



# Eligibility: Final Rule

Puget Sound ESD Policy Council

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# Categorical and Income Eligibility Requirements

- Pregnant woman or child is income-eligible if the family's income is equal to or below the poverty line
- The family is eligible for public assistance, specifically SSI and/or TANF
- The family is categorically eligible if the child is HOMELESS or in FOSTER care



# Eligibility Final Rule

- ▶ Eligibility: determines the requirements to enroll in our Early Learning programs
- ▶ Final Rule: making sure that we are serving the families most in need, First
- ▶ Effective March 12, 2015

# What Does the Rule Do?

- Provides a roadmap for programs on how to determine eligibility
- Describes the kind of documents the program may accept and must keep
- Provides a structure across the nation to make sure our income-eligible children and categorically-eligible families are enrolled in the Early Learning Programs



# Policies and Procedures

Program must establish policies and procedures that include:

- ▶ Actions taken against staff who intentionally enroll ineligible families
  - ▶ ESD will use their policies and procedures already established for Disciplinary Action
  - ▶ Subcontractor sites may have to establish Policies and Procedures with support from ESD

# Training

- ▶ Programs must train, within 90 days following the effective date of March 12 (June 12):
  - ▶ management
  - ▶ staff members who make eligibility determinations
- ▶ Programs must train, within 180 days (Sept 12):
  - ▶ the Governing Board and Policy Council
- ▶ New Staff: within 90 days of hiring
- ▶ ESD will establish yearly training on the final rule



# Eligibility Determination Record

- ▶ There will be a file for each family called the Eligibility Determination Record that will include:
  - ▶ Copies of documents used to verify eligibility
  - ▶ Statement that program staff have made reasonable efforts to verify information
  - ▶ Statement that identifies eligibility determination (Income or categorical eligibility)



# Enrollment Focus

- ▶ Homeless
  - ▶ Foster/Kinship Care
  - ▶ Public Assistance (TANF/SSI)
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