



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

*2019–20 Washington  
State Pyramid Model  
Implementation Report*

**2020**

# WASHINGTON STATE PYRAMID MODEL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

2019–20

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# ABOUT THE PYRAMID MODEL

Figure 1: Pyramid Model Tiers



The Pyramid Model<sup>1</sup> is a national innovation for an equitable multi-leveled system of support to enhance social and emotional competence in infants, toddlers, and young children. Program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model is often called [Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#).

The Pyramid Model is NOT a curriculum package, but a [collection of programs](#) and evidence-based [classroom practices](#) selected by experts in early childhood research to support optimal development and prevent challenging behaviors.

Relationships are key change agents in early childhood. Pyramid Model Training focuses on practices that address relationships, environments, intentional teaching and individualized interventions. Program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model is a relationship-based professional development framework that is child- and family-centered. Program-wide implementation intentionally addresses competency, leadership, and organization.



<sup>1</sup> [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)

The Pyramid Model is an effective approach for addressing challenging behaviors that may lead to suspensions. When culturally responsive practices, which are naturally incorporated in the Pyramid Model, are highlighted during training and coaching and intentionally applied in classrooms, suspensions and racial disparities in discipline may be greatly reduced.<sup>2</sup>

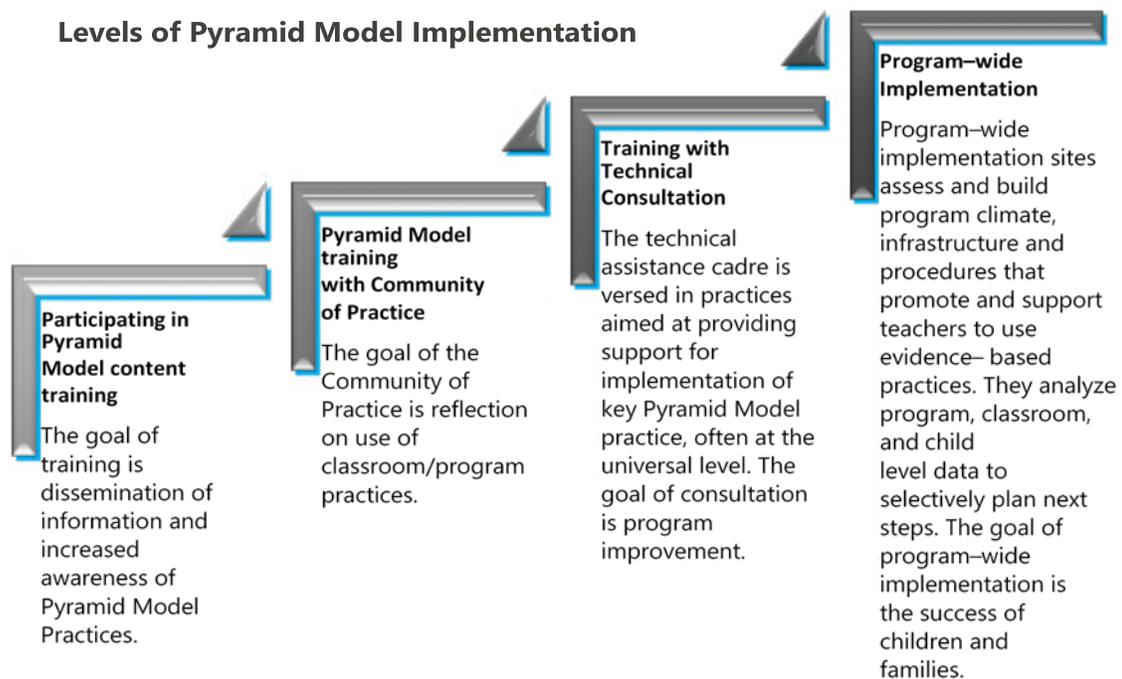
*"I have learned so much about de-escalating students using the Pyramid model Strategies. They have given me research-based tools that are effective with young children."*

–WA Pyramid Model Program Coach

### Key Outcomes of Program-wide Implementation of the Pyramid Model

- Building program capacity to equitably meet the needs of ALL children and families
- Reduction in the suspension and expulsion of young children
- Promotion of family engagement
- Integration of early childhood best practices with infant mental health consultation
- Use of data-based decision-making and intervention monitoring

**Figure 2: Levels of Pyramid Model Implementation**



<sup>2</sup> [How to Reduce Suspensions](#)

## Washington's Vision of Pyramid Model Implementation

*It is Washington state's goal to have responsive systems that partner with the adults in children's lives to promote social-emotional health through the framework of the Pyramid Model so all children, prenatal through age 5, experience high-quality, inclusive early learning settings.*

Washington has been building and enhancing the state infrastructure since awarded an intensive technical assistance grant from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) in 2019. A State Leadership Team, representing a variety of cross sector partners, meets monthly to guide efforts to build infrastructure for implementation of the evidence-based practices promoted by the Pyramid Model in Washington. More information relating to Phases I & II of Washington's implementation process can be found beginning on page 17, The Initial Growth and Development of Pyramid Model.

