



Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2021 – 9:30 am-2:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome & Introductions

- ELAC Regional Advisor, Enrica Hampton welcomed attendees, initiated introductions and led an ice breaker activity.
- Members voted to approve the [June 1, 2021](#) Joint ELAC and Provider Supports Subcommittee meeting minutes.

Feedback Loop & State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

- [Feedback Loop](#)
- [State Agency/Partner Updates](#)
- [Regional Coalition Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Portable Background Check (PBC), is that a legislative ask for next session to have more resources to update the technology? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The most updated information that I have is that they are researching potential technological fixes and will be sharing an update once they have an idea on the direction they are going to go. I will be following up with them to get an update as soon as one is available. • Was just made aware of the PBC and the hiring of staff and that staff can't be hired until the PBC comes through. I know a lot of centers and homes are having difficulty hiring right now. Waiting for several weeks means they can't get people on board. I appreciate the safety concerns for children but why do they have to wait until the background check is cleared? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The background check process has been identified as a barrier for providers even prior to the pandemic. This is a consistent concern we have been hearing from providers across the state. There are several factors contributing to the current process, including federal requirements and technological capabilities. • Is there a group I can connect with or who can help answer more questions regarding the PBC process and changes coming? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, feel free to email Community Engagement at dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov and they can connect you with the appropriate program staff. • What is the timeline regarding the technology efforts to address this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I will follow up with program staff and get back to you on timeline. • If someone has worked in another child care and has a current PBC and have good recommendations, why couldn't their PBC be transferred over until DCYF catches up? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A PBC is good for three years and transfers with each staff person. The real issue is onboarding new people joining the child care field. • We have classrooms closed because we can't hire people. • As far as unsupervised access they say: How do I know whether the adults in my child care program have had comprehensive criminal background checks? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The federal law requires all child care providers to have a comprehensive background check. This includes providers who are not required to be licensed but care for children receiving federal child care assistance. You can learn more about your state's criminal background check requirements by contacting your state licensing agency.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) visits, when it says the next IRR pilot cohort has recently completed the training and will begin licensing visits in July of 2021, has that happened and when you say licensing visits, is that in-person or virtual visits? Another question is what is the department’s plan when it comes to virtual licensing visits through 2021-2022 with other variances that may come along with COVID-19, curious what is the plan to prepare for that? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will pass your questions to the appropriate program staff and will follow up with the most accurate information. • Question for Department of Health (DOH) and DCYF: Will the Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) data system meet the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requirements for a developmental screening tool? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will reach out to the program contacts at DOH and get back to you with that information.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Engagement team will follow up on any unanswered questions with relevant program staff and share updates with the council.

Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) and ELAC

DCYF Community Engagement Manager, Erin Kerrigan discussed Section 104 of the FSKA and provided time for members to participate in an activity to provide targeted feedback on questions regarding potential changes to ELAC.

- [Fair Start for Kids Act](#)
- [FSKA and ELAC Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the governor’s office made it clear what type of feedback is desired so we have clear boundaries? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As of now, what we have as guidance for the ELAC report is all contained in Section 102. If your question is if there are additional expectations, none have been included in the directives. • Will these recommendations have to be approved by the department before moving to the governor’s office or will it be clear these recommendations are coming from this community group? Wanted to make sure the agency isn’t just a pass through to the Legislature and the governor’s office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As far as I know, there are not specifics laid out there but I am sure there will be a review process done by DCYF as we work together to develop the report. As far as any authority laid out for DCYF to modify or change any of the recommendations unilaterally, not that I’m aware of but that is something I will follow up on. There may be some elements that ELAC may want DCYF to provide additional context for. • Everyone participated in small group breakouts providing feedback on the following discussion question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do you feel ELAC’s work and/or structure may change after reviewing the FSKA? • After the small group breakouts, members shared individual input on the following question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has your view changed? If so, how?
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Integrated Pre-K (IPK)

DCYF Director of Early Learning Programs, Kelli Bohanon and Integrated Pre-K Administrator, Alicia Brender provided answers to the previous meeting's unanswered questions and shared updates. Time also allowed for a Q&A session for members/attendees to better understand IPK and how it will or will not impact child care providers and the community.

- [IPK Presentation](#)
- [IPK Barriers Document](#)
- [IPK Recommendations Document](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the report look at local publicly funded programs like Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) as an example?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Great question. We do anticipate pulling additional programs like SPP into the next phase.• Is there a plan to answer all of the questions individually in a separate document that can be shared with ELAC and interested parties? Is SPP prepared to share information with the state and are the metrics the same?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We will probably send it out and most of the DCYF related questions the Community Engagement team has already sent out to the group. We will make sure we have what we need to get those answers and have them sent out to you.• Everyone participated in small group breakouts providing feedback on the IPK Barriers document and the IPK Recommendations document. The following discussion questions were asked:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Is there anything you feel is missing that we haven't yet mentioned or included?○ Are there any unintended consequences that you think need to be addressed?○ How would you like to be involved in this work moving forward?• After the small group breakouts, the opportunity was given for members to share what was discussed in their small groups:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Competition in child care and loss of enrollment is a concern. Because the school district is offering this program and the parent will possibly think their child will be more prepared utilizing the program through the school district.○ Would like to see a model that is not a public model, what would that look like?○ Need more conversation around the true cost of care.○ Power structure that is there with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) having the power to say school districts provide this service and who has the power to make sure that service is providing what children and families really need.• All of your concerns we are including in this report and DCYF shares with you. We need to put some quality parameters around it.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What parameters have been put in place since June of 2021?• Is there a committee or advisory group where providers can give input in this process?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ There has been an advisory committee since June of 2020.• Where can ELAC members/Public members access the minutes/recommendations from these meetings?• Where would the teachers come from? We are already struggling to hire, train and retain early learning professionals. How can a private-based facility even begin to compete with the salaries/benefits provided through the school districts.• Existing licensed care is identified as to location. First, that should be represented by DCYF to OSPI with a point of creating connections and communication locally and reducing faceless competition. Second, we should be called upon to expand into newly available facilities with proven quality care and education.• DCYF is receiving lots of funds, is there anyway some of the money can be given to help the private sector?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are we continuing to go down the same path when there is so much concern in the early learning field and the ways that we need to fix these issues aren't being addressed? • We need to think about how we create these systems that are not in competition with each other but working together to focus on the needs of children and families. • When we encourage school districts to partner with community based programs, does that mean the funding could be directed to existing child care providers or Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) providers to serve students? Or do the dollars stay with the school districts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The agency has done the best we can do in the past couple years. What I am hearing is that people's wants and needs aren't being addressed or fixed. It is not defined yet. We want to see community partners come together and where that money sits right now is where it is. It is something we are wanting to figure out in the recommendations and those are not spelled out yet. • Are the recommendations shared today co-authored by OSPI? Do they have different/additional recommendations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, we worked on these recommendations together as part of the joint report. • Who is uplifting our questions and comments after this meeting and where are they going? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your questions and feedback are going to our core team, leadership team, and will go into the report as we work through these recommendations. • For the BIPOC community, the K-12 system has failed them and now moving forward this has not been addressed. If we don't have a way to fix this, why are we trying to put children in this kind of system at an earlier age? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is definitely not the intent for DCYF to push children into places where families don't want to go. • Is it possible to slow this process down to create true collaboration? To allow these thoughts, opinions, and concerns to be heard and taken into consideration rather than focus on pressure in which creates these systems to not be equitable and fair to families across Washington state?
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Engagement team will work with the IPK team to get outstanding questions answered before the next ELAC meeting.

Policy Development and Review

DCYF Government Affairs Advisor, Genevieve Stokes provided an overview of the DCYF legislative process and provided time for group discussion and Q&A.

- [Policy Development and Review Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any talk about asking for funds for technology/support of portable background checks? Any idea of the dollar amount needed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are no requests that we are making in the early learning space right now in regards to portable background checks. That would potentially be a 2023 ask. We know this is an ongoing problem in general. • Will ELAC be one of the main venues that you use to get stakeholder feedback or will there be others too? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ELAC has a very unique role in providing feedback and we will always be coming to ELAC for early learning topics. There is a Kinship Care Oversight Committee (KCOC) and there are a lot of informal advisory bodies. It is important to not only look to a sliver of the community for feedback. We are working on trying to figure out where are the tables we are missing for this important feedback as well.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What if the committees feel there are other things DCYF should focus on funding, how does your group plan to handle these situations?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It is always going to be an iterative process, we get direction from the governor's office and that is something we need to work through. We are trying to be strategic on what is most effective at this time and what will pass in the legislative session.• There are other ways that legislation gets through and passes besides agency request legislation.
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Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next ELAC advisory group meeting will be a joint meeting with the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) and the Provider Supports Subcommittee on October 5, 2021.
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