



Washington State Department of

**Early Learning**

# Standards Alignment Advisory Committee

*February 19, 2016*



# Agenda

- Welcome, Luba Bezborodnikova
- Alignment Project Status Update, Harriet Dichter
- Standards Writing Approach, Harriet Dichter
- Community Input Summary, Luba Bezborodnikova
- Community Feedback - April 2016, Luba Bezborodnikova
- Alignment Communication, Valisa Smith
- Summary, next steps, Luba Bezborodnikova

# Alignment - Small and Big Wins

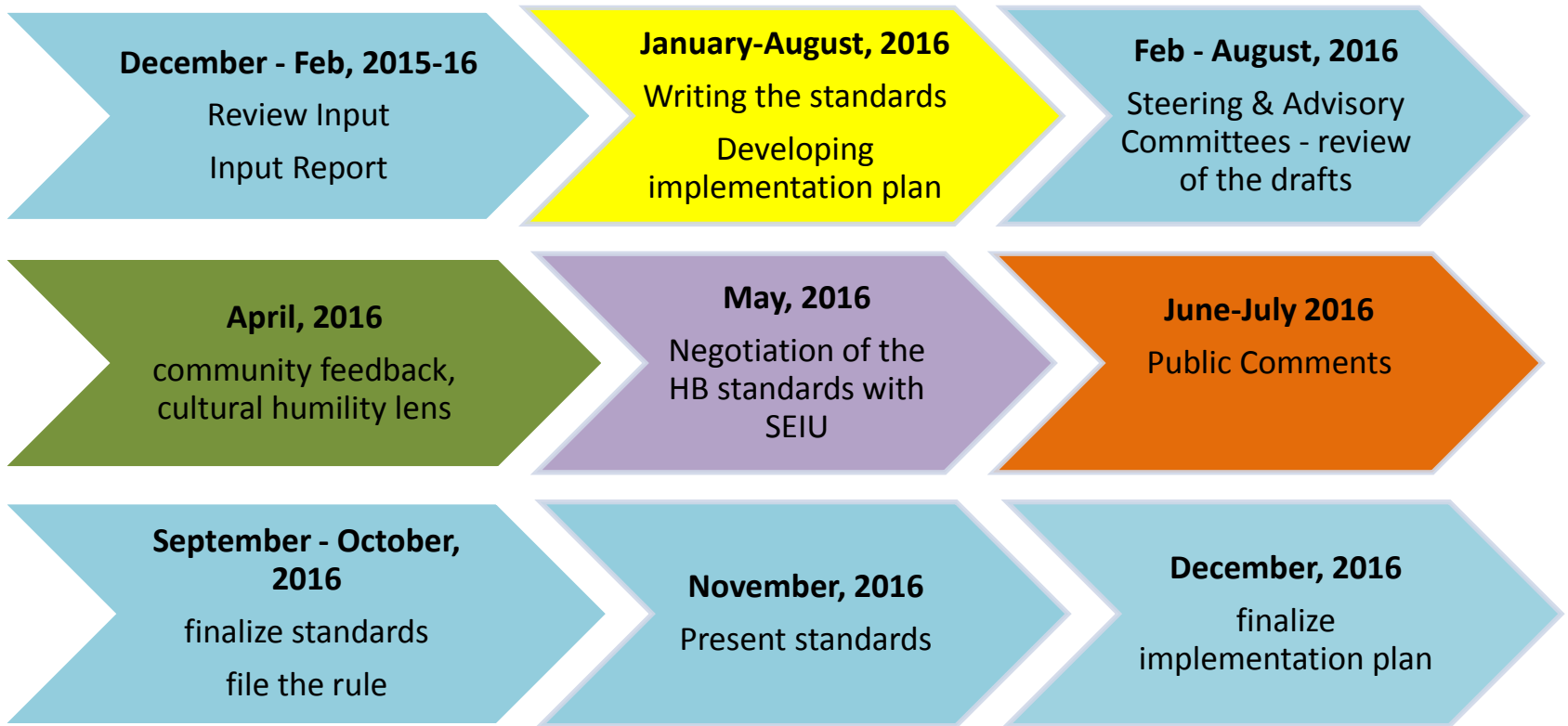
- Common vision— focus on children
- Staying true to the alignment process principles
- Collaborative team work, commitment and dedication – collective ownership
- Deep analysis of the standards progressions' materials and tools – data informed process
- Shared understanding of the new standards - sustainability

# Early Start Act, Standards Alignment Press

- The News Tribune
- National Institute for Early Education Research
- New America EdCentral
- National Women's Law Center
- Seattle Times

# Alignment Status Update

## Timeline, Dependencies



# Alignment, Writing Process Approach

- It's a big task!!!
- 5 Main Categories (Child Outcomes, Environment, Interactions and Curriculum, Family Engagement and Partnerships, Professional Development)
- 78 subcategories
- Great documents to inform the writing: analysis done in the past year, Caring for Our Children Basics, community input documents, etc.

