

ELAC 2014 Work Plan

Topics, Requested Action and Success Measures

This companion to the ELAC Work Plan provides brief descriptions of the issues, the “asks” of ELAC, and measures of success for the guidance needed from ELAC and the joint state and local action for 2014. There is a section for each of the topics confirmed by ELAC at its February 2014 meeting: Family Partnerships and Engagement, Public Awareness, Advancing Racial Equity, Early Achievers, ECEAP/Preschool Expansion, and WaKIDS. The measures of success clarify the purposes of ELAC’s work and can be used as a tool for the planned annual reflection on each year’s work.

Please see the *2014 ELAC Work Plan* for the proposed plan month-by-month.

Work Plan Criteria

The ELAC Work Plan Development Committee adopted the following criteria for determining the most important topics for ELAC’s focus in 2014. We encourage you to keep them in mind as you review and comment on the draft Work Plan.

- **High Impact:** Likely to make a significant difference in access to services, quality of services, equity and child outcomes.
- **Capacity to act:** Entity(ies) charged with action has/can readily access the resources (e.g., capacity, funding) to staff tasks, utilize advice and/or implement joint action.
- **Timely:** Sought/advanced when they can inform decisions and action in meaningful ways.

Work Plan Topic Descriptions and Success Measures

1. Family Partnerships and Engagement

Action: Consider and recommend the parent/family input and recommend the purposes and structure for DEL’s Parent Advisory Group (PAG) in engaging parents and families in development of early learning policies and programs.

Description: DEL is preparing to strengthen the voice of parents and families in shaping early learning services and policy and would like ELAC to be a key partner in this effort. A diverse, cross-sector parent/family focus group is now being convened to ask for guidance on how to engage parent/family voice in the development of early learning policies and programs. There is an opportunity for ELAC to consider the guidance from the focus group and recommend a structure for how to engage parents in meaningful ways that can inform all of ELAC’s work. ELAC can also begin thinking about how to measure whether parents believe they have meaningful input on DEL’s efforts.

Success Measures:

1. Consideration of parent/family focus group guidance and how the Parent Advisory Group informs and connects with ELAC (e.g., should PAG become a subcommittee of ELAC?).
2. Recommendations on how to design and structure engaging parents and families in development of early learning policies and programs including how the parent/family advisory group informs and connects with ELAC.
3. Parents and families have meaningful input into the development of early learning policies and programs.
4. Develop a measure of parent/family engagement in development of recommendations.
5. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that race and risk factors such as homelessness, involvement in child welfare or poverty are predictors of children’s success.

Timeline: The parent and family focus group will be convened in April 21st – 22nd. The goal is to have PAG operating by fall of 2014, so it is requested that this work begin in June.

2. Public Awareness

Action: Define public awareness goals for ELAC and what ELAC members' roles are in achieving those goals, and consider whether a work group is needed.

Description: Building community support and promoting children's learning and healthy development is one of the key outcomes in Washington's Early Learning Plan. There is an opportunity for ELAC to work with DEL to create focused goals and strategies to strengthen public awareness and community support for early learning.

Success Measures:

1. Defined public awareness goals and roles for ELAC.
2. Plan for leveraging public awareness resources and messages.
3. Measurement of what impact the public awareness plan will have on building support for early learning.
4. Create a public awareness work group.
5. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that neither race, nor risk factors are predictors of children's success.
6. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: Timing for this work is flexible; though it is recommended that it begin in August.

3. WaKIDS

Action: Provide feedback and raise any potential red flags on the self-reflection tool that has been created for the regions.

Description: Educational Service Districts (ESD) and members representing each Early Learning Regional Coalition jointly created a regional self-reflection tool in collaboration with DEL, OSPI and Thrive by Five. This tool may be used regionally to capture the strength of the early learning collaboration work related to WaKIDS.

Success Measures:

1. Any potential red flags for the self-reflection tool identified before it is finalized for pilot.
2. Perspective on the usefulness of the self-reflection tool from various partners after its rollout.
3. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that neither race, nor risk factors are predictors of children's success.
4. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: The tool is due to DEL on April 15th. This is a short-term request.

