

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WASHINGTON EARLY LEARNING FUND

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is being signed by the undersigned effective as of January 17, 2006, for the purpose of articulating an expression of intent to (i) establish a jointly funded public-private partnership for early learning in the State of Washington ("State"), and (ii) select two demonstration/pilot communities ("Pilot Communities"), as further described below.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, public and private investors in early learning recognize and value the critical importance of parents as their child's first and most important teacher;

WHEREAS, many children in the State are currently unprepared for success in school when entering Kindergarten, and all parties acknowledge that school readiness must include physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development;

WHEREAS, high quality early learning for children birth to five-years-old offers a proven, cost-effective investment to ensure that *ALL* children in the State are prepared for school and life;

WHEREAS, Governor Christine O. Gregoire has named a bi-partisan Early Learning Council to study and make recommendations on improving the State's support of parents, school readiness, child care, quality early learning, and other aspects of early learning;

WHEREAS, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation ("Gates Foundation"), in furtherance of its tax exempt purposes and in accordance with authority expressly granted under federal law, seeks to (i) establish a jointly funded program with the undersigned parties for the purpose of investing in early learning and parent education programs in the State as outlined in this MOU, and (ii) select two Pilot Communities to demonstrate the implementation of early learning and parent education programs;

WHEREAS, the Talaris Research Institute ("Talaris"), is seeking to invest in early learning and parent education programs as outlined in this MOU; and other private investors have long been committed to supporting and aligning efforts in early learning and parent education programs;

WHEREAS, the State is committed to increasing quality early learning and outcomes for children and families by concentrating and coordinating investments through the piloting of a Quality Rating and Improvement System and Tiered Reimbursement System as outlined in this MOU;

WHEREAS, significant opportunity to ensure access to high quality early learning for *ALL* children in the State is optimized by aligning and coordinating public and private investments; and

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WHEREAS, public-private partnerships are built to coordinate, align, and add value to work already being done by multiple parties where it is clear that no one party can work most effectively alone.

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned agree on the following:

TERMS

1. Public-private partnership

- a) Representatives from the undersigned entities will work together to form, within 120 days of signing this MOU, a jointly funded public-private partnership tentatively known as the Washington Early Learning Fund ("WELF") (See Concept Paper - Attachment "A").
 - i. The mission of WELF will be to work with and complement existing efforts statewide to ensure that every child in the State is prepared to succeed in school and in life by enhancing parent education and support, child care, preschool and other early learning environments.
 - ii. WELF will serve in a partnership role to accomplish the mission of the nonprofit, private investors and the federal, State and local governments to implement high quality investments in early learning, including childcare, pre-k and parental support.
- b) WELF will be used as a funding mechanism to pool funds for quality improvement initiatives, including parent education and support. WELF will also support the alignment of existing funding streams and coordination of efforts across sectors.
- c) WELF will focus on the following, as outlined in Attachment A to this MOU:
 - i. Assist the statewide movement to high quality early learning;
 - ii. Coordinate, consolidate and attract new investments so that there is a more substantial, outcome-oriented vision for quality early learning; and
 - iii. Advocate for early learning, where appropriate, and work to ensure consistent communications with parents, providers and the public.
- d) An Executive Board, which will include key appointees from the public and private sectors, will govern WELF. Parties to this MOU will establish the details regarding the Executive Board's size, composition and duties.

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2. Pilot Communities

- a) The undersigned agree to work together within 120 days of signature to finalize a budget and finance plan for jointly investing in two Pilot Communities.
- b) Governor Christine O. Gregoire will work with the state Legislature to request appropriate State funding for WELF and the two Pilot Communities.
- c) Both of the Pilot Communities will be in high-need areas, with one community in Eastern Washington and the other in Western Washington.
- d) The Gates Foundation commits to leading the Pilot Community selection process, conducting appropriate due diligence, and recommending the Pilot Communities for approval by the State, and other partners.

3. Finance Study

- a) Through the Early Learning Council, a study to determine the long term financing needed to bring early learning to scale for the State will be commissioned by January 31, 2006.
- b) The financing study will be jointly funded by public and private partners.

