

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2015 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Capital Event Center (6005 Tye Dr SW, Tumwater)

Welcome & Introductions

- ELAC Co-chairs Lois Martin and Anne Messerly welcomed attendees and asked for introductions.
- [Racial equity questions](#) were available with some changed language to reflect a preference for the term early learning educator instead of provider.
- The [October 6, 2015 meeting minutes](#) were approved with the addition of Maria Nardella as ELAC member in attendance.
- Co-chairs requested volunteer mentors for new ELAC members. Caitlin Jensen, and Nancy Spurgeon volunteered to serve as mentors.

Q&A on State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

The Council reviewed the updates provided by [State Agencies/Partners](#) and the [Regional Coalitions](#).

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Early Learning (DEL) website will be overhauled soon to be more user-friendly. The legal language around licensing on the DEL website will not be translated because of the difference in meaning for legal language. Other website content will be translatable using online tools. • Thank you to coalitions and partner organizations for successful standards alignment meetings. These meetings could be a model for working together in the future. There will be an online opportunity beginning in mid-December to comment for people who couldn't attend the meetings. • Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is partnering with the State of Oregon on the reading summits. Preschool teachers may be interested in this summit. • Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) expansion makes lack of enough facilities an urgent issue. OSPI is doing an analysis of ECEAP early learning facilities. They are trying to identify organizations who are thinking about building facilities that will serve ECEAP kids down the road to get them involved early in the process. They are also looking for an entity to conduct the analysis. • There was discussion around developmental screenings that touched on training provided to physicians and pediatricians, as well as how to reach children who may not be getting into the doctors' office for well child visits. There is hope for improvement because new Medicaid reimbursement for screenings may help physicians formalize the practice and because the conversation on developmental screening is more common in the medical community.
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Early Start Act (ESA)

Lois Martin, Nancy Spurgeon and members of the Early Achievers Review Subcommittee of ELAC provided an update on the work of the committee, what has worked well and improvements for next year. Ross Hunter, DEL's director provided an update on the Annual Progress Report. Rachael Brown-Kendall, DEL's Quality Rating Improvement System Administrator provided a presentation on the accreditation approval model.

- [ESA Annual Report Overview Presentation](#)
- [ESA November Update](#)
- [Early Achievers Accreditation Approval Model Proposal Presentation](#)
- [Accreditation and QRIS in Other States](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Achievers Review Subcommittee (EARS) has focused primarily on developing the first Annual Progress Report to the Legislature. The report describes what is going well in the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) and why it is likely to be successful. It also describes what systems are in place and what we need going forward. This process has resulted in good input from members despite the short timeline. The committee is now working on developing their charter. • There was a discussion about how Pay for Success is an opportunity for providers to meaningfully ask for
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	<p>what they actually need to be successful and determine what it really costs to deliver the service we need to get the best outcomes for children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Early Achievers (EA), all ECEAP providers are on target to be assessed on time. Some will be rated at less than level 4 and will have time to make corrections. DEL is working on focused coaching and professional development strategies. The goal is to have all providers thinking about how we achieve quality, and what does it mean to deliver quality early learning experiences. • Concerns about reliability of ratings in Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) and Early Achievers were expressed. • There was discussion of the goal Ross Hunter presented to have ninety percent of children ready for kindergarten. Ninety percent is an aspirational goal that will take updating in the organization, investment from the legislature, and targeted expansion. The focus is on the kids who make too much to qualify for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) but too little to afford over \$15,000 per year in childcare costs. This involves looking at segmentation, making goals for each of these groups of kids. The challenge we still have are how to target the kids who are not in our programs. One way to target is to look at where kids are in each region, and determine what we need to do to get ninety percent in individual regions. • Workforce development plays a major role in reaching the ninety percent goal. This involves coaching, retention and reimbursement. • Coordination of data sharing across agencies is needed. This can be achieved with shared executive sponsorship on efforts. • If WaKIDS data shows that accreditation ratings predict outcomes for kids then DEL will move forward with the development of an application for a national accreditation pathway through EA standards. An accreditation work group will start in January. By July 1, 2016, DEL will roll out the pathways for each of the accreditation bodies participating in the pilot and a process to recognize other accreditations. The process will help determine what else we should continue to measure and what standards we don't need to measure because they don't predict outcomes. • Small Group Discussions to address Questions to Consider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What ideas or concerns would you like to share about the list of additional documentation? 2. What ideas or concerns would you like to share about the approval models used by other states? 3. What other input would you like to share about the integration of national accreditation into Early Achievers?
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Lunch & Feedback Loop

ELAC reviewed the [Feedback Loop](#), one of the information sharing tools of the [Two-Way Communication Protocol](#)

- [Early Achievers Review Subcommittee Membership List](#)
- [Birth-Three Subcommittee Membership List](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer, Susan Barbeau, Yolanda Esquivel, and Lois Martin shared their experience meeting with Governor Inslee. They reported that it was a high level dialogue. He approached them to learn how he should talk about how Washington is doing as a state on early learning. The main message was that while we have done a good job putting a foundation in place for early learning quality, access is still a challenge. Governor Inslee was presented with a Champion for Children award from the Children's Alliance.
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2013 Work Force Report

Angela Abrams, DEL's Professional Development Administrator, presented an [update](#) and led a discussion on the [Work Force Report](#) and the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT).

