

WSTC Head Start/EHS Directors Meeting Notes

Day 1 – Wednesday, December 5th, 2007

Joel Ryan - Legislative Update, 9:15-10am

Head Start Appropriations

Joel had a couple conversations with congressional staff this week – they are looking at January to put together a large bill, including additional cuts to domestic spending to entice moderate republicans, that has a better chance of being able to override a veto. The new bill may reduce Labor/HHS spending by 10 billion, and we don't know where those cuts will be made yet.

Head Start Reauthorization

Passed unanimously, expected to be signed. The biggest thing right now will be regulations. Right now the OHS seems to be willing to sit down with the HS community to develop a regulatory process that works for us and them. We'll need to be proactive, develop workgroups and figure out what we want to see.

Governance

- Was there some recognition given in the legislation for governing boards in community action agencies or other elected boards? Yes, sort of.
- Could the lawyer on the board be someone who is paid? Probably not.

Eligibility

- No more application to the Secretary. The new eligibility levels are automatic, no waivers needed. Still must prioritize lower income first.

Eligibility – Homeless Children

- Specifies that homeless children are deemed eligible for HS services. You can enroll them while you're waiting for documentation. Length that you can wait to get documentation will be determined by regulation.
- Homeless families can enroll while program waits for documents
- McKinney Vento act applies to HS. This is a much broader definition from before.
- How do HS transportation regulations work with this? Transportation is a problem for everyone, including the ECEAP linkage issue. There is money in the quality section of the reauthorization to study the issue.

Enrollment

- House democrats wanted 100%, but we ended up with 97%.

- If you dip under 97% for 4 months, you'll get training, and if for a long period of time you may be asked to send money back. There are some exceptions for homeless families.

Competition

- This is the one issue that we didn't do too well on.
- Over the next few months they will create a 7 member panel that will determine what a high-quality program is. As an association, we may want to nominate someone to be on the panel.
- Panel will make recommendations based on PIR, classroom outcomes, etc, then it will be sent to Secretary of HHS, opened up for public comment. Current reviews don't count toward new system – we have 18 months until the new system goes into effect.

Coordination & Collaboration

- If the state decides to use the money, they have to meet the requirements in the bill. They got rid of the long list, but there is a short list of required members, some data collection requirements. It does mean we would end up paying for state councils with Head Start money.
- Councils get paid last – Monitoring, quality, COLA etc come first, then if there's money left over, it'll go to advisory councils.
- Collaboration office role is expanded, and is sort of considered under the governor's office.
- Centers of Excellence were started by Lamar Alexander in return for stopping the block granting of Head Start. They give you a grant to do best practices, expand, train others. This is not likely to be funded.

Early Head Start

- Of any expansion \$\$, half will go to EHS
- Allows programs to start EHS using existing funds, even if you don't have EHS in your community yet.

Professional Development – Teacher Degrees

- 50% BA degree is national with no penalty, but the 2011 AA degree requirement for all teachers is absolute.
- By 2012 teaching assistants must have CDA and be enrolled in AA or BA program.
- Early Head Start is separated out – these requirements don't all apply.

Outcomes

- NRS terminated.
- NAS panel to develop new assessment
- Program performance standards to be revised. They can't be watered down.

Training & Technical Assistance

- 2.5-3% for T&TA, 20% EHS
- Big difference – 50% of remaining training money will come to programs.
- 25% of remaining training \$\$ will be state-based, not regional.
- 25% for HHS to help programs meet performance standards

Monitoring

- Balanced report, good and bad.

Voter Education

- No federal funds can be used for voter education
- Outside community organizations can register parents during hours of operation.
- Programs can probably start doing this right after the bill is signed, as legislation is very clear.

Gil Sparks - Employment Law Overview, 10am – 12 noon

See Powerpoint.

Joyce Kilmer (DEL) announcements & Q&A

The RFP will come out January 2nd for the additional 1000 ECEAP slots, due Feb 13 by 3pm. It's open to everyone, not just existing programs.

Q- Is there a requirement to get signoff from existing programs in the area?

A- That's still under discussion. Current language requires documentation of conversations with other providers.

Comments from audience –

That's too late. It needs to be done earlier in the process so Head Start programs aren't surprised by ECEAP programs opening up down the street in saturated areas.

Maybe there should be an interagency agreement in place before the applications are submitted.

Q- Could an existing subcontractor apply for direct slots?

A- Yes. A lot of preplanning will be required. We know that last year's system caused some problems, and we're looking at how to avoid that.

Q- It might be useful to put some of those existing agreements on the website for people to use as a model.

A- Good idea. Joyce will follow up.

