

## Stakeholder Voices Influence Early Childhood Transition Priorities Strategies Take Shape for SFY 2021

As a result of the passage of [SHB 2787](#), signed by Gov. Inslee on March 19, 2020, state funding appropriated for the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program will transfer from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) effective Sept. 1, 2020. **Stakeholder voice and influence continue to be at the forefront of the planning and implementation process to help ensure the continuous, unified provision of high-quality, family-centered and culturally-responsive early intervention services.**

Stakeholders representing diverse perspectives and serving in multiple roles have united across the state of Washington in expressing a sense of urgency in proactively planning for the coming changes in the early childhood transition service delivery system. Whether it's through one of the Early Childhood Transition Peer Networks, a session in one of the new four-month ESIT Stakeholder Series, a topic on the State Interagency Coordinating Council agenda, a special convening of the Washington State Early Childhood Coordination Team or other grassroots convenings, the message is clear – **parent, community-based and early learning leaders are committed to upholding the integrity of the early childhood transition process.**

Driven by both an ethical and moral sense of accountability, internal agency representatives and external stakeholders have identified several early childhood transition strategies to (1) meet the requirements for a smooth and effective transition from IDEA Part C early intervention services to IDEA Part B preschool services referenced in WAC 392-172A-02080, (2) comply with joint DCYF and OSPI state-level obligations to ensure seamless transitions as referenced in ESIT State Policy 12.a.2 and **(3) elevate the existing requirements for the formal notification of toddlers “potentially-eligible for IDEA Part B preschool services” by DCYF (State Lead agency) to both OSPI (State Education Agency) and the respective local resident school district (see 34 CFR 303.209).**

**Strategies identified by stakeholders** and currently underway include:

- Design and development of a state-level *Early Childhood Transition Data Share Agreement* between DCYF and OSPI focused exclusively on electronic notifications of potentially-eligible toddlers from DCYF to OSPI, and from OSPI to local school districts.
- Development and direct access to a district-specific portal on ESIT's new Data Management System platform known as Sprout.
- Expanded technical assistance to enhance opportunities for the development of *Local Early Childhood Transition Agreements* focused on timely notifications (6-9 months ahead of third birthdays) of toddlers transitioning from local ESIT programs who are potentially eligible for Part B preschool special education services.
- Renewed commitment to finishing the writing and publication of the *Washington State Early Childhood Transition Practitioner Guide*.

Stakeholders are encouraged to watch for additional opportunities in the upcoming ESIT Weekly publications to actively engage in this critical early childhood transition dialogue and provide feedback on drafted content and timelines in the state-level *Early Childhood Data Share Agreement*.

To learn more about the planning and stakeholder engagement opportunities for the ESIT State Funding Transfer, please contact Valerie Arnold, DCYF ESIT Strategic Innovations Advisor, at 360-485-7773 or [valerie.arnold@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:valerie.arnold@dcyf.wa.gov).