

# Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, August 13, 2020

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

*The public may attend the meeting in any of the locations specified below:*

**Meeting Chair will preside via the Zoom link.**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Dana Balansag (for Dir. Bhanot), Justina Acevedo-Cross, Leilani Au, Ben Naki, Kerrie Urosevich, Wai’ale’ale Sarsona (for Jack Wong), Matt Shim (for Dir. Anderson), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner), Bob Peters, Namaka Rawlins, Mari Uehara, Melodie Vega, Edeluisa Baguio-Larena, Bob Davis (for Superintendent Kishimoto)

**Absent:** Cherilyn Shiinoki, Kaina Bonacorsi

**Executive Office on Early Learning staff in attendance:** Lauren Moriguchi, Keopu Reelitz, Wimmie Wong Lui, Alohilani Maiava, Chris Jackson, Jeff Larson, Dana Ciacci, Coleen Momohara, Keli Houston, Ashley Miura

**Public in Attendance:** Anne Horiuchi, Camille Masutomi, Danny Cup Choy, Deborah Zysman, Hide Wu, Justine Kamelamela, Katherine Murphy, Ken Kakesako, Kim Guieb, Mary Ann Nemoto, Napua Rosehill, Scott Fujii, Capsun Poe, Jordana Ferreira, Deanne Goya, Jennifer Dang, Ka’ano’i Walk, Kamela Souza, Pualani Kaho’ohanohano, Jordan Smith, Brandon, Carolyn

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
<b>MINUTES:</b>		
<b>Welcome/Introductions—</b> Bob Peters	Bob welcomed the group at 1:31 PM and asked Leilani to read the mission statement. He had EOEL’s Communications Specialist, Keopu Reelitz review the chat box rules and zoom etiquette. Bob explained that votes will be conducted by roll call and that the private comments feature had been turned off.	
<b>Review and Approve</b> <b>7/9/20 Minutes—</b> Bob Peters	The 7/9/20 meeting minutes were approved as distributed.	
<b>Public Comment—</b> Bob	No public comments were offered.	

Early Learning Board

<http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/early-learning-board/>

Wednesday, August 13, 2020

Peters		
<p><b>ELB Workforce Equity Subcommittee Update</b>—Justina Acevedo-Cross</p>	<p>Justina Acevedo-Cross gave an update on the ELB Workforce Equity subcommittee that was approved for creation at the last ELB meeting. The formation of a Workforce Equity subcommittee was suggested by Terry Lock and Justina, on behalf of the Early Childhood Education Equity and Excellence (ECE3) project.</p> <p>Justina reminded everyone that the new subcommittee would look at the proposed implementation plan around workforce and decide which pieces can already be executed in Hawaii and which ones will require more assistance. The subcommittee can also influence the direction that the proposed workforce economics study takes. There would be five committee members: two from the ELB (Justina and Melodie), one who is connected to the University of Hawaii ECE3 project (Terry Lock), EOEL’s workforce specialist (Dana Ciacci), and one more from an outside organization. The subcommittee’s focus would follow the scope of the ECE3 project, which means that it would look at the role of lead teachers across all settings (center-based, FCIL, etc.). The ELB will learn whether funds for the ECE3 project are awarded to Hawaii in December 2020. Bob reported that the letter of endorsement from ELB will be finalized soon.</p>	
<p><b>Executive Office on Early Learning Updates; Office Staffing/Legislative Updates</b>—Lauren Moriguchi</p>	<p>Lauren asked Wimmie Wong Lui, Government Affairs Specialist, to start with the legislative updates. Wimmie explained that since the last meeting, the Governor has signed the budget bill (SB 126) on July 31, and restored funding for the seven pre-K positions that were cut. She thanked all Board members who advocated for the funding to be restored, as well as partners, organizations, and families who spoke out on EOEL’s behalf. The position of EOEL program specialist currently occupied by Alohi Maiava has not had its funding restored, but EOEL is currently looking into alternate sources of funding. The Governor line-item vetoed a few expenses, so the final budget bill provides \$61 million for PPE out of the proposed \$100 million. Currently the Governor has not yet taken any final actions on HB1346, which is the</p>	

