Advocacy Day 2020
Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

Q: When is Advocacy Day scheduled this year and where will it be held?
A: Advocacy Day 2020 will be Thursday, February 20th. The event will take place in Olympia. Please see www.earlylearningwa.org for information about times, locations, driving directions and parking information.

Q: What happens at Advocacy Day?
A: PSESD Early Learning work in partnership with Washington State Association for Head Start and ECEAP (WSA), Early Learning Action Alliance and Think Babies for this event.

   Morning: Parents and staff join other parents and staff from around the state in the morning at the RL Hotel in Olympia for advocacy training to learn about the legislative process, issues that impact children and families, the power of the personal stories, etc. At the end of the morning, attendees will get a boxed lunch and then gather in groups by legislative district to make a game plan for the afternoon.

   Afternoon: Parents and staff will travel to the capitol campus. If you rode a bus to the hotel, you’ll ride a bus to the capitol campus. If you drove or carpooled to the hotel, you’ll do the same over to the capitol campus.

   Everyone will meet on the steps of the capitol building for at 2:00 pm for the rally. Be ready to yell, wave signs, and be inspired by speakers. After the rally, parents meet with legislators to share their personal experiences with our Early Learning programs and how they benefit children and families. Staff are welcome to attend to support their parents, provide program information, answer legislators’ questions and share their experiences working with children and families if needed.

Q: Are we asking parents and staff to lobby?
A: No, this is an educational field trip to learn about the legislative process for decision-making and for parents to learn more about how the advocacy process works on local, state and federal levels. This program activity is one of many to help us meet our state and federal Performance Standards related to advocacy. Please review the ‘Lobbying vs Advocacy’ handout at www.earlylearningwa.org. Parents will have the opportunity to speak to Legislators and share their child and families story.

Q: Will parents receive additional information about Advocacy Day?
A: Advocacy Day brochures are available to request here. This brochure is available in 6 languages and has lots of information for parents, including the web link to www.earlylearning.org. Policy Council representatives also receive information at their winter meetings. Parents registered for Advocacy Day will also receive information through the email address provided at registration.
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HOW TO ATTEND

Q: How do parents and staff register?
A: Registration is linked from www.earlylearningwa.org. Staff need to register in order to receive lunch.

Q: Are interpreters available?
A: Yes, interpreters are available for parents on the buses, at the training, at the rally, and during appointments. Be sure to indicate the need for an interpreter on the registration form. Handouts are available in English and Spanish.

Q: How does parent immigration status affect participation?
A: Parents can and should attach Advocacy Day regardless of immigration status. There is no identification required to enter the Capital Building or legislative offices.

Q: If I have a parent who changes their mind or decides not to go, can I substitute another parent?
A: Yes, substitutions can be made. For example, if you have 2 parents cancel, you can replace them with 2 other parents. Please remember to make these substitutions before the deadline if possible.

Q: Can friends, neighbors or other family members attend Advocacy Day?
A: Friends, neighbors and other family members can attend in the afternoon however, we are unable to provide the Parent Leadership Stipend. They are welcome to attend meetings with legislators and the Advocacy Day rally as members of the larger community who desire to join us to advocate for children and families.

TRANSPORTATION

Q: How do the parents/guardians travel to Olympia?
A: PSESD Early Learning arranges charter buses. Please note children are allowed on the charter buses. If you want to use a car seat, the family must bring it and there may not be seat belts to belt the car seat in. Charter buses, like school bus are built for no seat belt but meet the same safety regulations If children are attending we do encourage parents to self transport in order to meet the child and family’s needs without being held to the bus schedule. See www.earlylearningwa.org for specific bus stop locations and pick-up/drop-off times.

Q: Can parents/guardians drive themselves or carpool?
A: Yes, parents may drive themselves or carpool. Please note we do not directly reimburse mileage (see below for more information). Families that drive themselves should be prepared to find and pay for parking at the capitol campus.

Driving directions are available for parents driving themselves:
- Driving directions to the RL (Red Lion) Hotel for morning training
Driving directions from the hotel to the capitol campus for the afternoon

Q: Will families be reimbursed for their mileage, time, child care expenses, etc.?
A: Families will receive a flat $50 subsidy for attending Advocacy Day designed to pay for any expenses associated in attending. Parents that ride a charter bus will complete their subsidy request form on the bus ride. Parents that drive or carpool will receive a blank form in their packet and need to return it to a PSESD staff member by the end of the day.

Checks will be mailed to families about 2 weeks following Advocacy Day to the mailing address indicated on the form.

Q: Can staff ride the bus?
A: Yes, but priority is given to parents. Staff have the option to drive themselves. PSESD does not provide mileage reimbursements for subcontractor staff mileage.

Q: Can parents bring children if they drive themselves?
A: Yes, this year there will be a child station. It is good to remember this event is pretty fast-paced and there is a tremendous amount of walking around the State Capitol for the legislative appointments. Many of the legislative offices and meeting spaces are small and may not able to accommodate strollers, car seats, etc. Families will need to keep this all in mind as they decide to bring children.

QUESTIONS?

Q: What if I have more questions?
A: Contact Lori Pittman at lpittman@psesd.org