
Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, November 9, 2023

1:30 pm – 3:45 pm

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), Megan McCorrison, Nāpua Rosehill (for President Wong), Keiko Nitta (for Director Fink)

Absent: Dayna Luka (for Director Betts), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner)

Executive Office on Early Learning staff in attendance: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Kevin Kabasawa, Lane Tsuchiyama, Stephanie Tim Sing, Tara Castrovinci, Ian Okamoto, Alohi Maiava,

Public in Attendance: Emma Christopherson, Aldric Ulep, Angela Miyashiro, Tanya Enrico, Vivian Eto, Chris Jackson, Carol Wear, Terry Lock, Keiko Nitta, Kiyohide Noguchi, Lauren Padesky, Cassia Simms, Charis Sole, Maila Tsuchiya, Katherine Webb

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
Welcome/Introductions Bob Peters	Chair Peters opened the meeting at 1:30 PM and asked Board member Justina Acevedo-Cross to read the mission statement. Attendance was taken and quorum was established.	
Review and Approve 10/12/23 Meeting Minutes Bob Peters	A motion was made and seconded to approve the 10/12/23 meeting minutes (Ka‘iulani/Erin: Y—11; N—0)	The minutes were approved as distributed.

<p>Public Comment Bob Peters</p>	<p>A question was asked by attendee Carol Wear regarding when a new board would be appointed. The question was answered by Chair Peters stating that they did not know exactly but the composition would be what is outlined in the bill enacted in the 2023 legislative session. Chair Peters stated that the Maui fires were a possible cause for the delay but that applications are still being accepted.</p>	
<p>Executive Office on Early Learning Update--Yuuko Arikawa-Cross</p>	<p>Director Arikawa-Cross provided updates on EOEL's focus throughout the month including health, mental health, and nutrition.</p> <p>EOEL staff attended the Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) All Network meeting on November 2, 2023. Director Arikawa-Cross attended a session conducted by AIM-HI on reflective supervision as well as a hike to Likeke Falls with early intervention staff.</p> <p>EOEL released the Request for Proposal (RFP) F24-033. Family Child Interaction Learning programs (FCILs)) continue to be important with the opportunity to increase these programs. Currently, EOEL funds FCILs at Nanakuli and Kailua Elementary schools and anticipates expanding to Kapalama and Ka'elepulu Elementary schools in August 2024.</p> <p>The link to access the RFP: https://hands.ehawaii.gov/hands/opportunities/opportunity-details/23294</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross introduced Ian Okamoto as EOEL's Workforce Development Specialist and Tara Castrovinci as EOEL's Communications Specialist. Both recently attended the Region 9 Head Start Family Engagement and Cultural Effectiveness Conference, held on October 24-27, 2023 at the Prince Hotel in Waikiki. Ian shared that the conference provided an overview of the Head Start program, and opportunities to meet a number of local and regional leaders from Head Start.</p>	

Director Arikawa-Cross presented updated **enrollment information** that was recently pulled directly from PATCH’s website as a follow up from the last ELB meeting. Lane summarized slides that showed the overview of community school enrollment for all settings across each island, as well as for preschool only enrollment across all islands for September and October.

Board members shared suggestions and thoughts highlighted below: Board member Ka‘iulani asked if the numbers were reflective of enrollment or capacity and do they include public pre-k enrollment?

- Is it possible to pull data from an earlier time period?
 - Board member Rosehill asked if there is data on school closures. Director Arikawa-Cross shared that this month the focus would be on enrollment but can pull data on both moving forward.
 - Chair Peters also inquired about the frequency with which we should be pulling the data? Should it be monthly or quarterly to demonstrate the full picture?
 - Board Member Rosehill asked if it is possible to include prior early learning experience on EOEL’s enrollment or application forms. Director Arikawa-Cross said yes. Right now EOEL is working to reformat the application to be more “user-friendly” and can include a question on prior early learning programs and which program specifically.
 - Board member Urosevich suggested the Board keep public pre-k expansion as a standing line item on the agenda.
- Board Member Laehā suggested the board keep in mind the impact of public pre-k, especially at the community level, because we know there are many factors that impact family choices, not just location. Encouraged everyone to be flexible in how we analyze the data because one EOEL program opening in one zipcode may impact enrollment in another zipcode; public pre-k expansion outside of the same community.

Director Arikawa-Cross shared identified school sites that have shown interest to open new classrooms in the 2024 -2025 year. The legislature

appropriated funding for 55 new classrooms to open, of which 11 opened in SY 23-24. EOEL, SFA, and HIDEOE are working to identify the remaining 44 classrooms, with 36 classrooms currently identified as a potential site. She reiterated the goal is to serve 33,224 children total; 50% by 2027 and 100% by 2032. Currently, 15,388 children have been served in community-based care in October. The goal would be to meet 50% of the unserved children by 2027. The question was raised by her on how we could fill the gap and how we could collectively bring the numbers together to meet the goals put forth.

