Secretary of State
Kim Wyman

What's Happening in Early Learning?

WSL/Library Development

Today's Presenters

- Martha Shinners, Youth Services Consultant, Library Development, Washington State Library;

- Diane Hutchins, Consultant and Project Manager, Library Development, Washington State Library.

WSL supports early learning

- Training;
- Partnering;
- Washington Talking Book & Braille (WTBBL) Youth Services program;
- Publications;
- Member of Early Learning Public Library Partnership (ELPLP);
- Funding research.

Training

- What's the Big Idea? – making STEM fun!
- Sing With Our Kids – with Nancy Stewart;
- *Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR);*
- And exciting new tools! - More on this later.

Stay posted

- Find out about early learning training events:
    - Check out our Training Calendar at www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/trainingCalendar.aspx;
    - Sign up for WSL Updates by going to www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/lists.aspx.

Early Achievers Outreach Partnership (EAOP) Grants

- Funded by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) from their Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant from the U.S. Department of Education;

- Mini-grants awarded to 28 libraries;

- Grant activities to conclude in December.

Building awareness

- EAOP grants were designed to help local public libraries partner with DEL to build awareness of key early learning initiatives among Washington families;
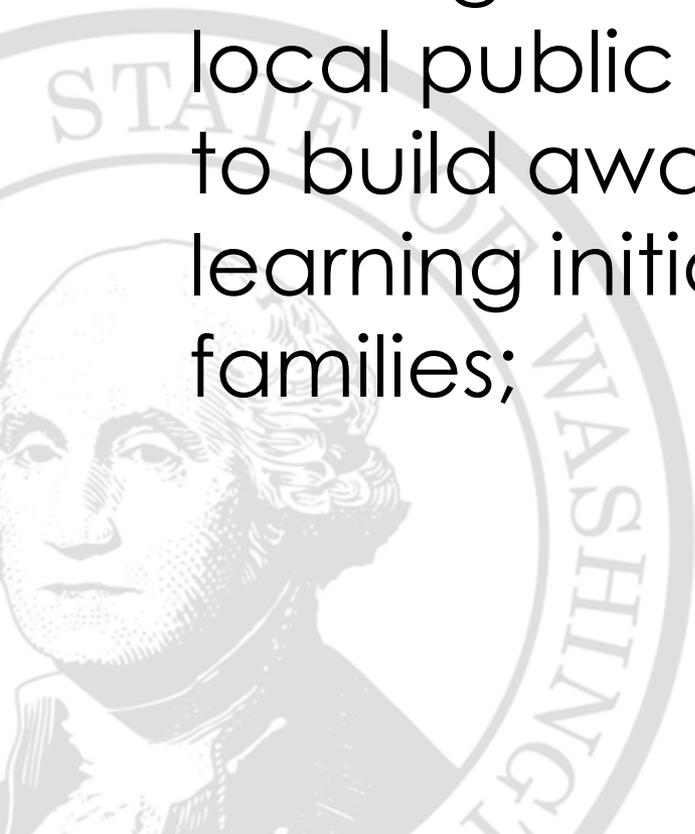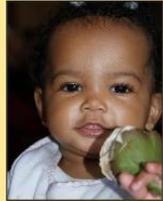
Building relationships

