

“The DEL Fellows” A Path Forward for the Early Learning Plan

Early Learning Advisory Council
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Primary Purpose

The Department of Early Learning Fellows program or “DEL FELLS” would serve to move the Early Learning Plan forward through program, community, and individual engagement and initiative. Ideally, when more funding is available it could ultimately serve a dual purpose by also providing high quality leadership training to all sectors of the early learning community similar to the Collaborative Leadership Institute.



How would it work?

1. Each ELAC member and Early Learning Plan Steering Committee member would have an opportunity to nominate a fellow to serve a one year term of service.
2. We envision that 10 to 15 fellows would be selected.
3. Fellows would be responsible for helping to move one of the Early Learning Plan Priorities forward.
4. Fellows would receive support on a regular basis from DEL/Thrive/OSPI staff.
5. Fellows would get together 3 times during the year for support, recognition for their service, and mentoring.



Early Learning Plan Priorities

In January 2011 DEL, Thrive by Five Washington, and OSPI decided to move ahead with key priorities for the year. They are the following:

- Make Home Visiting Available to At-Risk Families,
- Expand and Enhance ECEAP
- Increase Use of Early Literacy Services and Programs
- Provide More Parenting Learning Opportunities
- Implement Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- Implement Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (WaKIDS)
- Implement Phased-In Full-Day Kindergarten
- Align Prekindergarten and K-3 Instructional & Programmatic Practices
- Build Statewide Infrastructure for Partnerships and Mobilization
- Expand P-20 Longitudinal Data System, Revise and Promote Use of *Early Learning and Development Benchmarks*



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An Example: Literacy Development

1. Work with Reach Out and Read to help expand the program
2. Serve on advisory and planning groups
3. Engage AmeriCorps members/volunteers in community based literacy efforts
4. Be available to provide no cost training on literacy development and best practices.



An Example: QRIS

1. **Work with Thrive by Five Washington to help collect and disseminate data and best practices**
2. **Provide high level coaching to teaching staff at local centers upon request**
3. **Develop a cadre and network of volunteer coaches and trainers**



An Example: Home Visiting

1. Identify, educate, and engage a volunteer network of home visitors
2. Serve as a mentor coach to home visitors
3. Provide high quality training at state and local conferences and upon request



How much will it cost?

To make this work DEL, Thrive, and OSPI would need to provide staff time to recruit the fellows, coordinate communications and connections, and provide technical assistance on specific projects. Additional costs might include reimbursements for travel expenses for fellows, food, and the recognition awards. Ultimately this is a call for action and help from within.



Considerations for ELAC

1. Who should serve as a fellow? What kind of expertise is needed? How will they be selected?
2. Which of the specific priorities make sense for a fellow to work on? What would their specific project consist of?
3. How should ELAC support the fellows program? What kind of oversight, expertise, and know-how should ELAC members provide? Can they serve as fellows?
4. What kind of in-kind support could ELAC members provide organizationally and individually?



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