



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

June 29, 2020

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 2543, H.D. 1, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING
Hearing Date: June 30, 2020
Time: 10:15 a.m.
Location: Auditorium

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Comments

Good morning. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).

Thank you for continuing to prioritize early learning despite the challenges the state has had to face with COVID-19.

Hawaii's early learning community has been working to increase access for decades, but has not had the resources and structures needed to achieve this goal. EOEL has been committed to increasing access while building the structures needed to make sure the State's investment reaps the intended returns – what the Legislature created us to do.

To drive this work and achieve the current Legislature's vision, we will draw upon the state and strategic plans, and expansion concepts, we've developed in collaboration with the early childhood community statewide. We will continue to partner and draw upon the wisdom of the past and present to make this happen.

We believe the Legislature's goal – our goal – is achievable if there are funds, resources, and policies to support and sustain it. It is achievable if we support our existing providers who are struggling in the face of COVID-19. It is achievable if we address our workforce challenges: if not for their passion, there would not be many who'd want to work and stay in this field with pay at levels lower than those of parking lot attendants and manicurists.

We also thank the Legislature for crafting a bill that:

- Works toward better information to inform policy and decision-making around early learning;

- Supports our private providers through DHS grants;
- Expands the Preschool Open Doors Program;
- Eliminates the early learning coordinator position which would have duplicated EOEL and Early Learning Board responsibilities;
- Supports expansion of the early learning system through Hawaiian language pathways for our children; and
- Considers alternative locations for early learning programs such as in the libraries. EOEL had previously discussed the possibility of establishing family-child interaction learning programs with the State Librarian and look forward to advancing this effort.

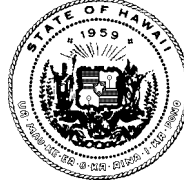
We also note the following concerns:

- POD provider accreditation.
 - We appreciate the consideration for the quality of the programs that our children participate in through the requirement that Preschool Open Doors providers be accredited, but recognize this may result in fewer children being served.
- DHS responsibilities regarding benchmarks for access to learning.
 - There seems to be some duplication/overlap with the new responsibilities assigned to DHS and the current responsibilities of EOEL and the Early Learning Board, our governing board that was created by the Legislature in 2017 to serve as the policymaking body for early learning in the State and is comprised of members across both the public and private sectors who have expertise and experience in various aspects of the early childhood field. We look forward to working with DHS to define responsibilities, and would be happy to work with the Legislature to clarify governance.
- DHS database for early learning information.
 - It would be less costly and more efficient if Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education were tasked with this responsibility. Hawaii P-20 has already been funded to develop, and has for years, pursuant to statute, been operating a statewide longitudinal data system that can fulfill this purpose with the proper structures in place to protect the privacy and confidentiality of students and their families. We understand it would need additional resources to assist with incorporating early learning information, but at a substantially lower cost than if a new database were to be created.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to expand access to high-quality early learning programs and services in the state and make its vision a reality. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

*Act 178, SLH 2012, established the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to be responsible for developing the State's early childhood system to ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout Hawai'i, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority for underserved or at-risk children.
Our work involves collaboration across both government and non-government sectors.*

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LATE

PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

June 27, 2020

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2543 HD1 SD1 - RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING**

Hearing: June 30, 2020, 10:15 a.m.
Auditorium, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill, suggests a technical amendment, and provides comments.

DHS appreciates the amendments of the House Committees on Lower and Higher Education and Finance as described in Standing Committee Report No. 961 and the amendments by the Senate Committee on Education as described in Standing Committee Report No. 3690.

Regarding implementation of this bill, DHS defers to the Department of Education and Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission as to Part II, the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) as to Parts II and IV, the Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) as to parts II and VI, and the University of Hawaii Hilo as to Part V.

PURPOSE: This bill requires parents or guardians of public school and charter school kindergarten students to disclose information on the student's prior child care program or prekindergarten attendance, if any, for the purpose of determining areas having the highest need for prekindergarten and child care programs. Requires assessment of

public school and charter school kindergarten students. Removes public charter school prekindergarten programs from the administrative authority of the Executive Office on Early Learning. Establishes the preschool open doors special fund. Expands Preschool Open Doors Program eligibility from 4-year-old children to all children who are 3- to 4-years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry. Requires annual reporting regarding the revenues and expenditures of the early learning special fund. Establishes a program for the Department of Human Services to award grants for preschools. Appropriates funds and authorizes positions for the Preschool Open Doors (POD) Program. Appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to expand its information technology system for the purpose of managing information on prekindergarten attendance and child care need and to contract for and operate preschool and child care programs. Establishes the Early Learning Coordinator position within the Office of the Governor. Establishes the goal of providing all children who are 3 to 4 years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry with enrollment in a preschool program by the year 2030 and assigns that responsibility to the Early Learning Coordinator. Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for building classrooms for Hawaiian language immersion pre-kindergarten programs. Appropriates funds for building early learning services classrooms on public library property. Appropriates funds. (HB2543 HD1 SD1)

