



April 13, 2010

Dear WSA Members:

I want to thank all of the parents, directors, and staff that fought to ensure that despite the very difficult budget situation in Olympia, funding for early education was spared. You have probably heard by now that the House and Senate have passed their compromise budget proposal. It now awaits the Governor's signature. The budget includes no cuts to the Working Connections child care program and ECEAP programs are only being asked to reduce the number of children served by 29 kids. This is an incredible accomplishment and you should be proud of your work!

We are also grateful for all of your help in moving several major early learning policy bills forward. In particular, we were delighted to see legislation establishing an entitlement program for ECEAP signed into law by the Governor as well as a bill streamlining our child care subsidy system. Without the numerous calls, e-mails, expert advice, and testimony none of this would have been possible. Please accept our thanks!

With our state legislative session finally coming to a close, WSA will now gear up for a long and difficult fight for Head Start funding. We will be working closely with the Early Learning Action Alliance (ELAA), our state association partners, and NHSA to help us secure enough funding for Head Start and Early Head Start to maintain the recent gains made under the economic recovery act. In addition, you can expect us to help our members respond to new guidance and regulations from the Office of Head Start which should be out as soon as the next few weeks.

WSA plans to be very active on the national policy front in two additional areas: 1) the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and 2) the reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant. We have been consulted several times by key staff on the House Education and Labor Committee, the Senate HELP Committee, and administration officials. Jill Brenner, from Kitsap Community Resources, is our point person on ESEA and has done a very nice job educating policymakers about the P-3 model that has worked so well in the Bremerton school system.

You may be aware that WSA has recently started convening a quality and training committee. The quality and training committee, chaired by President-Elect Connie Mueller, worked very hard to strengthen our professional development programming. As a result you will see regular **webinars** on a variety of topics starting April 20<sup>th</sup> for a new 'virtual cluster' on family engagement, and a 2-part webinar on fetal alcohol syndrome April 26<sup>th</sup> and May 3, both of which you can still [register for here](#). By now you have experienced our terrific **Summer Institute** which will take place this year June 28<sup>th</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup> in Ellensburg. Katy is hard at work rounding

up the top of line speakers for this conference which has grown in popularity. We are also adding two additional training conferences to our offerings. This November we will host the first **Management/Leadership Institute**. This institute is envisioned as an intensive professional development opportunity for first time and new supervisors. In April 2011 we will be launching the **Spring Institute** – think Summer Institute but for health, social services, fiscal, and parent engagement staff. At each of these events we will offer you high level training that can be implemented in your program. CEUs and Clock hours will be available to all those in attendance. These two new events will mean that WSA will now offer members 8 professional development, leadership, and networking opportunities each year plus regular webinars. And as has been the practice, the price of attendance will be economical and we will not raise the price of your WSA or WSTC dues. Please see the attached WSTC calendar for dates and times of conferences.

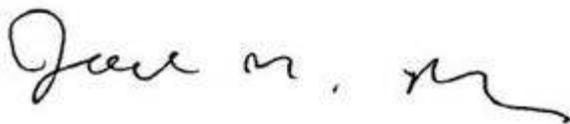
As part of our work plan for 2010 we will be revamping our web site to make it even easier to use. We hope to make our professional development sections a bit smoother to navigate and with additional information. Our new intern will be helping us improve our social networking opportunities including the creation of the WSA Facebook page—which will allow our members to connect with one another on pertinent topics and share information.

We are happy to report that our work with Parent Ambassadors continues to pay huge dividends for our members. Not only are parents receiving high quality advocacy and leadership training, but as this legislative session is any indication, we are getting real results. The Peppercorn Foundation which supports our Parent Ambassadors Program (recently featured on KING 5) is so excited about our work that they have invited us to reapply for funding on an earlier cycle.

Katy and I want to learn more about the work of local programs. Our goal is to come out and visit with as many folks as possible. If you are interested in hosting us at your program please contact Katy at [Katy@wsaheadstarteceap.com](mailto:Katy@wsaheadstarteceap.com). We are also available to come out and talk with your staff and parents about WSA and the impact of the various early learning bills passed this year in Olympia.

**Finally, we want to let you know that as of April 23<sup>rd</sup> we are moving to a new location.** Our new space is a bit bigger and will give WSA a chance to grow and expand in the coming years. You will be able to find us at 345 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Suite 220, Bellevue, WA 98005. Our new phone number will be (425) 453-1227.

Sincerely,



Joel M. Ryan  
Executive Director  
Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP