



EARLY ACHIEVERS GRANT

2026-27 GRANT GUIDELINES

Workforce Education Department
Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
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The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges reserves the right to make changes to this document due to, but not limited to, federal, state, or local legislation or policy changes.

Deadlines and Milestones

Milestone	Dates (subject to change)
Applications available in OGMS	February 26, 2026
Applications due in OGMS	April 9, 2026
Grant Start Date	July 1, 2026
Mid-Year Report Due	January 22, 2027
Final Budget Revision Deadline	June 15, 2027
End of Year Report Due	June 30, 2027

Grant Contacts

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Overview

The Early Achievers Grant is a student financial aid program to help employed childcare providers and early learning educators complete certificates and associate degrees in early childhood education. The Early Achievers Grant is offered in partnership with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). The funding is allocated by DCYF and administered by SBCTC.

What Institutions May Apply

This grant is open to all Washington State Community and Technical Colleges, as defined under [RCW 28B.50.030](#), that offer the common Early Childhood Education courses and standardized statewide stackable certificates, as well as other institutions approved by DCYF and SBCTC prior to the application opening in OGMS. Certificate and degree programs must meet professional certification requirements for early learning professionals.

How Does the College Apply

Access the 2026-27 Early Achievers Grant Application through the Online Grant Management System ([OGMS](#)).

If you do not have an account, contact your organization's [Security Contact](#) for access. You will also need your Security Contact to give you permission for FY27.

Submit completed grant applications, including attachments, to the SBCTC through OGMS no later than April 9, 2026, at 11:55 p.m. SBCTC staff are available for assistance until 4:00 p.m. on April 9, 2026.

Application Process

We suggest writing applications in a word processing program and pasting the application content into OGMS. This will help ensure you do not lose any content if the OGMS application times out. [The list of grant questions can be found in Appendix A.](#)

Application Review

The Early Achievers Grant Application will be reviewed by Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) staff. Feedback will be provided to colleges in order to refine or clarify application responses.

Disclaimer

SBCTC reserves the right to refrain from granting to any or all applicants. Additionally, SBCTC reserves the right to add additional grant requirements to applicants meeting minimum criteria to receive funds, but that are deemed to be higher risk grantees. Additional requirements may include, but are not limited to, additional reporting requirements or additional monitoring to assess the applicant's ability to adhere to grant requirements. Any additional requirements will be outlined for individual applicants prior to applicants accepting any resulting grant funding.

Administering the Grant

The majority of the duties, though not all, within this grant fall under the responsibility of the Early Achievers Grant Program Contact. In order to successfully complete those duties, the Program Contact requires the support of the ECE faculty and dean, staff within the financial aid office and finance office, and others, dependent upon the organizational structure of the college. The majority of the grant requirements are directly from the funder, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

If at any time throughout the execution of the grant, uncertainties, questions, or difficulties in administering the grant arise, contact the EAG Program Administrator at the State Board for support.

Responsibilities of the College

The responsibilities of the college include, but are not limited to:

- Establish and support an Early Achievers Grant Program Contact (PC) to advise and support Early Achievers Grant recipients using relationship-based advising methods.
- Establish contact between the college's PC and the Program Administrator at the State Board. Maintain accurate grant contact information in OGMS/OBIS and with the State Board.
- Contact the Program Administrator to obtain access to the FY27 EAG Canvas site. Reporting documents, including the quarterly and biannual reports and other grant-related documentation, will be uploaded to Canvas for access by the State Board.
- Ensure accurate coding of students and student financial aid.
- Ensure monthly billing of EAG expenses to SBCTC.
- Maintain secure records, including a copy of all reports, EAG student grant applications, student consent forms, employment verification, receipts for all expenses, and other grant-related documentation. Retain records per the [Community and Technical Colleges Record Retention Schedule](https://www.sos.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/community-and-technical-colleges-records-retention-schedule.PDF) (link: <https://www.sos.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/community-and-technical-colleges-records-retention-schedule.PDF>)
- Reach the FTES target equivalent to the funding amount.

Responsibilities of the EAG Program Contact

College staff identified as the Program Contact and/or others involved in the implementation of the grant will:

Outreach & Recruitment

- Develop and implement an outreach plan to promote and inform the broader community about Early Achievers funding opportunities at your college. Collaborate with Marketing & Communications department staff as needed.
- Meet with Early Achievers Coaches, program owners/directors, and prospective students to provide information about higher education programs in the early learning field, certificate and

degree pathways, and available student financial aid and services.

- Develop partnerships with local provider organizations to stay aware of, and responsive to, community needs. Communicate those needs to the relevant faculty, staff, and administrators at the college. For example, communicating the need for courses in additional languages or student support services outside of normal campus hours of operation to the faculty and dean.
- Recruit a pool of eligible students from family home childcare businesses, childcare centers, and ECEAP programs that reflect the diversity of the local provider community and the children they serve.

Onboarding & Advising

- Implement practices that promote educational access, meeting the needs of BIPOC providers and providers of various learning languages, ages, identities, and geographical locations.
- Assist students with completing college applications, registration, EAG scholarship applications, financial aid forms, and completion/graduation forms.
- Following the DCYF Program Guide, support qualified participants to understand the full impact of enrollment in the Early Achievers Grant program and receiving DCYF scholarship funds, including but not limited to time/effort commitments, intended outcomes, and required data sharing and reporting requirements.
- Coordinate prior learning assessments and the awarding of credit as requested by the student.
- Provide quarterly relationship-based academic and career advising to:
 - Help students reflect upon, develop, and implement a strategy for achieving their academic, career, and personal goals.
 - Develop an academic plan for students that meets each student's needs and educational goals, including online courses when appropriate.
 - Track student progress, deploy support services as necessary, and assist students with planning their course schedule for the following quarter.
 - Connect students with other resources on campus that can help them address specific academic, career, and personal concerns to enhance retention and completion.
 - Coordinate wrap-around support services such as tutoring, mentoring, study groups, eLearning workshops, or emergency assistance as needed.
- Make reasonable efforts to meet with students when requested outside of quarterly advising.
- Collaborate with other college personnel to align and seamlessly offer support services as needed.
- Collaborate with Financial Aid and Workforce to braid funding sources (when available) and develop financial aid packages for each student according to their needs.

Grant Administration

- Verify student eligibility in MERIT prior to the start of each quarter.
- Attend required Early Achievers Grant meetings hosted by the SBCTC.
- Stay informed with DCYF scholarship program information and DCYF staff qualification requirements by attending required meetings and information posted in the current fiscal year EAG Canvas site.
- Complete and submit quarterly eligibility verification reports, biannual narrative reports, and course modality and schedule data to SBCTC by posted deadlines. Please see Appendix C for biannual narrative report questions.
- Provide qualitative data by distributing and facilitating the completion of the annual EAG Student Survey and by completing the annual EAG Program Contact Survey.
- Provide quarterly data to the registrar's office (or other staff responsible for student coding) for enrolled Early Achievers Grant eligible students, ensuring data is available to report on program type (licensed family home providers, licensed childcare centers, ECEAP, or Head Start), and STARS IDs.
- Prior to the SBCTC Data Warehouse Enrollment and Staffing Snapshot each quarter, ensure all eligible and enrolled EAG students are accurately coded according to the SBCTC coding manual.
- Track and report all eligible Early Achievers Grant students who are on a funding waitlist due to limited funding and are not eligible for other funding sources, thus unable to enroll in classes and meet their education requirements.
- Maintain a budget to ensure that existing students can continue to make progress towards their goals for the duration of the funding year.
- Submit monthly invoices for all EAG expenses.

Establishing Eligibility and Priority

Below is information from the DCYF Early Achievers Grant Program Guide. The guide can be found on [DCYF's website](https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-profdev/scholarships-incentives-awards) (link: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-profdev/scholarships-incentives-awards>).

Eligibility Criteria

Early learning professionals must meet the eligibility criteria outlined below to be eligible for funding from the Early Achievers Grant (EAG) scholarship program. Scholarships will be awarded on an objective and nondiscriminatory basis. There are no income-based eligibility requirements; students are not required to submit a FAFSA/WASFA. Meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding. All colleges must verify eligibility in [MERIT](#) every quarter that the student is enrolled in classes.

Employment Requirements

Applicants must work at a program participating in [DCYF's Early Achievers Quality Recognition and Improvement System \(ORIS\) program](#). Program participation status can be checked in [MERIT](#) or [Child Care Check](#).

Employment Requirements	
Employment Site	Employed at an Early Achievers participating facility, verified each quarter. Eligible employment facilities must be one of the following: Licensed Family Home Sites, ECEAP, Licensed Childcare Centers, or Head Start.
Employment Duration	Employed in an eligible role for three months prior to the start of the academic term*
Hours	Minimum of 10 per week or 40 per month

*The three-month employment duration requirement may be waived for applicants needing to complete their Child Care Basics (CCB) training and enroll in ECED& 107. CCB status should be confirmed in MERIT prior to enrollment.

Role Requirements

Applicants must work in a qualifying role at a licensed Early Achievers-participating facility or in an Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) classroom. NOTE: Licensed early learning roles that do not have education requirements, as per [WAC 300-0100](#), are not eligible for EAG scholarship funding. Any role not listed in the Qualifying Roles table is not eligible to receive EAG scholarship funding.

Qualifying Roles
Family Home Owner/Licensee
Center Director
Assistant Director
Program Supervisor
Lead Teacher
Assistant Teacher

Residency Requirements

Funding is available to scholarship recipients regardless of citizenship or Washington State residency status. Tuition rates are dependent on residency and citizenship status. NOTE: If an applicant lives in a neighboring state, they are eligible for scholarship funding as long as they meet all eligibility criteria as listed above and are enrolled at a WA State Community or Technical College.

Priority Criteria

When student enrollment exceeds available funding, the following priority criteria should be used to determine funding.

- 1st: Eligible EAG recipients who need to meet DCYF staff qualifications to maintain employment.

2nd: Continuing eligible EAG recipients who have met DCYF staff qualifications but maintain continuous enrollment while working to complete an additional ECE degree or certificate beyond the required staff qualifications.

3rd: All other eligible EAG students

Funding Waitlist

EAG eligible providers are placed on a waitlist if the number of applicants exceeds the amount of available funding. Applicants remain on the funding waitlist until they request to be removed from the list or are no longer waiting for funding from EAG. Providers are not included on the waitlist if funding is available, but they choose to start in a future quarter.

Waivers

Permission may be granted for eligible grant recipients to enroll in additional credits if they meet the following criteria:

1. Must complete one or more developmental courses in math and/or English to complete the one-year Early Childhood Education State Certificate.
2. Are within a few courses of completing their Early Childhood Education one-year State Certificate, but could benefit from enrolling in one or two courses required for an Early Childhood Education Associate's degree as they complete their State Certificate.
3. Have at least an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education or a related degree as defined by DCYF, but need specific courses to retain employment. Communication from the employer or DCYF requiring needed courses must be documented.
4. AAS-T transfer requirements exceed 45 credits (note: students may not exceed 97 credits)

Colleges must track any waivers they approve and retain records per the [record retention guidelines for Community and Technical Colleges](#). In the event the college has a student who may need a credit waiver but does not fully meet the above criteria, please contact the Program Administrator for additional guidance.

