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Transitional Kindergarten Programs in Washington State: *Describing 2022-23 Programs, Educators, and Students*

Transitional Kindergarten (TK) provides a school-based educational experience to children in the year before kindergarten. This program started in a small number of Washington's school districts in 2013. In 2019, Washington's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) published initial TK program guidance, after which the number of districts reporting TK students increased each year. Through the 2022-23 school year, all aspects of TK implementation were locally determined by school districts.

The 2022 Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to summarize statewide information about TK programs and students and to compare TK with the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), the state's income-targeted pre-kindergarten program.[1] The legislature also asked WSIPP to describe districts' rationales and funding sources for offering early learning programming. Finally, the legislature directed WSIPP to compare Washington's approach to other states and to summarize any available TK evaluation studies. Overall, this report contributes to a better understanding of where TK fits in the broader landscape of early learning in Washington.

Summary

This report describes Transitional Kindergarten (TK) in Washington in the 2022-23 school year.

School districts reported their reasons for offering early learning, as well as their funding sources, and we summarize these responses. We use data on TK enrollments to provide program counts and to describe TK program structure. TK largely operates in standalone classrooms or blended with kindergarten in full-day programs aligned with the school year.

We also use administrative data to compare the backgrounds of teachers in TK and the state's income-targeted pre-kindergarten program (ECEAP). Consistent with state requirements, most TK teachers are fully certified and have an elementary education endorsement. We note key similarities and differences in classroom instruction content and strategies based on survey results from TK and ECEAP teachers.

We report on TK student demographic characteristics, developmental services, and prior pre-kindergarten experiences.

Finally, we compare Washington's TK approach to programs available in two other states.

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[1] Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5693, Chapter 297, Laws of 2022.

In Section I, we summarize WSIPP's assignment, our study approach and data sources, and the context of early learning in Washington. In Section II, we describe Washington's TK programs as implemented in the 2022-23 school year, including districts' student enrollment criteria (parts i and vi of the legislative assignment). In Section III, we describe the characteristics of students enrolled in TK in 2022-23 (parts ii—v of the legislative assignment). In Section IV, we compare teachers and classroom instruction in TK and ECEAP (part vii of the legislative assignment). In Section V, we summarize school districts' rationales for offering early learning programs, as well as the funding sources (part vii of the legislative assignment). Section VI reviews TK programs in other states and compares them with Washington's approach before and after new legislation in the 2023 session.[2] We also summarize previous TK evaluation research (part ix of the legislative assignment). Section VII highlights conclusions and limitations. See WSIPP's legislative assignment in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1

WSIPP's Legislative Assignment

… To the extent data is available, the institute shall collect data regarding:

i. *The number of school districts providing transitional kindergarten programs, including the number of classrooms and students in the program per district;*

ii. *The number of children participating in transitional kindergarten programs across the state, disaggregated by demographic information such as race, gender, and income level;*

iii. *The number of children participating in transitional kindergarten programs that attended prekindergarten previous to transitional kindergarten;*

iv. *The number of children participating in transitional kindergarten who received early learning services through the early childhood education and assistance program;*

v. *The number of children participating in transitional kindergarten with an Individualized Education Program;*

vi. *How children are selected and prioritized for enrollment in transitional kindergarten;*

vii. *The differences in teacher preparation, certification, and classroom instruction for transitional kindergarten compared to the early childhood education and assistance program;*

viii. *The identification of why school districts offer transitional kindergarten, ECEAP, and other early learning programs, such as traditional or developmental pre-kindergarten; and what funding sources are used.*

ix. *The use of transitional kindergarten in other states in comparison to Washington state, and any outcome data available.*

ESSB 5693, Chapter 297, Laws of 2022; Sec 604.

[2] Second Substitute House Bill 1550, Chapter 420, Laws of 2023.

I. Introduction

This section summarizes background information about TK, outlines WSIPP's study approach and data sources, and provides a high-level overview of the early learning landscape in Washington State.

Background

OSPI describes TK as a "kindergarten program for children younger than age five who need additional preparation to be successful in kindergarten in the following year and who do not otherwise have access to early learning."[3] More generally, TK programs are "school-based early learning programs that enroll children in the year before kindergarten."[4]

In Washington State, children typically enter kindergarten at age five. School districts are authorized to set uniform qualifications for entry, including birth date requirements.[5] However, school districts may also make individual exceptions to entry qualifications,[6] which has allowed districts to enroll children younger than age five as kindergarten students in TK programs.

Although a small number of Washington's school districts have operated TK programs since 2013,[7] OSPI first published program guidance in 2019 and required schools to report TK enrollments starting in the 2019-20 school year. The number of districts and schools reporting students enrolled in TK has subsequently expanded.[8]

Districts choosing to operate TK classrooms in Washington are expected to follow basic requirements for regular kindergarten classrooms in terms of class size, student-teacher ratio, operating schedule, and teacher qualifications. Within those parameters, decisions about TK implementation and classroom instruction, as well as standards and processes for student eligibility and selection, have been locally determined by districts and may vary considerably. To date, no statewide information about districts' TK programs, teachers, or students has been published.

[3] OSPI Transitional Kindergarten, retrieved December 2023.
[4] Berne, J. Garcia, K. C., Jacob, B., Musaddiq, T., Owusu, S., Shapiro, A., & Weiland, C. (under review). Transitional Kindergarten: The new kid on the early learning block.
[5] RCW 28A.225.160.
[6] WAC 392-335-025.
[7] The Bellingham School District reported that its TK program started in the 2013-14 school year; we understand this to be the first TK implementation in the state.
[8] In addition to public school districts, state tribal compact schools and public charter schools have also been eligible to offer TK, and we include these schools in relevant analyses.

WSIPP's Study Approach

See Exhibit 1 for a complete description of WSIPP's study assignment. Where possible, we obtained administrative data from state agencies. To address parts of this assignment for which no relevant administrative data exist, we collected information directly from school districts and teachers. WSIPP designed and implemented two web-based surveys between April and June of 2023.

Method and Data Sources

Administrative Data

We received data on TK classroom composition and TK teachers from OSPI. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) provided data on Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) teachers. Additionally, the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) provided records for TK students, linked across K-12 and early learning sectors where relevant. See Appendix I for a detailed list of administrative data sources.

District Survey

WSIPP surveyed Washington school districts, Tribal Compact Schools, and charter schools.[9] School district superintendents or early learning contacts reported on early learning, including TK programs, in their respective districts. See Appendix II for details on our survey strategy and sample.

District Survey Sample. Superintendents or early learning contacts from 138 districts responded. This represents 45% of the 306 districts that received WSIPP's survey.[10] Of responding districts, 92% offered one or more early learning programs in 2022-23. Eighty-eight of the districts that responded to the survey reported having a TK program (66% of districts with TK in 2022-23).

Teacher Survey

WSIPP surveyed TK and ECEAP teachers. Teachers reported on a range of classroom instruction practices. Appendix II details our survey approach and more information on how our samples compare to the TK and ECEAP teacher populations.

Teacher Survey Sample. Our final sample comprises 510 lead teachers in TK or ECEAP classrooms or combined TK-ECEAP classrooms. Of the 356 TK teachers identified in the 2023 school year, 163 (47%) responded to our survey. Teachers in the survey sample represented 98 districts (73% of districts with TK). TK teachers who responded to the survey were, on average, similar to the population of TK teachers in terms of experience and education.

Of the roughly 927 ECEAP lead teachers in the 2022-23 school year, 304 (33%) responded to our survey, representing 125 districts (60% of districts with ECEAP).[11] Compared to the population of all ECEAP teachers, respondents had more years of ECEAP teaching experience but had similar education levels.

[9] We distributed a survey to all Washington State school districts, Tribal Compact Schools, and Charter School Commission schools enrolling any students in the range of pre-kindergarten through 5th grade. We use the term districts to refer to this group throughout the report.

[10] Responding districts were largely similar to districts that did not respond; see Appendix II for additional detail.

[11] In our survey sample an additional 43 teachers reported leading a combined TK and ECEAP class. Response patterns for teachers in these classrooms were largely similar to responses for ECEAP. We omit this group from analyses. Ten teachers did not report their school district.

Early Learning in Washington

In this section, we briefly describe Washington's early learning (EL) landscape and highlight the role of school districts in providing EL. To provide context for the comparison of TK with ECEAP as directed in WSIPP's legislative assignment (presented in Section IV), we also include a high-level overview of ECEAP.

EL Settings, Eligibility, and Access

Early learning in Washington is delivered in a range of programs and settings. These include private licensed child care centers and family homes, community-based organizations, the state's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), the federal Head Start preschool program, educational service districts, school districts, and Tribal providers.

Early learning programs vary on a range of factors that determine whether they will meet the needs of children and families, including variation in program setting (e.g., public school or private center), schedule (e.g., length of day, number of days per week, and duration of year), and quality.

Additionally, some EL programs have eligibility criteria targeting specific populations. Income-targeted programs in Washington, including ECEAP and Head Start, are available to 3- and 4-year-olds in families with very low incomes.

Families with low incomes may also be eligible for public subsidies to attend private pre-kindergarten. Historically, Washington has not had a public EL option available for families that do not meet income-targeted or other needs-based eligibility criteria. Families that do not qualify for public programs may be limited both by what they can afford to pay and by what is available in their community.

Despite the mix of EL providers in the state, well-documented gaps in availability and access persist.[12] To address these gaps in part, Washington is moving toward establishing ECEAP as an entitlement program for eligible children by 2026-27 and will also expand ECEAP eligibility to more families.[13]

In recent years, the Governor's office[14] and the legislature[15] have directed DCYF and OSPI to collaborate on strategies to better align and integrate Washington's EL programs to improve access and service delivery.[16]

School Districts as Early Learning Providers

Washington's school districts are long-standing major providers of EL programs. Transitional Kindergarten is a relatively recent entry in this landscape.

Districts have been contracted to provide ECEAP services as well as federal Head Start programs, either directly or through an educational service district. School districts or schools with a high percentage of children from low-income families may offer Title I pre-kindergarten programs.[17]

[12] DCYF (2022). 2021-22 ECEAP & Head Start Saturation Study; Department of Commerce (2022). Washington State Child Care Access Strategy; Weiland, C., Burgess, T., Chaudry, A., Kagi, R., Shapiro, A., & Moran, C. (2021). *Preschool for All: A Strong Start for Washington State's Children.* University of Michigan.

[13] RCW 43.216.556

[14] Governor's directive.

[15] Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5237, Chapter 199, Laws of 2022.

[16] See DCYF & OSPI (2021). Integrated Pre-K – Aligning and Integrating Early Learning Programs.; DCYF & OSPI (2022). Advancing Integrated and Inclusive Programs for Preschool-Aged Children.

[17] Title I, Part A Program (ed.gov).

Districts are obligated to offer or contract services to make free and appropriate education available to preschool-aged students with disabilities. These services may be provided in a range of inclusive settings, including ECEAP, Head Start, or TK classrooms.[18] Districts may also provide tuition-based pre-kindergarten programs. OSPI reports that at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, there were 23,392 students enrolled in a range of district pre-kindergarten programs, not including TK.[19] Exhibit 2 shows recent student counts for major early learning programs in Washington.

ECEAP

ECEAP is Washington State's public preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds in families with very low incomes or other need-based characteristics. Currently, income-eligibility is defined as being at or below 36% of the state median income.

ECEAP has a mandate to prioritize students with a range of family risk factors (e.g., child welfare system involvement or housing instability),[20] as well as students with identified developmental needs. Programs provide services beyond early childhood education, including family support and engagement, as well as child health coordination.

ECEAP services are offered in a variety of contracted public and private settings and can follow a part-day, school-day, or working-day model. A majority of ECEAP slots are part-day, running a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, several days a week, during the school year.

ECEAP is administered by DCYF, and program performance standards set comprehensive statewide requirements for service delivery.[21] Services are intended to meet the developmental needs of preschool-aged children.

Exhibit 2

Number of Students Served by Early Learning Programs in Washington

Program (administration and oversight)	Number of preschool students
ECEAP (DCYF)	15,787
Head Start (Federal Department of Health and Human Services)	7,392
Developmental Preschool (OSPI and U.S. Department of Education)	10,122
Title I Pre-K (OSPI and U.S. Department of Education)	Undetermined
Working Connections Child Care Subsidy Program (DCYF and Federal Department of Health and Human Services)	110,428

Notes:
ECEAP funded slots in 2022-23.
Sources: DCYF 2022-23 ECEAP Contractor Slots, Models, Over-income and Funding. Head Start preschool funded enrollment; Head Start Program Facts: Fiscal Year 2022. Developmental Preschool funded by Part B, IDEA 619, enrollments in 2019-20, as reported in the 2021 IIPK Report. Working Connections Child Care Subsidy preschool counts in 2019-20, as reported in the 2021 IIPK Report.

[18] Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities (ed.gov); 2021 IIPK Report.
[19] OSPI Washington State Report Card 2022-23, Enrollment by Grade. Retrieved 11/29/23.
[20] DCYF (2023). ECEAP 2023-24 Priority Points.
[21] DCYF (2023). 2023-24 ECEAP Performance Standards.

II. Transitional Kindergarten Programs in Washington

As described in Section I, school districts in Washington may elect to offer TK and have considerable autonomy over program implementation. The legislature directed WSIPP to report on TK district, classroom, and student counts, as well as district approaches to determining student eligibility and priority. This section summarizes administrative and survey data on these elements of TK implementation. We present summary counts for all available years and expand on details for 2022-23.

TK Program Counts and Geographic Distribution

The number of school districts reporting TK enrollments increased substantially over the past two school years. This could reflect more districts offering TK, as well as an increase in reporting of TK enrollments. In 2022-23, 44% of Washington's school districts reported TK students.[22] Exhibit 3 shows the number of school districts and schools with TK in 2019-20 through 2022-23, including the total number of classrooms and students in each year.