DHS supports the need to increase the affordability, availability, and capacity of child care facilities for Hawai'i's families and children. Amongst other things, this proposed bill expands the eligibility of the State's POD program to serve 3-year-olds in addition to 4-year-olds, provides additional funding to DHS through the establishment of the preschool open doors special fund.

As we engage in the planning process to implement the proposed changes in this bill, we anticipate that we may need future legislation to achieve the legislature's intent. For example, requiring all preschools providing care for POD children to commence the process of becoming nationally accredited by July 1, 2022 and obtaining accreditation by July 1, 2027 may not result in more accredited facilities and may have the unintended result of reducing available seats for children and families participating in the POD program.

Other supports may be required to enable more providers to move towards accreditation as providers are currently modifying their business practices to address changes required by the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, additional funds will likely be needed to support DHS and EOEL in meeting the benchmarks under Section 11.

Additionally, DHS comments that the proposed changes under section 302D-C(d)(1) on page 7, lines 17-21, which provides that early learning programs and preschool programs at public charter schools are exempt from licensure by DHS per section 346-161, HRS. However, the proposed section 302D-C(d)(1) also requires that each public charter school early learning program and preschool program have a classroom and outdoor play area that meet the DHS requirements for health and safety for three- and four-year old children. DHS notes that the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission will be the entity to oversee the public charter schools to meet proposed section 302D-C(d)(1), pursuant to the proposed section 302-C(e) on page 12, lines 8-10.

DHS lastly suggests non-substantive **technical amendments** to the language relating to public charter schools at page 5, lines 14-17, to mirror the language at page 3, lines 11-13 for the Department of Education,

... shall disclose to the public charter school at which the child is enrolled the name of, and address of, and duration of attendance at the early learning program that the child attended during the previous academic year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LATE

DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 06/24/2020
Time: 03:00 PM
Location: 229
Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2543, HD1 RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING.

Purpose of Bill: Requires parents or guardians of public school and charter school kindergarten students to disclose information on the student's prior child care program or prekindergarten attendance, if any, for the purpose of determining areas having the highest need for prekindergarten and child care programs. Requires assessment of public school and charter school kindergarten students. Removes public charter school prekindergarten programs from the administrative authority of the Executive Office on Early Learning. Establishes the preschool open doors special fund. Expands Preschool Open Doors Program eligibility from 4-year-old children to all children who are 3- to 4-years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry. Requires annual reporting regarding the revenues and expenditures of the early learning special fund. Establishes a program for the Department of Human Services to award grants for preschools. Appropriates funds and authorizes positions for the Preschool Open Doors Program. Appropriates funds for the Department of Human Services to expand its information technology system for the purpose of managing information on prekindergarten attendance and child care need and to contract for and operate preschool and child care programs. Establishes the Early Learning Coordinator position within the Office of the Governor. Establishes the goal of providing all children who are 3 to 4 years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry with enrollment in a preschool program by the year 2030 and assigns that responsibility to the Early Learning Coordinator. Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for building classrooms for Hawaiian language immersion pre-kindergarten programs. Appropriates funds for building early learning services classrooms on public library property. Appropriates funds. (HB2543 HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2543, HD1, SD1 with comments. This measure aligns to the Department's mission to provide all of Hawaii's children with a quality public education that equips them to achieve success in their chosen educational journey. The Department appreciates the legislature's efforts to provide all of Hawaii's children who are three to four years of age with access to early learning by 2030 and supports its work to aggressively advance this objective to at least 50% of otherwise unserved children by 2025.

Article X of Hawaii's Constitution provides for "the establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools... and such other educational institutions as may be deemed desirable, including physical facilities[.]" As the largest provider of public education in the state, the Department's dedicated teachers, administrators, and state employees commit themselves daily to fulfilling this Constitutional mandate to provide this critical educational foundation for Hawaii's keiki.