Funding

The Early Achievers Grant is offered in partnership with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). The funding is allocated by DCYF and administered by SBCTC. Many of the grant requirements are directly from DCYF.

The Early Achievers Grant funds must be expended no later than June 30, 2027.

Assumptions

The 2026-27 award recommendation assumes the following distribution of funds:

1. Early Achievers Grant (EAG) funds will be distributed to community and technical colleges that apply and are selected to participate in the financial aid program during the 2026-27 academic year.

2. One FTES (full-time equivalent student) is equivalent to 45 credits. For example, a student who enrolls in 18 credits in the fall quarter, 12 credits in the winter quarter, and 15 credits in the spring quarter results in 1.0 FTES (18 + 12 + 15 = 45). The enrollment of several part-time students may be added together to determine FTES. For example, nine students who enroll in a five-credit course would total 45 credits, or 1.0 FTES.
3. The EAG funding will be granted to colleges in whole FTES increments (5, 7, 12, etc.), not partial FTES increments (3.4, 7.2, 15.7, etc.).

The contract with DCYF sets forth the requirements for Early Achievers Grant (EAG) funding. A student may receive EAG funding for up to 97 eligible credits.

College Awards

The college must apply for the total amount of funds outlined in the following table, which provides examples of full-time and part-time student tuition rates and includes the minimum and maximum amounts for each budget category. For example, if requesting 10 FTES, the college must apply for exactly \$83,000. Once funding is determined, the college is expected to reach the FTES target equivalent to the funding amount. Please use the budget planning spreadsheet to assist in calculating FTES requests.

EAG Funding Table	Parameters	Full-Time Example (10 FTES)	Part-Time Example (10 FTES)
Student Support	Minimum \$6,600 per FTES		
Tuition & Fees	Minimum \$5,100 per FTES	\$51,000	\$61,250
Required Books & Instructional Materials	Maximum \$1,000 per FTES	\$10,000	\$2,250
Wrap-Around Services (Misc.)	No minimum	\$5,000	\$2,500
General: Program Contact	Maximum \$1,700 per FTES	\$17,000	\$17,000
Total	\$8,300 per FTES	\$83,000	\$83,000

Please refer to Budget & Invoicing Guidance on [pages 10-14](#) for details on budgeting and transferring funds between budget categories.

The Early Achievers Grant funds must be expended no later than June 30, 2027.

Leveraging Funding Options

Colleges should explore and utilize other financial aid options for eligible students. Because EAG is not income-based, we serve students who may be just above the income requirements of need-based financial aid options. For those who qualify for need-based aid, we encourage braiding those additional sources of funding into the student's financial aid package. Other funding sources that may be applicable include Pell Grants, the Washington College Grant, the Washington Opportunity Grant, BFET, WorkFirst, and Worker Retraining, among others. When available, leveraged funding must be used first or shared with EAG funding, meaning EAG funds are not first pay.

Please refer funding waitlist or ineligible providers to other sources of aid.

Budget & Invoicing Guidance

Early Achievers Grant funds are awarded on a Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) basis and organized in OBIS by Activity and Category. One FTES is equivalent to \$8,300; of this amount, a minimum of \$6,600 is allocated for the Student Support Activity, and a maximum of \$1,700 is allocated for the General Activity.

Budget Activities & Categories

The following list identifies all eligible Early Achievers program components by activity (also known as a budget line). There are two Activities for EAG: Student Support and General. Student Support Activity includes the following budget categories: Tuition and Fees, Books, and Wrap-Around Support (aka Misc.); General Activity includes the following budget categories: Salary, Wages, and Employee Benefits, Goods and Services, Travel, and Contracts.

Budget Activity: Student Support

Three budget categories fall under Student Supports budget activity: Tuition and Fees, Textbooks and Instructional Materials, and Wrap-Around Student Services (budgeted in the “Misc.” cell). The minimum amount for this activity is \$6,600.

Budget Category: Tuition and Fees

The Early Achievers Grant funding covers tuition and fees that are required for students pursuing a stackable ECE certificate or AA degree in ECE, up to a maximum of 97 credits per student. The College Board of Trustees approves the [college fees charged to students](#); therefore, the cost of full-time enrollment is set at a minimum of \$5,100 per FTES for EAG, and colleges must allocate a minimum of \$5,100 per FTES towards tuition.

Required fees may be paid for with funds in the Tuition and Fees category. Examples of eligible fees include, but are not limited to, lab fees, technology fees, CPR certification fees, etc.

The following fees are NOT eligible at any time:

- Admission/application fees
- Late registration fees
- Fees for copies of official or unofficial transcripts
- Dropped class fees

Underspent funds from this category may NOT be moved to any other category without authorization from SBCTC and DCYF. To request authorization, please email Megan Harper (mharper@sbctc.edu) with the requested amount, the category you would like to transfer the funds to, and a brief explanation of the reason for the request.

Budget Category: Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Colleges may budget up to \$1,000 per FTES funded through the Early Achievers Grant program to

reimburse students for the purchase of required textbooks and other instructional materials.

Early Achievers Grant students may receive up to \$1,000 per FTES for books and other instructional materials (printed materials used in place of or in addition to textbooks). To prorate the textbook and instructional materials maximum funding, divide \$1,000 by 45 credits (1 FTES). Students may be granted \$22.00 per credit for textbook and instructional materials purchases.

The college must establish book purchasing policies and procedures for EAG students. Examples of how book purchases may be completed include, but are not limited to, setting up a student account at the college's bookstore; a program contact might create an account at the bookstore that bookstore staff can charge book expenses to; students may purchase textbooks from a third party vendor and submit a receipt to the Program Contact for reimbursement; or the Program Contact (or other EAG staff) may purchase books from a third party vendor and ship/deliver to students. Regardless of the procedure used to purchase textbooks, the college must retain the receipts for auditing purposes and track per-credit amounts for each student.

Grant funds may not be used to purchase computers, laptops, scientific calculators, or other similar items for students. Grant funds may not be used to purchase paper, notebooks, pens, or other types of supplies. Please see Wrap-Around Support (aka Misc.) for guidance on purchasing computers, laptops, or other similar items for a lending library to support students.

Receipts for all purchases made by the college are required and must be retained per the [Community and Technical Colleges Record Retention Schedule](#).

Underspent funds in this category may be transferred to the Tuition or Wrap-Around Support (aka Misc.) categories. Adjustments of more than \$500 require authorization by DCYF. To request authorization for transfers over \$500, please email Megan Harper (mharper@sbctc.edu) with the requested amount, the category to which you would like to transfer the funds, and a brief explanation of the reason for the request.

Budget Category: Wrap-Around Support (aka Misc.)

There is no minimum amount for wrap-around support (also known as Misc. in OBIS); however, colleges should establish a budget that ensures emergent student needs are met and considers projected replacement expenses for lending libraries.

Examples of allowable expenses include, but are not limited to, purchasing loaner laptops or textbooks, student success workshops, tutoring, advising, retention strategies, and funding to mitigate student emergency conditions that, if resolved, will help students continue in the program.

Examples of emergent student needs include, but are not limited to, providing funds to cover childcare to allow the student to attend tutoring sessions, transportation funds to help the student get to class, utility bill assistance, etc.

If a student has an emergent need and it is unclear if the expense would be allowable, please reach out to the Program Administrator.

Per the [DCYF program guide](#), colleges must have a policy in place to determine how wrap-around support funds are distributed to individual students. In the event the college purchases laptops,

textbooks, etc., to loan to students, the college must have a policy in place regarding the duration and conditions of the loan, and consequences for damaging or not returning these materials. This policy must be communicated to students prior to their acceptance of the loaned item.

Receipts for all purchases made by the college are required and must be retained per the [Community and Technical Colleges Record Retention Schedule](#). If the college purchases a \$50 gas card for the student, that receipt is required, not the student's transaction at the gas pump. If a student pays a mechanic's bill to repair their car so they can continue attending classes, and the college reimburses the student, the original payment receipt to the mechanic should be submitted to the college and retained.

Underspent funds in this category may be transferred to the Tuition or books/instructional materials categories, provided that students' emergent needs are met and the maximum amount for books/instructional materials is not exceeded.

Budget Activity: General

Five budget categories fall under the General budget activity: Salary and Wages, Employee Benefits, Goods and Services, Travel, and Contracts. These funds can be used for the necessary and reasonable costs to support an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program Contact or other college staff responsible for supporting EAG students.

Please note: This Activity cannot exceed \$1,700 per FTES awarded (Student Support funds cannot be used for General Activity expenses).

Budget Categories: Salary, Wages, and Benefits

These categories provide funding for the salary, wages, and benefits of the Program Contact or other staff members involved in implementing the grant. Colleges are required to identify all staff whose salary, wages, or benefits are supported with EAG funds. This includes all position titles, percentages of effort, FTE (full-time equivalent) employment, or hourly wages, as well as benefit costs, along with a brief description of the duties associated with each position as they relate to the grant. Please put each position on a new line of text when submitting an application in OGMS or a budget revision in OBIS. Individual amounts for Salary and Wages and Benefits are listed in separate category columns in OBIS, but narratives are combined into a single entry.

Examples:

- Early Achievers Grant Manager, .2 FTE = \$12,000 salary; \$3,000 benefits to provide quarterly relationship-based academic and career advising
- Financial Aid Coordinator, \$30/hour for 200 hours = \$6,000 wages; \$2,000 benefits to braid funding sources (when available) and develop financial aid packages for each student according to their needs.

Underspent funds in these categories may be transferred to any Student Support Activity category, so long as the maximum amount for books/instructional materials is not exceeded, or any other category within the General Activity.

Budget Category: Goods and Services

This category provides funding for the purchase of necessary goods and services needed to

implement the grant activities. This may include, but is not limited to, office supplies and materials, informational/marketing materials for recruitment activities, or interagency agreements (contracts between two or more public entities). If an item is purchased that will not be used exclusively to support EAG, the costs must be split among other funding sources (ex., Workforce flyers or rack cards that include all funding options must be paid for by all programs included on the materials).

Receipts for all purchases are required and should be retained per the [Community and Technical Colleges Record Retention Schedule](#).

Underspent funds in this category may be transferred to any Student Support Activity category, so long as the maximum amount for books/instructional materials is not exceeded, or any other category within the General Activity.

Budget Category: Travel

This category provides funding for expenditures related to transportation, meals, hotel, and other expenses associated with allowable grant activities. Reimbursement for travel costs must be within OFM travel rates and regulations, which can be found in the [State Administrative and Accounting Manual \(SAAM\)](#), Chapter 10.90. Please note that when the grant recipient (the college or CBO) reimburses travel expenses under this grant using state funds, the same Office of Financial Management (OFM) travel rates and regulations must be applied.

Examples:

- \$100 in mileage reimbursement for travel to childcare centers to conduct recruitment activities
- Hotel costs for attending the ECTPC Spring Conference
- Transportation costs associated with attending the Workforce Student Support Forum
- Meal costs while attending the WAEYC Conference

Underspent funds in this category may be transferred to any Student Support Activity category, so long as the maximum amount for books/instructional materials is not exceeded, or any other category within the General Activity.

Budget Category: Contracts

This category provides funding for professional or technical services provided by a consultant (contractor) to accomplish a specific study, project, task, or other work statement. Rules that apply to the college must also be applied to the contractor. Please note that interagency agreements (contracts between two or more public entities) are considered services and should be budgeted and invoiced in the Goods and Services category.

Example:

- 200 hours of translation services from Company XXX for a contract total of \$5,000
- Tribal partners' curriculum review to ensure course content is culturally and linguistically contextualized for indigenous students; 60 hours of review with XXX Tribe for a contract total of \$4,800

Underspent funds in this category may be transferred to any Student Support Activity category, so

long as the maximum for books/instructional materials is not exceeded, or any other category within the General Activity.

Refunds

Any student receiving Early Achievers Grant funding who officially or unofficially withdraws will have funds returned to the Early Achievers Grant institutional account based on the college's refund policy. All Early Achievers Grant funds collected from student refunds may be re-awarded to other Early Achievers Grant-eligible students if refunds are received in the same fiscal year as disbursed. If returned after the close of the fiscal year, they must be returned to SBCTC to be returned to DCYF. Please follow your college's standard refund policy.

Should the student re-enroll at a later date, those funds surrendered will apply and count toward the Early Achievers Grant tuition/fees funding maximum.

Typically, there are no refunds for books/instructional materials that have been purchased.

Budget Revisions

SBCTC approval of a revised budget is required if there is a variation of more than 10% in expenditure levels for any individual budget cell.

Budget revisions must be submitted to SBCTC via the Online Budget & Invoicing System ([OBIS](#)).

Please see individual categories for guidance on allowable budget revisions to correct underspending in any individual category.

Final budget revision deadline: June 15, 2027

See the OBIS user manual (available in the Resources section of OBIS) for information on how to create and submit a budget revision. Be sure to update budget narrative answers as applicable.

The Early Achievers Grant State funds must be expended no later than June 30, 2027.

Funding Surveys

SBCTC staff will conduct funding surveys throughout the year to monitor actual and obligated expenditures and to ensure applicants are spending down their contracts. These surveys are contractually required administrative activities and must be completed and submitted to SBCTC by the deadlines provided in the FY27 Canvas site.

Invoicing

Funds for this grant must be claimed on a reimbursement basis. No payments in advance of or in anticipation of goods or services provided under this grant shall be requested or paid. All costs must be reported for the period in which they were incurred. Receipts for all purchases are required and should be retained per the [Community and Technical Colleges Record Retention Schedule](#).

Reimbursement requests must be submitted monthly via [OBIS](#). All costs must be submitted for reimbursement in accordance with the schedule shown below. If no expenses are incurred for the month, please notify the program administrator to avoid missing this required deadline.

For expenses incurred	Invoice no later than
July 2026	August 31, 2026
August 2026	September 30, 2026
September 2026	October 31, 2026
October 2026	November 30, 2026
November 2026	December 31, 2026
December 2026	January 31, 2027
January 2027	February 28, 2027
February 2027	March 31, 2027
March 2027	April 30, 2027
April 2027	May 31, 2027
May 2027	June 30, 2027
June 2027	July 15, 2027

All financial reports, including reimbursement requests, must be certified upon submission. Please read the certification statement within the OBIS invoice module and click the checkbox to attest to the statement.

Invoices may be pulled for pre-payment review by SBCTC financial staff. If this is done, the invoice will be placed in “Audit” status in OBIS, and the recipient institution will receive an automated email detailing the next steps. It is important to provide all requested backup documentation as soon as possible, as OBIS will not allow additional budget revisions or invoices for the same award to be submitted while an invoice is in “Audit” status.

Reporting and Coding

Reports

The data within ctcLink is used by the State Board to complete reporting required by the funder, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Because data is shared with DCYF, students must complete the consent to data sharing form at intake. This required consent form can be found on the FY27 EAG Canvas site in English, Spanish, and Somali. If forms in additional languages are required, please contact the Program Administrator. The data from ctcLink is entered by college staff and is gathered in the quarterly Data Warehouse Snapshots. Therefore, it is essential to code students according to the Academic Year 2026-27 Data Warehouse Snapshot Schedule to ensure accurate recording of enrollments and FTES progress. All enrollment and FTES progress for EAG students will be generated from the Student Attributes in ctcLink.

Colleges are required to submit quarterly eligibility verification reports and biannual narrative reports via the FY27 EAG Canvas site. The reporting templates and deadlines for these reports can also be found on the FY27 EAG Canvas site. SBCTC reserves the right to adjust information requested on reporting templates on a quarter-to-quarter basis.

Completions

As student retention is measured by continued enrollment and/or program completion, it is essential that all students completing one or more credentials be coded with the appropriate exit code in ctcLink. The most common exit codes for Early Achievers Grant students are as follows:

4. Associate Degree
5. Long Certificate + 90 credits
6. Long Certificate 45-89 credits
7. Short Certificate 20 to 44 credits
8. Short Certificate 1 to 19 credits

The full list of exit codes can be found under “Completions” on the [Guidelines for Reporting Degrees and Certificates](#) webpage, or check with your college registrar. It is essential to code students according to the Academic Year 2026-27 Data Warehouse Snapshot Schedule to ensure accurate recording of completions.

Student Coding

Students receiving financial assistance, academic support, *or* other services from an Early Achievers Program Contact are to be coded as Early Achievers Grant students, using the appropriate student attribute (PeopleSoft). The coding is outlined below. All enrollment and FTES progress for EAG students will be generated from the Student Attribute codes in ctcLink.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requires colleges, through SBCTC, to report student enrollments, persistence, and completions disaggregated by the grant recipients' employment categories. At intake, potential grant recipients must identify the employment category that best describes their current employment situation: Family Home Childcare owner or employee, Childcare Center owner or employee, ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) employee, or Head Start employee.

Documentation needed for “dropped” courses does not include failed courses. It does include dropped or withdrawn courses for which EAG money was used and classes not completed for whatever reason.

Student Attribute Codes in PeopleSoft

Student Plan Stacks are coded with one of four Student Attribute Codes. This code should be term-activated each quarter. If multiple apply, use the highest as listed below.

"SE01" for students working at a childcare center.

"SE02" for students working at a family home childcare business.

"SE03" for students working at an ECEAP program.

"SE04" for students working at a Head Start program.

These Student Attribute Codes will be coupled with a Student Group Code of "SEAG" coded to the student. This code should be verified each quarter, before finals. The student should not be coded for the Early Achievers Grant after departure from the ECE program.

Financial Aid Coding

An eligible student may receive Early Achievers Grant for tuition and mandatory fees up to 97 credits.

Early Achievers Grant students may receive up to \$1,000 for books and other instructional materials per FTES (45 credits), not to exceed \$1,000 per year. To prorate the textbook and instructional materials maximum funding, divide \$1,000 by 45 credits (1 FTES). Students may be granted up to \$22.00 per credit for textbook and instructional materials purchases.

Financial Aid Program Codes in ctcLink

FA Item Type	Description	Short Description
912000000700	Early Achievers Grant-Tuition	EAGTUITION
912000000710	Early Achievers Grant-Books	EAGBOOKS
912000000720	Early Achievers Grant-Chldcare	EAGCHLDCAR
912000000730	Early Achievers Grant-Transp	EAGTRANSP
912000000740	Early Achievers Grant-Other	EAGOTHER

Entering STARS IDs

Colleges are required to enter students' MERIT System's STARS IDs into ctcLink. For step-by-step instructions, please visit the [ctcLink Reference Center](#). If college policies do not allow for the Program Contact to access the External System ID fields, please work with your Registrar's Office to establish a local process for the timely entry of STARS IDs by staff with appropriate security roles.

Please verify via MERIT that the STARS ID provided by the student is correct.

Grant Terms & Information

General

State funds for these grants are provided to the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

Allowable Costs

All expenditures submitted for reimbursement under this grant must be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient administration of the Early Achievers Grant program. They must also follow DCYF guidance as outlined in the [DCYF program guide](#).

The following state and federal regulations must be followed:

Applicable Washington State Regulations

The State Administrative and Accounting Manual ([SAAM](#)) must be followed.

DCYF Scholarship Program Guide

The Scholarship Program Guide is provided by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. This guide can also be found on [DCYF's website](#) or via [this link](#).

Please refer to this guide for guidance on student eligibility, academic requirements, and prioritizing grant recipients.

Expenditure Accounting

These funds must be kept in an account separate from all other funding sources.

Colleges must set these funds up as a cost-reimbursement/as-incurred grant and be accounted for as grant and contract (fund 145). SBCTC reimbursement for this grant must be coded to 4020120. This grant should be set up using the following information:

- Grant Type: As Incurred/Cost Reimbursable
- Sponsor ID: FIN00107
- Project Type: 02012
- Fund: 145
- Revenue Account: 4020120
- Contract Asset Account: 1010180

When entering this grant into ctcLink, be sure to select budget items based on the types of expenses the college will have. To view ctcLink budget items/accounts and expense accounts that roll up to each budget item/account, visit the ctcLink [Project Tree](#) QRG.

To add a new activity to an existing grant in ctcLink follow the [Adding an Activity to an Active Grant](#) QRG. Use this QRG to add new funding to the grant for a new activity or to add funds in an existing activity not previously entered in ctcLink.

Monitoring

SBCTC may schedule monitoring visits during and after the grant period to evaluate the fiscal progress and performance of the program and provide technical assistance. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure regulatory and contractual compliance on the part of grant recipients. To ensure compliance with grant requirements and to ensure that financial records support program expenditures, SBCTC staff will schedule on-site visits.

Publicity and Publications

The college must submit to SBCTC all advertising and publicity matters relating to this grant in which the State of Washington or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF's) name, state seal, or logo is mentioned or used, or language is used from which a connection with the State of Washington or DCYF may, in DCYF's judgment, be inferred or implied. The college shall not publish or use such advertising and publicity matters without the prior written consent of SBCTC and DCYF.

All publications funded, in whole or in part, under this grant must use the DCYF logo and must acknowledge credit as either providing "funding in partnership with" or "funded by" DCYF. The full-color or black-and-white DCYF logo, provided by the DCYF, shall appear in its entirety, without modification.

Records Retention

Financial management systems shall reflect accurate, current, and complete disclosure of all costs and expenses for grant activities. Grant recipients must maintain books and records, supported by source documentation that sufficiently and properly reflect the source of funds and all costs expended for program purposes. These records and financial statements are subject to inspection, review, reproduction, and/or audit by SBCTC or its designee for at least six years after the dispersal of funds, the termination or expiration of the contract, or the resolution of litigation or audits related to the program, whichever is latest. Additional information on records retention may be found in Chapter 7 of the [SBCTC Policy Manual](#).