Washington's State Leadership Team (SLT) goal is to use data from the implementation sites and other state Preschool and K–12 data to guide Pyramid Model implementation. A statewide plan primarily enacted by two State leads—the Early Childhood Special Education-619 Coordinator and the Early Childhood Special Education-619 Program Specialist—is one of the recommended guiding documents. Since 2019, Washington's Pyramid Model State leads are directing efforts to:

- Develop a state infrastructure based on implementation science, including a highly-qualified workforce to adequately address social-emotional development and challenging behavior.
- Serve in an advisory capacity for intentional connections to:
  - Washington's Preschool Inclusion Champions Network<sup>3</sup>
  - Head Start Collaboration office at the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Early Support for Infant and Toddler (ESIT), and Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) offices
  - Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
  - Washington state Preschool Inclusion Collaboration Team (PICT) with Department of Children Youth, and Families ECEAP offices
  - Washington family engagement stakeholders, including Partners for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)—Washington state's Parent Training and Information (PTI) partner
- Ensure professional development recognition for Pyramid Model training participation.
- Create a professional development network to fill training needs and support new trainers to deliver the content.
- Develop regional Pyramid Model communities of practice to ensure statewide cross-sector access to training in phases one and two of implementation.
- Build relationships with families through parent advocacy partners ([PAVE](#)) to promote the development of Pyramid Model parent content.

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<sup>3</sup> [Preschool Inclusion Champions Project](#)

- Create a readiness process that guides selection of programs to participate in Washington's Pyramid Model implementation trainings.
- Adapt national Pyramid Model training content to create comprehensive training packages representing Washington's cross sector early learning programs, to include examples from Washington's program-wide implementation sites, and to align with other important Washington efforts (e.g., [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's \(OSPI's\) Priorities for Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Washington SLT members recognize the significant benefits of collaborating with National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) through the Pyramid Model initiative. With technical assistance and support from NCPMI, Washington aims to establish systems that will:

- A. promote social and emotional development of young children,
- B. address and eliminate disparities in discipline practices statewide,
- C. ensure access to and meaningful participation in high quality, inclusive learning environments for all young children,
- D. promote meaningful and equitable family engagement, and
- E. successfully recruit, engage, and support a statewide network of program coaches prepared to provide culturally responsive, practice-based coaching with fidelity, through collaborative partnerships with practitioners.

*"I am thrilled to be a member of the WA state Leadership Team for Pyramid Model Practices. It is exciting to be a supportive partner in building the infrastructure and designing the support system, with the guidance of the leading researchers in the field of early childhood special education. As a previous practitioner, I know the focus must be on proactive, positive behavioral interventions for our youngest students, so meaningful learning can take place."*

—WA state Leadership Team Member

# PROGRAM COACHING: A KEY TO FIDELITY<sup>4</sup>

## Washington Pyramid Model by the Numbers

- Over 80 individuals (Including classroom practitioners, practitioner coaches, trainers, program coaches, and behavior support specialists) trained in the following Pyramid Model content between August 2019 and February 2020:
  - Pyramid Model Practices Program Coach training
  - Program-wide Implementation Team Orientation
  - Practice-Based Coaching Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)
  - Prevent, Teach, Reinforce - Young Children
  - Data Training
  - Behavior Incident Report (BIR) System
- 2 implementation sites in the Eastern part of Washington
- 1 Pyramid Model program-wide external coach
- 2 NCPMI technical assistants
- 8 Pyramid Model Practitioner and Program coaches
- 10 Pyramid Model classrooms
- 15 members serve on the Pyramid Model state leadership team

## The Program Coach's responsibilities include:

- Work with a program's leadership team to support implementation of Pyramid Model practices with fidelity, utilizing implementation science.
- Support the capacity of the internal coach to promote use of the evidence-based practices promoted by the Pyramid Model.
- Attend Pyramid Model Implementation Academy and help program team to complete Benchmarks of Quality.
- Assist the program's leadership team in collecting, analyzing, and reporting data to monitor program, teacher, and child outcomes resulting from implementation.
- Support the program's leadership team in identifying implementation priorities based on Benchmark of Quality data and team implementation content.
- Assist the administrator in sharing information with staff, families, and board regarding implementation.
- Utilize Pyramid Model resources and provide information to support team discussion and decisions using materials from the Resource Sharing website and team binder.
- Understand and apply the components of effective meeting facilitation.
- If necessary, assist programs in ensuring that all staff have been trained in Pyramid Model content.

