

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, December 14, 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: Ka‘iulani Laehā, Mei Ou, Robert Peters (for Director Bossert), Kerrie Urosevich, Melodie Vega, Rochelle Mahoe (for Superintendent Hayashi), Megan McCorriston, Nāpua Rosehill (for President Wong), Matthew Shim (for Director Fink), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner), Dayna Luka (for Director Betts), Mari Uehara

Absent: Justina Acevado-Cross, Ben Naki, Erin Henderson Lacerdo

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

Public in Attendance: Alanna Bauman, Aldric Ulep, Alexander Ozawa, Alice Luck, Angela Miyashiro, Carol Wear, Charis Sole, Christine Jackson, Christy Burke, Deborah Zysman, Doug Imig, Elaine Yamashita, Emma Christopherson, Jana Smith, Katie Femmer Demmin, Kim Guieb, Kiyohide Noguchi, Lani Au, Lauren Padesky, Maila Tsuchiya, Raya Esteban, Tammy Bahn-Kreis, Ted Burke, Terry Lock, Vivian Eto, Robyn Chun, Kiyomi Umezawa, Jordan Smith

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
Welcome/Introductions Bob Peters	Chair Peters opened the meeting at 1:30 PM and asked board member Ka‘iulani Laehā to read the mission statement. Attendance was taken and quorum was established.	

<p>Review and Approve November Meeting Minutes Bob Peters</p>	<p>A motion was made by Kerrie Urosevich and seconded by Member Melodie Vega to approve the meeting minutes from 11/09/2023. Motion passed. (Y-7; N-0)</p>	
<p>Public Comment Bob Peters</p>	<p>There were no public comments</p>	
<p>Healthy Keiki, Healthy Future (HKHF) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Jordan Smith, Project Coordinator</p>	<p>Jordan Smith, Project Coordinator for the <i>Healthy Keiki, Healthy Future</i> (HKHF) program shared information about the program and its benefits to early childhood providers. <i>Healthy Keiki, Healthy Future</i> (HKHF) is a statewide public-private initiative that provides resources to Hawaii's early childhood system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smith shared a slide presentation on the <i>Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)</i>. She highlighted CACFP's strategy for change that helps to increase access to nutritious food. CACFP strives to eliminate food insecurity for keiki while promoting equity, incentives and helps ensure children have access to high-quality food each day regardless of their financial means. ● Upon conclusion of the presentation, Chair Peters asked if the Maui wildfire has impacted the work Smith is doing. Smith addressed the question by stating that hunger is an everyday crisis, however the wildfire did put a spotlight on the need for access to food. She further added that if systems can be strengthened <i>now</i> they are more likely to work during a future crisis. ● Director Arakawa-Cross acknowledged public challenges for accessing the program could be looked at in order to find an 	