- EAOP grants were also intended to identify best practices for future partnerships between public libraries and DEL on early learning public awareness and family engagement initiatives.
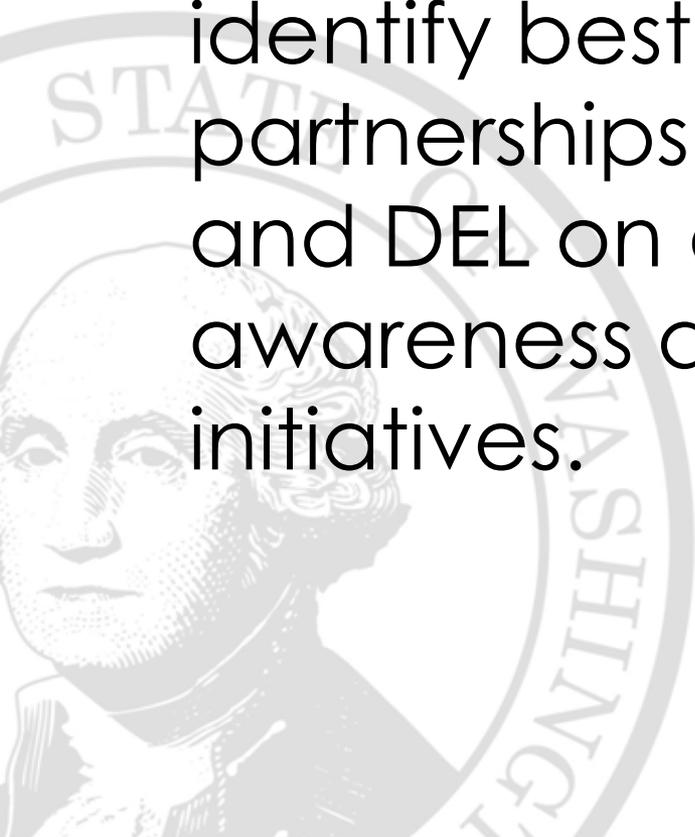
WTBBL's Youth Services Program

- Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) provides books and materials in all formats for children of all ages, from toddlers to teens;
- For learning support at home and at school;
- By-mail summer reading program;
- Special events for children and their families;
- Find out more at www.wtbbl.org/Youth.aspx.

Publications

Read to Your Baby Booklets -

Now available in 7 languages!

Find the order form at
http://www.sos.wa.gov/_assets/library/libraries/libDev/ReadToYourBabyOrderForm.pdf

CE Grants from WSL

- Continuing Education (CE) Grants
  - Available to library staff (paid or volunteer) as well as libraries or library consortia;
  - Individuals must work 10 or more hours per week (paid or volunteer) in a library or library consortium eligible to receive LSTA funds;
  - Training must meet one or more of the LSTA priorities and have a direct benefit to the library customer;
  - More information is available by going to www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/continuEd.aspx.

ELPLP - Strength in numbers

- Early Learning Public Library Partnership (ELPLP)
- http://earlylearning.org/about-us/early-learning-public-library-partnership

ELPLP Member Library Systems
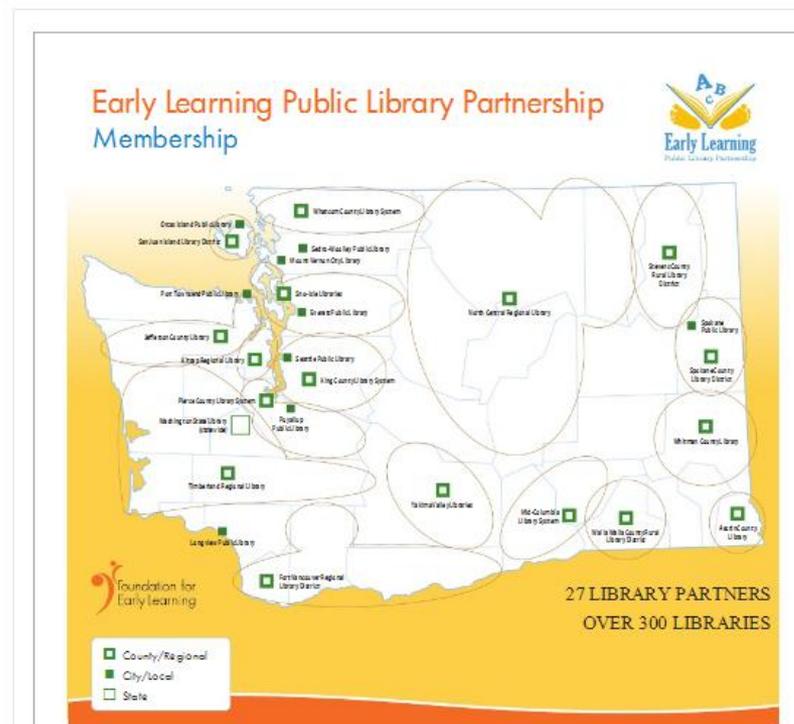
Partnership Members