This MOU is a statement of intent only, and is not binding upon the parties. The parties will not be liable to each other for any damages or losses arising from or relating to this MOU. Additional partners may be added to the MOU upon agreement by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have signed this MOU as of the day and year first above written.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Talaris Research Institute

Bill Gates Sr.
Co-Chair

Bruce McCaw and Jolene McCaw
Co-Chairs

State of Washington

Boeing

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

Bob Watt
Vice President - Government & Community
Relations Commercial Airplanes

**Memorandum of Understanding
Washington Early Learning Fund**

Social Venture Partners

Foundation for Early Learning

Paul Shoemaker
Executive Director

Jeanne Anderson
Executive Director

Ginger and Barry Ackerley Foundation

Lockheed Martin Information Technology

Kim Cleworth
President and Executive Director

Jorge F. (Frank) Armijo
Program Director

Kirlin Charitable Foundation

Entity:

Ron Rabin
Executive Director
Entity:

Name:
Title:
Entity:

Name:
Title:

Name:
Title:

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**Memorandum of Understanding
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**Appendix A
The Washington Early Learning Fund:
A concept paper to inform discussions for a statewide early learning strategy**

ATTACHED

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

The Washington Early Learning Fund

A concept paper to inform discussions for a statewide early learning strategy

Prepared by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
in cooperation with the Talaris Research Institute, the Foundation for Early Learning

Special thanks to The Rensselaerville Institute's Center for Outcomes,
the United Way's Success by 6,
and the Heinz Foundation's Children, Youth and Families Program

December 2005

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Aligning Public and Private Interests in Quality Early Learning

It is a momentous time for early learning in Washington State. Never before have public and private interests in improving the quality of early learning, including the importance role of parenting, appeared to be more aligned. Governance – how to coordinate these multi-faceted interests in order to accomplish a set of measurable outcomes – is an issue that is front and center for the public sector as well as for the private sector. This paper is intended to outline the underlying philosophy of public-private partnerships, examples, models and recommendations. This paper *does not* comment or have opinions on State of Washington governance for early learning. In 2005 Governor Gregoire's Early Learning Council, which is part of Washington Learns, agreed that all of the state's early learning and child care programs should be consolidated into a single new department. The Early Learning Council stipulated that the new early learning department should have a public-private partnership as part of its governance.¹ While this paper does not focus on the governance of this new department, it does present a vision for how the public sector can work in close partnership with private funders.

Public-private partnerships have the ability to bring the assets of each sector to the table to leverage social change. Private organizations, such as foundations and businesses, are able to bring expertise, credibility, nimbleness, and flexible funding to a problem. The public sector offers experience, expertise and brings considerable public resources, infrastructure and political legitimacy. Each of these assets is crucial to creating lasting, sustainable change.

In the absence of a strong public-private partnership for early learning, Washington misses an opportunity that other states are seizing – the opportunity to coordinate, support, rise above politics and do what's right for children.

What follows is a description of two different public private partnerships in two different states – Georgia and Pennsylvania. We also outline a recommended approach for Washington state. Specifically, we think the time is right to create the Washington Early Learning Fund. *Appendix A* describes the broad philosophy underlying public-private partnerships.

Examples of two public-private partnership at work in early learning

Smart Start Georgia (formerly Georgia Early Learning Initiative): Smart Start Georgia was established as the Georgia Early Learning Initiative to develop and implement a long-term plan to increase school readiness in Georgia with the aim of having all children ready to succeed in school by the time they enter kindergarten.² Smart Start Georgia is a public/private partnership among the State of Georgia, the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation, United Ways of Georgia, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, and more than 40 additional supporting businesses and organizations. Smart State Georgia is funded by a combination of public and private sources. Fiscal Year 2004-20045, Smart Start

¹ See October 19, 2005, staff summary of the Early Learning Council meeting.

² http://www.smartstartga.org/about_us/overview.php

Georgia received \$11,127,675 million from the State of Georgia and a total of \$2,567,900 from private sources. The Woodruff Foundation (Coca-cola money) spends approximately \$6 million per year on and through the partnership. The public-Private Partnership spends approximately \$20 million per year. Counties are selected to participate through a legislative process. The Governor of Georgia appoints board members and the funding foundations and other organizations are also represented on the board.

Pennsylvania Partnership for Quality Pre-Kindergarten: Fiscal year 2004-2005 the Pennsylvania legislature appropriated \$200M in a Block Grant to support quality Pre-K programs.³ A public-private partnership has been built in which private funding is used for enhancing specific elements of the early learning strategy including:

- Start up: activities to stimulate the start-up and expansion of quality pre-kindergarten programs offered through the newly established revenue streams at the state level.
- Quality Enhancement and Assurance: activities to assure high quality in Pennsylvania's pre-kindergarten programs.

