



Bio Sheet



Peter Dallas Finch, Ed. D.

ELAC Representation: Local Lead Agency

Occupation: Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching, West Valley, Yakima

City/Region: Yakima, WA

Getting to know YOU:

What drew you to early learning?

I have been drawn to early learning because it is an important component of a high-quality education for the students of Washington State. Students are our future and if we want to secure a strong future, we must invest in early learning and ensure that students enter school "Kindergarten Ready."

How do you hope to influence a stronger early learning system for Washington?

I hope to bring the perspective of someone who reduces barriers to student success and increases collaboration among the various stakeholders who support education. We need to increase our commitment to fund early learning – this will help to eliminate opportunity gaps for our most vulnerable citizens.

What was your first job?

My first job was helping to plant cherry trees in my grandfather's orchard. My grandfather was a teacher so he had a small cherry orchard to supplement his income in the summer. During the summer, all of the grandkids would travel to the Yakima Valley for the harvest. I am the first born of a first born – the oldest of 15 grandkids. We would all sleep on the basement floor with sleeping bags and help with the cherry orchard every summer. It was hard work but also, at times, one big slumber party!

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a teacher. My parents were teachers. My grandfather was a teacher. My great-grandfather was a teacher. I have great memories helping my younger sisters learn to read during summer vacations.

What is your favorite childhood memory?

A favorite childhood memory is reading to my sisters in the car during summer vacations while we traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest with our parents, enjoying all of the great things that our region has to offer – the beach, the rainforest, the countryside, and the city!