

## **Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting**

January 28, 2013 . 9:00 to 3:00 . Lacey Community Center

# **M i n u t e s**

### **ELAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Bianca Bailey – Parent

Jody Becker-Green – Chief Knowledge Officer, Department of Social & Health Services

Don Bennett – Executive Director, Washington Student Achievement Council

Marty Brown – Executive Director, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

Bob Butts – Assistant Superintendent for Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Leslie Dozono – Early Learning Policy Director, Children’s Alliance

Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH – State Health Officer, Department of Health

Dee Hirsch – Program and Admissions Director, Discovery Montessori School

Dr. Bette Hyde – Director, Department of Early Learning

Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer – Project Manager, HSSCO, Department of Early Learning

Tafra Jones – Parent & Parent Advisory Group Member, Department of Early Learning

Cynthia Juarez – Early Learning Director, ESD 105

Sandy Nelson – Assistant Superintendent, Early Learning, ESD 113

Mary Perkins – Early Childhood Consultant

Sue Winn – Family Child Care Provider

### **ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

Nina Auerbach – Chief Executive Officer & President, Thrive by Five Washington

Representative Roger Goodman – Washington State House of Representatives

Representative Larry Haler – Washington State House of Representatives

Senator Nick Harper – Washington State Senate

Senator Curtis King – Washington State Senate

Lois Martin – Director, Community Day Center for Children, Inc.

Jeromy Sullivan – Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe Chairman

VACANT – Governor’s Executive Policy Office

### **Opening Remarks from the Department of Early Learning (“DEL”) Director**

- DEL Director Bette Hyde welcomed everyone and shared exciting news happening in DEL.
- Bette mentioned the two ELAC members featured in the DEL newsletters for [October](#), Tafra Jones, and [November](#), Leslie Dozono.
- She announced that Early Achievers met – and exceeded – the targets for 2012! There are 910 registered facilities, including 342 centers and 428 family homes, and 140 Head Start/ECEAP

facilities in the pilot. On January 2<sup>nd</sup> Early Achievers expanded to seven more counties: Grays Harbor, Mason, Thurston, Lewis, Pacific, Benton and Franklin. She thanked the DEL team and the excellent work by DEL's partners at Child Care Aware of Washington who have helped start Early Achievers implementation off with a bang.

- Bette also talked about the Child Care Subsidy Program evaluation. The eligibility study was completed and delivered to the Legislature in November. The contractors completing the study were asked to be very frank and provide ideas about best practices in subsidy systems. The [Child Care Subsidy eligibility study](#) and the [DEL/DSHS action plan](#) in response to the study recommendations can be accessed on [DEL's website](#). The action plan includes several priorities, including to:
  - Reevaluate schedule reporting for families and
  - Simplify change reporting and reapplication processes for families, authorization of hours and the application
- Two new ELAC members were introduced: Marty Brown, Executive Director of the [State Board of Community and Technical Colleges \(SBCTC\)](#) and Dee Hirsch representing [Washington Federation of Independent Schools \(WFIS\)](#). Marty brings a wealth of advisory and leadership experience as the former director of the Office of Financial Management as well as his service as legislative director for former Governors Gregoire and Locke. Dee has served as School Director of Discovery Montessori since 1983 and is currently the President of the Pacific Northwest Montessori Association.

#### **Department of Early Learning Updates**

- Legislative

Amy Blondin, DEL Government and Community Relations Manager, provided an update on the current legislative session.

  - We are two weeks into the legislative session, and DEL has one agency request bill.
    - Public Records bill (HB 1203/SB 5198) – Seeking more coverage for children, ability to exempt all children's information from disclosure.
  - [Birth to Three Recommendations](#) were submitted to the legislature on November 30, 2012. They include a total of four recommendations including:
    - Increase the state general fund for Home Visiting.
    - Increase funds for Infant/Toddler Childcare consultation.
    - Create an Infant Toddler funding stream.
    - Create a Birth to Three subcommittee of ELAC.
  - There is a lot of talk about making it a priority to increase funding for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).
  - Currently watching a number of child related bills.
  - Session updates on early learning are available on the [DEL website](#).
- Race to the Top-Early Achievers Family Engagement

Juliet Morrison, DEL Assistant Director of Quality Practice and Professional Growth Division, and Katy Warren, Deputy Director of Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA)/Washington State Training Consortium discussed updates on Race to the Top progress and Early Achievers family engagement strategies.

