

**Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)**  
**Advancing Racial Equity Planning Series – Session 2 Minutes**

April 7, 2015 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Lacey Community Center

**Welcome and Purpose of Today’s Session**

- Introduction of Facilitator Maggie McGlynn, Participants and Public Guests  
Participants were asked to introduce themselves by name, organization or community they represent and sharing ONE PHRASE OR SINGLE SENTENCE that captures an insight that they had about embedding racial equity since last time – write it on a sticky note to collect your thoughts and “declare it” when you say hello.

**Purpose of Sessions:**

- ♦ To **fully embed a racial equity lens** into the work of the ELAC, including common language, framework and inquiries to address existing barriers and eliminate race and risk factors as predictors of success for young children in the state of Washington.
- ♦ To **build on our successes**, such as the Racial Equity Theory of Change, current efforts and other tools to develop an equity lens that will help ELAC facilitate conversations and provide advice to intentionally and meaningfully inform policy, practice, program quality and access to services.
- ♦ To **embrace the leadership opportunities** for the ELAC to recognize and focus on closing opportunity gaps in the early learning system to ensure that all children and families have what they need to thrive.

**Intended Outcomes:**

- To create a racial equity framework and implementation plan that everyone can support and contribute to its success.
- To agree on key elements of successful implementation and impact.

**Meeting Norms**

**COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS**

- Choose to be present and engaged as a representative of your constituencies.
- Listen actively to understand and be open to all voices, perspectives and outcomes.
- Tell the truth and assume good intentions.
- Be willing to have brave and sometimes messy conversations.
- Respect different learning, engagement and communication styles.

**Overview of February Meeting Materials**

Co-Chairs, Bianca Bailey and Nelly Mbajah welcomed the ELAC Members and thanked everyone for their good work last meeting and the Workgroup who prepared materials for today’s discussion.

DEL Director, Bette Hyde provided some updates and clarifying comments regarding the [2015 ELAC Work Plan](#). Changes made from the draft work plan are described in the [ELAC Work Plan Input & Response table](#). Facilitator, Maggie McGlynn referenced the Draft Racial Equity Framework and Implementation Plan to use as a springboard for discussions, along with the other resource information for the first conversation of the day on the Roles and Responsibilities of ELAC and DEL. The Advancing Racial Equity Workgroup members who prepared the [Draft Racial Equity Framework and Implementation Plan](#) were acknowledged (Lois Martin, Wilanne Ollila-Perry, Nancy Spurgeon, Jen Ross, Bianca Bailey and Caitlin Jensen) and each presented an overview of a section of the Plan.

The following pages include a one-page summary of the key agreements made by ELAC with links to the final versions of Principles and Questions/Inquiries. The balance of the summary offers more detail to each of the agreements to capture the insights and understandings from the conversations.

## TOPLINE SUMMARY OF AGREEMENTS

### Roles and Responsibilities of ELAC

1. ELAC affirmed and clarified the **roles and relationships** between ELAC and DEL
  - Modify the State and Local Early Learning Coordination System [Key Partners and Roles diagram](#) (and other materials, such as the ELAC Charter) to include that Council includes diverse, statewide representation reflecting regional, racial and cultural diversity, as described in the ELAC statute ([RCW 43.215.090](#)).
  - Affirm with all members the clarification that ELAC provides advice, guidance and input to DEL, and there is opportunity for state and local action to participate in the design and implementation.
  - Look at ways to update the statute to reflect current ELAC growth. Bette offered that the agency can propose changes to go through the legislative process. The group will think together as to the changes to propose, such as using language consistent with the state and local Key Partners and Roles diagram. Agency legislative and budget requests are due in September, so the group agreed to think about the strategies sooner rather later.

### Racial Equity Plan Foundation

2. Adopted the [modified Racial Equity Theory of Change](#) (RE-TOC) document to serve as the **ELAC Racial Equity Framework** and shared view. The next task is to reflect the language change across all materials for ELAC's purposes. Determine next steps for sharing this framework along with the other agreements of the session.
3. Agreed to incorporate and refer the ideas on *Family Partnerships, Engagement and Voice*, along with *Opportunities for Collaboration* to other forums as appropriate. Determine the appropriate avenues for sharing these ideas to inform their work.
4. Adopted a set of [ELAC Principles](#). The next step is to put the principles into practice.

### Racial Equity Toolkit

5. Adopted a set of [ELAC Questions and Inquiries](#). A next step is to look at 2015 Workplan areas where the questions can inform the presentations and used as prompts for preparation and discussion.

