| Health and Nutrition | * | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Home Visits | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Information Packets | X | | X | | | | X | | X | X | | | X | X |
| Library Resources | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Medical Equipment | * | | X | | X | | | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Parenting Education | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Salaries/Benefits: Classroom Teacher | X | X | | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |

| LEA Level Activities | Title I, Part A | Learning Assistance Program (LAP) | Title I, Part C | Title III | Special Education Funding IDEA, Part B | Career Technical Education & GRADS | Head Start | Child Nutrition Program | ECEAP | Working Connections Child Care Subsidy | State Special Education Allocation | Student Transportation | Private Pay/Parent Tuition | Small rural schools and REAP |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|--|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Salaries/Benefits: Paras/Support Staff | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Salaries/Benefits: Admin Support | X | X | | | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Salaries/Benefits: Comprehensive Services | | | | | | | X | | X | X | | | X | |
| Salaries/Benefits: Cook, Kitchen Staff | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | | | X | |
| Salaries/Benefits: Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, etc. | * | | | | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Salaries /Benefits: Mental Health Consultant | * | | | | | | X | | X | | | | X | X |
| Transition Activities: Between Grade Levels. Preschool-Third Grade | X | | X | X | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Transition Activities: Part C to Part B Transitions for Students with Disabilities turning 3 | | | | | X | | | | | | X | | X | X |
| Transition Activities: Sharing Preschool Data with Kindergarten | X | X | X | | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Travel | * | | X | | X | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X |

Cells with asterisks indicate that an LEA considering using federal funds for this activity should consult with OSPI, as it may require preapproval and may have a cost threshold.

Reporting

All students enrolled in and receiving preschool education/services must be reported to CEDARS with a valid value that describes the funding sources used in the Attributes and Programs File (I). If multiple funding sources are used, a unique record of each must be submitted to Attributes and Programs File (I). This includes preschool students with IEPs.

The following will be required when submitting data for prekindergarten students to CEDARS:

- LEA and school enrollment
- Ethnicity and Race
- PreK program funding sources in Student Attributes and Programs File (I), Element 106–Program Code, valid values 56-66, respectively
- All other appropriate program information

LEAs will not be required to submit student course, student/staff schedule or staff file information.

CEDARS PreK Programs Reporting Codes

| CEDARS Program Code | CEDARS PreK Program Types | Fiscal Reporting Information |
|---------------------|--|--|
| 56 | Special Education Preschool | Exclude from Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE); 0-2 Sped PreK FTE is already reported in P223H |
| 57 | ECEAP | Included in PPE (88) |
| 58 | Head Start | Included in PPE (61) |
| 59 | Title I | Included in PPE (88–Federal Fund) |
| 60 | GRADS (Parenting Teen) Preschool | Included in PPE (88) |
| 61 | Family and Consumer Science Preschool | Included in PPE (88) |
| 62 | Private Pay/Tuition-Based | Included in PPE (88) |
| 63 | Grant-Funded | Included in PPE (88) |
| 64 | Working Connections Child Care Subsidy | Included in PPE (88) |
| 65 | Parent Cooperatives | Included in PPE (88) |

| | | |
|----|---------------------|----------------------|
| 66 | Play & Learn Groups | Included in PPE (88) |
|----|---------------------|----------------------|

Transition to Kindergarten

Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, students being enrolled in a Transition to Kindergarten program must be submitted to CEDARS as enrolled with a grade level of TK. The program code of 67 – TK-Transitional Kindergarten, is inactive beginning with the 2024-25 school year.

Students enrolled in TK must be submitted to CEDARS as enrolled in TK and must be submitted with all demographic, attribute, program, schedule and other data as in the same manner as all other publicly enrolled students.

TK students must be submitted to Student & Attributes Program File (I):

- Element I06–Attribute or Program Code a valid value of 67–TK-Transition to kindergarten
- Element I07–Start Date, identifying the date the TK services began

If a student exits TK services during the school year, in addition to being reported as exited from school/LEA you will need to submit the following to Student & Attributes Program File (I):

- Element I08–Exit Date
- Element I09–Exit Reason Code

TITLE I, PART A PRESCHOOL TEACHER & PARAEDUCATOR MINIMUM QUALIFICATION

Teacher Minimum Employment Requirements

Teachers assigned to Title I, Part A targeted assistance programs and all teachers assigned to a Title I, Part A schoolwide building must meet applicable state certification and licensure requirements. A teacher assigned to Title I, Part A may be out-of-field or out-of-endorsement as long as they hold an eligible certificate type, and the school board approved the placement (per WAC 181-82-110 or WAC 392-172A-02090). School board approval must be in place prior to the date the teacher was assigned to a Title I, Part A program.