  - Strengthening Families is now embedded in the Early Achievers framework, including a free training on how to promote resiliency and protective factors.
  - Currently there are three Early Achievers videos ready to be viewed:
    - [Parents](#)
    - [Child Care Providers/ Early Learning Professionals](#)
    - [Stakeholders](#)

- Early Achievers has teamed with Libraries and the Foundation for Early Learning to expand outreach to parents and teachers by awarding 25 mini grants to a number of libraries. The goal of the mini grants is to increase access and use of the Early Learning Guidelines and to promote Love.Talk.Play.
- Montessori accreditation is now included in the [Washington State Career Lattice](#).
- Early Achievers is working with WSA to develop Parent Navigators. Past Parent Ambassadors will reach out to parents about what to look for in quality child care and how to navigate the early learning system. . Questions that are being asked include:
  - How do you get parents to talk to quality?
  - What resources are currently available to parents?
  - How do we encourage parents who are currently involved to reach out to other parents?

*Discussion:* **Bianca Bailey** asked how long the Parent Navigator partnership is expected to last. **Juliet** stated that the hope is that all of this work is catalytic. **Dee Hirsch** mentioned that it seems like the validation of credentials is taking the longest, is that still correct? **Juliet** agreed and mentioned that verifying credentials is just part of the process and is in place for everyone.

### Updates from other State Agencies/Partners

- Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)  
Jody Becker-Green, DSHS Chief Knowledge Officer for Planning, Performance, and Accountability, and Ronnie-Sue Johnson, DSHS Administrator for the Statewide Customer Service Contact Center, provided an update for DSHS.
  - DSHS’s biggest news is the newly appointed Secretary, Kevin W. Quigley.
  - Working Connections Child Care phone system improvements:
    - In the last 10 days, they haven’t had a single call where the caller hasn’t been able to get through.
    - The average wait time is 10-30 minutes, which is a significant improvement from the 2 hour wait time.
    - Recognizing that this is a slow time of year, they are still trying to prepare for higher peak times.
  - DSHS has piloted a new process for seasonal child care. Instead of qualifying by phone, they tested having parents come in and apply in person. The pilot seemed to work well, which prompted the idea of testing it out for non-seasonal child care as well.

*Discussion:* **Sandy Nelson** asked if there was data available to track paperwork submitted and then resubmitted due to it being lost. **Ronnie-Sue** admitted that this may happen, but that information is difficult to track if there is no data showing that paperwork was received. **Bianca** asked if it is possible to set up a client account accessible through [waconnection.org](#) where clients can log in and see their benefit information, etc. **Ronnie-Sue** stated yes, there is an accessible account for clients but only parts of their benefit information available. This is something that is still being worked on. **Leslie Dozono** asked for more information about the coordination that is going to happen between DSHS/DEL. **Ronnie-Sue** said she would be able to speak to that the next time she attends.

- Office of Superintendent to Public Instruction (OSPI)  
Bob Butts, Assistant Superintendent for Early Learning, provided an update for OSPI.
  - A new Ready & Successful group formed to look at systems and systems change. So far they have met 3 times with their fourth scheduled tomorrow with the topic of “Making Connections.”

- Provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) with graphs from the full-day kindergarten data system.
- The next Starting Strong conference dates are August 6 & 7, 2013.

*Discussion:* **Sue Winn** mentioned that middle income kids tend to suffer typically because parents are working two jobs just to pay for full day kindergarten, which results in the child being in childcare more than with their parents. **Bianca** asked if there would be a parent representative in this newly formed group. **Bob** said yes, there is currently a parent representative.

*Public Comments:* **Jackie Haight** asked if the full-day kindergarten data is based on individuals. **Bob** stated that yes, they are per child numbers. **Bob Hamilton** commented that instead of funding by school, maybe it would be beneficial to offer a voucher type system for low income students, to reach families that live in wealthier school districts.

- Department of Health (DOH)

Maxine Hayes, State Health Officer, provided an update for DOH.

- It's not too late to get your flu shot! Governor Inslee just received his.
- There was a Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) partnership meeting in December. Kelli Bohanon gave a stellar presentation! UDS is an early brain and child development tool. Child development is the number 1 priority for the American Academy of Pediatrics. There is a national spotlight on us since we were 1 of 20 states chosen to be the poster child of early development.
- During the last ELAC meeting, we were in the middle of a whooping cough epidemic. There are new recommendations that with **each** pregnancy, mothers should receive a Tdap vaccination, so the baby is protected.

- Thrive by Five Washington (TB5)

Molly Boyajian, Director of Policy and Community Partnerships, provided an update for TB5.