### Racial Equity Implementation Plan

6. Agreed to enhance **ELAC Operations** in these ways:
  - Look at ELAC statute enhancements and current/upcoming requirements to get all up to date.
  - Look at ELAC member terms, succession planning, capacity of coalitions, location of meetings, orientation, impact of putting the shared principles into practice, expectation of members on time and engagement and getting voices from the field.
  - The people who nominate members to ELAC should have that mindset that members should represent the diversity of the state.
  - Gained clarity on input for formal products versus input for implementation; supported by a data tracking system, including:
    - Accountability practices and trust building behaviors
    - Calling the question in a safe environment, more voices from the field via regional coalitions
    - Engage more voices from the field; take time to engage in the areas within your role/responsibilities
    - Establish coordination and common language
    - Being explicit about decisions made, and how ELAC made an impact
7. Initiated a process plan for requested input regarding the top leadership change at DEL.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELAC

The Council discussed ways to enhance the relationship and clarify roles between ELAC and DEL. The group acknowledged DEL has been out front gathering information in a meaningful way, but sometimes there is a feeling that DEL has gotten out ahead of the field with people not being consulted enough. It is also important to distinguish the items that ELAC can influence at the design stage and items that relate to implementation. There are tension points that need to be addressed so people feel their input is valued. Maggie led the group through a review of the [ELAC Statute](#), the State and Local Early Learning Coordination System [Key Partners and Roles diagram](#), and referenced the [Reauthorization of the Child Care & Development Block Grant Act](#) as well as the [ELAC 2015 Work Plan](#). The discussion led the group to recognize where they work well together and identify what needs to be enhanced to further enhance the relationships.

- Examples of things that have gone well include the Early Learning Plan when many people were included in the design over a year and a half to provide input. Along this line of getting ahead of final decision, DEL is consulting with ELAC as part of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) plan development and two ELAC members (Lois Martin and Bianca Bailey) are serving as liaisons on the steering committee. Another good example is when topics or issues are raised for communal problem solving, rather than asking “Does this project we already planned and started implementing look good?” The former scenario makes for more positive and productive conversations. Finally, ELAC as a group is working well - people are starting to get a rhythm. ELAC knows what the Council is supposed to be doing, and members are getting into a groove of offering advice and figuring out how to get things done. ELAC has a [2-Way Communication Protocol](#) that lays the groundwork for our expectations, and there continues to be both give and take in terms of DEL’s response and ELAC’s questions and answers. ELAC has processes in place that did not exist years ago, and this group is responsible for the change.
- Ideas on what to do to enhance what is working well now include:
  - ♦ Take the time needed to engage a broad range of perspectives, use outside people to help us facilitate conversations and get out front.
  - ♦ More voice from the regional coalitions will enhance our impact. ELAC members and Regional Advisors all represent different geographic areas and constituencies. We want to be intentional on how to get information out into the field to get feedback in a cohesive and common way. The group was reminded that they have a [Two-Way Communication protocol](#) that can be used.
  - ♦ Continue to explore ways to frame information in a way that is easy to understand for a Regional Adviser to convey to their communities. Look at ways that we can take information and frame it in a way that will make it easy for people to understand and respond.
  - ♦ Create processes to clearly distinguish the items that ELAC can influence at the design stage and items that relate to implementation. Connect these ideas to the 2015 Workplan for immediate action as needed. A suggestion was made by DEL that they create an easy data system that lists and tracks the types of input requested and the action that is taken. Also assure that the requests can match the capacity of the group to respond. We may need to answer the question: “How is it possible to get the most critical elements of our communities to support getting the work done?”
  - ♦ Create a safe environment and relationships to call the needed questions. One is to replace assumptions (such as thinking you already know what the answer will be, or that people do/don’t have time to respond, or that you cannot call on individuals for feedback) with an intention to capture the wisdom and experience in this room.
  - ♦ Recognize that conversation such as this will intrinsically build trust in this room, as is happening today. We want to figure out how new people can catch up and build trust so there is a continuous loop. One example is to personally commit to having an intentional conversation with a new member of ELAC and share how we build and maintain trust.

- ♦ Another opportunity for trust building is to make recommendations for new members. On one hand it is easier to build trust with someone you already have a relationship with, but if we have a process where we only bring in people we know, we may get more homogeneous ideas rather than diverse ideas.
- ♦ The group agreed to practice being in the desired communication styles, trusting behaviors and looking for shared results and notice how it makes a difference in the work and agreements today.

