

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

- SUBJECT:** Relating to Early Learning
- REFERENCE:** SB 2878, SD2, HD2, CD1, Act 14 (veto override)
(SLH 2008)
- ACTION REQUESTED:** Requires the early learning system to be developed and administered by the early learning council attached to the DOE. Establishes the Keiki 1st Steps grant program, provisions relating to the early childhood education facilities pre-plus program and requires annual report of progress and status of the early learning system in Hawaii.

DOE REPORT:

Introduction:

The provisions in Act 14 require the Early Learning Council to submit an annual report on its progress and the status of the Early Learning System in the State. The Council convened on September 17, 2008, and since then has had two (2) subsequent meetings. The attached progress report and work plan documents the efforts that have occurred over the past two (2) months.

Section 6 of Act 14, requires the Department of Education (DOE) to identify unused public school facilities to be used for early learning programs and services. A preliminary report of those facilities is attached.

FINDINGS:

The progress report from the Early Learning Council indicates that the Council must explore options for its continued work, beyond June 30, 2009, as the funding has been eliminated from the DOE budget. Without future funding, it will be challenging to secure the staff to ensure the smooth operations of the Council.

The Office of School Facilities and Support Services (OSFSS) is the designated lead for the facilities inventory and the continued work with the Department of Human Services (DHS). The Superintendent has asked the OSFSS to work on a detailed inventory of classroom and school facilities that may be utilized for early childhood programs. The inventory will take into consideration the DHS child care facility standards, which currently serve as the common standard for the majority of early childhood program facilities. The costs of renovating classrooms and school facilities will be itemized in consideration of the standards. This report will be updated and presented for legislative review annually, as indicated in Act 14.

With respect to the attached report, OSFSS reports that the cost of renovating a classroom for DHS childcare standards is \$80,000, given that estimate, costs may total to \$5.2 million.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Early Learning Council, while exploring other potential funding streams so that their work may continue, will also be asking the Legislature to consider measures to restore the funding to cover the operational needs of the Council.

Beyond the facilities inventory, the DOE and DHS shall continue their work to identify and develop Pre-Plus classrooms on DOE campuses statewide, particularly in those communities that lack adequate access to early learning programs for children and parents.

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

Report to the 2009 Legislature

Submitted on behalf of the Early Learning Council by
Robert Peters, Ed.D., Chair
Dee Jay Mailer, Vice-Chair

INTRODUCTION

It is well-established that children have higher levels of success in learning and life when provided education as early as possible. National and local statistics demonstrate that involving children and their families in early learning together increases the odds that children will succeed in school in later years. Acknowledging these trends and the need to increase access to quality early learning in the State of Hawaii, Act 14 was approved by the Legislature in 2008, setting expectations and a plan to help Hawaii's children succeed in school by:

- Establishing an early learning system to be known as *Keiki First Steps*;
- Creating the Early Learning Council to develop and administer the State's early learning system;
- Establishing the Keiki First Steps grant program;
- Statutorily establishing the pre-plus program;
- Promoting the development of early learning facilities

Keiki First Steps is intended to be widely accessible and voluntary, to be a cohesive and sustainable system which provides an array of high quality early learning services that involves families and engages community.

Act 14, as an initial priority, establishes the Early Learning Council (the Council), charged with developing and the administering the Early Learning System, *Keiki First Steps*. The Council, which is attached to the Department of Education (DOE) for administrative purposes only, started its charge in September 2008 and is actively engaged in developing a plan for the early learning system, including its development, execution, and monitoring, according to Act 14's requirements and a phased implementation plan. It has completed a preliminary workplan and established work groups/sub-committees to address the Council's initial priorities.

The Early Learning System will build upon existing programs and services for children from birth to entry into kindergarten and where needed, will establish new offerings through the *Keiki First Steps Grant Program* and the establishments of the *Keiki First Steps Trust Fund*. Early learning opportunities will achieve quality standards and offer families choices in center-based, family childcare and family-child interaction programs.

The creation of the Council is a major step forward in the advocacy efforts on behalf of the keiki of Hawaii. It creates a statewide organization consisting of public and private partners that are fully vested in ending learning disparities for at-risk children. The Council's creation is the culmination of many years of work by early childhood advocates and experts in our community. Beginning with the creation of Preschool Open Doors in the late '80's to the creation of Good Beginnings Alliance by Act 77 along with the work of the School Readiness Task Force, the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC) Statewide Accreditation Project, the creation of Preschool Content Standards, Hawai'i's P-20, initiative, Kamehameha School's efforts in early childhood and the report of the Act 259 Early Learning Task Force, our

community has become aware of the importance and need to take steps to provide quality early learning opportunities for our keiki if they are going to be successful in school.