- TB5 has a new Home Visiting Manager, Rob Colombini.
- TB5 also has a new Community Partnerships Manager, Dan Torres.
- Advancing Racial Equity – Theory of Change (ARE-TOC)
  - TB5 is currently thinking about how to start applying the ARE-TOC and be intentional internally as well. The first work group meeting is scheduled for February 14 and the ARE-TOC larger group will be held in March.

## WaKIDS Report

- Bob Butts, OSPI Assistant Superintendent, and Kathe Taylor, OSPI Director of Early Learning Assessment, gave a [presentation](#) on WaKIDS.
  - Multiple handouts were provided:
    - [2012 Data Press Release](#)
    - [WaKIDS Report to the Legislature](#)
    - [Characteristics of Children Entering Kindergarten](#)

*Discussion:* **Maxine Hayes** commented that the question really needs to be changed from “What is wrong with this child?” to “What happened to this child?” We need to ask ourselves, “How can we help this child and repair what happened to him/her?” **Leslie** noted that the family connection piece is so important. She also asked how much funding will be asked for in the future. **Bob** stated that we currently have \$2.4 million and about 1,000 teachers. We are shooting for \$400-600 per teacher, but we are unsure how many total teachers we will have next year. **Sue** asked if it was known yet as to how many schools would participate next year.

**Bob** said at this time there are about 600-800 currently participating, and with the request from Governor Gregoire to bump the number up by 48% we would have approximately 1,500. **Bette** asked the council if they had any recommendations on how to get that third partnership involvement. **Sue** commented that she hopes this doesn't all become about data, there is much more to the piece than just that. **Molly Boyajian** suggested that connections happen building-to-building, teacher-to-teacher but this would need to be sustainable, possibly through the districts on their own. **Maxine** mentioned that she had hoped the work of Frontiers of Innovation would be parallel with all of this. **Bob Hamilton** asked what we do with this information. WaKIDS is meant to be a catalyst for conversation between the important adults in the child's life. **Sandy** commented that the first steps have been taken in regard to kindergarten readiness and expectations. She also added that her ESD has many sizes of programs. In her larger programs the expectations of building-to-building, teacher-to-teacher conversations would be difficult but in her smaller programs the conversations are rich. We need to figure out a structure that can work with all examples. **Leslie** stated that the council needs to be cognitive of the current Race to the Top funding stream and think about sustainability once those funds are gone.

### Learning from DEL's Infant/Toddler Regions

- Nancy Vernon, DEL State/Local Coordination Administrator, Sandra Szambelan, ESD 101 Director of the Center for Early Childhood Services, and Connie Dougherty, Child Care Action Council Professional Development Administrator, provided information on what is happening within the Infant/Toddler (I/T) regions.
  - A [presentation](#) was given along with three handouts:
    - [2013 Infant/Toddler Child Care Consultation Legislative Briefing](#)
    - [Northeast Region Pamphlet](#)
  - Sandra Szambelan shared what's happening with the Northeast I/T region:
    - Their region covers 7 counties and currently has 9 consultants providing over 120 hours of service. At the end of year 1, they reached 35 providers.
    - Consultations begin with an initial observation, and then the consultant and provider develop an action plan with timelines on goals. Participation is on a voluntary basis and relies heavily on community partners for referrals and recruitment.
    - Their goal for year 2 is to continue with year 1 providers and be more intentional in supporting providers currently participating in Early Achievers and those who hope to participate.
    - A few challenges include meeting the needs of family home providers and the need for basic fundamental training for providers. Additional funding would be helpful to recruit licensed mental health specialists
  - Connie Dougherty shared what's happening with the Western Central I/T region:
    - The region is currently in the middle of year 2 and working with 33 teachers at 19 sites. 16 are Tribal, 3 are family home providers and the rest are centers.
    - They invited all providers to apply and chose centers based on their I/T steering committee's parameters of the number of low income families served, location and how much improvement was needed.
    - Their region has learned that the sites they worked with feel better prepared to participate in Early Achievers. They have started to incorporate more social emotional training.
    - Western Central's biggest challenge has been teacher turnover and balancing classroom demands. Teachers are already overwhelmed with day to day schedules. More consultation hours are the biggest need. Some teachers need a

lot of support and mentoring. Consultants also work with directors to bring them on board with goals.