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §302A-1128 currently places some responsibility for pre-Kindergarten education (pre-K) with the Department. The Department continues to provide Title I and special education components of pre-K education and remains committed to the expansion of pre-K throughout the state. The Department stands ready to collaborate with EOEL to design integrated preschool curriculum and classrooms to educate the whole child. In light of our ongoing partnership with EOEL and private entities like Kamehameha Schools to provide for statewide pre-K classrooms, the Department looks forward to employing its resources and expertise to effectively integrate pre-K components into our curriculum. Additionally, a critical component of ensuring the success of establishing pre-K programs is to provide the requisite facilities that house EOEL administrative offices and educational classrooms throughout the state, an obligation the Department is currently fulfilling.

The Department further acknowledges the unique diversity of our students and realizes that a one-size-fits-all approach to pre-K education will not meet the needs of all our students. To address this diversity of needs, the Department continues to capitalize and leverage the abundance of expertise through its personnel and partnerships to deliver a range of program options for all of our students. The importance of maintaining the highest levels of professionalism and competence amongst pre-K faculty and staff to ensure the delivery of excellent instruction and advancement towards achieving the benchmarks proposed in the measure cannot be overemphasized. It is imperative to maintain high standards and expectations of those entrusted with our students' futures at the inception of their educational journey.

The development of a student assessment model proposed in the measure is an apt first step in gauging a student's readiness upon entering kindergarten. Formulating an effective assessment tool will require reliance on the Department's capable faculty and staff at every stage of our tri-level structure - state, complex area, and school. The Department's proficiency in educational assessments will facilitate the adoption of a tool that will ensure the best possible footing for students entering kindergarten and increase the likelihood of attaining a successful educational experience. We also ask the committee to be mindful of the fact that the procurement of an effective assessment tool, competent data collection, and training for personnel administering this assessment and conducting this specific data collection will require additional financial resources to the Department.

This measure also includes reporting requirements between the Department and the Department of Human Services and proposed Early Learning Coordinator. Ensuring the

maintenance of privacy of our students as required by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a priority for the Department. The Department will employ its current policies, procedures, and standards as it relates to transmission of electronic data sets. These requirements will help us maintain the necessary safeguards to protect our students private information.

The Department appreciates the legislature's efforts to identify and prioritize regions where the need for pre-K programs and child care are most needed. Requiring the disclosure of the "name and address of the preschool or child care program that the child attended during the previous academic year" in Part II, Section 2, can potentially provide the requisite information and identify the regions with the highest needs. We would again ask the committee's consideration of the Department's need to maintain confidentiality of this type of student information, especially as it relates to the proposed transmission and sharing of data between various departments and agencies.

In further addressing the measure's data-sharing provisions, the Department would like to call attention to our need to modify existing forms and databases to meet these new requirements. This will include a combination of turning on out-of-the-box functionality, modifying current functionality, and developing customized new functionality. Currently, the Department has two information systems that we are working to consolidate, which has been a multi-year, multi-phase effort. Collaborating with the Department of Human Services and the proposed Early Learning Coordinator will be essential to determine the logistics of transmitting the requisite data. The Department would like to ask that the Legislature provide funding and positions to carry out the needed modification and expansion of the database infrastructure as outlined in HD1 of this measure.

Additionally, the Department predicts collecting data would require a combination of paper forms as well as digital forms to ensure equitable access for all and as such the Department would request a position and funding to help with the collection and input of said data. The Department would also like clarification of the timeline for data transmittal to the Department of Human Services and the proposed Early Learning Coordinator as we are again expecting a multi-phase effort needed in order to implement an effective data-sharing system.

Furthermore, when discussing data collection, the Department would like clarification on its responsibilities in regards to charter schools. We respectfully request that we be responsible for providing data for Department public schools and would defer to the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission in regards to data from public charter schools.

The Department is committed to providing the delivery of a quality public education from pre-K through high school for all of Hawaii's children. We are also focused on ensuring equitable access for our vulnerable and underserved students. This measure is an important step in establishing the vital foundation that is necessary for a whole child approach to education. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2543, HD1, SD1.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



Hawaii
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB2543 HD1 SD1- Relating to access to learning
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 229
2:45 PM, 3/11/2020

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!, I write in support of HB 2543 HD1 SD1.

