

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, September 14, 2023

1:30 pm – 3:30 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: Justina Acevedo-Cross, Erin Henderson-Lacerdo, 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), Dayna Luka (for Director Betts), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner)

Absent: Megan McCorriston, Nāpua Rosehill (for President Wong)

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

Public in Attendance: Emma Christopherson, Aldric Ulep, Danny Cup Choy, Diane Pawar, Angela Miyashiro, Elaine Yamashita, Vivian Eto, RJ Rodriguez, Ka‘ano‘i Walk, Chris Jackson, Carol Wear, Terry Lock, Felicia Villalobos, Alanna Bauman, Ke‘ōpū Reelitz, Ka‘ina Bonacorsi, Cherilyn Shiinoki, Keiko Nitta, Christina Cox, Robyn Chun, Kiyomi Umezawa

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
Welcome/Introductions— Bob Peters	Chair Peters began the meeting at 1:35 PM and asked Board member Dayna Luka to read the mission statement. Chair Peters explained that any public comment relating to agenda items will be welcome, not just related to the Maui wildfire crisis in Agenda item V. Attendance was taken, and quorum was established.	

<p>Review and Approve 8/10/23 Meeting Minutes—Bob Peters</p>	<p>A motion to approve the 8/10/23 meeting minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were approved as distributed. (Kerrie/Ka‘iulani: Y—8; N—0)</p>	
<p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p>	<p>No public comments were provided.</p>	
<p>Executive Office on Early Learning Updates—Yuuko Arikawa-Cross</p>	<p>Director Arikawa-Cross began this agenda item by thanking Keiki O Ka ‘Āina for the He Lei Piko Conference, which provided a breadth of representation of indigenous cultures. The conference focused on being present with the people we serve and to celebrate diverse perspectives and culture.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross announced the solicitation for RFI F24-033 Provision of Family-Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Program Services, which was posted on September 13, 2023. The RFI requests community input to facilitate the planning activities and development of a request for proposal for the provision of FCIL program services that support families in taking an active role in the social, emotional, and cognitive development of their young children. The link to access the RFI: https://hands.ehawaii.gov/hands/opportunities/opportunity-details/23294</p> <p>EOEL is partnering with the Hawaii Department of Education’s Office (HIDOE) of Student Support Services’ Exceptional Support Branch to host an early learning conference on October 12 and 13, 8am-3pm, at the Hawaii Convention Center. Anyone who supports young children with disabilities are welcomed to attend. There will be interactive, hands-on activities focused on evidence-based practices that can be embedded into daily routines and activities. Director Arikawa-Cross can provide anyone with the flyer with the QR code to register.</p> <p>The EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten Program will be hosting the first Professional Development day tomorrow. With additional classrooms</p>	

that opened in this school year, the total number of seats is 922. The program has 1,067 total approved applications statewide as of September 1, 2023. 13 sites still have openings but 3 of those sites have fewer than 3 vacancies. There will be four Professional Community Days for administrators, teachers, and partners on September 15, 2023; November 3, 2023; February 2, 2024; and April 5, 2024.

- Before the Lieutenant Governor’s Ready Keiki initiative, the process for EOEL public prekindergarten program expansion was to work with all elementary school principals to determine interest in hosting a classroom, analyze access and opportunity, and then request funding from the Legislature to establish those interested classrooms. Before the Ready Keiki initiative, there were already 23 sites identified by EOEL as future EOEL classroom spaces, and an additional survey conducted by the HIDOE helped them narrow it down to the eleven that have joined in the 2023-2024 school year.
- In terms of the eleven schools that have just opened for the 2023-2024 school year, two of them are on the list of the highest numbers of applications received, while three of them have six vacancies each and one has one vacancy (as of September 1).
- County Coordinators and Kamehameha Schools have been helpful when spreading the word about EOEL pre-k, as well as community partners such as INPEACE and the HIDOE Homeless Concerns liaisons. EOEL has also disseminated marketing materials and collateral to each school.
- Currently EOEL is not keeping track of the effect expansion has had on already existing community programs for pre-k and early childcare, but confirmed plans to start doing so.
- EOEL was already intending on collecting data on the number of children who are not yet toilet trained and based on feedback