Termination

This grant may be terminated by the SBCTC upon giving notice in writing to the grant recipient at least thirty (30) days in advance of the date of termination. If the grant is terminated for any reason, all reports and data gathered by the grant recipient prior to termination shall, at the option of the SBCTC, become the property of the SBCTC. If termination shall occur pursuant to this section, reimbursement to the grant recipient shall be made on the basis of work performed prior to the effective date of termination as mutually agreed upon by both parties. Determination of final adjustments, either payments or refunds, shall also be mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Termination for Cause

If, for any reason, the grant recipient violates any terms and conditions of the Early Achievers Grant program, SBCTC will give the grant recipient notice of such failure or violation. The grant recipient will be given the opportunity to correct the violation or failure within thirty (30) days. If failure or violation is not corrected, this grant may be terminated immediately by written notice from SBCTC.

Savings

In the event funding from state, federal, or other sources is withdrawn, reduced, or limited in any way after the effective date of this contract and prior to normal completion, the SBCTC may terminate the grant under the "Termination" clause, without the thirty-day notice requirement, subject to renegotiation at the SBCTC's discretion under those new funding limitations and conditions.

Appendix A: Application Questions

Below are the application questions as they appear in the 2026-27 Early Achievers Grant Application, accessible through the Online Grant Management System (OGMS).

Section 1: Grant Program Narrative

Please review the guidelines document, which is located in the Grant Info section of OGMS, prior to completing this section of the application. Additionally, please be sure to work with your grants/budget office when developing your grant budget and use the Planning Budget Spreadsheet.

1A. How many FTES is your college requesting? Please list only whole FTES, not partial FTES such as 3.3 or 5.6. Please use the Planning Budget Spreadsheet to determine the number of FTES you are requesting.

1B. Identify the Early Achievers Grant Program Contact. Please provide both name and email.

1C. Identify the individual(s) responsible for Outreach & Recruitment activities. Please provide both name and email.

1D. Describe your outreach and recruitment plans for the academic year. Include plans for each quarter (ex., travel to eligible childcare sites across the catchment area to establish/strengthen relationships with owners or directors, provide informational materials to staff, and/or assist with enrollment processes during Summer 202X) and identify outreach and recruitment metrics for the academic/fiscal year.

1E. Identify the individual(s) responsible for Onboarding & Advising activities. Please provide both name and email.

1F. Identify the individual responsible for MERIT verification. Please provide both name and email. Note: up to two staff members from your college may perform verification activities in MERIT, but one staff member must be responsible for ensuring that verification is completed quarterly and that reports are uploaded.

1G. Identify the individual(s) responsible for coding eligible students as EAG within ctcLink. Please provide both name and email.

1H. Describe your expected tuition needs. Include headcounts of EAG students (both continuing and anticipated new students), whether students are generally part-time or full-time, and how often EAG students complete additional financial aid applications (FAFSA/WASFA).

1I. How many students do you have on the EAG funding waitlist for Spring 2026? This includes only eligible students who are unable to enroll in Spring 2026 classes because the college does not have EAG funds available.

1J. Describe your expected book and instructional material needs. Please include details on the use of open education resources (OER) and how book purchases are made with EAG funds. For example, a list of students is sent to the campus bookstore with the amounts available per student, and the bookstore sends a final invoice after purchases for the quarter, or students purchase books from their vendor of choice and submit receipts for reimbursement, etc.

1K. Describe your expected miscellaneous/wrap-around student support needs. Include the types of support students usually request and any other forms of emergency support funds available on your campus. Please describe how students request funds (e.g., an online form, email to the program contact, etc.) and how the funds are distributed to individual students. Please include any plans for lending library purchases with these funds and identify the books or technology that you anticipate purchasing.

1L. How is your course schedule organized to support incumbent workers' unique learning needs and promote timely completion of degrees?

1M. Do students have access to Direct Course Sharing (formerly WAOL)? If not, please explain why this is not an option for your students.

Section 2: Budget Narrative

This grant has parameters regarding exactly how much funding may be requested and parameters on how much is budgeted in several individual budget cells. These parameters have changed in FY27; please review the EAG guidelines document, which is located in the Grant Info section of OGMS, prior to completing this section of the application.

Additionally, please be sure to work with your grants/budget office when developing your grant budget and use the Planning Budget Spreadsheet. Please submit this spreadsheet with other application materials in the attachments section.

Student Support: The minimum amount for this activity (budget line) is \$6,600 per FTES.

2A. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for TUITION. Tuition must be budgeted at a minimum of \$5,100 per FTES. Please include headcounts for EAG-eligible students. Example: We expect to serve 10 full-time students, enrolled in 450 credits. Total cost is \$51,000.

2B. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for BOOKS. Maximum of \$1,000 per FTES.

2C. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for MISC. Describe the support services that will be offered to EAG scholars that go above and beyond the services offered to all college students. See guidelines for information on allowable expenses.

General: The total for this activity (budget line) may not exceed \$1,700 per FTES.

2D. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for SALARY, WAGES, AND BENEFITS for the Program Contact or other staff funded with this grant.

Include:

- Position titles
- Percentages of effort, FTEF, stipend, and salary, and/or hourly wage information, and benefits.
- A brief description of duties by position as they relate to this funding.

2E. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for GOODS AND SERVICES.

2F. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for TRAVEL for the Program Contact or

other staff involved in the implementation of the EAG program.

2G. Describe how your college will use funds from this grant for CONTRACTS.

2H. Identify the individual(s) responsible for submitting monthly invoices via OBIS.

Appendix B: How to Calculate FTE & FTEF

Why Are Accurate FTE and FTEF Calculations Necessary?

Grant expenses must be “necessary and reasonable.” You must provide some type of salary breakdown for us to determine that the budgeted cost is reasonable. The budget narrative amounts must agree with the dollar amounts entered in the salary/wages and benefits budget boxes.

What are FTE and FTEF?

FTE is full-time equivalent staff. The plural is “FTEs” (with a lower case “s”). Please note this is different from FTES (full-time equivalent student).

FTEF is full-time equivalent faculty.