The Washington Early Learning Fund

Private foundations are poised to make significant investments with the public sector in order to move Washington's child care, preschool and other early childhood development programs toward a high quality early learning system that prepares children socially, emotionally and cognitively for school. Gates, Talaris, the Foundation for Early Learning, United Ways, Medina, the Boeing Company, Safeco, Wells Fargo, Social Venture Partners and others are important Washington state investors in early learning. As we have seen in other successful states, we believe that a public-private partnership will need to be established to effectively lead, govern and implement this move to quality.

We recommend the creation of the Washington Early Learning Fund as the public-private partnership. WELF is simply a working title for purposes of this concept paper. A **mission** statement might be:

The Washington Early Learning Fund is a public-private partnership that will work to ensure every child in our state is prepared to succeed in school and in life by enhancing parent education and support, child care, preschool and other early learning environments.

The Washington Early Learning Fund will serve in a partnership role to Federal, State and Local government's overall mission of implementing high quality investments in early learning including child care, pre-k and parental support. The Partnership's board will include key appointees from the public and private sectors and work closely with the new early learning department. The partnership's performance would be measured based on these strategies for accomplishing its mission, which include:

³ http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?Q=111541&A=179

Lead and drive the statewide movement to high quality early learning through:

- Strategic community and parent-centered investments
- A Washington Quality Rating and Improvement System
- School readiness benchmarks
- Advocacy from public and private leaders
- Start up funding and technical assistance

Coordinate, consolidate and attract new investments so that there is a more substantial, outcome-oriented vision for quality early learning through:

- Pooled funding
- A public-private executive board
- Strategic, coordinated fundraising

Advocate for early learning through:

- Parent education
- Public education (including businesses, grandparents, voters)
- Provider communications, training and technical assistance
- Government relations
- Evaluation

Structuring the Washington Early Learning Fund

The partnership should allow for participation by organizations that are able and willing to pool their funds as well as organizations that choose to align their own funding with the partnership strategy. The partnership provides a funding mechanism (which may include in-kind support) as well as a coordinating function.

The partnership will be capable of providing the necessary leadership and capacity to coordinate the efforts of multiple public and private stakeholders around a common long-term strategy, manage and provide technical assistance to community level intermediaries, fundraise, and administer a pooled fund of public and private dollars including managing competitive grant processes, disbursement of funds, and report management. The partnership must be capable of holding all elements of the system accountable to the objectives of the partnership.

The partnership will be governed by a Board that includes leaders from the public sector, providers, foundations, businesses, parent groups, and communities, and should reflect the diversity of the state. The Board should be led by two Co-Chairs, one from the public sector and one from the private sector. The Board should be directed by a well defined Charter and a Memorandum of Understanding that clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of all member organizations. The Board will guide the strategic and policy direction of the partnership, but not the day-to-day operations.

For the purpose of implementing an early learning strategy with demonstration sites, the partnership will contract with an appropriate Community Intermediary (CI) in each of the participating communities. The responsibilities of the CI will include developing a business plan for early learning in the community, coordinating existing early learning

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efforts, contracting with local providers, coordinating the replication of proven models, managing and tracking grant funds, and community level fundraising. The CI should have an Advisory Board made up of community level stakeholders as well a member of the Partnership. The Advisory Board will help advise and inform the demonstration projects, review grant proposals, and offer community level technical assistance as needed. The Partnership will oversee the efforts of the two demonstration communities and thus, the efforts of the CI. The CI will be legally accountable to the partnership and/or aligned funder(s). However, the Partnership will be a critical partner who helps to oversee the community-wide efforts.

Fundraising will be a critical element of the partnership to achieve substantial and sustainable funding. Funding streams for the partnership must include public and private funding streams at all levels, including individuals. The Partnership will be primarily responsible for coordinating, aligning and developing the fundraising strategy. All governing board members, however, will be expected to be actively engaged in fundraising to support the initiative.