Exhibit 3

Summary Count of TK Districts, Schools, Classrooms, and Students by Year

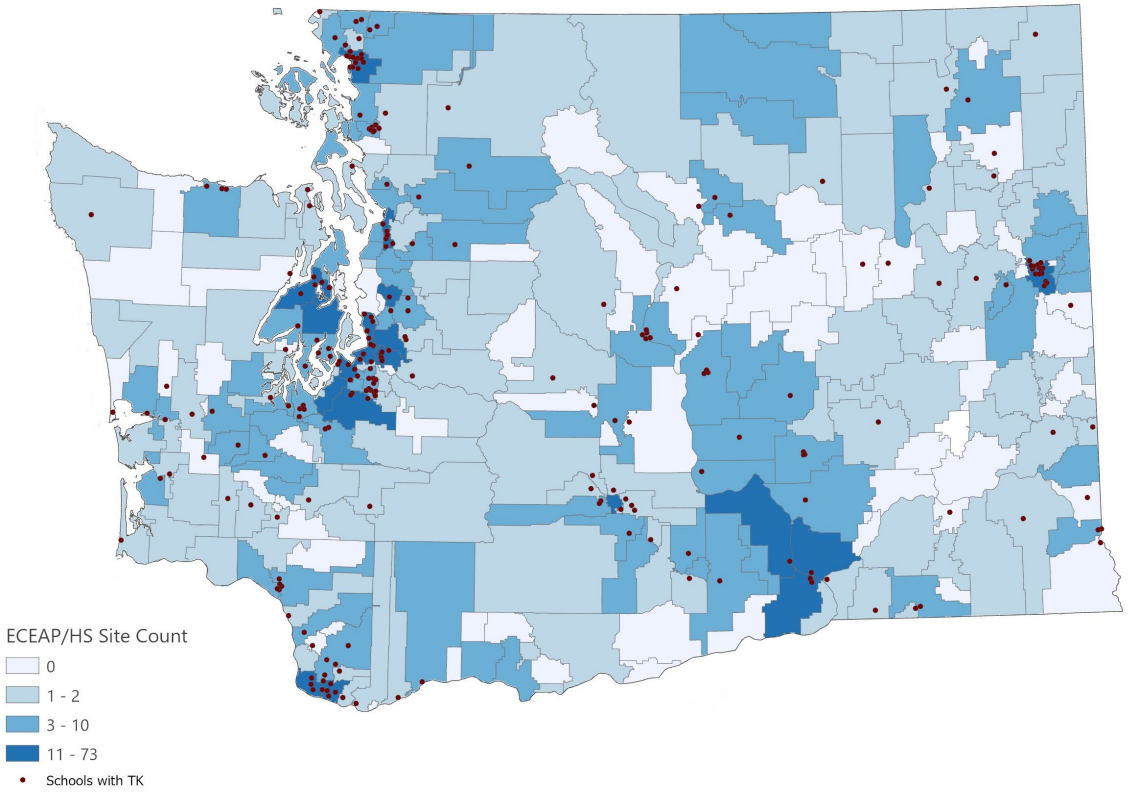
Number of TK:	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Districts	21	31	85	135[a]
Schools	46	44	139	247
Classrooms (all)	48	53	184	337
Standalone	38	45	147	246
Blended TK-PK	3	2	9	33
Blended TK-K	7	6	25	58
Blended TK-PK-K	0	0	3	0
Students	628	729	3,028	4,700

Notes:
TK = Transitional Kindergarten, PK = pre-kindergarten, K = kindergarten.
[a] TK programs in four charter schools and one Tribal Compact school are included in the 2022-23 district counts. District, school, and classroom counts come from WSIPP analysis of OSPI CEDARS records summarizing TK classroom composition for all class sections enrolling at least one TK student, supplemented with TK student enrollment records provided by ERDC. Student counts come from a WSIPP analysis of student-level records provided by ERDC.

[22] This figure is out of a total of 306 entities including 294 school districts, seven schools in the Washington State Charter School Commission, and five Tribal Compact Schools that enrolled elementary students (inclusive of pre-kindergarten through 5th grade) in the 2022-23 school year.

Exhibit 4

Schools with 2022-23 TK Enrollments and Availability of ECEAP or Head Start by School District



Notes:
Schools with TK enrollments were identified in OSPI administrative data.
WSIPP located ECEAP sites in school districts using geospatial records provided by DCYF.
We used public data from the Head Start Locator to map Head Start sites to school districts.

Appendix III lists all districts with TK in the 2022-23 school year, including the number of standalone and blended classrooms and the number of TK students in each district.[23]

In Exhibit 4, we show the geographic distribution of schools that offered TK in 2022-23, along with the availability of other public early learning programs (ECEAP or Head Start) for each school district. Transitional Kindergarten programs were distributed across Washington and operated in 35 of the state's 39 counties. Unsurprisingly, we observe a clustering of sites in more heavily populated areas of the state.

Of districts with TK enrollments in 2022-23, 84% had at least one ECEAP or Head Start site available in the district. Roughly 50% of districts with TK had two or fewer ECEAP or Head Start sites.

[23] OSPI provided class count and composition data for each section enrolling one or more students with a TK program flag. During our study period, TK students were supposed to have a kindergarten grade level enrollment, *and* have a TK program flag applied. We are aware of errors in school level reporting of TK students during our study period, particularly in early years. WSIPP took multiple steps to validate these data; in Appendix IV we describe the process of developing a final TK class dataset for the purpose of district-, school-, and classroom-level counts.

How do TK and non-TK Districts Compare?

Exhibit 5 compares school districts with and without TK enrollments in 2022-23. On average, districts with TK had a higher share of Latino students and somewhat lower shares of Black, Asian, and American Indian/Alaska Native students. Districts offering TK had a larger share of students from low-income families.

Districts with TK had a larger total number of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten enrollments, were less rural, and had more schools in suburban or city locales.

Districts with and without TK programs in 2022-23 showed a similar proportion of 3- and 4-year-olds in families at or below 50% of the state median income enrolled in publicly funded child care or early learning.[24] This metric cannot speak to the overall proportion of preschool-age children in TK and non-TK school districts enrolled in early learning.

Exhibit 5

Characteristics of Districts With and Without TK Enrollments in 2022-23

	District TK status	
Student characteristics	**No TK**	**TK**
% White	50%	49%
% Black*	6%	4%
% Asian*	11%	7%
% AIAN*	2%	1%
% Latino*	22%	28%
% NHPI	1%	2%
% Two or more races	9%	9%
% ELL	12%	14%
% Low income*	44%	50%
% Special education	14%	14%
District characteristics	**No TK**	**TK**
Total PK-K enrollment*	259.60	427.28
% of students ≤ 50% SMI in public CC/EL	33%	35%
% Title I	73%	78%
% Rural*	61%	46%
% Suburban*	16%	23%
% Town	17%	21%
% City*	7%	12%
Districts (N)	171	135

Notes:
* Significant at the 0.05 level.
AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native.
NHPI = Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.
CC/EL = Child care and early learning.
Student characteristic comparisons are for averages weighted by total district enrollment.
Sources include OSPI Report Card data from 2022-23, ELSI schools data for 2021-22, and DCYF child care and early learning need and supply data for 3- and 4-year-olds by school district for 2023-24.

[24] Data for this analysis were provided by DCYF. Enrollments include ECEAP, Head Start, and licensed private child care funded through the Working Connections Child Care Subsidy program.

TK Program Structure

We used administrative records to examine structural features of TK in 2022-23, including classroom type, class size and composition, and student-teacher ratios, as summarized in Exhibit 6.[25]

Classroom Type

Most of Washington's TK classrooms offered a standalone program. In 2022-23, 81% of TK districts offered one or more standalone TK classes, and 12% of TK districts offered one or more blended TK classes, the majority of which blended TK and kindergarten (see Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6

TK Class Size and Composition by Classroom

	TK classroom type		
	Standalone	TK-PK	TK-K
# of districts	109	9	29
# of classes	246	33	58
Class size			
Range	6-32	10-21	7-33
Average	16.9	16.7	18
Average % TK	100%	39%	66%

Notes:
TK-K = Transitional Kindergarten and kindergarten.
TK-PK = Transitional Kindergarten and pre-kindergarten.
WSIPP analysis of OSPI administrative records.
The district count exceeds the total number of districts with TK because some districts operate both standalone and blended classrooms.

Class Size and Composition

For all TK classroom types, the range of class sizes varied widely. The average class size was comparable for standalone and blended classes, although slightly higher for TK and kindergarten blends (TK-K). In blended classes, TK students tended to make up a larger share of the class in TK-K classes than in blended TK and pre-kindergarten (TK-PK) classes.

Teacher-Student Ratio

Most 2022-23 TK classes (84% overall) had a single teacher assigned.[26] A higher percentage of blended TK-PK classes had two or more teachers. On average, standalone TK and blended TK-K classes had one teacher for every 16 students, and blended TK-PK classes had one teacher for every 14 students.[27]

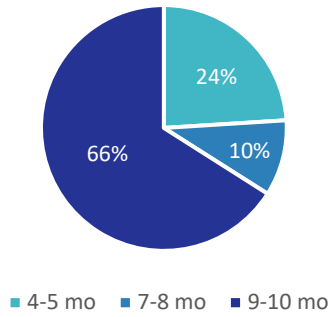
For context, average TK class sizes and ratios are slightly lower than the 1 to 17 guidance for general education average class sizes for kindergarten.[28] Ratios are higher than Washington's standards for child care and early learning programming, which require a maximum group size of 20 and a 1:10 ratio for 3-6-year-old children not attending kindergarten and a maximum group size of 30 and a 1:15 ratio for school-age children.[29]

[25] Source is WSIPP analysis of OSPI TK Classroom Composition records for all classrooms enrolling at least one TK student. See Appendix IV for detail on data processing.
[26] Classroom assignments for paraeducators are not systematically reported, so we are unable to account for paraeducators that may be present in TK classrooms to lower the student-teacher ratio.
[27] OSPI administrative data do not differentiate whether teachers assigned to a TK class were consecutive or concurrent, so teacher-student ratio should be interpreted with caution. However, given that most classes had only one associated teacher, ratio largely reflects class size.
[28] RCW 28A.150.260.
[29] WAC 110-300-0356.

TK Program Length and Schedule

Districts' survey responses included information about the length and schedule of their TK program in 2022-23. Districts reported programs ranging from 4 to 10 months (Exhibit 7). Most noted that their TK program aligns with the K-12 calendar, which starts in August or September.

Exhibit 7
2022-23 TK Program Length (N=82)



Note:
WSIPP analysis of school district survey data.

We asked the 28 districts reporting that their TK program was less than nine months to explain why they ran a shorter program. Most commonly, 36% of these districts indicated that a later TK start date allowed for other early learning programs to complete fall enrollments first so that TK programs could identify students not yet enrolled in an EL program.[30] Additionally, 21% noted that starting in October or November provides their staff with adequate time while under contract to recruit and appropriately screen students.

Districts also noted that offering a shorter program in the 2022-23 school year was a result of the need for planning time or challenges in hiring teachers (32%) or the timing of grant funding (18%). Roughly one-third of the districts volunteered their intent to run a school-year TK program in 2023-24.

Finally, 18% of the 28 districts with a program shorter than nine months noted that they have intentionally offered a 20-week TK program.

TK Eligibility and Priority

Districts that offer TK are expected to establish a screening process to identify students who meet eligibility criteria and need educational support for kindergarten. Districts' survey responses included information about their screening process, as well as eligibility and priority criteria.

Student Age. All 81 districts responding to questions in this section stated that students must be age-eligible to attend TK. Of those districts, 80 indicated that they set a minimum age for eligibility, and 71 indicated setting a maximum age. Within students who are age-eligible for TK, most districts indicated that they do not prioritize based on age.

Student Residence. Most districts (80%) require that students reside in the school district, and 74% indicated that they prioritize students residing in the district. Only 26% of districts require students to reside in the catchment area for the school where TK is offered; 35% prioritize students living in the school catchment area.

[30] This part of WSIPP's survey only asked for additional explanation if districts reported that their TK program started after September in the 2022-23 school year. We asked all districts an additional question regarding coordinated recruitment and enrollment efforts; results are summarized later in this section.

Early Learning Access. OSPI's guidelines for TK specify that students should not have had other access to EL programs. Of districts with TK responding to eligibility and priority questions, 79% reported that they require students to have no other EL access; 81% reported that they prioritize these students.

Screening Instruments. Over half of responding districts indicated that they use scores on a screening instrument to identify students in need of additional support prior to kindergarten. Districts use instruments to determine student eligibility, prioritize eligible children, or both (see Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8

% of Districts Reporting Screening Instrument Use for TK Eligibility or Priority

Does your district use an instrument for screening? (N=82)	
	%
No	11%
Yes (for eligibility)	55%
Yes (for priority)	61%

Which instrument(s) does your district use?	
	%
No response	15%
District-created instrument	35%
Validated screening instrument (e.g., ASQ; DIAL 4; Brigance)	45%
WaKIDS or TS GOLD	37%

Note:
WSIPP analysis of school district survey responses. Some districts gave multiple responses; percentages do not sum to 100%.

Of districts reporting that they use a screening instrument, roughly one-third reported using an instrument created by the district. OSPI provides examples of validated screening instruments, and 45% of districts reported using these or comparable instruments. Districts most frequently reported using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Over one-third of districts indicated that they use the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) or Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) developmental assessments for screening.[31]

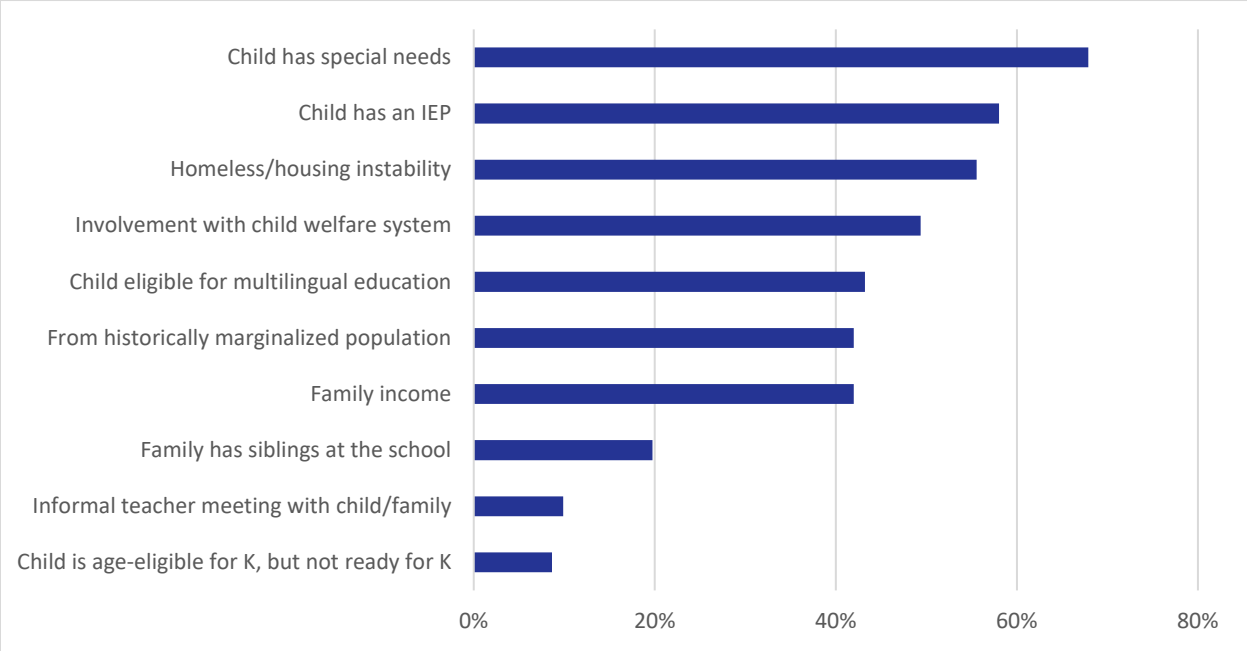
Child and Family Characteristics. Most districts reported that they consider a combination of residence, EL access, screening instruments, and other child and family characteristics to prioritize students for TK enrollment. Exhibit 9 shows the percentage of districts that endorsed each of an array of priority factors beyond residence, EL access, and screeners.

Of the TK districts that responded to questions about priority factors, more than half of districts prioritize students with special needs or an Individual Education Program (IEP). Between 40% and 60% of districts say that they prioritize students in families with risk factors, including housing instability, child welfare system involvement, low income, or membership in a historically marginalized population. Approximately 40% prioritize students eligible for bilingual/multilingual education services.

[31] We asked "What assessment(s) are used in your districts screening process to determine student eligibility for TK?" The WaKIDS and TS GOLD assessments are intended to be based on classroom observations conducted in the first months of the school year for TK/kindergarten and ECEAP programs, respectively. It is possible that respondents misinterpreted our survey questions, and inaccurately indicated that they are using these assessments for screening to determine eligibility. Alternately, it is possible that respondents were referring to the family connection interview, or that some districts use these assessments for screening without direct classroom observation (e.g., by using parent report).

Exhibit 9

% of Districts Endorsing Child and Family Characteristics as Priority Factors for TK Enrollment



Note:
WSIPP analysis of school district survey data. N=81 districts with TK in 2022-23.

