

**EARLY LEARNING BOARD (ELB)  
GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, January 09, 2025

1:30-4:00 pm

At CEED Center, KCAA

2707 South King Street, Honolulu HI 96826

Or via Zoom Link

The Meeting Chair will attend virtually.

**Board Members Present:**

Elaine Yamashita, <i>Chair</i> Dayna Luka, (for Director Ryan Yamane), <i>Department of Human Services</i> Joni Onishi, <i>Hawai'i County</i> Kau'i Burgess, <i>At-Large</i> Stephanie Shipton, <i>City and County of Honolulu</i> Matthew Shim, PhD (for Dr. Kenny Fink) <i>Department of Health</i>	Dr. Sulma Gandhi, <i>At-Large</i> Dr. Lindsey Heathcock, <i>City and County of Honolulu</i> Cheryl Cudiamat, <i>At-Large</i> Alanna Souza, <i>Kaua'i County</i>
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**Board Members Absent:**

Stephen Schatz (for President David Lassner), <i>University of Hawai'i</i> Nāpua Rosehill (for Jack Wong), <i>Kamehameha Schools</i>	Dr. Rochelle Mahoe (for Superintendent Hayashi), <i>Hawai'i Department of Education</i> Dr. Phil Bossert, <i>Hawaii Association of Independent Schools</i>
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**Executive Office on Early Learning Staff Present:**

Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, <i>Director</i> Kevin Kabasawa Tara Castrovinci Lane Tsuchiyama Mikako Deguchi	Alohilani Maiava Shigeta Dr. Ephraim Schwab Ian Okamoto Dr. Remy Pages Saesha Seguirant
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**Public in Attendance:**

Vivian Eto Lynette Kamekona Terry Lock Angela Miyashiro	Raya Esteban Kim Guieb Chris Jackson Richmond Luzar
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Alexandria Sisson Charis Sole	Mei Ou Stacie Tonouchi Carol Wear
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## MINUTES

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
<b>I. Welcome and Roll Call</b> <i>Chair Yamashita</i>	<p>Chair Elaine Yamashita called the meeting to order at 1:29pm</p> <p>The Vice Chair Stephanie Shipton read the vision and the mission statements.</p> <p>Chair Elaine Yamashita took roll and a quorum was established.</p>	
<b>II. Review and Approval of Minutes</b> <i>Chair Yamashita</i>	<p>Board member Kau'i Burgess made a suggestion for future minutes to include the year after the act being referenced. She mentioned on page 3 next to Act 210 should include (2021) next to it. This is due to the fact that each year, the act number refers to that year's enacted legislation. Act 210 (2020) would be different from Act 210 (2021).</p> <p>Chair Yamashita stated that the Introduction and discussion of the proposed salary schedule for the EOEL Director was not included in the minutes and asked for it to be included.</p> <p>Board member Joni Onishi made a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting with the amendments. The motion was seconded by board member Sulma Gandhi.</p>	<p>Vote was taken and a motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting with the amendments passed.  Yes=6, No=0</p>
<b>III. Executive Office on Early Learning Updates Report</b> <i>Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director</i>	<p>Director Arikawa-Cross shared updates from the Executive Office on Early Learning.</p> <p>She shared new updated numbers that will impact and help adjust workforce demand, facilities and funding for the system.</p> <p>She presented a picture that represented what Hawai'i looked like in 2023, with the breakdown of the total of 3 and 4 year olds including how many were served by existing pre-k classrooms, opt out of pre-k and unserved keiki. They have been tracking the unserved keiki.</p> <p>The Act says by 2027, we would be able to have served 50 % of these currently unserved keiki.</p> <p>Referring to the road map, the numbers directly impact the amount of workforce that is going to be needed, facilities and amount of funding.</p>	

**Workforce Development and Support**

Ian Okamoto shared updates about the Early childhood educator stipend program Fall 2024.

There are a total of 87 stipend recipients for the Fall 2024 which includes 20 new recipients and 67 continuing recipients.