Asotin County Library
Bellingham Public Library
Burlington Public Library
Everett Public Library
Fort Vancouver Regional Library District
Jefferson County Library
King County Library System
Kitsap Regional Library
Longview Public Library
Mid-Columbia Library System
Mount Vernon City Library
North Central Regional Library
Orcas Island Public Library
Pierce County Library System
Port Townsend Public Library
Puyallup Public Library
San Juan Island Library
Seattle Public Library
Sedro-Woolley Public Library
Sno-Isle Regional Library System
Spokane County Library District
Spokane Public Library
Stevens County Rural Library District
Timberland Regional Library
Walla Walla County Rural Library District
Washington State Library
Whatcom County Library System
Whitman County Library
Yakima Valley Libraries

ELPLP Goals

- Public libraries are recognized by early learning professionals, decision makers, and the public for their work in early learning;

- Public libraries are members of local and statewide early learning coalitions throughout Washington State;

- Public libraries continue to grow resources for early learning services and influence in the Washington State Early Learning Community.

Growing Young Minds

- IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) report, released in June 2013, called upon communities to engage libraries and museums as key partners in comprehensive early learning strategies to grow young minds;
- The report enumerates 10 key ways in which libraries and museums currently support early learning;
- Read the full report at www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/GrowingYoungMinds.pdf.

Why early learning is critical
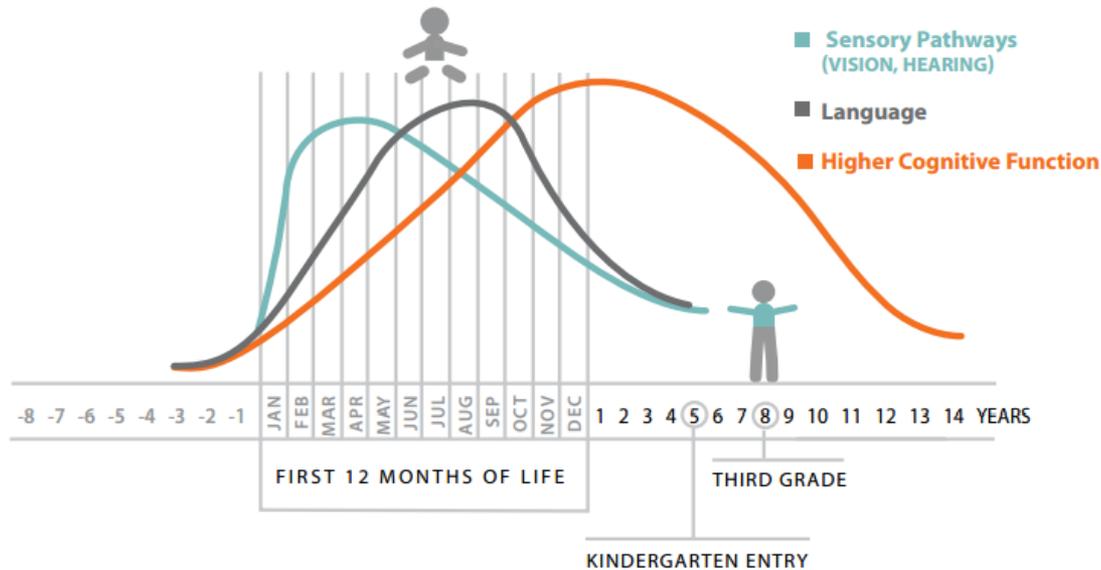
What happened in Washington

WASHINGTON STATE: GETTING TO THE TABLE

By proactively responding to new initiatives and policy actions, libraries across Washington have secured their position as key players in statewide early learning efforts.

In 1998, the Governor's Commission on Early Learning convened to identify and address early learning challenges. Libraries sought but were unsuccessful in gaining a place on the Commission. Undeterred, a group of librarians obtained funds from the State Library to develop their own project, the Washington Early Learning Initiative (2000-2003), which built a strong foundation for early education in Washington libraries and established partnerships with other child-serving organizations. According to the program director, "We may not have been at the first table, the governor's commission. But we had succeeded in bringing members of this group and others to our table and opening a dialogue with organizations and agencies previously unfamiliar with public library service" (Nelson, 2001).