Q- Programs that are not fully enrolled – what's happening with that?

A- We're working one on one with programs to get to full enrollment. We're at 95% enrollment now.

Q-Will you evaluate why the numbers are falling short after the first expansion? It may be because of location of programs, competing in already well-served areas.

A- We are looking into that. We know it's an issue.

Joyce announced that there is a job posting out for family support specialist, and DEL will be having another job opening coming up soon.

John Naegele - Topics Discussion, 1:15-2:30 pm

Possible topics:

- Dealing with staff morale due to budget reductions
- Smoking Cessation
- Higher Ed Roundtable
- Coordination with ECEAP providers
- Outcomes discussion
- Mental Health Transformation Project
- ELL for New language community introduced into program
- Policy clarification for lead blood screen – state law cannot overrule federal law
- Healthy marriage project
- Toddler attachment survey
- Regulations

Toddler attachment Survey – Marcy Miller

Neighborhood House partnered with PSESD on this.

PSESD part of 3-year UW Nursing school project. TAS-45. It was developed in New Zealand (lots of info on internet about it). It's an observational process. Home visitor watches the child and the primary care giver, rates 45 categories, and puts it into the computer to get a graph that depicts the attachment between the child and caregiver.

You can use it to work with the family on areas where they can work on strengthening attachment. UW is working on a package you can purchase, and there may be a version where the parent does the rating. PSESD may be willing to train others.

It helped NH to improve their observation skills, and develop intervention strategies.

Staff morale

This has been a concern for the last several years since funding has been flat or unstable. What are programs doing?

Our program has high morale, because we got more money this year for ECEAP.

Same in Granger – they've been able to do some renovations, send people to school, etc.

How do people assess staff morale?

- Jim Skucy – Annual Survey
- Exit interviews
- Lorraine Olsen – ‘taking the pulse’ survey midyear
- Dana Connelly – Voluntary feedback session on 1 Friday a month. Key management staff come with whatever is going on. She is always surprised at what people think she has said. Opportunity to set the record straight, opportunity to clarify procedures and self-correct. Releases pressure.
- John Naegele – we’ve done similar things at Starbucks or other outside locations, at different times of the day.

Lacretia Warnstaff – Suggestion box, staff newsletter. Suggestions are shared with policy council, staff, etc.

Mary Tatham – We stress professionalism, responsibility, and have brought in trainers.

John Naegele – we need to stress how important and professional these jobs are. We need to hear them.

Mary Tatham – one of the challenges is that much of the workforce is very young, and doesn’t have a lot of work experience.

Instead of budget last year, we focused on conversation within each center on what we were doing that is cutting edge.

Denise Schmidt – we’ve had a problem with staff when they’re off in the summer, with no income, etc. We’ve lost staff that way.

Graciela – it’s important to celebrate our successes, no matter how small they are.

Dana Connelly – it’s very tiring and maybe not clearly relevant for staff working with children and families all the time when we tell them they have all these other things they have to do. We may need to reframe, tell people we are part of a bureaucracy with edicts from above, but also we can see how we can change things from below, like with the NRS.

John Naegele – I try not to say “the regs are making me do this”, but “how is this helping the kids”. If we find it’s not helping children and families, we can maybe tweak the system a bit, change how we do something. We’ve actually thrown out some forms.

Head Start/ECEAP/Universal Pre-K

Summary of main points of conference call –

- Need to be very thoughtful about transition period if we’re going to move toward similar standards.
- There’s a concern about how it would look for ECEAP only programs
- There will be a phase-in process.
- Funding must be same as Head Start.

- Some flexibility needs to be built in, maybe with waivers for issues like transportation and hours per day.

Oregon is using this to build a Universal Pre-K, starting with the most in need. Rep. Kagi mentioned that she wants to expand the focus to 0-5.

Comments and Questions:

Does the area agency status still exist?

It does exist for HS. How will expansion work if everyone is HS?

How will this work? We already have overlapping service areas, etc., and it's already crazy.

There's an idea that we might phase in first the dually funded programs.

Why can't we get more money without adopting the HS performance standards? I've worked for HS before. I'm worried about the standards, losing flexibility, etc. We may spend all the money we're getting on administration and paperwork. Also a concern about the logistics of the program –what will we do with the teachers? They may have to work more hours or fewer hours, more work and planning, etc.

Lorraine Olsen – What problem are we solving by doing this?

Assessment/Outcomes – Janet Anderson

Janet passed out a handout on the outcomes project.

At the Sleeping Lady retreat, some people agreed to get together to talk about it. It kind of stalled out.

Some talk about interfacing with DEL website, use something like the HS assessment. It kind of stalled because until October we were up in the air on the DEL side.

