

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, August 10, 2023

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

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

**Meeting Chair will preside at CEED Center, KCAA
2707 South King Street, Honolulu, HI 96826
Or Via the Zoom Link**

Board Members in Attendance: Erin Henderson-Lacerdo, Megan McCorriston, Ka‘iulani Laehā, Ben Naki, Mei Ou, Robert Peters (for Director Bossert), Mari Uehara, Kerrie Urosevich, Melodie Vega, Rochelle Mahoe (for Superintendent Hayashi), Matt Shim (for Director Fink), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner)

Absent: Justina Acevedo-Cross, Napua Rosehill, Dayna Luka (for Director Betts)

Executive Office on Early Learning staff in attendance: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Jeff Larson, Kevin Kabasawa, Lane Tsuchiyama, Mikako Deguchi, Stephanie Tim Sing, Ashley Miura, Jordana Ferreira

Public in Attendance: Emma Christopherson, Aldric Ulep, Danny Cup Choy, Chris Jackson, Vivian Eto, Keiko Nitta, Lisa Martinez, Kim Guieb, Deborah Zysman, Elaine Yamashita, Ke‘ōpū Reelitz, Todd Wilson, Terry Lock, Edel Baguio-Larena, Felicia Villalobos, Ka‘ina Bonacorsi, Charis Sole, Cherilyn Shiinoki

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
Welcome/Introductions— Bob Peters	Chair Peters began the meeting at 1:38 PM and asked Member Stephen Schatz to read the mission statement. Chair Peters reminded everyone that regardless of in-person attendance, protocols would proceed as usual, with votes conducted by roll call. Attendance was taken, and quorum was established.	

<p>Review and Approve 7/13/23 Meeting Minutes—Bob Peters</p>	<p>The Chair entertained a motion to approve the 7/13/23 meeting minutes. The minutes were approved as distributed, with a change on page 5 in the “action” column to change “role” to “rule.” (Ben/Melodie: Y—7; N—0)</p>	
<p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p>	<p>No public comments provided.</p>	
<p>Executive Office on Early Learning Updates—Yuuko Arikawa-Cross</p>	<p>Director Arikawa-Cross began this portion of the agenda item by providing some mental health resources for people affected by the wildfires on Maui.</p> <p>The Director reviewed the EOEL budget and planned requests for the upcoming supplemental 2024 Legislative session and fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025. The first proposal is a funding request to establish a statewide “navigator system” that would incorporate a multi-pronged effort, strengthening families’ knowledge of what programs and services exist, engaging in strategies for recruitment and retention of the early childhood workforce, and raising awareness of the importance of early learning opportunities through media campaigns. The second proposal is to amend the pre-plus statute to allow pre-plus programs to operate on state property in addition to those on DOE campuses and to open it to all children not eligible for kindergarten. This request also includes a funding request for a 1 FTE Program Specialist position that would be responsible for facility design and implementation, and liaising with State and County partners for expansion purposes. Currently, the Early Learning State Office Teachers (ELSOT) are doing this work, so if a Program Specialist was hired to take over that part, the ELSOTs could focus on teaching. Both requests together would be an increase of \$507,352, changing the total proposed budget from \$16,108,333 to \$16,615,685.</p> <p>EOEL also plans to establish working groups that would: 1) design Hawaiian medium (HME) public pre-k programs, and 2) develop a</p>	<p>The Board received EOEL’s legislative proposals for their budget: one proposal will develop a navigation system, and the other will expand pre-plus learning facilities beyond DOE campuses and expand enrollment. Board also received two initiatives from EOEL, one to develop HME curriculum for public pre-k, and the other to develop a CQI. A vote will be held at the next meeting on these items.</p>