TK Program Access and Coordination

We also asked districts to report on how they manage TK access when the number of eligible children exceeds available TK seats. Of responding districts, 38% reported that they enrolled all eligible TK students. Of these, two-thirds added new TK classrooms to meet demand, and one-third added paraeducators to classrooms. Several rural districts noted that their eligible student counts are lower than classroom capacity.

Most districts (62%) do not offer a seat to all eligible students. Instead, districts report allocating seats using a combination of student assessment scores (40%), child or family characteristics (31%), and order of application (28%) or lottery (5%). Several districts also noted that they coordinate with other programs to identify an appropriate EL opportunity for all students.

Finally, TK districts responded to one survey question about their efforts to coordinate with other early learning providers in their communities. Roughly half of districts reported coordinating outreach and recruitment, as well as referring students to the "best fitting" program. About one-third of responding districts coordinated program application, eligibility screening, and setting priority criteria.

Some districts indicated that they prioritized students eligible for ECEAP/Head Start who did not receive a slot in one of those programs, while other districts prioritized students who did not meet family income requirements for ECEAP/Head Start.

III. Transitional Kindergarten Students in Washington

This section uses administrative data to summarize the demographic characteristics, developmental services, and prior pre-kindergarten enrollments of TK students in the 2022-23 school year.

Demographic Characteristics

We identified 4,700 TK students in the 2022-23 school year and summarized their demographic characteristics in Exhibit 10.[32] Most students were age four at the start of their TK year; 11% of students were age five. Roughly half of TK students were enrolled in the free/reduced-price lunch program.

Compared with all students enrolled in kindergarten in districts offering TK in 2022-23, TK students were largely similar to the population.[33] A slightly smaller share of TK students were White (47.8% for all kindergarten), and a larger share were Hispanic/Latino (28.3% for all kindergarten). A higher share of TK students were enrolled in the free/reduced-price lunch program (44.4% for all kindergarten).

Exhibit 10

2022-23 TK Student Demographics

Variable	Proportion
Number of TK students = 4,700	
Gender	
Female	49.3%
Male	50.3%
Other	0.4%
Race/ethnicity	
AIAN	1.2%
Asian	6.2%
Black/African American	5.9%
Hispanic/Latino	33.0%
NHPI	1.0%
Two or more races	8.0%
White	44.6%
Age at start of the school year	
Three years	0.2%
Four years	88.4%
Five years	11.4%
Free/reduced-price lunch	
None	48.7%
Reduced-price lunch	13.5%
Free lunch	37.7%
English Language Learner	13.3%

Notes:
AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native.
NHPI = Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.
WSIPP analysis of OSPI CEDARS student demographic and program records, linked by ERDC.

[32] We restricted our sample to include only students likely to be correctly classified as TK students. We dropped student records for students younger than three or older than six as of September 1st in the year of their TK enrollment (208 records), for students with grade level coded as 1st grade (three records), and for students in a district with fewer than three TK students in the school year (27 records). For students with two TK enrollments in the same school year (191), we retained the first record.

[33] We compared TK student characteristics summarized at the district-level with district-level kindergarten student characteristics in 2022-23 OSPI Report Card data. Because we cannot disaggregate TK from K students in the Report Card data, our comparisons are between TK students and combined TK plus K students. Any group differences are likely larger than those reported here. Nevertheless, the direction of group differences is unaffected by this aggregation.

For context, we also compared TK and ECEAP student profiles.[34] A larger share of TK students were White (45% compared to 34% in ECEAP), and a smaller share were Latino (33% compared to 41% in ECEAP). TK served a relatively smaller share of English Language Learners (13% compared to 27% in ECEAP) and a smaller share of students enrolled in the free/reduced-price lunch program (51% of TK students qualify; 92% of ECEAP students qualify).

Developmental Services

In the 2022-23 school year, 8.8% of TK students had an IEP at some point during the school year.[35] About a quarter of these students had an IEP prior to the start of their TK year, while the remaining three quarters started their IEP during their TK year. Additionally, 2% of students had exited an IEP prior to TK.

Within districts offering TK in 2022-23, fewer TK students had an IEP relative to all students enrolled in kindergarten (12.5%). TK also had a smaller share of students with an IEP relative to ECEAP (13.7%)

Prior Early Learning Experiences

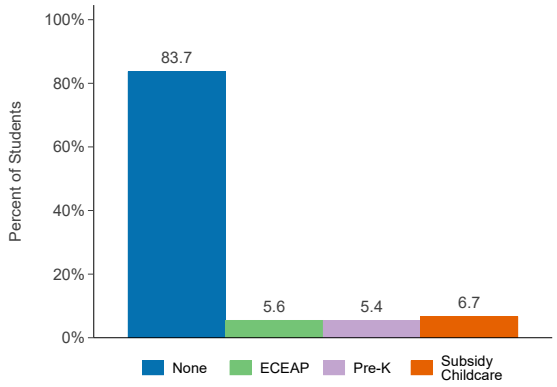
We did not observe any prior early learning experience for most TK students (72%) in 2022-23. We observed pre-kindergarten or child care enrollment during the previous school year (2021-22) for only 16.3% of students (see Exhibit 11).

These enrollments were evenly distributed among ECEAP, district pre-kindergarten programs, and licensed child care funded by the state subsidy program. Only 7% of TK students were in child care or early learning two years prior to their 2022-23 TK enrollment; nearly all of these were in licensed child care with subsidy.

These figures may underestimate the share of TK students with prior enrollments due to limited administrative data. Head Start and Seattle Public Preschool programs serve students that we do not observe in school district pre-kindergarten records. Further, students may have attended private licensed providers through means other than state subsidy; these records are not included in child care subsidy payment data.

Exhibit 11

Prior Year Early Learning or Child Care Settings for 2022-23 TK Students



Notes:
WSIPP analysis of OSPI CEDARS student program records, linked by ERDC. Some TK students were enrolled in more than one setting in the prior year.

[34] Comparisons here are with ECEAP students in the 2020-21 school year, as reported in DCYF's ECEAP Annual Report, 2019-2021.

[35] We observed an increase over time in the share of TK students with an IEP. During the 2020-21 school year roughly 2% of TK students had an IEP. This trend could reflect a change in district approaches to TK, or the documented challenges with accessing student special education services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. Comparing Washington's Transitional Kindergarten and ECEAP Teachers and Classrooms

The legislature directed WSIPP to compare teacher preparation, certification, and classroom instruction for TK and ECEAP. In this section, we first summarize teacher educational qualifications and experience for both groups based on WSIPP analysis of administrative data.[36] Second, we compare classroom instruction in TK and ECEAP programs as reported in teachers' survey responses.

TK and ECEAP Teacher Background

We focus on primary TK teachers and lead ECEAP teachers in the 2022-23 school year. We identified records for 344 TK teachers [37] and 927 ECEAP lead teachers.[38] Exhibit 12 summarizes teacher demographic characteristics.

The specific educational requirements for TK and ECEAP teachers differ. Like other K-12 teachers, TK teachers must hold a bachelor's degree or higher and complete a state-approved teacher preparation program.[39] By contrast, DCYF requires that ECEAP lead teachers hold an associate degree or higher with an early childhood education (ECE) major or a DCYF-approved equivalent.[40]

Exhibit 12

Demographic Characteristics of TK and ECEAP Lead Teachers, 2022-23

Demographics	TK	ECEAP
Gender		
Female	95%	97%
Male	4%	3%
Other/not reported	1%	0%
Race/ethnicity		
AIAN	2%	2%
Asian	2%	4%
Hispanic/Latino	9%	25%
Black or African American	3%	5%
NHPI	1%	1%
White	90%	68%
Other/not reported	2%	20%

Notes:
AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native.
NHPI = Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.
WSIPP analysis of OSPI administrative records for primary TK teachers and DCYF administrative records for ECEAP lead teachers.

Teacher Highest Degree

Highest degree for TK teachers and ECEAP lead teachers in 2022-23 varied consistent with educational requirements, as shown in Exhibit 13. Note that highest degree alone—without respect to certification (for TK teachers) or ECE-specific training (for ECEAP teachers)—does not determine whether a teacher has met the educational requirements for their respective program.

[36] Appendix I lists all administrative data sources used in this analysis of teacher educational background and experience.
[37] OSPI records included 11 classes enrolling one or more TK students for which no teacher had been assigned in the administrative data system. These unidentified teachers cannot be included in our analysis.
[38] DCYF's Early Learning Management System (ELMS) is the system of record for ECEAP teachers. Of 927 ECEAP lead teachers in ELMS, 72% could be matched to DCYF's MERIT data system, which includes degree type, credentials, and teaching experience in. We are unable to report this information for the remaining 28% of ECEAP teachers. In general, OSPI's workforce data are more complete than DCYF workforce data, and as a result we can report with greater confidence on TK teacher background.
[39] OSPI. Washington State Certification Frequently asked questions.
[40] DCYF. 2023-24 ECEAP performance standards.

Exhibit 13

Highest Degree for TK and ECEAP Lead Teachers, 2022-23

Highest degree	TK (N=344)	ECEAP (N=927)
Graduate (MA/Ph.D.)	52%	13%
Bachelor's	44%	30%
Associate	--	28%
Some college	--	6%
High school diploma	--	14%
Other/unreported	4%	10%

Notes:
WSIPP analysis of OSPI administrative records for primary TK teachers and DCYF administrative records for ECEAP lead teachers.
Shaded cells indicate that the highest degree could potentially fulfill educational requirements for a teacher in this program if other conditions are met.

Teacher Qualification Status

For K-12 teachers, including TK teachers, required teaching certificates are administered by OSPI. Teachers may hold full or limited certificates. Limited certificates are issued to teachers who do not yet meet all job requirements for their positions.[41] Among 2022-23 TK teachers, 84% held a full certificate for the full school year, and 15% held a limited or partial-year certificate.

ECEAP lead teachers are required to have an associate degree or higher in ECE or a related field. Teachers who meet these requirements are considered "fully qualified." ECEAP teachers who do not fully meet DCYF requirements for their role may continue working and enroll in a professional development plan (PDP). In 2022-23, 60% of ECEAP lead teachers were fully qualified, with the remaining 40% enrolled in a PDP.[42]

ECE Credentials. We examined the highest ECE credential for ECEAP teachers. Detailed records were available for 72% of ECEAP lead teachers in 2022-23. Of these, 63% held at least one ECE credential. In addition to traditional degree programs, all Washington early learning teachers can earn ECE credentials by completing one or more "stackable" certificates.[43]

[41] WAC 181-79A-142; Limited certificates include emergency certificates, intended to help schools experiencing staff shortages, and transitional certificates intended for teachers completing remaining job requirements.

[42] We examined retention in both groups. Of 197 TK teachers in 2021-22, 54.8% returned as a TK teacher in 2022-23. Of 753 ECEAP lead teachers, 76% returned as an ECEAP teacher in 2022-23.

[43] The stackable certificate series includes: A 12-credit Initial Certificate, an 8-credit Short Certificate, and a 27-32-credit State Certificate. Credits earned for these certificates can also count toward meeting degree program requirements. DCYF Publication EPS_0026 (05-2023).

Exhibit 14 summarizes the distribution of the highest ECE credential for ECEAP lead teachers. Of the teachers without a completed ECE credential, roughly half have an associate degree or higher in another field. We cannot speak to ECE credentials for TK teachers; no comparable records exist for this group.

Exhibit 14

Highest ECE Credential for ECEAP Lead Teachers, 2022-23

Highest completed ECE credential	% of teachers
Graduate (MA/Ph.D.)	4.8%
Bachelor's	14.9%
Associate	24.1%
State Certificate (27-32 credits)	4.8%
Short Certificate (8 credits)	7.1%
Initial Certificate (12 credits)	7.5%
None/in progress	36.8%

Notes:
DCYF records for ECEAP lead teachers, N=665.
Teachers with a higher-level ECE certificate have completed the lower-level certificate(s).
We grouped several additional certificate types under the state, short, or initial certificate categories based on similar credit load. The highest ECE credential is unknown for 262 additional teachers not observed in the MERIT data system.

TK Teacher Subject Area Endorsements

All K-12 teachers may hold subject area endorsements on their teaching certificates to signify an area of specialization within a degree program. We identified four endorsement areas most relevant to TK: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Special Education, and English Language Learner/Bilingual Education (ELL). In 2022-23, 78% of TK teachers held at least one of these endorsements on a full certificate.[44] Some teachers held multiple endorsements. Exhibit 15 summarizes the share of TK teachers with an endorsement in each of these areas.

Exhibit 15

Subject Area Endorsements for TK Teachers, 2022-23

Teaching certificate endorsement	% of teachers
Elementary Education	67%
Early Childhood Education	19%
Special Education	15%
English Language Learner	9%

Note:
OSPI records for TK teachers, N=344.

Teaching Experience

Among TK teachers in 2022-23, 67% had at least one year of prior teaching experience in pre-kindergarten, TK, kindergarten, or 1st grade in the public school system in Washington.[45] Detailed information about teaching experience by grade level for TK teachers is included in Exhibit 16.

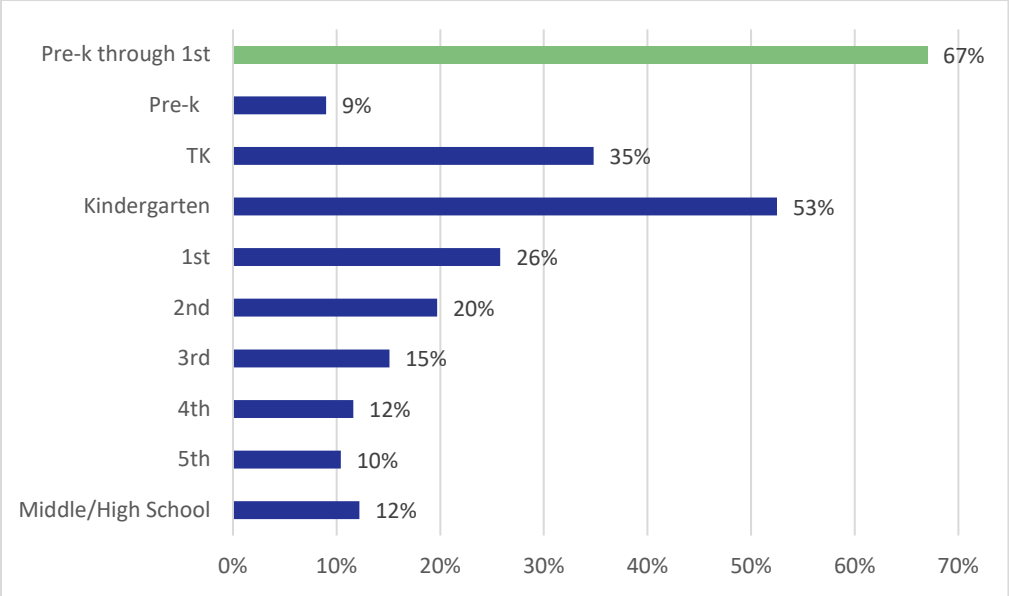
No comparable comprehensive record of ECEAP teachers' experience is available. Among 2022-23 ECEAP lead teachers, 71.4% had at least one year of prior experience as an ECEAP teacher in the 2019-20 through 2021-22 school years.

[44] Of the remaining 22% of TK teachers, most held one or more endorsements in these areas on a limited or part-year certificate. Only 3.8% of teachers held a certificate with no endorsement.

[45] Administrative records for prior teaching assignment by grade code for TK teachers started in the 2002-03 school year, covering approximately two decades of teaching experience. This is limited to teaching experience under school district employment. We cannot speak to early learning teaching experience in the private sector or public programs operated outside of the public school system.

Exhibit 16

% of 2022-23 TK Teachers with Prior Teaching Experience by Grade



Note:
WSIPP analysis of OSPI administrative records.

