

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, February 8, 2024

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: Ka‘iulani Laehā, Mei Ou, Robert Peters (for Director Bossert), Kerrie Urosevich, Megan McCorrison, Matthew Shim (for Director Fink), Nāpua Rosehill (for President Wong), Stephen Schatz (for President Lassner), Mari Uehara, Ben Naki, Erin Henderson Lacerdo, Mari Uehara, Sulma Gandhi, Stephanie Shipton.

Absent: Ben Naki, Dayna Luka (for Director Betts)

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

Public in Attendance: Aldric Ulep, Angela Miyashiro, Carol Wear, Charis Sole, Christina Cox, Kim Guieb, Kiyohide Noguchi, Malia Tsuchiya, Raya Esteban, Robyn Chun, Terry Lock, Edel Baguio-Larena, Emma Christopherson, Ka’ina Bonacorsi, Keopu Reelitz, Lisa Martinez, Lynette Kamekona, Sonya Zabala

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
Welcome/Introductions— Bob Peters	Chair Peters opened the meeting at 1:30 PM and shared the mission statement. Attendance was taken and quorum was established.	
Legislative Bill Tracking— Jordana Ferreira	Government Affairs Specialist, Jordana Ferriera, shared legislative updates happening around this legislative session. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EOEL staff reviewed bills introduced and introduced those related to EOEL or the early learning field.• Priority bills for early childcare include: EOEL’s legislative	

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

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	<p>priority to expand early learning opportunities through public-private partnerships; implementation of a childcare subsidy and bonus program; amends the POD second application process to administer subsidies timely; establishing a harm to child registry; repeals the sunset date exemption for UH laboratory schools and more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To date EOEL has submitted testimony on 19 bills and attended 10 hearings over the past two weeks. 	
Review and Approve January Meeting Minutes —Chair Peters	A motion was made by board member Kerrie Urosevich and seconded by board member Mei Ou to approve the meeting minutes from January’s meeting.	
Public Comments	Deborah Zysman, Hawai’i Children’s Action Network, asked for support for the paid family leave bills that are going through the legislature. She emphasized that other states have been using a similar model and have seen great success with these paid family leave funds.	
Executive Office on Early Learning Update —Director Arikawa-Cross	<p>Ian Okamoto, Workforce Specialist shared updates on the early childhood educator stipend program for fall 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For fall semester 2023 a total of 53 students received the stipend; Awards paid (tuition/fees) were \$101,196.94 ● Year-to-date 55 recipients have received the stipend and \$125,592.94 has been awarded. <p>Chair Peters asked at what point in their education are students receiving these stipends? Okamoto answered that students are receiving the stipend at various points in their education, many already working in the field, and will find more information on those numbers and share at a later date.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross added to the legislative update stating that EOEL has supported a number of bills supporting workforce including S.B. No. 2603 and H.B. No. 2964. S.B. No. 3087, H.B.</p>	