	<p>from Melody Vega, will also obtain data on the number of children who are not able to toilet independently.</p> <p>The Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program reached 75 total completed applications with students enrolled and registered, 51 awards processed, and \$128,339 total funds awarded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of awards processed so far matches other scholarship opportunities and Director Arikawa-Cross sees the Stipend Program as a success for workforce development. The funds will be disseminated each semester, and this award amount is reflective only of the summer semester. • Some people decline the award because they have received a different award elsewhere; they are still trying to pursue a career in early learning and they are taking a different pathway to it. • When the Workforce Specialist comes onboard, Director Arikawa-Cross will ask that person to track and analyze data to assess the stipend program so that recipients can receive support with all of the necessary transitions, including on their career pathway and reducing barriers, such as minimizing complicated processes or paperwork. • EOEL will look into collecting data on stipend awardees who are focusing on infant-toddler age versus preschool age. <p>For PDG B-5’s Activity 3, Parent and Family Engagement, a vendor has been selected to develop the PDG B-5 website. Embracing Your Journey workshops and Parent Leadership Training have also begun. The PDGB-5 team has worked with Technical Assistance to create a PDGB-5 State Profile for Hawai‘i. EOEL is currently working on the Year 2 Non-Competitive Application due on October 1, 2023.</p>	<p>The Board approved EOEL’s two 2024 legislative funding request of \$507,352 for FY 2025, to fund a statewide navigator</p>
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	<p>The Early Care and Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS) has received an industry intermediary contract from the US Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeships. As an industry intermediary, ECEPTS will be able to launch, promote, and expand multi-employer Registered Apprenticeship Models in critical industries, including early childhood.</p> <p>At the August Early Learning Board meeting, EOEL presented three proposals for the 2024 legislative session: create a statewide navigator system, amend the pre-plus statute to allow pre-plus programs to operate on state property rather than exclusively on DOE campuses, and establish a 1 FTE Program Specialist position who will assist with facility design and implementation of these spaces. A motion was made and seconded to approve EOEL’s budget request of \$507,352 for a statewide navigator system and 1 FTE Program Specialist position and the legislative request to amend the pre-plus statute to expand opportunities on other state property. The motion passed (Bob/Justina: Y—9; N—0).</p> <p>The Chair entertained a motion to approve the EOEL initiative to convene partners to develop an implementation plan for Hawaiian medium public pre-k under EOEL. Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board’s decision here will only affect EOEL and its programs and as it is a policy decision, the board is voting on it. • The reason this request was made is that there is currently a privately-funded Hawaiian language preschool on a DOE campus. Privately-funded public pre-kindergarten sites commonly apply with the intention of being funded by EOEL in the future, contingent upon Legislative appropriations. As such, Director Arikawa-Cross wants to plan for more EOEL Public pre-kindergarten Hawaiian language preschools to meet 	<p>system, and to establish a 1 FTE Program Specialist position and to amend the pre-plus statute to expand early learning opportunities on other State property.</p>
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	<p>community needs and in anticipation of greater interest. Because EOEL’s typical curriculum is English, and because that curriculum cannot simply be translated into the Hawaiian language, Director Arikawa-Cross wants to create Hawaiian language curriculum that is meaningful for any classrooms that come on board wanting to be taught in Hawaiian.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Ka’iulani Laehā explained that there is a legal definition of Hawaiian Medium Education (HME) and that what Director Arikawa-Cross is describing is a little bit more like Hawaiian immersion, and is requesting EOEL to be more careful and intentional with the language used in the initiative. <p>The motion did not pass (Bob/Kerrie: Y—2; N—7). Member Ka’iulani Laehā attempted to make another motion, this time changing the language from “Hawaiian medium” to “Hawaiian immersion,” but there was some other confusion expressed regarding the FCIL portion of the slide presentation and whether it was being voted on or not, so Chair Peters suggested to EOEL that they rework the initiative’s language to remove any confusion, and ELB will vote on it at the next meeting.</p> <p>Chair entertained a motion to convene a working group to develop a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system framework and implementation plan across the early learning sector. Key takeaways from the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus of the CQI, for now, will be determine systemic support that can be provided to early learning programs with the goal of enhancing the quality of their program with consideration for their programmatic needs, with an ultimate goal of enhancing outcomes for children. Eventually, the CQI could include workforce support and professional on-going learning support. The CQI may not necessarily be focused solely on center-based programs and may include diverse settings across the field. 	<p>EOEL will return to ELB after revising their initiative related to the implementation of a Hawaiian immersion pre-k program to make the language more concise.</p> <p>The Board approved EOEL’s initiative to convene a working group to develop a CQI framework and implementation plan across the early learning sector.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right now, it is not certain whether the CQI will include a training registry, but it will likely come up in discussions. The motion passed (Bob/Ben: Y—9; N—0). 	
<p>Maui Early Childhood Status/Updates—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Jordana Ferreira EOEL has been assisting Maui by deploying Jordana Ferreira, the temporarily assigned PIO for EOEL to assist Maui County at the Joint Information Center (JIC). At the JIC, EOEL has been assisting with developing press releases regarding information necessary for residents during the disaster and sharing important resources. For example, EOEL has worked directly with county officials to draft press releases on health and safety guidelines regarding hazardous materials and impacted areas, worked with County officials to disseminate resources available for young children and families including emergency child care options. EOEL has also been working closely with DHS, community partners, and Ka‘ina Bonacorsi on keeping track of which childcare facilities have closed due to the wildfires and PATCH is continuing to provide support to families looking for childcare options elsewhere on the island. Right now however, the full scope of impact is still unknown as property owners and residents have not yet been allowed to enter the impact site and assess the full scope of facility damage. EOEL will continue to work with partners on this endeavor as the county moves through the recovery phase. EOEL has also been keeping up to date with the HIDOE to assess what options are available to students enrolled within the Department.</p> <p>Ka‘ina Bonacorsi Ka‘ina shared that at the onset of the fire, her efforts on behalf of the county were to connect with affected families to assess immediate needs and has since been working with community partners to implement programs and services to assist young children and families during this time. Ka‘ina shared that she is appreciative of the partners who have reached out and have been offering assistance to the</p>	<p>Maui provided some updates and ELB will be asked to support them in the near future.</p>

