

Visions for Early Learning; West Central Regional Coalition
September 18, 2012 Meeting Notes

Present: Bert Miller, Cristi Heitschmidt, Dan Teuteberg, Ruth Nitz, Jennifer Williamson-Forster, Julee Durham, Laurie May, Mary Perkins, Patty Smith, Ryan Bezanson, Fran Williams, Connie Dougherty, Sandy Nelson, Bill Weismann, Nancy Snyder

Updates

State/local collaboration- Sandy

On the state level, “local” appears to mean the regional coalitions.
There will be a final report by February.

WaKIDS-Sandy

School districts are tasked with Kindergarten Assessment (TS GOLD) and Family Engagement. ESD 113 has a contract to provide training and support for the assessment. Abby Bowers is the ESD WaKIDS coordinator. The Regional Coalitions have the WaKIDS/ Early Learning Collaboration piece. This is part of the RFP, with funding up to \$20,000. The Goals are in the RFP. See attached handout on WaKIDS Implementation. Mary Perkins will be leading the planning for the WaKIDS/ Early Learning Collaboration.

Love, Talk, Play—Fran Williams

There have been many events, which have varied by communities. These include 6-week long Play and Learn groups as well as one-time events. Lewis, Thurston, and Mason County Coalitions have plans for some community events. Grays Harbor and Thurston counties will have some Play groups as well. Grays Harbor has some additional funding for a collaboration with the McCleary school district. North Pacific is taking over the Welcome Baby baskets project, which will include Love, Talk, Play information, and be distributed by home visitors.

There is not a set curriculum for Love, Talk, Play. Fran has curriculum available that she developed herself. Thrive by Five is not providing as many materials for parents now.

Love, Talk, Play is reaching out to teens, grandparents, Spanish speaking families, and isolated parents. Fran shared an idea for a Regional event—a conference for teen parents, possibly at the new Hands On Children’s Museum in Olympia.

Early Achievers (formerly QRIS-Quality Rating and Improvement System)-Connie Dougherty

Changes: Clallum, Jefferson, and Kitsap counties have been added to the CCAC Child Care Aware region. Lewis and Pacific Counties are now in the ESD 112 region. Clallum, Jefferson, and Kitsap have already started Early Achievers. Grays Harbor, Mason, and Thurston will begin in January. Lewis and Pacific may start in January also. There will be free one hour information nights this fall in Belfair, Aberdeen, Shelton, and Olympia. Connie shared the Child Care Action Council newsletter, which has workshop offerings in the counties that they serve now.

Infant/Toddler consultation project-Connie

Connie provided a handout with the results of the first year of the Infant/Toddler Quality Improvement Project. The data from the ITERS (Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale) shows improvement at all centers.

This program will also help caregivers with Early Achievers, as they get points from their ITERS scores. Teachers who have been coached are sharing with others at their centers. In year two 15 new rooms have been added, and those previously in the program will continue, some with reduced services. Connie will forward an email with the participating centers for year two.

Starting Strong Conference

Participants shared some of the highlights of this conference that took place in August. There was a lot of enthusiasm for the workshops and speakers.

Bridge Funding-Sandy

Sandy shared information about the proposal for funding through the end of the year, until the new funding becomes available. See attached handout.

RFP (Request for Proposal) from Thrive by Five

The grant is for up to \$110,000, from January-December 2013, though that amount is not guaranteed. Included in the \$110,000 is up to \$20,000 for WaKIDS, and up to \$10,000 for Love, Talk, Play. Proposals are due November 9 at noon. See attached RFP.

We broke into three work groups

- Goals 1, 2, 4 (Capacity & Infrastructure; Effective Functioning of the Regional Coalition; Building public Awareness) -Sandy (lead), Bert, Cristi, Dan, Jennifer, Julee, Ruth
- Goal 3-implementing prioritized strategies of EL Plan
 - Love, Talk, Play—(Fran lead), Ryan
 - WaKIDS—Mary (lead), Patty, Nancy, Laurie

Work Group Reports:

WaKIDS

The group formulated an approach to WaKIDS, which involves working with local coalitions to support Early Learning providers, and to help schools support the collaboration. Although parents are not included in the framework, it was felt that the community collaboration needs to be linked to the family component. Parents should be part of WaKIDS steering committee. There is a need to support and educate the Early Learning community so that they will have a larger voice in the collaboration with school districts. School districts also need support in community collaboration.

Abby and Mary have already set up a meeting for Oct 2, from 4-5:30 at ESD 113. Principals and Kindergarten teachers have been invited. The work group will represent Visions for Early Learning at this meeting.

- Mary will contact Jeanette about the possibility of joining this group to add representation from the college, and from Lewis County.
- Mary will also talk to Annie about the possibility of including some childcare providers.
- Sandy suggested that Mary also include some participants in the Gates P-3 grant, especially Rochester

Love, Talk, Play

Activities would be different for each area. A menu of ideas could be given to the county coalitions. Regional events for teens could be developed. LTP can be infused into things that are already happening in communities. Fran could Train the Trainers on the curriculum she has developed. Other Regional Coalitions could be contacted about ideas they might have to share. By the next meeting they will develop some activities and a budget.

- Fran will talk to Annie and Sandy about next steps, and getting feedback from the County Coalitions.

Dan is going to be helping do some research on evaluation for LTP, to develop some data.

Capacity/Advocacy

The role of regional coalitions is to support the local coalitions.

Visions for Early Learning could create web site capacity for all the county coalitions on one web page. There could also be research on other media to increase the capacity for communication.

Other ideas to develop: A shared understanding of racial equity; Increasing the diversity of stakeholders, including some low income parents; aligning with ELAC (may wait till Feb to see what the state/local structure will be); A calendar for updating and reviewing the Regional Early Learning Plan; using State/local data effectively; Advocacy, and what it means

There is a need for a full time staff person to take on much of the Regional Coalition work.

The work group will have another meeting before the next Visions for Early Learning meeting.

- The work groups will bring their Action Plans to the October 23rd meeting.

Regional Coalition Governance Structure

Fiscal Agent—The motion that ESD 113 remain the fiscal agent for Visions for Early Learning passed unanimously.

Governance Structure—The Governance Structure was adopted by consensus.

Steering Committee Selection—The process for selection was approved. (See attached handout) The timeline was modified. The deadline for county coalition nominations is now October 31. The new representatives will meet in November. They will look at nominations for the at-large members at that time, and the full Steering Committee will convene in January.

- Sandy will suggest meeting dates of November 8th and 13th, possibly some others
- Nancy will check on meeting room availability at the ESD, and compile the County Coalitions' regular meeting dates.
- Representatives from the County Coalitions should send the nominations to Nancy or Sandy.

Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges

As part of the work on the RFP we brainstormed a list of strengths, opportunities, and challenges. (See the attached handout)

Next Steps

- Representatives ask for feedback on the RFP from County Coalitions at their next meetings.
- Work groups prepare to report on their Action Plans on October 23rd, using the Regional Early Learning Plan as a source document.
- Nancy will prepare an Orientation Packet for new steering committee members.
- Conclude our work at the October 23rd meeting!

Bill's contract is over at the end of September.

Much appreciation was expressed for his leadership and facilitation.