



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting
August 6, 2024

**Regional Coalition & Washington Communities for
Children (WCFC) Updates**

Regional Coalition Update

Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast

For more information, please contact: Colleen Condon, colleen@lilaccityelc.com

One of the activities we identified as an avenue to addressing our equity challenge (our alliance is not reflective of the communities we serve) was for alliance members to attend regional events to build relationship and share about our work. Many alliance members were able to attend a handful of great events recently - the Women Helping Women annual fundraiser, the Northeast Youth & Family Services Spring Market, and the ESD101 UNITE Early Learning Conference, among others. Katie Maisch, alliance co-lead, had the opportunity to visit the RISE Network in Republic, WA and attend a half day in Colville at the SICC meeting. Upcoming are the Ferry and Pend Oreille County Fairs!

We had quite a few changes to our structure as a result of our most recent budgeting process. Katie Maisch is moving into a more full time position with the alliance. The group also named County Leads for the first time! We now have a County Lead in Spokane, Ferry, and Pend Oreille.

We just updated our monthly newsletter! Check it out [here!](#)

Investing in Children Coalition: Central

For more information, please contact: Lindsay Bowsell, lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org or Marina Medrano, marinam@yakimavalleycf.org

No updates to share at this time.

King County

For more information, please contact: Logan Endres or Tristen Hall, kcelc@childcare.org

We would like to introduce King County Early Learning Coalition's new Regional Co-Leads, Logan Endres and Tristen Hall.

Logan (he/him) serves as the Regional Co-Lead for the King County Early Learning Coalition (KCELC) as well as the Director of Advocacy and Policy at BrightSpark Early Learning Services. He joins the KCELC with a passion for uplifting community-based solutions and engagement around early learning policy. He has a background in advocacy, policy development, and

Regional Coalition Update

community engagement and lives in Tacoma, WA, with his partner, Devin, and two cats Pockets and Olivia Pope.

Tristen (she/her) is a longtime resident of Seattle and has lived in Washington for over 20 years. She is joining KCELC as a Regional Co-Lead with a background in childcare, preschool education, and social services, and graduated from UW with a master's in public administration last year. Tristen is thrilled to support KCELC's work of achieving educational justice for King County families.

The King County Early Learning Coalition (KCELC) and BrightSpark Early Learning Services hosted an in-person early learning business roundtable on July 25 with several school district partners from around the county. The purpose of this event was to bring together partners who are impacted by early learning and child care to review Washington Stem Early Learning Data, sharing pain points, and discuss solutions to address challenges stemming from the early learning system.

North Central

For more information please contact: Nancy Spurgeon, nspurgeon49@gmail.com

In Chelan, Douglas, and Grant counties we have been expanding and strengthening our partnerships by engaging in community events with the following:

- CAFE'- Pachanga y Mercadito
- Community Foundation -Civic Design Team, with recruitment and support of parent advocacy and civil engagement
- CHI -symposium for Health improvement on Food Security
- Attending the NCW ELC Home visiting committee meeting
- Sharing early learning resources with higher education institutions at Big Bend Community College, Wenatchee Valley College and Central Washington University
- Partnering with CCA of WA building business advocate cohorts with Chelan Douglas Health District, Nurse Family partnerships, the Upper Vally Mend and WA Fed Bank along with providing an Advocacy 101 training for our parent and provider cohorts
- Collaborating with DCYF community coordinator for Early support for Infants and Toddlers and attending the State interagency coordinating council meeting
- Presenting NCELC Strategic plan and coalition cross walk at ELCP at the core convening
- We attended the Apple Blossom Parade, Family fun Fair and Resource Fairs at Saint Jude's Landing and Chelan Douglas Child Service Association, distributing Vroom materials in English and Spanish
- Engaging with WA Apple STEM Network to increase awareness about the need for advocacy for childcare and offer education opportunities for providers
- We hosted a ribbon ceremony and proclamation for the week of the young child signed by Representatives Mike Steele and Chelan and Douglas County Mayors

Okanogan county continues their work on:

- Childcare needs assessment of focus groups

Regional Coalition Update

- Okanogan CHI -supports distribution of the regional wellness survey
- Tribal Head start open house in June attended by representatives from OCCDA, EA and NCELC
- Received invitation to share childcare needs assessment information with the rural WA care economy work group

Northwest

For more information please contact: Linden Obel, linden@first5fundamentals.org.

