

Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region  
(ELAWR)

Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020 Comprehensive Report

7/14/2015

Core Planning Committee



**Early Literacy  
Alliance of  
Waterloo Region**

Partnering for early literacy. Ensuring a stronger future.

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### Context

#### This Document

The purpose of this document is to serve as a comprehensive record for the Core Planning Committee of Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region, not only of the outcome of its strategic planning process, but also of the detailed discussions and thought processes that occurred throughout the strategic planning working sessions.

Please see also the shorter version “Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020 Summary Report” which contains only the key Strategic Plan outputs contained in this Chapter of this report.

#### Introduction

Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region (ELAWR) was awarded the Linda Sylvester Award by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation to undertake three specific initiatives. The first of these to be completed is the development of a five year strategic plan and is the subject of this report.

ELAWR set out to accomplish a number of objectives in the shorter and longer terms, as follows.

#### Shorter Term Objectives

- Members will:
  - have a clear and common understanding regarding our future direction
  - follow an efficient decision-making framework and comprehensive terms of reference
  - use a consistent orientation process for welcoming new members
  - gain knowledge of strategic planning methods
  - use the strategic plan to be proactive in sharing the value of early literacy
- ELAWR will attract new members and new followers
- ELAWR will attract new financial resources and support

#### Longer Term Objectives

- Implementation of the 5 year strategic plan will lead to:
  - member retention
  - continued attraction of new members and stakeholders
  - enhanced community profile
  - strengthened ability to pursue grants, partnerships, and other opportunities
  - transfer of knowledge base to community organizations
  - greater ability to impact community
  - ensured confidence in the sustainability of the alliance
- Young children of Waterloo Region will have improved literacy skills (as measured by external measures such as the EDI, Community Fit for Children reports and the Child Well Being Dashboard)

### Strategic Planning Process

ELAWR members charged the Core Planning Committee (CPC) with the task of engaging a consultant and working with the consultant to plan and implement a strategic planning process. CPC selected Ingrid Pregel Consulting Inc (iPCi) and its Principal Ingrid Pregel to work with to develop the planning process and the strategic plan.

### Strategic Planning Model

CPC learned about a variety of planning models and decided to adopt the following Strategic Plan deliverable:

- Vision, Mission, Values
- Principles
- Organizational Work Processes
- Goals
- Initiatives

CPC also learned about a variety of strategic thinking processes and agreed on a phased approach that considered:

- Phase I. Dream the big dream: desired future
- Phase II. Back to reality: environmental scan including external context and ELAWR internal capacity
- Phase III. Moving from reality to the dream: goals and key initiatives

### Participation

Although CPC accepted a leadership role in the strategic planning process, the nature of ELAWR as a collaborative lead CPC to propose a participatory process to its members, as follows:

- Include Alliance members in workshops for each of the three phases in addition to a final meeting to approve the Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020.
- Invite participation from professionals, community partners and stakeholders to establish a comprehensive understanding of the environmental context within which the Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020 was being established.

### The Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020

#### **Vision (Our Ideal Future):**

Every child achieves their literacy potential. Families know the importance of early literacy, actively participate in their children's literacy development daily and when their children need more support they know how to readily access the help they need. Providers of children's services work well together to deliver exemplary programs and services. Our early literacy movement benefits the community, contributing to life-long success and well-being for all.

#### **Mission (Our Role In Creating Ideal Future):**

Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region ignites and drives a sustainable early literacy movement.

#### **Values (What We Hold Dear):**

1. Universal access to early literacy programs and services
2. Early literacy is integral to life-long success and well-being
3. Collaboration among children's service providers
4. We speak with a united voice
5. Respect for all stakeholders

