

ERSEA Problem Statements

Problems in Black, Possible Solutions in Blue

ELIGIBILITY

1) **PROBLEM:** There are too many Eligibility guidance and procedure docs – overwhelming amount of reading for staff.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Revise documents to align with Adult Learning Styles Inventory (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- Simplify documents and merge forms if possible.
- Separate sections per program in one document.
- Update online training.

2) **PROBLEM:** FSS's have to frequently “chase paper” to determine eligibility because families have incomplete or wrong info.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Revise the application cover sheet and *Definition of Income Guidance* to align with Adult Learning Styles Inventory (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) so that it is concise and clearly states what types of income documents are accepted.
- Add to *Definition of Income Guidance*: December Year-to-Date from one paycheck is okay to use if parent had the job for the last 12 months, but need more income if parent had the job for part of the year.
- Develop a paperless system?
- Provide training/coaching.

3) **PROBLEM:** Requiring a parent signature with the “Statement of No Income” / “Documentation Not Available” on the *Eligibility Verification Form* is inefficient and holds up the application process.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Provide training/coaching.

4) **PROBLEM:** For Shared Waitlist Sites (HS/EHS/ECEAP): The ELMS Prescreen and ESD application do not support each other. Because ELMS eligibility questions are not on the ESD application, nor the *Eligibility Verification Form* (EVF), ECEAP FSS have to go back and gather missing information from family.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Provide training/coaching.
- Use ELMS Prescreen for all programs.
- Align PSESD application and EVF with ELMS Prescreen and Application to include:
 - Name and phone/email of employer
 - Work hours including travel time (needed to qualify family for Extended Day)
 - Work First information (needed to qualify family for Extended Day)
 - Documentation to verify household size – tax records, school district records, etc.
 - Documentation to verify child’s birth date.

Category

ELIGIBILITY, continued

5) **PROBLEM:** For Shared Waitlist Sites (HS/EHS/ECEAP): SSI and TANF requirements are not updated to include ECEAP on the *Eligibility Verification Procedure*, making it difficult to determine eligibility for multiple programs

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Combine *SSI Eligibility Guidance* with *Eligibility Verification Procedure*
- Include ECEAP instructions regarding SSI and TANF, or separate HS/EHS and ECEAP eligibility processes.
- Separate the process by program where logistically possible.

6) **PROBLEM:** Some questions in the application may be a barrier for EHS families.

7) **PROBLEM:** The *Living Situation Survey* definition of McKinney-Vento doesn't match the way school districts define homelessness and is too restrictive.

8) **PROBLEM:** The *Living Situation Survey* has questions other than those that establish eligibility.

9) **PROBLEM:** Questions about eligibility are given multiple, conflicting, or unclear answers when asked of ESD staff.

10) **PROBLEM:** The *Eligibility Verification Form* does not have a box for current income.

RECRUITMENT

1) **PROBLEM:** There is not enough guidance on how to recruit those in the opportunity gap.

2) **PROBLEM:** Some families are not applying due to immigration concerns

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Provide training/coaching.

3) **PROBLEM:** For HEAD START sites that are closed in the summer: Classrooms are capped early because categorically eligible families and income-eligible 4-year-olds might not apply until closer to the program start date.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Recruit year-round.
- With coaching, revise recruitment flyers to emphasize 3-year-old eligibility, but strongly encourage families with 4-year-olds to apply early.
- Partner with community-based organizations to encourage categorically eligible families to apply earlier.
- Provide training/coaching.
- Have a longer deadline for filling slots at the beginning of the year.

4) **PROBLEM:** The general public knows more about Head Start than it does ECEAP and EHS.

5) **PROBLEM:** The application is too long, complicated, and is not currently used as a family engagement tool.

Category

SELECTION

1) **PROBLEM:** Maintaining an ELMS waitlist at a shared waitlist site is difficult. If ELMS does not have a viable waitlist, it shows the state that the site does not have the population to sustain slots.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Separate HS/EHS and ECEAP selection processes where logistically possible.
- Discuss with DEL about having access to ChildPlus 2025 waitlist.
- Adopt ELMS pointing and waitlist system.
- Provide training/coaching.

2) **PROBLEM:** ELMS and PSESD pointing systems do not align.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Adopt ELMS pointing system.

3) **PROBLEM:** Pointing and Selection system is complicated, leads to inaccuracy, and takes too much time.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Provide training/coaching.
- Adopt ELMS pointing and selection system.
- Separate the process by program where logistically possible.

4) **PROBLEM:** The increase in minimum wage has caused families to be slightly over the income limit for ECEAP.

5) **PROBLEM:** Unclear why opportunity gap points are not given to SE Asian (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, etc.) families and refugees

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Should apply to recent immigrants, regardless of race.
- Clarify ethnicity.
- Give points, but weight less.

6) **PROBLEM:** Unclear reason for why 4 points are given for agency referral.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Weight agency referrals more so that they carry more meaning.
- Delete as a selection.
- Provide training/coaching.
- Give staff the answer.
- Remove from application.
- Provide a list of agencies that count towards receiving the points.