TK Teacher Background by Classroom Type

Finally, for TK teachers, we compared teacher background by TK classroom type. Compared with teachers in standalone TK classrooms, teachers in blended TK classrooms were more likely to hold a graduate degree and more likely to have "fully certified" status. Transitional Kindergarten-kindergarten blend teachers were more likely than other teachers to have previously taught in pre-kindergarten through 1st grade.

An elementary education endorsement was by far the most common for all TK classroom types. The distribution of endorsements was similar for teachers in standalone TK and TK-K blended classes; the share of teachers in TK-PK classrooms with a special education endorsement (31%) was higher than in standalone (11.8%) or TK-K classrooms (19%).

Classroom Instruction in TK and ECEAP

We describe classroom instruction in TK and ECEAP classrooms in the 2022-23 school year based on findings from WSIPP's teacher survey, as described in Section I.

Teachers answered questions about instructional content, group and instructional setting, use of developmental assessments, and curricula. These areas each reflect a unique dimension of classroom teaching, with evidence to support developmentally appropriate use for pre-kindergarten-age students.

Throughout this section, we highlight similarities and differences between TK and ECEAP teachers' responses.[46] We additionally note where ECEAP performance standards establish expectations for an element of classroom instruction.

Instructional Time

In our survey sample, over 90% of TK classrooms operate five days a week and operate for 5.5-7 hours per day (i.e., school- day program).

About 30% of ECEAP classes in our survey sample operate five days a week, and 50% operate school-day programs.[47]

Instructional Content

In both classroom types, most teachers report daily instruction in reading/language arts and math. As summarized in Exhibit 17, a larger proportion of TK classrooms, relative to ECEAP classrooms, report dedicating more days and hours per day to reading/language arts and mathematics instruction. About 92% of TK teachers report daily reading and language arts instruction (compared with 79% for ECEAP). About 83% of TK teachers report daily mathematics instruction (compared with 66% for ECEAP).

More ECEAP classroom teachers report dedicating daily instructional time and more hours per day to art and music relative to TK classrooms. For example, roughly 80% of ECEAP classrooms have art and music daily, versus roughly 40% of TK classrooms.

TK and ECEAP teachers report comparable instructional time dedicated to other content areas, including social-emotional learning (about 90% instruct daily) and social studies (about 30% instruct daily).

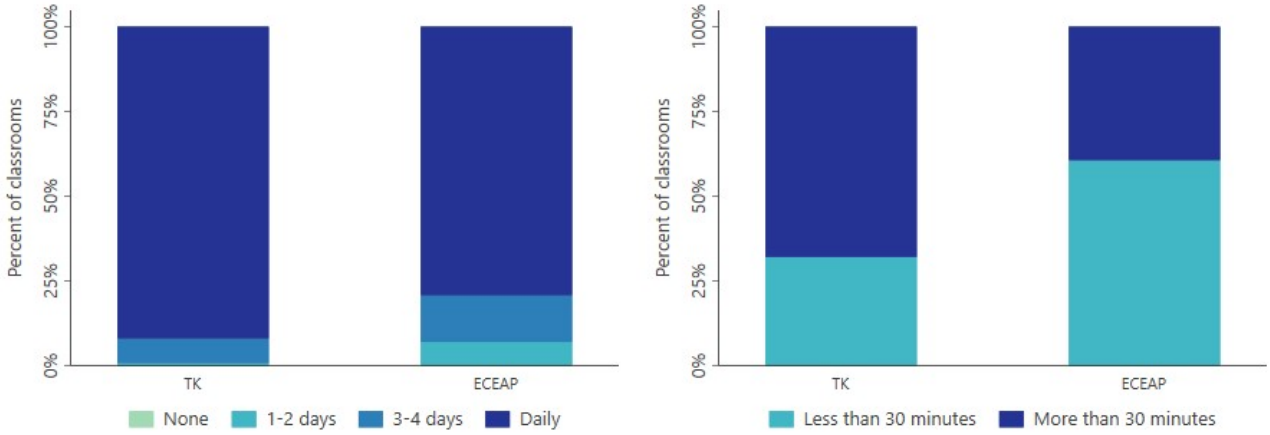
[46] Of the 163 TK teacher respondents, about 90% were in standalone TK classrooms, and only about 10% were in either blended TK-PK or TK-K classrooms. We combine these TK groups for all analyses. In our TK classroom composition summary over 25% of 22-23 TK classrooms are blended. TK teachers in blended classrooms are likely underrepresented in our survey sample.

[47] ECEAP classrooms may operate a part-day, school-day, or working-day program model. In 2022-23 approximately 57% of ECEAP slots were in part-day programs, 38% in school day programs, and 5% in working-day programs (DCYF 2022-23 ECEAP Contractor Slots, Models, Over-income, and Funding). School-day programs are overrepresented in our survey sample of ECEAP teachers. When comparing days of instructional content, we only describe classrooms that operate five days a week. The distribution of instructional time for content areas is comparable when we examine the sample of ECEAP classrooms that are operational two to four days per week.

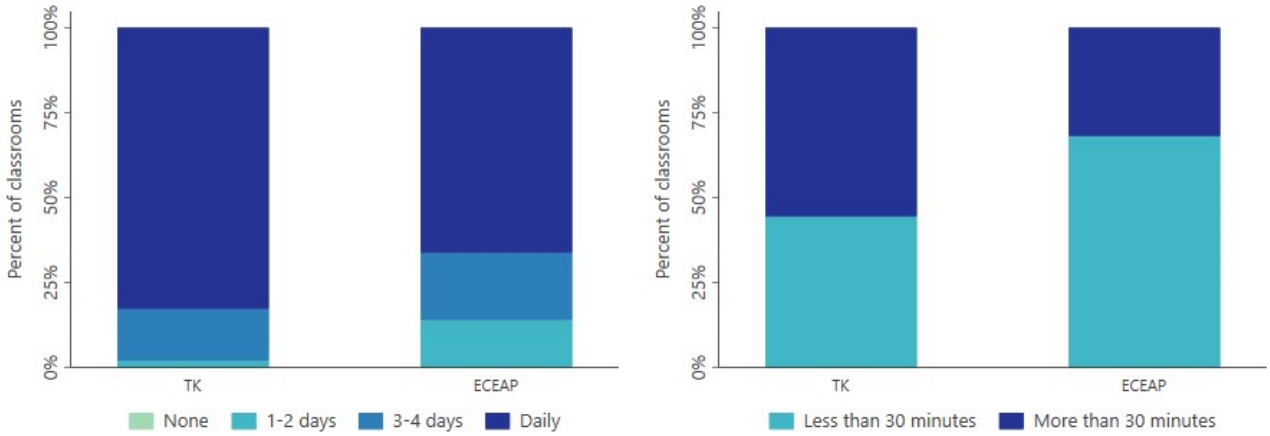
Exhibit 17

Select Content Areas of Instruction, by Type of Classroom

Panel A: Reading and Language Arts (Number of Days and Hours per Day)



Panel B: Math (Number of Days and Hours per Day)



Notes:
WSIPP analysis of teacher survey data. To allow for an "apples to apples" comparison, for the number of days, we included only teachers in classrooms operating five days per week.
The samples for this analysis are the following: TK = 158, ECEAP = 98.
For the hours per day analysis, we included only teachers in classrooms operating on a school day schedule (5.5-7 hours per day).
The samples for this analysis are the following: TK = 159, ECEAP = 151.

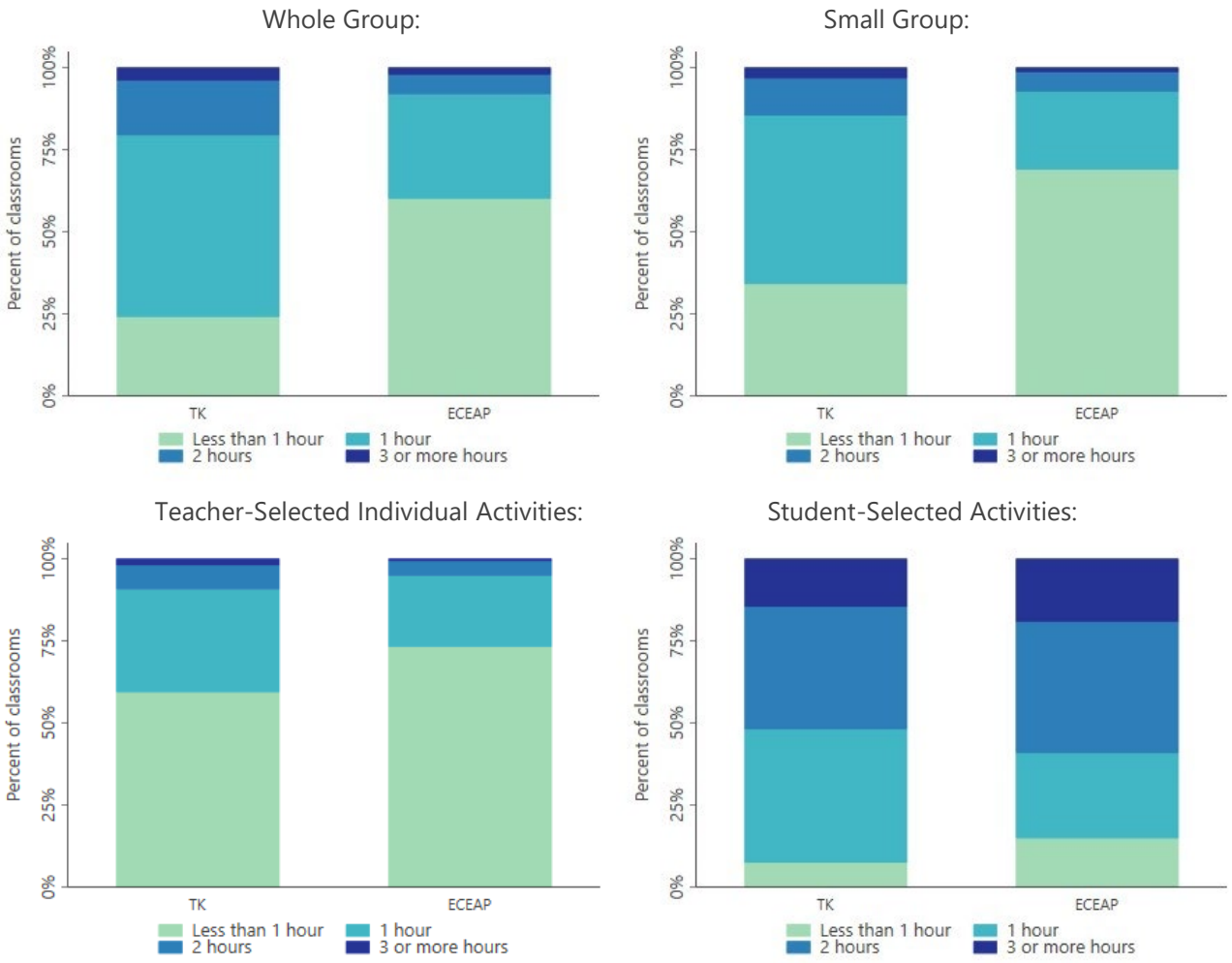
Group and Instructional Setting

Exhibit 18 summarizes the proportion of school-day classrooms reporting less than one hour, one hour, two hours, or more than two hours of each instructional setting by type. *Whole group* includes teacher-initiated activities with more than half the class (such as singing, calendar instruction, or book reading). *Small group* includes activities completed with less than half the class that are teacher-organized and assigned (e.g., art projects). *Teacher-selected individual activities* include teacher-organized and assigned projects that students complete independently. *Student-selected activities* are student-led; children select what and where they play and learn.

On average, TK and ECEAP teachers reported dedicating the most instructional time to student-selected instruction. Roughly 50%-60% of all teachers report at least 2 hours, on average, per day dedicated to this instructional setting.

Exhibit 18

Class Time Spent in Different Grouping Arrangements, by Classroom Type



Notes:
WSIPP analysis of teacher survey data. To allow for an "apples to apples" comparison, we included only teachers in classrooms operating on a school day schedule (5.5-7 hours per day). The samples for this analysis are the following: TK = 159, ECEAP = 151.

Relative to ECEAP instructors, TK instructors more frequently report dedicating at least one hour of instructional time to whole-group and small-group instruction.

Among TK and ECEAP classrooms, on average, the least amount of daily instructional time is dedicated to small-group and teacher-selected instructional settings.

Developmental Assessments

Assessments can be used as a regular teaching practice, for example, by guiding individualized instruction. We asked teachers whether they use assessments in their teaching, which specific assessment(s) are used, how often, and how these assessments are used.

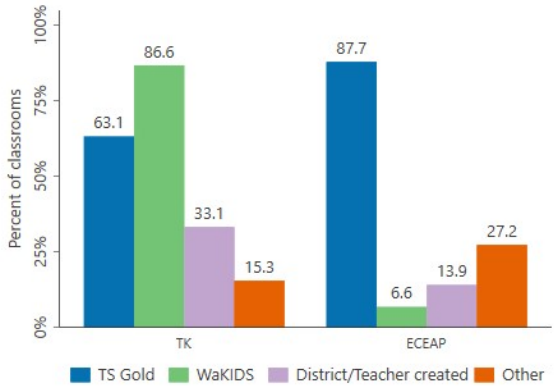
Assessment Use. Exhibit 19 summarizes the share of teachers who reported using each type of assessment by classroom type.

Most TK teachers reported using WaKIDS (87%) or the Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD; 63%). Roughly 90% of ECEAP and teachers report using the TS GOLD.[48]

A larger share of teachers in TK classrooms reported using a self- or district-created assessment (33%), compared with ECEAP or combined classrooms (roughly 15%). About 25% of all teachers report using an alternative ("Other") assessment (for example, teachers listed the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment).

Exhibit 19

% of Teachers Using Assessments, by Classroom Type



Note:
WSIPP analysis of teacher survey data, N=506.

Assessment Frequency. Consistent with program standards, over 90% of ECEAP and combined classroom teachers reported assessing students more than twice per year, while only 42% of TK teachers reported administering an assessment more than twice per year. Among TK teacher respondents, 30% report completing an assessment once per year, and 27% report completing it twice per year.

Why Do Teachers Use Assessments? Teachers in all classroom types reported similar reasons for using developmental assessments. Over 50% reported that assessments are used to fulfill a requirement, assess student growth, or inform individualized instruction. Roughly 30-40% report using assessments to inform grouping students by ability level. Less than a quarter use them to identify professional development needs.

[48] The WaKIDS is Washington's required statewide kindergarten readiness assessment. The WaKIDS is a custom subset of the TS GOLD, which is a more in-depth developmental assessment. ECEAP program standards require that ECEAP students are assessed using the TS GOLD in Fall and Spring.

Curricula

Curricula are core instructional materials that provide teachers with plans for what and how to teach.[49] Whole-child curricula are the most common approach in EL programs; these emphasize active learning by encouraging children to interact independently with materials and peers in the classroom. Subject-specific curricula strategically sequence and target skill development in a specific content area (e.g., literacy, math). A range of published curricula are available for preschool students. Evidence varies for the effectiveness of individual curricula from both categories in promoting children's developing skills.[50]

TK. School districts decide which curricula, if any, to implement in TK programs. We asked TK teachers a series of questions about their use of curricula; only 137 teachers responded to these questions. Of these, 88% reported using at least one curriculum of any type.

Roughly 80% reported using a whole-child curriculum. Among TK teachers who reported using a whole-child curriculum, nearly half used the Creative Curriculum, which addresses social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language areas of development; only 3% reported using the HighScope Curriculum.

