



Washington State Department of
Early Learning

**EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL (ELAC)
MEETING MINUTES**

December 17, 2007

Saint Martin's University
Worthington Center

Overall Purpose:

The purpose of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) is for representatives from the state's early learning stakeholder communities to provide input and recommendations to the Department of Early Learning (DEL) so that DEL's strategies and actions are well-informed and are broadly supported by parents, early care providers, health/safety experts and interested parties. The Governor holds final authority for policy decisions and her P-20 Council will be made aware of ELAC's input to DEL.

Today's Intentions:

- Get acquainted with Council members who were not present in October;
- Recap meeting protocols and values discussion;
- Learn about and discuss "Kids Matter";
- Learn about and discuss Department of Early Learning's strategic plan;
- Discuss and develop how the Council will move forward to meet our goals
- Define Next Steps

In Attendance:

Secretary Robin Arnold-Williams
Cheryl Cranston
Laurie Dolan
Representative Roger Goodman
Dr. Maxine Hayes
Dr. Graciana Italiano-Thomas
Dr. Illene Schwartz
Sue Winn

Director Jone Bosworth
Ann Daley
Charlie Earl
Amber Havens
Robin Higa
Jada Rupley
Jim Skucy
Marie Zackuse

Welcome, Overview, Agenda Review

Presented by Debbie Rough-Mack. The facilitator welcomed all, reviewed the agenda for the day and the overall purpose of the Early Learning Advisory Council.

Director Bosworth announced that several members would have to leave at 11:30 for a meeting of the governor's cabinet and that Co-chair Lorena Lowell was unable to attend due to having an ill child at home.

Review of first meeting's operational guidelines

The facilitator read aloud the “hopes for the council” shared by members at the October 22nd meeting. Dr. Hayes discussed the values of the council and stated that they represent diversity and the foundation of what all children need. The hopes for the Council were as follows:

Amber Havens – to move well-thought-out systems across the state.

Bob Watt – wants ELAC to win a Nobel Peace Prize; to change the way we think about learning and life for families.

Robin Higa – to establish ground-up and top-down consensus so parents know how to help children thrive – give parents and children voice.

Rep. Haler – everyone who has a child is aware of the critical nature of birth to 5.

Cheryl Cranston – make good things happen – look through the eyes of children.

Sue Winn – raise quality for children; honest support for providers; keep DEL's momentum.

Jone Bosworth – system-driven by parent voice.

Sen. Kauffman – make sure parents have choices; plan that includes parents.

Jim Skucy – support for families (first 5 years, especially).

Lorena Lowell – voice for diverse perspectives.

Dr. Maxine Hayes – policy development input; give a “leg up” to DEL.

Robin Arnold-Williams – inclusion of kids with special needs.

Jill Sweet – resources/funding & public support and knowledge about early learning.

Dr. Amie Lapp Payne, Deputy Director of the Department of Early Learning, reviewed the roles of the Co-chairs, members, staff, and public and introduced Kate Verville, as Special Projects Manager, for the Department of Early Learning and new staff to the Council.

Introductions – Who is here?

Several members were in attendance for the first time. Members were asked to share some brief information.

- Brief professional/personal background?
- Why you were chosen as a council member?

Introduction and Discussion of Kids Matter

Maxine introduced the Kids Matter presentation. Many handouts and the presentation itself were made available to the Council and to the Public and will be posted on the Early Learning Advisory Council page of the Department of Early Learning's Website <http://www.del.wa.gov/ELAC/ELAC.html>

Lorrie Grevstad, Department of Health, and Garrison Kurtz, Thrive By Five, gave an overview and history of the Kids Matter Framework, acknowledging Organizational Research Services and Dr Jill Sells for their incredible writing and narrative skills, and too many in the room that provided input to the development of this Early Learning Framework. Lorrie emphasized that Kids Matter is a framework and not a traditional strategic plan, and that the Department of Early Learning had not yet been created at the time that Kids Matter was created.