Additional funding enabled libraries to expand their role as partners in early literacy and learning initiatives, but they still desired more permanent partnerships in the statewide infrastructure. In 2007, the Early Learning Public Library Partnership (ELPLP) was formed. Members (26 public libraries) contribute an agreed-upon percentage of their annual operating budgets to contract with the Foundation for Early Learning, which, in turn, assists libraries and others to establish early learning partnerships and enter the mainstream of early learning efforts. Activities include: providing legislative testimony in support of continuing state early learning funding; providing input on the development of the Washington State Early Learning Plan; hosting Early Learning Community Fairs; serving as members of community early learning coalitions; and commissioning an evaluation study of the effectiveness of library story times.

In 2006, a task force of library directors identified the lack of outcome-based evaluation of library programs and documentation of best practices as a barrier to participation in state early learning and literacy initiatives. Assessment and monitoring of outcomes was a well-established priority for the state, and libraries recognized the need to find valid and reliable means to measure early literacy outcomes. The University of Washington Information School, in partnership with the with the ELPLP, the Foundation for Early Learning and the State Library, designed a rigorous assessment of library story times on child outcomes, which is currently underway.

The team first developed tools to measure outcomes for children in informal settings and then collected data in 40 libraries randomly chosen throughout the state. Using the results of the year-one data, in year two the team developed a research-based training and delivered it to a selected random sample of 20 librarians. After a second data collection, statistical analysis will compare the children and librarians in the experimental group with those in the control group to determine whether these children demonstrate more growth in early literacy skills. The project will also document improvements in story times specifically related to early learning. In year three of the project, stated outcomes will be used to strengthen partnerships around early literacy practices and findings and tools will be disseminated to other libraries and states.

How far have we come?

- 15 years (1998 – 2013) have gone by;
- Libraries have gone from no seat at the table to becoming full partners in early learning.

1998-2013: Just a few highlights

1998 – Washington State Governor's Commission on Early Learning convened – librarians excluded from Commission

2000 – Establishment of Foundation for Early Learning (http://www.earlylearning.org)

2000 – 2003 – Public libraries received LSTA funding to support Washington Early Learning Initiative, which resulted in workshops on incorporating early learning brain research into public library programs; core collections for babies and toddlers.

2001 - The *Read to Your Baby* booklet was developed by the Pierce County Library System Youth Services Department as a part of their 2001 demonstration grant. It continues to be translated into numerous languages and distributed by the Washington State Library.

2005 – 2007 – Paul G. Allen Family Foundation early literacy grant provided regional training and workshops, comprehensive resource collections, STARS credits

2005 – Publication of the Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks (replaced by Guidelines in 2012)

2006 – Creation of the Department of Early Learning (http://www.del.wa.gov/Default.aspx)

2006 – Formation of Task Force by public library directors in Washington to examine how public libraries interact with the state's early childhood system – found lack of outcome-based evaluation models and lack of documentation of best practices

2007 – Founding of Thrive by Five Washington, a non-profit that raises funds to support early learning initiatives that demonstrate best practices. Thrive Demonstration Communities at White Center and East Yakima involve public libraries as community partners. (http://www.thrivebyfivewa.org/)

2008 – Washington libraries form the Early Learning Public Library Partnership (ELPLP) (http://earlylearning.org/about-us/early-learning-public-library-partnership)

2008 – Thrive by Five produces concept paper, Culture of Literacy Initiative, based on ALA's six literacy principles – required considering assessment as a part of providing literacy programs.

2009 – Project VIEWS: Valuable Initiatives in Early Learning that Work Successfully, an LSTA National Leadership Collaborative Planning Grant, awarded to the iSchool at the UW to begin to develop an exemplary, evidence-based model that could eventually be shared on a national level. Dr. Eliza T. Dresang serves as lead researcher.

2009 – Library Council of Washington (LCW) approves the use of LSTA funds awarded to WSL for "Connecting the Dots," which will support and work in tandem with Project VIEWS. Dr. Eliza T. Dresang serves as lead researcher for this project as well, which will create evidence-based models that can prove the contribution of early literacy programs in public libraries to early learning development in children.

2010 (September) – Release of *Washington State Early Learning Plan* by the Department of Early Learning (http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/elac-qris/docs/ELP.pdf). Librarians are included in the definition of "Early Learning Professional" and library programs are included in plan strategies.

