



## Early Achievers Needs-Based Grants Overview

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Needs-Based Grants are available to support early learning programs participating in Early Achievers to assist with purchasing curriculum development, instructional materials, supplies, and focused infant-toddler improvements, equipment and environment improvements to improve program quality. Prior to applying, please thoroughly review the Needs-Based Grant Overview to ensure that you are eligible. A program may receive a Needs-Based Grant one time during each qualifying participation or rating type.

Child care providers participating in Early Achievers may be eligible to receive a one-time Needs-Based Grant, up to \$1,000 for family home child care and child care centers.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

**Early Achievers participants may be eligible for a grant if they meet** the following criteria:

- Be registered for Early Achievers and participating in Level 2, or
- Be registered for Early Achievers and rated a Level 2
- Be registered for Early Achievers and rated a Level 3 or higher (available January-June 2020)

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

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

### **Prioritization**

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

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

- Curriculum development and instructional materials
- Supplies and equipment
- Focused infant-toddler improvements
- Environmental improvements
- Materials to improve scores on the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) or Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- Substitute time
- Trainings/professional development
- Other supplies or equipment to improve program quality, as identified by the coach and approved based on information in the application spend plan

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

## **Application Process**

- A. Applications must be completed and submitted through [WACompass](#), unless your primary language is Spanish or Somali. For instructions and to access the application on a computer or mobile device visit: <https://wacompass.force.com/login>.
- OR**
- B. Translated application materials will be available in Spanish and Somali and can be found on the DCYF website at <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/early-achievers/pre-rating>.
- i. Completed Spanish and Somali applications may be mailed or emailed to DCYF.

### **MAILING ADDRESS**

Department of Children, Youth, and Families  
Attn: Early Achievers Needs-Based Grants  
PO Box 40970  
Olympia, WA 98504-0970

### **EMAIL ADDRESS**

**Needs.basedgrants@dcyf.wa.gov**

In order to receive Needs-Based Grant funds, participants need to have a Statewide Vendor Payee (SWV) number. SWV forms and instructions on how to submit them can be found on the DCYF website at <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/early-achievers/pre-rating>.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

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

Eligible school districts include those where at least 20% of students receive free or reduced-price meals. To determine if a school district is eligible, visit the Washington Public School Data for Area Eligibility Report on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website web site at: <https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/reporting/child-nutrition-program-reports>.

### **Can any eligible Early Achievers participant apply for a Needs-Based Grant, even if they do not work with a Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA of WA) representative?**

No. A child care center may submit an application on their own, but the signature of a CCA of WA Representative (typically the assigned coach) is a requirement for family home child care facilities.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

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

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

No. \$1,000 is the Needs-Based Grant amount for all participants. A grant will not be issued for higher than \$1,000.

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

Yes, a facility that is a Rated Level 2, 3, 3+, 4, or 5 may apply for a Needs-Based Grant. (Levels 3-5 can apply between January 1 and June 30).

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

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

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

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

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

If you think you have a Statewide Vendor Payee number, please be sure to enter it in your application. If you are not sure if you have a number, you can check the online database here:

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

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

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

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

A program may receive a Needs-Based Grant one time during each qualifying participation type (Level 2, rated Level 2, rated Level 3, 4, or 5). If a participant's rating changes after their initial grant award, they may qualify to apply for a second grant.

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

Upon receiving Needs-Based Grant applications, DCYF performs a quality check to ensure the application is complete. A notification of receipt is then sent to the participant. If the application is incomplete, the participant will be notified with instructions on re-submitting.

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

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

**Whom can I contact if I have questions?**

For questions about grant eligibility/spending, email [Needs.BasedGrants@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:Needs.BasedGrants@dcyf.wa.gov).  
For questions about WA Compass access, please email [dcyf.providerportal@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.providerportal@dcyf.wa.gov).