*Discussion:* **Maxine** asked if there were any physicians currently on the I/T steering committees. **Sandra** stated not in the Northeast region, but the Spokane health district is involved. **Maxine** offered that the DOH assist with connecting physicians with the steering committees. **Cynthia Juarez** inquired about the assessments being used in the regions, and whether they use ITERS. **Nancy** mentioned that ITERS is indeed high on the list of tools being used, but it is not the only tool. **Cynthia** asked Sandra to expand on what type of training providers need. **Sandra** clarified that they primarily need trainings on health and safety and promoting teacher/child interactions.

#### **During Lunch – Health & Physical Activity Priority Presentation**

- Adrienne Dorf, Public Health Seattle and King County Nutrition Consultant, provided a “Lunch with ELAC” presentation on [Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Early Learning Environments](#).
  - Multiple handouts were provided:
    - [Child Care Costs](#)
    - [University of Washington Child Care Brief #2](#)
    - [University of Washington Child Care Brief #3](#)
    - [2009 Washington State Regulations for Child Care Ranking](#)
    - [Delaware Child Care Policy Statement](#)
    - [Child Care Obesity Overview](#) and [Literature Review References](#)

*Comments:* **Amy Blondin** shared that DEL is revising the STARS child care basics training course to include a Nutrition and Fitness module that addresses developmental needs of children for physical activity, aerobic exercise and sleep. In addition, Early Achievers includes a Strengthening Families Self-Assessment that child care providers can complete to earn points for rating. One strategy in that self-assessment is called “Enable, Empower and Enhance Parent Skills in Health Decisions.

#### **State/Local Coordination Project – Next Steps**

- John Howell, Cedar River Group, and Bea Kelleigh, Dovetailing, presented on the next steps for the [State/Local Coordination Project](#).
  - Multiple handouts were provided:
    - [Preliminary Recommendations Summary](#)
    - [Outreach 2 Survey Briefing](#)
    - [Cultural Competence Review](#)
    - [DRAFT ARE–RETOC Outcome Map](#)

*Discussion:* **Maxine** commented that she is very interested in the request for representation of more coalitions in these governing bodies. **Sue** questioned the specifics on the current funding of the ELAC. **Kelli Bohanon** stated that the State Advisory Council (SAC) grant of \$1.7 million ends on August 31, 2013. This grant currently pays for things such as ELAC staffing, non-governmental member stipends, meeting logistics, etc. There was much discussion regarding funding and sustainability once the SAC grant disappears. **Cynthia** expressed the need for field/local level thinkers represented on the Council. **Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer** asked if the recommendations will be more tangible. **Bea** clarified that ELAC would have a work plan, an executive committee and multiple sub-committees. **Dee** noticed a lack of specific professionals in the recommendations. **Bea** noted that they are included in the coalitions. Currently there are 2 providers, the HSSCO Director, local schools, tribal, parents and a WFIS representative. With

the coalition representatives, there will likely be early learning professionals. **Bob H.** expressed concern as to what exactly it is we are asking folks to do when we invite them to join ELAC. This needs to be answered simultaneously if not prior to the ask. **Maxine** stated that the perception outside is that ELAC is doing a good job.

- Bette Hyde, DEL Director, provided a [presentation](#) on upcoming DEL initiatives, including initiatives for which ELAC may want to provide input and advice.

*Discussion:* **Sandy** commented that this reminds her of her yearly planning process where she maps tasks out on the calendar and adjusts as the year goes. **Bette** enthusiastically agreed. She mentioned that this is just in draft form and will definitely change as we move forward. **Sue** showed concern for the amount of items that can be tasked to a subcommittee. She stated that it takes approximately 3 months just to form the subcommittee and if this is the path we are taking, then the communication needs to flow much faster, or it isn't going to work. **Bette** added that we need to start somewhere. **Maxine** added that it might be a good idea to make a list of all the people who are benefitting. Beneficiaries aren't always at the table. **Bette** agreed that it was a good idea but to also add outcomes to each of these. **Leslie** noted that a challenge is only having five meetings per year. **Bette** offered that we look into more meetings per year or more communications via e-mail, conference calls, webinars, etc. **Maxine** suggested changing the agenda format to not include so many presentations, but add more discussion time. **Dee** noted that those of us connected at the local level could plan communications around upcoming topics with their contacts ahead of time and bring feedback to meetings. **Bette** discussed the option of a survey to select three topics to kick off the next steps. **John** added that this is exactly what the role of the executive committee would play. These tasks would go to them to work out first to develop a clearer path before bringing them to the larger Council.

#### **Closing Remarks & Adjourn**

- Appreciation was extended to the Council and to members of the public for their attendance and participation.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2013 at the Lacey Community Center from 9:00am – 3:00pm with the possibility of a special meeting scheduled sometime in March.