As a regional network of early childhood partners and local early learning coalitions, Northwest Early Learning Coalition (NWEL) continues to collaborate to ensure high-quality early learning experiences for all children. Our current focus areas have been 1) advocating for more equitable policies in the early learning field, 2) strengthening and expanding regional partnerships and collaborative opportunities, and 3) prioritizing resource navigation and access activities that improve how families with young children access the culturally responsive and high-quality resources they want and need to support their children's development and wellbeing. Below are current Highlights:

Early Learning Catalyst Project: in partnership with our STEM Networks, our region is collaborating 1) to co-create a regional strategic plan to increase equitable access to high quality early learning opportunities that aligns with the Early Learning Coordination Plan; 2) grow Family Friendly Workplace Business Champions through cross-sector engagement; and 3) develop a strategic policy agenda and advocacy campaign aligned with regional and state priorities. Recently, we've been focused on business engagement strategy and have been working with our WA STEM Networks to develop and distribute a survey to businesses on their workforce challenges related to early care and education access. In partnership with Economic Alliance Snohomish County and the Snohomish STEM Network, we will be participating in a Coffee Chat in mid-August focused on the business case for investing in early care and education and what businesses need in order to better support their workforce.

Role Transitions: NWEL Coalition is in the process of hiring for a new Regional Lead! This is a part-time, hourly position estimated at 10 hours per week. The application is open until August 9 with priority given to applicants that are connected to one of our five counties. Please pass along to individuals who may be interested! [Here is a link to the job posting.](#)

Inspire Breakfast Northwest 2024 was a success! At the end of May, NWEL Coalition hosted a regionwide early learning brunch across three in-person locations. Partners from local communities came together to hear from keynote speaker Kristin Wiggins and discussed local updates, data highlights, and ECE systems alignment strategy.

Peninsula Early Learning Coalition

For more information, please contact: Elisia Anderson, elisiaf_fstep@olypen.com

No updates to share at this time.

Regional Coalition Update

Pierce County Early Childhood Network

For more information please contact: Muriel Herrera-Velasquez, muriel@first5fundamentals.org

No updates to share at this time.

Southeast (SEELC)

For more information, please contact: Brittany Hartikainen, brittany@bh-consulting.org

The SEELC has engaged in a new opportunity with WA STEM to assess our current STEM offerings in the community and create more opportunities for families and providers to engage in STEM curriculum. We are also actively planning our Early Learning Summits where we hope to foster strong connections with community members, including businesses, legislators, council members, childcare providers, K-12 faculty, etc. and rally around the state of early care and education in our region. These summits will be taking place from mid-September to mid-October.

Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)

For more information please contact: Debbie Ham, Debbie.ham@selfwa.org

No updates to share at this time.

Visions for Early Learning, West Central

For more information, please contact: Sheila Kavanaugh, kav.consulting231@gmail.com

We revisited the summary reports from Help Me Grow (HMG), which include data records categorized as “out of scope” based on HMG’s criteria. This exclusion has raised some important considerations for our coalition.

Importance of Excluded Resources

Several workgroup participants have strongly advocated for the inclusion of some of the out-of-scope resources in the Resource Finder, based on HMG’s essential service categories. These participants believe that the excluded resources are crucial for the comprehensive support our coalition aims to provide to families and individuals in need.