Jone talked about a “common assessment” on a statewide basis, and she was open to program people to work on that, along with the work group doing outcomes.

Things got busy with the ECEAP/HS idea and the Higher Ed roundtable, so we're just getting back to it, with a new timeline and a broader mission.

Graciela is interested in participating.

Dana Connelly – looking at last sentence 3rd paragraph. Didn't we just get rid of the NRS?

A- That's not the correct terminology.

Dana – this still sounds like the potential for a universal assessment. An equally parallel track is developing some sort of demographic model, because results from a program with a high percentage refugee/immigrant might score differently.

We want to be able to demonstrate that we can get data from multiple tools.

We're looking for an indicator, not a tool.

Is there any discussion around the demographic issue?

Not yet. In January when we bring group together for the first time, that is an issue that should be brought up. Any concerns or issues that ought to be raised at that meeting should be sent to Janet or Kelly.

Kelli – it's a good opportunity for us to set the stage, define the options.

Joyce – Jone needs a way to represent what we're doing on a statewide basis. Right now we have good ways in local area, but she wants us to work intensely with partners to develop a way to do something statewide.

Regulations

I don't understand the disallowment of parents' transportation. The regulation doesn't preclude the parent bringing their child to school.

After the transportation regs went into effect, the transportation became a non-allowable cost, because you couldn't spend your federal dollars on private cars.

Joel – we tried over and over again on this, multiple Senate offices, but Republicans decided to block it. Murray, Harkin, Dodd are aware of it and want to keep working on it.

When a school district decides a kid lives too far away, they reimburse parents to bring their kids to a closer point. Why can't that work? It's state money, not federal.

Lead Screening – Janice Deguchi

There was a policy clarification about this. Janice has been working with Zach Hudgins to come up with policy recommendations related to this. There's new technology not requiring venous draw, but finger prick with results in 10 minutes. Janice has info about cost of this machine if your health clinic doesn't do it. EPSDT Requirement is that you need it for ages 1-2, there was a waiver in WA because of the very low incidence in the past.

Because it's not required in WA, health departments sometimes refuse to do the test. May need to work with parents to advocate on their own behalf to get the health departments to do it.

We may not be able to do that in a program, because it punctures. Only licensed providers can do that. Or the parent.

Might not be a bad thing to test for lead, with all the toy problems.

Joel Ryan - HS/ECEAP Linkage Proposal, 3-4:30 pm

Speaker Chopp brought this idea to our attention, and said he'd been thinking about a proposal to convert the state ECEAP program to a state Head Start program. 2 reasons:

1. Policy – create efficiencies, raise quality and accountability, and enable more money to go into state program
2. Politics – not everyone knows ECEAP. It might be easier to build support for early learning overall if we have better name recognition.

We've had meetings with legislative staff, elected officials, etc to discuss the possibilities.

We've learned a few things. We're not Oregon – we're going to have to do things a bit differently.

Discussion of Strengths of programs:

ECEAP	HEAD START	SIMILARITIES
People who administer it on the state level are very knowledgeable	Easier to get your money. You get it in advance.	We all care about children and families, committed to kids.
State people have control, and the people who are in control have the knowledge	Name recognition	Staff qualifications similar after reauthorization.
Can meet needs of specific community. Flexible – they can develop a curriculum that works for their community	Parents shared governance is truly institutionalized and codified in the law. In ECEAP it's advisory	Good training
Years of great service	Early Head Start	Self assessment
Many programs very close to local schools	Child outcomes framework, intensity of looking at outcomes important for quality	Similar work plans for both programs – no huge difference for dually funded programs
Able to serve very rural areas, which is difficult with HS	Number of hours in classroom.	Comprehensive services provided, though maybe a little intense for HS
Easy to do blended classroom with special ed, adjusted hours, etc when working with schools	10% disabled, intensive requirements to serve children with disabilities	Both serve children with disabilities. Many do through school districts.
Performance standards aren't as prescriptive	Great trainings	
Not as much paperwork, so more time can be spent on direct services	You can tailor the curriculum to the culture of the community	
In ECEAP, you can get waivers right here with someone you know at DEL, not have to wait 6 weeks from	System set up for capacity building, infrastructure, start-up money	

WA DC		
Program reviews are positive experiences, with strengths identified, and by people in-state	Boundaries are clear in head start, and service area agreements are required	
Reviewers can provide TA	Lots of research (for ECEAP too)	
Data management system easier to work through	Comprehensive – looking at whole family, not just child	
Self-assessment tool is very good.	State collaboration office	
Very strong parent piece, family services, parent education, etc	Community assessment & planning process is very thorough	
Some of the ECEAP initiatives aren't just started, they're supported by state and followed through	Systems approach to self-assessment very good	

Comments and questions:

In past years in Oregon, in dually funded programs an Oregon staff person could come on the review.