#### **Principles (How We Approach Our Work):**

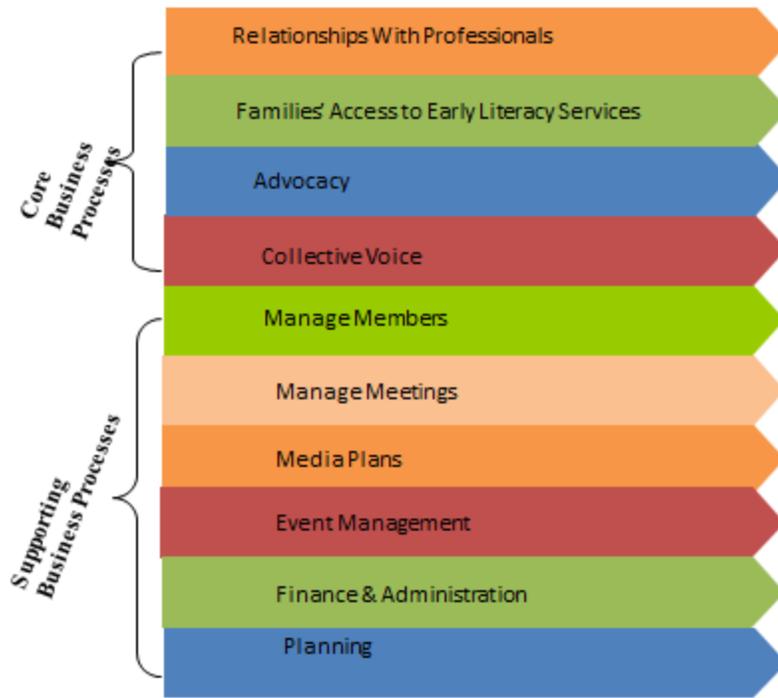
- Current, relevant and evidence-based practices
- Early literacy is nurtured through playing, singing, talking, writing and reading
- Strength-based approach

#### **Organizational Work Processes (Our Work):**

The work we do as an organization comprises two types: that connected directly to our mission and that connected to being any kind of organization. The first is called "Core Business Processes" and the second is called "Supporting Business Processes".

The two charts that follow identify the processes and sub-processes that comprise our work.

# Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region



Relationships With Professionals	Share Information	Train the Trainer	Contribute to Agencies Goals	
Families' Access to Early Literacy Services	Provide Link to Agencies	Identify Gaps in Service	Advocate to Fill Service Gaps	
Advocacy	Create Messages	Engage Influencers & General Public	Hold Events	Content for Website
Collective Voice	Create Tools		Create Large Scale Communications	
Manage Members	Plan	Recruit Orient	Capture Info	Nurture Release
Manage Meetings	Communicate	Get Resources	Agendas	Chair Document
Media Plans	Create	Update	Respond	Maintain Website
Manage Events	Plan	Promote	Site Management	Admin Evaluation
Finance & Administration	Insurance		Accounting	
Planning	Strategic		Annual Including Budget	

## Goals and Key Initiatives

### A. Create Awareness of the Importance of Early Literacy

- Engage a marketing professional
- Explore communication needs of ELAWR
- Research what other Early Literacy programs are doing
- Create key messages, internal and external
- Develop marketing plan
- Develop marketing resources

### B. Influence the Influencers

- Develop/build relationships with community networks
- Learn how to advocate
- Develop and implement an advocacy plan

### C. Provide Professional Resources and Learning Opportunities

- Continue existing learning opportunities e.g. semi-annual cafes, bi-annual regional conference, Family Literacy Day, etc.
- Define need for learning for professionals in early literacy
- Enable first phase of providing priority resources

### D. Build Health Care Providers Distribution Channel

- Determine access points (research, partner and engage experts)
- Develop messaging
- Develop strategy and create resources
- Implement plan
- Measure/evaluate results

### E. Enhance Organizational Effectiveness

- Align membership strategy with Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020
- Update Terms of Reference to support Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020
- Create a resource plan
- Develop orientation plan for new members

### Phase I. Dream the Dream: Desired Future

#### Table Groups Exercise 1: Vision

Imagine it is 2040. A reporter is doing a story to describe what is different in Waterloo Region because the Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region has been wildly successful. The reporter does not want to know anything about the Alliance, only the end result impact of the Alliance's work. What do you tell the reporter?

