

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)

Racial Equity Implementation Plan & Next Steps

The Early Learning Advisory Council made a commitment to develop and implement a lens that would lead to racially equitable programs, policies and practices in Washington’s early learning system. In 2015, ELAC adopted a modified version of the [Racial Equity Theory of Change \(RE-TOC\)](#) to serve as ELAC’s racial equity framework and shared view, a set of [principles](#) and a set of [questions](#) to guide actions and discussions. These commitments were outlined in [ELAC’s Racial Equity Implementation Plan](#). This document describes the work completed on the implementation plan to date and next steps for ELAC and the Department of Early Learning (DEL).

A. ELAC ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES		
Create an implementation plan that outlines specific roles and actions for ELAC members. Build on our current strengths and go deeper with specific perspectives from ELAC and opportunities for growth and learning. Success is measured by a change in behavior.		
ACTIONS & DECISIONS	WORK COMPLETED	NEXT STEPS
1. ELAC affirmed and clarified the roles and relationships between ELAC and DEL.	Updated 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).	a. Convene an ongoing ELAC Racial Equity Work Group. b. ELAC Racial Equity work group develop and insert a definition of what we mean by “racial equity lens,” so there is a consistent interpretation of what this means throughout the ELAC charter and guiding documents.
2. Affirmed and clarified that ELAC’s role is to provide advice, guidance and input to DEL, and there is opportunity for state and local action to participate in the design and implementation of early learning programs and policies.	Updated the ELAC Charter and guiding documents	a. Continue to explore ways to frame information in a way that is easy to understand for ELAC members and Regional Advisers to convey to their constituencies and communities and for people to respond. b. Assure that requests match the capacity of the group to respond by following the agreements made in the Two-Way Communication protocol.

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3. Gained clarity on input for formal products versus input for implementation; supported by a data tracking system.	Recommended a tool to track requests for input on formal products and implementation, decisions made and how decisions were informed by input. DEL will work with ELAC and the Racial Equity work group to develop the State/Local Coordination Annual Reflection.	a. Develop a State/Local Coordination Annual Reflection due annually in June. Include description of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Areas/topics where DEL informed, consulted, and collaborated with families, professionals and communities; ii. Guidance, input and questions raised; iii. What DEL did or did not do differently as a result, and why; iv. Improvements to ELAC operations; and v. Report on implementing racial equity framework. Include data and narrative on how the racial equity lens is used and outcomes.
4. Considered updating the ELAC statute to reflect current growth.		a. Determine next steps for proposed changes to the ELAC Statute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Include language consistent with the state and local Key Partners and Roles diagram ii. Need to revisit terms. ELAC has shorter terms than most advisory bodies. Succession planning. iii. 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. iv. If there are statutory changes, community voice is important to be added to the statute. Coalitions should be mandated for inclusion as voting members of ELAC.

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B. RACIAL EQUITY FOUNDATION Create a foundation (<i>framework</i>), so that everyone understands what it means and looks like to lead for equity. Identify and communicate potential outcomes from implementing a racial equity framework for ELAC.		
ACTIONS & DECISIONS	WORK COMPLETED	NEXT STEPS
5. Adopted the modified Racial Equity Theory of Change (RE-TOC) Outcome Map document to serve as the ELAC Racial Equity Framework and shared view.	Cross-referenced the ELAC Racial Equity Framework with the ELAC 2015 Work Plan to identify ways to align the plan with the specific intentions. ELAC suggested DEL take the following actions for Early Achievers and Early Start Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct a survey to find out what types of successes and barriers families, early learning professionals and communities are experiencing in each region. Measure responsiveness to community needs using SMART goals for accountability. ○ Work with partners to find out how to support and promote the great work that is already happening and assist with developing example program policies and procedures. ○ Host discussions in each region to increase awareness on what cultural and linguistic relevance means and the vision moving forward. 	a. Cross reference Racial Equity Framework/Theory of Change with future ELAC Work Plans to inform actions and advice.

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6. Agreed to incorporate and refer the ideas on Family Partnerships, Engagement and Voice, along with Opportunities for Collaboration to other forums as appropriate.		a. Determine the appropriate avenues for sharing these ideas to inform the work.
7. Adopted a set of Racial Equity Principles that serve as a foundation for our data driven actions. These principles are the rules that guide ELAC’s conduct to achieve the goal of race being eliminated as a predictor of progress and success. They serve as a place for members to return to when struggling with policy making issues that impact racial equity in early learning.	The Principles are embedded in ELAC’s Charter and document and will be highlighted as part of orientation for new ELAC members and Regional Advisors.	a. Continue to put the principles into practice.
8. ELAC meetings can be repository that furthers the work of racial equity	Identified additional conversations that should happen to assure ELAC is thinking with a racial equity	a. Consider scheduling an annual retreat or specific dates to have training, reflection or leadership development opportunities around racial equity. For example, a train the trainer at an ELAC meeting to

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through the sharing of experiences, align/connect conversations at both the state and local level, as well as planning/implementing strategies.	perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support participants to facilitate conversations about race. b. Share racial equity tools, trainings and opportunities for conversation outside of ELAC. c. Request that DEL create a racial equity STARS training and module for early learning professionals. d. Ask Regional Advisors to include updates from coalitions on what they're doing to implement a racial equity lens and best practices. e. Request that DEL work with tribal communities and the coalitions that serve tribal communities to learn about the history of tribes and establish long term, meaningful relationships.

C. RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKIT		
Develop a toolkit to move the RE-TOC from philosophy to practice. The toolkit is a part of the structure and practice of ELAC.		
ACTIONS & DECISIONS	WORK COMPLETED	NEXT STEPS
9. Adopted a set of ELAC Questions and Inquiries to be considered when looking at any policy, practice, procedure, funding opportunity, etc. The questions are used to guide the work of ELAC and ensure that a racial equity lens is used at all times.	<p>Identified areas in the 2015 Work Plan where the questions can inform presentations and be used as prompts for guidance to presenters and the meeting discussions.</p> <p>Commissioned the Early Achievers Review Subcommittee to serve as an example of how ELAC can conduct in-depth examinations of existing systems and practices, provide feedback about what aspects of the current system are perpetuating disproportions, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Share ELAC Racial Equity questions with discussion facilitators prior to meetings to help guide and frame conversations and presentations. Request that pre-work includes available data and examples disaggregated by race, ethnicity and languages spoken. b. Keep the questions in the forefront for all ELAC members, so if questions are not being addressed in discussions, participants can ask. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Print and laminate copies of questions for each table to encourage everyone to think about and be responsible for asking the questions. ii. Print wallet-size copies of questions to distribute. iii. Add Essential Questions to the top of ELAC agendas. c. Gather information on the Early Achievers Review Subcommittee process to inform how other ELAC subcommittees can review other

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	advise on how to make modifications to eliminate inequities.	early learning systems issues.
10. Make data part of the toolkit that ELAC and partners use to begin their racial equity work. Develop common understanding of and distribute data (paired with stories) regarding racial inequity, and why it matters.	ELAC suggested that when DEL collects data, include plans to encourage families and providers to share their racial and ethnic backgrounds. Include messaging on why providing this information is important and beneficial.	a. Cross reference future Work Plans to identify specific data needs or opportunities. b. Develop a data dashboard, so ELAC can monitor racial equity outcomes and indicators, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. <u>Indicators for Children</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Participation in home visiting, preschool, quality child care, family support programs by race and ethnicity ii. Percentage of children ages 10 month-5 years who during the past 12 months were screened for developmental, behavioral and social delays by race and ethnicity II. <u>Indicators for early learning professionals</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Number of early learning professionals that take trainings on cultural and linguistic responsive services and instruction ii. Number of early learning professionals that reflect the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of children iii. Cultural and linguistic responsiveness are included as hallmarks of quality III. <u>Indicators for Community Voice</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Families, professionals and community leaders of color provide insight and expertise and influence decision-making processes

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D. RACIAL EQUITY IMPLEMENTATION		
Focus on areas and partnerships where ELAC has influence to infuse a racial equity lens. Build from assets to further strengthen communities.		
ACTIONS & DECISIONS	WORK COMPLETED	NEXT STEPS
<p>11. Agreed to enhance ELAC Operations in these ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look at ELAC member terms - Succession planning - Capacity of coalitions - Meeting locations - Orientation - Impact of putting the shared principles into practice - Expectation of members on time and engagement and getting voices from the field - People who nominate members to ELAC to have mindset that members represent the diversity of the state 	<p>Recommendations on recruitment, orientation and peer mentoring for new members incorporated to increase representative voices in ELAC.</p> <p>ELAC Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Added this question to ELAC Member recruitment announcements: What is your perspective on or approach to advancing racial equity and closing the opportunity gap? ○ Emphasized in announcement that non-government seats are eligible for compensation and travel reimbursement ○ Include in recruitment announcement that translation and interpretation is available. 	<p>ELAC Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Create a list of organizations and individuals to reach out to when recruiting for each seat. Ask ELAC and RA’s to provide suggestions. <p>ELAC Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. Hold a webinar for basic information and what to expect, then incorporate relationship-building opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Host a dinner or breakfast meeting prior to their first ELAC meeting. b. Have an ELAC member and Regional Advisor peer mentors participate in orientation and help with onboarding. C. Include an intentional focus on racial equity as part of ELAC member and Regional Advisor orientation. Introduce ELAC’s racial equity framework and implementation plan. D. ELAC Members and Regional Advisors sign a commitment to uphold ELAC charter and racial equity principles at the beginning of each new term. <p>Community Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E. ELAC can incorporate voices from the community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inviting community organizations that work with children and families of color to do a Lunch & Learn and share their story. b. Show the <i>Danger of a Single Story</i> TED talk by Chimamanda Ngozi to demonstrate how critical it is to tell and listen to stories about the experiences of children and families. c. Put a structure in place for ELAC members and RA’s who provide direct services to gather and share stories. Create short videos about how families are impacted. d. Introduce the Community Café model during an ELAC meeting.