Sara Bartrum just had an ECEAP review, and found that the ECEAP review has become more like the federal review, more structured. What's nice is that they can help you with technical assistance.

Some of the items on the list are political in nature – like reviewing. Currently ECEAP reviews are fair, but they haven't been in the past. At one point I'd have preferred to get a federal review. And vice versa.

Agreed – I've had very supportive reviews with TA from the feds, and it varies.

More paperwork in HS largely due to documenting individualized outcomes, health histories, etc. Often we do more on the program level than required, that makes extra work above and beyond the standards. Individual agencies have varying loads of paperwork depending on how they do their documentation.

Benefits of Linkage proposal

- Name recognition
 - This goes back to previous question about why can't we just increase ECEAP funding – the name recognition has been a problem in the legislature itself.
- With Pre-K spreading, HS reauthorization, etc this is a good time to do more collaboration.

- It would be nice to have a single contract cycle, single point of contact for grants, streamlined application cycle, etc.
- Opportunity to improve HS by learning from ECEAP
- Region X more willing to provide flexibility to support this collaboration.
- Increase slot rate for ECEAP. We wouldn't do this if we weren't going to get the same amount of money for ECEAP as HS.
- ECEAP can count as federal match.
- Clearer definition of service areas, service level coordination.
- Administrative efficiency for dually funded programs.
- Could also have efficiencies on the state level, collaboration with feds.
- Very small staff at Oregon DOE – that money could go into programs.
- Bring programs together.
- Yakima and White Center are trying to serve all children birth to 5. This could be a step toward quality EC programs for all children.
- We've been fighting so long, and there are so many families in need, and we have partners who are no longer as willing to partner with us. If we're no longer in the situation where we have to fight and fight and fight, we can spend more energy on some of the other community needs.
- We need to think about why we're in this line of business. We are capable of taking on the paperwork challenges if there are benefits to children and families. We require exactly the same high standards to both ECEAP and HS.

How are we benefiting children and families? That may be what we want to focus on to get away from turf issues.

ECEAP is and will raise their requirements too as they increase funding – this may create a more consistent system.

Lots of groups interested in moving money from low-income programs and spread it out into academic pre-school for all children.

We have great leaders who are interested in doing something significant for low-income kids right now – who knows if they'll still be interested in two years. Stars don't align like this very often.

Challenges

- If I were a state legislator, I would spend the money on child care, where the money seems to be more needed. Take a serious look at child care subsidy and QRIS, where children aren't been well served at all.
 - We've had conversations with WAEYC about this, about including child care in future phases.

- Additional paperwork requirements and loss of flexibility could limit the services that ECEAP can provide.

Moving ahead

- Most needed areas of flexibility – hours and transportation, class size.
- Phasing needed, speed of phase-in. How would you do it?
- Need some federal waivers.
- ECEAP only would still work exclusively with DEL.
- HS only programs with a shared service area with an ECEAP only could be an issue. Formalize the interagency agreement process.
- There are other major stakeholders – DEL and Region X, etc.

We have had coalition meetings, conference calls with Nancy Hutchins, DEL people here at this meeting, and are having meeting tomorrow. They're looking to us to see what this would look like.

Dr. Richard Brandon – Kids Count, 4:30-5:15 pm

See PowerPoint presentation.

Day 2 - December 6, 2007

More topics, 9-10 am

- Early ECEAP
- Higher Ed Roundtable
- Mental Health Transformation
- Universal Pre-K in seattle

Higher Ed Roundtable

WSA is working proactively with Region X and DEL to figure out how we will meet the BA requirement in the new reauthorization. We're bringing together a group next Friday to try to come up with a plan on how to move forward to identify capacity, next steps, etc. Process will take place over the next few months.

This is similar to what happened in 92/93, but with a focus on BA's rather than AA's.

First meeting will be decision-makers, and a work group will be identified to do more research, identify models, capacity, etc. Goal will be to have a white paper that lays out

the situation and the options for the future. We'll try to have the white paper by the end of this school year.

Universal Pre-K in Seattle – Kathee Richter

The mayor of Seattle has decided he wants to explore and encourage this. A group has come together organized by City of Seattle Department of Education to look at universal pre-k's around the country. First one they were to look at was Abbots in New Jersey, but it was cancelled at the last minute. Kathee Richter went anyway, met with Dept of Ed people, gathered information, etc. The Abbot program was established in response to numerous lawsuits, charging that low income children weren't being well served by the school district.

