



To: Department of Early Learning; Early Learning Advisory Council Members
From: Foundation for Early Learning

RE: Early Learning Plan (ELP) Fellows Initiative

The Initiative: Foundation for Early Learning has designed the Early Learning Plan (ELP) Fellows Initiative, a statewide effort to connect grassroots communities with the Early Learning Plan, Washington's comprehensive early learning systems plan. This initiative has two objectives: 1) to support emerging early learning leaders in communities across Washington state; and 2) to implement Early Learning Plan strategies in local communities

Objective 1: Support emerging early learning leaders in communities across Washington state

- Foundation for Early Learning will partner with Department of Early Learning and Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP to recruit ten emerging early learning leaders; these leaders will serve as Early Learning Plan Fellows. Preference will be given to emerging leaders from grassroots communities including, but not limited to: parents/primary caregivers, child care providers, librarians, and representatives from communities of color, tribal nations, and other underserved and overlooked communities.
- Foundation for Early Learning will coordinate leadership training for Fellows in the following areas: project management, network building, community organizing, advocacy, and other as needed/requested.
- Foundation for Early Learning will also coordinate virtual and perhaps in-person lectures and discussions about key elements of early learning (i.e. brain development, social emotional development, etc.) and the Early Learning Plan (what it is; why it matters). Fellows will be encouraged to share their learning with local community members.
- Foundation for Early Learning will coordinate a "Learning Community" where Fellows will share information and resources, ask questions, and exchange Early Learning Project plans, processes, and results. The Community will meet in person at the beginning of the fellowship year and once midway through the fellowship, via teleconferences, and online.

Objective 2: Implement Early Learning Plan strategies in local communities

- Foundation for Early Learning will provide mini-grants to Fellows to create collaborative projects based on Early Learning Plan strategies.
- Fellows will join with at least three partners (agencies, organizations, individuals) from their local community to design and implement an early learning project that directly serve children and families.
- Special emphasis will be given to recruiting fellows from tribal nations.
- Sample projects include:
 - In a rural community where many children are not enrolled in formal child care or pre-school the local library coordinates with the elementary school, Resource & Referral Network, and other early learning providers to host a series of "Get Ready for Kindergarten Nights." Each Kindergarten Night features a different topic such as literacy, numeracy, and science. Families move through different stations featuring

activities related to the theme. The local school is on-site and provides registration information and answer questions. Children also receive activity packets to take home, including items such as little-magnifying glasses (science), counting sticks (math), reading and instruction guides.

This project touches on Early Learning Plan strategies: 10- early literacy, 11- early numeracy, 15- parent learning opportunities, and 17- Family Friend and Neighbor support.

- A group of parents whose children communicate using American Sign Language due to craniosynostosis (fusing of the skull at birth) host an educational concert with ASL entertainer Rachel Coleman of Signing Time. The parents saw an opportunity to take leadership, highlight the benefits of ASL for both hearing and non-hearing children, and provide a positive language experience for children undergoing medical care.

This project touches on Early Learning Plan strategies: 10- early literacy, 17 Family Friend, and Neighbor support, 20- parent leadership, and 35- public awareness.

Tentative Timeline: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

- August, 2011 – cohort recruitment commences; applications accepted
- September, 2011 – Fellows selected
- October, 2011 – “Learning Community” kickoff - in person orientation/training held; monthly conference calls commence
- November, 2011 – Early Learning Plan project guidelines released
- January, 2011 – Project plans submitted by Fellows
- February – Projects launched in local communities

Budget: The budget below represents estimated costs for year one of the initiative.

Expense	Amount	Explanation
Two full-day in-person meetings – locations TBD	\$2,500.00	Mileage, lodging, meals (breakfast and lunch)
Telecommunications	\$500.00	Conference calls, webinars
Supplies	\$200.00	
Postage, Printing	\$300.00	
Mini-grants	\$20,000.00	10 grants @ \$2,000.00/each
Staff Time	\$10,500.00	Coordination, grants management, learning community
TOTAL	\$34,000.00	