

RCW 43.216.772 Fair start for kids account—Spending goals and strategies. (1) The spending goals and strategies for the fair start for kids account created under RCW 43.216.770 include, but are not limited to:

(a) Increasing child care subsidy rates, with the goal of moving toward the full cost of providing high quality child care;

(b) Expanding health care coverage through state sponsorship of child care workers on the Washington health benefit exchange and providing consumer assistance through navigators, as well as any other expansions of access to affordable health care for staff in child care centers, family home providers, outdoor nature-based care, and early childhood education and assistance program staff;

(c) Increasing child care and early learning providers' compensation;

(d) Implementing the provisions of collective bargaining agreements for family child care providers negotiated pursuant to RCW 41.56.028;

(e) Supporting and expanding access to the early childhood education and assistance program to reach state-funded entitlement required in RCW 43.216.556;

(f) Making child care affordable for families;

(g) Providing resources and supports for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers that better reflect the full cost of care;

(h) Providing child care subsidies for families working to resolve homelessness;

(i) Providing professional development opportunities and supporting the substitute pool for child care and early learning providers;

(j) Delivering infant and early childhood mental health consultation services;

(k) Establishing prekindergarten through third grade systems coordinators at educational service districts;

(l) Supporting youth development programs serving children and youth ages birth through 12 including, but not limited to, expanded learning opportunities, mentoring, school-age child care, and wraparound supports or integrated student supports;

(m) Awarding grants and loans through the early learning facilities grant and loan program established under chapter 43.31 RCW;

(n) Funding special designations in the working connections child care programs, early childhood education and assistance programs, and birth to three early childhood education and assistance programs including designations established in RCW 43.216.579, 43.216.585, 43.216.590, and 43.216.592;

(o) Supporting costs for transparent data collection and information technology systems operated by the department and department contractors, in particular, to ensure equitable systemic service provision and outcomes;

(p) Providing access to learning technology;

(q) Providing child care resource and referral services;

(r) Conducting quality rating and improvement system activities through the early achievers program;

(s) Expanding prenatal to three services and supports, including the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program and the in-home parent skill-based programs established in RCW 43.216.130;

(t) Building and delivering a family resource and referral linkage system;

(u) Allowing the exploration of options to provide regulatory relief and make licensing more affordable for child care providers;

(v) Administering comprehensive shared services hubs to allow the ongoing pooling and shared use of services by licensed or certified child care centers and family home providers;

(w) Training department staff to ensure consistent and equitable application of child care licensing and quality standards across the state including antibias and antiracist training;

(x) Providing incentives and supports for child care providers to become licensed;

(y) Studying and evaluating options to incentivize business participation in child care and early learning systems;

(z) Providing start-up grants to eligible organizations as described in RCW 43.31.575 who provide or commit to providing the early childhood education and assistance program or working connections child care. Start-up grants must be used for one-time start-up costs associated with the start-up of a new child care or early childhood education and assistance program site; and

(aa) Recognizing the benefits of the diverse workforce and facilitating communication in the three most commonly spoken languages by developing a language access plan that centers on equity and access for immigrants, multilingual providers, caregivers, and families.

(2) This section does not interfere with, impede, or in any way diminish the right of family child care providers to bargain collectively with the state through the exclusive bargaining representatives as provided for under RCW 41.56.028. [2021 c 199 s 102.]

Short title—Findings—Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 199: See notes following RCW 43.216.770.