

Karen Tvedt- Member-at-Large



Summary of Experiences:

- Currently is an Independent Consultant and Instructor
- Previous experiences include serving as director at state and national early learning/child care departments or divisions, directing a child care center, teaching preschool, and providing family child care
- South Sound AEYC member
- Expert panel member for Child Care Quality Rating System Assessment and Policies Database Project for Administration for Children and Families
- Past or present board or committee member for Child Care & Early Education Research Connections, Committee for Children, Early Learning Action Alliance, and League of Women Voters Thurston County

Candidate Statement:

Share what you are willing to do and contribute

I bring to WAEYC a life-long commitment to improving the development of young children and supporting families. As a Governing Board member, I will actively support the goals of the organization, and with other Board members and WAEYC staff, pursue strategies that further WAEYC's financial stability and effectiveness in promoting professional development, high quality early childhood programs, and the systems/financing to support these aims. I am particularly interested in ways we can do more to engage WAEYC's affiliates in advocacy, and to recognize the achievements of early childhood programs and professionals.

Describe how you would enhance the diversity of the Governing Board

I appreciate WAEYC's commitment to being a high-performing, inclusive organization. While I faced many challenges raising my children as a single parent, and being the first person in my family to graduate from college, my life experiences have taught me that this doesn't come close to the obstacles faced by families (and children) that have faced long term poverty,

racism, language barriers, etc. This awareness shapes my commitment to economic justice and early learning. And, as I move toward retirement, years give me perspective that helps me find hope in what we've accomplished, awareness about how much more needs to be done, and recognition that we need to be mentoring young people to carry-on this important work.

Address specific skills you would bring

I have spent 40 years in early learning, starting as a licensed family child care provider. While working as a provider, I attended school part-time, and eventually got a degree in early childhood education from North Seattle Community College (NSCC). What I learned, and the support I received from instructors at NSCC and colleagues in the Family Child Care Association, changed my life, setting me on a path devoted to improving the quality of child care and supporting families. I have been a life-long learner, and over the years, earned a B.A. in Social Welfare, an MPA, and a Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Research.

I bring knowledge and skills gained from working in a variety of roles including cooperative preschool teacher and instructor, school-age child care director, parenting instructor, child welfare social worker, program manager, and director of child care offices at the state and federal levels. Over the past couple of years, I have coordinated the work of the federal Child Care Policy Research Consortium (as a paid consultant) and served as a volunteer advocate with the Children's Alliance and the League of Women Voters Washington and chaired WAEYC's Public Policy Committee.

My specific strengths include a deep and current understanding of early childhood policy and research (both state and federal); positive relationships with early childhood/welfare leaders at the local, state and national levels; success in working collaboratively across sectors and with diverse communities; leadership, strategic thinking, and problem solving skills; a strong work ethic; a commitment to customer services; and a sense of humor.