

**Timeline: Libraries and Early Learning in Washington** - Compiled by Diane Hutchins, Washington State Library, 21 August 2013

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-gris/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!