#### Summary Key Vision Themes

- Well informed population
- Social marketing strategy – participation
- Long term impact of literacy for adults on the community – lower health care costs, lower social costs, better employment and higher incomes etc.
- Intergenerational connectedness
- Interdisciplinary connections among professions
- Population at large focuses on “child hope” – everyone looks to make a difference in a child's life
- Success in school - readiness

#### Table A (Kim and Machele)

##### Vision

- Lower health care costs in Waterloo Region
- Little or no disparity in child development and school readiness (multiple measures, multiple vulnerabilities) among different socio-economic groups
- Early literacy focus embedded in multiple early child service disciplines
- All people know what to do and where to go for resources that meet their needs and they are all looking
- Lower crimes rates in Waterloo Region
- Lower high school drop-out rates
- Lower teenaged pregnancies
- All adults reading to the children in their lives and as well as the other 4 practices (singing, playing, writing, talking)
- Waterloo Region has the highest EQAO (or equivalent) scores in the province of Ontario
- Higher civic engagement to realize a voter turnout rate of 80%
- All families have a healthy media diet to ensure proper brain development and social development/interactions

##### By 2040

- Children are entering JK with higher language and math scores
- Early literacy is seen as critical in healthy child development
- Early literacy development messages delivered at all prenatal visits
- Concise, consistent, universal messaging related to early literacy
- Every adult reading at a level that would make them employable, healthy, engaged and informed

### Table B (Laura and Laura)

#### Vision

- Families have a healthy relationship with technology
- Adult literacy rates have increased as a result of ELAWR's success
- All children and their families in Waterloo Region enter kindergarten with the skills and support/tools needed to be successful
- Community knows where to go to access literacy information
- Smart, informed, well connected professionals exist because ELAWR is the foundation for early literacy support and program development in the Region
- High school drop-out rates have decreased
- Post-secondary attendance rates grow
- Waterloo Region recognized as an early literacy leader
- Confidence – families have a positive attitude re: early literacy practices – they read together!
- Better prepared work force – economic gains/development = Waterloo Region is a destination
- Life-long learning (informal and formal)
- EQAO scores exceed expectations
- Family literacy strategies are commonly practiced across the Region/Province (lead by ELAWR)
- Early literacy programming in Waterloo Region is high quality, best practices and well attended
- Decreased need for intervention, due to an effective communication plan, preventative and proactive

### Table C (Gabriele)

#### Vision

- Partnerships with music industry – promote songs, rhymes
- Intergenerational literacy – connections between older adults, preschoolers, families, older/younger peer mentors
- All children have good exposure to rich, conversational interactions
- Technology is used in a way to promote interaction – not a replacement for interpersonal interaction
- We have a literacy fitness program that is exemplary
- “literacy is embedded” into every childhood experience (camps, sports, dance, play grounds)
- Literacy “levels” are funded, accessible to everyone (like swimming Red Cross or belts in Judo)
- Business partnerships enable ELAWR and other literacy initiatives in the community
- Information about literacy is available prenatally (connections with health practitioners)
- Everyone knows nursery rhymes

- Highest rate of literacy in the province (adults, children, based on provincial testing in grades 3, 6, 9)
- Successful completion of high school 90% +
- All children have a library card and are active participants
- Great awareness of programs to help children with literacy – no waiting, all welcome
- All children with literacy needs are identified early and get the help they need before they start school
- Parents are able to recognize early literacy needs – know it is important and know how to access help
- “closed the gap” for “at risk for literacy” children
- Global leaders coming from Waterloo region – CEOs, managers
- Engage all learners by accommodating /teaching different learning styles (audio/visual, tactile)
- Community partners work well together – cross training, referrals, good awareness, common messages/goals

### Proposed as a Draft

In 2040:

#### Children: All achieve their literacy potential

- Across socio-economic groups have a high readiness for school
- Those with literacy needs are identified early and receive the help they need before they start school
- Experience adults in their lives who read, talk, sing, write and play with them
- Have high EQAO scores
- Enter JK with high language and math scores and the support tools they need to be successful
- All have library cards and visit regularly
- Have all their learning styles accommodated at school

#### Families: know the importance of early literacy, can identify their children’s needs and know how to readily access the help they need.

- Know how to recognize literacy needs, actively seek out resources to meet their children’s literacy needs and know where to find them
- Have a healthy media diet to promote healthy brain development and social interaction
- Have positive attitudes toward literacy practices and actively adopt literacy strategies
- Emphasize intergenerational literacy
- Access literacy information prenatally

#### Providers of children’s services: work well together to deliver exemplary early literacy programs and services.

- Early literacy focus embedded in multiple early child service disciplines
- Early literacy is seen as critical in healthy child development

