



Charter

(Adopted 4/11/17)

Background - Since 2012 early learning champions in Southwest Washington have been working together through SWEL to strengthen individual programs and services; improve equity and quality, and promote parent voice and advocacy. Our Southwest Washington region includes Klickitat, Skamania, Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and south Pacific counties.

Local communities have created and expanded many strong early learning services and supports. Through understanding and giving voice to our unique community needs and speaking with a common voice, we will expand our impact expressing regional needs and solutions. By sharing resources and common goals for early learning systems, we believe we can improve the consistency and quality of early learning services and supports across the region and improve long-term opportunity for all families in Southwest Washington.

Vision - Our youngest children are surrounded by nurturing families and skilled professionals who thrive within a strong early learning support system and an engaged community.

Mission - SWEL connects and builds local and regional efforts that grow strong families and prepare children and families for success in school and life.

Values - SWEL partners adhere to these guiding values as we:

- Bring our passion to the regional table to support each child's social-emotional, cognitive and physical health and development
- Empower families and early learning professionals to support children in safe, nurturing and engaging home and community settings
- Respect and engage our racial, ethnic and cultural communities and families in poverty to eliminate disparities.
- Encompass State, regional and local efforts to prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) and promote resiliency
- Act to maximize benefit and reduce duplication, while increasing opportunity for all, with an emphasis on families furthest from opportunity.
- Focus efforts and measure results based on success and lessons learned through collaboration

Goals – We work together as advocates for systems change who close the opportunity gap by achieving the following goals:

- Resources, Connections and Accessibility - *All our children have access to expanded early learning resources and services.*
- Healthy Start - *All our children and families start life in a safe and connected community*
- Early Learning Opportunities - *All our children have accessible, affordable and universal childcare and early learning opportunities*
- Advancing Equity - *All our children - regardless of race, income or ability- have an equitable capacity to succeed as we close the opportunity gap*
- School Success - *All our children are ready for school and schools are ready for our children*
- Regional - State Alignment - *All our children benefit from a coordinated early learning system committed to consistent communication and common outcomes.*

Membership - SWEL members promote regional and local efforts by providing leadership, sharing experience and technical expertise, participating in public events and supporting our objectives with time, energy and resources. Through a variety of stakeholder engagements we advance broad regional early learning goals. Coalition members agree to the listed commitments as evidenced by their signature and statement of commitment noted below.

Governance - Deliberations and oversight of the regional collaboration's work is handled by those authorized for roles outlined in the Coalition's *Governance Structure*

Fiscal Agent - SWEL's fiscal agent is Support for Early Learning and Families (SELF), a non-profit organization headquartered in Vancouver, Washington.

Decision-Making – SWEL decisions will initially be attempted to be made by consensus - using the *Fist of Five* approach as needed. When consensus is not possible or more formal decisions are required, decisions will be made through motions and majority vote.

Meetings - The SWEL Steering Committee meets monthly, except for July and December. Work Groups and Committee meetings (via in person, conference call or K-20) are scheduled as needed.

Agenda - Meeting agendas are prepared in advance and sent via a current email list. Requests for agenda items must be submitted at least two days in advance of meeting.

Accountability - We adhere to our mission and measure program progress through continuous evaluation, including an annual self-assessment of the coalition's effectiveness and the participation of our own individual agencies.

Commitments - As members of SWEL, we commit to:

1. Participate through regular attendance at meetings (local and/or regional) and contribute resources or in-kind support to regional efforts.
2. Bring early learning issues of regional concern to the Coalition table

3. Support the Coalition's priorities, principles, and objectives as expressed in this *SWEL Charter* and our annual *Action Plan*. We commit to reviewing, revising and endorsing our initial *Coalition Charter* at least every two years, or as needed.
4. Utilize our agency's existing strengths and take steps to effectively engage in the Coalition and sustain a coordinated approach to serving children and families.
5. Open and transparent communication and decision-making. We listen to understand, share openly and speak constructively even when disagreeing. We clearly state the constituencies whose perspective we are representing
6. Achieve fund development at the regional level based on the direction of the Steering Committee and the input of the county coalitions.
7. Volunteer for leadership roles on issues and functions where we have expertise.
8. Work together to engage tribal nations, state and local policymakers and others to advance regional early learning priorities.
9. Take time to strengthen the individual, organizational and community relationships that drive our success.
10. Prioritize the needs of children and families over our individual organizational interests whenever possible

Charter Amendments - Changes to the Charter can be made by vote of the Steering Committee, with 30 days advance notice of the meeting.

SWEL Charter Endorsement and Designation of Representative

My agency/organization/Coalition hereby joins SWEL and endorses SWEL's mission, values and goals.

Name of Agency / Organization / Coalition	
Mailing Address	
Type of Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Coalition <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Other
Counties where you operate programs (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Clark <input type="checkbox"/> Cowlitz <input type="checkbox"/> Klickitat <input type="checkbox"/> south Pacific <input type="checkbox"/> Skamania <input type="checkbox"/> Wahkiakum
Primary Representative	Name:
	Phone #:
	Email:
Alternate Representative	Name:
	Phone #:
	Email:

Authorized Signature	
Name / Title (print)	

Date of Signature	
-------------------	--

Please email a completed copy to SWEL via ***debbie.ham@selfwa.org***

Or mail to: Debbie Ham, SELF, 13504 NE 84th St., Suite 103-137, Vancouver, WA 98682