Process for Reliable Feedback Loop

To address this issue and ensure the HMG Resource Finder remains as inclusive and useful as possible, we proposed the following process:

1. Review and Identification:
 - Form a dedicated subcommittee to review the excluded resources.
 - Identify which resources are crucial and why they were initially marked as out of scope.
2. Criteria Alignment:
 - Compare the identified resources against HMG’s essential service categories.
 - Document cases where these resources meet the necessary criteria and should be considered for inclusion.
3. Feedback Collection:
 - Create a structured feedback form for workgroup participants to provide detailed input on excluded resources.
 - Collect feedback regularly and review it in subcommittee meetings.

Regional Coalition Update

4. Engagement with HMG:
 - Communicate findings and justifications to HMG, advocating for the inclusion of these resources.
 - Request periodic meetings with HMG to discuss and reassess the criteria and scope of resources.
5. Update and Communicate:
 - Maintain an updated list of resources that are under review or have been successfully included.
 - Regularly update the coalition and community stakeholders on the progress and any changes made to the Resource Finder.
6. Continuous Improvement:
 - Establish a bi-annual review process to reassess the criteria and resources in the Resource Finder.
 - Incorporate new feedback and ensure the Resource Finder evolves to meet the community's needs.

WCFC Updates – For more information please contact: info@washingtoncfc.org

WCFC State Updates

For more information please contact: Rachel Hall, WCFC State Lead,
rachelh@first5fundamentals.org

WCFC Structural Changes

The WCFC Leadership team composed of Regional Leads and State Network Leads met in early March to connect with one another, reflect on our current Network structure, and strategize what is needed from a Network of early childhood coalitions, today. We are excited to introduce updates to our Network structure.

Purpose

The purpose of the WCFC Network is to strengthen the systems that impact the wellbeing of children, families, and communities, by catalyzing connection, learning, and action.

Commitments

WCFC Network Members agree to prioritize and practice the following commitments in our collective work both locally and statewide:

1. We commit to grounding our work in equity.
2. We commit to data transparency and to using data to guide strategic activities.
3. We commit to transparent and timely communication, and to using regional and state communication channels to connect and coordinate.
4. We commit to supporting policy priorities identified at the local, Regional, and state levels.

Structure and Governance

WCFC is a network of ten Regional Early Childhood Coalitions across Washington state that are supported by a team of specialists focused on policy and advocacy, equity, data, and community engagement. Community engagement efforts currently focus on Child Care Voice, Health Provider Voice, and Family Voice & Resource Access. As a statewide network, we use Liberatory Design to ground and guide our infrastructure and activities.

WCFC Workgroups

WCFC hosts a bi-monthly Diaper Bank conversation on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is September 18th. Ongoing topics of interest include sharing current best thinking/best practices, funding opportunities, sustainability, accessing discounted or free supplies, and diaper bank operations. [Contact Rachel Hall](#) to join - all are welcome!

WCFC hosts a monthly conversation regarding the Washington State Early Learning Coordination Plan on the 4th Thursday of the month from 2:00 – 3:00pm. The purpose of this space is to provide strategy to crosswalk the WCFC Network with the Goals and Strategies of the ELCP, and support local communities aligning their work with the ELCP. [Contact Rachel Hall](#) to join - all are welcome!

Living Wage Proviso

WCFC's has played a role in supporting DCYF's implementation plan to expand access to Washington's early care and education system and provide a living wage to its workforce. Over the past couple of months, our Network has:

- Identified and analyzed existing local data from families about access to affordable child care and early education and from child care providers about wages and benefits since 2020. Our goal is to avoid duplication of activities and leverage data to which we already have access.
- Hosted listening sessions throughout the WCFC Network, and administered an online survey, to capture perspectives from families with children B-12, and child care providers.

The report and analysis of the above efforts is complete. However, we are waiting for the Spanish translation to be conducted before releasing for public view. Stay tuned!

Stay in Touch!

Want to learn more about WCFC, be the first to hear updates, or get connected with your local early childhood coalition? Get in touch with us!

Website: washingtoncfc.org

Facebook: [WashingtonCFC](#)

Instagram: [Washington_cfc](#)