- Early literacy development messages delivered at all prenatal visits
- Concise, consistent, universal messaging related to early literacy
- Smart, informed, well connected professionals exist because ELAWR is the foundation for early literacy support and program development in the Region
- Early literacy programming in Waterloo Region is high quality, best practices and well attended
- Partnerships with music industry – promote songs, rhymes
- We have a literacy fitness program that is exemplary
- “literacy is embedded” into every childhood experience (camps, sports, dance, play grounds)
- Literacy “levels” are funded, accessible to everyone (like swimming Red Cross or belts in Judo)
- Business partnerships enable ELAWR and other literacy initiatives in the community
- Information about literacy is available prenatally (connections with health practitioners)
- Community partners work well together – cross training, referrals, good awareness, common messages/goals

The community at large has benefited tremendously from the work of the early literacy movement because: Waterloo Region offers an excellent quality of well-being for all.

- Lower health care costs in Waterloo Region
- Lower crimes rates in Waterloo Region
- Lower high school drop-out rates
- Lower teenaged pregnancies
- Higher civic engagement to realize a voter turnout rate of 80%
- Every adult reading at a level that would make them employable, healthy, engaged and informed
- Adult literacy rates have increased as a result of ELAWR’s success
- High school drop-out rates have decreased
- Post-secondary attendance rates grow
- Better prepared work force – economic gains/development = Waterloo Region is a destination
- Life-long learning (informal and formal)
- Decreased need for intervention, due to an effective communication plan, preventative and proactive
- Global leaders coming from Waterloo region – CEOs, managers

### Table Groups Exercise 2: Mission

Other organizations in the community probably share that same view of a desirable end result impact – ‘vision’. You need to carve out a unique mission.

#### Table A Mission

ELAWR exists to **ignite** and fuel **an early literacy movement** to help ensure a higher quality of life and a stronger community in Waterloo Region

Draft:

ELAWR exists to...

Do what...ignite and empower and inspire a literacy movement

For whom...for the benefit of young children and the communities in which they live

Why?...to improve quality of life for citizens in Waterloo Region through ensuring strong literacy skills for our children

The means – adults

The end – children aged 0 to ?

What:

- Inform
- Educate
- Support
- Empower
- Promote
- Motivate
- Advocate
- Collaborate
- Provide
- Communicate
- Ignite

Ignite a literacy movement in Waterloo Region

### **Table B**

#### **Mission**

ELAWR exists to ensure children achieve their **literacy potential** in order **to strengthen their lives and our community**

Who? Children

What?

- Empower families and professionals
- **To advance literacy skills**
- Advocate
- Educate
- Collaborate/connect

## Table C

### Mission

ELAWR, a collaborative group, exists to promote literacy development for all children in Waterloo Region prenatal to age 6 to support academic and **life-long success**.

Who? “the child” age 0 to 6 years – universal (all) or “at risk” – ensure that a minimum “at risk” get what they need (more deliberate focus and effort)

What work does the Alliance do?

- Empower parents/families/service providers –through knowledge sharing
- Advocate
- Educate – knowledge, resources, workshops, website, conference
- Coordinate – facilitate connections, communicate between sectors
- Create awareness, inspire
- collaborate

### Proposed as a Draft

Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region exists to ignite an early literacy movement that ensures children achieve their literacy potential, contributing to their life-long success and strengthening our community.

## Table Groups Exercise 3: Values

Values are the fundamental beliefs and overarching principles that we hold dear, that brings us together and that we will not go against, no matter how much money a funder might promise.

### Table A

#### Values: The Movement

- Every caring adult has the ability to truly impact their community by supporting early literacy development in its children
- We believe in the importance of early literacy for all children; striving for literacy potential
- We are stronger together “where there is **unity**, there is **strength**, one voice, victory
- Advocate for evidence-based
- It is never too early to start your literacy journey
- We believe in the 5 practices
- Everyone has the right to access the conditions/resources and supports they need to achieve their literacy potential
- Strength based organization
- Early literacy has a long-term impact
- ELAWR meetings are fun, interactive and we leave inspired to do our mission and with more than we came....

### Table B

#### Values

- Universal accessibility
- No financial barriers
- Current/relevant
- Literacy potential
- United voice/common language
- Presence in the community
- Strength based

How we will be with each other – equal voices, respect

### Table C

#### Values

- Inclusive – all children, all languages, cultures, SES
- Respect for children, adults, community partners
- Children learn best in the context of the family
- Literacy starts before birth
- The support of the community is essential – parents should not feel alone
- Universal access to literacy support
- Meaningful interactions are the building blocks of language and literacy development
- Build on knowledge of evidence-based practices
- Literacy birth to 6 encompasses 5 practices of reading, talking, singing, playing, writing

### Proposed as a Draft

#### Values:

- Universal access to early literacy programs and services
- Early literacy is integral to life-long success
- Collaboration and unity among children's service providers
- Highly visible community presence
- Members have equal voices
- Respect for all stakeholders

#### Principles:

- Evidence based practices
- Early literacy is enabled through playing, singing, talking, writing and reading

## Phase II. Back to Reality: Environmental Scan

### External Context

Trend or Reality	Opportunity or Threat?
<b>Political:</b>	
Increased awareness of the importance of the early years – How does learning happen? Report; epi-genetics	
Focus on universal needs - there is a need to maintain this voice as government tends to target funding	
Increasing need for government austerity; trend to start-up funding and questionable sustainability of program funding – families want continuity of programs and services	
Importance of mixed socio-economic programming opportunities – need to attract the middle class	
Need to be more politically aware and active e.g. position papers	O
MOE – HDLH: (Ministry of Education – How Does Learning Happen) family engagement and expression	O
Poverty – have families meet with politicians; lobby, advocacy, education (preferred term; not all agree with this)	T, O
Our region is considered high tech, but has lots of poverty (45% without disposable income)	T
New comer families can look to learn and grow for ELAWR, provincial MCI (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration) funding	O
Accountability and measurement – change program to make it better?	O T
Have new provincial funding for more childcare spaces	O
Provide messages to the public to make early literacy accessible to all	O
New strategic plan for Region of Waterloo being developed	O
<b>Economic:</b>	
Waterloo Region – growing inequality, gap is increasing and a lack of awareness this is the case among many citizens	
Decline in manufacturing jobs – change in the economy, fewer jobs to keep parents out of poverty	T
Can be a challenge to find PT ECEs for positions, challenge for early learning	T
Economic and community impact of literacy	O
<b>Social:</b>	
Growth in families who do not speak English at home; parents speak first language, kids learning English; impact on reading	
Demographics: increase in seniors; impact on economic power – loss of boomers and need to sustain the economy	
Lack of parenting skills from a broad perspective	

## Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

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Dispersed extended families	
Grandparents in parenting roles	
Shift in what we expect from schools and teachers (full day kindergarten, community hubs, sex-ed) and what schools expect from families (time, abilities and increased demands)	
Media – impacts messages to parents (anxiety) and “you are doing it wrong”	
Increase in engaged dads, splitting paternity leave	
Increase in engaging parents through consultations – over asking or fatigue?	
30% of adults in this region can’t read	O to sell the message
Early literacy will not be a priority if families are dealing with poverty	T
Start to look at research and development for this region	O
Look at JK/SK and grade 1, we are above provincial statistics after grade 3 – impact of capacity reduction programs	O (T)
Looking for belonging and getting along, 1/3 of families w/o social cohesion, impact of technology on communication – transient neighborhoods	O
Living in poverty, social opportunities with others in poverty, social is so important	T
Free events are important, but how to communicate with families effectively? Cheque inserts just before the event for families accessing OW or unaddressed ad mail cards with logo (bring this to a site for a free.....)	O
Open House for Fire Stations, attach literacy to free family events in the community, has to be in the neighborhood	O
Impact of JK/SK on attendance at community programs	O T
Neighborhood hubs; community use of schools	O
Seniors can all learn how to engage with children to support literacy	O
Cyberbullying	
Early literacy awareness is merging well with “how does learning happen”/pedagogical approaches	O
Understanding brain connections/ importance of parental-child interactions; early start prenatal/early newborns; focus on FDK/early learning; early identification of needs	O
Messages about early literacy align well with early learning	O
Issue re: families hard to reach – what partners can help us to reach vulnerable families	O
Edi data to be released – opportunity to review trends re: areas, skills	O
Increased complexity of children seen by speech pathologists	
<b>Technology:</b>	
Access to information, less family time, kids read and write through blogging, kids learn cryptic shorthand, economic disparity means some families so not have technology and feel isolated	

## Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

Need for being app-friendly, hand held devices, video of baby with magazine vs. ipad, disconnect between parent and child and ability to use technology, our ELAWR logo as an app? E.g. of an app going under e.g. free app at Starbucks – same idea for ELAWR?	O T
Has created less engagement between parent and child (T); social media could be a great avenue as a tool to convey key messages (O); apps can be an educational tool or may decrease communication and engagement (O and T); consider use of technology for ESL (but if not user friendly then not accessible for all	
<b>Legal:</b>	
Increased accountability of organizations (impacts people/services, liability and play = increased anxiety	
<b>Environment:</b>	
<b>Children’s Service and Early Literacy System:</b>	
Navigation of services is confusing/frustrating – system needs to accommodate a multitude of families with complexities such as shift work and the realities of family life - :”drive to do”	
16 literacy networks in ON (created own network with own website for information and communication), \$200 membership fee sustains the website upkeep, members are responsible for own information updates) – Razorkids, Scholastic	O
Emergent, play based learning, e-learners, honoring children’s interests; ECE viewed as a “real teacher”	
Whole family literacy – an initiative to explore	O
Online prenatal education	O
Community is well connected – understanding roles. Great collective community vision of all children’s services	O
Organizations come together for planning purposes at CPT	O
Whole family approach to literacy; Alliance to explore opportunities to collaborate with parent, adult literacy group	O
Learn from Community Fit for Children & reports from other areas – what is working well?	O
Community screenings – Special Needs Strategy has a new developmental screen, CHF – gathering data – does ELAWR have a role?	O
Infant screenings identify “at risk”	O
Navigation work of CPT – ELAWR could have input on universal access point	O
HBHC screening tool – how to “link” at risk infants to literacy resources/programs	O
“Should have” early information on car seats, feeding, brain development	O
Work with prenatal women – give education re: early literacy	O
Importance of locating services “in the community” vs in hospitals e.g. OEYCs, neighborhood hubs, community use of schools	O

## Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

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<b>ELAWR:</b>	
Focus on building skills/knowledge of adults	
ELAWR as “go to” agency, need capacity to grow & update e.g. Guelph’s Growing Great Kids – need commitment funding	0

### ELAWR Internal Capacity

<b>Successes/Strengths to Build Upon</b>	<b>Gaps to Potentially Resolve/Mitigate</b>
<b>Membership diversity (but gender and cultural diversity lacking)</b>	<b>Underutilized skills/talents e.g. media, public relations and marketing expertise</b>
Strong will to participate, do work, commitment	Lack of orientation plan for new members as turnover occurs
Strong leadership, member organization support	Mechanism for members to “help each other” meet own agency goals
In kind contribution from organizations	Formal connections with other collaboratives (Positive Parenting)
Volunteerism from community members	More outreach e.g. presentations to City Councils
Strong networking	Explore connections with other literacy collaboratives
Communication among members	<b>No ongoing source of funds to sustain our work</b>
Proven success at events	Need a model for succession planning
Supported by evidence-based research	Measurement of collective impact?
Promotional materials developed	ELAWR collective community goal setting related to literacy
Successful application for L S Award	Lack of backbone admin support e.g. Communication
Presence at Children’s Planning Table	Lack of reach to “front line” service providers
	Need for advocacy and communication plans

## Phase III. Moving To the Dream: Goals and Key Initiatives

### Synthesis of Table Group Top Ten - Line Up Themes

Table One	Table Two	Table Three
Political rep – voice in the political arena (influence the influencers)	Voice in political arena	Political lobby activity
Develop a clear, succinct message to be used in literacy campaign	Clarity of message/cohesiveness	Clarity of message – easy to understand
Advocate for connections with health care services (Drs/HBHC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Early screening tools</li> <li>b. Risk assessments</li> <li>c. Prenatal education</li> </ul>	Tapping into public health/medical system	Engage the health care community to deliver “early literacy (healthy development) messages at every prenatal and post birth visits
Video – utilizing social media to largely disseminate messages, visuals (infographics)	Marketing campaign	High impact, cohesive, marketing plan – tools/resources to share
Sustainable funding – (research to get qualitative and quantitative data)		
Research to get qualitative and quantitative data	Engaging in early literacy research	Use data and information to inform our work, our messages, our target “underserved” groups
Visible in the community		Increase visibility via Ambassador, Rock Star “go viral” - to reach who we are not reaching
Align with other community groups (beyond literacy group)	Reach beyond literacy community	Looking at the broader community and other initiatives to embed literacy – not literacy for literacy sake ie. Belonging, neighborhoods, positive parenting, mental health, poverty, “fusion”

## Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

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Apps and Maps – central hub, service pathway for different literacy issues/struggles	One stop shopping for literacy	
Rep to have a presence in other communities/groups that affect literacy		
Advocacy training		Educate and advocate to maximize impact
	Reach those we are not reaching	
	Create common tools to measure outcomes	
		Early influence (early in a child’s life i.e. first 2000 days)
		National conference – catalyst for attention

### Reorganize Around Goals – what and then how

- Influence the Influencers
  - Cultivate political support at all levels
    - Advocacy training
  - Build Evidence of Impact of Early Literacy
  - Research to get qualitative and quantitative data (create common tools to measure outcomes)
  - Identify high profile Rockstar with a connection to literacy
- Build Health Care Providers “Distribution Channel”
  - Advocate for connections with Doctors, HBHC
  - Create & fund resources
- Target Special Populations
  - Conduct research to identify underserved groups
  - Create strategy to access groups
- Create Awareness for Importance of Early Literacy
  - Develop clear, cohesive, comprehensive messages
  - Create video
  - Hold a national conference
  - Create and implement marketing plan
  - Align with other groups and initiatives (literacy rep to have presence)
- Create Central Resource for Early Literacy
  - Apps and maps, central hub, service pathways

## Final Draft Goals and Initiatives

### A. Create Awareness of the Importance of Early Literacy

- Engage a marketing professional
- Explore communication needs of ELAWR
- Research what other Early Literacy programs are doing
- Create key messages, internal and external
- Develop marketing plan
- Create a funding plan
- Develop marketing resources

### B. Influence the Influencers

- Develop/build relationships with community networks
- Learn how to advocate
- Develop and implement an advocacy plan

### C. Provide Professional Resources and Learning Opportunities

- Continue existing learning opportunities e.g. semi-annual cafes, bi-annual regional conference, Family Literacy Day, etc.
- Define need for learning for professionals in early literacy
- Enable first phase of providing priority resources

### D. Build Health Care Providers Distribution Channel

- Determine access points (research, partner and engage experts)
- Develop messaging
- Develop strategy and create resources
- Implement plan
- Measure/evaluate results

### CPC Additional Thoughts Based on Original Objectives

CPC reviewed the draft goals and initiatives at its June 23, 2015 meeting and considered the original objectives it had set out in the proposal to Lyle S. Hallman Foundation. All the objectives are well covered with the exception of internal processes with respect to members and the Terms of Reference outlining how we will work together. It was agreed there will need to be work done to update the Terms of Reference and our thinking about the role of various types of members to better align our governance practices with the new Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020. A new goal:

**E. Enhance Governance Effectiveness** was included in the final plan to ensure ELAWR does not lose focus on this important ingredient in the organization's success.

## Table Group Transcript of Game Changers

### Table One Gabriele

#### Top 10

1. Political representation – voice in the political arena (influence the influencers)
2. Develop a clear, succinct message to be used in literacy campaign
3. Advocate for connections with health care services (Drs/HBHC)

- a. Early screening tools
- b. Risk assessments
- c. Prenatal education
4. Video – utilizing social media to largely disseminate messages, visuals (infographics)
5. Sustainable funding – research to get qualitative and quantitative data
6. Visible in the community
7. Align with other community groups (beyond literacy group)
8. Apps and Maps – central hub, service pathway for different literacy issues/struggles
9. Rep to have a presence in other communities/groups that affect literacy
10. Advocacy training

### Brainstorming List

- Be able to reach a wide audience – every child and every family – “fill gaps” – inclusive of family literacy problems
- Tools needed – easy to access video, visuals, infographics, apps e.g. how to access various organizations’ literacy programs
- Continue to stress messages re: importance of one to one, face to face interactions with young children to build communication/literacy (screen time messaging) – use social media strategy e.g. Soul Pancake – Kid President video went viral
- Source of ongoing funding to manage communications strategy, materials, conference, chair (funded)
- Be able to do our own outcome measurement (include longitudinal info and younger children) re the value of early literacy and use this to support grant funding requests – example: qualitative impact video to share with funders (Edmonton Public Library video) – include local universities
- Create a map of early literacy services in Waterloo Region
- Well baby health screens to include questions about early literacy – if “at risk” then link up with HBHC to make referrals to model literacy behaviours
- Library cards to all; free books to all
- Research early literacy screening tools (younger than school age)
- Prenatal education on early literacy
- Edmonton model re: family physician role in early literacy and giving family a bag of resource materials and free book – needs \$
- Political rep from ELAWR on city council (London model)
- More promotion – recognizable slogan, logo
- Literacy “campaign” (similar to seat car campaign)
- Survey community re early literacy needs, experiences
- Make an “app” that points parents to next literacy info session or workshops in Waterloo Region
- Create a united voice
- Central hub of information – one stop shopping for early literacy

### Table Two Laura and Laura

#### Top Ten

1. Voice in political arena
2. Tapping into public health/medical system
3. Reach beyond literacy community
4. Reach those we are not reaching
5. Create common tools to measure outcomes
6. Clarity of message/cohesiveness
7. One stop shopping for literacy
8. Marketing campaign
9. Engaging in early literacy research
10. All of the above

#### Brainstorming List

- Dedicated staff, ongoing funding
- Voice in political arena – investigating other work being done in this arena
- Reach professionals/agencies/businesses beyond literacy – advocate and educate
- Tap into the needs of community we are not reaching i.e. ESL etc. other language resources
- Inclusiveness, universality
- Marketing plan – social media – traditional media – pervasive throughout community – present a cohesive and strong voice
- Clarity of message

#### Additional Idea from Discussion

- Survey and broadcast the assets members have available to share “in kind”

### Table Three Mabelle and Kim

#### Top Ten

1. Engage the health care community to deliver “early literacy (healthy development) messages at every prenatal and post birth visits
2. Looking at the broader community and other initiatives to embed literacy – not literacy for literacy sake i.e. Belonging, neighborhoods, positive parenting, mental health, poverty, “fusion”
3. Increase visibility via Ambassador, Rock Star “go viral” - to reach who we are not reaching
4. Use data and information to inform our work, our messages, our target “underserved” groups
5. Clarity of message – easy to understand
6. Early influence (early in a child’s life i.e. first 2000 days
7. National conference – catalyst for attention
8. Educate and advocate to maximize impact
9. High impact, cohesive, marketing plan – tools/resources to share
10. Political lobby activity 😊

#### Brainstorming List

- Lots of money

- Tapping into the needs of the community e.g. those who haven't accessed support prior to Jk/Sk; how to make a difference for unreached and priority families
- Leverage our relationship with CPT
- Accessing information (government, literacy, potential partnerships) & tapping into data and trends in order to move the needle
- Stronger collaborations and more ways to work together, more conscious effort
- Authentic relationships, very organic and efficient
- Continue to evolve the child well being dashboard
- Really early influence (pregnancy) will have long term impact – shifting behavior (also need resources), grass roots movement
- Need to address early toxic stress and brain development
- Visibility in the community (promo of messages/principles and ELAWR) of different member roles and the piece we play in achieving our goal
- We need an early literacy rock star e.g. Clara Hughes for mental health) – a pregnant rock star
- Collective voice “my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m from \_\_\_\_\_ and I believe that early literacy is important – powerful, can draw new people in
- Being more vocal about shifting CPT from advisory to planning and action
- Look at social movements for what has worked well e.g. Recycling is now part of our culture. What caught fire? What can we do?
- “So what?” is critical
- Tapping into broader community; what can we do together? E.g. Provincial, national, national conference to share ideas and use resources
- What do we want to do? Have society realize the importance of early literacy influence
- How many degrees are we away from influencers?
- How do we work together and find supports for families with a baby who are struggling and/or with toxic stress?
- Relationships improve literacy and mental health
- “A Good Start” (food and relationships) doesn't require a lot of money or training; what can we do to support families?
- When community decisions are made, consider how the decision will help support early literacy – and early literacy lens
- Relationships is part of a bigger movement across the community
- Promotion of services e.g. library promotion, LCBO
- Look at our partners and potential partners e.g. Grocery stores with posters hanging from ceiling encouraging talk to baby about food and arenas – places that families frequent
- Intentional involvement in different initiatives e.g. May 27<sup>th</sup> Poverty symposium