community. Right now there have been 11 licensed childcare providers that were affected. For some of these providers, the extent and magnitude of damage may still be unknown. In addition, there have been support programs (such as Early Intervention, FCIL programs, KOKA, MFSS etc.) that have been impacted. Each program took an assessment of families in their programs. There was an estimate of almost 240 children in those programs that have all since been accounted for. All staff also had been accounted for but some staff members did lose homes. We also know some families/children lost homes and some adults have lost employment. From there, the County convened stakeholders and partners, which includes state-level partners that provide direct services to keiki and families on Maui and those that refer families to resources and important information. In collaboration with these groups, the County has been looking at sustainability plans and alignment with existing funding sources (such as county grants). Through feedback from these convenings, the County identified projects that would assist families and young keiki during the disaster as well as to support resiliency and on-going recovery, Ka'ina worked with the Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) partners who applied for a \$6 million funding opportunity with Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). In addition to some of the immediate needs, mental health support has been identified as a critical short- and long-term need. In addition to federally-organized disaster hubs, Maui County also has established family hubs that have been disseminating resources, information, and donations to impacted families. Regarding questions about when childcare will be established in Lahaina, right now that is still an unknown. We will have many transient families during this time (for those moving from hotels to more permanent shelters) and with health and safety considerations that still need to be made, assessing childcare related needs will likely be transient as well. Right now, the County is working with DHS to reduce barriers and start planning ahead to anticipate the needs of

<p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p>	<p>families and young children. Chair Peters thanked Ka‘ina for all her work to coordinate all of these efforts for Maui families.</p> <p>Christina Cox, President of KCAA Preschools and a liaison for the Childcare Business Coalition shared the following: Due to the increased challenges in recruiting qualified teachers, KCAA recently made the difficult decision to close the Kailua preschool after 50 years of operation. All preschool teachers who worked there have been reassigned to one of the other KCAA preschools, which are also struggling with staffing. Kama‘āina Kids has three programs on Maui, which has, in total, lost four preschools and 200 slots for students. After the Maui fires, KCAA has offered to donate furniture and supplies/materials from their four classrooms to them. KCAA has plans to submit a request to HCF Maui Strong to support the shipping, packing, and storing of those materials in the next coming months. Christina also mentioned that Oahu’s KCAA has enrolled a two-year-old child from Maui who remembers the fires.</p> <p>Chair Peters offered to Ka‘ina ELB’s continued assistance to the County as needed and encourage board members to continue assessing how to best support children and families during this time in meaningful ways.</p>	
<p>Review Agenda Outcomes—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Chair Peters reviewed the following agenda outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board approved EOEL’s 2024 legislative funding requests and proposal to: fund a statewide navigator system, create an FTE Program Specialist position to assist with facility design and implementation, and amend the pre plus statute to expand early learning opportunities state property other than HIDOE campuses. ● The Board approved EOEL’s initiative to convene a working group to develop a CQI framework and implementation plan across the early learning sector. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOEL will return to ELB after revising their initiative related to the implementation of a Hawaiian immersion public pre-k program to make the language more concise. • Maui provided some updates and ELB will be asked to support them in the near future. • The Strategic Implementation Subcommittee report was postponed until the October meeting as were Member Updates. 	
Announcements	None provided.	
Closing —Bob Peters	“We tell people to follow their dreams, but you can only dream of what you can imagine, and depending on where you come from, your imagination can be quite limited.” –Trevor Noah	

Submitted by Ashley Miura