

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, September 10, 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. Betts), Justina Acevedo-Cross, Leilani Au, Cherilyn Shiinoki, Ben Naki, Kerrie Urosevich, Wai’ale’ale Sarsona (for Jack Wong), Matt Shim (for Dir. Anderson), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner), Bob Peters, Mari Uehara, Melodie Vega, Edeluisa Baguio-Larena, Bob Davis (for Superintendent Kishimoto)

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

Public in Attendance: Anne Horiuchi, Aldric Ulep, Deanne Goya, Deborah Zysman, Donna Ahuna, Jordan Smith, Kathleen Algire, Mary Ann Nemoto, Melissa Pavlicek, Napua Rosehill, Kenyon Tam, Scott Fujii, Hide Wu

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action |
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| MINUTES: | | |
| Welcome/Introductions— Bob Peters | Bob welcomed the group at 1:31 p.m. and asked Justina to read the mission statement. He then announced that Boards and Commissions had informed him recently that Namaka Rawlins of Aha Punana Leo and Kaina Bonacorsi of Maui County are no longer eligible to serve as board members. Both Namaka and Kaina have already served two terms - one with the former Early Learning Advisory Board (which is not considered distinct from the current governing board), and one with the current Early Learning Board. Bob thanked each of them for their contributions to both ELAB and ELB over time, and expressed his | |

Early Learning Board

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

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| | <p>hope that they would continue to serve on ELB sub-committees in the future. Quorum is now 6 members.</p> <p>Bob then had EOEL Communications Specialist Keopu Reelitz review virtual meeting procedures once again. Keopu asked everyone to indicate their wish to ask a question or make a comment in chat in order to be recognized, and to mute themselves when they are not speaking. The group was reminded that the meeting is being recorded and that all voting would be conducted by roll call.</p> | |
| Review and Approve 8/13/20 Minutes —Bob Peters | The 8/13/20 meeting minutes were approved as distributed. (Edel/Ben: Y:9; NO: 0) | Minutes were approved as presented. |
| Public Comment —Bob Peters | No public comments were offered. | |
| Governance Subcommittee Report: Director Appointment Process —Wai’ale’ale Sarsona and Bob Peters | <p>As head of the Governance subcommittee, board member Wai’ale’ale Sarsona introduced the subcommittee’s recommendation to create a Director search committee that would address the process of hiring a new EOEL Director, and requested that 4 actions be taken for approval (see handout). The following motions/actions were then taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Establish an EOEL Director search committee (Wai’ale’ale/Edel; Outcome of votes: Y:9; N: 0) (2) Approve the proposed charter for the subcommittee based on the charter structure of other subcommittees (Wai’ale’ale/Cherilyn; Outcome of votes: Y:9; N:0) (3) Appoint up to five (5) subcommittee members (including the ELB Chair). The following members volunteered to sit on the new search committee: Matt Shim, Stephen Schatz, Edel Baguio-Larena, Justina Acevedo-Cross, and Bob Peters. (Wai’ale’ale/Edel; Outcome of votes: Y:9; N:0) (4) Appoint a subcommittee Chair. Matt Shim volunteered to serve | The proposal presented by the Governance subcommittee was approved unanimously. |

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| | <p>in this capacity. Bob offered his support to Matt. (Wai’ale’ale/Bob; Outcome of votes: Y:9; N:0)</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The search committee will take on the tasks required to find a Director, but all recommendations will go back to the ELB for approval, including a list of the top three candidates, who will then undergo closer vetting by the ELB. • The search committee is tasked with designing the hiring process. There are no predetermined timelines (in order to give the subcommittee flexibility to come up with a process and set timelines) other than bringing recommendations back to the ELB at its November 2020 meeting. • Previously, the Director was appointed by the Governor, with Bob and Kerrie participating in candidate interviews coordinated by the Governor’s Assistant Chief of Staff. This is the first time ELB is in charge of hiring a new Director. <p>Bob thanked Wai’ale’ale for orchestrating this task, and reported that he still needs to contact the Governor’s Office regarding the filling of the EOEL Director vacancy. At the next ELB meeting, members will go into an Executive Session with the AG to discuss ELB’s relationship with HIDOE as ELB goes through this hiring process.</p> | <p>Bob will contact the Governor’s Office regarding the hiring freeze.</p> <p>An Executive Session will be held at the October ELB meeting.</p> |
| <p>Executive Office on Early Learning Updates: 2020 Legislation, EOEL Program Performance Review, and Budget Request—Lauren Moriguchi</p> | <p>Lauren began with legislative updates and shared that although EOEL received confirmation from Gov’s Office, that funding will be restored for the 7 pre-k classroom positions, EOEL is still waiting for the funds to be provided and is fronting the funds at this time. Additionally, EOEL has since learned from Budget and Finance (B&F) that funding was only restored for one year and EOEL will need to include these funds as a part of the budget request. During the 2 ½ months of waiting for confirmation that the funding would be restored, schools had to</p> | |

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| | <p>grapple with difficult decisions. While waiting, three of the seven teachers in those classrooms in question secured more stable positions. As a result, reopening is on pause for three of these affected classrooms (Honokaa, Hookena, and Ka’u High/Pahala Elementary).</p> <p>With respect to the 2020 legislative session both HB2543, the bill to expand early care and education, and HB1346, the bill regarding suspension and expulsion in the EOEL pre-k program, were not included on the Governor’s intent to veto list. Both will pass into law by Sept. 15.</p> <p>Lauren provided a presentation on the EOEL’s budget which included information requested by Governor and Budget & Finance as a part of a program review, as well as EOEL’s budget requests for the next fiscal year. Each department within the state was asked to submit proposed budget reductions for three different levels of reduction: at 10%, 15%, and 20%. EOEL used the following guiding principles in their approach to this exercise: 1) minimize impact to direct services for young children and families and 2) minimize impact to existing positions and staff members essential to EOEL’s work. At the 10% reduction, travel (for ELB, EOEL Office convening work, and pre-k) is significantly reduced, at the 15% reduction the travel budget is nearly eliminated and supplies are significantly reduced. At 20% reduction, in addition to the 10% and 15% reductions, EOEL positions are impacted.</p> <p>The Finance subcommittee recommended approval of the 10%, 15% and 20% proposed reductions. (Stephen/Wai’ale’ale; Outcome of votes: Y: 10; 1 with reservation; N: 0) Kerrie had joined the meeting at this point so total votes equal 10.</p> <p>The EOEL budget request for the 2020-2021 fiscal year focuses on maintaining what is currently in place:</p> | <p>The board approved the EOEL budget request for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, as well as the EOEL budget reduction proposals as requested by the Governor.</p> |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for 7 classroom positions that were restored without funding (note: Governor has promised funding for these classrooms for only this year) • Funding for Program Specialist position that was restored without funding • Allocate 2 positions – Preschool Teacher and Educational Assistant III (note: funding was provided for this by SB78, SLH 2019 but positions were not allocated) <p>The Board approved the budget request for FY 2021. (Justina/Ben; Outcome of votes: Y: 10; N: 0)</p> <p>A few takeaways/comments from the brief discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only other source of funding EOEL has are the funds provided by the federal government for the Head Start State Collaboration Office, which are not funds EOEL can use for other purposes. • In regards to inter-island travel, in the case where the entire funding allotted for ELB travel is cut, EOEL might find private partners and stakeholders who may be able to support travel. • It was suggested that the pre-k positions could be transferred to DOE so that the funding can be diverted to office operations and to systems-building. Lauren responded that this would require a statutory change and that there are a numerous issues which would need to be carefully considered with this approach. • Lauren will continue to provide updates on the situation as things move forward. | |
| <p>Leadership Report: Looking Forward– Bob Peters</p> | <p>Bob reported that the letter of support from ELB that Terry Lock had requested has been submitted for the Early Childhood Education Excellence and Equity (ECE3) grant. The subcommittee that Terry and Justina had proposed has been formed and has begun meeting, so the</p> | |

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| | <p>board will hear more about the work they have been doing.</p> <p>Bob then turned the meeting back over to Lauren. Lauren explained that EOEL is working on a plan for the Office and would like to involve ELB in process. While the Early Childhood State Plan and Strategic Implementation Plans are visions for the system as a whole, the plan she hopes to discuss today is specific to the EOEL office. Lauren introduced EOEL’s Institutional Analyst, Keli Houston, to share the process for the proposed 5-year plan. Keli reviewed the Vision, Mission and high-level goals of the EOEL, along with a proposed timeline/phases of development for the plan. The proposed plan will focus on three priority areas: family/community engagement and knowledge; early childhood system coordination, collaboration, and advocacy; and workforce development. Per Keli, these priorities were identified with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in mind.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were some concerns that the new EOEL Director would not have the flexibility to create his/her own leadership approach/goals if responsible for implementing an already-existing 5-year plan. Lauren explained that the intention behind creating the plan was to continue to momentum that has already been generated in the area of systems building and maintain the work that has been accomplished, as she does not want the previous work to be lost or undone.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bob suggested that the ELB could approve a 5-year plan with the caveat that the new Director could make modifications to the plan as needed (and as circumstances change).○ Several members suggested that perhaps this plan should be a one-year, not a five-year plan.• There was confusion around the purpose of the EOEL strategic | |
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| | <p>plan and its relationship to the other plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a question as to whether the EOEL strategic plan will address anything outside of the EC State Plan and PDG SIPs and whether it is meant to be an implementation plan rather than a strategic plan? • Bob suggested that the EOEL plan could be made to be more specific as it is a very broad framework with five goals and 3 key strategies as described. Both Keli and Lauren expressed their appreciation for the feedback and said they would take the information back for consideration. EOEL was asked to further clarify how their plan ties back to the EC State Plan, and where the current pandemic fits into the planning process and impacts the work. • Bob also reviewed his ELB priorities for the coming year: (1) Hire a new Director - with a smooth transition process - to move systems-building forward; (2) Support EOEL’s budget request; (3) Build the capacity of ELB with a vice-Chair and a new subcommittee to address EC workforce development. | <p>EOEL to share at the next ELB meeting.</p> |
| <p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p> | <p>Former ELB member Kaina Bonacorsi offered a question and a comment: (1) How will members of the public and community stakeholders be informed of the Director hiring process; and (2) Kaina voiced similar concerns about EOEL’s proposed five-year plan, and suggested that EOEL turn to ELB’s Capacity and Resources ad hoc committee as a resource.</p> <p>In response to her question, Bob explained that the public would not be directly involved in the selection process, but they would be invited in some fashion to give input and advice. The selection/hiring of the Director is a board responsibility, not a public one, but the search committee will definitely be trying to engage with the public and include them in some ways.</p> | |

