



2009 Early Learning Action Alliance Policy Agenda

Coalition members:

American Federation of Teachers
Washington

Business Partnership for Early
Learning (BPEL)

Child Care Resources

Children's Alliance

Children's Home Society of WA

Community Network Coalition

Denise Louie Education Center

Economic Opportunity Institute

First Five Fundamentals of Pierce
County

Kirlin Charitable Foundation

League of Education Voters

League of Women Voters
Washington

Minority Executive Directors
Coalition of King County

Nurse Family Partnership

Parent Trust for Washington
Children/Parents as Teachers
State Office

Program for Early Parent Support
(PEPS)

Reach Out and Read Washington
State

Ready by Five

SEIU, Local 925

SOAR

WA Association for the Education
of Young Children (WAEYC)

WA Chapter American Academy
of Pediatrics

WA State Child Care Resource &
Referral Network

WA State Family Child Care
Association

WA Federation of State
Employees (WFSE)

White Center Early Learning
Initiative

WPEA/UFCW 365

The Early Learning Action Alliance recognizes that as the foundation for success, **preserving existing investments for children birth to five** is crucial to Washington's future. In addition, we have prioritized the following:

- ❖ **Adopt HB 2261/SB 6048 with the inclusion of early learning for at-risk 3-4 year olds in the definition of basic education.** A central purpose of public education is to help give all children the equal opportunity to succeed in school and life. This starts with ensuring that all students enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Including preschool for all low-income children in the definition of basic education will narrow the kindergarten readiness gap by ensuring that nearly 13,000 at-risk kids would have access to high-quality early learning. This recommendation should be phased over six years within the current mixed delivery system.
- ❖ **Protect voluntary evidence-based home visiting programs to serve at-risk families.** Parents are their children's first and most important teachers. Research shows that home visiting programs provide at-risk parents with the support they need to get their children ready for school. Keep Washington's \$3.5 million investment to provide services through the Council for Children and Families for 1,600 low-income families each biennium in Washington.
- ❖ **Improve early learning and care by creating a streamlined system in HB 1943 and maintain supports for professional development.** Adopt HB 1943, the Pathways to Quality Bill, to develop a plan for a comprehensive statewide professional development system that gives early learning providers straightforward access to the educational opportunities and supports they need to deliver high-quality education and care. And maintain current funding levels that encourage professional development (\$3 million for Career and Wage Ladder) and continue delivery of core services that help parents access quality early learning (\$4 million for Child Care Resource and Referral Network).
- ❖ **Support incorporating the elements of HB 1754 which reform components of child care subsidies to increase the efficiency of the system and the stability of children's care.** Proposed changes will lessen the paperwork burden on providers through longer reauthorization period, expansion of excused absences, and limits on the child care co-pay. Low-income families will have a wider range of affordable early learning opportunities and children will be more likely to experience the continuity of care they need.

A subset of our coalition also supports collective bargaining for child care

centers: HB 1329/SB 5572. Passing this legislation gives child care providers—who are responsible for our state's most precious resource—a voice, helps stabilize the workforce, and provides the first step necessary to improve quality care and early learning across Washington.

Subset member organizations:

Denise Louie Education Center, League of Education Voters, SEIU, Local 925, Washington Family Child Care Association, WPEA/UFCW 365, AFT WA, Economic Opportunity Institute, Children's Alliance, Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King County

The Early Learning Action Alliance is convened by the Children's Alliance.

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