# Alignment, Writing Process Approach

- Writing teams
- Licensing rules drafted first with changes outlined for Early Achievers and ECEAP. Drafting of Early Achievers and ECEAP comes next
- Multiple reviewers:
  - Review process within DEL
  - Spring community input Process
  - Home-based rules are discussed with the union

# Review - Standards Writing Process

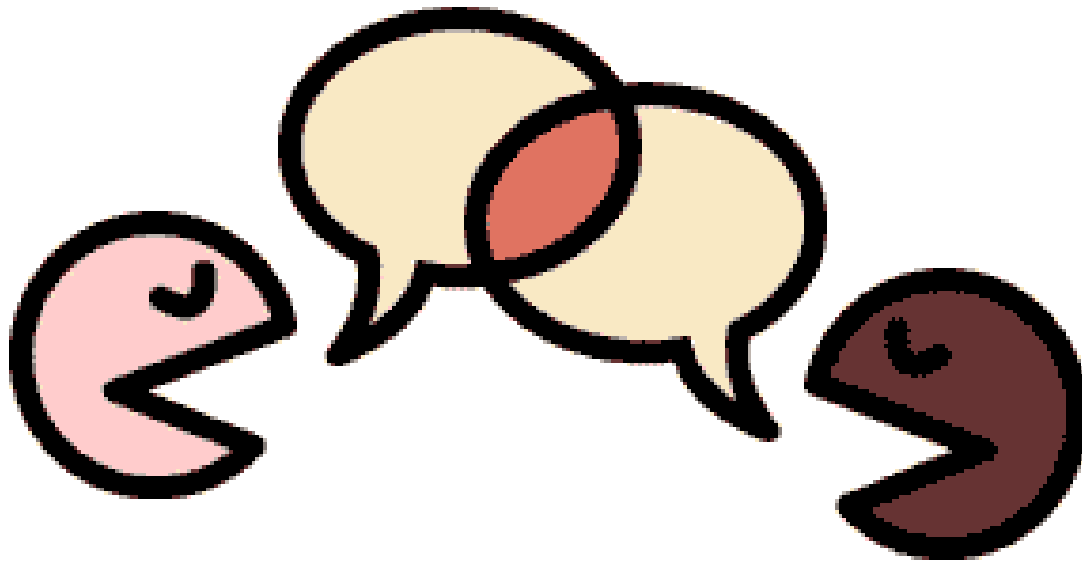
Category	Licensing (WAC)	Early Achievers	ECEAP
<b>Administration and Oversight</b>			
Definitions	X	X	X
Authority	X	X	X
Administration	X	X	X
<b>Quality Programs</b>			
Child Outcomes	X	X	X
Environment	X	X	X
Interactions and Curriculum	X	X	X
Professional Development and Training	X	X	X
Family Engagement and Partnership	X	X	X



# Review - Standards Writing Process

- Enthusiastic team members, eager to participate and contribute
- Child focused in the progression writing-here to enrich the lives of children
- Team collaboration is going well internally
- Excellent resources to inform the writing
- Writers with the big picture in mind-making sure all areas considered and not forgotten
- Satisfaction of seeing writing sections come together with clear progression and simplification
- Team members taking the time to educate each other about their respective programs
- Writers willingness to go through the hard work and struggle in their writing journey

# Alignment Status Update & Writing Approach Questions & Suggestions



# Community Input, Process

- DEL partnered with Thrive by Five and 10 Washington Early Learning Regional Coalitions: First 5 FUNdamentals, Olympic-Kitsap, South West Early Learning (SWEL), investing in Children, Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance (INWELA), North Central, SOAR, Northwest, Southeast, and Visions for Early Learning.
- From November 15 through December 13, 2015, there were 22 community meetings with 110 focus groups that were conducted for early learning educators, partners, and community members
- A population-wide survey was developed and in December 2015 until the last week of January 2016 early learning educators, partners, and community members were invited to complete the survey.
- The community input materials were made available in English, Spanish, Somali, Oromo, Amharic, and Russian languages.
- Altogether, there were more than a thousand early learning educators, partners and community members who participated in the community input process (including DEL staff)

# Community Input, Methodology

- The Community Input methodology used two data collection strategies - regional focus groups and a broad-reaching survey via an Online Community Input Portal
- To discuss the proposed standards alignment options in the identified 5 content areas the 4 questions had served as guideposts for quantitative and qualitative information to be gathered from various stakeholders
- The objective of a population-wide survey and regional discussion groups was to collect data from across all state-wide communities engaging diverse populations of early learning educators
- The input Information that had been collected through the focus groups and the survey was summarized according to the main ideas or themes that are reflected in them
- The theme had been defined as significant and prioritized based on how many times an idea had been commented in the input data (more than 5 times – prioritize, 3 to 5 times – consider, 2 to 3 times - note).

