



Office of
Financial Management
STATE OF WASHINGTON

Budget Activity Assessment

Department of Early Learning

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Executive Summary

- The current annual reporting cycle of the measures submitted to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) combined with a lack of historical data, means that the current measures will not be very meaningful to a budget/policy development audience for another 5 to 7 years.
- This assessment should be used as an opportunity to synchronize the subject and operational definitions of what is submitted to OFM through the Performance Measure Tracking system (PMT) and to the Government Management Accountability & Performance (GMAP) office through the Data View system.
- The relevance and the ability to tell a compelling story of agency performance of some of the existing measures could be improved with the addition of a few additional measures:
 - A002 – Child Care Licensing: An outcome measure that explains what is better if monitoring visits are performed in a timely manner
 - A003 – Child Care and Early Learning Initiatives: An outcome measure that explains the benefits of advancing the educational level of childcare providers
 - A004 – Child Care Subsidies: A workload measure that describes how many children or families are receiving the subsidies
- There are 4 unpublished measures relating to ECEAP child preparedness outcomes that are not currently linked to any budget activities in PMT. The agency and its OFM Budget Analyst should either link these measures to the appropriate budget activities or place them into inactive status.

Budget Activity Measure Qualitative Evaluation Summary

Budget Activity Number & Title	Evaluation Criteria						
	Relevance	Understandability	Comparability	Timeliness	Consistency	Reliability	Performance
A001 – Agency Operations & Administration	Red	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
A002 – Child Care Licensing	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
A003 – Child Care and Early Learning Quality Initiatives	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
A004 – Child Care Subsidies	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red
A005 – Early Learning Programs	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red