*"I have learned so much about de-escalating students using the Pyramid model Strategies. They have given me research-based tools that are effective with young children."*

–Central Valley Pyramid Model Program Coach

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<sup>4</sup> [Wisconsin Pyramid Model](#)

## Practice-based Coaching (PBC)

Practice-based coaching is a cyclical process for guiding practitioners' use of evidence-based practices for promoting positive child outcomes. Practice-based coaching<sup>5</sup> involves the following components:

- collaborative partnerships
- shared goals and action planning
- focused observation
- reflection and feedback

Washington Pyramid Model coaching logs show the amount of time used on coaching strategies<sup>6</sup> within each implementation site. For example, Table 1 captures the time spent by a practitioner coach observing classroom teachers while engaged in large and small group instruction. The feedback strategy most often utilized was the written feedback of the classroom observations which were shared after the observation, while the coach conducted a debriefing session with the teacher(s). Showing how many minutes went into each of the observational strategies allows the SLT to make both programmatic and funding recommendations.

**Table 1: 2019 Washington Pyramid Model Coaching Strategies**

Number of Coaching Cycles Attempted	Number of Coaching Cycles Completed	Percentage Completed Cycles	Average Number of Completed Cycles	Total Duration Across Focused Observations	Average Duration Across Focused Observations	Total Debriefing Duration	Average Debriefing Duration	Total Number of Goals	Total Number of Goals	Percentage of Goals Completed
32%	27%	84%	2.15%	21.40%	156.9%	13.90%	82.88%	35%	11%	31%

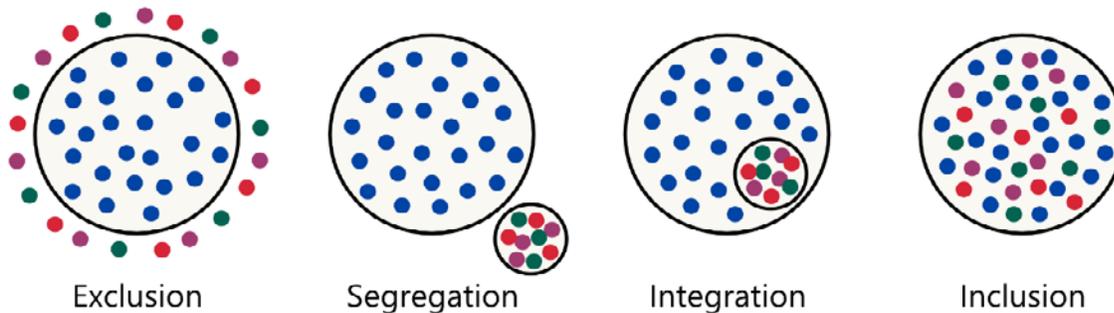
**Source:** Phase 1 Implementation Sites' coaching strategies data.

<sup>5</sup> [Practice-Based Coaching](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Types of Coaching Strategies](#)

# NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE PYRAMID MODEL

**Figure 3: Exclusion, Segregation, Integration, and Inclusion**



**Source:** [Think Inclusive](#)

## The State of Special Education in Washington

Research shows that the majority of students with disabilities can progress in regular education settings with appropriate supports.<sup>7</sup> Washington state is in the lowest quintile for inclusion nationwide, with 57.7% of K–12 students with disabilities included in general education settings for 80–100% of the school day<sup>8</sup>. For students of color, that total falls to 49%, which ranks Washington 44 out of 50 states for inclusive practices<sup>9</sup>. Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are capable and deserve access to high quality learning experiences similar to their same aged peers. Inclusion is not an option but rather must be an expectation placed up on IEP team members.

Students between the ages of 3 and 5 are experiencing similar barriers to their K–12 counterparts, with only 23.3% of students with disabilities accessing early childhood programs with their typically developing peers<sup>7</sup>. More than 49.7% students with disabilities are currently enrolled in separate programs and schools and receiving the majority of their specially designed instruction outside of the classroom environment. These findings highlight the disproportionality among the approximately 12,000 children who do not have access to high quality inclusive early childhood programming in Washington state<sup>7</sup>.

The Early Learning department within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction has found a 30% performance gap for students with disabilities when compared to their nondisabled peers on the 2019 Fall WaKIDS assessment (Figure 4). This trend continues with a 30% performance gap in 3rd grade and up to 50% by 10th grade on the English language arts state assessments<sup>10</sup>. This is our call to action. The time has come to change our practices when

<sup>7</sup> [Inclusion for Preschool Children with Disabilities](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Nov 2019 Federal LRE and Child Count Data](#)

<sup>9</sup> National Council on Disability. (2018). [The Segregation of Students with Disabilities](#).

<sup>10</sup> [Washington State Report Card](#)

supporting students with disabilities to close the performance gap and ensure all students have access to high-quality inclusive learning environments.