Board member Rosehill asked if there could be, or has been, conversation with the community preschools located within the proposed new areas to see what their capacity or current enrollment numbers are in order to ensure that they can be sustained, including Head Start programs. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that the conversation has not been had but is open to the conversation. She stated that there has been talk with Head Start regarding how they can increase enrollment in order to get to their funded enrollment numbers.

Chair Peters brought up his concern regarding some of the communities showing interest as proposed new classroom sites for opening public pre-k sites and whether they are meeting the demographic priorities as outlined in Statute and does it make sense to expand public pre-k spaces in communities that may not have high population of priority demographics. Director Arikawa-Cross responded to the concern stating how the process works that preference is given to those in the *priority need* category first. and that sites receive applications from not only those who live nearby particular community schools, but from applicants across the island.

Board member Laehā asked if we are continuing to follow the road map that was derived and is the board following that intentionally. Director Arikawa-Cross stated she would make that connection to the road map in future reports to the board. Chair Peters stated that since

	<p>Ready Keiki took off, the Board has not looked at the Road Map again and something that might be good for the ELB to explore.</p> <p>Board member Vega asked who is working in the classrooms and are the classrooms staffed? For the proposed sites, Director Arikawa-Cross stated that they are not yet staffed because these positions are not yet posted within the HIDEOE system. All of the current 48 classrooms are filled with teachers that meet EOEL's statutory requirements. She also explained the requirements for an Educational Assistant (EA) for EOEL, which requires having a CDA or actively pursuing a CDA.</p> <p>Board Member Vega also suggested tracking workforce leaving community based programs that might be going to EOEL public pre-k classrooms.</p> <p>Board member Urosevich asked if EOEL has the flexibility to turn down a proposed school site if the area is already saturated with existing community-based providers. Director Arikawa-Cross posed the question back to the Board asking where does family choice come into the decisions that EOEL makes. How do we determine who gets to be in a community and who does not get to be in a community? What choices would we like to offer our families?</p> <p>Chair Peters stated we should choose to table this family choice issue and determine what legal authority, if any, EOEL has in determining sites. Discussion will be held off until clarity can be determined on the legal authority of these decisions.</p> <p>Board member McCoriston supported the idea of a community conversation on how and when we should open an EOEL classroom based on a variety of variables. EOEL classrooms are opening up based on principal/school interest, not necessarily where there is a need or data.</p>	
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Director Arakawa-Cross updated the board on a legislative site visits that took place on November 6th at Fern Elementary and on November 7th at Pahoia Elementary. The House Committee on Education had the opportunity to tour the EOEL classroom at Fern Elementary, meet with the principal, and interact with keiki. On November 7th the Senate Committee on Ways and Means toured Pahoia Elementary on the Big Island and listened to a joint presentation from EOEL and UH on workforce development and the Early Childhood Educator Stipend program.

Revised legislative proposals are due back to the Governor's office on November 13th. Today we received formal notification that the Department of Budget and Finance is recommending to not approve EOEL's budget requests, including the 1 FTE position and funding to implement a navigator system. There is an opportunity to appeal this decision and EOEL is discussing this internally and solicited board feedback. Chair Peters shared that action cannot be taken on this topic since it was not included on the agenda; however, if EOEL decided to appeal, it can consider that the proposals were approved by the board previously. Board member Urosevich also shared that staff should consider how critical the requests are in light of the Maui fires.

EOEL will be welcoming Kelli Vannoy as the Business Manager. Her start date has not been set.

Alohi went over **PDG B-5** grant updates. We are still pending Fiscal approval for year 2. No substantial updates for Activities 1 and 2. Regarding Activity 3, we initiated a conversation with a vendor for website development to craft a new website where grant information can be found, and supported a family event on Kauai held on October 31, 2023. For activity 4, we were able to join a national community of practice with the National Early Care and Education Workforce Center. The group, Cohort B, is focusing on developing wage and salary scales. Regarding Activity 5, CLASS observations have begun and to date, 30 providers have been signed up with a goal of signing up 50. Alohi