They have 3 or 4 different options, including Abbot School (low income or living in 40% free-or-reduced-lunch school district), child care center subsidies, money for higher salaries and professional development, etc.

Their salaries are equal to public school salaries.

They have a mentor teacher system, where a non-teaching teacher mentors 15 teachers.

Money is funneled through school districts, but they would rethink that if they were to do it again. Some disconnect between programs, school districts, and state offices. They would look at different cohorts, not just school district.

Head Start programs may have had trouble fitting into the model. They had to apply to be part of it; NJ HSA wasn't necessarily enthralled by the idea. Focused more on teacher issue, not comprehensive services.

It was a huge program – way bigger than Seattle may do. Programs were state of the art, and outcomes that they shared were excellent. They were using Eckers, classroom assessment, assessment of parent/child interaction, and literacy outcomes.

They had one school with “English World, Spanish World” program. Each child was assigned two rooms, and each spent time in each in 2 week cycles. Outcomes were similar to other programs.

They had BA requirements with deadlines, and teachers who didn't make the deadline were demoted to assistant teacher. They worked with colleges and universities to set up EC degrees, had on-site classes, etc.

Kathee will send out the summary of her visit and WSA will distribute.

John Bancroft – White Center

They submitted their plan in May, but nothing has been funded yet. The parts that they are planning to fund in 2008 is a significant increase in home visiting. They're going to fund community-wide literacy, QRIS, and expand pre-k opportunities. Head Start and Educare to serve birth-5.

When we started planning the White Center project, there was no Thrive by Five. Now we're doing it in the context of what Thrive is doing statewide.

Both sites about to hire an executive director within the next month or two.

Yakima is going through a similar process. Having difficulty finding land, deciding what will be part of the plaza. There are several other partners involved in Educare in Yakima, as well as school district and ESD, so some of those issues and program governance are still being worked out.

Mental Health Transformation Project

Collaboration between DOH, UW and others.

Purpose was to ask the family policy council to look at mental health services and prevention for children birth to 5. Dept of Health was asked to provide a white paper.

There are 5 groups – EC group, school-age group, school-adult, older adults, institutionalized group.

We met in July and provided input in each of the five areas. EC was the biggest, since there are no services for 0-3.

Statewide assessment was discussed to identify needs in each of those groups. Turned into a somewhat public health model/prevention model to recommend to the legislature. Last month's meeting discussed what to present to the legislature and how to implement some prevention and early intervention strategies.

Within the next couple of weeks the draft white paper will come out again.

Early ECEAP – John Bancroft

We talked last year about having a set-aside for the state pre-k program for babies like Early Head Start. It's hard to fight against the stream of 4-year olds, 4-year olds, 4-year olds, but we should also think about including services or some sort of set-aside that will gradually increase each year for prenatal-3 also. There's more and more support from the legislature on this, mainly focused around home visiting.

Hyeok Kim - House Democratic Caucus Info & Q&A, 10-11am

Hyeok is a policy analyst with the House Democratic Caucus, and she staffs the Early Learning and Children's Services committee for Rep. Ruth Kagi. Kagi made a deliberate decision a couple of years ago to change the name to put a greater emphasis on early learning.

What's coming in 2008:

2008 is a supplemental budget year, and Governor has requested no new spending. The economy is slowing down, so the surplus isn't as big as it looks. We're trying to limit new or expanded services that create budget items that cost more down the line.

Usually these years aren't used to drive new policy, but to fix smaller issues.

With that said, every year legislators have new ideas, things they're excited about, things they hear about from their constituents. The question is how much can you spend, and where will that land.

Early learning continues to be in a good place along with the rest of the education issues. There are a number of people who are vested in a continuum of education from EL to higher ed. P-20 council, appropriations subcommittee that focuses on EL and higher ed, etc. There are structural mechanisms in place to focus on these issues.

One of the most important things in the political process is momentum. Last session had a huge impact on EL, the biggest in years. \$140 million in new general fund money for early learning programs in general. After the session, people thought we would take some time, wait until 2009 to make any additional significant changes.

HS/ECEAP Linkage Proposal

Over the summer, Speaker Chopp, who is a big education advocate, was thinking about the issue. What does ECEAP stand for? Does it matter to parents what the name is?

Rep. Kagi took his questions to heart, and began to think about where we want to see our ECEAP program going over the next few years. Looked at the Oregon model, and are having conversations about how we might start to draft legislation. Beyond that, she doesn't have any set ideas. She wants to hear from you, spend the next couple of weeks teasing out all the questions and concerns. She would like to see a merger – 1. for the benefit of the consumer, 2. build base of public support for investing more money into early learning services over all.

