

Children's Alliance roles at ELAA

Children's Alliance brings its own priorities to the Early Learning Action Alliance as a member of the coalition as a whole and of the Steering Committee. In addition, our organization has earned a role as a trusted facilitator in this community. While the coalition manager holds primary responsibility for facilitation and staffing roles, all Children's Alliance staff are expected to meet these expectations to some degree. We all need to be aware and, at times, be explicit about which role we are fulfilling in any given moment.

1. Coalition Member. Staff with policy specialization will:
 - i. Fulfill ELAA membership expectations
 1. Supporting the coalition's policy goals.
 2. Playing a leadership role in areas in which you and your organization have expertise for the purposes of recommending issues and/or positions for consideration by the coalition.
 3. Mobilize grassroots and grasstops by engaging organizational members that can help move the mission.
 4. Mobilize communications statewide, utilizing organizational constituencies.
 5. Attend full coalition meetings and other applicable meeting and conference calls
 6. Commit to disclosing and stating when you are representing your organization and when you are representing Early Learning Action Alliance
 - ii. Advocate for our priorities
 1. Assert organizational priorities and mobilize support for them among coalition members with the same mechanisms available to all members;
 2. Develop strategy in alignment and collaboration with partners;
 3. Share information and support the advocacy of partners with education, materials, and opportunities for action.
2. Community leadership. Our organizational role as a trusted facilitator and representative of the whole affords us a lot of power.
 - i. This power has been earned through relationship and it can be lost. We maintain trust by:
 1. Making better outcomes for kids the highest priority and first evaluation criteria of every decision.
 2. Being fair, respectful, inclusive, direct and kind;

3. Being good listeners, making members feel heard and that their views and interests are reflected in our priorities and agreements;
 4. Modelling a constructive, solutions oriented posture in our conversations with members about coalition priorities, processes and members. (Not talking trash.)
 5. Being responsive to the needs of the group and individual members
 - ii. This trust allows us the power to:
 1. Frame conversations, define context
 2. Draft objectives and agendas
 3. Draft frameworks and criteria for decision-making
 4. Shape who is at the table and facilitate access for under-represented groups
 5. Choose the language with which we tell our collective story and assert our priorities by drafting materials
 6. Access decision-makers to represent the network and its shared priorities.
3. Neutral facilitator -
 - i. Implement governance agreements, and facilitate the creation of new ones when necessary (e.g. conflict protocol)
 - ii. Set up **transparent** and **inclusive** processes that give every member an opportunity to shape, own, and contribute to coalition priorities, strategy and campaign implementation.
 - iii. Identify and build common ground among partners. Develop policy and advocacy strategy proposals consistent with mission and principles that reflect the needs of members.
 - iv. Facilitate conflict resolution
 - v. Distribute leadership across the network.
 - vi. Provide platforms for communications, learning and planning.
 - vii. Facilitate evaluations of effectiveness
 - viii. Aim for a careful balance of group autonomy and herding cats
4. Staffing
 - i. Facilitate the alignment and development of shared priorities and coordinate shared strategy development and implementation;
 - ii. Track development of policy, budget and implementation relevant to coalition priorities to ensure that advocacy opportunities are identified and shared;

- iii. Act as a communications conduit, sharing info among members re policy updates, advocacy opportunities, sample mobilization and communications materials, intel about advocacy targets, and other advocacy tools via email updates and social media.
- iv. Publish budget and policy summaries during and after legislative session
- v. Meeting scheduling and facilitation, assigning content to members;
- vi. Draft shared advocacy materials (or assign drafting)
- vii. Provide opportunities for self-evaluation and celebrating successes
- viii. See [coalition facilitation timeline, objectives and strategies](#).