**Figure 4: WaKIDS Assessment Results, 2011–2019**

School Year	Student with Disabilities	Students without Disabilities
2011-12	19.60%	42.30%
2012-13	15.60%	38.80%
2013-14	19.00%	43.00%
2014-15	17.40%	41.20%
2015-16	19.80%	46.50%
2016-17	19.10%	50.10%
2017-18	18.50%	49.60%
2018-19	18.00%	48.60%
2019-20	22.40%	54.50%

**Source:** Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) Report Card for school years 2011–12 through 2019–20.

In Washington state, we are looking at ways to gather data to address disproportionality of students that are being suspended and/or expelled from preschool and childcare programs. The Washington SLT challenges our leaders in early childhood education to address inequitable outcomes based on race. This will help eliminate disparities in discipline practices statewide. Suspension rates for students within our K–12 systems (Table 2) are at an alarming rate. An identified priority for the 2020–21 school year will be for each Pyramid Model implementation site to establish cross-sector data collection systems to clearly identify the racial inequities and systemic barriers that are preventing students of color and students with disabilities from thriving at the rate of their white, typically developing peers.

**Table 2: Percentage of K–12 Students Suspended or Expelled, School Years 2014–19**

School Year	All Students	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino of any race(s)	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White	Total
2014–15	4.1%	8.2%	1.2%	9.2%	4.7%	5.6%	4.9%	3.5%	41.4%
2015–16	3.8%	7.3%	1.1%	8.6%	4.4%	5.4%	4.6%	3.4%	38.6%
2016–17	3.8%	7.5%	1.1%	8.3%	4.5%	4.8%	4.5%	3.2%	37.7%
2017–18	4.1%	8.2%	1.1%	8.5%	4.8%	5.8%	5.0%	3.5%	41.0%
2018–19	4.0%	7.7%	1.1%	8.3%	4.8%	6.4%	4.8%	3.4%	40.5%

**Source:** Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) Report Card for school years 2014–15 through 2018–19.

Despite many successes in WaKIDS implementation, our needs assessment reveals numerous

opportunities to improve kindergarten readiness and transitions, birth–5 years and beyond, especially for historically underserved children. Data show kindergarten readiness disparities are most pronounced for children from tribal, refugee, or immigrant communities, and children with special circumstances, which includes children with disabilities, children with child welfare involvement, and children who experience homelessness.<sup>11</sup> The need to deepen collaboration between early learning settings and K–12 schools to share best practices and enroll children in settings that best meet their needs is essential to school and life success.

**Table 3: Percentage of Students Entering Kindergarten Ready in All Six Areas of Development and Learning, by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity, 2019–20 School Year**

Student Group	Number of Students	Percent
Female	37,966	56.30%
Gender X	63	50.80%
Male	40,785	47.10%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	996	34.60%
Asian	6,238	63.00%
Black/African American	3,340	44.10%
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	18,112	35.40%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	946	33.10%
Two or More Races	7,509	56.00%
White	41,573	57.50%

**Source:** Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) Report Card for school year 2019–20.

Program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model will allow early childhood practitioners to use data to establish equitable and effective practices for all children. An identified tool to assist with this process is the Equity Coaching Guide which supports [culturally responsive practices](#)<sup>12</sup> and assists in addressing implicit biases that interfere with positive outcomes for children, practitioners, and families. Increased, coordinated, and sustained investment is necessary to address Washington’s priorities of supporting healthy social and emotional development and school readiness of all our children.

The [National Pyramid Model Equity Project](#) has developed new resources, including a *Behavior Incident Report (BIR)*. The BIR system provides an efficient mechanism for gathering information on elements related to behavior incidents that are used to make decisions about providing supports to teachers and children within the program. In addition, the BIR includes alerts about potential equity issues by calculating disproportionality related to race, ethnicity, IEP status, gender, and English language learners. The BIR also provides information on the frequency of

<sup>11</sup> [Kindergarten Readiness Disparities](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Equity Coaching Guide](#)

behavior incidents resulting in suspensions and expulsions.<sup>13</sup> The BIR is an essential component of the data collection systems established by both Washington Pyramid Model Phase 1 and 2 Implementation Sites.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic. To slow the spread of the virus, on March 13, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee ordered all public and private K–12 schools in Washington state to close through April 24. On April 6, the Governor announced all schools would remain closed from providing traditional, in-person instruction through the rest of the 2019–20 school year. Due to the school facility closure in Washington, implementation sites did not capture BIR data.

The Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) is another formal measure used to determine implementation of the Pyramid Model. Teachers' present levels of implementation are captured and used to gauge current strengths and needs, and TPOT data are used to set goals and action plans for implementation and professional development. Due to the school facility closure, Washington's Phase 1 and 2 Implementation Sites did not have the opportunity to capture progress made in Pyramid Model classrooms versus in non-Pyramid Model classrooms in the same community regarding problematic behavior.