	<p>continuous quality improvement (CQI) system to better prepare and support the early learning workforce, enhance program quality, and enhance children’s outcomes.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 14 pre-plus programs. The goal for a statute amendment is to expand additional opportunities without impacting existing sites by expanding opportunities for public/private partnerships on other state-owned property. • No vacant positions were cut in the 2023 Legislative Session. Director Arikawa-Cross is working to fill all vacant positions (more information given in the personnel section of the EOEL updates). • Questions were asked on whether the navigator system would duplicate existing efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EOEL has been communicating with partners to identify gaps in existing services. The purpose of this navigation system, and the funding for it, is to enhance existing systems, not to supplant them. • The navigation system and projected funding factors in workforce support, including recruitment efforts and supporting individuals with entry points into the early learning field; linking individuals with existing job opportunities; and supporting career advancement, including technical assistance to access coursework or credentials. • Implementing a Hawaiian-medium program is not simply a translation of the English-medium program, and thus may need to be designed differently. The purpose of the HME working group is to determine what factors need to be present, including curriculum, qualifications, operations, and potential legislation, to implement a public pre-k HME program. • A CQI differs from a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) because there will be no rating system component. The 	
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	<p>purpose of the CQI will not be to “rate providers,” but instead, to help those charged with integrating the system better assist programs and providers with enhancing the quality of their programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS, UH, EOEL, and possibly DOH have agreed to participate in designing the CQI. <p>Director Arikawa-Cross shared that DOH’s Early Intervention Section is going to hold topical meetings regarding their Annual Performance Report (APR) via Zoom on August 30, September 11, October 6, October 24, October 30, and November 6. More information can be found at: https://rebrand.ly/earlyintervention</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross provided EOEL Public Pre-K Program updates. 11 new schools opened in the fall. 7 of the 11 are at full capacity, with incoming students being waitlisted. There is now a total of 48 classrooms statewide, 36 of which are full, and the remaining 12 are at 50% or higher capacity. Applications are accepted throughout the school year, and currently EOEL is working on creating an online application.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross provided PDG B-5 grant updates. An RFQ for the PDG B-5 website has been posted. The “Embracing Your Journey” workshops and “Parent Leadership Training” Cohorts have begun. University of Hawaii’s College of Education (UH COE) started the development of an ECCE compensation implementation plan; aligning ECE professional preparation programs with Power to the Profession Unifying Framework and NAEYC’s Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators; increasing pathways to ECE degrees; and establishing an early educator apprenticeship program. UH COE is also working with HCYC on foundational documents for a continuous quality improvement-technical assistance</p>	
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	<p>system. Hawaii P-20 is recruiting a pool of CLASS-certified observers to establish a satisfactory threshold score to support the implementation of Act 46/210 requirements. UH COE's Center for Disability Studies is contracted to be the external evaluator of the PDG B-5 grant project.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross introduced Tara Castrovinci, who will be filling the Communications Specialist position. Tara will start at EOEL on October 23, 2023. She has a BA in Communications with a minor in Psychology, and holds a master's degree in Counseling, Marriage, and Family Therapy. She has been in real estate for the past sixteen years, handling communication plans, legal updates, marketing and photography, website hosting, and social media. She is excited to begin work with the Executive Office on Early Learning.</p>	
<p>Subcommittee Reports— Subcommittee Heads</p>	<p>Member Melodie Vega, representing the Workforce Equity Subcommittee (WES), provided updates. WES is working on finalizing a memo to the new Early Learning Board, prioritizing workforce areas and outlining some key initiatives and strategies. WES will follow the Board map of the 2023 approved policy framework regarding workforce, and also ensure any past meeting notes and references will be shared in a google folder to the new Board. Chair Peters reminded the Board that the priorities set last year around the State Plan's Building Block 4 were related to the workforce: building workforce capacity via apprenticeships, professional development, and career pathways; supporting retention and recruitment through tuition assistance, stipends, and improving compensation and working conditions; and continuing to provide support for HME providers.</p>	
<p>Leadership Update: Board Transition Status—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Chair Peters reminded the Board that the questionnaire information sheets have been sent out to the conveners of subcommittees to gather thoughts on priorities for the Board transition. Member Matt Shim (head of the Governance Standing Subcommittee) informed board members they could change their answers if they needed to. Chair Peters explained that the goal is to provide the new Board with as much</p>	