	<p>bill that prohibits expulsion and limits suspension in the EOEL pre-k program, as well as HB2543, the main early childhood bill from the recently completed legislative session. The Governor’s Office has said that bills that were part of the Governor’s package this past year can be re-introduced next year, but that the Governor will be very restrictive in approving/signing any bills that request new funding.</p> <p>Lauren then announced that Wimmie has accepted another position within the DOE, so EOEL will have to begin a search for a Government Affairs Specialist. Wimmie explained that she is moving to DOE’s budget office as a budget specialist. Her last day will be August 31, and her position was posted on August 1. The earliest a new person could be hired into the position is late October to early November. Lauren assured the board that while Wimmie will leave big shoes to fill, other office staff will stand in for her and perform her duties during the transition period. Bob thanked Wimmie for all of her hard work and emphasized the critical importance of the work she has done for EOEL, ELB, and the early learning sector in general. Wimmie said she will miss everyone and appreciated her time with EOEL.</p>	
<p><b>Executive Office on Early Learning Director’s Annual Review—Bob Peters</b></p>	<p>Bob shared a summary of the Board’s Input Survey related to the Leadership Standards on which the Director of EOEL is evaluated. Eleven members completed the survey, allowing for an adequate review. The Director was evaluated as either “meeting” the individual standards or “needing improvement” with comments to support each evaluation. On all 5 Leadership Standards, the majority of respondents rated the Director as “Meets” the standards. Comments included praise for developing a high-quality Public Pre-K Program, management of the EOEL Office, effectively working with the Board and demonstrating professionalism. Improvement noted by some centered around the need for the Director to demonstrate stronger, more assertive and visionary leadership across the broader childcare system.</p> <p>The Board approved the Director’s annual review and requested that a</p>	<p><b>A written summary will be</b></p>

	<p>written summary report be distributed to ELB members. The votes were split thus:</p> <p>Ayes: 6</p> <p>Nays: 2</p> <p>Abstentions: 2</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several Board members agreed that they would have preferred a written summary to refer to, rather than just a verbal report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bob explained that he did not send out a written summary with the rest of the meeting materials because then everyone, including the public, would be able to see it, not just Board members. Most other public Governing Boards, in his experience, do not send out written summaries until after the Board has voted on it. That said, he is aware that written summaries are a common practice from Boards in the private or non-profit sector.</li> <li>○ It was suggested that for the next review process, the Governance subcommittee could look into how other public boards conduct executive reviews, and if there are any examples ELB can pull from to do this.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The evaluation will be used as a self-reflection, along with the strategic priorities of both the ELB and the EOEL, in order to set new goals, particularly for next year.</li> <li>• In regards to the Executive Session on last meeting’s agenda that was deferred to this meeting, Bob had asked the Attorney General’s office what the protocol for the Director’s evaluation would be. The AG responded that if there was going to be a</li> </ul>	<p><b>shared with the Board and Lauren.</b></p> <p><b>The governance subcommittee will re-examine the annual review process, particularly around providing a preliminary written summary.</b></p> <p><b>The board needs to determine priorities for the upcoming year, and that will be on the agenda for the next ELB meeting as well as EOEL office priorities.</b></p>
--	---	---

	<p>private meeting with the evaluations discussed, that there would need to be an Executive Session. However, if the evaluations were written, there wouldn't be a need for an Executive Session, so Bob did not feel that the Executive Session needed to be included on this month's agenda because the review was conducted through written responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lauren clarified that she also completed a self-evaluation. She explained that Bob had shared the results of the review and the accompanying feedback and that she was grateful because it was very useful, especially for setting goals moving forward. She feels that EOEL has done a great job in addressing the strategic priorities. A major accomplishment in the area of systems building is the development of the Early Childhood State Plan and completion of 7 strategic implementation plans. She recognized that this was achieved through collaboration with partners and stakeholders who participated in the development of these plans. She expressed that achieving the shared vision of the Early Childhood State Plan will require the investment of all whose work touches the lives of young children and families and requested their continued support as EOEL continues to uphold the work for which the foundation has already been laid.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Leadership Report: Looking Forward; ELB/EOEL Strategic Priorities – Bob Peters</b></p>	<p>Bob informed the Board that Lauren had approached him over a year ago, regarding her personal and professional plans, and he asked Lauren to share her plans with the Board.</p> <p>Lauren reminded everyone that she has been the Director of EOEL for five years, and reiterated how much the office has evolved in that time period—moving out of the Governor's Office to become an attached agency to Hawaii's Department of Education (DOE), increasing staff in the EOEL, coordinating the development of a state Early Childhood Plan, securing funding from the PDG B-5 grant to conduct a</p>	