<p>Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) Lauren Pedesky, Hawaii DOE Early Learning Specialist</p>	<p>opportunity to advocate for closing those gaps. Chair Peters agreed that there is a need for these types of services.</p> <p>Lauren Pedesky, Hawaii DOE Early Learning Specialist, shared the results of the recent Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pedesky shared the background and function of the KEA is to determine the developmental readiness of students in the state entering kindergarten. It was noted that this assessment was English-only and did not include other languages. ● The presentation included a comparison of Hawai'i kindergarten ready outcomes as compared to other states. Data was also shared comparing individual HDOE schools. Children were evaluated on whether they were <i>demonstrating, approaching, or emerging</i> in their developmental competencies for language and literature, mathematics, social functions and physical development. Preliminary data outcomes were also shared based on ethnic backgrounds. ● Padesky stated that the goal is to learn what is currently taught in the classroom and how the state can be better prepared in the future, taking into consideration we are a multilingual state, and what can be done to support these children going forward. ● Board Member Alice Luck asked if there was a correlation between a state's investment in children and KEA outcomes. Padesky answered that other states have done preliminary analysis that does seem to indicate there is a correlation between the two. She also stated that it's important to keep in mind where the funding is going and the population in which it will be impacting. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Chair Peters asked if information (for Hawaii) will eventually be available for children who have attended Pre-K. Padesky answered that there will be. The data does exist but is not as “clean” as they would like it to be at this time and that tracing the children on their Pre-K to Kindergarten path can be “messy” at this moment.● Board Member Kerrie Urosevich posed a question to the group asking if there is a way to take what we are learning from this KEA and think differently about our investments in early childhood programs. Chair Peters responded with concern that this assessment could result in policy changes if not carefully interpreted in a way that people understand its limitations.● Board Member Rochelle Mahoe shared that the KEA was given to the kindergarteners within the first 30 days of coming to kindergarten. She believes the data will get better and “cleaner” over time. She reiterated that this is the first time that the KEA has been performed and that we need to take it with “multiple grains of salt” at this point. The information gathered can be helpful for the HODOE in finding what children need and implementing the best practices throughout their transition to kindergarten.● Board Member Stephen Schatz agreed with previous comments and added that it would be valuable to have a conversation regarding areas where children are falling behind as this information could be helpful for both HODOE on a diagnostic basis as well as for helping early care educators.● Board Member Mari Uehara raised the question if the results of this KEA were parallel to what the teachers in the field are experiencing or are the results a surprise to teachers? Padesky stated that most teachers would likely state that this would be a	
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<p>Executive Office on Early Learning Update Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director</p>	<p>fairly accurate assessment of what the teachers are experiencing and reflective of what they see in the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board Member Kaiulani Laeha stated her concern over how the data will be useful and how it will be used, particularly for Hawaiian language immersion students. ● Board Member Megan McCorriston stated her interest in the charter school as a sub-group that might be worth looking at from a charter school perspective. <p>Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross presented the December EOEL updates.</p> <p>Jordana Ferreira, Government Affairs Specialist, presented current legislative updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EOEL did not appeal the Governor’s budget decision for EOEL’s requests and in this upcoming session, EOEL will advocate for the appropriated budget to remain as is. ● EOEL continues to work with the Attorney General to finalize the legislative proposal that amends Chapter 302 L-1.7, Hawai‘i Revised Statute, to expand early learning opportunities on public properties besides HIDOE campuses. <p>Alohilani Maiava Shigeta, Program Specialist, presented an update on the Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The national PDG B-5 convening was held in Maryland where representatives from EOEL, P-20, Hawaii Community College and UH Center on Disabilities attended. ● Work continues to move forward on the new PDG B-5 website. ● Travel assistance was provided for up to 20 participants to the Hawaii Island 2023 Early Childhood conference in Kona. 	
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- The latest version of HCYC “career lattice” framework for early childhood educators was sent out for feedback.

Mikako Deguchi, Institutional Analyst, presented information on current early learning data which included updates to data collected on the current kindergarten enrollment form.

- Incoming kindergarten families are asked to complete a form asking if their child attended a pre-kindergarten program. If families answer “yes” they are asked which program was attended and their start and end date.
- Data was collected as to which complex area they attended, whether they attended a Pre-K program, did not attend a Pre-K program, or whether the family gave no response.
- Data was collected further on ethnicity, household income/economic status, and English or non-english language learner status.
- Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross stated that there are many opportunities for dialogue on the data collected. She further stated that this was the first attempt at collecting this data and believes it gives an opportunity to see how we can move forward with collecting information going forward.
- Board Member Kerrie Urosevich asked about why this form only asks families if their child attended EOEL or public charter programs and not community-based programs. Director Arikawa-Cross answered that the HIDEOE enrollment form only asks about the public EOEL and charter programs but the supplemental kindergarten enrollment form does ask for more information. She further provided that families who responded sometimes entered the program, name and location of the school attended while others did not. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that there should be further conversation about the data collection

method, but wanted to share what has thus far been collected for this initial year.

