



Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

Partnering for early literacy. Ensuring a stronger future.

ELAWR Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 27, 2015 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Family Centre, Room 2011 (upstairs)

65 Hanson Ave, Kitchener

Present: Kim Krueger-Kischak, Samantha Burns, Mabelle Denison, Laura Dick, Laura Reed, Cameron Dearlove, Wanda Kampijan, Janelle Wenger, Chris Beck, Joanne Stronge, Kelly Kipfer, Maria Milne, Cathy Scott, Stephanie Denison, Katherine White, Gabriele Croft

Regrets: Jill Watson, Mary Trottier, Tierney Hunter, Kaitlin Jackman, Colette Moffat, Joanne Davis, Caitlyn Hicks

1. Welcome and Introductions were made.
2. Reviewed and approved November 25th meeting minutes
3. Budget update - Gabriele reported that with the receipt of Lynda Silvester Award and accompanying grant money two accounts are now set up at KidsAbility to handle ELAWR finances. In the existing account, there is a net balance of \$9,850.24. In the LSA grant account we have \$50,000.00.
4. Subcommittee updates
 - January 25, **2015 Family Literacy Day** – a successful FLD event was held at Conestoga Mall this year with leadership from ELAWR. A significant social media campaign led up to the event, including twitter and facebook messages. FLD sub-committee established their own weebly web account, and during the month of January leading up to FLD there were 1500+ unique visitors to the website. Average estimate of booth visitors = 500 people, with ELAWR booth visits at over 600. Final tallies will be worked out over the next few weeks. ELAWR booth provided free books; passports worked well; Centre court literacy activities were lively and well received; good media coverage on the day of event; and overall participation of ELAWR committee and FLD subcommittee were highly rated/valued. Following the event a front page article in KW Record was written, with interview input from Kim Krueger-Kischak.
 - **Website/Facebook/Twitter** –lots of activity was reported, with many short messages posted leading up to the FLD event. Sam requested others to keep sending fresh material to post.

- **Promotions** – nothing new to report. Machelles asked whether it might be helpful for Promotions to take a role posting all ELAWR events rather than sub-committees take charge of their event only. This way continuity and cross-promotion of events can occur easily. This could be part of our workplan related to communications, and should be re-addressed there.
- **Literacy Café** – April 29th evening presentation by Joanne Lee, from WLU on Math is being planned. Dr. Lee will tie in the 5 every day literacy practices to her presentation. Location: Family Centre. More info to follow.
- **Core Planning/LS Award** – on Dec. 8th, 2014 2 co-chairs received funds and reporting requirements related to the Lynda Silvester Award. Funds were deposited in ELAWR's account at KidsAbility. An interim report will be required after 1 year and a final report in January 2017. Some suggestions were offered in terms of community consultants – including Capacity Canada and Waterloo Wellington Learning Associates. Funders are particularly interested in 1) strategic planning process for an interagency collaborative such as ELAWR, 2) would like updates on Advocacy events with the possibility of partnering with other initiatives and Hallman grant recipients who have advocacy goals, 3) CPT re-survey as noted in our proposal, 4) acknowledgement of the Silvester family if possible at an event. The Core Planning group met on January 6th to prioritize the work plans and initiate search for a suitable Strategic Planner. Selection Criteria were developed and preliminary “interview” questions were posed.

Three workplans were reviewed (see attachments for more details). Strategic planning will be addressed first, with Advocacy and Communications Strategy to be phased in later. All members were asked to take part in a comprehensive Strategic Planning event likely to be held during an upcoming committee meeting (extended), and also to thoughtfully consider how they might like to be involved in the planning and execution of the 3 workplans – i.e. by selecting an area of special interest.

Re Strategic planning, the criteria for successful strategic planner selection included:

- Experience working with non-profit sector
- Experience bringing together diverse organizations, and especially working with an interagency collaborative similar to ELAWR
- Proven track record in providing strategic plans that are enduring, workable and individualized
- Understanding of Waterloo region planning initiatives (the general service “climate”).

Conversations were held with 3 potential candidates. As a result of these conversations, the core planning committee recommended that Strategic Planner, Ingrid Pregel Consulting Inc. be awarded the contract to work with ELAWR in developing a strategic plan. It was noted

that Ingrid has worked in the non-profit sector in Waterloo region for many years, has a good grasp of current issues and initiatives in our sector, and has worked with many of our member organizations (Our Place, KidsAbility, Strong Start, WRDSB, YMCA). A vote was taken, and the recommendation to hire Ingrid Pregel was approved with unanimity.

5. Member organization updates

-Conestoga College PRC – Sam noted that the ELCC conference will occur on Saturday March 7th. This year the conference will be combined with the home child care conference. Currently over 400 registrants are registered with an anticipated number of 500 attendees, which will exceed last year's numbers. Sam noted that a new season of the Family Literacy Certificate program will start again– this is an online program consisting of 6 modules – one offering per semester.