	<p>comprehensive needs assessment and the development of strategic implementation plans, developing legislation to support the EC system, and supporting the transition of the Early Learning Board from an advisory board to a governing board, among many other accomplishments. She explained that at this time, she is finding herself having to choose between work and family, and is deciding to take her own advice, which she frequently gives to the EOEL office staff that “family comes first”. She had intended for the 2020 legislative session to be her last as Director, but with the ongoing pandemic, she didn’t feel comfortable leaving while the Office was in jeopardy of losing funding and positions. Lauren has offered to remain until the close of the 2021 legislative session or until the Board can find a successor. She hopes this will allow the Board time to find a new Director, and thanked the Board for the opportunity to work together, and for all the things she has learned while in this position.</p> <p>A few key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It took eight months for the Governor to appoint a Director the last time the position became vacant. (Prior to the ELB becoming a Governing body, the EOEL Director was appointed by the Governor.)</li><li>• Although it is written in statute that the Early Learning Board is the entity to hire and fire the Director, it is also in statute (HRS 26-35, item 4) that if a Board is administratively attached to the DOE, the Superintendent needs to approve the hiring of a new Director.</li><li>• Bob asked the Governance subcommittee to create a process to find a new Director.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Kerrie wondered if rather than assigning the creation of the process to the Governance subcommittee, a new ad hoc (search) committee could be created to address this</li></ul></li></ul>	
--	--	--

	<p>issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wai’ale’ale said that this might take too long because there is no way to vote on the issue until the next ELB meeting, and a new Director needs to be chosen as soon as possible.</li> <li>○ The position description in statute can serve as the basis for identifying the qualifications and competencies to include in a position description to begin a job search.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Board and the Governance subcommittee will work on a leadership transition plan through the end of the year leading up to Lauren’s departure.</b></p>
<p><b>Public Comment—Bob Peters</b></p>	<p>No public comments were offered.</p>	
<p><b>Member Updates—Bob Peters</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Bob Davis</i> reported (at the beginning of the meeting because he had to leave early to attend another meeting) that DOE was wondering which direction it should take when handling their pre-k classrooms, and what the student-teacher ratio should be if pre-k services are to be face-to-face. Lauren then asked EOEL’s Educational Specialist, Coleen Momohara, to respond to the questions.</li> </ul> <p>Coleen explained that EOEL would defer to the DOE and the different Complex Area Superintendents on whether services for their pre-k classrooms will be face-to-face or through distance learning. Ideally, children should be interacting with actual people, engaging in real life experiences, but decisions on services has been different depending on the school and complex area. EOEL’s messaging to the pre-K teachers has been that part of the face-to-face interactions include modeling for children by wearing face masks or face shields, hand washing and other safety practices. CDC guidelines state that there must not be more than ten students in a group. Some schools have taken on a staggered schedule model.</p>	

	<p>Bob Davis responded to a question about how children with special needs will be served by saying that they will still receive face-to-face instruction, but that their teachers will be prepared with PPE for themselves. He said that the best the DOE can do is mitigate the risk, since without a vaccine it is impossible to eliminate it. It was agreed that the Board should review both the EOEL pre-k guidelines as well as the DHS child care reopening guidelines.</p> <p><i>Matt</i> reported that there were 350 people signed up for the DOH early childhood webinar with Dr. Sarah Park, and 220 actual participants. Some of the messages that Dr. Park gave were different from actual DHS childcare guidelines, so child care providers should check with their DHS child care licensing worker. Matt gave a mahalo to Bob Peters, Mary Ann Nemoto, Leilani Au, and Coleen Momohara for being on the panel. He also mentioned that there is a flowchart on the DOH website for what to do if someone in your classroom has COVID-19. The link to the flowchart was provided in the chat box:  <a href="https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/files/2020/08/What-To-Do-If-A-Person-at-School-Has-COVID-19-080520.pdf">https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/files/2020/08/What-To-Do-If-A-Person-at-School-Has-COVID-19-080520.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Regarding the large number of cases reported today, a lot of that has to do with large clusters, including one from Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). There are a couple of cases that happened through community spread. Matt wanted to remind everyone that we, as individuals, are the public in public health. As the public, we have to take responsibility for our own individual actions--wearing masks, social distancing, and not going out if you're ill should be universal practices. If the individual person does not adhere to these recommendations, it</p>	<p><b>EOEL pre-k guidelines and DHS preschool guidelines will be shared with the Board.</b></p>
--	--	---