# Community Input

## Key Messages Summary

- No consensus in choosing a particular option
- Focus on support system and resources – licensing TA, shared services hubs, cross-sector work, high ed, workforce development
- Elimination of inconsistencies in licensing, EA and ECEAP requirements
- Elimination of inconsistencies in monitoring processes
- Development of shared language – Caring for Our Children, ERS, DAP, CLASS
- Consideration of cultural, programmatic, linguistic, setting, space, and geography components
- Consideration of provider business relationships with families
- Understanding of the current education/qualification status of providers, current capacity of high ed capacity, and a level of available resources and supports
- Resources for improving providers business practices

# Community Input, Key Messages

## Child Outcomes & Family Engagement

- Create a list of state “approved” developmental screening tools; start requiring developmental screening from EA levels 3, prepare licensed providers for developmental screening activities at the EA 1-2; include developmental screening in parent handbook at the licensing level
- Develop regional hubs with additional and comprehensive services for all providers
- Bring ECEAP standard of informing parents about community resources and supporting access into licensing requirements; add child transitions and communication with families in licensing; focus family engagement on child progress
- require licensing to conduct a home language survey/interview with families; include to ECEAP performance standards DLL individualized plans and family supports

# Community Input, Key Messages

## Unaligned Licensing Regulations

- Include to the authority statement DEL's responsibility to provide customer support and technical assistance
- Administrative policies should be standard for all programs
- Eliminate licensing and Early Achievers inconsistencies in regulations
- Establish an alignment of the health and fire codes
- Use 'Caring for Our Children' and ERS for developing common language and expectations
- Safety regulations must be the same for all programs and providers
- Consider setting differences – home and center, rural and urban
- DEL need to develop a policy or at least a mission statement regarding services for DLL children and families

# Community Input, Key Messages

## Environments

- Support developing culturally relevant menus in consideration with health and USDA requirements
- Food allergies need to be included in licensing
- Require social interactions during meals
- Nap and Rest Time - review requirements with a cultural lens
- Space accessibility for inclusion (ADA)
- Soft Furnishings could not be a requirement due to health and safety hazards
- Have measurable basic requirements in WAC based on safety and Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Diapers checking every 2 hours should be basic licensing regulation
- Space for privacy language needs to start from licensing as a part of what needs to be considered arranging an indoor space
- Link space for privacy to allowing children to work, learn and play independently



# Community Input, Key Messages Interactions

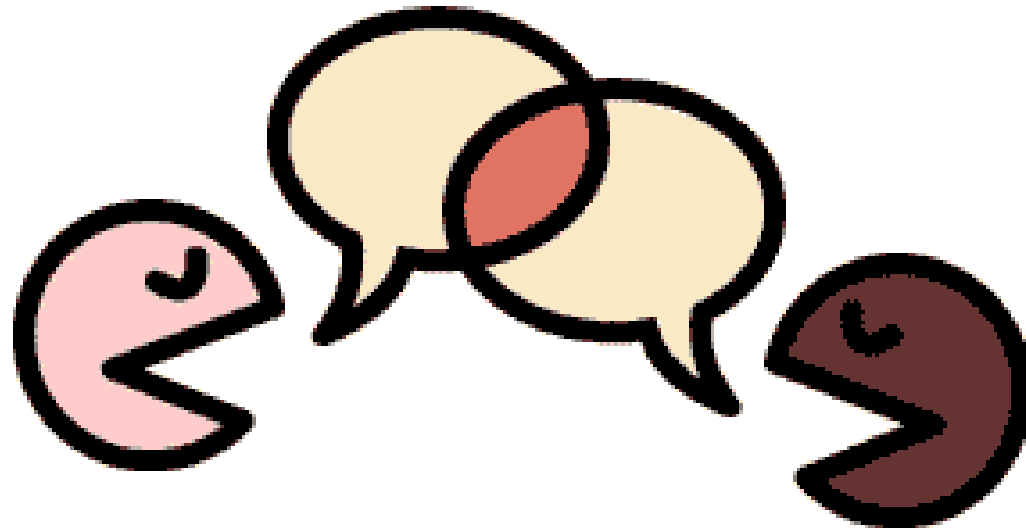
- Quality Feedback - enhance current WAC with EA language
- Add a pre-expulsion and communication process to licensing
- No Expulsion, but ensure a provider right to not serve a particular family for business reasons, include transition plan
- require an “organized and safe” departure process but describe this expectation specifically in licensing and don’t make the requirement too restrictive
- warm greetings and goodbyes should be happening, but could look differently (cultural lens) - acknowledgement should be required
- Make a clear rule who can restraint, how, include ongoing training and what supports are available
- Have a strong WAC language - restraint is for safety only! It has nothing to do with discipline.
- Schedule - Adapt EA language to replace licensing. Missing a free play progression

