

Early Learning Board (ELB)

Thursday, July 11, 2024

1:30 pm – 4:00 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: Stephanie Shipton, Dr. Sulma Gandhi, Dayna Luka (for Director Betts), Matthew Shim, PhD (for Dr. Kenny Fink), Dr. Phil Bossert, Cheryl Cudiamat, Joni Onishi, Dr. Lindsey Heathcock, Dr. Rochelle Mahoe (for Superintendent Hayashi), Elaine Yamashita, Stephen Schatz (for President David Lassner) Nāpua Rosehill (for Jack Wong), Kau‘i Burgess

Board Members Absent: Alanna Bauman

Executive Office on Early Learning staff in attendance: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Kevin Kabasawa, Stephanie Tim Sing, Tara Castrovinci, Lane Tsuchiyama, Mikako Deguchi, Alohilani Maiava Shigeta, Dr. Ephraim Schwab

Public in Attendance: Christina Cox, Angela Miyashiro, Carol Wear, Charis Sole, Chevelle Davis, Chris Jackson, Christopher Au, Deanne Goya, Deborah Zysman, HPPA Intern, Ka`ano`i Walk, Ka'iulani Laehā , Kim Guieb, Lauren Padesky, Lynette Kamekona, Rev. John C. Halemano Jr., Robyn Chun, Jordana Ferreira, Wendy Nakasone-Kalani, Kiyomi Umezawa

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
MINUTES:		
I. Welcome/ Mission Statement/ Announcements Chair Elaine Yamashita	<p>Chair Yamashita opened the meeting at 1:35 pm. Attendance was taken and a quorum was established.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita introduced herself and gave an overview of the make-up of the current board including positions currently filled on the board as well as those vacant.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita asked each person, both board members and the general public in attendance, to introduce themselves to the board. Introductions were made by those present including: Phil Bossart, Hawai`i Association of Independent Schools Ephraim Schwab, EOEL Head Start Collaborator Kiyomi Umesawa, University of Hawai`i Wendy Nakasoni Kalani, U.S. Army Children's Services Tara Castrovinci, EOEL Communications Specialist Mikako Deguchi, EOEL Institutional Analyst Lane Tsuchiyama, EOEL Institutional Analyst Christina Cox, KCCA Preschools Jordana Ferreira, City and County of Honolulu</p>	
II. Review and Approve Minutes Chair Elaine Yamashita	<p>Chair Yamashita motioned to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Joni Onishi seconded to approve the minutes. A vote was taken and the minutes from the June meeting were approved.</p>	<p>Minutes from the June meeting were approved. Yes=5 No=0</p>

**III.
Board Member Report on
Event Attended:
Early Care and and
Education Symposium
2024: “Cultivating
Leadership From Within”
Kau`i Burgess**

Board member Kau`i Burgess shared her experience from the Early Care and and Education Symposium 2024: “*Cultivating Leadership From Within*”.

- The conference was held on July 29th and was hosted by the Hawai`i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity Project (EC3)
- The objectives of the symposium were to learn about the power of supporting early educators as leaders and as agents of change, as well as examine how we as a state can cultivate leadership to continue to advance the early childhood profession and improve quality programs and services.
- The conference was attended by several board members and EOEL staff including Chair Elaine Yamashita, Kau`i Burgess, Nāpua Rosehill, and Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross.
- Approximately 100 persons attended the symposium. Guest speakers included Lt. Governor Sylvia Luke who spoke on the Ready Keiki initiative, Dr. Anne Douglass, the Executive Director of the Institute for Early Education Leadership & Innovation, Nathan Murata and Terry Lock from UH College of Education.

**IV.
Chair's Report on
Meetings Attended as
ELB Chair: Ready Keiki
Meeting**
Chair Yamashita

Chair Elaine Yamashita attended (virtually via Zoom) Lt. Sylvia Luke's Ready Keiki meeting on June 27th. This was the Chair's first time attending a Ready Keiki meeting.

Chair Yamashita noted the following important points of information from the meeting:

- New classrooms will be opening this upcoming school year.
- EOEL will be taking applications both online and paper.
- Increase in the POD funding and opening up the application period has resulted in an increase of applications.
- The School Facilities Authority (SFA) has new staff including Executive Director, Ricky Fujitani and Policy & Program Officer, Cheri Nakamura.
- Schools are dealing with staffing shortages with not enough qualified staff available for DHS licensed programs. Some programs have closed classrooms due to lack of staff. Chair Yamashita stated that this is a dire need that needs to be addressed and that the board should work to support workforce recruitment, retention, compensation and benefits for early care providers.