	<p>No. 2398, and H.B. No. 1903 are priority bills for the Office this session. These bills pertain to the expansion of early learning programs on public properties beyond the DOE campuses.</p> <p>Lane Tsuchiyama, Institutional Analyst, shared updates on facilities for ECE programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EOEL continues to work with SFA and Bowers & Kubota to move forward in completing 44 new classrooms as part of the state's Ready Keiki Initiative. ● A handful of classrooms have already been completed and several are being renovated or are nearing the beginning of renovation work. <p>Director Arikawa-Cross also added that the Pre-Plus RFP F24-049 has been evaluated and is currently under review by PCB. She should hopefully have an update at the next meeting.</p> <p>In addition, Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) and EOEL have connected to submit a joint letter of interest for the Children's Funding Project. The mission of the Children's Funding Project is to help communities and states expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing. Director Arikawa-Cross will update the board next month on whether ECAS and EOEL have been selected to participate.</p> <p>Lane Tsuchiyama outlined the new Preschool Open Doors (POD) administrative rules that were approved and released last month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlights of the new rule include increased child care payment rates and increased income eligibility guidelines. ● New child care payment rates (from \$919 to \$1500 for licensed accredited group child care center providers; from \$795 to \$1200 for licensed, non-accredited group child care center providers; and \$1500 for Hawaiian medium 	
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	<p>center-based care providers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New POD Eligibility Threshold Rules: eligibility up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines; Updating the Federal Poverty Guidelines each Jan. 1st for the upcoming program year). • Chair Peters asked for clarification on the maximum amount that could be received. Tscuhiyama explained the maximum cap amount possible was likely responding to the market rate and would depend on the individual child care provider selected. <p>Director Arikawa-Cross stated that they will be supporting H.B. No. 2683 and S.B. No. 2937. This bill repeals the sunset date for the exemption of laboratory school programs of the Hawaiian language college at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo from state English-medium standards, assessments, performance ratings, staff qualifications, and staff training requirements.</p> <p>Mikako Deguchi, Institutional Analyst, gave updates on the kindergarten enrollment form survey in which data was presented to the P-20 Council. Deguchi also shared that EOEL met with Hawai‘i DOE leadership to discuss making modifications to the current form based on recommendations.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross shared that the last day for two new FCIL proposals will be on February 21st. Board member Kerrie Urosevich asked if FCIL’s are permitted to operate on non-DOE campuses. Director Arikawa-Cross answered that these particular FCIL programs will be on DOE campuses, however it is possible that non-DOE options will be looked at in the future.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross also shared a document policy statement on inclusion for students with disabilities in early childhood programs.</p>	
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	<p>She emphasized the importance of expanding access to these programs.</p> <p>Alohi Maiava Shigeta gave an update on the PDG B-5 grant progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Four sets of the four-workshop series <i>Embracing Your Journey</i> were completed; 48 families were recruited and 31 of these families attended at least one workshop session. ● Parent Leadership Training Institute is ongoing; 23 families recruited and 17 of these families attended the initial retreat event. ● They attended the DHS infant-toddler workgroup and shared information about the Infant Toddler Caregiver Certificate Pathway. In addition, the Hawai'i team attended the National Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Center's Community of Practice (CoP). ● Additionally, they worked with DHS to develop infant and toddler center staff draft waiver requirements for the caregiver. ● Board members Napua Rosehill and Kerrie Urosevich asked if payments have been received as federal funds can often times be delayed. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that EOEL does not issue payments, however she would check with partners to determine if these payments were being received in a timely manner. 	
<p>ELB Legislative Advocacy: Policy Priorities Framework—Chair Peters</p>	<p>Chair Peters suggested that the board continue to utilize the framework used last year to help determine which bills the board would be supporting this year.</p> <p>Chair Peters made a motion to continue to utilize this framework, to help inform which bills would be supported. The motion was seconded by Board member Megan McCorriston. Motion passed (Y-9; N-0) Chair Peters also asked if the board would support other bills that have not formally been supported, but have been recently</p>	

	<p>tracked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board was asked to support the paid family leave bill • Chair Peters made the motion to support the family leave bill. The motion was seconded by Erin Henderson Lacerdo. • Several board members raised concerns over not having ample time to review the bill and in addition had questions regarding the bill. • Motion did not pass. Board members “support the intent” of the bill and agree to revisit it at the next meeting. (Y-0; N-9) • Board member Kerrie Urosevich shared that the 3 supported bills will be supported by the Early Intervention Coordinating Council related to children with special needs ages 0-3. Chair Peters will be adding this to the agenda for next month. 	
<p>Public Pre-K Toileting Training—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Chair Peters addressed concerns that were raised during the course of the WAM/EDN briefing regarding 3 year olds in public pre-k and toilet training. He outlined the four concern areas that were brought up by legislators: (1) Teachers having difficulty attending to toilet training matters in the classroom while also managing the needs of other students; (2) Children being bullied/teased as a result of not being toilet trained; (3) Where the responsibility of toilet training lays (4) potential lawsuit concerns particularly around the issue of sexual abuse. As a result the WAM Chair suggested that ELB have a conversation on policy surrounding 3 year olds and toilet training.</p> <p>Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and assistants must currently have education credentials in order to be a public pre-k teacher. Director Arikawa-Cross had conversations with these credentialing programs and was ensured that this is part of their practicum and state approved teacher education. In addition, the early learning state office teachers have given support to teachers and 	

