

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, March 11, 2021

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), Leilani Au, Kerrie Urosevich, Matt Shim (for Dir. Char), Bob Peters, Mari Uehara, Melodie Vega, Edeluisa Baguio-Larena, Justina Acevedo-Cross, Pualani Kaho’ohanohano, Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner)

Absent: Wai’ale’ale Sarsona (for Jack Wong), Bob Davis (for Superintendent Kishimoto), Cherilyn Shiinoki, Ben Naki

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

Public in Attendance: Anne Horiuchi, Deborah Zysman, Kaina Bonacorsi, Kim Guieb, Alfred Castle, Carol Wear, Danny Cup Choy, Ken Kakesako, Scott Fuji, Mary Ann Nemoto, Mary Silva, Vivian Eto, Summer Keli’ipio

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action |
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| MINUTES: | | |
| Welcome/Introductions— Bob Peters | Bob welcomed the group at 1:32 PM and asked Mari to read the mission statement. Keopu Reelitz, EOEL’s Communications Specialist, reminded everyone of Zoom etiquette and chat box rules. | |
| Review and Approve 2/11/21 Minutes— Bob Peters | The 2/11/21 meeting minutes were approved with a change made to page 9 in the legislative updates agenda item. The change should read that “ELB is seeking additional clarification in regards to Preschool Open Doors, as well as clarification on the intent of repealing the requirement for DHS and EOEL to collaborate and identify the need for child care and early learning in geographic regions of the state.” (Edel/Kerrie: Y--8; N--0) | |

Early Learning Board

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

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| Public Comment —Bob Peters | No public comment. | |
| Executive Office on Early Learning Updates —Lauren Moriguchi | <p>Jordana Ferreira, EOEL’s Government Affairs Specialist, provided the following legislative updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 1360, the early childhood stipend bill, amendments exempts EOEL from the prohibition of contracting with a collection agency to collect commission from a debtor. Funds for the program will be deposited into the early learning special fund. • HB 1362 was amended to remove language that would require EOEL to partner with Charter School Commission to provide the Early Childhood Education program, and repeals language that requires DHS and EOEL to collaborate on identifying need for childcare and early learning in the state geographically. This version passed the House Committee on Finance. • HB 514, related to on-site group child care facilities tax credit, was passed by the House Finance Committee unamended. • The House committee on Finance passed HB 546, which would remove the Hawaiian medium seat in ELB and replace it with a permanent seat for Aha Punana Leo. The Senate recommended the passage of SB 1384, which does not remove the Hawaiian medium seat and instead provides that the prohibition against serving two consecutive terms shall not apply to the representative of the Hawaii medium early learning provider. • Budget bills (HB 200 and SB 1229) in both chambers have yet to have hearings. The deadlines for budget decking and budget crossover have been extended to March 22, 2021 and March 24, 2021, respectively. • HB 1322, which would establish a Trauma-Informed Care Taskforce passed the House Committee on Finance unamended | |

