



WHY DO WE WANT TO JOIN SWEL? Frequently Asked Questions

What is SWEL? SWEL is Southwest Washington's regional early learning coalition - committed partners include local early learning programs and coalitions, School Districts, health and social service agencies, libraries, parent groups and more. SWEL connects and builds local and regional efforts that grow strong families and prepare children for success in school and life. SWEL's region is 6 counties (Klickitat, Skamania, Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and south Pacific). SELF (Support for Early Learning and Families) is SWEL's fiscal sponsor. Together we have a strong advocacy voice in Southwest Washington, in Olympia and beyond.

What has SWEL achieved? Since 2010 SWEL has empowered parents, professionals and the public through pilot projects, family events, racial equity and home visitor training, and data reports. SWEL speaks for our region with a strong voice in Olympia. SELF and SWEL have leveraged millions of dollars in services for our region. In Spring 2017 SWEL is holding four local forums across the region to raise up the voices of local parents, professionals and communities.

What is SWEL's 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. SWEL believes Our Children Can't Wait - it's time for action. SWEL's 2020 Vision will be affirmed at an October 24, 2017 Summit in Vancouver. Be there for your voice to count!

What is required of partners? Your active participation is expected - you set the level. There are multiple options for engagement including monthly Steering Committee meetings (K-12 video system available), Work Groups, training events and local county coalitions.

What is SWEL's role with state systems change? SWEL is our link to state level stakeholders (like the Department of Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health and Thrive Washington). These agencies seek to hear from and partner with regional coalitions to achieve the state's Early Learning Plan, close the opportunity gap and reach those furthest from opportunity. SWEL partners state level stakeholders to achieve the vision that by 2020 90% of five-year-olds will be ready for kindergarten, with race/ethnicity and family income no longer predictors of readiness.

Where does SWEL's support come from? Most of SWEL's current revenue comes from Thrive Washington (a statewide public-private partnership); other funding comes from SELF, foundations, corporations and SWEL partners. SELF is actively seeking additional funding to strengthen SWEL's resources to close the opportunity gap. While there is no required dues payment from SWEL partners, voluntary contributions are invited so we can extend our impact.

Questions - Need more information? **Contact Debbie Ham | debbie.ham@selfwa.org**