Meets or Exceeds OFM Expectations

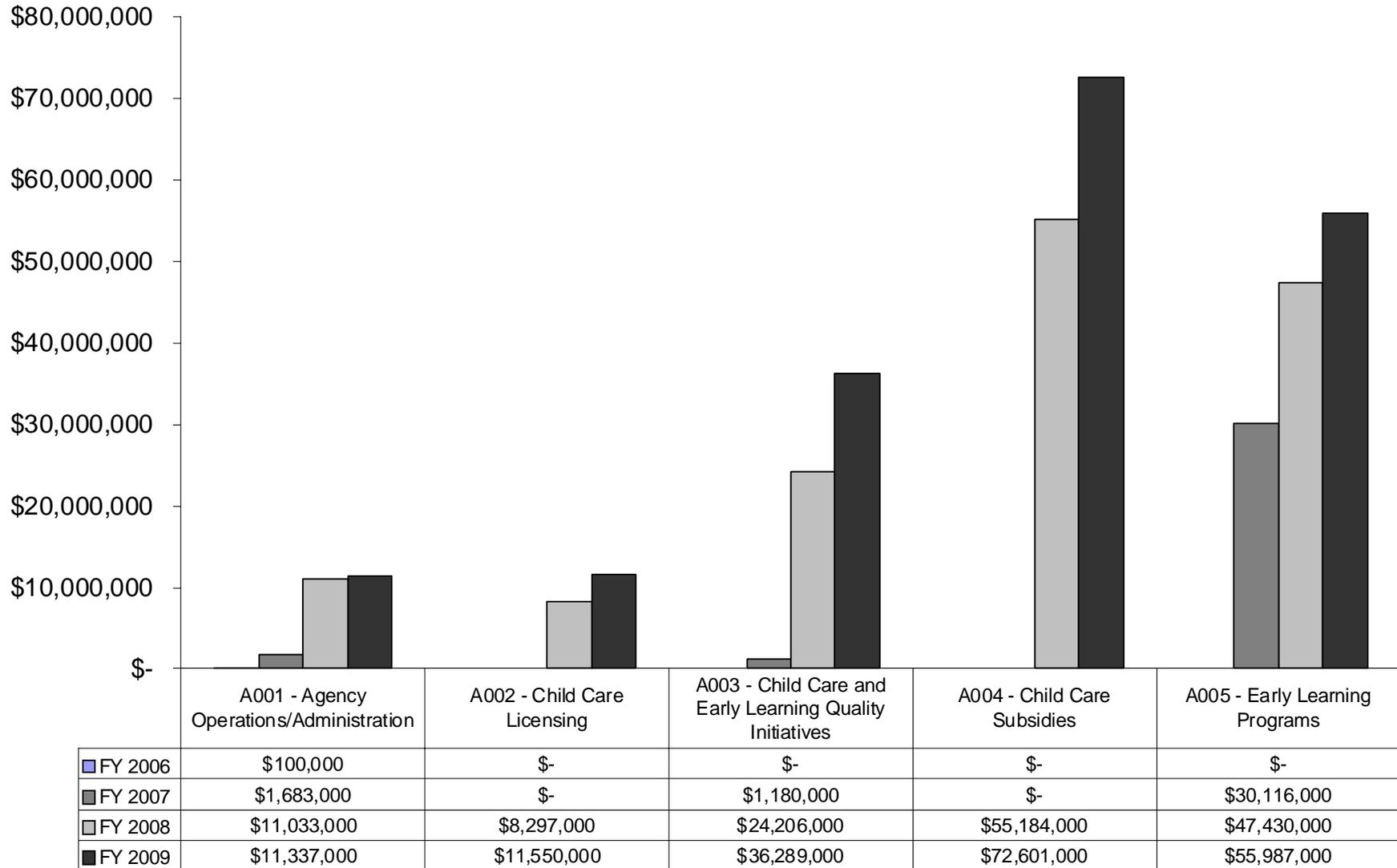
Marginally meets OFM Expectations

Needs Improvement to Meet OFM Expectations

Evaluation Criteria Definitions	
Relevance	Useful to a budget/policy development audience in assessing the level of accomplishment
Understandability	Clear, concise, and easy for a non-expert to understand
Comparability	Do the data, targets, and footnotes provide the reader with enough context to tell whether performance is getting better, worse, or staying the same?
Timeliness	Is the data current and reported frequently enough to be of value in assessing accountability and making decisions?
Consistency	Is the data collection method standardized and is the operational definition for data calculations adhered to?
Reliability	Is the information verifiable, free from bias, and a faithful representation of what it purports to represent?
Performance	Is actual performance in reference to the stated targets getting better, worse, or staying the same over time?

Budget History by Activity

Department of Early Learning Total Budget Allocations by Fiscal Year



Agency Comments and Reactions

A002 – Child Care Licensing: The Measure currently being reported on to GMAP (on a quarterly basis) should be the same for OFM. The same measure for on-time monitoring visits will be reported both to GMAP and OFM.

The Definition of “on-time” is set into DEL internal policy and procedure as every 18 months for Family Home Child Care, and every 12 months for Child Care Centers. DEL will continue to explore additional measures that it can report on to show why “on-time” monitoring visits are critical to the health and safety of children in child care settings. What is known in research now is that the more frequent the monitoring visits are, the less child injury occurs in child care settings. Family Home Child Care settings currently only require monitoring visits every 18 months. Monitoring visits would need to be increased to every 12 months in order to test the hypothesis of increased health and safety for children in child care settings. Currently, there are not the staff resources to implement a 12 month monitoring schedule for Family Home Child Care.

A003- The relationship is to improved quality. DEL will relook at the best measure to capture impacts of DEL investments on the quality of child care as well as one which can be reported more frequently than on an annual basis.

A004 - A workload measure that describes how many children or families are receiving subsidies can be reported and we will request this change to this measure that we can report on a quarterly basis.

Specific Opportunities for Improvement

Budget Activity Number and Title	Measures	Improvement Suggestions
A001 – Agency Operations & Administration	None	<p>The measures relating to ECEAP outcomes could be logically linked to this budget activity.</p> <p>Since there are no measures currently linked to this activity, there is no detailed critique of the budget activity in the next section of this assessment.</p>
A002 – Child Care Licensing	PM05 - Percent of licensed homes and centers that will be monitored within the timeframe required by the Department of Early Learning’s agency policy	<p>With the addition of a target, a definition of the term “on-time”, and a slightly reworked title, the version of this measure submitted to GMAP would be preferable to what is currently being sent to OFM.</p> <p>To improve the relevance of this measurement subject to a budget/policy development audience, consider developing an additional measure that answers the question, “What is better if monitoring visits are more timely?”</p>
A003 – Child Care and Early Learning Quality Initiatives	PM06 - Number of early learning providers who advance their level of education as a result of the Department of Early Learning’s investments	<p>To improve the relevance of this measurement subject to a budget/policy development audience, consider developing an additional measure that answers the question, “What is better if child care providers advance their level of education?”</p>
A004 – Child Care Subsidies	PM07 - Percentage of licensed child care providers that accept subsidies	<p>To improve the relevance of this measurement subject to a budget/policy development audience, consider developing a workload measure that describes how many children or families are receiving these subsidies.</p>
A005 – Early Learning Programs	PM08 - Percent of Early Childhood Education and Assistance teachers that are in compliance with the Department of Early Learning’s teacher qualification performance standards	<p>If it makes sense, the reporting cycle needs to be changed from annual to quarterly. At the current reporting rate, it will take about 7 more years for this measure to be useful to a budget/policy development audience.</p> <p>There are 4 unpublished measures relating to ECEAP child readiness for kindergarten that are not linked to any budget activities. The agency and OFM need to decide if those measures should be outcome measures linked to this budget activity and A003, or they should be placed into inactive status in PMT.</p>

Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A002 – Child Care Licensing

Budget Activity Summary: Department Staff are responsible for licensing over 7500 child care centers and family home child care facilities. Agency licensing staff offer child care providers orientation, assistance with the application process, and by conducting background checks. Licensing staff are also responsible for inspecting and monitoring facilities, inspecting complaints, and taking corrective actions, as necessary. The DEL Quality Division is responsible for writing internal policy, promulgating and interpreting regulations, and initiating quality improvement activities.

Related Performance Measures

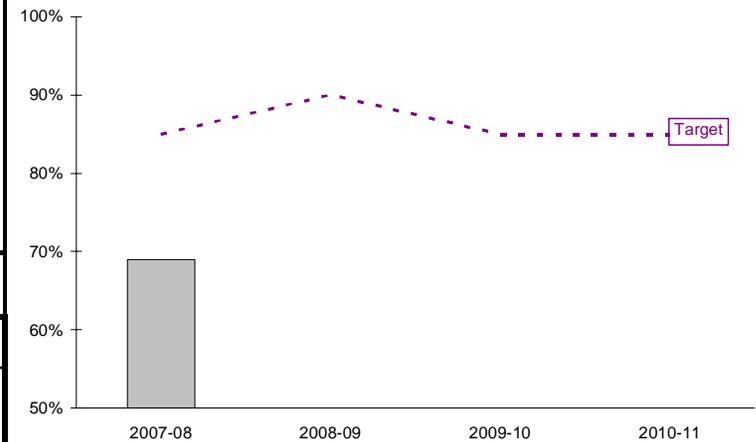
Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
PM05 – Percent of licensed homes and centers that will be monitored within the timeframe required by the Department of Early Learning’s agency policy	Process	<p>Not enough data for any trend analysis.</p> <p>The single actual data point (69%) reported did not meet the (85%) performance target.</p> <p>The GMAP version (quarterly) appears to show the data trending in an upward direction (desirable)</p>

OFM Assessor Comments & Suggestions: The current annual reporting cycle of the OFM version of this measure means there will not be enough data for any trend analysis for 5 to 7 years. There is no reason to submit the same data with a different title and a different reporting frequency to OFM and GMAP. With the addition of a target, a definition of the term “on-time”, and a slightly reworked title, the version submitted to GMAP would be preferable to what is currently being sent to OFM.

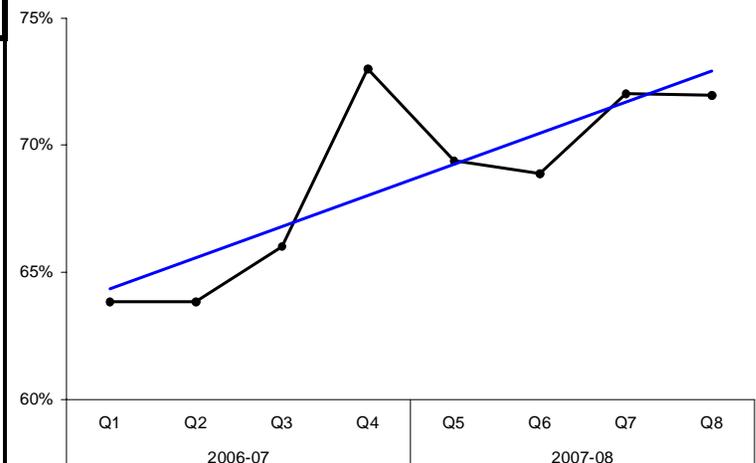
As a process measure, this subject would be more relevant to a budget/policy development audience if it was also connected to a logical outcome measure. What results are timely monitoring visits likely to influence? Should the number of complaints, investigations, or punitive license actions decrease with increased timeliness of the monitoring visits?

Agency Comments:

PM05 - Percent of licensed homes and centers that will be monitored within the timeframe required by the Department of Early Learning's agency policy



Percent of fully licensed facilities with monitoring visits on time (GMAP)



Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A003 - Child Care and Early Learning Quality Initiatives

Budget Activity Summary: Develops and implements programs designed to improve key components of the child care system to enhance the quality of care.

Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
PM06 – Number of early learning providers who advance their level of education as a result of the Department of Early Learning's investments	Immediate Outcome	Only the title exists in the Performance Measure Tracking System (PMT). No actual data or targets are available.

OFM Assessor Comments & Suggestions: Even as an immediate outcome, this measure begs the question, “So what?” Will more educated providers reduce complaints and punitive license actions? Or are more educated providers likely to positively influence measures of child readiness and preparedness for kindergarten? The relevance of this particular measure would be greatly improved if the logical connection to other outcomes was explained and those other outcome measures were linked to this budget activity.

Agency Comments:

No actual data or targets in PMT

Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A004 – Child Care Subsidies

Budget Activity Summary: The Working Connections Child Care program provides payments for child care services to all Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients, WorkFirst participants, and non-TANF low-income parents who participate in employment, work activities, and training. The state also partially subsidizes child care for families with seasonal employment as well as homeless and teen parent populations.

Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
PM07 – Percentage of licensed child care providers that accept subsidies	Process	The only information in PMT is a target of 75% for 2009-11.

OFM Assessor Comments & Suggestions: The reliability of this current measure is questionable. Whether child care providers accept subsidies or not is largely influenced by the reimbursement rate set by the legislature. The agency has little influence over this factor.

This budget activity might also benefit from a workload measure that could answer the question, “How many children are covered by these subsidies?” If funding is finite, another possible way to approach measuring this topic would be to report the number of children left on the waiting list when existing funds were expended.

Agency Comments: Will move to quarterly caseload data.

No actual data exists in PMT at the time of this assessment

Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A005 – Early Learning Programs

Budget Activity Summary: Early learning programs focus on ensuring that children are ready to learn when they transition to kindergarten. These programs include Early childhood and Assistance Program (ECEAP). ECEAP programs offer literacy, language, math, science, health, medical linkages, social and emotional development, and family support services. The Department monitors contracts to ensure compliance with statewide standards and provides technical support, training, and development to the 40 local ECEAP contractors.

Related Performance Measures

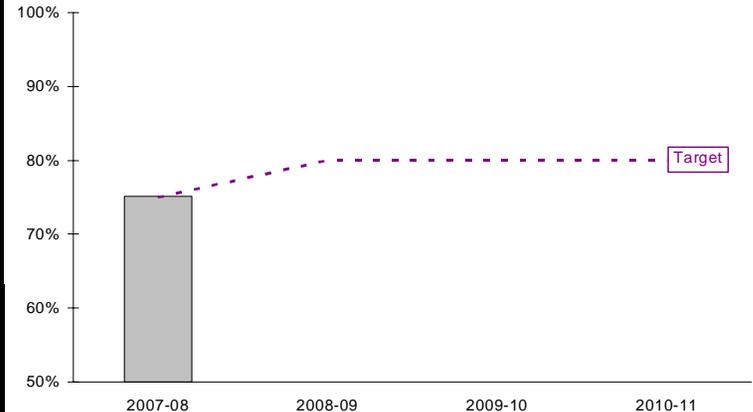
Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
PM08 – Percent of Early Childhood Education and Assistance teachers that are in compliance with the Department of Early Learning's teacher qualification performance standards	Outcome	There is not enough data for much analysis. For the one year reported, actual data meet the performance target of 75%.

OFM Assessor Comments & Suggestions: The annual data reporting cycle for this measure is not ideal. It will take 7-10 years to see any trends in the data.

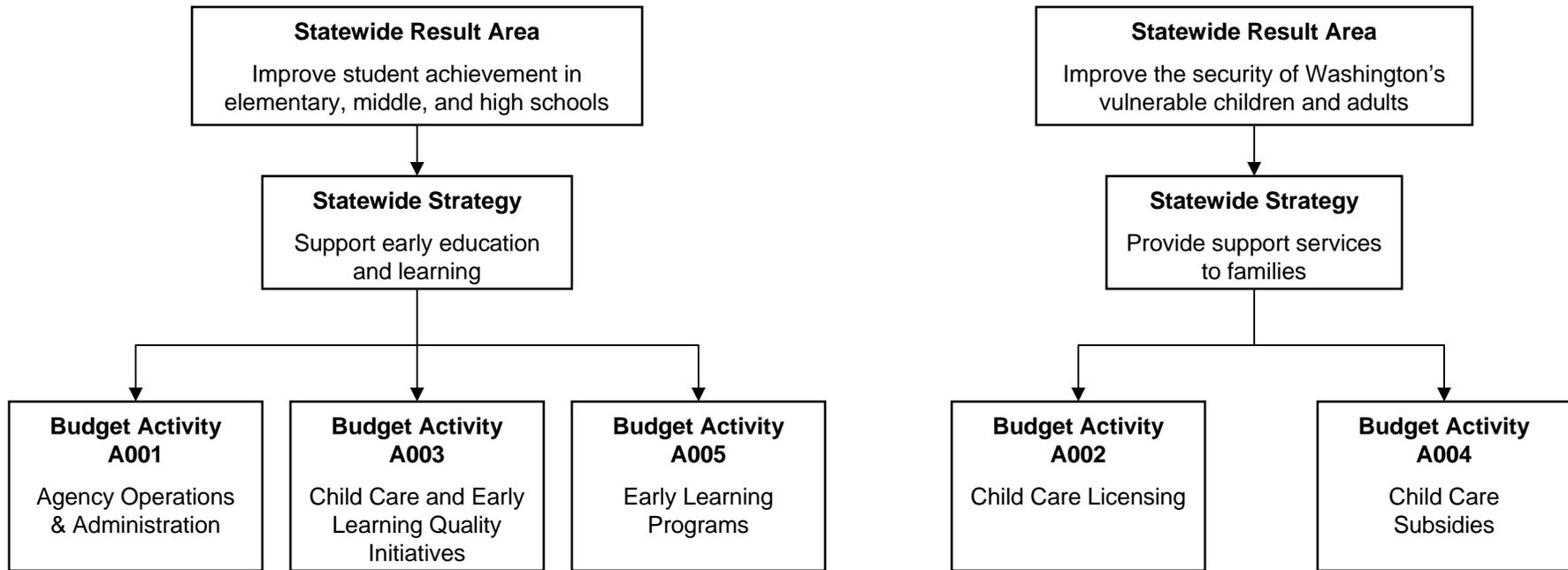
There are 4 unpublished measures in PMT that are not currently linked to any budget activity: Early Childhood and Assistance Program children demonstrating proficiencies in self-control (2), literacy/language, and math/thinking.

Agency Comments: This information is collected annually. DEL will look at similar measures that are monitored more frequently.