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| | <p>on March 2, 2021, and the Senate passed the bill's senate version (SB 1242) with amendments, including clarifying language from DOH and effective date of 2050.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 986 (newborn screening) and HB 987 (hearing and vision) passed the first readings and have been referred to the Senate Committee on Health. <p>Lauren addressed HB 514 - the child care facilities tax credit bill. Based on a question raised at the February ELB meeting regarding the 1.0 FTE, Lauren explained that the crafters of the original bill shared that the allocation of the position to EOEL was intentional because they believed EOEL was best equipped to provide guidance on designing high quality early learning spaces. EOEL and DHS have agreed that the position is more appropriate within EOEL since HB 514 has minimal responsibilities for DHS at this time. EOEL recommends that the purpose statement for the position should remove "assistance with licensure" as that responsibility lies squarely with DHS.</p> <p>In response to a question raised regarding the kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) and if it is meant to be a uniform tool, Lauren responded that while DOE will be responsible for determining which assessment tool is utilized, it is her understanding that the goal is to have one uniform assessment used across the state.</p> <p>Coleen Momohara, EOEL's Educational Specialist, provided updates about the EOEL public pre-k program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms are providing in-person learning experiences for children, and Coleen extended her appreciation to the schools and their communities to make this possible. • With respect to teachers and educational assistants (EAs), currently, 77% of the teachers and 79% of the EAs meet requirements and educational qualifications established by Act 276. Coleen expressed appreciation to partners and stakeholders | |
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| | <p>and credited DOE principals, teachers and staff for recognizing the importance of quality in early learning, as well as higher education without whom gaining the necessary qualifications would not have been possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EOEL pre-k staff continue to provide support and guidance to teaching staff and elementary school administrators through the Early Learning Academy. • Schools have begun to accept 2021-2022 school year EOEL Prekindergarten Program applications as of March 1, 2021. All schools keep waitlists if there are more applications than allotted slots. In response to an inquiry regarding the timeframe for increasing the number of children (from 10 students back to the normal class size of 20), Coleen responded that it depends on whether CDC guidelines change. For now, EOEL is in a “wait and see” mode based on CDC guidelines and individual school plans for reopening. <p>Alohi Maiava, EOEL’s Program Specialist, provided updates on the Preschool Development Grant Birth – Five (PDG B-5). She shared the new website funded by the grant, www.earlychildhoodhawaii.com, and demonstrated how to navigate the website. She also urged Board members to share about the website and its resources broadly. Bob also encouraged ELB to reach out to others to access this website so that it can be used as an advocacy tool.</p> <p>Keopu Reelitz, EOEL’s Communications Specialist, informed the Board that the “Little Ones” newsletter was on pause but has resumed last month upon her return to EOEL. All Board members should have received it and those who haven’t should contact Keopu. Board members were also encouraged to share the newsletter with their partners and were asked to provide information and announcements they would like to have included in future newsletters.</p> | <p>EOEL’s new website and newsletter were shared with Board members. Board members are encouraged to share these with others in their networks.</p> |
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| <p>FCC Shared Services Pilot Report—Summer Keli’ipio (Ali’i Alliance)</p> | <p>Bob asked Board member Kerrie Urosevich to introduce Summer Keli’ipio from Ali’i Alliance, the nonprofit helping Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) with the Ka ‘Upena Shared Services Pilot Project which started in January and is set to continue for two years.</p> <p>The goal of the project is to ensure that providers are more connected, more resourced, and better able to focus on taking care of children and families as providers are being, and have been, stretched thin during this pandemic. Because the pilot is ongoing, if anyone knows of small center-based programs or family child care providers who would be interested in joining, they are encouraged to have the individuals contact Summer.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current pilot participants are only at around 40% of their original capacity because when the pilot started in January, many were still trying to ramp up their services and/or preparing to get back into business. They anticipate that after another month or two, providers will be at greater capacity. It is also worth noting that there is one new provider among the participants. • It was suggested that this pilot could connect with Family-Child Interactive Learning (FCIL) partners to bring small numbers of children in an FCC home to the FCIL location to connect children and families and to learn about resources. • The first time the opportunity to explore a shared services model was discussed in Hawaii in 2015, it was targeted to larger center-based providers which was the wrong audience as they already had infrastructure support. This time around, the project is focusing on smaller providers, such as family child care providers and small center-based programs. | <p>Summer indicated that the shared services pilot is still recruiting participants, so if anyone knows of someone who would be interested, they should share the opportunity with them.</p> |
| <p>Subcommittee Reports—</p> | <p>Matt Shim, who is leading the Director’s Search Committee, provided</p> | |