From comparison to Fall 2023, which had 53 recipients

- Community colleges - 56
- Undergraduate programs 8
- Graduate programs - 23

He also stated that the data isn't final, these projected figures are subject to confirmation.

Chair Yamashita commented that we aren't going to meet the workforce due to a shortage, that is across education in general, but it's pretty severe in early childhood. The board needs to understand the factors in why we have such a severe shortage. Part of it is the compensation for people with equivalent degrees. She said as a board they need to talk and make our circles aware of the opportunity that is very rewarding.

**Program Quality Improvement and Maintenance**

Director Arikawa-Cross wanted to highlight this accreditation support. She shared a flier with informational sessions that were held at the very end of December.

**Legislative Updates**

Director Arikawa-Cross shared that there are 2 reports that are due to the Legislature. The first one is a DHS EOEL joint report Section 26-61 © and the second one is Report to the 2025 Legislature- Chapter 302 L-8 HRS.

She also thanked Jennifer Chow for offering phenomenal training to the EOEL office to talk about the legislative process. She also mentioned that herself, Jennifer and Tara have met with over 20 legislative members in the past 3 months and continue to work on scheduling additional meetings.

She also wanted to highlight a document "Early Childhood System Government programs in Hawai'i". She asked for the board to take a look at the documents to see if there's anything they should add or change to improve this representation.

Chair Yamashita asked if this could be emailed to the Board members for further review.

The second document shared the EOEL vision, statutory changes, EOEL public pre-k classrooms and Family Child Interaction Learning programs. The next page shares the EOEL public pre-k program and

	<p>the priority categories. The enrollment families are based on priority category and belong to that homeschool geographic region.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross shared that after October, if there's any seats left available, then they consider those who did not meet the priority category.</p> <p>Joni Onishi asked the Director about Waiakeawaena School in Hilo. They aren't listed, is it because they don't meet the priority category? Director Arikawa-Cross replied that Waiakeawaena School doesn't have an EOEL public pre-k on their campus, they have an early childhood special education classroom and therefore are not listed. Director Arikawa-Cross mentioned she will check to see if they have any other type of general education pre-k on their campus.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross shared that on January 10, 2025 that she, Jennifer Chow and Tara Castrovinci will be going before the Senate to offer their budget briefing. They are currently in the process of scheduling the house finance budget briefing on January 14, 2025.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita thanked Yuuko, Jennifer Chow and Tara Castrovinci for conducting these meetings.</p> <p>Alanna Souza commented that she appreciates the visualizations. She also had a question about the document sharing about the EOEL public pre-k program. She suggested adding the application period March to October and how it could be helpful to include on the document.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross agreed and thanked her for the feedback.</p>	
<p><b>IV. Proposed Salary Schedule for EOEL Executive Director</b> <i>Matthew Shim</i></p>	<p>Matthew Shim made a motion to approve the policy on the performance based salary adjustment for the Executive Director as presented to the Board on December 12, 2024.</p> <p>Kau'i Burgess seconded the motion.</p>	<p>Vote was taken and a motion to approve the policy. Yes=6, No=0</p>