	<p>are readily available to give support to teachers who may be struggling with this or any other classroom issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are 3 and 4 year olds in classrooms that need toileting support. ● Regarding bullying, Director Arikawa-Cross reached out to the complex area superintendent and principals to inquire about the subject. ● Director Arikawa-Cross shared that a child not meeting a developmental milestone is not necessarily the result of a parent not doing their job. The priority categories that EOEL focuses on encompasses a range of families and accepts children as they are. ● Regarding liability, she stated that all teachers are DOE staff, union members, and must adhere to protocols and background checks. EOEL also supports the national registry to protect children from harm. <p>Chair Peters opened up for member discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board Member Urosevich asked if there was a specific program policy in place for this or if EOEL could create a policy to suffice. She also stated that the state would be at greater risk of liability by not including children based on the ADA. ● Board member Megan McCorriston was in agreement with Kerrie Urosevich's comment and also added her concern with the government's role in 3 year old education and the prevalence of this type of thinking and certain attitudes about it. ● Board member Mei Ou stated that toilet training is part of early learning and those who work with young children know that 3 and 4 year olds need the guidance to succeed. She expressed that toilet training is part of early learning development and that support should be given to these children. She also stated that the current EOEL plan in place is what should be supported. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board member Mari Uehara shared that, as a Developmental - Behavioral Pediatric doctor, that children develop on their own time and that toilet training is a task that must be taught. She emphasized that children do not all learn at the same time. She shared that harm can be done by forcing a child to toilet train when not ready. She also stated that if children are being bullied for wearing a pull-up or diaper that should not be on the child, but rather an issue that is addressed by the adults. ● Board member Erin Henderson Lacerdo also agreed with previous comments and added that it is important to remember the mental health aspect of this. Requiring children to be potty trained at a certain age/point could potentially add unnecessary stress that could be detrimental to further development. She stressed the importance of having an inclusionary stance when it comes to toilet training. In addition, she stated that this is a “skill” and that we could be opening ourselves up for issues if we use this “skill” as a reason for denial of entry into the program. ● Board member Sulma Gandhi also agreed with other board members' statements. She added the importance of offering support to the teachers as needed but not forcing a developmental milestone to be met. ● Board member Napua Rosehill commented that this issue must be approached as a developmental skill. Potty training should be approached as a milestone. She added that those who go into early childhood education as a profession do so because it’s a passion and see child development as a continuum versus a definite timeline of skillset. ● Board member Kerrie Urosevich made the suggestion that the board come up with a clear, firm statement in anticipation for if/when this should be brought up in the future. <p>Chair Peters made the recommendation that EOEL share the following</p>	<p>EOEL share the following with WAM: Maintain current state policy regarding enrollment in</p>
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	<p>with WAM: Maintain current state policy regarding enrollment in public prekindergarten and provide the professional support needed to foster inclusive environments respectful of children’s developmental needs.</p> <p>Motion was made by Chair Peters and seconded by Board member Kaiulani Laeha. Motion was approved (Y-9,N-0)</p>	<p>public prekindergarten and provide the professional support needed to foster inclusive environments respectful of children’s developmental needs.</p>
<p>Maui Updates—Ka’ina Bonacorsi</p>	<p>Ka’ina Bonacorsi gave updates from Maui:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head Start classroom opened for 20 children ● The first licensed child care to open in Lahaina since the fire will be opening shortly. ● Ka Pa’alana program looks to opening their doors in about 2 weeks ● Imua Discovery Gardens will be opening in Wailuku and will be able to take 20 students. ● She has been working on networking and focus groups as well. ● \$75,000 was also awarded by the Health Surge Grant 	
<p>Public Comment—Bob Peters</p>	<p>Malia Tsuchiya, who has 20 years in the early childhood education field, provided her support for the policies of inclusion and accepting children as stated by board members. She stated that within the community child care programs (she has worked in) that the standards and competencies do clearly address the need for developmentally appropriate activities and that toilet training, from a teacher's perspective, is also a skill. There's no curriculum designed around potty training. It is individualized and culturally specific. She also added that we need to be cognizant of our facilities as well. Are the facilities set up and equip to allow successful potty training?</p>	
<p>Member Updates</p>	<p>Board member Stephen Schatz shared an update on Hawai’i’s new “<i>Hawai’i Graduates for Hawai’i’s Future</i>” goal. The new goal will be inclusive of early care and education. The early education data is</p>	

	not available yet, however K12 and higher goals are available now. Workforce data will also be available at a later date.	
Review Agenda Outcomes/Announcements/closing—Bob Peters	Board member Kerrie Urosevich concluded the meeting with a quote from Star Wars, “We had each other and that is how we won.”	

Submitted by Tara Castrovinci