Chair Yamashita disclosed her involvement in other groups. She stated that she will not be reporting on these groups and if voting takes place that concerns these groups she would recuse herself of voting.

- Hawai'i Careers with Young Children (HCYC); a coalition of entities working on a coherent, inclusive professional development system for early childhood educators. Chair Yamashita is the co-chair of the framework workgroup along with Brenda Watanabe of Hawai'i Community College.
- Compensation Design Team member working on a plan to increase compensation for early childhood educators in Hawai'i. The group was organized by Terry Lock's ECE3 program at UH Manoa.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Care Advisory Committee. Chair Yamashita is a voting member representing Maui County. ● Council for Professional Recognition. Chair Yamashita is a Professional Development Specialist (PDS) independent contractor doing observations of Child Development Associate (CDA) credential candidates. 	
<p>Public Comment Opportunity Chair Elaine Yamashita</p>	<p>Chair Yamashita opened the floor for public comments. No comments were made.</p>	
<p>V. Executive Office on Early Learning Updates Report Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross</p>	<p>Director Yuuko Arikawa-Cross shared updates from the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director Arikawa-Cross shared that several bills EOEL had been supporting were recently signed into law by Governor Josh Green. Communications Specialist, Tara Castrovinci, attended one of the bill signing ceremonies and shared photos from the event. ● Bills that were signed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>SB 3087 SD1 HD1 CD1 Relating to Early Learning</i>; Authorizes early learning programs to be established on public school campuses and other available public buildings. ○ <i>SB 3116 SD2 HD1 CD1 Relating to the Preschool Open Doors Program (POD)</i>; Establishes that the priority of selection for participation in the POD program applies only during the priority application period that occurs to the start of each fiscal year through January 31 shall be processed continuously 	

	<p>through the fiscal year on a first-come, first-served basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>SB 2475 SD2 HD2 CD1 Relating to Education</i>; Establishes the Harm to Students Registry for all early learning programs or schools and K-12 educational institutions within the state. ○ <i>HB 2227 HD2 SD1 Relating to Child Care</i>; Expands the existing exemption from state law governing child care for United States Department of Defense (DOD) certified child care providers on federal property to those operating off federal property. ○ <i>HB 2430 HD1 SD1 CD1 Relating to Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for Children Program</i>; Establishes and empowered the Dept. of Education (DOE) and the Dept. of Human Services (DHS) to implement measures to maximize participation in summer EBT program for keiki. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director Arikawa-Cross shared data relating to the Hawai`i birth rates. Data shows a decline in birth rates in the state from 2018 (17,027 births) to 2023 (14,829 births). ● Data taken from the birth rates can be used to understand the minimum and maximum number of spaces required to achieve Act 46 and Act 210 by the year 2032. Minimum number of spaces required would be 31,916 and maximum number would be 34,988 based on adding class cohorts identified from data sources. ● The goal by 2027 is to have enough spaces to serve the needs of 50% of the children and by 2032 to serve 100% of the children. ● Director Arikawa-Cross also shared slides from Lt. Governor’s Ready Keiki Program. 	
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Director Arikawa-Cross shared that EOEL will be opening their first Hawaiian language classrooms. Last month EOEL contracted Islander Institute to facilitate a Hawaiian language program retreat held at the Kuhuku Ranch on Hawai`i island.

- The retreat was held to bring together a cohort of experts and supporters of Hawaiian language early learning.
- Attendees included: ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, Kahuawaiola at UH Hilo, The Office of Hawaiian Education (DOE), Kamehameha Schools, Charter Schools Commission, Kūlaniākea, Hānaiāulu at Windward Community College, and Kawaiāha`o Church School, as well as charter schools that currently run a Hawaiian language school and charter schools that are Hawaiian culture-focused.
- The retreat focused on the evolution of Hawaiian language early learning with EOEL seeking support, perspective, and to create a community environment for the programs and workforce that will be joining the EOEL program.

Director Arikawa-Cross shared updates in workforce development.

- The University of Hawai`i just announced an Early Childhood Education (ECED) Graduate Certificate. The ECED certificate will allow current DOE licensed teachers that may not have the early childhood credentials on their licenses the opportunity to earn these credentials.
- The early childhood educator stipend program applications are now open. Deadline to apply for Fall is July 15th.
- U.S. Department of Education is also looking for feedback regarding extending public service loan forgiveness to early childhood educators. The comment period is open through July 22, 2024.

