



STRATEGIC PLAN

2009 – 2011

INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Association of Head Start/ECEAP (WSA) is a statewide membership organization for Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Programs (ECEAP). Members represent programs providing Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant Head Start, Native American Head Start and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). The Association has been existence since the late 1960s; in 1986 it was incorporated as a non-profit organization in the State of Washington.

WSA is dedicated to giving low income children an opportunity to live up to their fullest potentials. We do that by strengthening and energizing our programs, the people who work for them, the parents and families we serve, key decision-makers, and the larger community. Our goal is simple: get children to the starting line and provide them the same chance to succeed in school and later in life.

WSA understands that we live in a global economy that is fast changing. WSA commits its resources, expertise, hopes and faith to designing programs with our eyes to the future and our fingers on the pulse of what's happening today. We seek to keep the PULSE on our community by advocating on behalf of and providing training for programs that benefit low income children and families. Over the next three years we will provide strong leadership through quality training, a unifying approach, innovative leadership, strong stewardship of the organization and strategic outreach.

Our new 3 year strategic plan begins in October 2008 and will run through August of 2011 and will set the direction for our organization. We want to thank our board of directors, our consultant Terry Taylor, and the many volunteers and friends that provided input into this year-long process.

PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT

WSA is a catalyst for creating opportunities for children, families and communities through quality training, collaboration and advocacy for Head Start, Early Head start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Programs (ECEAP).

VALUES:

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| Diversity – | We value uniqueness and inclusion. |
| Leadership – | We lead with integrity and initiate change. |
| Innovation – | We are on the forefront of early childhood education, policy development and organizational leadership. |
| Respect – | Everyone has a contribution and we value their perspectives. |
| Quality – | We are committed to excellence and high standards. |
| Accountability – | We are committed to effectively meet our mandates and the expectations of our stakeholders. |

VISION

WSA is the sought after, credible leader in early childhood education effectively serving families, programs and communities.

GOALS

- P** – Strengthen Providers
- U** – Unify Programs
- L** – Provide Organizational Leadership
- S** – Stewardship
- E** – External Outreach

GOAL P = STRENGTHEN PROVIDERS

Our programs deserve to have the best possible training and networking opportunities available. This is critical so that they can continue to provide high quality programming to low income children and families. Our training capacity should be high quality, accessible, and responsive to the specific needs of our community. Our customers must see us as the “go to” place for training. We must also find ways to strengthen programs through partnerships, services, and other key projects that will assist our members in serving children.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. **Head Start/ECEAP Coaches Program.** The goal of this initiative is to develop a peer to peer training model for program directors. Coaches would be available to provide technical assistance to local programs on a variety of key issues.

2. **Best Practices Clearinghouse.** The WSA web site will become a “go to” place to learn about the best practices in the early learning community.
3. **Comprehensive training plan to meet the needs of our membership.** A quality and training committee will be convened to review and make recommendations on potential training offerings. This will include a top down review of current conferences and events as well as recommendations for new ideas and concepts. Some new ideas already include the use of webinars and other technologies to deliver high quality training at an affordable cost.
4. **Training registry for local programs.** WSA web site will contain contact information for programs to connect with local trainers and consultants by topic area.
5. **Monthly parent newsletter.** Each month WSA will produce a short newsletter for parents that will provide information about events, activities, success stories and advocacy opportunities.
6. **Voter Education.** Each election year WSA will make available to local programs information about how to register parents to vote, information about candidates, and the available resources to be an informed voter.

GOAL U = UNIFY PROGRAMS/PARENTS

We seek to actively engage and listen to all of our members so we may serve their interests and meet their needs. Success to us is to engage parents, ECEAP programs, and tribal programs. We find and create opportunities to listen to our members. We do this by being open to hearing and truly listening to all points of view.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. **Better Engage Parents.** WSA will develop a plan to better engage parents in our advocacy campaigns. We will also seek to provide more specific training and services that meet the needs of parents. Some initial conversations have revolved around parent advocacy, improved communication with WSA, and policy council training.
2. **Translate WSA Materials Into Spanish.** WSA hopes to engage all members of our community. We believe one step in doing this is to ensure that members of our Spanish speaking community can fully participate by translating our new parent newsletter and conference materials into Spanish.
3. **Engage ECEAP Providers.** WSA recognizes that we need to do a better job of engaging and working with our ECEAP providers. In concert with ECEAP programs we will develop an engagement plan so that all of our members feel welcomed and valued within our community. As a starting point WSA will begin hosting an ECEAP Directors meeting each December.
4. **Engage Migrant Populations.** Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Early Head Start programs offer unique challenges and opportunities for WSA outreach and support. We are

committed to working with these special populations on a plan to ensure that we are providing these populations with useful services and products.