How Do I Calculate Percentages of FTE and FTEF?

Total amount of funds budgeted for the staff/faculty time per position ÷ the annual full-time salary per position = total FTE per position to be funded from the grant.

Percentage of position salary allocated to the grant x the annual salary of each position = the salary budget for each position.

Example of Calculating FTE and/or FTEF:

Ex. 1: \$10,000 budgeted for a part-time office assistant/adjunct faculty ÷ \$50,000 annual full-time salary for this position at your organization = a total of .20 FTE office assistant/adjunct faculty paid from this grant.

$$\$10,000 \div \$50,000 = .20 \text{ FTE}$$

Ex 2: The grant staff/faculty salary allocation of 75% FTE is budgeted for this year. The annual salary for this position is \$60,000. The salary cost for the budget comes to \$45,000 by multiplying the estimated FTE by the annual salary for this staff/faculty position.

$$\$60,000 \times 75\% \text{ FTE} = \$45,000$$

Ex. 3: Salary allocation for a grant administrator is \$80,000. The annual salary for this position is \$160,000. Annual FTE for this position is calculated by dividing \$80,000 by \$160,000. Double check by multiplying the calculated FTE by the annual salary for this administrative position.

$$\$80,000 \div \$160,000 = .50 \text{ FTE}$$

More Examples & Explanations

Acceptable Budget Narrative:

Salary Budget: \$15,000 **Benefits Budget:** \$3000

Narrative Description: PT Program Assistant: .30FTE = \$15,000 salary and \$3,000 benefits. Provides CTE data entry support. The above seems reasonable for a part-time program assistant

providing data entry support.

Unacceptable Budget Narrative:

Salary Budget: \$1,000

Benefits Budget: \$200

Narrative Description: Part-time program assistant to provide data entry support.

The above narrative omits the FTE, salary, or hourly wage information, and benefit amount for this position. The total for the salaries/wages, and benefits for categories showing more than one position must agree with the budgets. The narrative for each position needs to include the specific FTE, salary or hourly wage information, and benefit amount so the SBCTC can confirm that the budgets agree with the listed narrative amounts.

Budget Narrative Using Hourly Wage Information:

While we prefer FTE/FTEF amounts, it's also acceptable to provide an approximate number of hours and an approximate hourly pay rate in budget narratives.

Salary/Wages Budget: \$1,200

Benefits Budget: \$250

Narrative Description: Program Assistant: \$1,200 Wages for approx. 60 hrs. at \$20/hr. and benefits at \$250. Provides data entry support.

SBCTC can determine that dollar amount is reasonable and accurate.

Appendix C: Biannual Narrative Report Questions

Mid-Year Report

1. Is your college returning or requesting additional FTES
 - A. How many FTES is your college returning?
 - B. How many FTES is your college requesting?
2. How many students are on the EAG funding waitlist after Winter 2027 registration?
3. Identify any changes to the Early Achievers Grant Program Contact
4. Identify any changes to the individual(s) responsible for Outreach & Recruitment activities.
5. Please describe your outreach and recruitment activities to date. Were these activities consistent with the plans outlined in your application materials? Describe any progress made towards the outreach and recruitment metrics specified in your application documents.
6. Identify any changes to the individual(s) responsible for Onboarding & Advising activities.
7. Identify any changes to the individual responsible for MERIT verification (note: up to two staff members from your college may perform verification activities in MERIT, but one staff person must be responsible for ensuring verification has been completed quarterly and reports uploaded).
8. Identify any changes to the individual(s) responsible for coding eligible students as EAG within ctcLink.
9. Describe your tuition expenditures for Summer and Fall 2027. Include headcounts of EAG students supported with tuition funds, whether students are typically part-time or full-time, and the frequency with which EAG students completed additional financial aid applications (FAFSA/WASFA).
10. Describe your books and instructional material expenditures. Please include details on the use of open education resources (OER) and whether student book and instructional materials budget needs to be revised to align with actual expenses.
11. Describe your miscellaneous/wrap-around student support expenditures. Please include the types of support typically provided to students, as well as any other non-EAG emergency support funds that were used. Please describe how students requested funds (ex., an online form, email to the program contact, etc.) and how funds were distributed to individual students. Please include any purchases for the lending library with these funds, and identify the books or technology that were purchased.
12. Identify any changes to the individual(s) responsible for submitting monthly invoices via OBIS.

End of Year Report

1. Did your college meet the FTES goal for FY26? If not, what challenges prevented you from meeting this goal? If you met or exceeded your goal, what practices helped you achieve this goal?
2. How many students are on the EAG funding waitlist after Summer 2027 registration?
3. Please describe your outreach and recruitment activities for the fiscal/academic year. Were these activities consistent with the plans outlined in your application materials? Did you achieve the outreach and recruitment metrics specified in your application documents?
4. Describe your tuition expenditures for Winter and Spring (or Summer) 202X. Include headcounts of EAG students supported with tuition funds, whether students were typically part-time or full-time, and the frequency with which EAG students completed additional financial aid applications (FAFSA/WASFA).
5. Describe your books and instructional material expenditures. Please include details on the use of open education resources (OER) and whether individual student book and instructional materials budgets aligned with actual expenses.
6. Describe your miscellaneous/wrap-around student support expenditures. Please include the types of support typically provided to students, as well as any other non-EAG emergency support funds that were used. Please describe how students requested funds (ex., an online form, email to the program contact, etc.) and how funds were distributed to individual students. Please include any purchases for the lending library with these funds, and identify the books or technology that were purchased.
7. Kindly share any success stories of individual students or general challenges that students may be experiencing, which you wish to share with SBCTC and DCYF staff.



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Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges