

# Early Language Working Group (ELWG)

## Minutes

**Thursday, November 8, 2018**

**3:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Library**

**Early Language Working Group Members in Attendance:** Christie Chadwick, Carole Duran (via phone), Dale Matsumoto-Oi, Coleen Momohara, Angel Ramos, Darci Singlehurst, Jill Taosaka, Po Kwan Wong, Nikki Kepoo (via zoom). **Guests:** Michelle Arakawa, Patricia Heu, Annie Kalama. **Facilitator:** Keiko Nitta

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
<b>Welcome/ Introductions—</b>	Group welcomed. Christie Chadwick, teacher of the deaf who lives on Maui joined in person to meet the team and provided informational handouts to the Group. Guests introduced themselves: Annie Kalama, Department of Education (DOE), Special Needs Section; Michelle Arakawa, Educational Specialist with the Office of Student Support Services.	
<b>Minutes Review and Approval 9/13/18.</b>	Group reviewed to September minutes.	If people have edits, please send to Keiko.
<b>Review of Legislative Report 2019</b>	<p>Currently being reviewed by Department of Health and the DOH will submit to the Legislature.</p> <p>Comments and edits received from Nikki, Dr. Heu, Dale, and Po Kwan.</p> <p>Nikki suggested researching surveys in the past from other states' focus groups of hearing parents with deaf children and their experiences from birth. This might help provide information on how to support parents.</p>	<p>May need to look at developing a strategic plan for addressing the systemic challenges (resources for families, qualified staffing, data, and assessment). This may help identify the legislative ask for 2020.</p> <p>Need to get more families involved.</p>

<p><b>Qualified Staffing</b></p>	<p>DOE representatives asked to provide an update. DOE requested in budget biennium for a statewide position to support the deaf, and hard-of-hearing students. It would be an educational officer position at the state level to serve all students who are serving students who are deaf, hard-of-hearing. A specific job description has not yet been created but it would be for all grades. It is being requested at the State level to serve all students and provide support for the teachers or the service providers across the state. DOE also shared that they have filled the State deaf, hard-of-hearing teacher resource position which provides resources to the teachers, not direct services to students. Carole's position is the state office resource teacher. There is a vacancy posted for a state audiologist position. Nikki would like to see job descriptions because for all the vacant positions it's not clear if we need to address language acquisition or developmental support. There is need in each community for positions.</p> <p>DOH Early Intervention Section is also requesting one statewide position for children who are D/HH/DB. Not sure if it will make it through the DOH budget request to the Governor to be included in the DOH legislative package.</p> <p>DOE just put in the request for the position and while early intervention is always a priority, they may need to put more emphasis on professional development and the roles that can use training not just for itinerant teachers but also preschool and classroom teachers.</p> <p>Nikki also questioned the need for qualified staff from both departments and whether it's a matter of training existing staff members on how to work with D/HH children and families in support services and/or qualifying more in those roles. Would Hawaii still need positions if we could just train existing staff? Is Hawaii addressing the area of qualified and adequate staff or a staff development plan?</p> <p>DOE's intent is to have an itinerant at each district to support students as well as the teachers. Not always successful in filling those positions and the position that's requested statewide. The position requested will be serving</p>	<p>Need to correct language to differentiate between state level and district or school personnel in the report. It can be confusing as to getting an accurate count of positions and the need for qualified staff.</p> <p>Need to make sure the language in the report address the importance of language development and early intervention as well as parent involvement.</p> <p>May need to look at the targeted strategy of professional development since there is already a teacher and staff shortage, what then can be done with existing staff.</p> <p>Ask someone from UH Higher education to help look at pathways and to help expand the programs for those working with the D/HH/DB.</p>
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all islands and one of the primary duties will be to build up the capacity of the district level resources in addition to school level resource and teachers as well. That will be the big plan.

Carole reminded that the focus of this group is birth to age five and getting kids to be kindergarten ready. Carole clarified that because EIS is requesting a position for the birth-three population, which is why it was included in the report. The position that DOE is requesting would service kids three to 22 if they had a need which is why a position was not included in the ELWG report.

Question about whether there are incentives for training – may need to look at teachers union. For DOE it was explained that they have inquired about incentive pay for teachers with special certification but it is not allowed. This is an overall problem that DOE is facing and not just this population needs more assistance. It is possible if, after getting prior authorization and registering for the class, they can get credit and after five classes there can be an increase in pay. It was clarified that it does not equate to certification and it's not synonymous with getting certified but this may be an avenue to explore. May also want to look at stipends available for people to take classes so need to have conversation with UH and see if funders would be interested in funding teacher educators so there is a larger pool to pull from. This way Hawaii can attract more from the local community who already understand the culture here. DOE would consider an MOA with UH teacher program to pay for tuition but UH says it is not feasible. DOE is looking at data on what teachers are certified and many are but they're not in teaching positions or not in the "right" position and they are trying to figure out what the best solution is. May need to look at early childhood education in the general education population as well as children with special needs.

Nikki mentioned that there is not just a educator shortage but also with interpreters. May want to look at how the Hawaiian language communities have been able to work together such as the Kaiola Foundation. May need to do more advocacy.

Coleen reminded that in looking at young children, may need to engage the

	<p>early childhood care and education programs like Family Child Interaction Learning Programs that work with children and families. Instead of just looking at it thru the special education lens, perhaps it should be looked through the early childhood lens.</p> <p>Darcie reminded that there used to be a teacher of the deaf program at UH in the early 2000s. KCC used to have a program in addition to interpreters, they trained educational assistants for the DOE to hire that could sign so there is a need for educational assistants that know ASL and able to use all communication needs, not just kids with hearing loss.</p> <p>May need to look at different pathways into the DOE so that there can be an increase in services with increased opportunities for people to come into the field.</p> <p>Dale reminded that Annie said that DOE approached UH about a deaf education program and that they could pay for tuition. What about if DOE gave the stipends to mainland college or to Gallaudet so that people who want to get certified in early childhood education or deaf education could do it on line and Ode could support them and they give back years of service to DOE. It wouldn't have to just be UH that could receive stipends.</p>	
<p><b>Resources for Parents</b></p>	<p>Nikki shared the concern that even with Newborn Hearing Screening, there is loss to follow up and sometimes parents do not enroll in Early Intervention services so that by the time they get to DOE, children are going to be farther behind. How do we get DOE positions to really service the three to five age group and not put a strain on teachers? How can we get to the younger children so it won't be harder for them when they get older? The report needs to emphasize the importance of language development and even if we're working towards it, we don't want it to just focus on accommodations for children when they're older. The importance of language to start off needs to be stressed which would also probably support DOE's needs.</p> <p>Carole shared her experiences at HSDB where kids come in at age seven who haven't accessed services and may just be discovering that they are deaf. There are a wide range of experiences and children may not be</p>	<p>Group may want to revisit public awareness and perhaps start with the HSDB to get those parents involved in ASL Day.</p> <p>Statewide parent involvement needs to be addressed.</p>

	<p>accessing EI services or even 3-5 services. Hard to control parent involvement. Perhaps there are ways to make it mandatory to let DOH know about newborn hearing screening and try looking for ways to be proactive and get parents and families involved as soon as possible.</p> <p>May need to look at developing a strategic plan to address the infrastructure needs. May need to also look at a way to help get more parents and families involved.</p>	
<b>Data</b>	DOH signed an agreement with DOE, DLIR, and Higher Education to include data from EIS into the longitudinal data system. But data is not specific to children who are D/HH/DB. Need to make sure each departments' data bases are able to track these children.	Ongoing task: creating systematic processes that allows efficient coding and data extraction
<b>Newborn Hearing Legislation</b>	DOH is also looking at legislation around Newborn Hearing statute revisions will make it mandatory for audiologist to send diagnostic information so children do not fall through the cracks. Most programs have been good about sharing information back to Newborn Hearing Screening but there have been some challenges with Tripler and individual small clinics.	
<b>Announcements</b>	December 13 <sup>th</sup> is the Deaf Santa at Pearlridge Mall from 8:00 – 12:00.	
<b>Next Meeting</b>	Group would like to hold regular meeting dates and with the use of zoom technology, more options may be available for participants.	<p>December 13, 2018</p> <p>Location should be at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind depending on availability.</p>

Submitted by: Keiko Nitta