The creation of DEL was a similar concept, reducing fragmentation in early learning, sparking interest from newspaper editorials about the focus on early learning, etc.

Ruth would also like to have conversation about how Early Head Start might work for state funded programs.

Q&A

Carolyn Lewis – Being in a school district, one of the biggest problem is how the formula goes for building construction and use of space. They don't often qualify for expansion though they have lots of head starts and eceaps within. Also, with expansion of all-day kindergarten, there's even less space for ECEAP. It's like dominoes. She'd love to see a reworking of that formula legislatively.

With the expansion of ECEAP, we didn't really look at the capital impact of that last year. Some school districts are double hit, with both ECEAP expansion and expansion to full-day K.

John Naegele – There are other things that need to be around children and families. Mental health prevention, etc. Those are some of the things we need to think about – if we have more eceap slots but no additional resources in the community for other things families need, it's frustrating.

Yes – so many of our services are provided in 'silos', and it's hard to break that down. She'd like to talk more about how we might address that problem. There

is a law that enables local governments to levy a local tax for mental health/substance abuse programs.

John Bancroft – where is the governor on the HS/ECEAP combination?

Unlikely that it will be part of governor's budget request, so her official position would have to be that she doesn't support it. Probably her staff hasn't brought it to her yet.

Janet Anderson – Yesterday we had some concerns about the quality of child care. Do you expect that in 2009 we may be seeing some significant changes in funding for child care?

Absolutely. Proposals will be offered. Hyeok thinks collective bargaining will pass this year, and last year's increase was huge with the family child care agreement in place. In 2009 the economic picture might look very ugly, though, so who knows. Also in 2009 the QRIS recommendations will come out, so there will probably be action on that as well.

Carolyn Lewis – will the referendums/initiatives affect 2009?

Kirk – it's always better to wait and see. Hard to predict at this time.

Hyeok – outlook may be less driven by the initiatives and more by caseload predictions, etc.

Sara Bartrum – we're having a big expansion of ECEAP in January open to anyone who wants to apply. Will that make this more complicated, since there might be many other groups who want to apply?

Joel sees new ECEAP providers as a part of the process. In the future, we're looking at incorporating child care into the concept.

Sara Bartrum – The cost-per-child for ECEAP is around what it was for our HS children 10 years ago, and we've been talking about quality for the last day. Why did we get more slots rather than vendor rate?

In any program, in any level of government, it's an easier political message to expand services to more people than to increase vendor rate

Cathy Garland – part of last year's bill was about home visiting coordination, and she participated in the work group that put together the report. EHS was included in the report. As we move forward on the home visiting issues, we should remember that EHS should be part of that discussion.

John Bancroft – that's why it's important to describe this as an expansion of services to children and families, not "parity" with head start or anything else, which nobody cares about.

Other issues in 2008

Kagi is also asking for more money for home visiting (3 million). No other big policy initiatives on the table at the moment.

Collective Bargaining goes through Commerce and Labor committee, and that will be a big issue.

K-12 education committees passed a dropout prevention task force, so the recommendations of that task force might bring up some issues.

Nancy Hutchins – Region X Update, 11-12:15 pm

It's sometimes very good to talk to the regional office. Head Start's not taking over ECEAP – we're looking for partnerships, raising quality, etc. We don't like the word 'merger', it doesn't reflect the separate identities, separate funding sources, etc.

Reauthorization process

House signing ceremony was yesterday, and the president will sign it. As soon as he signs it it becomes official.

There are a lot of prescriptive requirements, more than before. OHS is gearing up, going back to DC, figuring out how it will roll out, what will be done in Regional offices, etc. The state collab officers will be coming in in February, as their jobs are greatly changing.

Also spending a lot of time talking about how the new things will be different from the past, how can we better define the performance standards.

One example – eligibility, HS-EHS conversion, etc. OHS will decide how they will interpret that, give guidance to programs.

Couple of things out there that you may be interested in:

- Initiative and Improvement Grants, January 08 available. Array of topics – health ed for parents; mental health; grandparents; disability services and inclusion, etc.
- Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play. Looking for an agency for a 3 year grant, 3 million. Related to *I am Moving I am Learning*.
- Johnson & Johnson. Great leadership opportunity.

Risk Assessment

We're finding (per the GAO) that we're not consistently proactive, not noting early enough that there are fiscal problems or other problems. For the last year we've been trying to figure out how to do that in a more systematic way.

New person Patricia Brown, acting OHS director, had done risk assessment in her area (Oklahoma). We will come up with a consistent national approach to this. It'll look not just at fiscal, but PIR, media attention, etc. It will enable to be preventative rather than reactive, and a partnership with grantees/regional office/T&TA.

It's a move to prevention/early intervention model. Determine the need and intensity of T&TA

Regions will review programs in 'enterprise system' which will include all that information. Then they will have conversations about what's working well, what needs assistance.

Should be rolled out by Webinar 3rd week in January.

Other issues

Grantees that have put in a non-federal share waiver are in process, and we're waiting for approval from OHS.

Important that programs stay in close contact with Region X, including emergency situations, media, etc.

Pleased to be part of Higher Ed roundtable.

Q&A

Carolyn Lewis – Any movement on the transportation issue?

We continue to have discussion about transportation. Also FYI, there's a 5 year life expectancy on child restraints, so programs should make sure they are still working.

Are you looking at how many children have lost bus transportation, in their own cars where accident rate is higher, etc.

We're aware. We encourage programs to watch their attendance. The real question is whether we're meeting the needs of families. Gas prices are very high.

Mary Tatham – In the process of reauthorization, some things seem cut and dried, other things require guidance. Should we just start doing things, or what should we wait on?

Don't do anything too drastic. We'll let you know what you can go ahead and do, and what we'll need more time on. There may be some very complicated changes, that may require policy changes on the program/policy council level.

Does that effect programs that are going to be reviewed this year?

I think there would be some consideration in reviews of the transition time needed to meet the new requirements.

Janet Anderson – In previous performance standard revisions, we've been able to participate in statewide workgroups. We'd be willing to help with that.

The reason for the performance standard revisions are different this time, since this time it's to become consistent with the legislation, and it should be on a faster track. If you have specific concerns or recommendations, let us know.

Janet Anderson – We've alluded during our discussion about the HS/ECEAP linkage proposal to the possibility of waivers from the federal government on some of those issues.

Building the partnership with states and with child care is a major Head Start initiative. We do know that there is sometimes a perceived policy barrier. Some

of the problems are perceptions. For example, California has a strong Pre-K program, and they're partnering with the regional office. They have 20 kids in all the classes, and they got a waiver for that. If it's in the best interest for the partnership, it can happen. Waivers have been granted in many scenarios, and where appropriate, it can happen here in WA. Could be either a statewide waiver or program waiver or both. Waivers come to the regional office, get justification, and send it to OHS. Program waivers only last a year, and must be renewed. It's a new day, and many things that might not have been possible before, may be possible now.

Janet Anderson – do you think there are benefits to the ECEAP/HS partnership?

Eceap does have some advantages that HS doesn't have, and one of those is flexibility. The programs can work to provide services that work for the community, and can be in partnership, not competition with Head Start.

Sara Bartrum – what about Early Alerts?

Early Alert has changed, and we haven't been calling you as much lately. However, as the Risk Assessment process comes into being in 2008, that will be a bigger, more prescriptive process with different timelines than Early Alert. The Risk Assessment tool is similar but broader than Early Alert.

How does Region X office relate to Oregon?

Our jointly funded grantees get money from State head start and federal head start. They have adopted all the HS performance standards, and have a couple of standards that are higher than federal. They honor prism monitoring system. They were given a choice that they could be part of this prism process, but they had to be a reviewer, not a co-lead or whatever, since they want outside people with fresh eyes doing the reviews. ODE accepts our report, not their own form, and they send a letter to the grantee saying they have to do the following things.

They do all grantees on the same funding cycle.

Sometimes we change the funding ratios and request additional information if numbers change. All children are reported as Head Start children.

There are three programs in WA who are doing the HS performance standards in ECEAP, so they get non-federal share for those children.

Originally Oregon was funded equally, but now Oregon Pre-K gets less than that. OHS doesn't require 'parity'. Non-federal share is available if you meet eligibility requirements and provide comprehensive services.

Couple of concerns – OHS isn't that fond of double sessions. Also, Oregon pre-k has expansion with no planning time.

Carolyn Lewis – How did Oregon start?

Dana Connelly – They waited to see how WA did it, then did it differently.

Nancy Hutchins – they started with the premise that they wanted the same cost and the same performance standards as Head Start.

John Bancroft – in WA, they did make it almost exactly the performance standards and \$\$, but the governor wanted it to be his legacy, so set it up separately from Head Start.

Sara Bartrum – What's being done about duplication of services?

Nancy and Claudia Shanley at DEL are meeting to talk about this today. Nancy has heard concerns from grantees about this, cooperative agreements, etc and how the next phase of ECEAP expansion might work.

Kelli Bohanon (DEL HS-SCO) and Karen Sporn (DSHS), 1:30-2:30 pm

See PowerPoint presentations.

