

## Strategic Plan Meeting #1 Dreaming – Report

The following document contains four distinct types of information:

- A final version of Vision, Mission, Values/Principles and Strategic Initiatives offered for discussion to all Alliance members by the Core Planning Group
- Literal transcript of the flip chart notes three table groups produced under the headings of Vision, Mission and Values. Yellow highlights are the words and ideas the group “liked” that Ingrid circled on the flip charts during the debriefing sessions.
- A sorting of the literal information into the beginnings of a consolidated, single set of ideas
- A draft of potentially final language to be considered and edited by the Core Planning Committee – highlighted in bright green. This content was the basis for the following summary Draft Final Version of Vision, Mission and Values

### Draft Final Version of Vision, Mission, Values/Principles and Strategic Initiatives

#### **Vision:**

In 2040, children all achieve 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 community benefits from the work of the early literacy movement, resulting in well-being for all.

#### **Mission:**

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

#### **Values:**

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

#### **Principles:**

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

#### **Strategic Initiatives: What work do we do? (Very rough draft)**

- Create awareness about, and advocate for the importance of early literacy in healthy child development

- Share knowledge to empower parents, families and service providers
- Educate stakeholders by providing knowledge and resources through workshops, conferences and the website
- Coordinate collaboration by facilitating connections and communicating between sectors

### 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 Mabelle)

##### 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 and EDI 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 by Ingrid 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 by Ingrid 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 by Ingrid 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