An additional 28% reported a district- or teacher-developed curriculum; we cannot identify the content areas addressed by these curricula.[51]

Most TK teachers (78%) also reported using one or more subject-specific curricula. Specifically, 74% of TK teachers reported a social-emotional learning curriculum, 53% reported a language/literacy curriculum, and 49% reported a math curriculum. For each of these subject-specific curricula, roughly 65% of instructors said they had received curriculum-specific training.

ECEAP. ECEAP Performance Standards require programs to use the Creative Curriculum or HighScope Curriculum, or a DCYF-approved alternative, as a whole-child curriculum.[52] Programs may also use one or more subject-specific curricula. DCYF maintains records of curricula use reported by programs, and information was available for 91% of ECEAP programs in 2022-23.

Of those, nearly all reported using the Creative Curriculum, and nearly all districts report layering on one or more curricula for social-emotional learning or health. Roughly 75% reported using a language/literacy curriculum, and 60% reported using a math curriculum (again, in addition to the Creative Curriculum). Note that these figures reflect the population of ECEAP programs rather than our ECEAP survey sample.[53]

[49] Jenkins, Duncan, Auger, Bitler, Domina, & Burchinal (2018). Boosting school readiness: Should preschool teachers target skills or the whole child? *Economics Education Review, 65*, 107-125.

[50] Jenkins et al. (2018) provide rigorous evidence that subject-specific curricula outperform whole-child curricula with respect to student skill-development. The Institute for Educational Sciences What Works Clearinghouse publishes evidence tier ratings for curricula based on summaries of available research.

[51] Additionally, 20% reported using an "Other" whole-child curriculum, however most curricula listed in a write-in option were subject-specific.

[52] 2022-23 ECEAP Performance Standards

[53] Our ECEAP teacher survey sample represented a high proportion of school-day model classrooms, relative to the population of ECEAP classrooms which are primarily part-day programs.

Collaboration and Alignment

Finally, we asked teachers about their collaboration and alignment with other types of teachers in the same school or district. Collaboration entails regularly scheduled discussion and planning time and professional development. Alignment includes shared or coordinated curricular materials and content standards.

TK teachers most frequently report communication with other TK teachers (79%) or kindergarten teachers (59%); they least frequently report communication with pre-kindergarten teachers (35%). TK teachers reported very similar patterns with respect to alignment of materials and content standards.

ECEAP teachers almost exclusively reported collaboration and alignment with other ECEAP teachers or pre-kindergarten teachers in their district.

V. Districts' Early Learning Rationale and Funding

Why Do Districts Offer Early Learning?

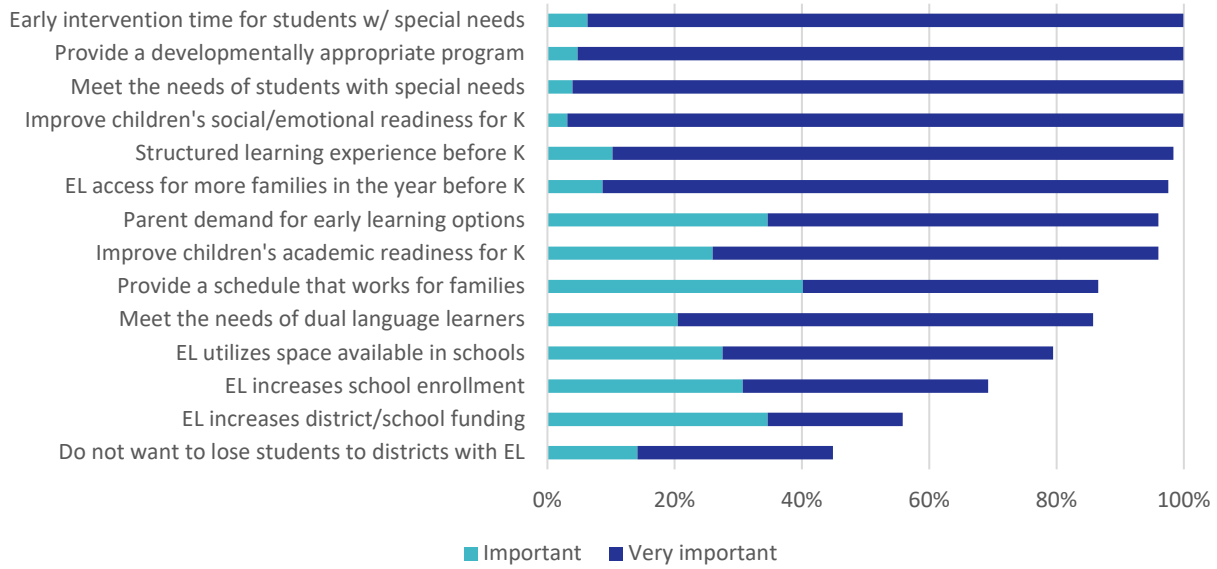
The legislature directed WSIPP to identify districts' rationales for offering early learning programs, as well as to describe the funding sources districts are using. In this section, we summarize survey findings addressing these topics.

District leaders strongly endorsed a variety of reasons for offering early learning programs. Exhibit 20 shows the percentage of districts with any EL program endorsing each item as important or very important.

District leaders' responses indicated that they value EL programs to support students' learning and development (especially students with special needs), to provide a structured learning experience prior to kindergarten, and to expand community access to EL opportunities. Fewer districts endorsed considerations related to district space, funding, and enrollments.[54]

Exhibit 20

How Important Are the Following Considerations in Offering Early Learning in Your District?



Notes:
WSIPP analysis of school district survey.
N=127 districts with an EL program in 2022-23.

[54] Rural districts were more likely than non-rural districts to endorse the importance of early learning increasing school enrollments, and preventing enrollment losses to surrounding districts that offer early learning.

Why Do Districts Offer Specific Early Learning Programs?

We also asked district leaders open-ended questions about why they chose to offer a specific program or set of programs in the 2022-23 school year. We reviewed all responses and identified ten overarching themes. Exhibit 21 summarizes by program the percentage of responding districts that mentioned each of the most frequently referenced themes.[55]

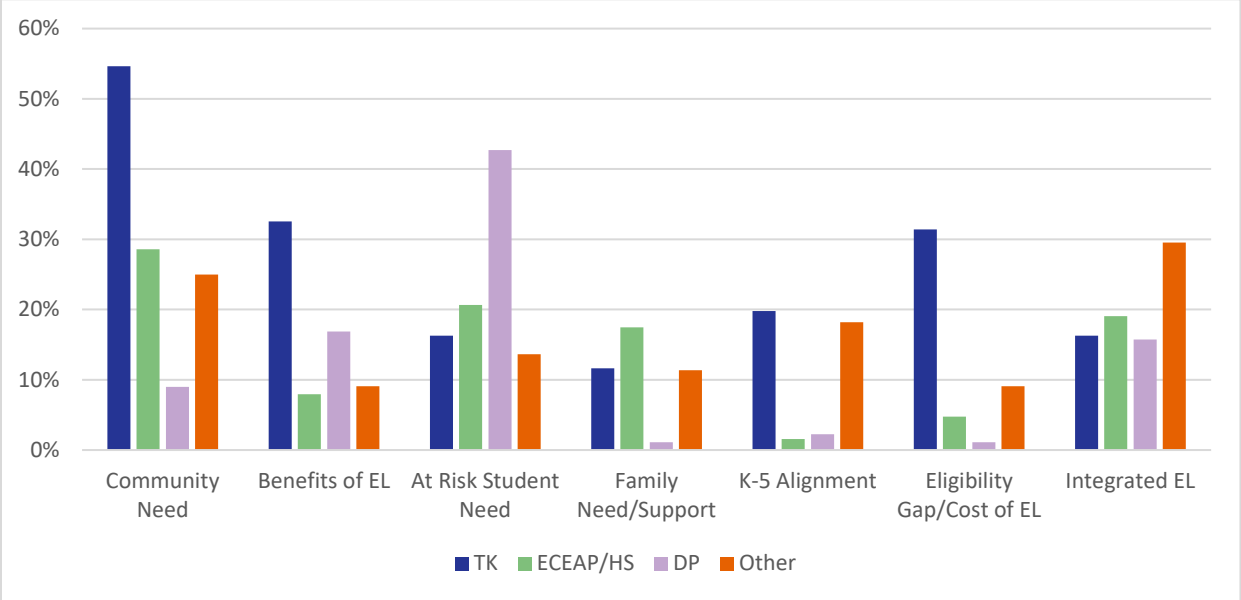
Transitional Kindergarten

Over half of the districts offering TK emphasized addressing unmet community needs (e.g., living in an EL desert or having no other high-quality early education options for children). Over 30% of TK districts noted the benefits of early learning for student development, especially for promoting kindergarten readiness.

Of responding TK districts, 31% highlighted that TK fills a gap in EL availability for families that are not income-eligible for other public programs or that high cost puts private programs out of reach for families.

Exhibit 21

What Informed Your District's Decision to Offer This Specific EL Program?



Notes:
WSIPP analysis of open-ended responses for all responding districts with one or more EL programs.
Samples are TK=86; ECEAP N=51; Head Start (HS) N=12; Developmental Preschool (DP) N=89; Other preschool (Other) N=44.
We combined ECEAP and HS because of the similarity in responses, similarity in program approach and target population, and the small number of districts with HS that responded to this question.
Districts frequently offered more than one EL program.

[55] See Appendix V for additional detail on content for all ten overarching themes identified in open-ended responses.

Approximately 12% of TK districts mentioned family needs as a reason for offering TK. Although family needs were also referenced for ECEAP/Head Start and other pre-kindergarten programs, meeting families' needs by offering an EL program with a school-day schedule was a rationale offered only for TK programs.

ECEAP and Head Start

Districts offering ECEAP or Head Start most frequently described meeting community needs as the reason for choosing their programs (29%). District leaders also described choosing these programs to support at-risk students, to meet family needs by providing services and parent education, and to provide an integrated EL setting. Additionally, many noted that their district had historically provided ECEAP or Head Start services, in some cases, for decades (not pictured in Exhibit 21).[56]

Developmental Preschool

Districts offering developmental preschool (DP) most frequently emphasized meeting the needs of at-risk students (43%). Only districts offering DP referenced the obligation to offer appropriate programming for students with disabilities (20% of districts with developmental preschool). District leaders also noted the benefits of EL in terms of the value of early intervention services, as well as the importance of integrated EL settings, as reasons for offering DP.

"Other" EL Programs

Most districts offering an "other" EL program—instead of or in addition to TK, ECEAP, Head Start, or DP—described operating a general education preschool or inclusion preschool.[57] The most commonly mentioned reasons for these programs were providing EL that increased inclusion opportunities in an integrated setting (30%) and meeting community needs for child care and early learning (25%). District leaders also noted that providing these programs affords flexibility to align their EL program with K-5 education and services.

How do Districts Fund EL Programs?

Funding strategies and sources vary by district and program. Districts may use multiple sources to fund classrooms with a single early learning program (e.g., TK classes using both basic education and Title I funds). Districts may also operate classrooms with students funded through separate programs (e.g., TK and ECEAP).

EL Funding Strategies

Exhibit 22 summarizes the number of districts reporting on the funding strategy for each program. For example, the entry for TK indicates that 76 districts reported TK funding information. Of those, 49% reported standalone TK classrooms using a single funding source; 29% reported standalone TK funding using multiple sources. Additionally, 22% of districts reported funding for classrooms offering TK jointly with one or more other programs.

[56] Washington started ECEAP in 1985, and Head Start has been available in the state since 1965.

[57] Inclusion preschool refers to integrating students receiving special education services and typically developing peer students in the same classroom.

Overall, more than 40% of districts with TK, Head Start, or DP reported standalone programs using a single funding source. Roughly 20% to 30% of districts reported using multiple funding sources to support a standalone program.

A total of 51 districts described funding for a classroom that combines students from more than one program. This was reported most frequently by districts with an ECEAP or "other" pre-kindergarten program (e.g., Title I preschool). Programs that districts with a combined classroom most frequently reported were ECEAP and developmental preschool for students receiving special education services. Districts also reported combining ECEAP with other pre-kindergarten programs. Several small districts described combining multiple types of programs and funding streams to maintain a sustainable EL classroom.

Funding Sources

Primary designated funding sources varied by program, as expected. Districts listed many additional funding sources; the share of districts using each additional funding source differed by program and by standalone vs. combined classroom status.

In Exhibit 23, we summarize funding sources for TK, ECEAP, developmental preschool, and "other" pre-kindergarten classrooms that were claimed by at least 10% of reporting districts with that program.[58] Appendix VI lists all funding sources reported by district leaders.

Districts operating standalone TK classrooms or TK in combined EL classrooms (Exhibit 23) had at least 10% of districts endorsing ten different funding sources. This is a higher number of commonly used funding sources than for other types of EL programs, including the "other" EL program group.

Exhibit 22

District Reported Funding Approach by Type of Program

Program	N	# (%) of responding districts that report classrooms with:		
		Standalone programs		Combined programs
		Single $ source	Multiple $ sources	Multiple $ sources
Transitional Kindergarten	76	37 (49%)	22 (29%)	17 (22%)
ECEAP	63	18 (29%)	15 (24%)	30 (48%)
Head Start	15	7 (47%)	3 (20%)	5 (33%)
Developmental preschool	93	39 (42%)	21 (23%)	33 (35%)
Other EL programs	55	15 (27%)	18 (33%)	22 (40%)

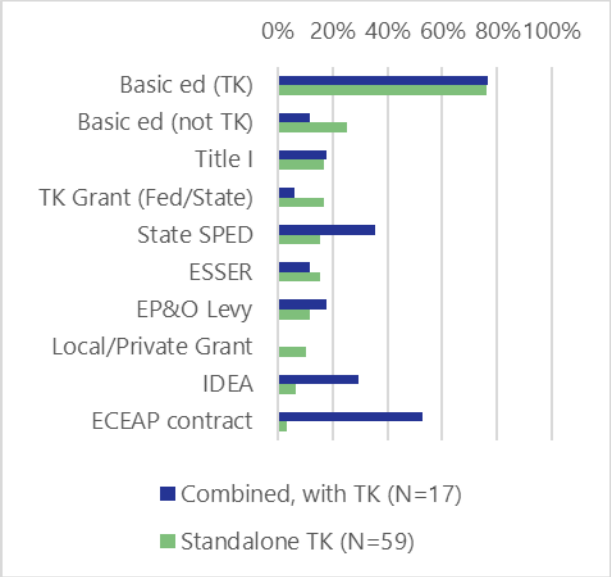
Notes:
Analysis of responses to WSIPP School District Survey questions about EL program funding.
Combined program counts overlap; a total of 51 districts described funding for a classroom that combines students from more than one program. For example, a district reporting a classroom that combines ECEAP and Developmental Preschool is counted on both lines.

[58] We omit districts with Head Start from Exhibit 23 because only a small number of districts reported on Head Start funding. Federal grants are the primary source of funding for Head Start; districts also listed basic education (not TK), state special education, IDEA, and Seattle FEPP levy funds as supporting standalone Head Start classrooms.

