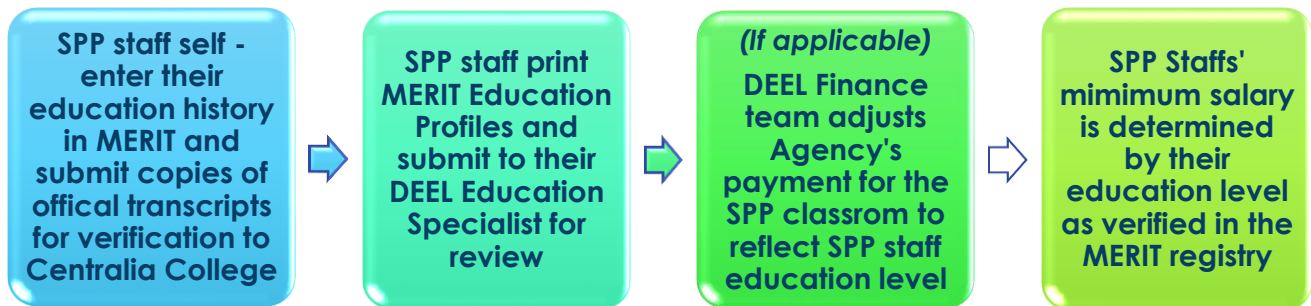




Quick Guide to Education Verification

Staff working in DEEL-contracted Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) classrooms must meet SPP **education standards**.¹ The City's Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) requires that qualified staff submit proof of verified education from the *My Education* page of their individual record in the Washington State Department of Early Learning MERIT registry. Education verification informs the level of funding DEEL allocates to early learning programs for their SPP classrooms, which affects the minimum salary levels of classroom staff.

How Education Levels Influence Salary



Steps to Education Verification

Step 1 Gather Documentation

- Gather all college transcripts, certificates, diplomas, and any other proof of education documentation.
- Scan or copy the front and back of all documents. Retain the originals for your own records.

Step 2 Enter information into MERIT My Education Page

- All college names, dates of attendance, and education information should be entered exactly as they appear on the transcript(s) or other documentation.
- Confirm that checkboxes in the online application form are selected, and click *done*. (A missed checkbox will stall the verification process).

Step 3 Submit Documentation to Centralia College

- Write your STARS ID at the top of all copied documents.
- Copies of education documentation can be submitted electronically to centraliamerit@centralia.edu, or by following the [Five Easy Steps](#).²

Step 4 Check MERIT My Education page for verification status

- Log in to MERIT to check the status of your application. Verification should take no more than four weeks. You will be prompted to complete additional actions until the status is listed as *Approved*.
- Once approved, print two copies of the education profile, and submit to your assigned DEEL early education specialist.





SEATTLE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

What can I do if it has been over 4 weeks and my verification status in MERIT has not changed to *Approved*?

Contact your DEEL Early Education Specialist if your verification status is showing in the education page as one of the following: Application Under Review; Awaiting Documents; Partial Documents Received; In-Process; Withdrawn; or Denied.

How do I get education earned outside the United States, such as foreign degrees and translation services, evaluated and verified? SPP staff who have completed a degree at a college or university outside of the United States should contact DEEL Early Learning Policy Specialist Suzette Espinoza-Cruz at suzette.espinoza-cruz@seattle.gov for information and support with MERIT education verification.

What if I do not meet the SPP education requirement for my current position? All SPP staff that do not meet the education requirement are eligible to remain working in the SPP classroom if they agree to complete a degree within four years. Staff returning to college are eligible to apply for SPP Scholars Tuition Support, which provides them with up to \$10,000 of funding per academic year to use toward tuition, books, and supplies.

What can I do if my education does not meet SPP standard and I am not interested in returning to college to complete a bachelor's degree? Beginning in Spring 2017, there will be an option available for high quality early learning lead teachers to demonstrate their quality teaching practice without returning to college in pursuit of a Bachelor's degree. For more information about this option please contact: **Suzette Espinoza-Cruz, Senior Early Learning Policy Specialist**, at suzette.espinoza-cruz@seattle.gov or call 206-386-1020.

For information on the Seattle Preschool Program visit the DEEL website at <http://www.seattle.gov/education/early-learning/early-learning-providers/forms-policies-and-manuals>

For information regarding SPP Education Standards and Verification please contact Suzette Espinoza-Cruz, Senior Early Learning Policy Specialist, by email at suzette.espinoza-cruz@seattle.org or call 206.386.1020.

¹ Link to DEEL Forms, Policies, and Manuals: <http://www.seattle.gov/education/early-learning/early-learning-providers/forms-policies-and-manuals>

² Five Easy Steps: https://del-public-files.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Five_Easy_Steps2016.pdf