Director Arikawa-Cross made updates on facilities expansion for ECE programs.

- She acknowledged that securing facilities can be somewhat challenging for community-based providers, therefore EOEL is taking a look at areas of needs and opportunities. She shared

again that recently passed bills such as SB3087 and HB 2227 will help will expansion.

- Preschool Open Doors (POD): Prior to Ready Keiki, the POD program was limited to \$12 million annually. In 2023 the POD funding was expanded to \$50 million annually as well as expanded to include 3 year olds as well. POD has helped to increase enrollment. Children enrolled increased from 666 in 2023 to 1,542 in 2025 (current year).

Director Arikawa-Cross also shared her highlights from the Early Care and Education Symposium last month including the take-away that you can be an agent of change.

Director Arikawa-Cross shared opportunities for education, highlighting expanding access with the following classrooms:

- Bezos Academy in Lahaina: Two free, full-day classrooms serving breakfast and lunch with free take home dinner meals.
- Hawai`i State Public Libraries; Pearl City and Waikoloa will have 2 classrooms each
- `Imiloa Astronomy Center; Hawaiian language medium with 3 new modular classrooms
- Kapolei Parkway Village; Run through PACT, state Charter preschool with 4 classrooms, 20 seats in each classroom.
- UH Manoa Children's Center; 130 new pre-k seats.

Director Arikawa-Cross shared that EOEL will have 92 total classrooms for the new school-year, 44 being new classrooms opening in August. Board member Kau`i Burgess asked if a list of the new schools is available. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that the list can be found on the EOEL website.

Director Arikawa-Cross highlighted student safety and the newly signed bill that would establish a Harm To Students Registry for all early learning programs or schools and K-12 educational institutes in Hawai`i. She clarified that because the bill is classified as “Relating to Education” it includes HAIS, DOE, EOEL and Charter schools. It

does not include anything under DHS umbrella because those are considered “Child Care” and not “Education”.

Chair Yamashita added that the terminology can be difficult. She added that DHS programs are considered “child care” and not “education” because of where the federal funds are coming from–The Childcare Development Block Grant Fund (CCDBG) and the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).

Director Arikawa-Cross also highlighted that the summer EBT program was established to provide meals for students.

Director Arikawa-Cross welcomed new EOEL staff including 6 new State Office Teachers (ELSOTs) Cherie, Christine, Crystal, Darene, Kimberly and Phyllis. She also welcomed the new Head Start Collaboration Director, Ephraim Schwab. Dr. Schwab introduced himself and gave a brief statement on his background prior to joining EOEL.

Board Member Stephen Schatz asked a question pertaining to the No Harm To Students Registry. He asked if there has been any conversation with DHS to fix the statute. He expressed his concern that the statute could use further refinement to include DHS licensed schools.

Chair Yamashita asked if Family Child Interaction Learning Programs (FCIL) were included in the preschool enrollment numbers. Director Arikawa-Cross shared that the numbers don’t necessarily take into account FCIL, but that EOEL is aligning with Act 46 to give all children access.

Board member Nāpua Rosehill asked Director Arikawa-Cross if all 44 new classrooms are ready to open in the fall. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that they are still waiting on several education assistant positions to be filled. There are some schools that did not post open job positions early, and therefore some schools will open in August