Preschool teachers should meet the highest professional standards for teaching young children, which ideally include having earned a baccalaureate degree in early childhood education or early elementary education and possessing strong knowledge of child development and background in developmentally informed practices

Paraeducator Minimum Employment Requirements

All preschool paraeducators (instructional assistant teachers, paraeducators, or

paraprofessionals) in a Title I, Part A funded preschool program must meet the new preschool requirements by the beginning of school year 2020–21. (*ESSA Section 1111(g)(2)(J)*)

In a Title I, Part A preschool program in a **Schoolwide program school**, all paraeducators must meet the requirements below, regardless of how their salaries are funded.

In a Title I, Part A preschool program in a **Targeted Assistance school**, a paraeducator paid with Title I, Part A funds must meet the requirements below.

(Note: If instructional assistant teachers, paraeducators, or paraprofessionals, in ECEAP and Head Start programs are paid out of Title I, Part A funds, they must also meet minimum requirements below.)

All K-12 paraeducators (instructional assistant teachers, paraeducators, or paraprofessionals) must meet the following minimum employment requirements:

- Be at least eighteen years of age and hold a high school diploma or its equivalent. In addition, a paraeducator must meet one or more of the following:
 - Have received a qualifying score on the Education Testing Service paraeducator assessment (461); or
 - Hold an associate degree or higher from an accredited college or university; or
 - Have earned seventy-two quarter credits or forty-eight semester credits at the one hundred level or higher at an accredited college or university; or
 - Have completed an apprenticeship as a paraeducator, in a program registered with the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council.

RESOURCES

Federal

- ED, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, [*Non-Regulatory Guidance Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act: Expanding Opportunities to Support our Youngest Learners*](#), Washington, D.C., 2017.
- ED, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, [*Serving Preschool Children Through Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended, Non-Regulatory Guidance*](#), Washington, D.C., 2012. This guidance is valid through the 2016–17 school year, but schools and LEAs may find it useful in regard to family engagement, examples of supplement not supplant, and resources.
- ED, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, [*Parent Involvement: Title I, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance*](#), Washington, D.C., 2004.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. (2018). [*Relationship-based competencies to support family engagement: A guide for early childhood professionals who work with families*](#).
- Council of Chief State School Officers and The National Head Start Association, [*New*](#)

[Early Childhood Coordination Requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)A Toolkit for State and Local Educational Agencies, Head Start Programs, and the Early Childhood Field](#), Washington D.C., 2017.

- *Federal Register*, Vol. 61, No. 78 / April 22, 1996, 17794-17795 (Head Start standards)
- [2 CFR 225, Appendix B \(37\)](#), page 171. (Renting private facilities)
- [34 CFR 77.1\(c\)](#) (minor repairs or remodeling)
- ED, U.S. Department of Education, [Serving Preschool Children Through Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended](#), Washington D.C., 2024
- [Mixed Delivery DCL 2.26.24 pdf](#)

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

- [Transition to Kindergarten](#)
- [Early Learning and Development Guidelines](#)
- [WaKIDS](#)
- [Learning Assistance Program \(LAP\)](#)
- [Early Numeracy Pathways](#)
- [Early Literacy Pathways](#)
- [Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program Guidance](#)
- [Early Learning](#)

Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF)

- [Early Childhood and Assistance Program \(ECAEP\)](#)

Head Start

- [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#)

Third Party

- Sullivan-Dudzic, Linda, Gearns, Donna K., and Leavell, Kelli, *Making a Difference; 10 Essential Steps to Building a PreK-3 System*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2010.
- Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Christina Weiland, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Margaret R. Burchinal, Linda M. Espinosa, William T. Gormley, Jens Ludwig, Kathertine A. Magnuson, Deborah Phillips, Martha J. Zaslow, [Investing in our Future: The Evidence Base for Preschool Education](#). Policy brief, Society for Research in Child Development and the Foundation for Child Development, Foundation for Child Development, (Society for Research in Child Development, 2013).
- Deborah A. Phillips, Mark W. Lipsey, Kenneth A. Dodge, Ron Haskins, Daphna Bassok, Margaret R. Burchinal, Greg J. Duncan, Mark Dynarski, Katherine A. Magnuson and Christina Weiland, [Puzzling It Out: The Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Pre-Kindergarten Effects](#), Brookings, 2017.
- Kauerz, K., Ballard, R., Soli, M., & Hagerman, S. (2021). *Leading learning communities: A principal's guide to early learning and the early grades (Pre-K–3rd Grade)*. Alexandria, VA:

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (A Principal's Guide to Early Learning and the Early Grades)

- Ehrlich, Stacy B., Kyle DeMeo Cook, Dana Thomson, Kristie Kauerz, Mitchell R. Barrows, Tamara Halle, Molly F. Gordon, Margaret Soli, Andrew Schaper, Sarah Her, Gabriella Guerra (2021). *Understanding cross-systems transitions from Head Start to kindergarten: A Review of the knowledge base and a theory of change*, OPRE Report # 2021-128, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (Head start to kinder Resource).

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