

What are Expanded Learning Opportunities?

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) programs are programs that care for and engage young people ages 5 – 18 years old outside of formal school. This includes before and after school care, summer camps, tutoring clubs, specialized teen programs, and early childhood settings that extend services to 5-12 years old.

These programs are very important. Many young people spend more hours in their ELO programs than in their school-day classrooms each year. Research shows that children who participate in high quality ELO programs have better academic performance and stronger social-emotional skills.

What is the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) initiative?

The state legislature recognized that quality learning environments are critical to ensure all children and youth thrive. Building upon the success of Early Achievers in Washington state, Cultivate Learning began to study the quality and the effectiveness of quality improvement efforts of the state's many ELO programs.

Today the ELO team at Cultivate Learning continues to collect data on the ELO quality assessment tool, the Quality Seal, and produce professional development materials for ELO providers, including Two-minute Tips and online modules to help build quality practice

How is Expanded Learning Opportunities connected to Early Achievers?

Cultivate Learning has modeled the ELO initiative off of the Early Achievers framework. The goal is to connect the two systems to build a continuous system of quality for birth – 12 in Washington state via Early Achievers as well as continue to support a quality system for youth development programs serving youth ages 12-18. With these goals in mind, ELO coaching methods and data collection protocols are nearly identical to Early Achiever's. Our quality rating tool, the Quality Seal, is being developed with Early Achiever's tools CLASS and ERS in mind to ensure a smooth crosswalk between the systems.

Birth – 18 Continuous Quality Systems in Washington State:

As a state we've seen strong outcomes from Early Achievers. We're excited to build upon those prior successes, enhance collaboration, expand our reach to support more educators in the important work they do enhancing the lives of children, youth, and families in Washington state.