The Council is formed and poised to assume its legislative charge. This report records the Council's establishment, its orientation to appropriate governance, its preliminary work plan and its request for future start-up support, including funding in the next State biennium. On behalf of the Council's members, we are privileged to serve the State in establishing an early learning system.

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

Composition/Qualifications:

The Early Learning Council is made up of 13 members representing both the public and private sectors as designated in Act 14. Members of the Council and their respective positions are listed in *Attachment A*. The members of the Council are a committed group of early childhood advocates with broad experience in early learning and family issues. A number are continuing members of the Act 259 Task Force and bring the knowledge gained from their work to the Council's deliberations.

Council Governance/Functioning:

Randall Nishiyama of the Attorney General's Office introduced the Council to the process requirements of Act 14 at the Council's first meeting, September 17th. A quorum was determined to be 7 members. It was recommended that the Council use Robert's 80-20 Rule for technical decisions and follow the Sunshine Law with respect to all operations and public

meetings. At its subsequent meeting on October 13th, it was agreed that the Council would follow a consensus decision-making model (7 members required) to address the inability of the Chair and Vice Chair to participate in discussions and vote if Roberts' Rules were followed. It was agreed that the voices of the Chair and Vice Chair were meant to be heard as part of the intent of Act 14.

Attachment to the DOE is for administrative purposes only. Their staff have been especially helpful in supporting the Council during its start-up. The DOE serves as the link to the Governor and the Legislature and facilitates but is not the voice of the Council. While the DOE is the communication link, it cannot screen nor amend the Council's decisions.

As designated by the Act, a Chair was to be elected from the Private Sector. Robert Peters, Headmaster of Hanahauoli Schools, was elected Chair and following discussion the Council agreed to the selection of a Vice-Chair, Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kamehameha Schools. The two are responsible for convening meetings, planning agendas and directing the course of Council meetings.

The Act allows for the creation of work groups or subcommittees that may include individuals who are not council members to further the efforts of the council in achieving its goals. At the October 27th meeting, the following work groups/sub-committees were established: Governance, Quality Assurance and Accountability, Direct Services, Qualified Professionals, Funding and Capital Infrastructure. Work group/sub-committee conveners will be members of the Council and membership will be open to the public and by invitation. The groups were instructed to

utilize the Council's Work Plan to guide their efforts and to report back to the full Council at its December 15th meeting. The work groups are expected to return to the Council with realistic deliverables to do by year's end (June 30, 2009), the top 3-5 steps to get there, resources needed and major milestones to achieve. These groups are not bound by the Sunshine Law.

Budget Planning and Staffing:

A budget of \$250,000 has been allocated for the Early Learning Council. It includes funding for Personal Services including an Executive Director and additional funding to support general expenses and operating costs. The Council is in general agreement that hiring an Executive Director at this point, with no guarantee of funding beyond the current year, is unlikely. The Council is therefore exploring the value of a consultant, which would require following procurement laws and would serve the Council in communications and/or project implementation and management. A scope of work for a consultant is being defined and will be ready for the Council's next meeting. In addition to project management, expenses associated with Council meetings are being considered. While meeting expenses are expected to be minimal, there will be costs for facilitated discussions and travel for Neighbor Island participants. The question of funding for Council support is critical to keep the work moving. Therefore, necessary funding will be identified for the Council's functioning over the next biennium and funds will be requested based on those needs.

The Council understands the importance of using multiple resources to fund its efforts, including existing and new public and private funds. One of the tasks listed on the Council's work plan is funding. The Department of Human Services (DHS) has offered a consultant to meet with the

Council to address questions about “maximizing federal revenues” as one source of funding (scheduled for December 15, 2008). Concurrently, a new work group/sub-committee has been formed to address funding, including funds from the private sector. To support such funding, a Trust Fund will need to be established by the Council to receive funds. There is a work group/sub-committee designated to address the establishment of a Trust Fund.

Council Work Plan: (see *Attachment B*)

Based upon the recommendations of the Act 259 Task Force and the mandates of Act 14, a preliminary Work Plan was devised by the chairs and revised and approved as a dynamic plan (open to change/revision/refinement) by the Council members. A major assumption of the work plan is that there will be minimal state funding available in the current biennium but an expected opportunity for new funding in the next biennium. Utilizing the typical state fiscal year of July 1–June 30, the work plan breaks up the Council’s work into four phases over ten years.