5. **Engage Tribal Populations.** WSA’s membership includes tribal programs with unique interests and concerns. We will develop a plan to engage these programs in a culturally relevant way and provide services and training that are valuable to their staff and families.

GOAL L = ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WSA will look for every opportunity to stay sharp and ahead of the game. We will position ourselves proactively to lead and not be left behind. We will create avenues to constantly examine what we are doing, what the future holds, and what steps are necessary to continuously grow and improve. We shall remain a valuable partner with the Department of Early Learning and the Region X Office. We are experts on early education and move issues and ideas in a positive direction.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. **Honorary Board of Business and Community Leaders.** We need to broaden our “friends” pool and engage strategic partnerships that will serve the interests of our membership. WSA hopes to set up an honorary business and community leaders’ board that will advise and serve as a critical resource for the association.
2. **WSA Leadership Academy.** Modeled after the very successful UCLA Johnson and Johnson Program, WSA will launch a similar Washington version. The focus will be on management strategies, fund development, and leadership skills. It will also tackle the fiscal and governance issues critical to running a high quality Head Start or ECEAP program.
3. **New Head Start/ECEAP Directors Support System.** We will seek to develop specialized training, resources, and networking opportunities for all new Head Start and ECEAP directors.
4. **Broker of Services, Partnerships, and Resources.** WSA will look for key partnerships, services, and resources that will benefit the community. One concept discussed has been the request by several directors that WSA provide all programs with a state wide Wage Comparability Study.
5. **Think Tank.** To keep sharp and on top of the latest issues WSA will convene a yearly think tank to assess the early learning environment and to make recommendations to our board of directors.
6. **Universal Pre-K Position Paper.** In order to pro-active and in front of the pre-k movement, WSA will develop its own universal pre-k position paper that respects the Head Start/ECEAP comprehensive model.

GOAL S = STEWARDSHIP

We ensure our fiduciary responsibility and pass on balanced books. We focus on obtaining grants and sponsorships to support our work. We look at ways to promote our organization to the public and find creative avenues to raise public awareness and funding. We ensure strong processes and systems so that our work product is top of the line and the organization is managed well.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 1. Fiscal Management and Oversight.** WSA values the financial support and contribution of its members. We want to make sure all funding received by the association is spent wisely and that members have a clear understanding of where funding is being spent. We will seek to provide clear budget information and reports to our members and have strong systems in place to safeguard financial resources. We will continue to present our full budget at WSA meetings, put together mini-budgets for each event, and conduct a yearly mini-audit of our books to ensure all fiscal procedures are being met.
- 2. Fund Development Plan.** WSA will continue to diversify our funding streams and increase revenue into the association so that we have the resources to provide more services to our members.

GOAL E = EXTERNAL OUTREACH

WSA is the driving force for positive change in the field of early education will continue to highlight the success of Head Start and ECEAP to key decision makers, the public, and friends of both programs.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- 1. Marketing/Public Relations Plan.** We will raise the visibility of WSA and Head Start and ECEAP programs throughout the state. Some initial ideas include: a success stories campaign, new marketing pieces for the association, better use of our web site, and the creation of an annual report.
- 2. Awards Program.** Each year WSA will give out awards to celebrate and highlight the outstanding work of Head Start and ECEAP programs.
- 3. Outcomes Report.** Each year WSA will put out a state wide report that highlights the progress children are making in our programs. We will use this report to influence policy and to assist local programs.
- 4. Business Outreach.** Business leaders see the need to invest in early learning. WSA will seek to bring better awareness of Head Start and ECEAP to the business community in the hopes of influencing policy and developing strategic partnership that will benefit the community.