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| <p>Member Updates—Bob Peters</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bob Davis</i> reported that DOE is waiting for more guidance from DOH that will help them make determinations as to when it is appropriate to bring students back onto public school campuses, and what “triggers” or warning signs DOE would need to be aware of in order to warrant the shutting down of schools. This will obviously affect the pre-k program, as well. • <i>Matt</i> reported that the current director, Dr. Bruce Anderson, is retiring, and Dr. Libby Char, an emergency physician who worked with the Honolulu Emergency Management Systems, will be acting interim director, starting Wednesday, August 16. Matt reminded everyone that we are still in the middle of a pandemic. He thanked everyone for maintaining social distancing and other preventive measures, including the wearing of face coverings and frequent hand washing. • <i>Dana</i> reported that DHS is working on finalizing their proposal for the \$50 million in childcare grants that was appropriated under the budget bill (SB 126). DHS is hoping to have that finalized version as soon as possible. They are also working on the contract with a private entity to administer those childcare funds. Dana said she would send more information out later in the month. • <i>Ben</i> reported that Head Start has six grantees across the state, and a majority of them are not offering in-person services but providing virtual services. A few Early Head Start (EHS) classrooms on Maui and Hawaii Island are doing in-person childcare. Recently, there were changes made to the Office of Head Start’s Designation Renewal System, which is about grantees who may need to re-compete for their grants because of certain criteria. Certain previous requirements have now been removed. There is also a current funding opportunity nationwide for EHS expansion and/or EHS/Child Care Partnerships. Hawaii is part of Region 9, putting them in | |
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| | <p>competition with California, Arizona, Nevada, and outer Pacific territories. The deadline to apply for this funding opportunity is September 21. Ben expressed his hope that someone from Hawaii gets a grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cherilyn</i> reported that Family Hui has been doing drive-by pickups on Oahu for young families, for things like diapers, wipes, baby food, and fresh produce. This has resulted in very positive responses among the young families receiving these items, and Family Hui is hoping to add a kind of “RSVP” service to this activity in order to obtain useful information beforehand, like what diaper sizes are needed. Any organization that wishes to partner or help out is welcome to do so. • <i>Edel</i> reported that two of the Maui Family Support Services Early Head Start sites have opened up in person, with very strict pick-up and drop-off procedures. EHS home-visiting services are still being conducted virtually. • <i>Kerrie</i> reported that the Region 9 position for Administrator of the Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families has been filled. No name was provided, but Kerrie has high hopes for the new head. • <i>Wai’ale’ale</i> briefly introduced Napua Rosehill to the board. Napua has served many years in the early learning sector and she will be helping Wai’ale’ale and Kamehameha Schools with their early learning strategy. She is from Hawaii Island and has been attending a few of the ELB meetings virtually. • <i>Bob Peters</i> reported that Hawaii Association for Independent Schooling (HAIS) early learning committee continues to hold its roundtables for teachers, heads of schools, and directors. There have been some very interesting comments from the few schools that are re-opening or bringing children back in person, including the challenge of having to continuously problem-solve in the midst of frequent changes in situations. | |
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| <p>Review Agenda Outcomes—Bob Peters</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board approved the EOEL Director search subcommittee, its charter, and the 5 subcommittee members. • By November, the board will hear back from that committee regarding a selection process and transition plan. • The board approved the EOEL FY21 budget recommendations and budget request with the recommendations of the Finance subcommittee. • An Executive Session will be convened at the next ELB meeting. • With regard to the EOEL strategic plan, the office staff will come back to the board with more dedicated plans to tie into the EC state plan and with an implementation focus. <p>Bob thanked Keopu for her facilitation of the chat box and the EOEL staff for their preparations for the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>Announcements</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. | |
| <p>Executive Session</p> | <p>No items from the AG.</p> | |
| <p>Closing—Kerrie Urosevich</p> | <p>“Hope is a renewable option. If you run out of it at the end of the day, you get to start over in the morning.” –Barbara Kingsolver, novelist</p> | |
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Submitted by Ashley Miura and Chris Jackson