Category

SELECTION, continued

- 7) **PROBLEM:** There is no guidance on how to discuss homelessness priority points with a family if they don't want to mark "homeless" on the application (especially with immigrant/refugee families).

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Provide screencasts and training and coaching opportunities, including clarity on McKinney-Vento across early learning programs.

- 8) **PROBLEM:** Head Start and ECEAP differ on whether OI with IEP counts towards OI % allowance

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Over-income children with IEP count towards IEP % allowance, not over-income % allowance. Transfer E-Alert information regarding over-income and IEP to *Eligibility Verification Procedure*, in chart form.
- Provide training/coaching.

- 9) **PROBLEM:** Household size is difficult to verify if some family members are not claimed on the tax return provided.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Training on ELMS - see list of documents in ELMS Prescreen.
- Align Head Start with ECEAP.

ENROLLMENT

- 1) **PROBLEM:** The *Individual School Readiness Goals Form* needs clarity.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Revise and provide training/coaching.

- 2) **PROBLEM:** The *Parent Interest Survey* has many redundancies, needs to define "Information Provided" and "Resource Provided", and needs bigger fields.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Revise and condense the form for clarity
- Add information about Peer Programs

Category

ATTENDANCE

1) **PROBLEM:** Head Start attendance is too complicated.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Provide training.

2) **PROBLEM:** The *Attendance Procedure* doesn't explain how to address class enrollment impact when a family asks to be excused for a long period, then drops out.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Explain and revise document.
- Empower staff to determine due diligence for their site.
- Provide training/coaching. around sensitive conversations regarding attendance with families.

DOCUMENTATION

1) **PROBLEM:** There is no explanation for how to transfer ELMS documentation for a 3-year-old moving to HS the following year

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- ECEAP FSS can print from ELMS and HS FSS can add to "Last Year" tab in family file for reference
- Rework entire Transfer/Transition section of ELPM and provide training/coaching.

2) **PROBLEM:** The *File Order Procedure – Preschool and EHS Center Based* is inaccurate.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Review and revise procedure, then provide training/coaching.

3) **PROBLEM:** The *ERSEA Notebook Procedure* is only located in "Program Administration – Documentation and Reporting" in Early Learning WA website.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Create link in ERSEA page
- Put all other documents related to ERSEA together and add to ERSEA page of Early Learning Website.

Category

MISCELLANEOUS

1) **PROBLEM:** The current ERSEA system is too complicated and time consuming, so it takes away from time with families.

2) **PROBLEM:** There are too many sources of information to hunt through:

1. ELPM
2. Coaching sessions
3. Trainings/FAQs
4. E-Alerts
5. Connector
6. NOW Newsletter (internal PSESD)
7. Personal conversations/emails
8. Center Director meetings
9. To-Do Lists
10. Federal and State updates

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Have separate pages on the ERSEA page per program, including one for Head Start, one for EHS-CCP/EHS-HB, and one for ECEAP.

3) **PROBLEM:** It's confusing to know which ERSEA "Current Year and Next Year" docs to use and what date to make the switch.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Only have the current year documents available and remove when next year documents are ready to use.

4) **PROBLEM:** There is not enough ERSEA training in small group settings.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Contact FE Coach for one-on-one sessions.
- Bring back First Year Club for new staff.
- Provide booster ERSEA learning labs for seasoned staff throughout the year.
- Year-round training for application, pointing, eligibility, selection.

5) **PROBLEM:** The ELPM is difficult to navigate.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Provide training/coaching.
- Make each component look the same on each page.

Category

MISCELLANEOUS, continued

6) **PROBLEM:** There are some incorrect information in the ELPM.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Review and revise/update ELPM documents.

7) **PROBLEM:** There is no clear process to make corrections in ELPM documents when we receive updates from State or Federal governments.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Have a designated person curate the information.
- Have an electronic space for site staff can give ongoing feedback.

8) **PROBLEM:** There are not enough visuals in ELPM documents.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Review and revise/update ELPM documents.

9) **PROBLEM:** Revisions to ELPM documents in the middle of the year cause mistakes and confusion about the purpose.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION PREVIOUSLY SHARED: Update purpose statements on all documents.

10) **PROBLEM:** The ELPM search box is unpredictable/unreliable.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- ELPM pathway on the bottom of each document so staff know where the document lives on the website.
- Provide training on how to search.

11) **PROBLEM:** Some program models (EHS-CCP, EHS-HB, Part Day, Full School Day, Extended Day) are not supported by forms and procedures.

12) **PROBLEM:** There is no guidance on transitioning families from EHS-CCP to HS/ECEAP.

13) **PROBLEM:** There is no periodic forum for staff to share the innovative ways they operationalize ERSEA procedures at their sites or to tell others what documents are most useful in their practice (e.g. *Selection Worksheet, Staffing To-Do List*, etc.)

14) **PROBLEM:** The integration of Head Start and ECEAP has caused complexity, confusion, and non-compliance within both programs.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:

- Keep what works and provide training/coaching, and review and revise what doesn't.