Between the beginning of January and today, our state has gone through tremendous change and we appreciate the continued focus on early education. Expanding access is incredibly important for children, their families, and the economy. The bill's primary intention is to increase access to preschool for three and four year olds. To that goal, the bill revises the state's Preschool Open Doors (POD) program. In the most recent draft, a provider receiving a POD subsidy would need to be accredited or pursue accreditation. Because POD is a subsidy for child care and is administered by the Department of Human Services the department does not have the authority to require educational accreditation. Although the bill would allow additional accreditation programs, it remains to be seen if there are other accreditations that are viable. Currently, of the children receiving POD, only about a third attend an accredited program. Accreditation without assistance may mean we lose preschools that can accept POD.

The current POD program is a tiered system that gives a higher subsidy for an accredited program. We encourage this committee to consider maintaining the tiered POD system, make accreditation voluntary, and keep the supports offered in section 7, page 23 subsection (d) to encourage programs gain accreditation without risking a loss in programs and seats accepting POD.

We appreciate the bold vision and the partnership between all stakeholders this year and the years to come. It will take all of us working together to succeed in getting every 3 and 4 year old access to learning.

For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.



TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, June 30, 2020, 10:15 a.m.

State Capitol, Auditorium

**TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2543 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

I am Peter Ho, Chairman, President and CEO of Bank of Hawaii, and appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in support of HB2543 HD1 SD1 relating to access to learning. The purpose and intent of this measure is to build the foundation to provide access to learning by the year 2030 to all children three to four years of age and children who will be eligible for kindergarten within two years with an ultimate goal of providing all of the children in that age group with access to learning by the year 2030.

Over the years, studies have consistently shown that participating in early learning opportunities leads to personal development and academic and career success. However, more than half of Hawaii's three- and four-year olds are not able to take advantage of early learning opportunities, in large part due to high costs and/or lack of convenient options.

As part of the legislature's initial 2020 joint legislative package, this represents a key element and innovative approach to support Hawaii's underserved families. As an employer of more than 2,000 employees across our state, we recognize the seriousness and urgency in addressing this pressing economic and social need.

I respectfully encourage your favorable consideration in advancing this measure. Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peter Ho'.

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Committee Chair Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Committee Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran

Date: June 30, 2020

RE: **Support for HB 2543; Relating to Early Learning**

The Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. With comments, ECAS strongly supports the bold vision of HB 2543.

We are tremendously grateful to the legislature for continuing to recognize the importance of increasing access of early learning and child care opportunities for both keiki and 'ohana. Early learning opportunities provide foundational support keiki need to be successful in future years of schooling and well into adulthood. In addition, child care and early learning programs help benefit working families and have been linked with lower employee absenteeism and higher rates of productivity in the workplace. The reality however, is that many families who want to enroll their keiki into an early learning program often face difficulty due to the high cost of care and lack of availability.

Currently, there are over 1400 4-year-olds that are serviced by non-accredited programs, compared to roughly 480 in accredited centers. We appreciate the legislature's provisions intended to enhance quality across the sector. Many programs may face barriers in achieving accreditation and as such, we appreciate the inclusion of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System as an alternative to accreditation. We recommend the legislature also consider the inclusion of other key quality measures such as ERS (ECERs, FCCERS, and ITERS-3), PAS/BAS etc. to ensure keiki have equitable access to more programs. In addition, POD is currently a tiered subsidy program that provides increased funding to accredited programs as a method to incentivize quality--considerations to keep the tiered system in tact, while maintaining the additional supports to accreditation mentioned in the existing bill, may aid in achieving access and quality goals.

We appreciate the legislature's efforts to improve access to child care and early learning programs. High quality early learning opportunities are a public good—it contributes to stronger families, greater economic benefits, and thriving communities. In a survey conducted with 800 Hawai'i voters in June of 2020, 77.9% of respondents supported creating a system of high-quality, publicly-funded, community-based child care and early learning programs. We respectfully urge the committee to support HB 2543 HD 1 SD 1. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Time: 10:15 AM
Date: June 30, 2020
Where: Auditorium

TESTIMONY

By Jack Wong, CEO

RE: **HB 2543, HD1, SD1, Relating to Access to Learning**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalu Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalu Keith-Agaran, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa‘a a me nā Ho‘olilo o ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, aloha! My name is Jack Wong and I serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Kamehameha Schools.

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS** HB 2543, HD1, SD1.

Collectively, we know that early education is important:

- There is no debate. We know from the research, which has shown time and again that early learning is critical for brain development, life and family success, and community well-being. And, we know it from our hearts – if we can find a way, we send our own keiki to an early learning program.
- Because our state’s current private and public early learning system is dominated by private providers and tuition-based programs, families are all too often required to dip into strained household budgets or work to find financial aid. Now, in light of the pandemic, that may not even be possible with Hawai‘i’s high rate of unemployment and an unstable economy.
- At the same time, there has never been a greater need. There was already a shortage of preschool seats (1 seat for every 2 keiki) and hardly any public seats (2.3% of 4-year olds; <1% of 3-year olds), and the cost of private seats is prohibitive for many (avg. \$9,600/yr). Nearly half of all 3- and 4-year-olds do not attend preschool, or 16,500 keiki. We can all expect that number to rise.
- This bill represents a real and meaningful plan to fix this egregious inequity.

For these reasons, we eagerly support HB 2543, HD1, SD1. This is landmark legislation, that has been diligently drafted with the collaboration and hearts of many in the community alongside the leaders of our legislature.

At Kamehameha Schools, we believe in early learning education for all Native Hawaiian keiki. Every year, we educate 1,600 keiki at our 29 preschools (with 79% of our keiki on financial aid); provide scholarships to another 2,400 keiki at other private preschools; and support another 4,800 keiki through partnerships with public and private preschools, family-child interaction learning centers and other early learning programs. In sum, every year, we spend \$50 million in our communities to assist over 8,800 keiki to start their journey.

Despite our efforts and the efforts of others, there are still many keiki who do not get a fair start. This bill represents a pivotal step, one that requires investment and a steadfast commitment to the future.

We humbly appreciate the opportunity to support HB 2543, HD1, SD1.



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov
June 30, 2020

LATE

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Andrea Alexander
Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta
Ms. Virginia Beringer
Ms. Mary Brogan
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman
Ms. Annette Cooper
Mr. Mark Disher
Dr. Kurt Humphrey
Ms. Tina King
Ms. Bernadette Lane
Ms. Cheryl Matthews
Ms. Kaili Murbach
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto
Ms. Kau'i Rezentos
Ms. Rosie Rowe
Dr. David Royer
Mr. James Street
Mr. Francis Taele
Mr. Steven Vannatta
Ms. Lisa Vegas
Ms. Jasmine Williams
Ms. Susan Wood

Ms. Annie Kalama, *liaison to
the Superintendent*
Dr. Bob Campbell, *liaison to
the military community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 2543, HD1, SD1

Dear Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee,

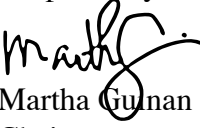
The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **supports the intent** of HB 2543, HD 1, SD 1 which helps to advance the availability and quality of pre-kindergarten programs for children in Hawaii, including children with disabilities.

SEAC has been a proponent of universal preschool for more than two decades, so we are appreciative of the components of this bill that help to expand pre-kindergarten options, particularly for three year olds, an age-group that has not been given priority for funding over the last few years. We also agree on the necessity of educational standards for pre-kindergarten and quality assessments to measure progress and provide accountability.

Finally, we are encouraged that the bill contains language for the inclusion of natural proportions of children with disabilities in charter school pre-kindergarten programs. Hawaii's children with disabilities are served in segregated settings far more than their Mainland counterparts, due in large part to the lack of inclusive pre-kindergarten programs, either public or private.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important legislation.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair



Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair



LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 10:15am

by
Stephen Schatz
Executive Director, P-20 Partnership for Education

HB 2543 HD1 SD1– RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2543 HD1 SD1. Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education supports HB2543 HD1 SD1 with suggested revisions. Providing more seats for childcare through the Pre-School Open Doors Program as well as more pre-school classrooms through the Executive Office of Early Learning will provide the kind of support our students need to prepare for kindergarten. EOEL’s public pre-school classrooms have demonstrated success, and we should continue to support and accelerate the growth of pre-school opportunities throughout the state, especially where these opportunities are lacking for children and families.

