

## QUESTIONS?

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Washington State Department of  
**Early Learning**

# QRIS Connection

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Deputy Director, Dr. Amie Lapp Payne, presented information about QRIS to the House of Representatives, Early Learning and Children's Services Committee on November 28, 2007.
- The QRIS Design Phase runs from November 2007 to June 2008.
- Welcome to the DEL team:

Suzette Puente, QRIS Professional Development System Coordinator

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Announcing DEL QRIS Pilot Sites

What is the QRIS Design Phase?

Get to know more about our 5 Pilot Sites

## Welcome Pilot Sites!

In early November, DEL announced our five pilot sites for the design phase of Washington State's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

The goal of the design phase is for all five sites to gather information from their local communities including stakeholders and parents and ask them:

*What makes sense to you for building a rating system that measures child care quality?*

The department wants to know what is working in communities now, what resources are available, what is needed, what innovative ideas remain to be discovered, and how we can design the most meaningful, data-driven system to benefit Washington's children and families.

The pilot sites met for their first collaborative meeting on November 19. Each community shared some thoughts on unique aspects of their site. Here is a bit from what each of our 5 pilot sites had to say:

### Clark County:

- ◆ Due to location, there is a large connection to the Portland metropolitan area.
- ◆ The county-wide collaborative, SELF, has been working since 2001 on early learning issues and currently maintains 22 partners.

- ◆ Some of the SELF guiding principles are: family voice, accessibility, diversity, strength-based approach, inclusion, and sharing.



### White Center, Thrive by Five WA:

- ◆ Unincorporated area of Seattle that is twice as multilingual as King County.
- ◆ Over 70 languages in the school district. 1 out of 6 children lives in poverty.
- ◆ Two guiding principles are creating a system of attraction for providers and working to look for opportunities for improving quality beyond regulation.

### Kitsap County:

- ◆ In response to community feedback, this site will be focusing their efforts in remote areas of the county with fewer resources.
- ◆ The Early Learning Everyone Welcome Group has served as a way to bring the community together and plan for QRIS.
- ◆ One of the guiding principles is inclusion.

### Spokane County: WSU

- ◆ 1 in 4 children in the community come from diverse backgrounds and over 50% of children qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- ◆ The Inland Northwest Alliance for Early Learning is a leadership and mobilization team for early childhood efforts. This group meets weekly and instills the message, "our kids, our business"
- ◆ Two of the guiding principles include honor families as their children's first teachers and use evaluation and data to inform decision making.

### East Yakima, Thrive by Five WA:

- ◆ A QRIS readiness survey was conducted for 65 homes and nine centers.
- ◆ Results showed that over 80% of providers in East Yakima are monolingual in Spanish, and providers have an average education level of 8th grade or less.
- ◆ Two guiding principles in this community are respect and trust

*The department is so pleased to be working with our five pilot sites to encourage creativity and innovation at the community level.*