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| Subcommittee Conveners | <p>updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following are confirmed members of the Search Advisory group: Kaina Bonacorsi (Maui Early Childhood Resource Coordinator), Mary Ann Nemoto (Learning to Grow), Camille Masutomi (Department of Education), JoAnn Farnsworth (Maternal-Infant Mental Health Consultant), Stacy Kong (DOH Early Intervention Section), Terry Lock (UH College of Education), Jayne Arasaki (Rainbow Schools), Johanna Nielsen (parent of a young child), and Coleen Momohara (EOEL). • Matt also reported that the Search Subcommittee had interviewed two search firms, rank ordered them, and connected the #1 candidate with a private donor who is now in the process of certifying an agreement with the firm. • Matt then provided an update to the timeline. The initial timeline presented earlier to ELB needed to be modified as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2021: Donor contracts with search firm; • March/April 2021: Advisory Group and search firm collects input on Executive Director “characteristics”; • May 2021: Board adopts job description and Director “characteristics”; • May 2021: Position posted internally and externally for recruitment; • June 2021: Search Subcommittee, Advisory Group, and search firm determines list of three final candidates; • July 2021: Search Subcommittee recommends three final candidates to the Board. ELB forwards the top candidate (“Finalist”) to DOE Superintendent for approval; • August 2021: Board announces EOEL Executive Director selection. • For next month, the Board will need to approve the following items: temporary assignment of a current EOEL staff member | |
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| | <p>to cover the vacancy period, and approval of the selected employee who would be filling in that temporary assignment. Both items would need to be forwarded to the Superintendent for approval. Lauren has revised her plans and has agreed to continue serving as Director through the end of May.</p> <p>The Capacity and Resources Subcommittee updates were postponed to next meeting since Cherilyn Shiinoki, Subcommittee convener, was unable to attend this ELB meeting.</p> <p>Bob Peters provided the Governance Subcommittee updates in lieu of Wai'ale'ale Sarsona, who was unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>The Governance Subcommittee met with Representatives Luke and Woodson to understand their expectations of ELB as they pertain to Act 46 and HB 1362.</p> <p>Representative Luke indicated that the conversation will be different next year, with the possibility of more funding. She suggested the ELB could be active in advocacy, as was previously discussed at last month's meeting, and could help shape the discussion at the legislative level. She was in favor of including a coordinator position to support the implementation of Act 46 and is open to working with all departments.</p> <p>Representative Woodson shared that he sees the ELB as a vehicle, along with EOEL, to determine more educational opportunities with DHS as the entity to develop more childcare opportunities, similar to Preschool Open Doors (POD). The legislature has already determined the rate of expansion, and this does not need any follow up. The ELB could help determine the type and nature of the expansion, specifically in three different areas:</p> | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELB can identify what are the community needs and where those needs exist; • ELB can determine the type of expansion needed to meet those needs while at the same time guaranteeing the best outcomes for young children and families; and • ELB can make policy recommendations to meet those needs. <p>Representative Woodson is open to considering a position within EOEL or ELB to support that effort.</p> <p>The Governance Subcommittee debriefed and discussed possible next steps, including exploring a coordinator role regarding planning for collaboration and moving forward with Act 46 implementation. The Subcommittee crafted a proposed amendment to HB 1362 and submitted it to Rep Woodson for his consideration: “The ELB in collaboration with EOEL, DHS, DOE, HSPCS, and other affected partners to be determined by the board, be charged with recommending a coordination plan, including staffing and funding needs for staffing, to facilitate implementation of Act 046. At least 1 FTE be established for state FY 2022 to begin 7/1/2021, and state FY 2023, within the authority of either the EOEL or the ELB to support development of this coordination plan.”</p> <p>A motion was made and approved to support the addition of the amendment, taking into consideration Kerrie’s statement that EOEL may be the best entity to house this position. (Bob/Leilani: Y—8, N—0). If the amendment is not added into the legislation, ELB will need to have more discussion next year.</p> | <p>Board approved supporting HB 1362, HD 1, related to coordination and planning, and adding staffing to support that work in EOEL or ELB, with a reservation expressed about the flexibility needed to make that happen, and the impact of Sunshine Law on ELB’s ability to be flexible.</p> |
| <p>Chair’s Update–Bob Peters</p> | <p>Bob announced that the state Department of Health (DOH)/Family Health Services Division has asked ELB to submit a letter of support for a grant administered by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) -- the Early Childhood Comprehensive</p> | |

