



## Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

Partnering for early literacy. Ensuring a stronger future.

**ELAWR Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 26, 2016, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Location: Community Room at Waterloo Public Library – John M. Harper Branch  
500 Fischer-Hallman Road North, Waterloo**

Present: Rebecca Dahle, Gabriele Croft, Wanda Kampijan, Stephanie Denison, Katherine White, Laura Dick, Laura Reed, Vicki Miles, Janelle Wenger, Maria Milne, Tierney Hunter, Brenda Mak, Maria Andrei-Gedja, Kim Krueger-Kischak, Joanne Davis

Regrets: Chris Beck, Mary Trottier, Katie Jackman, Marci Nicolaisen, Jill Watson, Machelles Denison, Joanne Stronge

### 1. Welcome and Introductions (Kim)

### 2. Update on Lynda Silvester Award

- Communications Plan (Gabriele)
  - ELAWR has engaged Gayle Goosen from Barefoot Creative as the consultant; she has interviewed 14-15 ELAWR members and contacts to gather info to help craft our key messages; subcommittee will meet February 11<sup>th</sup>; looking at social media and website and print messages
  - Gabriele shared the slide presentation of an ELAWR presentation given by Gabriele and Kim at the Niagara Speech Services Conference in December 2015; many requests from other regions to use the Raising a Reader booklet (this will be decided in coming months); have been invited back in May to speak to the Niagara Emergent Literacy Consortium
- b) Advocacy Plan (Kim/Gabriele)
  - Subcommittee met for the first time in January and will meet again February 18<sup>th</sup>; want input from communications plan; are considering somehow combining advocacy training with the fall ELAWR conference

### 3. Budget update (Gabriele)

-is \$8,096.61 left in general account; \$29,794.38 remaining in Lynda Silvester Award

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#### 4. Updates from subcommittees

- Family Literacy Day: Slide presentation of January 24, 2016 event at Conestoga Mall; Kim will prepare a final report; thank you to all ELAWR members who helped to make this a successful event!
- Literacy Café: Will be planning a café for the spring
- Conference: Planning meeting sometime in February or early March for Fall 2016 ELAWR Conference; will email ELAWR members for input about dates and how to combine literacy conference and advocacy training
- Promotions/Communications/Marketing: Password for ELAWR members-only section on [www.elawr.org](http://www.elawr.org) is available through Wanda Kampijan
- Advocacy: See 2b)
- Core Planning: Involved in advocacy and communications planning; are reviewing the resource plan (e.g. future funding for ELAWR)

#### 5. Updates from ELAWR's involvement in the community

- Children's Planning Table (Kim): annual forum was December 7, 2015 (handouts and details <http://communityservices.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/childrensServices/CPT-Past-Meeting-Materials.asp>) ; next meeting is February 24, 2016

#### 6. Updates from member organizations

- Public Health (Rebecca): New Parent Resource Guide (print version) given to every family that gives birth (available at hospital or through OEYC's), is also available online; "Sleep and Your New Baby" Sessions being offered in partnership with OEYC's and PH
- b) KidsAbility (Gabriele): Infant Mental Health Training available through PRC; \$1,600 value offered for free to professionals who register; Music therapist available at KA; After school programs for JK/SK groups; SonSuh and YouAreSpecial are good sources for Arabic books
- c) Early Years Centres of Waterloo Region System – Our Place (Wanda): All three main sites in the region (Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo) offer similar services and can refer families to multiple sites; Autism Support Waterloo Region representative, Breastfeeding support, Lending library, Waterloo Region Family Network, ZeroToSix, Early Literacy Specialist, Speech and Language Support, Sleep and Your New Baby

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- d) UW Infant Studies Group (Katherine and Stephanie): 60 families signed up for studies following the Family Literacy Day event; typically have 500-600 people participate in studies in the two labs each year
- e) WCDSB SLP (Vicki): Train 20 JK/SK staff each year in Hanen's "Learning Language and Loving It" program; SLP and mental health worker are teaming up to provide training for JK/SK children to use vocabulary for emotions/feelings; Kindergarten Book Club at one school, great response of 40 people each session for six sessions; lots of family reading; book mark distributed on different early literacy skills; parent council loved this idea and bought a book for each child
- Waterloo Public Library (Laura D.): programs are ongoing
- Let's Read (Laura D.): concluded at Family Literacy Day event; will soon choose books for 2016-17 initiative
- Kitchener Public Library (Laura R.): Twice a week are hosting up to 80 4-16 year old Syrian children who are government sponsored refugees in transitional housing; City of Kitchener will take on March Break support; children are very interested in learning English
- Region of Waterloo Library (Janelle): Starting some planning for Summer Reading Club; Re-structuring with upper management, will be hiring a Supervisor of Programming, have hired a new Supervisor of Outreach, will be moving from having a program at each of the 10 branches to 4 system-wide programmers who share plans and approaches
- LINC (Maria): [www.cmascanada.ca](http://www.cmascanada.ca) has resources on supporting families who have young children; 55 families have already gone through the YMCA Language Assessment Centre; IRCC will be funding more expansion when the existing LINC childcare sites are full; LINC staff are participating in Infant Mental Health Training
- WRDSB SLP (Cathy): New head speech and language pathologist is Melanie Gravel
- Project READ (Joanne): Received a large grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to expand family literacy program beyond families who are on Ontario Works to those who have low literacy or are on low income, will have three new sites (Victoria Community Centre in Kitchener, Arthur, and Guelph with BBBF), also looking at sustainability; hiring new facilitators for programs
- Early Literacy Specialist (Kim): Literacy and the Youngest Learner professional learning sessions had low attendance to start 2016, but attendance is climbing; Conestoga College is offering a three-part series in Literacy and Numeracy taught by Goranka Vukelich; January 23<sup>rd</sup> Early Learning Symposium at Conestoga College featured Dr. Jean Clinton with a focus on well-being, but not at the expense of content; "Meet with an Early Literacy Specialist" appointments at the three main Early Years Centre sites are often a chance to build rapport and refer to KidsAbility;

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part of this role is visiting different community programs to talk about the value of early literacy and numeracy and use of technology with children and families

- Baby Connections (Kim): Newly designed website [www.babyconnections.ca](http://www.babyconnections.ca) , January facilitator training focused on messaging around screen time and the value of home language use

#### 7. Other business:

- Community support: ELAWR has received a request from a group of 20 local professionals who are interested in helping with literacy for a day in June; please contact Gabriele if your organization has a specific project or could use support in this way

#### 8. Next meetings:

\*Change in date: Thursday, March 31, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. at KidsAbility, 500 Hallmark Drive, Waterloo

\*May 31, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. at KidsAbility, 500 Hallmark Drive, Waterloo

#### 9. Subcommittee work : (optional)

a) Conference Planning Committee – initial planning (*Members: Gabriele, Kim, Katherine W, Stephanie D, Katie J, Sam Burns,, Cathy Scott, Amber Holmes*)

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