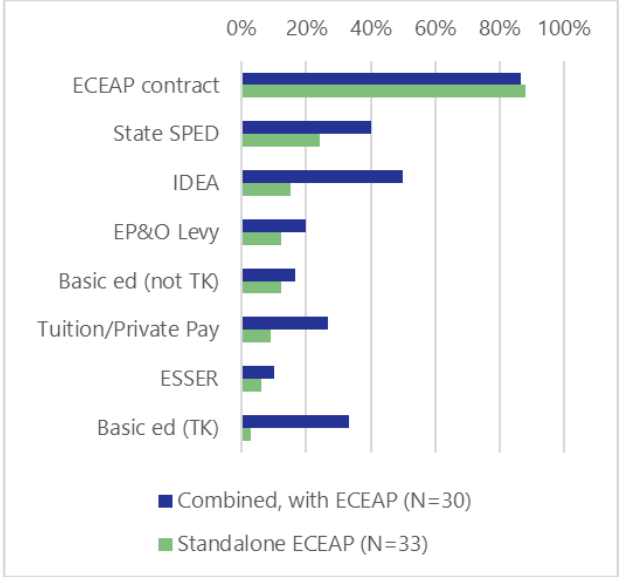
Exhibit 23

% of Districts Reporting Funding Sources, by Program Type

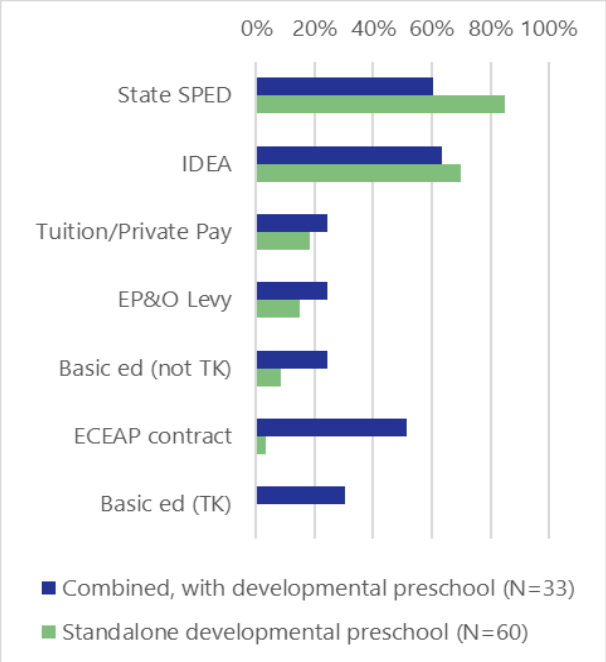
Transitional Kindergarten



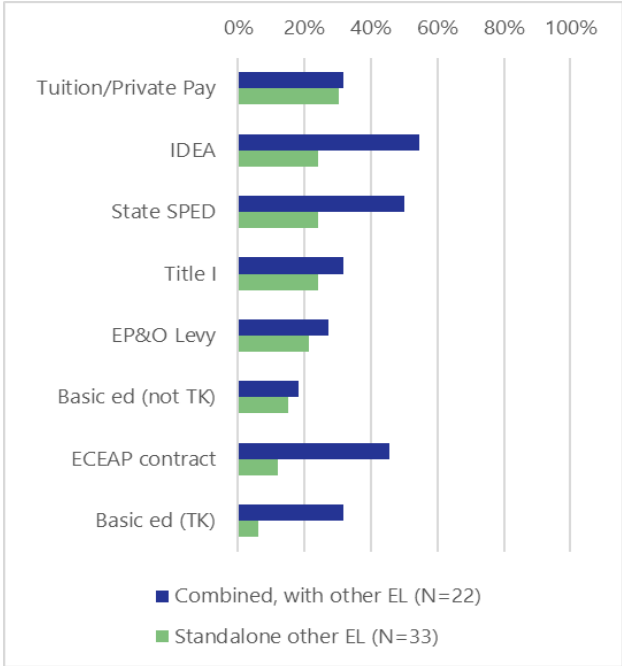
ECEAP



Developmental preschool



Other EL programs



Notes:
WSIPP's analysis of school district survey responses. We present the percentage of districts reporting each funding source for both standalone and combined programs.
Districts may be represented in both standalone and combined groups; combined counts overlap across programs.
These figures include only funding sources reported by at least 10% of reporting districts with that program.
Appendix VI lists all reported funding sources.

VI. Comparing Washington's TK Approach with Other States

In this section, we describe TK in other states and compare the use of TK in other states to Washington's approach. Additionally, we summarize the limited outcome evaluation research currently available for TK programs.

To identify other states with TK or a similar program, we compiled information from several sources. First, we consulted publications from national early learning organizations and consulted with program and research experts. Next, we reviewed publicly available information on websites for state-level education agencies, including early learning agencies. Finally, we searched for recent legislation in the National Conference of State Legislatures Early Childhood Legislation Database.

How Many States Have TK?

Currently, only two states—Washington and California—formally recognize TK at the state level. In addition, Michigan's TK (developmental kindergarten) is well-documented but not formally promoted by the state's Department of Education.

In practice, other states allow for districts or schools to operate TK programs, but these programs are not systematically tracked or endorsed at the state level.

More than half of US states allow for early entry into kindergarten or do not have a statewide standard for entry age; state policies for allowing early entry vary widely.[59]

We additionally note that there is overlap between TK and some states' strategies for public pre-kindergarten program availability and funding. For example, we identified nine states (with ten relevant programs) that either require districts to offer the program or make funding available to any district offering the program and use the state aid funding formula as the primary mechanism for determining funding, with direct funding provided to public schools only. [60]

These programs differ from TK in that they were conceived as pre-kindergarten programs, with standards designed to meet the developmental needs of 3- to 4-year-old children.[61] In some cases, these programs are a part of the state's strategy for implementing universal pre-kindergarten.

[59] State K-3 Policies 2023 - Education Commission of the States (ecs.org). Some states leave determination of policy for early kindergarten entry fully to districts or school boards; others direct districts to use individual child assessments to determine readiness for kindergarten or "giftedness," or to determine that kindergarten will best meet the child's developmental needs.

[60] We used the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) 2022 State Preschool Yearbook. NIEER collects extensive detail annually from the states. Our count of state pre-kindergarten programs reflects 2020-21 data. Legislative action through 2023 suggests that additional states have made or proposed changes to fund public school-based pre-kindergarten programs through the state aid funding formula.

[61] In practice, these ten state pre-kindergarten programs vary in the extent to which they meet NIEER's preschool quality

How is TK Implemented in Other States?

In this section, we describe TK in California and Michigan. We then compare these states' approaches with TK in Washington using what we learned from administrative and survey data. In Exhibit 24, we summarize the key features of TK programs in each state.

TK in California

Access. California established TK in the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 as the first year of a two-year kindergarten program for all students turning five from September through December, following a change in kindergarten age requirements.[62] California's approach has evolved over time, first by allowing eligibility for students turning five later in the school year at districts' discretion.[63] In 2021, California passed a statute that gradually expands access and eligibility.[64] Starting in 2025-26, TK must be universally available to all 4-year-olds in the state, and all school districts offering kindergarten must also offer TK for students residing in their district.[65]

TK operates alongside the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), as well as Head Start and private early learning providers. As of 2018-19, TK and CSPP students can be enrolled in the same classroom.

Eligibility. As noted above, California's TK was initially available only to students in a narrow age band, but the state has expanded eligibility over time. TK is now a major component of California's plan for implementing universal pre-kindergarten.[66] Districts may not enact further eligibility criteria for TK.

Program Standards. California's TK programs must be aligned with California's preschool standards. However, TK teachers must meet the same requirements as kindergarten teachers—a bachelor's degree with an approved teaching credential. Program schedule currently varies, but the majority of California's TK classrooms are full-school day, standalone programs.[67]

TK in Michigan

Access. Michigan's TK program started in 2008 after districts were allowed to count four-year-olds born before December 1st in their pupil membership. Michigan's school districts decide whether to offer TK. In the 2021-22 school year, just over half of school districts and a quarter of charter schools had a TK program.[68] Most districts with TK (63%) offer a program in every elementary school building. Those districts not offering TK in every elementary school building tend to target the program for schools with higher proportions of students from families with low incomes.

standards, ranging from three to ten out of ten standards met.

[62] California Senate Bill No. 1381, Chapter 705, 2010, changed birthdate eligibility for kindergarten from age five by December 2nd of the year of enrollment to age five by September 2nd; TK was initially available to students turning five between September and December.

[63] A June 2015 amendment to California state law allowed students turning five after December to attend TK at the start of the school year.

[64] CA Education Finance: Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill, 2021.

[65] California Transitional Kindergarten FAQs.

[66] California Universal Prekindergarten FAQs.

[67] American Institutes for Research (2016). Transitional Kindergarten in California: What do Transitional Kindergarten Classrooms look like in the Third Year of the Program's Implementation?

[68] Michigan's charter school system is more extensive than in Washington. Shapiro, A., Berne, J.B., Garcia, K.C., Jacob, B., Musaddiq, T., Owusu, S., & Weiland, C. (2023) report 581 school districts and 233 charter schools.

Districts offer TK as an option alongside Michigan's state pre-kindergarten (the Great Start Readiness Program) and in addition to Head Start and private providers.

Eligibility. Students must be age five on or before December of their year of TK enrollment; programs serve four-year-olds who turn five in the first two months of the school year, as well as those delaying kindergarten start by a year ("redshirting" for five-year-olds).

Most districts set additional eligibility criteria; a majority of districts consider prior experience in child care or early learning, a kindergarten readiness screener, or a teacher meeting/impression. Some districts report using child/family characteristics, student special education or ELL eligibility, or other criteria.[69]

Program Standards. Michigan's TK programs function as the first of a two-year kindergarten sequence, and programs are largely aligned with kindergarten standards. Unlike kindergarten, the state does not provide recommendations or oversee curricular decisions for TK.[70] Like kindergarten teachers, Michigan's TK teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree with an elementary education endorsement. Nearly all Michigan TK programs are full-school day, standalone programs.[71]

Comparing Washington with Other States

As highlighted by Exhibit 24, in all three states, TK is offered as a school-based public early learning option provided at no cost to families, alongside another large-scale state preschool program. Washington's current approach to TK bears more similarity to Michigan's approach in terms of districts "opting in" to TK and geographic program availability. Additionally, in both Washington and Michigan, TK programs appear to be mostly targeted, with local determination of specific eligibility criteria for age-eligible students.

Although roughly half of Michigan's school districts offer TK, implementation in Michigan is more widespread, with districts offering TK likely to offer it in all elementary schools. Compared with Washington, a larger share of Michigan's TK classrooms are standalone programs. Some districts in both California and Michigan operate blended TK-K classrooms. Some Washington districts offer blended TK-PK classrooms, which appears to be unique.

Washington appears more similar to Michigan with respect to local control of program implementation and standards and alignment with kindergarten teacher requirements, class-size, and ratios.

[69] Shapiro et al. (2023). Michigan Transitional Kindergarten: A first look at program reach and features.

[70] ibid.

[71] ibid.

Exhibit 24

State TK Comparison Summary

	Washington [a]	California [b]	Michigan [c]
Required/voluntary	Voluntary	Required	Voluntary
Geographic availability (% of districts)	44% of school districts	100% of school districts	53% of school districts; 24% of charter schools
Funding & cost	State funding formula; No cost to families	State funding formula; No cost to families	State funding formula; No cost to families
Eligibility	Targeted; Students must be four by August 31st and need additional preparation for kindergarten. Additional criteria vary by district.	Universal; Students must be age four by September 1st.	Targeted; Students must be five on or before December 1st; Additional criteria vary by district.
Program standards	Programs are largely aligned with K standards. State-provided recommendations but no state requirements for curricula.	Aligned with California's Preschool Learning Foundations, the state has a curriculum approval process and support.	Programs are largely aligned with kindergarten standards; there is no state-provided list of curricula.
Teacher requirements	BA with an approved teaching credential	BA with an approved teaching credential	BA with an elementary education endorsement
Class size & ratio	Average class sizes are approximately 17-18; average teacher-student ratio is approximately 1:16.	Currently, TK class sizes are capped at 20 students, and classes must maintain a 1:12 adult-to-student ratio.	Average class sizes are capped at 19; no information was available on the required or average teacher-student ratio.
Program structure	In 2023, all were full-day; 73% were standalone (10% were TK-PK blends; 17% were TK-K blends)	In 2016, 2/3 were full day; 3/4 were standalone (1/4 were TK-K blends)	In 2022, nearly all were full-day; 90% were standalone TK (10% were TK-K blends)

Notes:

[a] WSIPP analysis of state administrative data, survey data, and OSPI documentation.

[b] Sources include the 2016 CA 3-year implementation report, CA TK FAQ webpage, and CA Universal Pre-Kindergarten FAQ webpage.

[c] Sources include the 2023 MI TK Brief and NIEER 2021 State of Preschool Yearbook.

TK Policy and Program Changes in Washington

Our focus in this report is on the state of TK in Washington in the 2022-23 school year. In early 2023, Washington lawmakers passed new legislation establishing the *Transition to Kindergarten* program in statute and replacing TK.[72] Exhibit 25 summarizes major legislative changes, which require OSPI to adopt and oversee statewide standards for this new program and to set more specific criteria for student eligibility and priority. OSPI enacted emergency rules for the Transition to Kindergarten program in May 2023, and permanent rules will be adopted before the 2024-25 school year.

Our description of districts' TK program implementation, as well as instructional practices in TK classrooms, may not reflect what Transition to Kindergarten programs look like in future years. These programs are likely to become more similar across districts over time as OSPI implements new standards. Comparability of Washington's new Transition to Kindergarten program with TK programs operating in other states will depend in part on the nature of permanent rules adopted by OSPI and any future policy changes.

Exhibit 25

Summary of Select Changes Made by 2SHB 1550 (2023 Session)

Establishes and funds Transition to Kindergarten (TK) in statute
• The state aid formula will be the mechanism for TK funding amounts • TK is not part of the state's program of basic education (districts are not required to provide TK) • Districts must use funding provided for TK *only* to support operating the TK program • TK students are eligible for district transportation and specialist funding (e.g., Special Education, Learning Assistance Program, Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program)
Requires OSPI to adopt rules
• Emergency rules must be issued by the 22-23 school year, and permanent rules by the 23-24 school year • Rules must address funding and minimum standards for operating TK, student eligibility and priority, and community needs assessment & coordination with local early learning providers • OSPI must set requirements and increase oversight of TK program facilities, developmentally appropriate curricula, professional development opportunities, and a process for site visits
Sets intent for targeted eligibility for TK students
• TK students must be at least four years old by August 31st of their enrollment year • Eligible children must be "determined to benefit from" additional preparation for kindergarten • Districts should prioritize students a) from families with low income and b) most in need of additional preparation to be successful in kindergarten

[72] 2SHB 1550.

Research on TK Outcomes

We identified several studies evaluating the impact of TK on student outcomes. First, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) conducted a rigorous multi-year study of California's TK implementation as well as student outcomes in kindergarten. Their work indicates that students' participation in TK impacts kindergarten readiness in the following year. TK students scored higher than comparison groups of similar peers on literacy skills, math and problem-solving skills, and executive function. Children who attended TK still had a measurable advantage in literacy skills over children who did not attend TK, even after a full year of kindergarten. Further, AIR found positive impacts across student groups, including English language learners and students from low-income families. Notably, over 80% of the comparison group students had attended a variety of other center-based preschool programs in the year before kindergarten.[73]

A separate study examined kindergarten readiness for both TK students *and* students in an income-targeted preschool program in a large California city relative to demographically similar kindergarten students who did not attend district preschool.[74]

Participation in both programs positively predicted school readiness, but program effects on literacy and social-emotional skills were larger for TK than for the income-targeted preschool program. Program effects on cognitive/fine-motor skills were similar. One limitation of this study is that the early education experiences of children in the comparison group—those who had not attended a district program—were unknown.

Beyond student outcomes, a recent Michigan study indicates that the introduction of TK is likely to impact the early learning landscape. Where TK is available in Michigan, four-year-olds tend to enroll in TK instead of other public options.[75]

The novelty of TK as an early learning program means that evidence of its effectiveness for student outcomes is limited.[76] The available studies convincingly suggest that TK has moderate to large positive impacts on students in the following year. The available evidence does not directly address how the impacts of TK compare with the impacts of other specific programs.