2010 (September) – Project VIEWS Planning Grant culminates in white paper, *The Early Literacy Landscape for Public Libraries and Their Partners*, with findings that will guide the next phase of Project VIEWS. Report includes matrix that incorporates relevant strategies from the Early Learning Plan.

2010 (October) – Contract for Connecting the Dots is finalized and provides funding and support to continue work of Project VIEWS.

2011 (January) – Secretary of State, Sam Reed, and Washington State Librarian, Rand Simmons, submit letter of support for the iSchool's application for a National Leadership Research Grant from IMLS to fund the next phase of Project VIEWS. Project VIEWS2 will conduct further research on tools and methods that can measure effectiveness of public library early literacy programs on preparing young children for success in school. Tools will incorporate Early Learning and Development Benchmarks.

2011 (October) – iSchool is awarded a $635,000 National Leadership Research Grant from IMLS for Project VIEWS2. ELPLP and WSL are partners in this project.

2012 – *Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines* are released. Libraries and librarians are included as early learning resources.

2013 – WSL, invited by Dr. Bette Hyde, the Director of DEL, to partner with her agency to support their work on *Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge*, receives funding to support the awarding of 28 Early Achievers Outreach Partnership (EAOP) grants to libraries throughout Washington State (http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/eaop.aspx).

Present and Future – Project VIEWS2 and Connecting the Dots work in tandem to support research and field work, leading to successful outcomes!

Report recommendations

Districts, schools, and early learning programs can:

- Offer joint professional development to teachers and museum and library staff to create a common understanding of standards, curricula, and instructional practices in schools and the available resources at museums and libraries.

- Establish partnerships with local libraries and museums to provide programs and services that support new expectations for building content knowledge.

- Fully engage school librarians as important learning and literacy resources.

- Consider leveraging family engagement expertise and programs in museums and libraries to supplement school-based efforts, including involving families in supporting their children's transition to kindergarten.

Museums and libraries can:

- Establish strong partnerships with a wide range of community organizations.

- Provide parental and family support and access to quality programs and services, especially for vulnerable populations.

- Create links to schools that support local education priorities and policies, including Common Core and other state standards.

- Incorporate recent research on the brain, executive function, and learning into exhibits and programs.

- Embed rigorous evaluation into program development and base programs on research and evidence.

Remember this name!

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

The following people participated in a consultative session on December 5, 2012, to inform the development of this report.

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Claudine Brown, Smithsonian Institution

Judy Brown, Miami Science Museum

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Gerry Cobb, The BUILD Initiative

Kathleen Reust, Family Place Libraries™

Eliza Dresang, University of Washington

Lisa Guernsey, New America Foundation

Ann Joslin, Idaho Commission for Libraries

Kimberly Kiehl, Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center

Cheryl McCallum, Houston Children's Museum

Dale McCreedy, Franklin Institute

Elizabeth Orsburn, Free Library of Philadelphia

Joseph Prevratil, Archstone Foundation; Long Beach Public Library Foundation

Debbie Reese, American Indians in Children's Literature

Jeri Robinson, Boston Children's Museum

Gloria Rubio-Cortes, National Civic League

Tonja Rucker, National League of Cities

Shannon Rudisill, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Raymond Santiago, Miami-Dade Public Library System

Nina Sazer-O'Donnell, National Results and Equity Collaborative

Albert Wat, National Governors Association

The following additional people were interviewed for this report.

Francie Alexander, Scholastic, Inc.

Stephanie Bailey-White, Idaho Commission for Libraries

Gregg Behr, The Grable Foundation

Emily Blumenthal, Walters Art Museum

Janet Brown, Institute for Educational Leadership

Charles Bruner, The BUILD Initiative

Cen Campbell, Santa Clara County Library District

Rita Catalano, Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media

Reba Dominski, Target

Janet Elman, Association of Children's Museums

Kelly Fisher, Global Abilities Foundation, SRCD/AAAS Fellow

WSL – Funding research

- A challenging question - are early learning programs in public libraries effective?

- Our gut instinct said "yes," but did we have evidence-based studies that could demonstrate this?

- Libraries needed hard science to convince our funders that public funds were being spent wisely;

- But, how could this be done?

