

It Is Not Too Late To Speak-Up!

“What is going on in our State? I am hearing that the Department of Early Learning is making my job even harder! How can mandates be placed in my home? This is my home. What is a weighted WAC? What can I do? Who is really listening to me? Does government really know what we (FCC) do?”

I hear comments and whispers from fellow providers every day; voices that ring out truth and fears of the State’ new Washington Administrative Codes (WACs). Let’ try to separate truth from myths and gain clarity about these issues.

History:

In 2016, the State of Washington past the Early Start Act that mandated Department of Early Learning (DEL) to update rules that govern child care licensing, the intent was to unify a set of regulation that would be easy understood by the provider. The first step in this process is to align the Family Home to Center WAC, eliminating all unnecessary differences and consolidating two separate WAC into one.

The Second step of this process is creating a progression of standards and regulation between licensed child care, Early Achievers, and ECEAP, with health and safety requirements in the WAC replacing similar standards in Early Achievers and ECEAP.

Negotiating Rule Making and Public Comment

“DEL is required by statute [RCW 34.05.320](#) to organize a public comments process, as well as negotiate rules with the Family Home Providers’ union on behalf of represented family child care licensees, and include all other affected parties in this negotiation. DEL has created a robust plan to engage the early learning community in the public comments process, and to negotiate with the various affected parties in this situation, including Child Care Centers, ECEAP and Head Start providers, and Families.

Affected parties have a number of options for involvement in both processes, including reviewing the rules and providing comments as individuals (via an online [Public Comments Portal](#)), connecting with their designated organizing entity (see below) or participating in an [Alignment Café](#). Public comments received during the NRM will be considered during the formal negotiations of the affected parties.”

” (<https://del.wa.gov/Negotiated-Rule-Making>)

CURRENT STATE OF WAC ALIGNMENT

The NRM teams have been meeting since May 2017 and will continue to meet until October, to exam, discuss and bring voice to the implementation of the revised WAC. Although there are five teams, Family Child Care carry the most passion. WE are seated at each Negotiation meeting albeit small group/break out session and general meeting. In each county, we have had a myriad of FCC providers/supporters who have openly spoke to the compassion that is needed in changing “our” livelihood and “our” homes.

WAC Consensus has been met with 1/3 of the regulations; thus, your voice and actions are still needed. The State realizes the commitment of the FCC’ and other team such as the Centers and ECEAP and has implemented additional meeting time for negotiations.

This process cannot be successful without “your voice.” We need everyone who life will be impacted with these changes to speak up. Our next NRM meeting is September 23 – 25th at the Red Lion Conference Hall, in Renton WA. Your presence is needed; your knowledge should be posted to the public comment portal. I invite you to come during the public opinions hour to come out speak up for our business, our children, our future!

Sincerely,
Mary Curry