HB2543 HD1 SD1 would also provide resources and require data sharing among the agencies involved in providing services for young children, to best inform effective and efficient policy development and implementation, as called for in HRS Section 27-7. As the managing entity of Hawaii’s Data Exchange Partnership (DXP), a collective and collaborative effort among state agencies, Hawaii P-20 Partnership has the responsibility of managing data sharing and data governance among the agencies who participate in the DXP. Hawaii P-20 stands ready to assist in the build-out of new data sharing infrastructure, governance, and analysis related to pre-school students who are the focus of HB2543 HD1 SD1. We have attached some suggested revisions to the current version of the bill that would enable Hawaii P-20 to manage this effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

PART I. INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to:

(1)

Expand the capacity, resources, affordability, and flexibility of childcare facilities licensed by the department of human services to significantly increase affordable and accessible childcare choices for Hawaii's families, especially those in financial need and in lesser-served areas of the State;

(2) Expand the capacity, early learning, and availability of public pre-kindergarten;

(3) Offset the cost of living for Hawaii families by subsidizing both childcare and preschool;

(4) Clarify the coordination of the continuum of early learning and preschool programs throughout the State; and

(5) Augment the statewide longitudinal data system to include early learning and child care data to help determine the levels of prekindergarten attendance and need for child care in geographic regions of the State; identify the highest priority regions requiring prekindergarten programs and child care to meet the needs of unserved or underserved eligible children; and assess the longitudinal outcomes of students who attended prekindergarten or were provided with early childhood services; and

~~(56)~~ Build the infrastructure and develop the resources necessary to achieve the objective of providing the capacity to serve fifty per cent of all otherwise unserved children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, with access to learning by the year 2027, and providing the capacity to serve

one hundred per cent of those children within the same age group with access to learning by the year 2032.

This Act is part of the State's early childhood plan to increase access to child care and early learning opportunities for children in the State.

PART II. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding two new sections to subpart C of part IV to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§302A-A Standardized assessment for students entering kindergarten. (a) The board of education shall adopt a student assessment model pursuant to section 302A-1101(a) to assess all students entering kindergarten.

(b) Within the first thirty days of each school year, the department shall assess all kindergarten students with the student assessment model; provided that any assessment administered pursuant to this subsection shall be conducted in either English or Hawaiian.

(c) The department shall share the information gathered pursuant to this section with the department of human services, executive office on early learning, ~~and~~ public charter school commission, and the statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with section 27-7, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by administrative rule or law.

§302A-B Prior early learning programs attendance disclosure. (a) At least one parent or guardian of each child entering kindergarten shall disclose to the department the name of, address of, and duration of attendance at the early learning program that the child attended during the previous academic year. The department may also require the disclosure of any other information not otherwise prohibited by law that would assist the department, the department of human services, and the executive office on early learning in developing, assessing, and implementing strategies to meet the early learning needs of children in the State. The department and the executive office on early learning shall use the information to assist the executive office on early learning and department of human services in determining the levels of prekindergarten attendance and need for child care in geographic regions of the State and identify the highest priority regions requiring prekindergarten programs and child care to meet the needs of unserved or underserved eligible children.

(b) The department may include a request for the information required by subsection (a) on a kindergarten enrollment form or any other appropriate form.

(c) The department shall share the information gathered pursuant to this section with the department of human services, executive office on early learning, ~~and~~ public charter school commission, and the statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with section 27-7, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by administrative rule or law."

SECTION 3. Chapter 302D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding three new sections to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

§302D-A Standardized assessment for students entering kindergarten. (a) The state public charter school commission shall adopt a student assessment model pursuant to section 302A-1101(a) to assess all charter school students entering kindergarten.

(b) Within the first thirty days of each school year, the state public charter school commission shall ensure that all charter school kindergarten students are assessed by public charter schools with the student assessment model; provided that any assessment administered pursuant to this subsection shall be conducted in either English or Hawaiian.

(c) The department shall share the information gathered pursuant to this section with the department of human services, executive office on early learning, ~~and~~ public charter school commission, and the statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with section 27-7, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by administrative rule or law."

§302D-B Prior early learning programs attendance disclosure. (a) At least one parent or guardian of each child entering kindergarten shall disclose to the public charter school at which the child is enrolled the name and address of the early learning program that the child attended during the previous academic year. Each public charter school shall provide the information disclosed pursuant to this section to the state public charter school commission. The state public charter school commission may also require the disclosure of any other information not otherwise prohibited by law that would assist the department, the department of human services, and the executive office on early learning in developing, assessing, and implementing strategies to meet the early learning needs of children in the State. The state public charter school commission and the executive office on early learning shall use the information to assist the department of human services and executive office on early learning in determining the levels of prekindergarten attendance and need for child care in geographic regions of the State and identify the highest priority regions requiring prekindergarten programs and child care to meet the needs of unserved or underserved eligible children and shall provide the information to the department of human services.

(b) The state public charter school commission may include a request for the information required by subsection (a) on a kindergarten enrollment form or any other appropriate form used at all public charter schools.