**AGREEMENT RECAP:**

1. ELAC affirmed and clarified the **roles and relationships** between ELAC and DEL

- *Modify the State and Local Early Learning Coordination System Key Partners and Roles diagram (and other materials, such as the [ELAC Charter](#)) to include that Council includes diverse, statewide representation reflecting regional, racial and cultural diversity, as described in the ELAC statute ([RCW 43.215.090](#)).*
- *Affirm with all members the clarification is that ELAC provides advice, guidance and input to DEL, and there is opportunity for state and local action to participate in the design and implementation.*
- *Look at ways to update the statute to reflect current ELAC growth. Bette offered that the agency can propose changes to go through the legislative process. The group will think together as to the changes to propose, such as using language consistent with the state and local Key Partners and Roles diagram. Agency legislative and budget requests are due in September so the group agreed to think about the strategies sooner rather later.*

**RACIAL EQUITY FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Following the overview from the Workgroup Members on the four Components of the Plan (*Foundation, Outcomes, Tools and Implementation Plan*) Maggie asked the group to review the first component and form agreements.

**Component 1: Racial Equity Plan Foundation**

The first area of agreement was to adopt a proposed [modification to the Racial Equity Theory of Change \(RETOC\)](#) that had been presented as part of the gallery walk at the first meeting. During that discussion, the question of adopting RETOC as written was posed, and Bette explained that Legal Counsel had said that DEL could not use the term “prioritize”. For today’s discussion a proposed language change was offered to replace prioritize with “influence.” A suggestion was also made to add an “s” to the end of the word “perspective”. The group agreed with that modified statement adopted this theory of change as a baseline framework and foundation tool.

- The group agreed to cross-reference this document with the ELAC Workplan to look for ways to aligning with these specific intentions. For example, the RETOC points to the value and importance of having regional representatives at the table to bring forth the voice of their communities.
- Most of the items that are referenced in the policies, practices and cultural representation are not in place. The theory is that these are the changes that have to happen in order to achieve the end goal. In what ways are we willing to change in order to meet these principles?

The second area of agreement in the component called Foundation relates to the ideas generated at the last meeting on [Family Partnerships, Engagement and Voice](#), along with [Opportunities for Collaboration](#). ELAC members received handouts of these “working papers” and were asked to comment on the following recommendations from the Workgroup:

- ELAC incorporate ideas from the working paper on [Family Partnerships, Engagement and Voice](#) into the ELAC racial equity framework as successful ways to invite families to share their stories and give voice to issues that help us understand the impact of policies and system level decision-making.
- ELAC act as a forum for its members to coordinate and share lessons learned as described in [Opportunities for Collaboration](#).

The group agreed to the recommendations of the Workgroup and a next step will be to determine the specific avenues for sharing these ideas to inform our work.

The final area of agreement in the component called Foundation related to [Racial Equity Principles](#). At the gallery walk in the February session the group was introduced to examples from other states and leadership organizations in racial equity. Three sets of principles were pulled together in a single document that offered principles for Individuals, Institutions and Systems. Maggie asked for three table conversations, one on each category of principles, and asked that group to recommend some, all or none of the listed items. (See attachment for final wording.) She also asked each group to comment on “What difference would it make if you adopted these principles?”

- **Principles for Individuals.** The group agreed to four of the five principles and made some clarifying edits. Regarding what difference it will make if we adopt the principles, the following ideas were offered: *This is about who you are as a person and how you think and problem solve. It would be a part of the orientation of any new members to ELAC. As people are committing to become part of ELAC, they need to say whether this is part of their world view and to not become a member of ELAC if they cannot commit to these individual principles. Better communication and authentic communication. It would change conversations that we have with people at home. There may be unintended consequences of asking people to acknowledge structural racism (such as their discomfort that we will face).*
- **Principles for Institutions.** The group agreed to all four principles, with some word changes, and noted that within institutions (such as ELAC), these are principles around process. They also recommended a similar introductory statement to the set of principles as seen with Individuals and Systems. Regarding what difference it will make if we adopt the principles, the following ideas were offered: *We liked the idea of having a set for individuals, institutions and systems. If we as individuals adopt the first set of principles, then we are a part of creating the process steps (outlined in this set of principles) that then impacts us an institution. We noticed that just one of these principles for institutions can produce the intended outcome. They need to be within the context of a whole process of thinking and engagement.*
- **Principles for Systems.** The group really liked the statements here and offered one addition and one edit. The addition is for a new number 6 to be inserted that states: “Assure early childhood systems provide multiple pathways that promote equitable professional development opportunities and resources to support high quality workforces.” The edit refers to number 7 and the group agreed to replace it with the wording in the RETOC document as follows: “Race is eliminated as a predictor of progress and success for children birth through eight.” Regarding what difference it will make if we adopt the principles, the following ideas were offered: *It gives us some guiding principles as new members come on board as well as taking it to our regional coalitions to get insight into the principles under which ELAC will be operating. Once I commit to the individual principles then I know what I am committing to as the institution.*