Ian Okamoto, Workforce Development Specialist, spoke on the expansion of workforce development and support:

- Early Childhood Educator Stipend Program: Applications closed on Dec. 1st for spring 2024 semester; applicant numbers have increased and awards can now be used toward prior learning credit options (credit by exam, portfolio-based assessment)
- Partnership with ECEPTS (Early Care & Education Pathways to Success): Planning is underway for a February visit by ED Randi Wolfe and team to share about the apprenticeship program model and opportunities.
- Director Arakawa-Cross shared that EOEL will look at whether the Hawai'i Teacher Standards board should revise or replace current licensure requirements to include new or alternative or revised pathways, including whether national board certification should be accepted.

Director Arikawa-Cross highlighted the School Facilities Authority (SFA) completion dates for public Pre-K program facilities. Nānākuli Elementary site will be opening in January at the request of the Principal and in order to accommodate children on a waitlist. The remaining sites will open for the following school year. It was shared that the City and County of Honolulu will be including early learning spaces within the footprints of certain future projects. This will include both public and private options.

On December 6th there was a blessing ceremony in Lahaina for the Bezos Academy project. The Bezos Academy is a Montessori-inspired school program that will feature full-day programs year-round, with 2 classrooms for 40 children ages 3 to 5. The school is projected to open in 2025. The school will offer breakfast, lunch, snack and a take-home meal for dinner.

Director Arikawa-Cross also highlighted the notice of proposed rulemaking for Head Start, which included some of the following changes: workforce support, mental health, and quality improvements. There are numerous policy goals including promoting wages that reflect the value of the staff, strengthen benefits, ensure reasonable workloads, increase health and wellbeing of the staff, better identify families that qualify for Head Start and many more. Director Arikawa-Cross provided a QR code to the full proposal. Public comments and feedback are welcomed and will be accepted until January 19, 2024.

Jordana Ferreira shared that UH is leading Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts in collaboration with EOEL, DHS Hawaii Careers for Young Children (HCYC, and DOH. The first joint meeting will be held on December 19, 2023.

The Ready Keiki program held a backpack distribution for the new classrooms, led by the Lieutenant Governor and included area legislators. Tara Castrovinci, Communications Specialist, shared children were treated to storytime and were given a Ready Keiki backpack filled with a book, water bottle, blanket, and other items donated.

<p>Governance Subcommittee Update, Matthew Shim</p> <p>Maui Updates</p>	<p>Board Member Matt Shim shared that the Governance Subcommittee met on November 17th to discuss the EOEL Director Evaluation process for 07/01/2023-06/30/2024.</p> <p>One change was made to the draft for Section 1.2. It was recommended by Board Member Dayna Luka that it be changed to <i>“Coordinate with DH child care regulation program. Under this proposed change, EOEL’s responsibility would be to offer assistance where needed and help address barriers that could impede the process.”</i></p> <p>Board Member Shim made a motion for the board to approve the EOEL Director Evaluation process . Kerrie Urosevich seconded the motion. The board approved the motion. (Y-7; N-0)</p> <p>Chair Peters shared an update from absent Board Member Erin HendersonLacerdo. She praised the efforts of the Home Visiting Services Unit recognizing how quickly they acted to add Lahaina as a service area and Keiki O Ka 'āina has also begun services in that area. Twelve families have been enrolled and 4 intakes are scheduled for next week.</p> <p>Kerrie Urosevich shared that Early Intervention has been doing a great job of providing telehealth services to those families displaced by the wildfire and throughout the neighboring islands as well.</p>	<p>Approval of the Director’s roll for 2023 as submitted by the governance subcommittee.</p>
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<p>Public Comments</p>	<p>No public comments were made.</p>	
<p>Board Member Updates</p>	<p>Chair Peters shared that the Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation sponsored a dinner meeting for early childhood stakeholders and program directors. Dr. Steven Barnett, Senior Co-Director of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, was asked to give insights. He urged them to continue to partner with the business and corporate community to look at ways that the private and public sector could work together. He also gave insight into the declining birth rates and how that could affect future enrollment as well as ways to increase wages and workforce benefits.</p>	
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Board Member Kerrie Urosevich closed the meeting by sharing a video of an excited baby seeing a Christmas tree for the first time.</p>	

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Notes submitted by: Tara Castrovinci