

Early Learning Plan Community Outreach Meeting Summary Kirkland

Note: This is intended as a high-level “snapshot” of the conversation from the meeting. More detailed information was captured at the meeting and will be incorporated into the planning process.

Thursday, November 5

7 to 8:30 p.m.

Attending: Bob Hamilton, Department of Early Learning
Molly Boyajian, Thrive by Five Washington
Bob Butts, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

- What is different now? Why will things be different with this plan when we have had so many?
- Quality programs need to be: safe, attended, children developing, clean, qualified and compensated staff, art, music, variety of experiences, there needs to be accountability
- Kindergarten readiness assessment process—where will it be piloted? Why are we doing it?
- Why the focus on evaluation? There are so many kids not in formal care—how will you evaluate them?
- We shouldn't spend money on evaluation. We should spend it on services/programs
- How are you going to pay for everything in this plan?
- Need to incorporate technology into the plan
- QRIS should be mandatory—it will never work if it is voluntary
- Parent education should be expanded. It should be based on what already exists—community colleges
- Evidence-based home visiting is key to reaching and supporting at-risk children
- Must address the subsidy rate
- Screening is very important, but we need to make sure there are services for kids once they are screened
- Need stronger partnerships with DOH and DSHS
- There needs to be a strong public awareness campaign around the implementation of the plan
- We need to look at what other countries are doing—especially European countries
- Paid family leave is critical and something almost all western/industrialized countries provide
- Our main investments should be in teaching parents so they can gain the necessary parenting skills to advocate for their children