#### **AGREEMENT RECAP:**

##### **Racial Equity Plan Foundation**

2. Adopted the [modified Racial Equity Theory of Change](#) (RE-TOC) document to serve as the **ELAC Racial Equity Framework** and shared view. The next task is to reflect the language change across all materials for ELAC’s purposes. Determine next steps for sharing this framework along with the other agreements of the session.
3. Agreed to incorporate and refer the ideas on [Family Partnerships, Engagement and Voice](#), along with [Opportunities for Collaboration](#) to other forums as appropriate. Determine the appropriate avenues for sharing these ideas to inform their work.
4. Adopted a set of [ELAC Principles](#). The next step is to put the principles into practice.

##### **Racial Equity Toolkit**

In this component of the Plan the group adopted a set of [ELAC Questions and Inquiries](#) (revised handout). Similar to the exercise on Principles, at the gallery walk in February the group was introduced to examples from other states and leadership organizations in racial equity. Six sets of questions (six rows on the document) were pulled together for review and discussion. Maggie asked each of the three table groups to select/recommend two rows of questions from the example list that will serve you the best in placing a racial equity lens on your decision-making.

- (Row #4) Oregon Equity Lens – We like it because it generates more dialogue. We liked the data component as well. It was missing the idea of stakeholder community engagement. Potentially stakeholder engagement elements could be drawn from the Applied Research Center questions (Row #1).
- (Row #6) NEP Racial Equity Lens – We also like this one as well because these questions also generate discussion although again lack the stakeholder community engagement piece.
- (Row #1) Applied Research Center and (Row #2) ELAA Racial Equity Tool had a lot of similarities. The ELAA Racial Equity Tool captures a lot of the key questions. In the Applied Research questions, we liked that they asked the question of who is missing.
- We liked group of questions that were offered in the Draft Implementation Plan (see below) because the questions talk about how it is impacting kids, talks about data, and talks about unintended consequences. They liked the elegance and simplicity of those questions. They also liked the (Row #6) NEP Racial Equity Lens.  
Draft Plan questions:
  - ~ Is it good for kids, families and providers?
  - ~ Do some kids and families benefit more than others?
  - ~ Which kids and families do not have access and why?
  - ~ What data and information is missing?
  - ~ Might there be any unintended consequences?

The group agreed that they would try using the questions (those posed on the Draft Plan listed above) as a starting place, and pull from the revised list when there were more complex or specific inquiries to undertake.

**AGREEMENT RECAP:**

**Racial Equity Toolkit**

5. Adopted a set of [ELAC Questions and Inquiries](#). A next step is to look at 2015 Workplan areas where the questions can inform the presentations and used as prompts for preparation and discussion.

**Racial Equity Implementation Plan**

The group had a lunchtime discussion of ways to operationalize the racial equity framework. A number of ideas were generated including:

- Need to revisit terms. ELAC has shorter terms than most advisory bodies. Succession planning.
- Need to revisit funding for coalitions and the capacity of coalitions to do what they need to do independently and for DEL and Thrive. In the system in WA, the early learning coalitions are of primary importance. They will be a key driver of the racial equity work.
- If there are statutory changes, a community voice is important to be added to the statute. Coalitions should be mandated for inclusion as voting members of ELAC.
- Orientation for new members and peer mentoring of new members. Need more representative voices at the table of ELAC. Use the principles as part of the new member orientation and incorporating them into all ELAC meetings. Talk to those who nominate people and to make sure the people they are nominating for membership will personify ELAC's racial equity principles.
- Carve out 20 minutes in every ELAC agenda to discuss equity. We want it incorporated into the entire meeting but carving out specific time assures that it WILL happen.
- Provide input per requests regarding the top leadership change in DEL. What will be the role of ELAC in influencing who the next leaders are? That is a Governor's call of course, but can ELAC have influence? Bette explained that they are hiring a national search organization to select the next DEL Director. The search group will begin their work in April and the process should take about 90 days. Can we also reach out to the Governor's representative to ELAC and ask for involvement by ELAC in the search process? Bette agreed to

mention the idea to Heather Moss, DEL's Deputy Director. ELAC members and Coalitions will share hopes and fears as to the new leadership.