Student outcome evaluation studies are limited to TK in California, which is different in potentially important ways from Washington's TK implementation. California TK has a more uniform implementation, follows early learning program standards, and programs are universally available.

[73] Manship, K., Holod, A., Quick, H., Ogut, B., de los, Reyes, I.B., Anthony, J.,. . . Anderson, E. (2017). *The Impact of Transitional Kindergarten on California Students: Final Report from the Study of California's Transitional Kindergarten Program.*

[74] Sulik, M.J., Townley-Flores, C., Steyer, L., & Obradovic, J. (2023). Impacts of two public preschool programs on school readiness in San Francisco. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 62*, 194-205.

[75] Berne et al. (under review).

[76] Rigorous TK outcome evaluation research is also underway in Michigan, but results were unavailable at this report's publication.

VII. Conclusions and Limitations

Transitional Kindergarten is relatively new to Washington's early learning landscape. This report provides the first detailed documentation of Washington's TK programs, teachers, and students and helps to establish where TK sits relative to the state's established ECEAP program. In Exhibit 26, we summarize key findings.

Increasing numbers of school districts have opted to provide TK over the past four years. Still, less than half of Washington's districts offered TK in 2022-23, typically at only one school, and programs enrolled a small number of 4- and 5-year-old students relative to other programs.

Within the parameters of state requirements for kindergarten, all dimensions of TK program implementation have been largely determined by districts. However, directed by the 2023 Legislature, OSPI is currently developing new statewide rules for these programs. This process is intended to define state standards specific to developmentally-appropriate TK programs and to differentiate TK from kindergarten.

TK program documentation from other states indicates that Washington's approach differs in meaningful ways from the approaches of California and Michigan, the only two other states with established TK programs. TK in Washington is more similar to Michigan's approach, in which districts elect to offer TK, and program standards are locally determined, provided that they meet requirements for kindergarten classrooms.

Although initial outcome evaluation research out of California indicates that TK participation positively impacts students across the following kindergarten year, we caution against generalizing findings to Washington, given programmatic and population differences. Further, based on existing evidence, it is not possible to estimate the potential impacts of TK relative to other early learning programs available in Washington State.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be noted. First, TK counts are based on administrative records that were initially entered by district or school personnel. Statewide reporting on TK is a relatively new requirement. Through 2022-23, TK did not have a unique grade level code, and OSPI did not have systematic data validation rules in place. We compared various data sources and validated records to the extent possible. Still, numbers reported in this study reflect TK program enrollments as recorded locally and could be subject to error.

Second, our descriptions of early learning in Washington's school districts, district TK policies and strategies, and classroom instruction practices in TK programs are all based on responses from a survey sample. These responses may not be fully generalizable to districts or to teachers who did not respond to our survey.

Additionally, our survey of school districts was available starting in April 2023, during a period when the 2023 Legislature was debating new legislation directly impacting the continuation of TK programs. This may have impacted districts' survey responses.

This study begins to establish how district-initiated and developed TK programs compared with early learning provided in Washington's ECEAP classrooms in 2022-23. These comparisons may help to inform OSPI's development of statewide standards for the new Transition to Kindergarten program. However, WSIPP's study cannot speak to how TK compares with traditional kindergarten classrooms in the state.

In California, TK implementation studies indicate that standalone TK classrooms differ from both regular kindergarten classrooms and blended TK-K classrooms.[77] This comparison would be useful for understanding the place of TK in the early learning landscape but was outside the scope of the present study.

Nonetheless, this report summarizes the most complete data available regarding TK in Washington. We present detailed information about TK program operation in the 2022-23 school year, reflecting a baseline from which further policy and program decisions can be made.

[77] AIR (2014).

Exhibit 26

Summary of Key Findings

How many school districts provided TK programs? How were programs structured?
- In 2022-23, TK was reported in 135 districts (including charter schools and Tribal compact schools). Most districts offered TK in only one elementary school - Most TK is offered as a school-day program with only TK students, but some districts blend TK with kindergarten or pre-kindergarten - Most districts in our sample offer a school-year TK program; some strategically start programs in October or November to support coordinated recruitment and/or eligibility screening or offer 20-week programs
How did districts select and prioritize students for enrollment in TK?
- Most TK districts in our sample used a screening instrument to determine student eligibility or priority. Less than half reported using a reliable and valid norm-referenced screener - Most TK districts in our sample prioritize students with limited EL experience/access, students with an IEP or special needs, and families with housing instability or child welfare system involvement
How many children were participating in TK? What were their characteristics?
- In 2022-23, there were 4,700 TK students. Nearly 90% were four years old as of September 1st - Compared with all kindergarteners in TK districts, slightly fewer TK students were White, and a larger share were Hispanic/Latino. A larger share of TK students were low-income - Approximately 18% of 2022-23 TK students had a prior early learning enrollment; these were evenly distributed across district pre-kindergarten programs, ECEAP, and licensed child care providers using state childcare subsidies - Approximately 9% of 2022-23 TK students had an IEP at any time during their TK year
How do TK and ECEAP compare in terms of teacher background and classroom instruction?
- TK and ECEAP teachers' educational backgrounds and experience varied with state requirements. A larger share of TK teachers fully met educational background requirements relative to ECEAP teachers - Compared with ECEAP teachers, TK teachers report spending more time in reading/language arts and mathematics; ECEAP teachers offer more instruction across content areas, reporting relatively more time on music and art - In both programs, teachers report student-selected learning as the most common instructional setting. TK teachers report more whole-group settings - Relatively few TK teachers reported on curriculum use. Of those that did, most reported using either the Creative Curriculum or a district-developed whole-child curriculum. Roughly half of TK teachers also reported using one or more subject-specific curricula in literacy and math, and three-quarters reported a subject-specific social-emotional learning curriculum
Why do school districts offer early learning, and how do they fund early learning programs?
- Districts offer programs to support students' learning and development (especially students with special needs), to provide a structured learning experience prior to kindergarten, and to expand community access to EL opportunities - Rationale for specific programs varied. The most common reasons for TK were community need, benefits of EL for student development, and a lack of affordable EL for families ineligible for other public options - Funding strategies and sources vary by program and district. Combining sources and programs is common

Appendices

Appendices

I. Administrative Data Sources

We used the following state administrative data sources in this report, listed below in Exhibit A1 by the data provider and indicating relevant report section(s). All 2022-23 data were provisional.

Exhibit A1

Administrative Data Sources

Data	School year	Summary	Report section
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction			
Electronic Certification	All available	Certification and endorsement records for all educators	Section IV: TK teacher educational background and teaching experience
Teacher Grade Assignment	19-20 - 22-23	Teacher grade assignment for all educators	
Staff Schedule	19-20 - 22-23	Teacher course assignments, links with student schedule	
TK Teacher flag	19-20 - 22-23	Flag indicating teacher had ever been assigned to a course with a student flagged as enrolled in TK	
Highest degree	19-20 - 22-23	Teacher highest degree for all educators	
TK Class Composition	19-20 - 22-23	Teacher ID, teacher count, and student count by grade level code for all sections with 1+ students flagged as enrolled in TK	Section II: TK program counts, program structure
Department of Children, Youth, and Families			
ECEAP Staff Monitoring Report (ELMS)	19-20 - 22-23	ECEAP teacher highest degree, qualification status, and PDP end date	Section IV: ECEAP teacher educational background and teaching experience
ECEAP Teacher Summary (MERIT)	19-20 - 22-23	ECEAP teacher degree and certificate	
ECEAP Curricula Report (ELMS)	19-20 - 22-23	ECEAP program curricula	Section IV: ECEAP curriculum summary

Exhibit A1, Continued

Administrative Data Sources

Data	School year	Summary	Report section(s)
Education Research Data Center (Data owner is OSPI unless otherwise noted as DCYF)			
TK Student Enrollments	19-20 - 22-23	All enrollments flagged with a TK program code	Section III: TK counts – students
TK Student PK-1st Enrollments	19-20 - 22-23	All PK-1st grade enrollments for students ever enrolled in TK	
Student Demographics	19-20 - 22-23	TK student fuzzy DOB, race, gender	Section III: TK student characteristics
WaKIDS	19-20 - 22-23	all WaKIDS assessments for TK students (TK year and K year)	
FRPL program	19-20 - 22-23	free or reduced lunch program enrollment for TK students	
LEP program	19-20 - 22-23	Limited English Proficiency program enrollment for TK students	
SPED	19-20 - 22-23	SPED program enrollment for TK students, entry & exit date	
504 Accommodation	19-20 - 22-23	504 plan enrollment for TK students	
ESIT program (DCYF)	15-16 – 21-22	ESIT program participation for TK students	
ECEAP enrollments (DCYF)	18-19 - 22-23	All ECEAP enrollments for TK students	
Child Care subsidy (DCYF)	18-19 - 22-23	All child care subsidy monthly payment records for TK students	
District PK program enrollments	18-19 - 22-23	All district PK program enrollment codes for TK students	

For all student-level data, the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) identified students enrolled with a Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program code. They then matched students to other data from OSPI's CEDARS data system (e.g., demographics and program data) and completed identity matching to link TK students to individuals in other data systems (e.g., child care subsidy). ERDC removed direct student identifiers and shared coded data with WSIPP.

The research presented here uses confidential data from ERDC located within the Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM). ERDC's data system is a statewide longitudinal data system that includes de-identified data about people's preschool, educational, and workforce experiences. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of OFM or other data contributors. Any errors are attributable to the authors.

II. Survey Method and Participation

School District Survey

We distributed a web-based survey (using Survey Monkey) to all Washington school districts enrolling any students in preschool through 5th grade (based on publicly available OSPI report card data). We first distributed the survey to district superintendents and then to early learning contacts registered with OSPI. Finally, we followed up with districts that had TK enrollments in administrative records to support a more robust analysis of TK-specific assignment components.

We asked all districts questions about their rationale for offering early learning programs as well as funding sources for early learning. We asked TK-specific questions for all districts reporting a TK program in 2022-23, including questions about TK student eligibility and screening.

Exhibit A2 compares districts with and without survey responses, both overall and for districts with TK enrollments in 2022-23. We received responses from 138 districts (45% of 306 districts) overall. Responding districts had larger student enrollments and served fewer Latino and low-income students than non-responding districts. Rural districts were underrepresented among those that responded to the survey.

We received responses from 88 districts with TK (65% of the 135 districts with observed 2022-23 TK enrollments). Of districts with TK, responding districts served more white students and fewer low-income students. Again, rural districts were underrepresented.

Districts with TK were more likely to respond to the survey, likely as a result of targeted follow-up invitations. Of the districts, 44% have a TK program, and of those, 65% responded to the survey. Of the districts, 56% did not have TK, and of those, 30% responded.

Teacher Survey

Our target population for WSIPP's teacher survey included all TK and ECEAP lead teachers in the 2022-23 school year. We distributed a web-based survey (using Survey Monkey) using several different strategies, described below.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) maintains central records for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance (ECEAP) programs, including staff names and email addresses. DCYF sent a communication to all ECEAP program directors to notify them of the upcoming survey. Several program directors requested that the survey be distributed to lead teachers in their programs. For all other ECEAP teachers, we sent a survey invitation via email directly.

No centralized list of TK teacher contact information exists, and WSIPP's project timeline required conducting this survey before having access to OSPI administrative records on teachers with TK students. We contacted school principals for all schools with observed TK enrollments (based on student enrollment records provided by ERDC, as listed in Appendix I) and requested their cooperation in distributing the teacher survey to TK teachers in their schools. About half of these schools opted to provide contact information for their TK teachers, and in these cases, we emailed TK teachers survey invitations directly.

For the remaining schools, we emailed a survey invitation to the school principal and requested that they forward the survey link to their TK teachers.

Of the 345 lead TK teachers in WA in the 2022-23 school year, 163 (47%) responded to our survey. TK teachers who responded to the survey were largely similar to the population of TK teachers in terms of total years of teaching experience and highest degree. About 90% of survey respondents reported less than three years of TK teaching experience, about 45% have received a bachelor's degree, and 45% have received a graduate-level degree. TK survey respondents had, on average, more years of prior pre-kindergarten or kindergarten teaching experience (about four years) compared to all TK teachers overall.

Of 927 ECEAP lead teachers in the 2023 SY, 304 (33%) responded to our survey. Relative to the population, respondents had more years of ECEAP teaching experience (about 6.5 years) and comparable education, with about 24% receiving a bachelor's degree and 10% receiving a graduate degree.

Exhibit A2

Comparison of School Districts With and Without Survey Responses: All Districts & TK Districts

	All districts			Districts with TK		
	Non-responders	Responders		Non-responders	Responders	
Number of districts	166	140		47	88	
Student characteristics						
Race/ethnicity						
AIAN	5.9%	3.5%		1.7%	3.3%	
Black	2.1%	2.6%		1.6%	3.2%	
Asian	2.3%	3.3%		2.6%	3.1%	
NHPI	0.5%	0.5%		0.5%	0.6%	
White	57.4%	61.7%		56.1%	57.3%	
Two or more races	6.1%	7.1%	*	5.1%	7.0%	**
Hispanic/Latino, any race	24.6%	21.2%	**	32.2%	25.3%	
ELL	9.9%	8.0%		13.0%	9.9%	
Low income	54.7%	51.9%		55.5%	54.2%	
Disabilities	14.9%	15.0%		15.0%	14.8%	
District characteristics						
Number of students	2,551 (4352)	4,798 (7989)	***	3,496 (5290)	5,168 (7215)	
Locale			***			*
City/suburb	23.5%	34.3%		25.5%	42.1%	
Town	17.5%	24.3%		21.3%	25.0%	
Rural	59.0%	41.1%		53.2%	33.0%	

Notes:
WSIPP analysis of public data retrieved from OPSI (Report Card) and ELSI, along with indicators for survey response and TK status by district.
***Signiciant at the 0.001 level, **significant at the 0.01 level, and *significant at the 0.05 level.
AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native.
NHPI = Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.
ELL = English language learner.

III. School Districts with TK in 2022-23

Exhibit A3 lists each district with a TK enrollment in the 2022-23 school year and the number of standalone and blended classrooms observed in each district. We list student counts by classroom type and approximate average class size and composition.

Exhibit A3

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	2022-23 Standalone TK classes				2022-23 Blended TK classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Asotin-Anatone	1	2	25	12.5							
Auburn	4	4	81	21.0	3	3	51	21.67	17.0	78%	TK-K
Battle Ground	4	4	68	17.3							
Bellevue	1	1	20	20.0							
Bellingham	13	16	273	17.2							
Bethel	2	4	81	20.8	1	1	19	22.00	19.0	86%	TK-K
Blaine	1	1	17	18.0							
Boistfort					1	1	5	10.00	5.0	50%	TK-PK
Brewster	1	2	41	21.0							
Bridgeport	1	2	23	11.5							
Brinnon					1	1	6	12.00	6.0	50%	TK-K
Burlington-Edison	1	1	15	15.0							
Camas	1	1	17	17.0							
Cascade	1	1	16	17.0							
Central Kitsap	5	5	91	18.4							
Chewelah	1	1	16	16.0							
Chimacum	1	1	16	16.0							
Clarkston	2	3	53	17.7							
Cle Elum-Roslyn	1	1	18	18.0	1	1	13	16.00	13.0	81%	TK-K
Colfax	1	1	21	21.0							
College Place	1	1	11	12.0							
Colton	1	1	11	11.0							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK Classes				Blended TK Classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Columbia (Stevens)					1	1	6	12.00	6.0	50%	TK-K
Columbia (Walla Walla)	1	1	17	17.0							
Colville	1	3	43	14.3	1	1	13	16.00	13.0	81%	TK-K
Concrete	1	1	21	22.0							
Cosmopolis					1	2	11	11.50	5.5	48%	TK-K
Creston	1	1	9	9.0							
Darrington					1	1	8	12.00	8.0	67%	TK-K
Davenport					1	3	30	16.00	10.0	60%	TK-K
East Valley (Yakima)	1	1	5	6.0	1	1	7	18.00	7.0	39%	TK-PK
Eastmont	3	3	51	17.0							
Ellensburg	1	1	14	14.0							
Elma	1	1	14	14.0							
Enumclaw	1	1	20	20.0							
Everett	6	6	118	19.8							
Evergreen (Clark)	4	4	51	13.3	1	1	13	15.00	13.0	87%	TK-K
Federal Way	4	4	80	20.0							
Ferndale	3	7	123	17.7							
Freeman					1	2	25	17.00	12.5	73%	TK-K
Grapeview	1	1	13	13.0							
Granite Falls[a]	1	1	16	16.0							
Griffin	1	1	16	17.0							
Highland	1	2	29	15.0							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK Classes				Blended TK Classes						Blend type
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		
Highline	4	4	71	17.8							
Hockinson	1	4	71	17.8							
Hoquiam					1	1	11	14.00	11.0	79%	TK-K
Issaquah	3	3	43	14.7							
Kalama	1	2	36	18.0							
Kelso	4	6	88	14.7							
Kennewick	2	2	27	14.5							
Kettle Falls	1	1	16	16.0							
Kiona-Benton City	1	2	35	18.0							
Kittitas	1	1	16	17.0							
La Center	1	1	13	14.0	1	1	5	10.00	5.0	50%	TK-PK
Lakewood	1	1	17	17.0							
Lind	1	1	8	8.0							
Longview	1	1	15	15.0	1	3	42	16.67	14.0	84%	TK-K
Lynden	3	4	68	17.0							
Mabton	1	2	39	20.5	1	2	13	19.50	6.5	33%	TK-K
Mead	1	1	19	20.0							
Medical Lake	1	1	20	20.0							
Meridian	1	2	30	15.0							
Monroe	1	1	17	17.0							
Montesano					1	4	38	13.00	9.5	73%	TK-PK
Morton	1	2	32	16.0							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK Classes				Blended TK Classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Moses Lake	1	1	15	15.0							
Mount Vernon	2	2	29	15.0	4	5	64	15.00	12.8	85%	TK-K
Naches Valley	1	1	16	16.0							
Nespelem					1	1	5	7.00	5.0	71%	TK-K
Nooksack Valley	2	2	36	18.5							
North Beach	1	1	15	16.0							
North Franklin [b]	1	1	15	15.0							
North Mason					1	2	29	17.00	14.5	85%	TK-K
North River					1	1	3	7.00	3.0	43%	TK-K
North Thurston Public Schools	4	4	69	17.3							
Oakville	1	1	19	19.0							
Ocean Beach [b]	1	1	15	15.0							
Olympia					1	1	15	17.00	15.0	88%	TK-K
Onalaska	1	1	13	14.0							
Othello	2	2	34	17.0	1	1	16	18.00	16.0	89%	TK-PK
Palisades [b]					1	1	4	10	4	40%	TK-K
Palouse					1	1	9	12.00	9.0	75%	TK-PK
Pasco					1	2	33	19.00	16.5	87%	TK-K
Pateros					1	1	9	12.00	9.0	75%	TK-K
Pe Ell					1	1	23	26.00	23.0	88%	TK-K
Peninsula	5	5	85	17.2							
Pomeroy	1	1	15	15.0							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK classes				Blended TK classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Port Angeles	3	3	27	9.0							
Port Townsend	1	1	14	14.0							
Prosser	1	1	17	17.0							
Puyallup	13	13	225	17.3							
Quillayute Valley	1	1	18	18.0							
Quincy	2	2	36	18.0	1	1	15	18.00	15.0	83%	TK-K
Raymond [a]					1	1	5	16	5.0	31%	
Reardan-Edwall	1	1	18	18.0							
Richland					1	2	30	21.00	15.0	71%	TK-PK
Rochester	1	2	23	11.5							
Royal	1	3	43	14.7							
Sedro-Woolley	3	4	69	17.3							
Selah	1	1	16	17.0							
Selkirk					1	1	11	13.00	11.0	85%	TK-K
Skamania					1	1	5	17.00	5.0	29%	TK-K
Soap Lake					1	2	21	19.00	10.5	55%	TK-K
South Bend					1	2	11	19.50	5.5	28%	TK-PK
Spokane					14	15	53	17.80	3.5	21%	TK-PK
Stanwood-Camano	1	1	17	17.0							
Starbuck	1	1	7	7.0							
Stevenson-Carson	1	1	15	15.0							
Sultan	1	1	17	17.0							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK classes				Blended TK classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Sunnyside	1	2	34	17.0							
Tacoma	2	2	40	20.0	3	11	91	21.91	8.3	38%	TK-K
Tahoma	2	3	47	15.7							
Thorp	1	1	15	15.0							
Touchet	1	1	7	7.0							
Union Gap	1	1	17	17.0							
Valley	1	1	12	12.0							
Vancouver	4	5	89	17.8							
Wahluke	1	2	34	17.0							
Walla Walla Public Schools	1	4	72	18.0							
Wapato	1	5	67	13.8	1	1	13	15.00	13.0	87%	TK-K
Washougal	1	1	19	19.0							
Waterville	1	1	22	22.0							
Wenatchee	2	3	38	12.7							
West Valley (Yakima)	2	2	35	18.0							
Wilbur	1	1	15	15.0							
Winlock	1	3	38	13.7							
Wishkah Valley	1	1	6	6.0							
Woodland	1	1	17	17.0							
Yelm	2	2	30	15.5							
Zillah	1	3	46	15.3							
Impact | Puget Sound Elementary	1	3	87	29.3							

Exhibit A3, Continued

Standalone and Blended TK Classes by District, 2022-23

School district	Standalone TK Classes				Blended TK Classes						
	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	# Schools	# Classes	Total # TK students	Average class size	Average # and % TK students in blended classes		Blend type
Impact | Salish Sea Elementary	1	4	115	29.0							
Impact | Commencement Bay Elementary	1	1	32	32.0	1	3	85	30.33	28.3	93%	TK-K
Chief Leschi Tribal Compact [a]					1	4	17	12	4.3	35%	TK-PK

Notes:

WSIPP analysis of OSPI TK class composition data. Appendix IV describes data processing that resulted in these district summary counts. Counts should be considered estimates due to reporting irregularities and the absence of internal data validation in the CEDARS data system.

[a] OSPI TK class composition data did not include 2022-23 records for this district. Counts are based on 2022-23 student TK enrollment records provided by ERDC, and information regarding standalone or blended TK status and number of schools and classes is based on district response to WSIPP's school district survey.

[b] OSPI TK class composition data did not include 2022-23 records for this district. This district was identified by ERDC student-level data as having 2022-23 TK enrollments, and WSIPP confirmed classroom configuration via phone call to the district or elementary school.

IV. TK Classroom Data Processing Approach

WSIPP's legislative assignment directed us to report on the number of districts, including the number of classrooms and students in the program per district. During our study period, TK enrollments were reported by districts and schools as a kindergarten enrollment (or, in some cases, as a pre-kindergarten enrollment) *along with* a pre-kindergarten program code designated for TK rather than as a unique grade level code. As a result, identifying counts, particularly for classrooms, required starting with all observations with the potential to be TK classrooms. OSPI delivered a data file that included all class sections enrolling at least one student with a TK program code. Class section observations represent unique combinations of school year, district organization ID, school organization ID, location ID, course ID, section ID, and term. Because of local variation in reporting conventions and because TK students may be enrolled in sections beyond their TK "homeroom" (e.g., specialist classes), these data included many observations that did not reflect a TK classroom. Accordingly, we cleaned and validated data using logic and, in some cases, by reaching out to districts and schools for additional information or verification. Exhibit A4 details this process.

Exhibit A4

TK Class Data Processing Steps

Step 1: initial OSPI data - all records containing one or more TK students N = 3,141		Excluded Observations
⇩		
Step 2: for classes with more than one teacher, include one record for each teacher N = 3,468		
⇩		
Step 3: restrict to classes that were intended to be TK classes N = 3,293		Removed likely data errors related to student misclassification *Example: classes with students who had an outdated TK indicator* N = 175
⇩		
Step 4: restrict each class to its homeroom record N = 982		Removed records associated with subject and specialty instruction *Example: music & P.E. classes that include TK students* N = 2,311
⇩		
Step 5: final data for analysis - one record per teacher per TK class N = 695		Removed duplicate records *Example: classes with a record for each trimester in a school year* N = 287

V. District Rationale for Early Learning Programs: Theme Definitions

We asked districts to describe their rationale for offering a specific EL program instead of or in addition to other programs. We reviewed all district responses and identified ten overarching themes. In Exhibit A5, we summarize the response content included in each theme and provide examples of district leaders' responses. Examples are direct quotes from survey respondents.

Exhibit A5

Theme Definitions and Examples of District Rationale for Offering Specific EL Programs

Theme includes references to:	Example responses from district leaders
Community need: Few or no other EL providers in the community, early learning deserts, requests from community members, and EL access equity.	*There are not many early learning options for our families, let alone low-income options. We were able to fill two classes with ease. There is a need for more early learning in our school district.* *We are a small, rural, remote school district. Preschool and licensed daycare opportunities are not available for our students. 85% of our students this year qualify for free and reduced meals. These families in poverty would have to drive more than an hour to reach any sort of program. We are in an early learning "desert."*
Benefits of EL: Perceived short- and long-term benefits of early learning program participation for students, including benefits of early intervention, kindergarten readiness, social and emotional learning, reduced behavioral and disciplinary issues, and reduced need for later special education services.	*Readiness for kindergarten, having the adaptive, social/emotional, and behavioral skills to be ready to learn. Opportunities to provide extra support to students who have not had access to communication and socialization. Helping children learn how to be a student when there is less academic pressure.* *We know that intervention is most successful when provided to as young a child as possible.*
At-risk student need: Providing early education and intervention services for students with a range of needs, including developmental delay and family or community risk factors.	*We have more and more students coming to us from child find that need early intervention with an individualized learning plan. Supporting these students early on only improves their growth.* *The high percentage of children in our high-poverty schools who come to kindergarten without prior pre-kindergarten experience.* *Even though we offer ECEAP services, these families that qualify for TK have risk factors that indicate the need, but they didn't qualify for ECEAP.*
Family need/Support: Building relationships with families, providing child and family services, providing parent education, and offering full-day EL to meet families' schedule needs.	*We recognize and value early intervention and see the benefit of connecting families to their neighborhood schools prior to the transition to kindergarten.* *The needs of our families exceeds our capacity and ECEAP offers different supports than our district programs.* *Full-day early learning option that follows the exact school day schedule and school calendar to help accommodate our families and their needs.*

Exhibit A5, Continued

Theme Definitions and Examples of District Rationale for Offering Specific EL Programs

Theme includes references to:	Example responses from district leaders
K-5 Alignment: Factors aligning the EL program to broader K-5 system resources or requirements, including teacher qualifications, classroom availability, district control of program or instruction, fit with a district initiative, access to K-5 specialists and resources, and ease of meeting a single set of K-5 requirements.	*The district felt they would have more control over the curriculum so as to mesh better with our Kindergarten program.* *The TK option mirrored the school day, used a certified teacher, and allowed us to step down existing curriculum.*
Eligibility gap/Cost of EL: Filling a need for EL services for families that do not meet eligibility requirements for income-targeted programs or to high cost/financial inaccessibility of private early learning programs.	*We offer TK to families who do not qualify for ECEAP but are still in need of access to high quality preschool. We have many families who just barely miss qualifying for ECEAP and still have high needs for early learning opportunities.*
Integrated EL: Offering a continuum of services, increasing inclusion opportunities for students with disabilities, or creating a sustainable and cohesive early learning system.	*Research-based practices with peer models and more inclusive early childhood settings improve outcomes for children receiving special education services.* *We decided to start our peer inclusion program so that we are offering a continuum of services for children with developmental delays within our community.*
Historically offered program: District offering a long-standing program or a program that was established prior to the survey respondent's tenure.	*ECEAP has been an established program in our area for quite some time.* *We developed and started transitional K in our schools over 10 years ago. This program was developed in collaboration with community partners and families.*
IDEA Requirement: Requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to make free and appropriate education to eligible children with disabilities.	*We have students with special needs. By having ECEAP in district we have a setting available for these students.* *Our legal obligations to meet students IEP program needs was the driver in this decision.*
Funding opportunity: Available grant funding, public funding source, or funding rate.	*We needed another option for students as our wait list was over 100 students… We decided to start these services since funding was offered. I applied for a grant and received the money to get started.*

Note:
WSIPP analysis of district survey responses.

VI. District Early Learning Funding Sources

We asked districts to report all funding sources for each of their standalone programs and separately for their combined program classrooms. Exhibit A6 summarizes counts by program type for each funding source that was included in survey options or was written in by a district. We consulted with OSPI staff to categorize some of the write-in responses.

Exhibit A6

Number of Districts Reporting Funding Sources by Program; Standalone Program Classrooms (2022-23)

	TK	ECEAP	HS	DP	Other EL
Number of districts reporting on funding	***59***	***33***	***10***	***60***	***33***
Federal					
21st century					
ESSER	9	2		1	2
Head Start Grant		1	10		1
IDEA	4	5	1	42	8
Impact Aid		0		1	1
Preschool Dev. Grant	1				
Title I	10			3	8
Title III (Eng. Language Learners)					1
Title IV					
ARPA		2		1	1
Title VI (Native education)					1
State					
Basic education (TK)	45	1			2
Basic education (not TK)	15	4	2	5	5
ECEAP contract	2	29		2	4
LAP	5				1
High Poverty LAP	1				
State SPED	9	8	1	51	8
TK Grant	10			1	
Child Care Subsidy					1
Career and Technical Ed.					1
Local or private					
City					
County	1	1			
EP&O Levy	7	4		9	7
Tuition/Private Pay		3		11	10
Other Grant (Local/Private)	6	2			1
Levy (Seattle FEPP)			1		1

Exhibit A7 summarizes counts of districts' reported funding sources for classrooms that combine more than one program. Program-specific columns indicate that the district reported funding for a classroom that includes students in that program. Combined classroom program counts overlap. The column titled "All" reflects the count of districts' reported funding sources for all combined program classrooms.

Exhibit A7

Number of Districts Reporting Funding Sources by Program; Combined Program Classrooms (2022-23)

	TK	ECEAP	HS	DP	Other	All
Number of districts reporting on funding	***17***	***30***	***5***	***33***	***22***	***51***
Federal						
21st century						
ESSER	2	3		3	1	5
HS Grant		1	2	3	1	3
IDEA	5	15	2	21	12	23
Impact Aid						
Preschool Dev. Grant						
Title I (Low income)	3	4		1	7	10
Title III (Eng. Language Learners)						
Title IV	1			1	1	1
ARPA				1	1	1
Title VI (Native education)	2	2		1	1	1
State						
Basic education (TK)	13	10	1	10	7	15
Basic education (not TK)	2	5	1	8	4	7
ECEAP contract	9	26	1	17	10	27
LAP		1		1	1	2
High Poverty LAP		1		1		1
State SPED	6	12	3	20	11	22
TK Grant	1					1
Child Care Subsidy						
Career and Technical Ed.						1
Local or private						
City						
County						
EP&O Levy	3	6		8	6	10
Tuition/Private Pay	1	8	2	8	7	11
Other Grant (Local/Private)						
Levy (Seattle FEPP)			1	1	1	1

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