



# Memorandum

**TO:** Satpal Sidhu, County Executive  
**FROM:** Charlene Ramont, Assistant Director  
**RE:** Whatcom Center for Early Learning – Healthy Children’s Fund Innovative Services Contract  
**DATE:** MARCH 17, 2025

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Attached is a contract between Whatcom County and Whatcom Center for Early Learning (WCEL) for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

Through this contract, WCEL will pilot the *Inclusive Childcares Project* kindergarten readiness program to support children from birth through age five in rural (outside City of Bellingham) parts of Whatcom County, particularly those with developmental delays and disabilities, their families, and childcare providers. This program will improve skills in all six domains that support kindergarten readiness through expanding the knowledge and skill development of childcare providers serving children who may require additional health and supportive services. During this pilot year, WCEL will partner with at least six licensed child care centers and/or in-home providers, focusing on those in rural areas (outside City of Bellingham), who may serve children experiencing disabilities and developmental delays.

WCEL staff, including a Specialized Instructor, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech-Language Pathologist, specialize in serving children who may require additional health and supportive services to support kindergarten readiness. WCEL will support childcare staff in utilizing an online platform to gain additional accredited education on inclusive topics such as autism, biting, and sensory processing, then WCEL will provide hands on mentoring in classrooms, support and coaching in navigating conversations with caregivers, and resource and referral navigation.

This contract is awarded as a result of RFP solicitation 24-66 and aligns with the Healthy Children’s Fund Implementation Plan’s Strategy Six to support innovative approaches to meet various Healthy Children’s Fund goals related to Early Learning and Care.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract, in an amount not to exceed \$225,525, is the Healthy Children’s Fund. These funds are included in the 2025 budget. Council authorization is required per WCC 3.08.100 as funding for this contract exceeds \$40,000.

Please contact Sarah Simpson, Children and Family Programs Supervisor at 360-410-2400 ([SSimpson@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:SSimpson@co.whatcom.wa.us)) if you have any questions.

Encl.