**AGREEMENT RECAP**

**Racial Equity Implementation Plan**

6. Agreed to enhance **ELAC Operations** in these ways:

- *Look at ELAC statute enhancements and current/upcoming requirements to get all up to date.*
- *Look at ELAC member terms, succession planning, capacity of coalitions, location of meetings, orientation, impact of putting the shared principles into practice, expectation of members on time and engagement and getting voices from the field.*
- *Anyone nominating members to ELAC should have the mindset that members should represent the diversity of the state.*
- *Gained clarity on input for formal products versus input for implementation; supported by a data tracking system, including:*
  - *Accountability practices and trust building behaviors*
  - *Calling the question in a safe environment, more voices from the field via regional coalitions*
  - *Engage more voices from the field; take time to engage in the areas within your role/responsibilities*
  - *Establish coordination and common language*
  - *Being explicit about decisions made, and how ELAC made an impact*

7. Initiated a process plan for requested input regarding the top leadership change at DEL.

**ELAC Work Plan**

Time did not allow the group to discuss the workplan next steps at this meeting. Maggie suggested that the group look at the 2015 Workplan for the rest of the year using the racial equity lens that has been created today with the racial equity theory of change and the principles and the questions. Are there conversations that should be happening as part of this workplan to assure you are thinking from a racial equity perspective? The group suggested these ideas:

- We would like to see a logical link between the work plan of the coalitions, the ELAC and the Washington Early Learning Partnership (WELP). Create a "give and take" between the three groups, so everyone knows what is on everyone's work plan and there can be alignment across the work plans. Everyone leading discussions on work plan topics should incorporate ELAC's racial equity principles and questions.
- Find out the status on who will serve on DEL's Parent Advisory Group and clarify the equity of those selections. It's also about communications as well.
- The CCDF plan is now not due until March 2016, so the group suggested adding the topic to the August and October meetings agendas and to use the racial equity lens as part of that discussion.
- The changes to the ELAC legislation we discussed needs to be part of the workplan and must emphasize the racial equity lens in suggested changes.

**2015 Legislative Session**

- Bette Hyde and Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer provided a brief update on the status of the Early Start Bill.

**State Agency, Partner & Regional Coalition Updates and Feedback Loop**

- [State Agency/Partner Updates](#)
- [Regional Coalition Updates](#)
- [Feedback Loop](#)

**ELAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Bianca Bailey – Parent & Parent Advisory Group Member, Department of Early Learning  
Peter Finch – Assistant Superintendent, West Valley School District  
Dr. Bette Hyde – Director, Department of Early Learning  
Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer – Early Learning Policy Director, Children’s Alliance  
Caitlin Jensen – Project Manager, HSSCO, Department of Early Learning  
Lois Martin – Director, Community Day Center for Children, Inc.  
Nelly Mbajah – Early Childhood Development Program Manager, Department of Social & Health Services  
Anne Messerly – Program Associate, Washington Student Achievement Council  
Jennifer Ross – Parent  
Karen Walker – ESIT Program Administrator, Department of Early Learning  
*Dan Torres and Rivka Burstein-Stern for Sam Whiting* – President & Chief Executive Officer, Thrive by Five Washington

**ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

RaShelle Davis – Early Learning Policy Advisory, Governor’s Executive Policy Office  
Luba Bezborodnikova – Associate Superintendent for Early Learning, Puget Sound ESD  
Bob Butts – Assistant Superintendent for Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Senator Annette Cleveland – Washington State Senate  
Dee Hirsch – Program and Admissions Director, Discovery Montessori School  
Representative Larry Haler – Washington State House of Representatives  
Lindsay Lanham – Policy Associate, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges  
Jeromy Sullivan – Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe Chairman  
Rebecca Timmen – Project LAUNCH State/Early Childhood Coordination Systems Coordinator, DOH  
Lisa Webb – Family Child Care Provider  
Senator Mark Miloscia – Washington State Senate

**REGIONAL ADVISORS (RA) IN ATTENDANCE**

Susan Barbeau – First 5 FUNdamentals of Pierce County  
Enrica Hampton – SOAR, King County  
Karri Livingston – Investing in Children: Coalition Central  
Wilanne Ollila-Perry – Northwest  
Nancy Spurgeon – North Central  
Sandra Szambelan – Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast  
Dan Teuteberg – Visions for Early Learning, West Central

**REGIONAL ADVISORS (RA) ABSENT**

Yolanda Esquivel – Southeast  
Rhodes Lockwood – Olympic-Kitsap Peninsulas  
Jodi Wall – Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)