Phase 1 (current year-2) focuses on system design while Phase 2 (years 2-4) calls for design testing and pilot launches as well as assessing and planning for an expansion to the age group 0-3 years; Phase 3 (covering years 5-8), is a ramp up and expansion period for system initiatives and Phase 4 (years 9-10) are primarily devoted to evaluation and refinement of the system.

Key tasks identified in the work plan are:

- Design and establish key governance and administrative processes (Early Learning Trust, Special Fund sourcing, Council Administration through DOE), grant administration and legislative reporting.

- Design Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (for classroom/home and the system itself);
- Advocacy/Communications about Early Learning
- Direct Services to Keiki and Families (identify, analyze and prioritize at risk groups; plan for special needs; plan for family involvement)
- Qualified Professionals: Build Capacity (teachers, aides, administrators, caregivers)
- Capital Infrastructure
- Funding (private and public; existing and new)

Key and immediate next steps for the Council in order to fulfill the work plan include:

- reviewing the plans of the work groups/subcommittees and their alignment with the Council's Working Plan;
- identifying resources (including funding) needed to proceed with work and setting priorities for seeking legislative support;
- establishing a working budget that responds to working group needs and the Council's along with personnel needed to proceed;
- considering changes in the Act to facilitate efficient Council deliberations, such as, allowing designees to be assigned when needed (for the Governor's appointees and those of the Hawaii County of Mayors);
- proposing legislation to move the Council's agenda ahead and to keep the importance of early childhood before the legislature; and

- completing a Council communication plan to assure all stakeholders are kept informed and engaged in the emerging process.

Public response at meetings has been supportive of the work plan and community members signing up to serve on committees is yet another example of supporting the Council's efforts. To ensure transparency and on-going communication, the work of the Council is posted on the DOE website (<http://elc.k12.hi.us/index.htm>) which includes opportunities for public comment. To date, comments have been minimal however, the Council expects more public engagement as work moves beyond formation.

Legislative and governmental support will continue to be critical as the Council moves its agenda forward. Of highest priority will be funding to support the work of the Council as it moves to improve the quality of teaching and programs, the availability and expansion of early learning services to the most at-risk children and families and an accountability system that monitors quality throughout our State. The Council will also work with State agencies to recommend the appropriate proportion of State funds that could be distributed to programs and services across the early learning spectrum.

Conclusion:

To date the Council has had a productive start with members fully engaged in its formation. It has met three times and working groups/subcommittees are currently being organized. Many years of hard work have gone into making the Council's formation and work possible. And, many wise advocates have preceded the current Early Learning Council both paving and leading

the way. To them we are most grateful as we are to the Governor and Legislature, the public and private sector providers, the educators and childhood specialists and, of course, the funders all of whom recognize the critical importance of the years from 0 – 5. We are excited about the progress made and humbled by the task that lies ahead; yet, we are all committed to our keiki and our `ohana knowing that it is in their strength that our State thrives.

The Early Learning Council has established its procedures and governing structure as well as created a work plan that builds on the recommendations of the Task Force and the mandates in *Keiki First Steps*. Working groups have been established to enhance the Council's work and build on the vast knowledge of our early childhood community; public input on the broadest level is being sought.

Challenges certainly remain as we struggle with limited funding and a year when new budget requests will most likely be denied. Yet because we have a firm foundation in our State and a public and private sector that understands the value of early education to school success, we are confident we will be able to move ahead with our agenda. Early childhood has become a national agenda and we must be a part of it.

Attachment A: List of Early Learning Council Members

**Early Learning Council
List of Members**

Patricia Hamamoto	Department of Education
Deliana Loretta Fuddy (designee)	Department of Health
Lillian Koller	Department of Human Services
Dr. David McClain	University of Hawaii System
Kaina Bonacorsi	Representative of Hawaii Council of Mayors
<i>(To be appointed)</i>	Representative of Hawaii Council of Mayors
Christine Jackson	Head Start State Collaboration Office
Dee Jay Mailer	Kamehameha Schools
Dr. Robert Peters (designee)	Hawaii Association of Independent Schools
Charles Larson	Representative of center-based programs
<i>(To be appointed)*</i>	Representative of family child care program
Lora Ann Perry	Representative of family-child interaction program provider
Crystal Ray Kanoelani Naone	Representative of philanthropic organizations that support early learning