	<p>information as possible for a good foundation, as well as give them historical context. He has been gathering information related to the process for the selection of the new Board. If any current Board members wish to continue on in the new Board, they should apply to let the Governor’s Office know of their continued interest. Currently, there is no time frame, and considering the Maui wildfire crisis will take priority, the current ELB will continue to function as is for the time being. Chair Peters also shared he does not know who specifically will be doing the vetting portion of the selection process for the new ELB.</p>	
<p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Ka‘ina Bonacorsi provided public comment related to the Maui wildfire crisis. There will be a press conference at 3pm today, with representatives from both the Governor’s Office and the Office of the Mayor of Maui. One of the challenges Maui is currently facing is that information is sparse. However, with what little information is coming in, it is easy to anticipate increased levels of damage from the destruction. There are a lot of families stranded, and people who have lost their homes. Those in Lahaina who did not lose their homes still lack basic needs. Many early childhood settings in Lahaina have been lost, and it is easy to anticipate that any remaining settings there will close down. Currently, there are still three active fires with no indication of what containment could look like. The numbers of loss will be covered in the press conference. Another challenge is getting resources to devastated areas. Once the search and recovery efforts are declared complete and the next stage is moving into disaster relief, that is where most of the help will be needed: how to identify what families need, how to distribute those items, etc. Right now, at a local level, people are putting names on a list and indicating whether they are accounted for or still need to be located. This is not done by officials, but on a community basis.</p> <p>Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ka‘ina will put together a list to sort out contacts and resources from programs who are reaching out to provide support, early childhood or otherwise. If there is a need or an opportunity for a certain type of resource, she can refer back to the document to organize and collaborate with the right partners more effectively. • Edel Baguio-Larena shared that the Early Head Start center in Lahaina broke down due to the fires. She considers Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF) and Maui United Way (https://mauiunitedway.org/disasterrelief) as the best places to donate funds, while goods donations are being accepted at the War Memorial Complex. She thanked everyone for thinking of Maui at this time. • Ka‘ina reminded everyone that when people urgently respond to something, especially if a news station recently broadcasted places to donate to, it can slow down the internet for people who might actually need it, so if people could be mindful of that and hold back a little to let traffic move more freely, that would be much appreciated. She extended her thanks to the state and their partners for the support they have been receiving. • Jordana Ferreira explained that HI-EMA established a Joint Information Center (JIC), staffed by State Public Information Offices (PIOs) for the crisis to assist with communications related to the wildfires and are trying to vet and verify information while responding to inquiries. Messaging is also being developed to encourage people to buy supplies on Maui to support that local economy. The county and other appropriate personnel are also working to establish distribution centers, continued emergency response efforts, and preventing pollution that could be due to the fires. Monetary donations are best; they are the most helpful in the sense of their versatility and efficiency. 	<p>ELB is ready to support Maui in whatever way they can, however they can be the most useful, without adding to existing anxieties and stress.</p>
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<p>Member Updates—Bob Peters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Justina Acevedo-Cross</i> reported through a written statement that HCF is working with partners to immediately respond to, and provide relief for the Maui wildfire crisis. HCF is accepting donations through the Maui Strong Fund (https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/maui-strong). To date, the fund has raised over \$1M and 100% of the funds will go to relief and recovery efforts. HCF has also created a short application for nonprofit organizations seeking support on Maui. Applications will be reviewed daily through a rapid process, so funds can get out into the community as soon as possible. The link to the applications is here. Email mauistrong@hcf-hawaii.org for any inquiries on grants. • <i>Erin Henderson-Lacerdo</i> reported that mental health clinicians are gathering across the state and there will be mental health efforts provided at the convention center. She reminded the Board that babies and children are experiencing this along with the adults, and that they are affected, too. Also, it is not only the people of Lahaina or those directly affected by the fires, but also people on other parts of the island who can see the smoke and the fire, or have family members that are unaccounted for. Let's keep our children in mind for the support being discussed and explain what is happening in developmentally appropriate ways. • <i>Kaiulani Laehā</i> reported that the Aha Punana Leo (APL) site in Lahaina was severely impacted. APL has been getting in touch with all of their staff and the families they were serving, and trying to identify what their needs are, as well as making sure they are all accounted for. Fundraising has been set up on the APL site that will go directly to them. APL is not exactly sure what the money will be used for at this time but will decide when the needs become known. They will also organize a gift 	
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	<p>card drive specifically for the families they were able to get in contact with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Melodie Vega</i> reported that the He Lei Piko Conference is happening on August 31. The theme of the conference is “take wisdom and make it deep.” It will be about understanding the heritage and ancestry of not only Hawaiian people but also all indigenous cultures. There is no deadline to apply. It is free, and lunch and dinner are provided. Melodie also thanked Edel and Ka‘ina for their updates regarding Maui. Link to the He Lei Piko conference flyer: https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:a0cc15ab-7b41-4d40-b24b-f6ab03aa25fc • <i>Matt Shim</i> introduced Todd Wilson, who was hired by the DOH as a school liaison who is developing an online outbreak reporting tool. Todd explained that the reporting tool records not just COVID-19 but also flu-like illness outbreaks in schools. If anyone would like assistance with the tool, please contact Board Member Matt Shim or Todd Wilson. Link to information on the reporting tool: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q4qJUw8LqVJYR2C4rDcdKYKpWhKdGsq4fl1g-O8swYE/edit?usp=sharing 	
<p>Review Agenda Outcomes—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Chair Peters reviewed the following agenda outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board received EOEL’s legislative proposals for the supplemental year FY 24-25: one proposal includes a budget request to develop a navigation system, and the other will expand pre-plus facilities in addition to DOE campuses with a 1 FTE position request and subsequent funding for the position. The Board was also informed of two initiatives for EOEL-led working groups, one to develop an HME public pre-k program, and the other to develop a CQI system. A vote will be held at the next meeting on these items. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELB is ready to support Maui in whatever way they can, however they can be the most useful, without adding to existing anxieties and stress. 	
Announcements	None provided.	
Closing —Bob Peters	“Life doesn’t get any easier or more forgiving. We get stronger and more resilient.” –Steve Maraboli, author of <i>Life, the Truth, and Being Free</i>	

Submitted by Ashley Miura