	<p>makes the impact of the pandemic greater on the overall community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dana</i> reported that Director Pankaj Bhanot will be retiring at the end of the month, and that Cathy Betts, the current Deputy, will take over as the Director of DHS. She wants everyone to know that early learning is an issue that is near and dear to Cathy’s heart, and that Cathy is looking forward to working with the ELB. Because of COVID-19, there will be no farewell party for Director Bhanot.</li> </ul> <p>DHS is remaining in communication with the provider community and doing its best to continue to spread news and messages as quickly and efficiently as possible. The Department will continue to work with state agencies and the Governor’s Office, and if there were any changes to whether child care can be open or not, DHS will communicate that to the child care providers. The execution of emergency child care contracts for PPE and sanitizing supplies is still in process. There were several hundred applications and proposals received, and only seven staff processing these, so it will take a while to get through all of them. If providers want to know the status of their applications, they should reach out to their licensing worker.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Wai’ale’ale</i> reported that Kamehameha Schools (KS) did two rounds of bulk purchasing of PPE and sanitizing supplies which were delivered to PATCH for distribution to child care providers. KS will be conducting online classes through August at least. When teachers came back to the campus before the children returned, two of them tested positive for COVID-19, so KS will implement distance learning for now. Pauahi Keiki Scholars (PKS) funding has been depleted due to the higher number of families applying, the higher need of families, and</li> </ul>	
--	---	--

	<p>the higher tuition costs of preschools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Leilani</i> reported that the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (HI-AEYC) conference is still scheduled to be in-person, taking place from October 16-17. Conference planners are looking at smaller groups, doing activities outside, and not providing lunch. Workshop presenters are being recruited at this time.</li> <li>• <i>Kerrie</i> reported that the Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) All Network meeting is going to be held virtually from November 18-20. They are looking at creative ways of making Zoom engaging and fun.</li> </ul> <p>Hawaii Early Intervention Coordinating Council (HEICC) updates: Early Intervention has been successful in implementing telehealth with their families and have learned a lot through that process. The one challenge has been that referrals for early intervention services are low for obvious reasons. Because COVID-19 is not going away any time soon, Kerrie reminded the Board that everyone needs to pay attention to children who may require early intervention in order to prevent them from receiving services late or not having their needs met. Learning loss is developmental loss in early education. HEICC is also looking at how they can get more family feedback, and that this is a priority for them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Melodie</i> reported that the requirements for Keiki O Ka Aina (KOKA)'s early childcare scholarships have been revised, so families who previously may not have been eligible to receive scholarships may now qualify. She provided the link to the application in the chat box: <a href="https://www.koka.org/help-for-childcare/">https://www.koka.org/help-for-childcare/</a>. Melodie also reported that KOKA made the decision to close all of their in-person programs, and will conduct them virtually through December. However, to their</li> </ul>	
--	---	--

	surprise, they received a positive response from enrolled families thanking them for not providing services on-site.	
<b>Review Agenda Outcomes</b> —Bob Peters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board requested that EOEL share its pre-k guidelines for review; the Board will review the DHS guidelines as well.</li> <li>• The Director’s annual review was approved, and a summary will be written and shared with the board and Lauren.</li> <li>• The Governance subcommittee will examine the annual review process, particularly around the distribution of a pre-written summary.</li> <li>• A key item on the next meeting agenda is working toward a leadership transition plan that will go through the end of the year leading up to Lauren’s departure.</li> <li>• The Board needs to determine its priorities for the upcoming year, and that will be on the agenda for the next meeting as well as EOEL’s goals for next year.</li> </ul>	
<b>Announcements</b>	None were provided.	
<b>Executive Session</b>	No items from the AG.	
<b>Closing</b> —Kerrie Urosevich	“She stood in the storm, and when the wind did not blow her way, she adjusted her sails.” –Elizabeth Edwards, American attorney	

Submitted by Ashley Miura and Chris Jackson