Table 4 captures the baseline *Indicators Observed by Key Practice* captured in the fall of 2019. These key practices are:

- Schedules, Routines and Activities (SR),
- Transitions between Activities are Appropriate (TR),
- Teachers Engage in Supportive Conversations with Children (SC),
- Promoting Children's Engagement (ENG),
- Providing Directions (PD),
- Collaborative Teaming (CT),
- Teaching Behavior Expectations (TBE),
- Teaching Social Skills and Emotional Competencies (TSC),
- Teaching Friendship Skills (FR),
- Teaching Children to Express Emotions (TEE),
- Teaching Problem Solving (TPS),
- Interventions for Children with Persistent Challenging Behavior (PCB),
- Connecting with Families (COM), and
- Supporting Family Use of Pyramid Model Practices (INF)

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<sup>13</sup> [NCPMI Behavior Incident Report System Overview](#)

**Table 4: Percentage of NCPMI Indicators Observed by Key Practice in Fall 2019**

<b>Key Practices</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Schedules, Routines and Activities (SR)	80%
Transitions between Activities are Appropriate (TR)	88%
Teachers Engage in Supportive Conversations with Children (SC)	91%
Promoting Children’s Engagement (ENG)	90%
Providing Directions (PD)	86%
Collaborative Teaming (CT)	78%
Teaching Behavior Expectations (TBE)	38%
Teaching Social Skills and Emotional Competencies (TSC)	28%
Teaching Friendship Skills (FR)	48%
Teaching Children to Express Emotions (TEE)	57%
Teaching Problem Solving (TPS)	43%
Interventions for Children with Persistent Challenging Behavior (PCB)	80%
Connecting with Families (COM)	75%
Supporting Family Use of Pyramid Model Practices (INF)	48%
<b>Average Across Key Practices</b>	<b>67%</b>

**Source:** Phase 1 Implementation Sites’ Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool data.

Using TPOT data, Washington coaches will continue to identify potential social-emotional teaching practices that can serve as a focus for coaching support. It goes without saying that even in the best of circumstances, things do not always go according to plan. With the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we anticipate that the uncertainty of reopening traditional early learning programs will impact the quality of services and thus the quality of data from our implementation sites.

Regardless, Washington’s plans for future implementation include:

- Recognizing that family and program relationships were not always strong even before the school facility closure and that relationship building is a critical element in teaming and supporting families and classroom teams.
- Working on building relationships with students prior to the start of school in fall 2020 and looking at different ways of communicating with families.
- Emphasizing the importance of connecting and collaborating with team members, colleagues, and other external entities doing Pyramid Model work.
- Acknowledging the important role families play in supporting their children and including families every step of the way.
- Continuing to support teachers and classroom teams with innovative ways of developing curriculum materials and resources for families.

## **Next Steps: Coordinated and Cohesive Statewide Efforts**

The Washington State Leadership Team is committed to the long-term work of shifting systems, creating momentum and support, and organizing communities toward high-quality inclusive preschool settings for all children. Now is a critical time to assure communities and family partners that we are working together to dismantle structural racism in Washington state. Our state's leaders in early learning are prepared to offer a position statement on preschool inclusionary practices that emphasizes the need to ensure racial equity, as well as guidance to align current early learners' initiatives with existing legislation found in our K-12 systems supporting inclusionary practices, system development, and data management in hopes of creating a stable funding source to ensure the expansion of integrated early learning programs with Pyramid Model program-wide implementation.

To move the Pyramid Model forward in Washington state, our cross-sector SLT has identified several action steps including:

1. Improving the inclusion of children with special needs in early learning settings.
2. Identifying and implementing applied research strategies that address specific inclusionary policy, procedure, and reflections on potential opportunities in early childhood settings.
3. Identifying early childhood inclusion and funding models, facilities guidance, and high-quality instructional strategies which will be captured in a Pre-K Inclusion Toolkit.
4. Developing a Joint Position Statement on Preschool Inclusion with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).
5. Sharing training experiences with early learning professionals, across grade levels and disciplines, relating to inclusionary practices and universal design for learning frameworks.
6. Creating a system and a model of sustainable professional development around the Pyramid Model to support implementation in classroom, program, and systems level under the guidance of a cross-sector State Leadership Team.

These efforts will require several key individuals, including the Early Childhood Special Education-619 Coordinator and the Early Childhood Special Education-619 Program Specialist, who will be responsible for:

- Representing the Pyramid Model in statewide efforts.
- Facilitating the Washington State Leadership Team meetings and implementation of statewide action plans.
- Creating plans to begin leading training and technical content development and improvement in Phase 3 of Pyramid Model Implementation.
- Expanding training and support for Phase 1 and 2 Program and Practitioner coaches.
- Ensuring the identification of Pyramid Model trainers and the connection to the selection/mentoring processes.
- Launching new program-wide implementation sites in school year 2021-22.

- Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating state-wide and program-wide data on the effects of Pyramid Model implementation.