# Community Input, Key Messages

## Professional Development & Staff Support

- Aim for a minimum of AA in ECE across the board, preferred BA in ECE – reward this through Early Achievers
- Early Achievers to align the education qualification requirement for providers and directors in consideration with “30 ECE credits or CDA and relate to CC experience”
- Consider Infant Mental Health credential/endorsement or something similar as credit
- Recognition and allowances for degrees earned outside of the US
- Allow time for staff to obtain ECE degree or credits. Need a specific/consistent time frame for all 3 -licensing, EA, ECEAP
- Initials Certificate is NOT enough - should be state certificate (47 credits) or ECE AA degree
- Grandfather for time in the field or life experiences
- Establish PD support in primary languages by engaging community organizations representing linguistic communities

# Community Input Questions & Suggestions



# Community Feedback, Plan

**review the standards changes by using racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion lens**

- State to Local Collaboration Approach
- Continue partnership with Thrive by Five and EL Regional Coalitions
- EL Regional Coalitions will focus on recruiting providers and stakeholders that represent local diverse communities
- Community Feedback Goal - Review projected changes and justifications by using racial equity lens and cultural humility principle. Provide feedback that support DEL to ensure equitable opportunities to access high quality care and be school ready to all WA children.
- Community Feedback Objectives:
  - Ensure children and families have the supports they need including policies, qualified staff, and safe and healthy learning environments
  - Increase collaboration between family/teacher/specialists in supporting culturally competent and inclusive learning environments

# Community Feedback, Plan

## review the standards changes by using racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion lens

### Community Feedback Process Logistics:

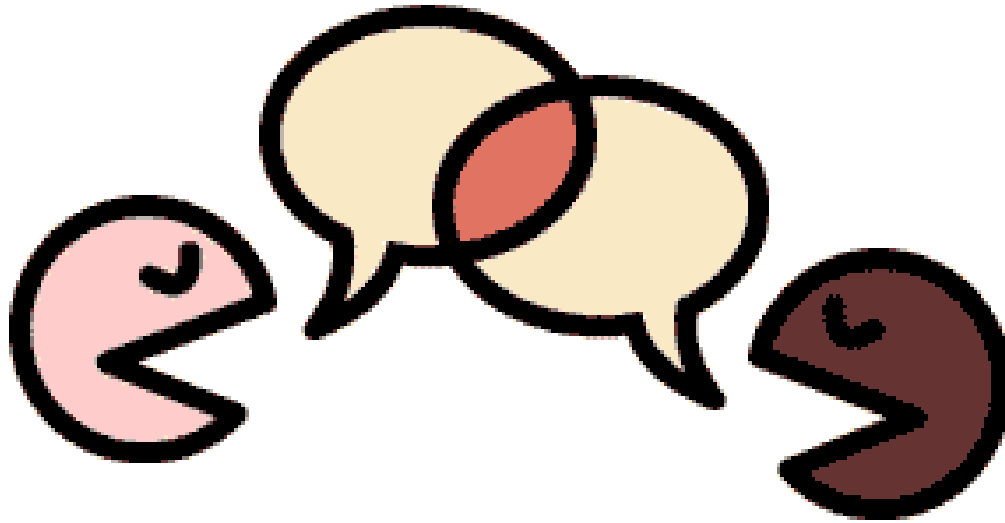
- Communities will provide feedback for 4 content areas – environments, interactions, PD, and children outcomes and family engagement
- DEL will provide materials that will cover the following: summary of the changes per area of content with justifications and 3 standards progression examples per area of content to illustrate how changes are incorporated into the standards
- DEL and EL Regional Coalitions will collaboratively develop facilitation approach and materials
- There are 5 racial equity, culture and inclusion questions that ELAC is using - suggest to use the same questions to guide the community feedback conversations
- The Community feedback meetings timeline – April 11 to 29

# Community Feedback, Plan

review the standards changes by using racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion lens

- Is it good for kids, families and providers of color?
- Do some kids and families benefit more or less than others?
- Do kids and families of color have access, and if not, why?
- What data and information is missing?
- Are there any unintended consequences?