(c) The state public charter school commission shall share the information gathered from public charter schools pursuant to this section with the department of education, department of human services, ~~and~~ executive office on early learning, and the statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with section 27-7, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by administrative rule or law.

§302D-C Public early learning and preschool programs; administrative authority. (a) The state public charter school commission shall have administrative authority over all state-

funded early learning programs and private partnership-funded preschool programs in public charter schools except for special education and Title I-funded prekindergarten programs.

(b) The early learning programs in charter schools shall enroll no more than a maximum of twenty children per classroom who are three- or four-years-old on or before July 31 of the school year, as aligned with the department of education kindergarten age entry requirements.

(c) Subject to the availability of funding, the state public charter school commission shall implement an application process for schools to establish an early learning program.

(d) Each early learning program and preschool program shall meet the following requirements:

(1) The availability of a classroom and outdoor play area that meet department of human services requirements for the health and safety of three- and four-year-old children and is exempt from section 346-161 as a public preschool provider;

(2) The commitment of the principal to implementing an early learning program, including through active participation in professional development sessions offered through the state public charter school commission, and promoting continuity and alignment between and across other early learning programs in the community and other grade levels in the school to ensure the positive outcomes of children are sustained;

(3) The inclusion of students with disabilities based on individualized education program placement; provided that:

(A) The in-classroom ratio of students with disabilities shall be based on the inclusion of children with disabilities in proportion to the general population of the school;

(B) Subparagraph (A) does not anticipate or permit imposing caps or quotas on the number of children with disabilities in a program or not individualizing services for children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., as amended);

(C) The department of education shall collaborate with the charter school to coordinate services for students with disabilities who are placed in the classroom offered through the program; and

(D) Funding for all costs associated with the implementation of the individualized education program of students shall be provided through the department of education;

(4) Enrollment in the program shall be free and voluntary;

(5) The enrollment shall not exceed twenty children per classroom;

(6) The incorporation of standards that are research-based and developmentally-appropriate practices associated with improved educational outcomes for children, such as:

(A) Positive teacher-child interactions that shall be evaluated through observations conducted by the state public charter school commission using a research-based tool at least twice a year, for the purposes of professional development; provided that the observations shall not be used for the purposes of teacher evaluation;

(B) The early learning environment shall be assessed using a tool that measures its effectiveness and shall be conducted at least two times per school year by a certified observer who is employed or contracted by the state public charter school commission; provided that the teaching staff shall use the assessment data and feedback to improve the quality of the learning environment; provided further that observations shall be used for the purposes of professional development and shall not be used for the purposes of teacher evaluation;

(C) Use of individual child formative assessments that are used for ongoing planning relating to all areas of child development and learning including cognitive, linguistic, social emotional approaches to learning, and health and physical development;

(D) Family engagement in partnership with charter schools, including conducting outreach for enrollment and engagement of families in their children's education in recognition of families' role as their child's first and most important teacher;

(E) Alignment with the Hawaii early learning and development standards, department of education standards, state content and performance standards, and general learner outcomes for grades kindergarten to twelve to facilitate a seamless educational experience for children;

(F) Requirements that any teacher shall have coursework in early childhood education pursuant to Hawaii teacher standards board licensing requirements for a prekindergarten teacher or be enrolled in a state-approved teacher education program and be working toward satisfying the Hawaii teacher standards board licensing requirements; and

(G) Requirements that any educational assistant has a current child development associate credential, coursework for a certificate that meets the requirements for child development associate credential preparation, or be enrolled in and working toward completing a program that prepares the individual to obtain the credential.

(e) The state public charter school commission shall monitor the implementation of the educational experience for children.

(f) The state public charter school commission shall provide support to incorporate the standards developed pursuant to subsection (d), including support related to teacher-child interactions, early childhood learning environment, individual child assessments, and family engagement.

(g) Teaching staff participating in a program established pursuant to this section shall participate in coaching and mentoring and professional development opportunities offered through the state public charter school commission; provided that the commission shall cover the associated travel and substitute teacher costs, contingent upon funding availability. The commission may extend this support, excluding travel and substitute teacher costs, to individuals who are not participating in the program to promote alignment between all grade levels, programs, and settings.

(h) School leaders shall attend professional development sessions related to P-3 (preschool to grade three) alignment offered through the state public charter school commission, as provided by the commission. The commission shall cover the costs associated with travel and substitute teacher expenditures, contingent upon the availability of funding. The commission may extend this support, excluding travel and substitute teacher costs, to individuals who are not participating in the program to promote alignment between all grade levels, programs, and settings.