*“Throughout this (Pyramid Model) training I have changed my mindset. Before I was more annoyed by what the child was doing etc. Now I am more responsive to the child and ponder and ask more questions about how they are feeling, why, and what I can do to help them learn in that experience. I have become more understanding of all children.”*

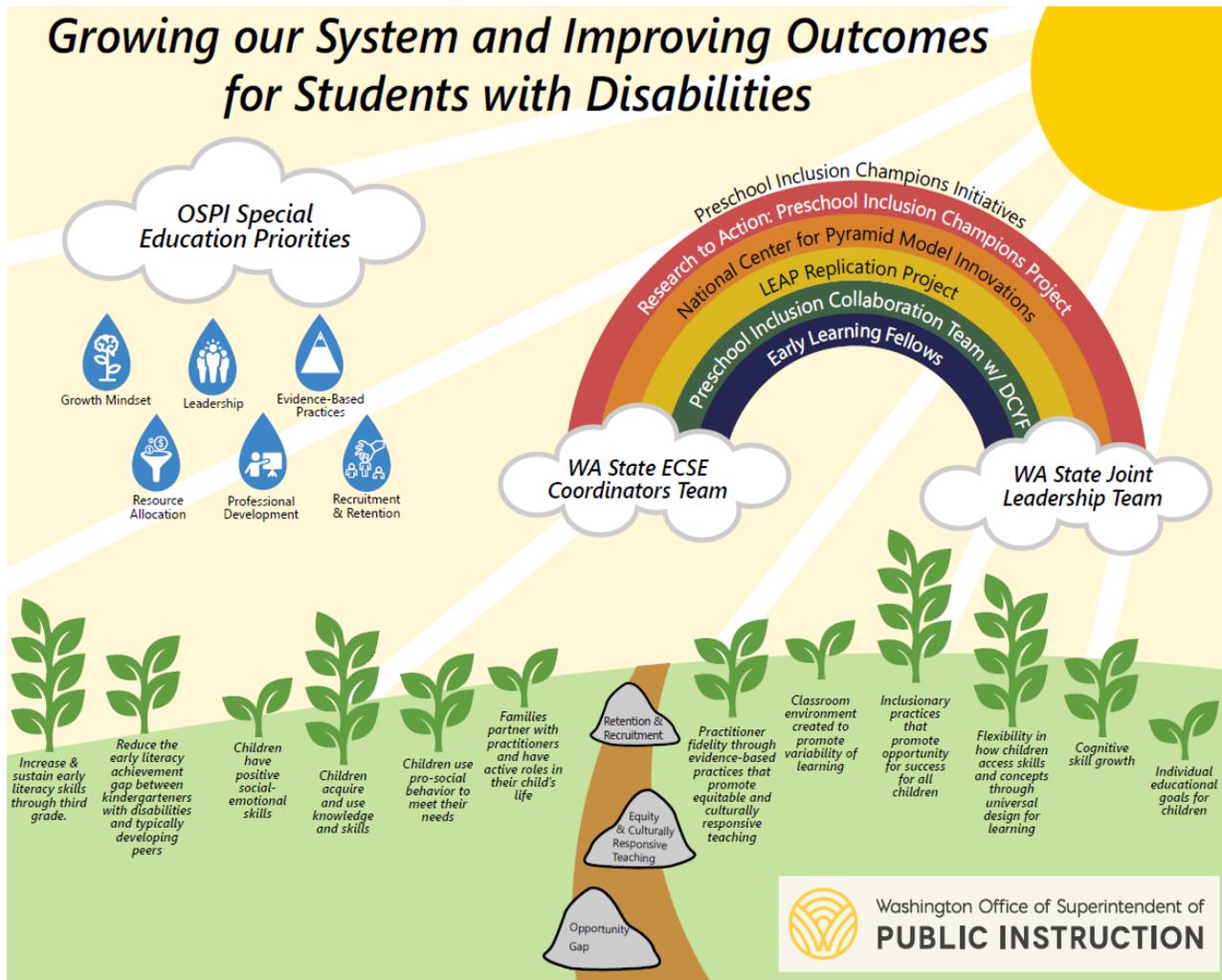
– WA Pyramid Model Implementation Site Training Participant

Washington SLT member, an Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECEAP) Administrator, shared that the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) ECEAP is committed to creating and supporting environments that are fully inclusive of all children and supportive of healthy social-emotional development. Through this commitment, children who have experienced trauma or have behavioral needs are nurtured with responsive teacher-child relationships. The tiered approach in the Pyramid Model for supporting all children in classrooms with structured scaffolding supports helps fill gaps in trainings and supports that ECEAP staff have been identifying as a need for years. The individualized interventions and guidance for each child are tailored to be holistically relevant to the child and family and most importantly support staff in implementing.