	<p>with one staffed teacher and therefore can only take on 10 students, rather than 20. Once those particular schools are able to fill the second position, they will be able to accommodate 20 students.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita voiced concern over not having 2 teachers in every classroom, even at the 10:1 ratio. She stated it would be a health and safety issue to only have one teacher per 10 students. Board member Cheryl Cudimat asked if all classrooms would have bathrooms and stated that children should not be using the bathrooms alone unless under staff supervision in the classroom.</p>	
<p>Public Comment Opportunity Chair Elaine Yamashita</p>	<p>Chair Yamashita opened the floor for public comments.</p> <p>Jordana Ferreria commented on the Harm to Students Registry concern that was brought up by Stephen Schatz. She stated that other departments should have access to the information that is included on the registry.</p>	
<p>VI. Presentations on Chair's Expectations, Culture of Board Meetings Chair Elaine Yamashita</p>	<p>Board member Kau`i Burgess asked for EOEL to provide a report of the bills this past season they were advocating for that did not get passed in the legislative session. Director Arikawa-Cross stated that EOEL has a tracking system that is used to track which bills and will share to the board's shared Google drive.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita outlined her expectations and culture of the board for her 3-year term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have an inquiry mindset. Ask informed questions. (Anne Douglass, 6/29/24) ● Come informed. Read reports before the meeting ● Meeting times can be used for discussion and decision making. Not all written reports require decision making ● County representatives should be informed about early learning in their county. County coordinators and higher education faculty are resources. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shifting in our thinking from seeing early educators as objects of change to agents of change. (Anne Douglass, 6/29/24) ● For board functioning, working on by-laws to send to the governance committee. 	
Break –10 mins		
VII. Governance Subcommittee: Amending previously approved (07/09/2020) Early Learning Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Term Limits Governance Subcommittee Rochelle Mahoe	Board member Rochelle Mahoe shared that the Governance Subcommittee met on June 21st, 2024 to review the roles and responsibilities of the Early Learning Board, chairperson and vice chairperson, as well as their term limits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Governance Subcommittee proposed the following change to the verbiage regarding term limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adding to the original statement: <i>The Chair is selected by the majority of the voting members every three years, or if the term limit of the selected member is less than three years then a new Chairperson would need to be elected if term is less than 3 years.</i> ○ Motion to amend was made by Rochelle Mahoe and seconded was by Kau`i Burgess. 	Motion to amend was approved. Yes=5 No=0
VIII. Proposed selection process for Vice-Chairperson Governance Subcommittee Rochelle Mahoe	The Governance Subcommittee proposed that the vice chairperson selection process mirror the same process as the chairperson process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Motion was made by Rochelle Mahoe and seconded by Kau`i Burgess. 	Motion was approved. Yes=5 No=0

<p>IX. Review of Board Responsibilities and how ELB will address each. Chair Yamashita</p>	<p>Chair Yamashita shared the board responsibilities according to the Hawai'i revised statute HRS 302L-1.6. Link: HRS 302L-1.6</p> <p>Responsibilities of the board shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Directing EOEL on how to best meet the developmental and educational needs of children prenatal-kindergarten. ● Providing recommendations on improving the quality, availability, and coordination of early learning programs. ● Promoting collaboration across agencies and stakeholders serving young children. ● Appointing the director of the office and evaluating the director on an annual basis. <p>Board member Kau'i Burgess suggested that the board consider having a subcommittee created around legislation that would potentially draft bills or legislation for bills in the future. Chair Yamashita agreed that a legislative subcommittee would be a good idea. Chair Yamashita will confer with legal counsel to determine if that is possible.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita discussed which committees the board should consider adding or keeping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board member Stephen Schatz agreed to stay on with the finance committee. Board member Phil Bossert volunteered to be on the finance committee. ● Chair Yamashita suggested the board consider committees such as an early learning systems committee or legislative committee. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board member Kau`i Burgess suggested that discussions of early learning systems could come under a legislative committee. ● Board member Stephen Schatz suggested that they consider integrating the word <i>coordination</i> due to previous criticisms over the board only being overly focused on EOEL funding and administration responsibilities. The name <i>Early Learning Coordination Committee</i> was suggested. ● Current Standing Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governance: Matthew Shim, Rochelle Mahoe, Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Elaine Yamashita ○ Finance: Stephen Schatz, Elaine Yamashita, Yuuko Arikawa-Cross <p>Chair Yamashita followed up on the suggestion of adding public requests to the ELB agenda. She updated the board that they are still working on researching this and will follow up as more information is determined.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board member Kau`i Burgess suggested that the chair consult with the deputy attorney general to determine if they are able to add this to the agenda and to develop a process to respond to requests based on whether or not the topic is the responsibility of EOEL or another agency. She suggested having the request be made in writing either by email or standard mail. ● Napua Rosehill suggested that public comment could be left at the end of the meeting if unable to email or write in a request. 	
<p>Public Comment Opportunity Chair Elaine Yamashita</p>	<p>No public comments were made.</p>	

<p>Agenda Review and Outcomes, Announcements and Closing Chair Elaine Yamashita</p>	<p>Chair Yamashita shared the outcomes from the meeting agenda including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board voted on two items (1) to amend the chairperson and vice-chairperson term limits and (2) mirror the chairperson selection voting process for the vice-chairperson. ● Discussed how to organize committees and which committee(s) should potentially be added. ● Discussed adding public requests to the agenda <p>Chair Yamashita read a quote from Marie Curie: <i>You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end each of us must work with for his or her own improvement, and at the same time share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to who we think we can be most useful.</i></p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 3:48 PM</p>	
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Notes submitted by: Tara Castrovinci
Early Learning Board Meeting for 07/11/24