Kursten Holabird, SEIU and Mary Jo Shannon, AFT/WEA - Collective Bargaining, 2:30-3:00 pm

A few years ago family child care providers came together as a unit to gain more leverage for child care subsidies. They just passed their first contract with the state over subsidy rates, and got 10% increase, plus money for training and bonuses for training. Also eligibility for health insurance in certain cases.

Combination of family child care effort and the effort to raise standards in the profession. We heard from a lot of centers asking if they could get in on it somehow, but at the time we said we couldn't do it. We had to figure out how to work out how that might work.

Both AFT and SEIU have organized in the past, and when teachers and directors are sitting across the table bargaining for resources that don't exist, it doesn't work. It's not a model that works.

Mary Jo introduced the model that they are putting forward for the legislative session this year. It's a very non-traditional labor union model.

This model is organized around centers that have state-subsidized children. Negotiating with state over very narrow areas – subsidies, benefits, and professional development. The bargaining unit would have nothing to do with hiring, firing, working conditions, etc.

Right now there's 40% turnover in staff, and we're hoping additional resources will help stabilize workforce.

This exempts community college centers, tribes, and if you're running Head Start without using cc subsidy, it wouldn't apply to you either.

HS/ECEAP might not be part of the bargaining unit, but its voice could help set the direction of EL in the state.

Q&A

Mary Tatham – What’s WEEL?

AFT/WEA is WEEL.

That was one of our questions – why are there two different organizations going to the legislature?

There are three unions working together on this. We’ll be working in different parts of the state, based on DSHS regions. If the legislation passes, we would come together to work on one contract.

Cathy – what does ‘all other economic issues’ mean?

We’re looking at other incentives around professional development, for example.

John Naegele – Right now the legislation doesn’t look at working conditions, hiring/firing, grievances. What will keep these from being added later?

It’s written in to the legislation that these will be the limitations. There’s not much incentive from a union perspective to organize in the traditional way.

Janice Deguchi – So an employee could be represented by this, and also by a union that could represent them for working conditions etc.

Yes.

What about dues?

There would be a representation fee that would come from the state that would be bargained at the table, a certain percentage of the subsidy. We also have an affiliate membership program that we invite people to join at \$50 a year.

John Bancroft – How would it improve quality of care?

We’re really into this quality conversation. In low quality center, there is very high turnover. Where there is turnover, there’s no consistency, they can’t get accredited. With a stable workforce we can build quality. Also, there’s no incentive for people to get education they want and need and come back to child care centers.

Family child care contract is an example – union’s focus is not on working conditions, but on resources to raise quality, wages, professional development, benefits.

Mary Tatham – your rep told us you had to gain enough signatures.

Yes, after it passes, we have to get a list of child care centers, then get 30% of people to approve. The legislation doesn’t create a union, it just makes it possible, pending approval.

This model is very different from normal union. Workers could do that now – for this model, we need enabling legislation. Private/public issues, etc.

John Naegele – What was incentive for WEA/AFT to do this?

Washington Learns is about cradle to grave – we represent 80K K-12 staff, so we care a lot about early learning. AFT and SEIU have both been involved in The Collaborative for years, and has been involved in centers for years.

John Bancroft – What ensures that the subsidy gets down to the programs, and what about programs with partly subsidized/partly unsubsidized children? Would it price out the private pay folks?

It would need to be worked out. We are trying to drive new resources into early learning. Career and wage ladder is also mentioned in the legislation.

Question 2 – if you put more resources into the centers, the private payers may not have to subsidize the others so much.

You mentioned that the representation fee is included at the bargaining table – did the family care 10% include the fee?

Yes, 2% up to \$50 comes out of subsidy checks.

We won't be getting involved in salary schedules like WEA. And we don't want to reward people just for being there, but want to reward quality outcomes.

Joel – What specific guarantees are there that we won't be straightjacketed, isn't this a back-door organizing thing.

As part of this, the bill specifically says that we have given up our ability to bargain on those issue. Directors will be part of the bargaining unit, will be able to vote, be at the table.

How do we know that there will be more money if we do this?

There is a precedent, with the family child care bargaining. The combined power, they would bargain with the state. The state would have a legal obligation to bargain. We're trying to get a bigger pie, not just slice up the existing pie.

Rick Garza – most of our funding is federal dollars. There are mechanisms in place to advocate for state dollars, like through WSA. This seems like a benefit to programs who get child care subsidies, not us.

Janice Deguchi – do you have a specific ask for us?

We would love to have your support, maybe sign on to the advocate support letter, talk to legislators, info to staff.