In addition, a Head Start Collaboration Administrator at DCYF stated that there are 51 Head Start grantees in the state of Washington who provide Head Start and/or Early Head Start services to 20,000 children and their families each year. In surveying grantees, the top program needs were fostering the social emotional development of all children within inclusive settings, supporting children who have persistent challenging behaviors, and engaging families as essential partners in this support. DCYF ECEAP and Head Start, with ESIT, IDEA Part C, commit to ignite change in the space of early learning and social emotional development to improve outcomes for our students and families.

Figure 5 captures the [Early Childhood Special Education Initiatives](#) taking place across Washington state to increase efforts in eliminating challenging behaviors in our childhood programs with the identification and implementation of applied research strategies, implementation of inclusionary practices, strategic use of instructional and/or systemic coaching.

Figure 5: OSPI Early Childhood Special Education Initiatives



## The Initial Growth and Development of Pyramid Model

Phase 1 Implementation Sites included three educational agencies: two school districts (Mead School District and Central Valley School District), and one educational service district (ESD), ESD 101.

### Mead School District

#### Demographics

- **79** students in **3** classrooms with morning, afternoon, and some children who stay all day.
- **43** children with disabilities who usually attend part-day programs when the site started Pyramid Model implementation work.
- **36** children in general education. Most of the children in general education stay longer (all day) versus the children in special education, who typically (but not always) are in a part-day program. Typically, it is 5–6 students with disabilities and 12 general education students per classroom.

### *About the Program*

- **15** staff have participated in the initial Pyramid Model practices training.
- No expulsion is allowed in this center, instead the Early Childhood Program uses a Positive Guidance Plan and has a support system in place for challenging behaviors or supports needed.
- Training focus and coaching support has focused on one classroom, but professional development is expanding to all three classrooms and teams. Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPO) was completed for all three classrooms. Training and coaching are provided for all staff. Coaching goals have been set for all three classrooms. Assistant teacher and Paraeducator training are being implemented and planned moving forward. The Early Learning Center has two staff represented on the elementary Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) school-wide team. The principal is interested in having kindergarten teachers attend Pyramid Model training for better understanding of how PBIS looks in early learning.

A family support advocate from one of the implementation sites provided the following response to the question “Why is the Pyramid Model relevant in Washington?”:

*“This is a consistent model where all staff are on the same page so that anyone who walks into a classroom will know what the expectations are and that each staff member is doing their best to follow the best practices. A ‘transdisciplinary’ model. Focusing more on social emotional training, which is the most important aspect of early learning. Importance of building relationships: teacher-student, student-student, etc., and helping children build relationships and to understand emotions and how to deal with them. The most important aspect of the Pyramid model is ‘positive behavior practices. The importance of catching 5 positives to 1 (redirection as I call it). To not ‘separate’ special services/Early Childhood Education Assistance Program—all in the same program receiving the same services and support.”*

– WA Pyramid Model Implementation Family Support Advocate

### **Central Valley Early Learning Center**

This is a licensed childcare program within a school district that offers ECEAP, paid preschool Title 1, and special services for 3- and 4-year-old children. This site currently has seven NCPMI implementation site classrooms.

*“I feel Pyramid Model Practices are so important, because we are focusing on teaching each and every child the skills they need to have positive interactions with one another. Starting with a positive, nurturing and consistent environment, we can create child-led experiences and be each child’s support. Now more than ever, with the ongoing theme of “We are all in this Together”, the pyramid model uses a whole team approach, with family and classroom staff, working together to support the child.”*

—Central Valley Pyramid Model Training Participant

## Demographics

- **153** students in **seven** classrooms with morning, afternoon, and some all-day slots.
- **84** students with disabilities who usually attend part-day programs when the site started Pyramid implementation work.
- **69** students in general education. These students can be identified with one or more services under their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

## About the Program

- **35** staff have participated in the initial Pyramid Model practices training.
- Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Central Valley School District do not use suspension as a guideline for discipline. The Student Study Team process is used to identify resources for challenging behaviors, and the process is given to all enrolled families in the parent handbook when students are placed.
- Student demographic of staff and families show a realistic composition of the community make up. Classrooms are made up of students experiencing poverty, students with IEPs, students funded through Title funds, and private pay.

*"All staff including support staff have now been trained in the first two full days of the initial National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) Instructional Practices Training."*

—Mead Administrator

## Supporting Children and Families during COVID-19 School facility Closures

OSPI is committed to providing ongoing guidance and resources as we experience this unprecedented situation together. [The most current guidance and resources are provided on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website.](#)

Additionally, the Positive Early Learning Experiences (PELE) Center at the University of Denver provided a variety of resources on a weekly basis to early care and education providers serving young children with autism. Each week, the PELE Center sends resources to providers on topics critical to supporting adult family members while their children are at home. Washington NCPMI implementation sites were encouraged to tap into these resources and shape them to fit their communities.