	<p>asked the board to let any interested individuals contact Kim Guieb or Alohi. UH COE also began to gather feedback on Hawaii Careers for Young Children’s (HCYC) draft career framework document that aligns with the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) Power to Profession Unifying Framework. We were able to meet with evaluators to define roles and scope over the next few years.</p>	
<p>Keiki Central Website Kerrie Urosevich (for Hide Wu and Jennifer Pecher, Aloha United Way 211)</p> <p>Governance Subcommittee Bob Peters (for Matt Shim) Update on 2023-24 Director Evaluation</p>	<p>Board member Urosevich presented information on the Keiki Central website in lieu of Hide Wu on behalf of ECAS. The Keiki Central website is now available and provides a number of resources for families with the hope to “have the fewest number of clicks to get to the resources they need.” It is also a great resource for providers to refer families and get the information they need quickly. The website is easy to use with various options available through drop-down menus. If a provider finds that their program is not listed, there is a link where you can fill out information to get your program included. There will be a larger community communications outreach for this website in the near future.</p> <p>Chair Peters reviewed the ELB Governance Subcommittee Chair report provided by Matthew Shim. The meeting report was provided to board members ahead of the scheduled meeting.</p> <p>The Subcommittee members discussed the EOEL evaluation process for the 2023-24 year including specific criteria and 2024 annual evaluation of director Arikawa-Cross. Specific standards and indicators were identified based on notes from the Board during the previous evaluation as well as specific criteria and objectives outlined. Updated goals are planned to be presented to the board for a vote and approval at the December meeting. The subcommittee is asking for input on the draft goals; Board members should contact Matt Shim with any input or questions.</p>	

**Maui Early Childhood
Status/Update**

Bob Peters

Chair Peters called attention to the Civil Beat article that appeared regarding the status of the early childhood on Maui.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/11/lahaina-families-frustrated-over-lack-of-child-care-options/>

He noted that the article highlights preschool shortages have been intensified by the closures and that the remaining schools on Maui are at capacity. There has been no update as to a timeline when new schools can be built or when the reconstruction process can begin in Lahaina.

Board member Urosevich shared that over Labor Day weekend there was a coordinated effort of 15 early childhood partners to put forward a sequenced and coordinated solution for meeting needs in West Maui. They are still waiting to find out if funds are coming through. The State was awarded \$17 million and has not yet determined where those funds would go. We are discussing other funding opportunities with other funders as the needs are immediate.

Tanya Enrico, with DHS, shared that she and Dayna Luka visited Maui childcare providers to offer talk story sessions to better understand what their immediate needs are. DHS also met with the Dept of Public Works on Maui to find out what exemptions for buildings could be available to facilitate the establishment of temporary structures to build up child care. The Mayor issued an emergency proclamation that allows some spaces exemption from building codes. However, once the emergency proclamation ends, the structure would no longer be in compliance, which can be a problem since we are unsure when the proclamation would end and disrupt services for children in order to transition again. Some of the other schools on the other side of the island have taken on children from the westside. However, many families do not necessarily know from one day to the next where they will be and we are still unsure of what the concrete need is and where. DHS will continue to work with providers to assess and address needs.

	FEMA, DHS and the County are working together to get more spaces available sooner than later.	
Public Comments	No public comments were provided.	
Member Comments	<p>Board member Urosevich shared on behalf of HEICC that there will be a salary increase for early intervention and asked for ELB’s support during the next legislative session.</p> <p>Board member Henderson-Lacerdo shared that AIM-HI is hosting support for those providing direct services in early childhood (ages 0-5) in the evenings via Zoom.</p> <p>Board member Acevedo-Cross shared that Board member Rosehill was elected to be part of the national board for the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative in Washington, D.C. last week. There was excellent representation from Hawai‘i at the conference, including Shawn Kana‘iapuni, Al Castle, and others with Kamehameha Schools. There was also a focus on early relational health that aligns with the Promising Minds Initiative and infant mental health efforts.). The link for more information can be found at: http://nurtureconnection.org/resource/policy-early-relational-health/</p> <p>Board member Henderson-Lacerdo mentioned that there was also a National Home Visiting “Parents as Teachers” (PAT) conference where a local parent, Michelle Janosko, was awarded the PAT Parent Educator of the year award.</p>	
Review Outcome/Announcements / Closings	<p>Chair Peters reviewed agenda outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board welcomes the new staff members joining EOEL. 2. Consider incorporating public pre-k item as a standing agenda item. 	

	<p>3. ELB and EOEL should explore public pre-k expansion in relation to the roadmap, and with regard to the workforce within the private sector as well as the issue of family choice and community needs as we continue to expand public pre-K.</p> <p>4. Board members are asked to check out the Keiki Central website and determine if any services need to be added or if there are any issues that need to be addressed.</p>	
Closing —Kerrie Urosevich	“You’re just a child in a mask.” –Snoke, The Last Jedi	

Submitted by Tara Castrovinci