4. Advancing Racial Equity

Action: Participate in a retreat (one and a half to two days) to develop a common understanding of the impact that race, culture and language have on child outcomes — particularly for children of color, and embed an equity lens when making decisions and/or providing advice. Develop a framework or set of questions to ask that provide an equity lens when making recommendations and taking actions.

Description: Washington State's communities are increasingly diverse. A substantial proportion of low-income families are non-white and experience complex barriers that contribute to vast disparities in outcomes. We must recognize and intentionally focus on closing opportunity gaps in the early learning system to ensure that all children and families have what they need to thrive.

Success Measures:

1. A plan and a process are in place to intentionally and meaningfully inform policy, practice, program quality and access to services, so that race and risk factors (e.g., homelessness, poverty or involvement in the child welfare system) are not predictors of children's success.
2. Collect community voice to determine where inequities occur.
3. Develop a measure to show progression of ELAC's racial equity work.
4. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: This work does not have a specific deadline and can begin in August.

5. Early Achievers & ECEAP/Preschool Expansion: Shared Services Alliances (combined)

Action: Provide recommendations on how shared service alliances can support moving comprehensive service options into the community to support preschool slots placed in Level 2-5 licensed child care settings, as well as ideas on how local communities can build shared service alliances to promote quality. Help generate a work plan or road map about how to initiate shared service alliances in various local communities, including recommendations on how this might be funded at the local level.

Description: Many licensed child care providers are not currently resourced to offer the various position types and expertise to offer comprehensive services (family support, medical and dental supports, etc.). However, many licensed child care providers are offering high quality instruction. Shared service alliances or a community based model could bring groups of licensed child care providers together to share costs related to administrative overhead and supplies and broaden our delivery system. In Washington, we also have the opportunity to build alliances tied to Early Achievers to support quality improvement. For example, a specific staff member who supports implementation of evidence-based curriculum could be shared among facilities. Another example would be shared staff who can serve as a substitute to the multiple facilities participating in the alliance.

Success Measures:

1. Recommendations on how shared service alliances can support moving comprehensive service options into the community to support preschool slots placed in Level 3-5 licensed child care settings
2. Ideas on building shared services alliances to promote quality in various local communities.
3. Work plan or roadmap about how to initiate shared services alliances in local communities.
4. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that race and risk factors such as homelessness, involvement in child welfare or poverty are predictors of children's success.
5. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: This year, Contractors who are awarded new slots will be working with DEL to pilot innovative strategies around comprehensive services. This would inform the future RFA that will be release in January/February next year. There is not specific deadline for this work and can begin in August.

6. ECEAP/Preschool Expansion

Action: Educate communities about the full-day preschool model. ELAC members who are part of local community groups, Early Learning Regional Coalitions, school-district meetings, etc., can discuss the advantages of moving toward a full-day model and encourage innovation.

In addition, ELAC will play an advisory role in ECEAP expansion going forward.

Description: ECEAP expansion slots will prioritize a new full-day preschool model and also pilot a number of best practices supported by pre-k research.

Success Measures:

1. Recommend ways to champion full-day preschool model and encourage local partners who are eligible and interested to apply for preschool expansion
2. Plan developed for ELAC to communicate the value of full day preschool through their constituencies, and communities.
3. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that race and risk factors such as homelessness, involvement in child welfare or poverty are predictors of children's success.
4. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: There is a current RFA out in the field. Applications are due in May, however expansion slots will be available each school year. The next RFA will likely come out in January/February next year.

7. Supporting Infants & Toddlers

Action: Provide guidance on opportunities to improve the system of supports for infants and toddlers.

Description: DEL is building a continuum of supports to promote the healthy development and well-being of infants and toddlers, including those with developmental delays and disabilities, during this critical period of cognitive, social and emotional development. ELAC is interested in policies and practices that encourage nurturing, reliable and responsive relationships between children and their caregivers. This work will include connections with other agencies doing this work (as agreed) and the Essentials of Early Childhood Steering Committee.

Success Measures:

1. Recommendations on how to improve the system of supports for infants, toddlers and their families through policy and practice.
2. Intentionally and meaningfully inform policies, practice, program quality and access to services, so that race and risk factors such as homelessness, involvement in child welfare or poverty are predictors of children's success.
3. Parents/families are intentionally and meaningfully engaged.

Timeline: This work does not have a specific deadline and can begin in August.