Ways that the Kids Matter Framework can help the Early Learning Advisory Council:

- Helps build on existing efforts
- Early Learning Advisory Council will develop an early learning plan; consider outcomes and strategies.
- Kids Matter offers common goal and outcomes for coordinated efforts.
- Provides a picture or 'landscape' of early learning.

Kasey Langley – Organizational Research Services – discussed evaluation activities including Survey results and a Case Study on Kids Matter. Survey reports and other information can be found at <http://www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter>.

Vaughnetta Barton, Director of Programs for the Foundation for Early Learning and Kelli Bohanon, Head Start State Collaboration Project Manager discussed their experiences with Kids Matter, and how it is being used today.

There was extensive discussion of Kids Matter in communities with presentations from Inland Northwest Alliance for Early Learning, and Northwest Early Learning, and their partners providing local examples of Kids Matter in Practice. Extensive handouts and presentation materials were provided which will be available on the Website at <http://www.del.wa.gov/ELAC/ELAC.html>

Lorrie Grevstad wrapped up with a summary of the history and current status of Kids Matter.

Lunch Break

Strategic Planning at the Department of Early Learning

Dr Amie Lapp Payne, Deputy Director, DEL, introduced the presentation

Joe Egan, Chief Operating Officer of DEL presented the mission vision and strategic goals of the Department and provided an example of how the Department will take the work forward to determine outcomes, strategies and measures toward its goals. The full presentation is available now at <http://www.del.wa.gov/ELAC/ELAC.html>.

Mission and Vision

Together, with parents and partners, we offer children world-class learning opportunities so they realize their full potential.

Every day we are honored to take action that inspires the world to discover, love and nurture the greatness in all children.

The Department of Early Learning is developing its Strategic Plan over the coming months with four goals:

- Build Public Will and Awareness
- Build a Comprehensive Early Learning System
- Build a Trusted Environment to Exchange Information
- Build Organizational Excellence

Dr. Juliet Torres, QRIS coordinator, gave an overview of the Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Lynne Shanafelt, Assistant Director, Parent Support and Programs, gave an overview of PSP programs, which distribute over 300 million dollars, including child care subsidies, Family Help Line, Family, Friends and Neighbor caregiver supports, and Culturally Relevant Parent Support and Education. A parent needs assessment, and the Parent Advisory Group, are two avenues through which DEL is utilizing parents to inform their work.

Claudia Shanley –Assistant Director for Systems, Partnership & Collaboration, gave an overview of SPC work.

Joshua Verville, Southwest Service Area Manager, presented an overview of Child Care Licensing, and discussed what licensors do, where they work, and the make up of child care in Washington

Introduced Larry Horne – Assistant Director for Quality Division

Joe Egan discussed next steps with strategic planning next steps to work on objectives, strategies, and performance measurements, with staff and others.

Next Steps to meet our goals

There was extensive discussion of the goals as they are written in statute
Develop and Early Learning Plan
Act as Community Representatives to the Department of Early Learning

After extensive discussion, the consensus of the Council is that it is not ready at this time to adopt Kids Matter or any other framework. Instead, several points were made about the direction the council should take and the members' desire for more information.

- Need for more “Nuts and Bolts” of the Agency
- More Discussion time
- To hear from National Experts
- “Love to hear from more licensors”
- Where we are today? DEL progress and Successes
- Look at a few problems and how we might address them

Exchange of Information

Due to time constraints and the desire to continue the Next Steps discussion, the Exchange of Information discussion was pushed to next meeting.

Future Meetings, Next Agenda Items, Next Steps

The next meeting will be held on January 30th.

Items discussed as possible next agenda items are:

More information about the Department of Early Learning

EL/Jone- discussion of

- Opportunities,
- Challenges,
- Legislative issues (budget, data)
- Specific critical questions so that group can advise
- Proposed results from DEL/Co-Chairs

Exchange of Information/Introductory Activity

Conversation Time

The Pew Commission Report, “Taking Stock”- to be sent out ahead of time.

For all ELAC communications please send email to elac@del.wa.gov.