

June 11, 2009

Dear Collaborative and Early Learning Action Alliance members,

We're excited to tell you about a recent development involving our two advocacy coalitions. First, here's a little background about us.

- The Collaborative, established in 1990, is a coalition of statewide early learning and afterschool organizations representing direct service providers and the families and children they serve. Our vision is that all children, youth and their families will have access to high quality early learning and afterschool programs that support optimal growth and development leading to success in school and life.
- The Early Learning Action Alliance, established in 2008, is a broad coalition of organizations representing a diverse array of Washington nonprofits, professional associations, businesses and industries. Member organizations are united by the belief that all children in Washington State deserve to have the opportunities and support they need in their first five years of life to be prepared for school and a bright future.

Since our visions overlap and our advocacy efforts can be more successful if we are united, the Collaborative decided to disband at the end June and join forces with the Early Learning Action Alliance. One current Collaborative activity and a new one will now occur as part of the Early Learning Action Alliance.

#### **Quarterly Meetings with State Agencies (continuing from Collaborative)**

Leaders from the Governor's Office, the Department of Early Learning, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and other state agencies meet with us quarterly. The purpose is to share and discuss policy and budget matters of interest to policy makers and advocates. WAEYC will continue to convene these meetings, which are open to all ELAA members. The next meeting is September 24<sup>th</sup> 1:00-3:00 pm in the Olympia area.

#### **Provider Caucus (new effort)**

The purpose of this caucus is to raise policy and budget issues to bring to the larger Early Learning Action Alliance coalition to be vetted through ELAA's policy agenda setting process. The provider caucus will meet as needed throughout the year possibly on the mornings of the quarterly meetings with state agencies. WAEYC will convene and communicate with the provider caucus.

In the formation discussions of the Early Learning Action Alliance, the coalition decided that we would prioritize birth to five policies. Because of the systemic linkages between child care for early learners and afterschool care for children in the K-12 system, members decided to support, but not prioritize, policies that would benefit children in after school/out of school time care – via the following statement:

We will address the intersections between early learning and K-12. For example, ELAA shares a common interest in furthering

- 1) professional development for child care workers in family homes, FFN care, centers and after school programs that care for kids up to age 12,
- 2) funding for quality improvements and supports, and
- 3) supporting subsidies for families utilizing those settings.

In this transition, we remain committed to working in partnership for the best outcomes for children in early learning and the K-12 system.

We look forward to working together with you! For more information about the quarterly meetings and provider caucus, contact Krista Rhea at [Krista@waeyc.org](mailto:Krista@waeyc.org) or (253) 854-2565x19. To join the Early Learning Action Alliance, contact Leslie Dozono at [leslie@childrensalliance.org](mailto:leslie@childrensalliance.org) or (206) 324-0340 x20.

Sincerely,

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