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| | <p>Systems (ECCS): Health Integration Prenatal-3 Program Grant. The grant award is approximately \$255,000 per year over five years. The funding will be used to better integrate maternal, prenatal, and infant health with early childhood systems to promote early childhood development, health, and family well-being. ELB has been asked to sign a letter of intent, with the understanding that by doing so, they agree to have a representative on a proposed ECCS Impact Advisory Council for the grant. The ELB chair has submitted the LOS as it aligns with the ELB priorities. Matt added that the purpose of this grant is to focus building on supports for children birth through 3, identify developmental delays and linking to Early Intervention services, ensuring there are maternal and family supports like depression screening, and other components that help promote kindergarten readiness.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The grant is statewide and focusing on the statewide system. DOH is hoping to use the momentum and experience from Maui County’s experience with an earlier ECCS grant, and spread that across the state. Maui County has a very unique network of providers, agencies, and collaborations that is not necessarily replicable, but will be looking to Maui’s efforts and how it could be integrated statewide.• Letters of support from different agencies, boards, and community partners were required for the grant submission, which was submitted on March 10, 2021. Nothing further is needed from ELB members at this point, but their support is appreciated.• Mari reminded everyone that follow-ups are important. Development screening can be done by many different individuals; however if screening is not coupled with follow-up, | |
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| | <p>it will not be effective otherwise.</p> <p>Bob moved on to discuss the Early Childhood Governance and Financing (ECGF) Project, seeking approval from the Board to allow the Governance Subcommittee to explore applying for this grant. He shared a document with further details, including the purpose of the grant. The goal is to enhance state approaches to governing and financing early childhood education systems, while focusing on achieving equitable outcomes for infants and children from birth through age 8, their families, and the ECE workforce. The ECGF Project anticipates issuing three to five three-year grants. The maximum funding amount that can be received is \$1million dollars for the three-year timespan. The LOI is due on April 5, 2021. The full application proposal is due June 25, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justina added that this would be helpful for thinking about ways to finance Act 46 and the post-pandemic early childhood system, so this could be an interesting exercise for the sector. The grant is really looking to create equitable solutions with an emphasis on racial equity. • There was a concern raised as to whether there was a way to ensure that the data gathered from this grant doesn't become outdated by the time anyone is ready to use it. It was noted that the data collected from the PDG B-5 needs assessment may not be entirely reflective of current needs since it was conducted prior to the pandemic, and the early childhood system has transitioned. Unfortunately, there is no way to answer this as there are no guarantees, but Justina explained that the grant is broad around systemic reform, so they are looking for more actionable plans that can build a system, change it, and make it more dynamic, so that it can respond to the equity needs of the community. <p>A motion was made and passed to authorize the Governance</p> | <p>Board approved giving authority to the Governance Subcommittee to pursue the application for the ECGF grant.</p> |
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| | <p>Subcommittee to pursue the ECGF Project grant – investigating the potential for this grant to address governance needs and to submit both an intention to submit a letter of intent (March 22, 2021) and the actual letter of intent (April 5, 2021) by the stated deadlines. The Governance Subcommittee will report back to the ELB at the April meeting about its plans to determine next steps and if the Board wishes to continue with a grant application. (Bob/Edel: Y—8, N—0).</p> <p>Bob proceeded to talk about legislation that was singled out at last month’s meeting -- starting with SB 1384, the bill that would eliminate the term limit restrictions for the Hawaiian medium provider seat on the ELB to eight years. This bill is not a companion to HB 546, which would make Aha Punana Leo (APL) a permanent member of the Board and removes the Hawaiian language medium provider seat that currently has term limitations. Bob asked for some guidance and input on which of the two bills the Board should support as it would be difficult to support both, as they are asking for two very different, and in some sense, contradictory things.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There was some concern as to the precedent supporting HB 546 would create, especially if new Hawaiian medium and/or immersion programs emerge. There is some discomfort over one particular organization getting a permanent seat when other programs may form in the future.• It does not appear that any other Hawaiian medium providers have expressed interest in wanting to serve on the Board, and Bob noted that this issue was not brought up in either of the bills.• Pualani, as the current Board representative from APL, explained that from her understanding, APL would speak for all Hawaiian medium and/or immersion programs and do its best | |
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| | <p>to ensure that other programs would be heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A question was raised as to whether a public charter school, should they want to be the Hawaiian language medium representative, would be able to serve in that position. It was noted that as a public entity, it may not be able to be a voting member. Bob said that he would ask the AG’s office for an answer to this question. • Once again, the question of why the board is structured the way it is was raised for consideration. <p>As no motion was made to change the Board’s position on supporting HB 546, Bob discussed the next piece of legislation, HB 514. The Board voted at the last meeting to support the intent of this bill as it relates to the goal of increasing access. Lauren has requested a change to the full-time position in EOEL referenced in the bill to remove “licensure” from its scope of work. There was no motion made to change the Board’s position on the bill, so ELB will continue to support the intent of HB 514.</p> <p>Regarding HB 1362 HD 1, Bob asked the legislature on behalf of the Board for clarification on the intent behind the repeal of the requirement for DHS and EOEL to collaborate to identify the need for early childcare and early learning in geographic regions. The intent appears to have been to replace this with an amendment about collecting specific data, but both DHS and EOEL submitted testimony to keep the original language in the bill as this allows for more flexibility around data collection.</p> <p>Finally, Bob talked about the article that Suevon Lee wrote for <i>Civil Beat</i> on the current capacity in preschools and early childhood centers, which he had shared with all Board members beforehand. Bob shared that while there has been a significant decrease in number of seats, at least 70% of HAIS schools felt confident that they would return to full</p> | |
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| | <p>capacity once all schools had reopened and people were feeling more comfortable with in-person services. Keopu also mentioned that EOEL and DHS were working on an Ideas Essay in response to Suevon’s article, which they hope will be a good way to open more discussions around childcare and early learning. Lauren and DHS Director, Cathy Betts, felt that despite tremendous pressure due to the pandemic the community collectively worked together and formulated partnerships. These were not mentioned in the article.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melodie mentioned KOKA had been operating at 70% capacity with virtual classrooms, but that when they opened in-person, that percentage dropped to 10% due to parents not being comfortable with in-person services. • Mari suggested that health concerns for kupuna living in multigenerational homes, among other situations, may have influenced parents’ decisions to keep their children at home. | |
| <p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p> | <p>Kaina Bonacorsi of Maui County requested clarification on why DHS’ and EOEL’s testimony for HB 1362 was different from ELB’s testimony. Bob explained that it is not different in purpose. They are requesting to reinstate the repealed language, which is in alignment with DHS and EOEL, and clarified that no recommendations on the data provisions added would be made by the ELB. Bob stated he will check on whether EOEL and DHS testimony are in alignment.</p> | |
| <p>Member Updates—Bob Peters</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Justina Acevedo-Cross</i> reported that HCF just opened the Change Grants program which is primarily for general operating funds for programs that fit within the change framework. The deadline for applications is April 9, 2021 and there are videos and Zoom “coffee hours” available if anyone would like more information. Grants on average will be around \$50,000. Justina included a link in the chat box: https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/strengthening/ch | |