-WPL – Kelly noted that as part of Family Literacy day a big “girls hockey” event was held. WPL is busy planning March break childrens' programs. WPL has hired a new programmer (Katie Jackman from ELAWR)

-U of Waterloo Baby Lab – Katherine and Stephanie noted they are interested in learning about the community literacy initiatives in our community through ELAWR meeting attendance. They continue to actively look for families interested in pursuing research opportunities.

-Family Centre – Cameron noted Get Ready for school program (Strong Start) will be starting next week at the Family Centre. He noted that Child and Youth Resilience project received a grant from the Lyle Hallman foundation. The Morning Glory café has reached its first year anniversary with successful “graduates” – i.e. 6 out of 7 youth previously unemployed are now either back in school or employed following this experience.

-KPL- Laura Reed noted preparations for March break programs and summer reading club are underway. Ipads are being circulated in children's programs. She is working on parent education regarding screen time, with a view to family-friendly recommendations.

-Let's Read – Laura Dick noted that the 2014 season with the book Community Soup is now complete. 460 free books were given, thanks to grants from TD and Canada council. A new book for 2015 will be chosen tomorrow. Contenders are: Most Magnificent Thing by Ashley Spires, Big Bear Hug by Nicholas Olan or In the Tree House by Andrew Larsen.

-Strong Start – Machelles noted that Get Ready for School is having its kick-off now. The program is offered in 12 sites with staggered starts between January and June. Children receive 44 sessions of 2 hour duration (either 3 times/week or twice/week) with assessments pre- and post- program. Letters Sounds and Words program is currently open for volunteer training (4 hours in duration).

-Our Place – Wanda noted that she is on the Positive Parenting committee and indicated that this group is looking at some of our messaging from ELAWR as a “model”, noting we are having an impact on various community groups.

-ROWL – Janelle reported upcoming changes with the region’s libraries over the next 6 months. Plans for summer reading clubs and March break are underway.

-KW Habilitation – Chris noted that staff are busy with training in new developmental assessment tools and new behavioural tools. Referral are high, and Transition to School planning is very busy at this time. There is a greater emphasis on group assessment and programing, due to the fact that when there are behavioural issues with one child, there is an impact on the whole group. Families receive resources on self-regulation, self-control and resiliency. She noted that an area of continuing education for which there is need involves sharing sensitive news with parents (e.g. discussion of concerns re behaviour, development).

-Home Child Care – Joanne noted that 102 home child care providers are participating in the larger ELCC conference. In order to encourage as many as possible to attend, fees have been sponsored by ROW Home child care. She noted that the Day Nursery Act will be revamped (last written in 1946) with some changes in child: caregiver ratios for all caregivers (not just licensed). The max ratio is 1:6, including caregiver’s own children, with no more than 3 children under age 3. Large fines are possible for violations of the ratios.

-LINC – Maria noted that she is currently assisting parents to register their children for Kindergarten. She noted that LINC had a big literacy function to celebrate FLD using “Community Soup” book as the catalyst. LINC has recently become a training site for Conestoga College ECE students.

-WRDSB – Cathy noted that SLPs provide suggestions, activities and demos in the full day kindergarten classrooms related to the experiential learning approach with a focus on improving oral language and phonological awareness. At the board, Info sessions on the Special Needs Strategy are commencing on Feb. 2nd.

-KidsAbility – Gabriele discussed emphasis on Seedlings (under 30 months) and SKIP (School Kids Intervention Program) with new funding dollars recently received. Waitlists are down to 2 months for assessments, and more timely intervention for these 2 groups is underway. KA is actively involved with Special Needs Strategy Planning also.

-Early Literacy Specialist (OEYC/YMCA) – Kim noted that she represents ELAWR on the Children’s Planning Table. There is a new charter document which is being reviewed and will be voted on shortly. She will bring a copy to the next meeting to share. She noted that we are an “affiliated organization” with CPT. The next meeting on March 4th is an “open” one as always and info is available on the Early Learning Bulletin. Kim also noted that Literacy and the Youngest Learner program continues to be in demand, with about 40 professionals attending monthly. Kim distributed two handouts with invitation to attend/share: “Family Math Canada Facilitator Training” (Feb 7th) and “Symposium Program: Schools at the Centre: A Case Study of Seamless Early Learning” (Feb. 4th).

Follow-up to discussion at meeting: Kim will be hosting an Early Literacy Digital Breakfast Club on Friday, March 6th at 8:00 a.m. at the YMCA OEYC at Roger Street. RSVP via EventBrite will be set up.

-Baby Connections: Kim reported that Baby Connections is working on a new database, and refreshing the BC website, with a view to have an online community for facilitators and families. There have been questions about follow-up for families who “graduate” from B.C. – is there a need for a “Toddler Connections” pilot?

6. Future meetings:

-Monday March 30th : - 12 to 4 pm – Family Centre - this will be a longer meeting to include Strategic Planning. It is vital that all members attend if at all possible. More information will follow.

-Tuesday May 26th

7. After 3:00 p.m. - subcommittee meetings

Recorded by Gabriele Croft