Connecting the Dots

- October 9, 2008 – Draft proposal for project discussed at meeting of Fort Vancouver Regional Library and Washington State Library.

- Project would provide a way for Washington's public libraries to prove their value as community early learning partners.

Project would use LSTA funds to:

- Document and describe various early learning initiatives in Washington that involved public libraries with partner organizations;

- Enable local libraries to evaluate their early learning programs to build an inventory of research-based models in Washington;

Share best practices

Project would:

- Encourage innovative expansion of current programs that offer opportunities to increase knowledge and documentation of best practices;
- Implement proven models in new communities.
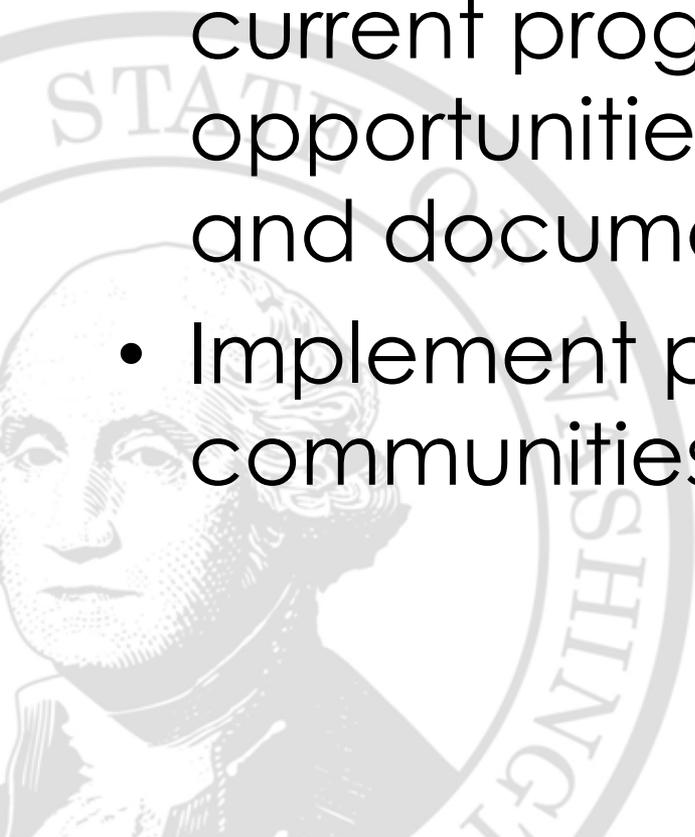
Meanwhile…

- Project VIEWS National Leadership planning grant is awarded to Dr. Eliza T. Dresang, Beverly Cleary Professor of Children and Youth Services at the University of Washington iSchool, in 2009;
- Project VIEWS was designed to identify best early learning initiatives and how to assess their impact.

Project VIEWS: Ultimate goals

- To create a plan that could enable Washington's successful early learning services and partnerships to become a model for public libraries throughout the United States;

- To develop an assessment instrument that could measure librarians' knowledge of early literacy skills and the impact on children of early literacy programs.

Why duplicate effort?

- December 2009 – WSL explored how Connecting the Dots could be designed to support the work of Project VIEWS;

- Dots funding would cover the funding gap between the end of Project VIEWS and the beginning of Project VIEWS2;

- Connecting the Dots would support the implementation of the tools and methodologies field tested during Project VIEWS2.

Where are we going?

- Website currently under development:
  - Phase 1: Portal for early learning practitioners for planning and self-evaluation (no password will be needed);
  - Phase 2: Portal for researchers who wish to replicate study (password protected).
- Coming soon (2014):
  - Training on ECRR2;
  - Roll out of training on Project VIEWS tools to library staff throughout Washington.

Upcoming Early Learning Event

Save the Date!

2013 Early Learning Public Library Partnership Symposium:
Embracing Cultures, Connecting Communities:
Libraries as a Place for All

Wednesday, November 6, 2013
9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Pierce County Library System Administration Building
3005 112th St. E.
Tacoma, WA, 98446

Registration free for ELPLP members, $75 for non-ELPLP Members
(continuing education scholarships for travel are available)

For more information and to register: please contact Susan Yang at 206-525-4801 x28 susan@earlylearning.org

Questions?

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