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| | <p>ange-grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matt Shim</i> reported that K-12, early learning, and childcare employees should have heard from vaccination centers, which have been sending out emails with information on how to get vaccines, as well as where vaccination centers are. The State has moved to expand to 70 years plus, and on Monday, the State will be moving to 65 years plus and phase 1C. As more vaccines come into the state, they will move into phase 2, which includes the general public. Matt highly encouraged everyone who can to get their vaccines as soon as possible and thanked everyone for being patient as they wait on more vaccines to arrive. | |
| Executive Session | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No items from AG. | |
| Review Agenda Outcomes —Bob Peters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOEL’s new website and newsletter were shared with Board members, and they are encouraged to share them with others in their networks. • The shared services pilot still has openings for interested FCC or small center-based providers, so if anyone knows of interested individuals, they should share this opportunity with them. • Board approved supporting HB 1362, HD 1, related to coordination and planning, and adding staffing to support that work in EOEL or ELB, with a reservation expressed about the flexibility needed to make that happen, and the impact of Sunshine Law on ELB’s ability to be flexible. • Board approved giving authority to the Governance Subcommittee to pursue the application for the ECGF grant and to report back at the April meeting. | |
| Announcements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. | |
| Closing —Kerrie Urosevich | <p>“We live in a networked world. People are becoming more inter-dependent. Issues and problems ripple through webs of connections causing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity—a ‘VUCA’</p> | |

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| | <p>world. To address these problems, we need a better understanding of the networks that form naturally within organizations and the networks that are formed strategically within and between organizations and communities. Today’s organizational and societal challenges are too big to be addressed by heroic leaders alone. A more contemporary understanding of leadership as a shared process is needed. Collective leadership occurs when mobilized masses achieve exponential results through their connections. If leaders, organizations, partnerships, cross-sector alliances, NGOs, community- based organizations, and grassroots movements are going to leverage the potential they have for impact, then they must understand the power of informal networks. Networks are the fundamental way in which we can see and measure how collectives are engaging in leadership.”</p> <p>–ACUMEN</p> | |
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Submitted by Ashley Miura and Chris Jackson