# Community Feedback Questions & Suggestions



# Alignment Communication Plan

Goal: Execute a strategy that communicates to various key audiences the goals of the Standards Alignment process, the progress of the work to date, the final design of the standards, and proceeding implementation of the new standards in a way that:

- Helps garner valuable information and feedback for implementation
- Paves the way for successful community engagement process
- Ensures information is widely available to diverse groups
- Utilizes existing communications channels and develops new channels when necessary
- Keeps the work visible as the work transitions into quieter writing phase



# Alignment Communication Plan

## Key Messages

- Core principles: evaluation & observation, simplicity, efficiency, cultural humility, equity and community impact, transparency
- The standards alignment process will create one set of standards across all programs demonstrating a clear progression of quality from licensing, to Early Achievers and through to ECEAP.
- Quality begins with licensing. Programs will meet licensing standards as the foundation of quality.
- The standards will be measurable and have a clear progression from licensing to Early Achievers and ECEAP, as each standard demonstrates a clear progression of quality.
- Early learning providers will be able to see themselves on a progression of quality standards, and understand the expectations and next steps for participation in quality improvement.

# Alignment Communication Plan

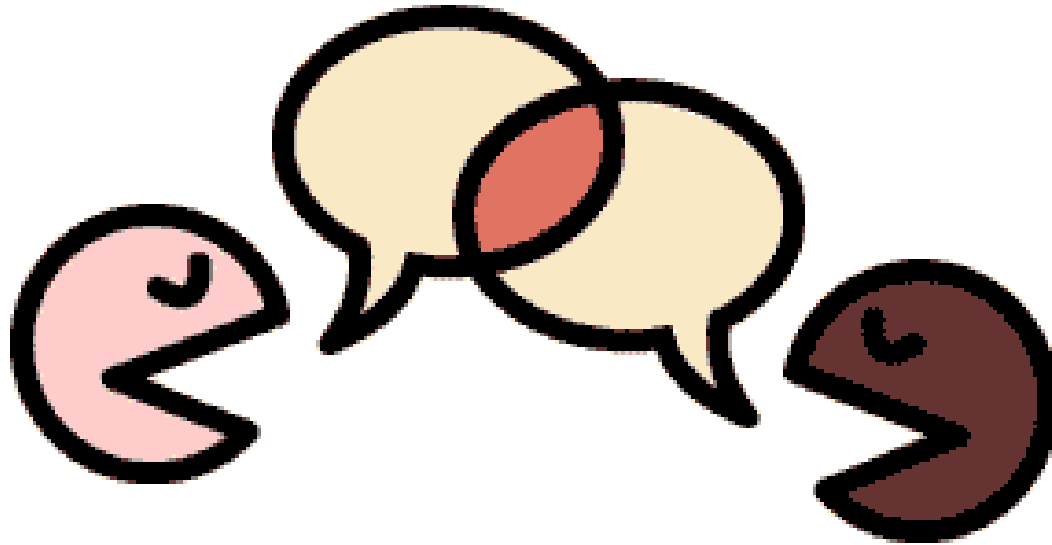
**Deep:** create clear communications channels for an engaged external audience particularly the Advisory Committee, EL Regional Coalitions, and the stakeholder groups and organizations that support diverse providers and communities.

- Ongoing updates on the writing process
- Updates/feedback through formally scheduled meetings
- Request partners to share information and provide feedback loops with constituents

**Wide:** Communicate broadly to early learning stakeholders about the Standards Alignment process and how it fits into the goals of the Early Start Act and Early Learning Plan.

- Use existing communications tools (e.g. newsletters, blog, website) to share high level updates and information on the Standards Alignment process
- Create new communications when needed (e.g. legislative updates, etc.)
- Clarify the importance of Standards alignment with the success of ESA

# Alignment Communication Plan Questions & Suggestions



# Summary & Next Steps

- Community Input Report final draft will be shared with the Advisory Committee and EL Regional Coalitions 3/1/2016
- DEL will collect Community Input Report comments by 3/14
- Community Input Report will be released by 3/28.
- Need to schedule April – June meetings
- Connect EL Regional Coalitions to provide Alignment Feedback support
- 3/17 and 3/27 meetings will focus on reviewing changes and justifications - Child Outcomes & FE, Professional Development and preparing for the Community Feedback forums