*original appointee resigned

**EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL
DRAFT WORKPLAN
Amended 10/27/08**

Key Tasks				
	Years 0-1 Deliverables Design	Years 2-4 Testing & Pilot Launches	Year 5-8 Ramp Up/Expansion	Years 9-10 Evaluation/Refinement
Inventory unanswered questions or incomplete analysis	Inventory completed			
Design & establish key governance and administrative processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Trust (allows private contributions for “early learning purposes”) • Special Fund sourcing (cf. ELC statute to confirm) • Council Administration (DOE) • Grant Administration (DHS) – including institutional criteria • Legislative reporting 	Process approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get advice about ELC options and abilities • Consider new recommendations to the Legislature (<i>e.g., designees, staffing, professional dev., prior work and initiatives</i>) 	Processes in place	Processes implemented	
Design Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the classroom/home • For the system 	ID classroom/home quality requirements & design system measures & processes	Communicate, train and implement requirements and processes	Continually evaluate & improve classroom/home measures	System evaluation and report

	Years 0-1 Deliverables Design	Years 2-4 Testing & Pilot Launches	Year 5-8 Ramp Up/Expansion	Years 6-10 Evaluation/Refinement
Advocacy/Communications on Early Learning	Complete a plan & implement; Identify key messages and audiences	Advocacy w/ demonstration pilot(s)	Communicate progress	Communicate evaluation
Direct Services to Keiki and Families 1. ID, analyze and prioritize at risk group: (<i>children who because of home and community environment, are subject to language, cultural, economic, and other disadvantages that cause them to be at risk for school.</i>) 2. Define and size gap group 3. Define and Plan for Special Needs 4. Plan for family engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define gap groups and special needs Plan at risk to gap group roll-out over 1-3 years Plan to serve special needs 	Implement early adopter demonstration pilot(s) (groups already working using innovative, etc., programs) Implement 1 st priorities – at risk children . Integrate special needs based on plan	Expand to gap group, according to plan	
Qualified Professionals (e.g. teachers, aides, administrators, caregivers) 1. outreach 2. training (including maximizing instruction within UH system) 3. incentives and compensation	Use existing capacity for outreach, training, etc. ID & plan for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outreach training needs and system improvements incentives & compensation	Use existing capacity for outreach, training Implement incentives & comp plan	Expand outreach & training	

	Years 0-1 Deliverables Design	Years 2-4 Testing & Pilot Launches	Year 5-8 Ramp Up/Expansion	Years 6-10 Evaluation/ Refinement
Capital Infrastructure ID homes and facilities for renovation/improvement (e.g. DOE, private and public community centers or learning centers, homes, etc.)	ID & prioritize improvements based on ease & costs	Implement <u>minor facility improvements</u>	Implement <u>major facility improvements</u>	
0-3 Expansion		Analysis, planning & initial launch	Expansion	
Funding (private and public) 1. Existing 2. New	Refresh analysis of existing funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current use is early learning • Maximize existing funding sources for early learning • Maximize Federal funding – use federal funds fully (e.g. CCDF) and seek other federal sources: maximize current resources ID new funding opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Private (Early Learning Trust) 	ELC to “recommend the appropriate proportion of state funds that should be distributed to programs and services across the early learning system, to ensure the most effective and efficient allocation of fiscal resource within the early learning system.” Plan & implement existing and new funding plans		

	Years 0-1 Deliverables Design	Years 2-4 Testing & Pilot Launches	Year 5-8 Ramp Up/Expansion	Years 6-10 Evaluation/Refinement
Resources (Committees, Staff, Consultants, \$, etc.)	<p><u>Propose Committees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants Processing/State Procurement Law • Trust Fund • Interagency (e.g. funding, systems, capacity) • Quality (classroom/home requirements and system evaluation) • Professional Capacity (e.g. outreach, training, rewards planning) <p>NI travel for Council and Committees</p> <p>Hire ED</p> <p>Analytical/facilitation support</p> <p>1st year report and plan</p>	<p>Training on classroom/home requirements</p> <p>Pilot demonstrations and 1st priority implementation</p> <p>Professional incentives & implementation</p>	Expansion to gap groups	Evaluation and Report

Elementary Schools Reporting Vacant Classrooms		as of 5/1/2008
District	School	# Vacant Classrooms
Honolulu	Aliiolani	3
	Hokulani	1
	Kalihi Kai	2
	Koko Head	4
	Liholiho	3
Central	Nimitz	6
	Pearl Harbor	1
	Shafter	1
Leeward	Ewa Beach	11
	Kanoelani	3
	Manana	3
	Nanakuli	3
	Pohakea	1
Windward	Kahuku	1
	Parker	2
Hawaii	Hilo Union	2
	Kahakai	1
	Kalaniana'ole	1
Maui	Haiku	3
	Kekaulike	3
	Kula	1
	Pomaikai	9
Kauai	None	0
Total State		65