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was discussion about alignment of clock hours, STARS hours, and Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP). In smaller districts, it is a lot of work, in bigger districts it becomes a union issue. • There was discussion on some of the data points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data is missing on family home providers because their data doesn't get collected if they are not providing benefits to another employee. ○ The compensation data sample lists the median amount, but we want to know about the outliers. It is also important when considering location of compensation to think about the cost of living, disparity of the range of pay, and the comparison with K12 compensation. ○ On MERIT you indicate your primary language, so bilingual is not listed. Trainers list the languages they are comfortable training in. • We are thinking of new and innovative ways to support adult education. This involves a focus on the delivery of training, and less on the early learning content. Adult learners learn best in the context of their culture, so there is a need to provide culturally relevant early learning examples. • We've learned that there aren't very many individual early learning training professionals—most are organizations doing the trainings. We are brainstorming, how do we create the capacity? Generally, it is an increase in work load rather than a dedicated trainer. • We are working on ways to connect data on the workforce with ratings data. What is the demand and what is the supply? Looking at ECEAP expansion, how do we support with both current supports and also through new strategies. There are few brand new students coming in wanting to go into early childhood education. How can we design a scholarship program that incentivizes students to pursue early learning? There is not currently a mechanism for loan forgiveness in early learning. That is one avenue to pursue. • We do notice a direct correlation when requirements increase; people are willing to do it. We saw it when head start required bachelors, and now there is an increase of people getting Early Childhood Education (ECE) credits. • Messaging needs to be that there is a crisis in finding staff for early learning. This is an issue with Early Achievers and ECEAP ratings — the crisis is going to be evident. • There was discussion on developing a best practices training model for teaching math and other content areas, perhaps adopting a specific curriculum, philosophy or strategies. Most people in higher education community college don't have math skills, so you need to teach the educators the concepts to teach the children.
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2016 ELAC Work Plan

Deanna Stewart, DEL's State/Local Coordination Program Manager led a discussion on the [draft 2016 ELAC Work Plan](#).

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was concern and wonder about how Director Hunter's ninety percent target would work into this plan. • It will be helpful to see how we did with the 2015 plan; what topics were followed, what was accomplished, what was changed and what was removed? • Small Group Discussion-2016 Work Plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should the Work Plan include Family Engagement, including supports for family, friend and neighbor (FFN) caregivers? 2. If yes, what are your ideas for how to include family engagement? • The Council suggested keeping the Family Partnerships and Engagement topic in the right column, but add a bullet underneath: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Engage in a data seeking process to better understand FFN." • By the end of the year there should be more intentional focus on FFN care in the work plan. The request to have the Parent Advisory Group attend a meeting in 2016 would be of interest as well. • Early Math is another priority that could be added in <i>Guidance Needed</i> area. • Deanna will update and send the work plan for ELAC to vote to approve online.
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Childcare Development Fund (CCDF)

Matt Judge, DEL's Subsidy Policy Supervisor provided a [presentation](#) on the draft CCDF Plan and process for gathering public comment.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public hearings will be held around the state via the K-20 system toward the end of January to gather comments on the final draft of the plan. Reauthorization rewrites the law for how the funds are to be used moving forward. States rewrite their plans is rewritten every three years under new reauthorization. Since the plan is a living document, we can submit multiple changes throughout the three years. For example, the last plan had approximately 30 different versions. This particular final version will be submitted in March 2016 after the public input has been considered.
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Meeting Follow-up, Closing Remarks & Adjourn

Follow-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The October meeting minutes will be corrected and emailed to the Council as well as posted online. Volunteers willing to mentor new members can email ELAC or Deanna. Volunteers and nominees for the accreditation work group can be sent to Rachael or Deanna by December 31. The ELAC 2016 Work Plan will be updated and emailed for voting online. Next meeting February 2nd over the K-20 network.
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ELAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Bob Butts – Assistant Superintendent for Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- RaShelle Davis – Early Learning Policy Advisory, Governor’s Executive Policy Office
- Peter Finch – Assistant Superintendent, West Valley School District
- Kathy Goebel – Policy Associate, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
- Dee Hirsch – Program and Admissions Director, Discovery Montessori School
- 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.
- Anne Messerly – Program Associate, Washington Student Achievement Council
- Maria Nardella – Manager, Healthy Starts & Transitions, Department of Health
- Karla Weeks – Family Home Provider
- Dan Torres *on behalf of* Sam Whiting – President & Chief Executive Officer, Thrive Washington

REGIONAL ADVISORS (RA) IN ATTENDANCE

- Susan Barbeau – First 5 FUNDamentals of Pierce County
- Yolanda Esquivel – Southeast
- Enrica Hampton – SOAR, King County
- Nancy Spurgeon – North Central
- Sandra Szambelan – Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast
- Dan Teuteberg – Visions for Early Learning, West Central
- Jodi Wall – Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)

ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT

- Bianca Bailey – Parent & Department of Early Learning Parent Advisory Group Member
- Senator Annette Cleveland – Washington State Senate
- Representative Tom Dent – Washington State House of Representatives
- Senator Mark Miloscia – Washington State Senate
- Jennifer Ross – Parent
- Representative Tana Senn – Washington State House of Representatives

REGIONAL ADVISORS (RA) ABSENT

- Amy Kocher – Investing in Children: Coalition Central
- Rhodes Lockwood – Olympic-Kitsap Peninsulas
- Wilanne Ollila-Perry – Northwest