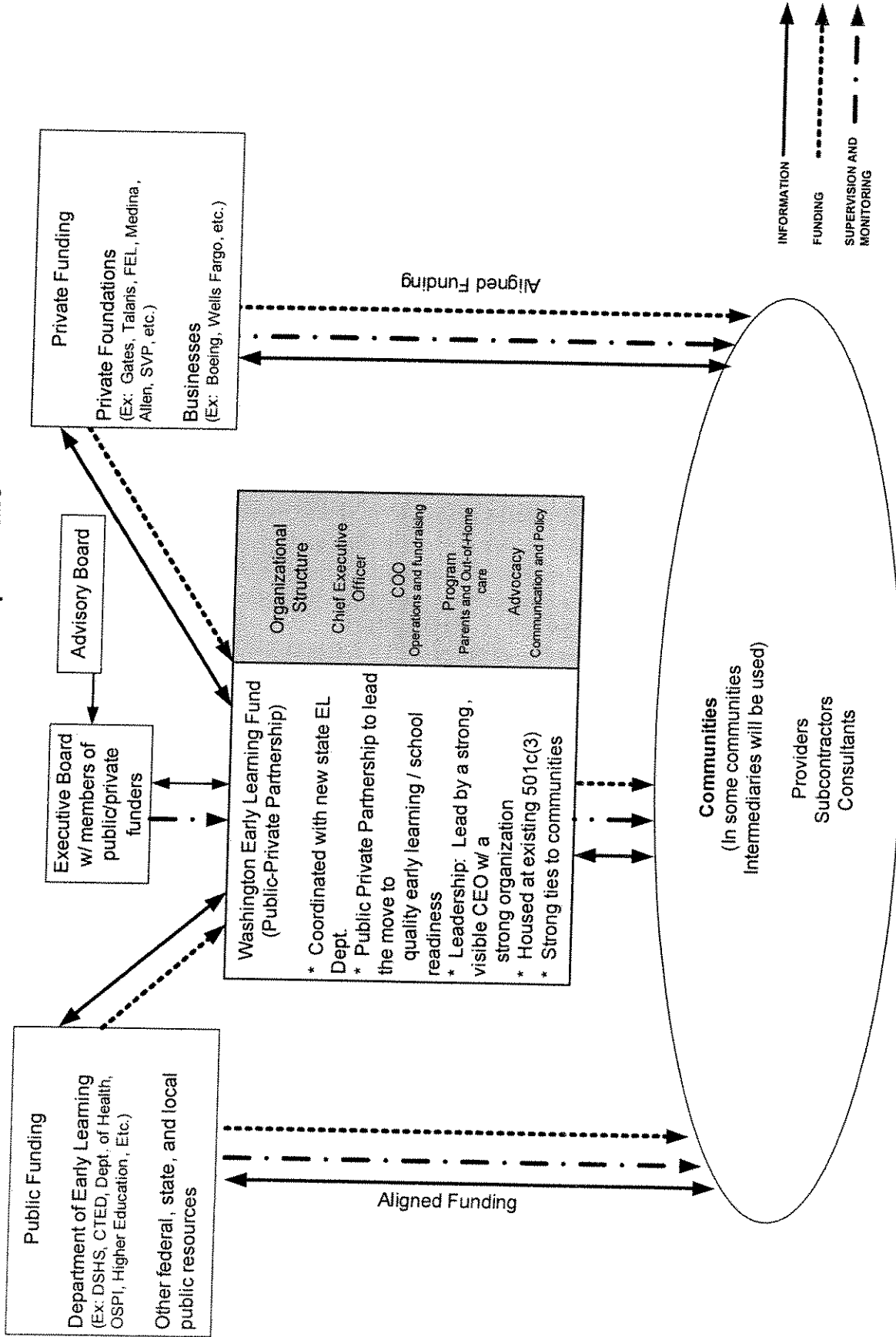
An RFQ/RFP process would lead to the selection of an existing 501c(3) nonprofit organization (or some combination of existing organizations) to fulfill the partnership's duties. The successful respondent to the RFQ/RFP will fulfill the organizational structure and staffing in the graphic on the following page.

The graphic portrayal is that of a potential structure, including funders, governance, organizational structure and relationship with communities, sub-contractors and consultants to the enterprise.

SEE GRAPHIC PORTRAYAL ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

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DRAFT Public-Private Partnership Structure



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APPENDIX A

Philosophy of public-private partnerships

Public-private partnerships are built to coordinate, align, and add value to work already being done by multiple parties where it is clear that no one party can work effectively alone. Public-private partnerships also:

- Avoid duplication of investments and activities and allow for innovation.
- Reduce and share financial risks.
- Increase effectiveness by sharing and coordinating knowledge, relationships and resources.
- Accelerate momentum and catalyze additional funding by building a common “brand” that gains legitimacy and support.

The attributes of strong public-private partnerships include the following elements:

- Form follows function: identify core objectives and outcomes *then* select suitable partners; choose appropriate alliance structure.
- Clear project goals: spend time defining *mutual, clear and achievable* goals and milestones.
- Clear roles: define in advance who will do what.
- Cultural differences and strengths are maximized: considers the different strengths the private and the public sector bring to the table and build on the strength of each partner.
- Senior leadership is committed; dedicated staff is empowered: staff are focused on achieving the key outcomes agreed to by the partners.
- Strong intermediary structure: conduct regular, rigorous performance evaluation; uses external reviewers if possible; compare across similar ventures.

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