Topics included:

- Week 1—Talking to Your Child About COVID-19, School and Washing Hands
- Week 2—Building Positive Home Routines
- Week 3—Creating a Strong Beginning and End of the Day
- Week 4—Building Relationships & Positive Commenting
- Week 5—Creating and Using Visual Supports at Home
- Week 6—Supporting Children’s Play and Building Independent Play
- Week 7—Building Language and Communication
- Week 8—Supporting Social Relationships (Peer Mediated Instruction with Social Distancing)

These resources are available on the [PELE Center’s YouTube channel.](#)

# LOOKING AHEAD: NCPMI'S FUTURE

As program sites move through the phases of implementation, it is expected that they will begin to build upon their initial Pyramid Model teams and bring on new classroom sites, community partners, and family advocates. The state Pyramid Model implementation team designated to facilitate this project, along with the Professional Learning and Coaching SLT workgroup, has begun the initial development of a statewide training and coaching network. Under the supervision of NCPMI, the Phase 1 and incoming Phase 2 implementation sites will be trained in Pyramid Model Practices, including identifying Program Coaches, and leadership members for their teams.

*"We will be moving to add possibly three more classrooms to our coach staff and will continue to roll out a building wide universal system of social and emotional supports for all classrooms and students."*

—Phase 1 Implementation Site Staff Member

Washington state has moved into Phase 2, year two, of the intensive technical assistance grant with NCPMI, with four diverse early childhood programs along the I-5 corridor selected to engage in Pyramid Model implementation. Each site will have three classrooms.

## 2020–21 Pyramid Model Programs

### **Clover Park School District**

The program serves children 3–5 years old. The most common ethnicity of children enrolled in the program is Hispanic/Latino of any race, the second most common is Black/African American, and the third most common is White. Twenty percent of children enrolled have a primary language other than English, and the most common language other than English is Spanish. The other languages that families in the program speak include French, Swahili, Tagalong, Samoan, and Marshallese. Ninety-two percent of families enrolled are living at or below the federal poverty level. Services offered include early childhood education, family engagement, and health/nutrition services.

### **Neighborhood House**

The program serves children who are infants through age 5 in home visiting and center-based programs. The program serves refugee and immigrant families with over 90% of families who are English learners and with over 26 languages and cultures represented. The Rainier Vista site has four preschool classrooms serving children ages 3–5; two are Head Start classrooms and two are ECEAP classrooms. The Rainier Vista site serves 80 children and families with 97% English learners.

### **Edwin Pratt Early Learning Center**

The program serves all preschoolers on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Students are ages 3–5 in preschool only; no kindergarten-aged students are in the program. This program is for students who qualify for special education services.

### **APPLE ECEAP Preschool**

The program serves children ages 3–5. They have children that are typically developing, on IEPs, being double served with developmental preschool, children receiving speech services, and children receiving occupational therapy services.

*"I feel Pyramid Model Practices are so important, because we are focusing on teaching each and every child the skills, they need to have positive interactions with one another. Starting with a positive, nurturing and consistent environment we can create child lead experiences and be each child's support. Now more than ever with the ongoing theme of "We are all in this Together", the pyramid model uses a whole team approach, with family and classroom staff, working together to support the child."*

—Central Valley Pyramid Model Training Participant

### **Trainings for Phase 2 Implementation Sites**

- Instructional Practices Training: May 28–29, 2020
- Program Coach Training (Program Coaches ONLY): June 8, 2020
- Program-wide Leadership Team Strategic Planning: June 9–10, 2020
- Practice-based Coaching Training: August 31 through September 1, 2020
- Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) Training: September 17–18, 2020
- Data Coordinator Training completed by September 30, 2020
- Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS) Training to be completed by September 30, 2020
- Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC) Training to be completed by November 15, 2020

## CONCLUSION

The Pyramid Model State Leadership Team looks forward to working together to enhance our state's capacity to implement and sustain inclusionary practices and eliminate challenging behaviors within our early childhood programs through the work of a collaborative cross-sector team. We also recognize that developing systems of support that assist both students and early childhood staff and families will inevitably have a positive outcome on later student success in school and life.

We are at the cusp of change in our state. There is a collective desire to reexamine current systems to determine what level of access children participating in our current early childhood programs are receiving. We are vested in creating a system of support for all children and families that unifies our programs regardless of race, ability, or zip code, birth to age 8. Together with our statewide stakeholders, the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team has fully committed our desire to ignite change in the space of early learning, inclusionary practices, and social-emotional development.

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*This resource was adapted from [Wisconsin's Pyramid Model 2018 Annual Report](#).*

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*Download this material in PDF at [OSPI-Special Education-Early Childhood](#). This material is available in alternative format upon request. Contact the Resource Center at 888-595-3276, TTY 360-664-3631. Please refer to this document number for quicker service: 20-0019.*



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