<p><b>V. Unfinished business: How to address compliance with Head Start Act in relation to ELB having a “representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services.”</b> <i>Elaine Yamashita, Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Government Affairs Specialist Jennifer Chow</i></p>	<p>Chair Yamashita addressed the issue of compliance with the Head Start Act in relation to having a representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services.</p> <p>Matthew Shim commented that since they’re making changes to the language of the Board composition, he suggested that just having language to invite a member of local early childhood and development services to serve as an ex-officio voting member is not filling that role.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita wanted to be clear that they are wanting to come in compliance with the Head Start Act because we are the designated state Early Learning Advisory Council by the Governor for the Head Start Act.</p> <p>Matthew Shim made a motion for the Board to support the intent of the recommended language to include a local early childhood education services member on the board, either as an ex officio non-voting member or a voting member. Proposed language: The board may invite a member of the local early childhood education and development services to serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member if no voting member fills that role.</p> <p>Joni Onishi seconded the motion.</p>	<p>Vote was taken and a motion to approve the intent of the recommended language. Yes=6, No=0</p>
<p><b>VI. Unfinished business: Update on Act 156 (SB 2475 SD2 HS2 CD1) - Establishing the Harm to Students Registry and Dept. of Human Services (DHS) access to the Registry</b> <i>Dayna Luka</i></p>	<p>At the December meeting, DHS board member Dayna Luka agreed to check with the DHS deputy attorney general (AG) regarding the most effective way to have DHS gain access to the Registry. This is an update on the discussion.</p> <p>During the 2024 legislative session when the bill was going through, DHS submitted testimony to ask for access to the registry. DHS asked because they wanted to use the information as part of the background process which would enhance the risk and suitability assessments. DHS has a whole administrative rule and chapter on background checks and reviews and DHS gets written consent from the individual to conduct the 9 checks. They also collaborate with child welfare services on investigations. DHS, EOEL, DOE and HAIS will meet to discuss how that information could be shared with DHS once that consent is given.</p> <p>The Chair wanted to clarify that they would need to talk about access for next steps and changing the statutes. In future sessions the statute might need to be changed. Chair asked if the board could get an update in May about this issue.</p> <p>Joni Onishi asked if the applicant gives permission you’re not able to get access?</p> <p>Dayna Luka replied that would be something that would need to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Board member Dayna Luka will convene the group. There will be an update to the board in May 2025.</p>
<p><b>VII. Proposed policy on Mixed</b></p>	<p>Chair Yamashita shared that the ELB shared a mixed delivery system which supports family choice. However, it has not been an articulated</p>	

**delivery system**  
*Chair Yamashita*

policy.

The first step is to come to an understanding of what the term means, and what it looks like in Hawai'i.

Today is an introduction to the term, using materials from the Early care and education consortium, ECE Advocates and EOEL.

She shared a page from the Early Care and Education consortium. "A Mixed Delivery system is the most Sustainable and efficient solution to meet policy objectives".

A mixed delivery system administers funds across licensed center and family based child care programs, Head Start, Early Head Start, Public schools and community based organizations to ensure high-quality, affordable options for children through age 5 and their families. An opportunity funded mixed-delivery system, which draws on the decades of expertise and existing infrastructure in the early care and education sector is essential. It is the most cost effective and sustainable solution to deliver affordable high-quality early care and education to all.

It also mentions that it supports choice and flexibility for families, ensures high-quality experiences for children and protects diversity in the provider network.

Chair Yamashita mentioned that she wants as a board to support systems that are based on human or user centered design that are based on the people who are going to be using the system. There isn't enough space on the DOE campuses to provide for all the children that need care.

She also presented a video emphasizing the potential dangers of a universal pre-k based primarily in public schools, which could lead to the closure of the community-based child care centers.

Lindsey Heathcock asked about signs of potential threats to non-DOE classrooms and monitoring mechanisms, to which Chair Yamashita responded that they are currently gathering anecdotal information and considering sharing a list of planned EOEL classrooms with communities.

Kau'i Burgess emphasized the importance of considering the needs of children in the context of Act 46 (2020), which aims to provide equal access to education for all children, regardless of whether they attend public or private schools.

Chair Yamashita and Director Arikawa-Cross discussed various funding sources for early childhood education programs. They highlighted private funding sources such as community-based programs, family child care homes, and group child care homes. They also discussed federally funded sources like early head start, head start, and early intervention services for children with special needs.

	<p>Director Arikawa-Cross mentioned the potential use of Title One funds for public pre-k programs in eligible schools. State-funded sources included early learning contracts and public pre-k programs.</p> <p>Chair Yamashita emphasized the importance of federal funding going to the Child Care Program office and then being distributed as subsidies to families.</p> <p>Director Arikawa-Cross clarified that the funding discussion did not include subsidies.</p>	
<b>VIII. Closing</b>	Chair Yamashita adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.	

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