PM-08 - Percent of Early Childhood Education and Assistance teachers that are in compliance with the Department of Early Learning's teacher qualification performance standards

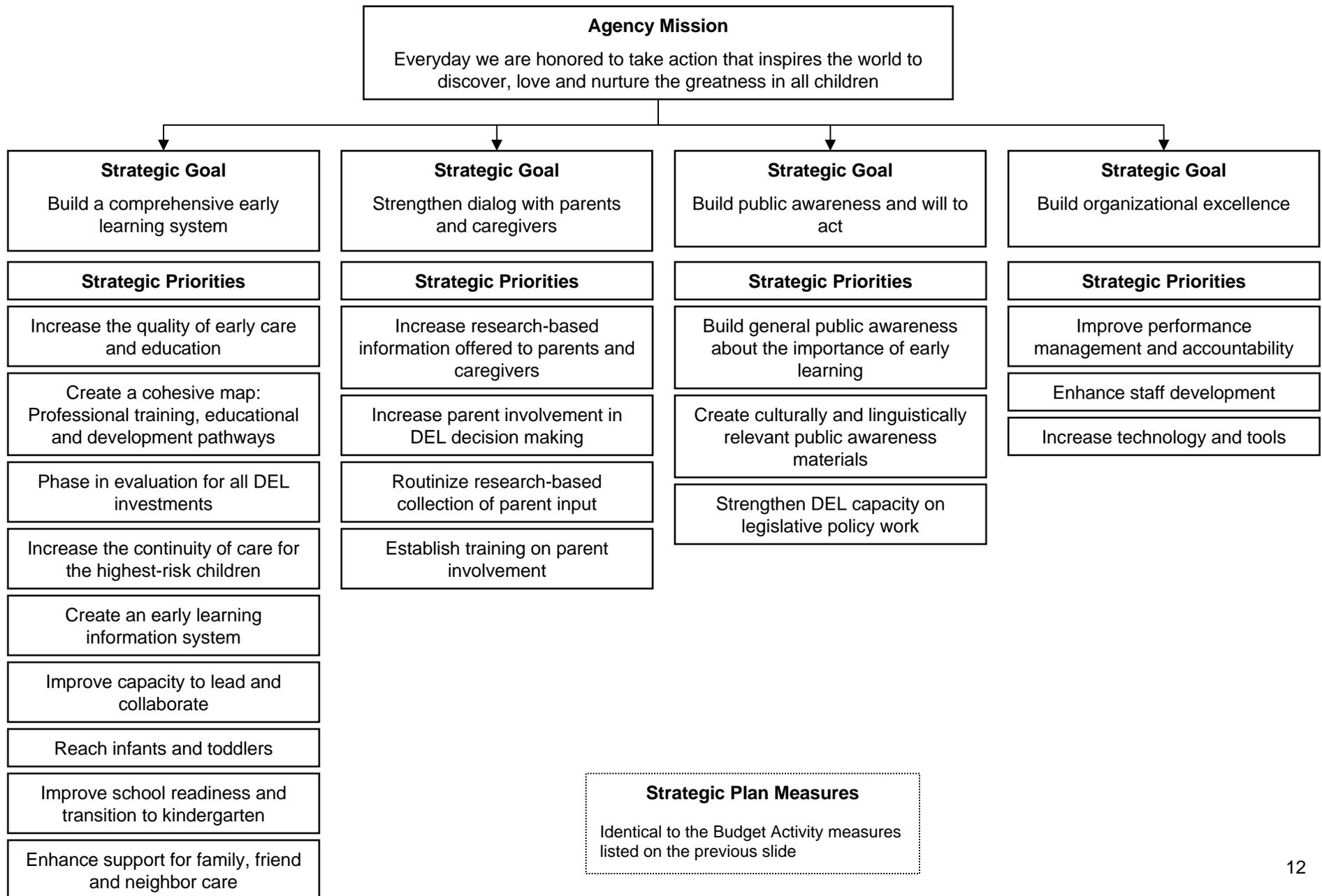


Alignment Overview – Budget Activity Structure

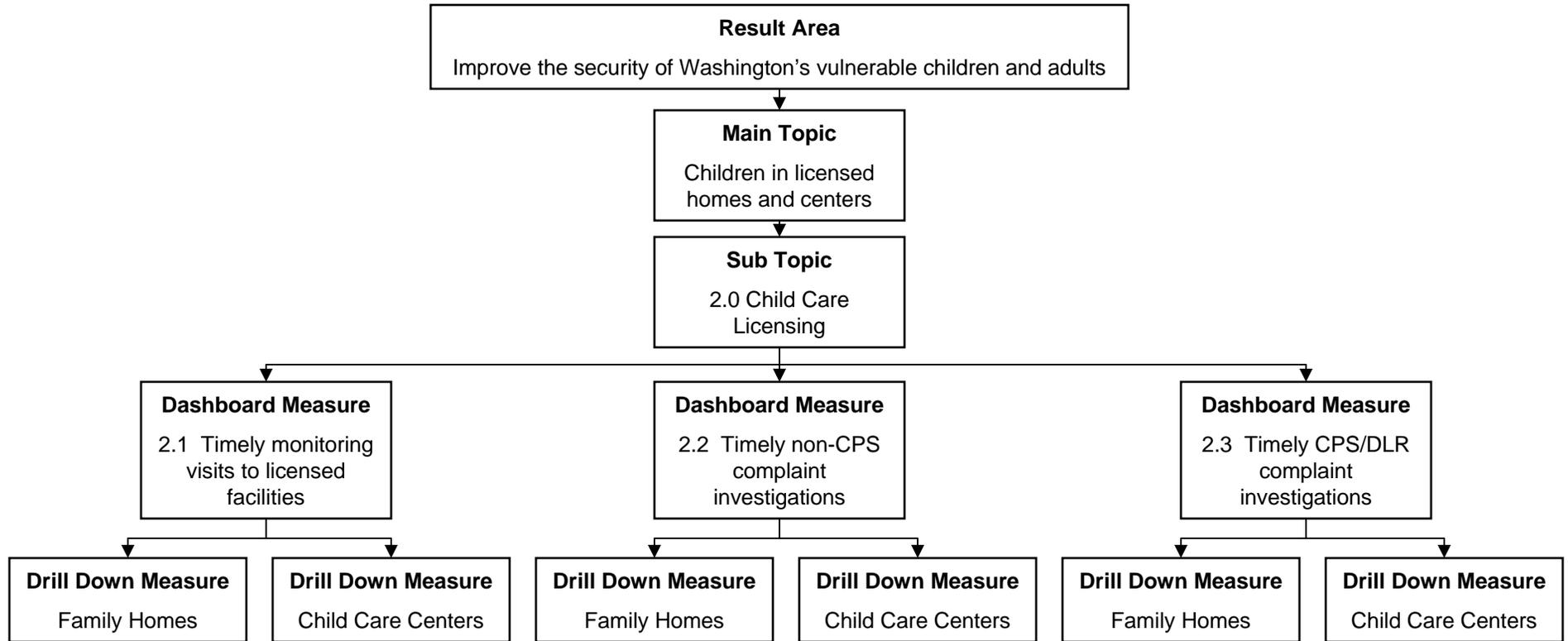


Input/Workload Measures		Process/Efficiency Measures		Output Measures		Outcome Measures	
• None		PM05 – Percent of licensed homes and centers that will be monitored within the timeframe required by the Department of Early Learning's agency policy PM07 – Percentage of licensed child care providers that accept subsidies		• None		PM06 – Number of early learning providers who advance their level of education as a result of the Department of Early Learning's investments PM08 – Percent of Early Childhood Education and Assistance teachers that are in compliance with the Department of Early Learning's teacher qualification performance standards	

Alignment Overview – Agency Strategic Plan Structure



Alignment Overview – GMAP Dashboard Structure



Process/Efficiency Measures

- 2.1 Timely monitoring visits to licensed facilities and broken down by family homes and child care centers – Also available by area
- 2.2 Timely non-CPS complaint investigations broken down by family homes and child care centers – Also available by area
- 2.3 Timely CPS/DLR complaint investigations broken down by family homes and child care centers – Also available by area

Input/Workload Measures

None

Output Measures

None

Outcome Measures

None