(i) The state public charter school commission shall work with each charter school to develop and annually update a written three-year plan that promotes, within the school and community, alignment of and transitions between learning experiences, and report on the progress made toward the plan by the end of the school year.

(j) The state public charter school commission shall coordinate with other agencies and programs to facilitate comprehensive services for early learning.

(k) The state public charter school commission shall promote the development of a cohesive, comprehensive, and sustainable early learning system. The commission shall coordinate with other early learning providers, including those providing the programs and services, to promote alignment between prekindergarten and elementary school programs and to support children and their families in making successful transitions from prekindergarten into kindergarten.

(l) The state public charter school commission shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 for the purpose of this section.

(m) The state public charter school commission shall submit a report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session regarding state-funded early learning programs in charter schools. The report shall include, as related to each type of program:

- (1) The number and location of classrooms;
- (2) Sources of funding for each classroom;
- (3) Aggregated data reflecting the quality of teacher-child interactions relating to emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support;

(4) Aggregated data reflecting the quality of the early learning environment and the teacher-child interactions that maximize the learning opportunities of the environment; and

(5) Aggregated student outcomes related to all areas of child development and learning, including cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional approaches to learning and health and physical development, as assessed using a formative assessment tool selected or approved by the state public charter school commission.

This reported data shall be compiled from the previously state-funded school year."

SECTION 4. Section 302L-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§302L-5 Early learning [~~trust fund,~~] special fund. (a) There is established within the state treasury the early learning [~~trust fund,~~] special fund, to be administered by the executive office on early learning, into which shall be deposited all moneys received by the office in the form of:

- (1) Fees;
- (2) Grants;
- (3) Donations;
- (4) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund; and
- (5) Revenues regardless of their source,

and earnings on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund shall be used for the early learning system. Expenditures from the fund may be made by the office without appropriation or allotment.

(b) The office shall submit an annual report to the legislature, no later than August 31, on the sources of moneys deposited into the fund and expenditures of the moneys in the fund."

SECTION 5. Section 302L-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended as follows:

1. By amending subsection (a) to read:

"(a) There is established within the early learning system an early childhood education program to be known as the executive office on early learning public prekindergarten program and to be administered by the office pursuant to rules adopted by the office. The program shall:

(1) Be provided through the executive office on early learning, which shall partner with the department of education [~~and state public charter school commission~~] through either a memorandum of agreement or memorandum of understanding pursuant to the requirements of this section;

(2) Prepare children for school and active participation in society through the use of either of the State's two official languages; and

(3) Provide access to high-quality early learning that addresses children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development."

2. By amending subsections (o) and (p) to read:

"(o) The office shall collect data with assistance from the department of education [~~and state public charter school commission~~], based on a schedule to be determined by the office, to:

(1) Evaluate the services provided;

(2) Inform policy; and

(3) Make any improvements to the program.

(p) The department of education [~~and any public charter school existing pursuant to chapter 302D,~~] may use available classrooms for public preschool programs statewide. [~~The office shall give priority to public charter schools that serve high populations of underserved or at-risk children.~~] Preschool classrooms established pursuant to this section shall be in addition to any classrooms used for the pre-plus program established pursuant to section 302L-1.7."

SECTION 6. Section 312-2.1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

"~~[(d)]~~ The state librarian shall collect, purchase, receive gifts of, and otherwise acquire all books and other publications proper for libraries, and arrange, classify, and catalog the same; provide for their safekeeping; expend moneys appropriated by the legislature and otherwise acquired for the development, use, support, and maintenance of libraries~~;~~ and other related purposes; provide ways and means for placing libraries within reach of all residents throughout the State and particularly of all public and private school children; provide and maintain branch libraries, offices, or places for the distribution of books and periodicals throughout the State; enter into contracts as may be necessary to carry into effect the general duties herein imposed; appoint such officers and employees as deemed necessary, all of whom shall be under the authority of the governor for purposes of chapters 76, 78, 89, and 89C; and adopt rules for the management and use of libraries, and for the control of the property under its management."

PART III. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

SECTION 7. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding four new sections to subpart D of part VIII to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§346- Preschool open doors special fund. (a) There is established within the state treasury the preschool open doors special fund, to be administered by the department's child care

assistance program, into which shall be deposited all moneys received by the department's child care assistance program in the form of:

- (1) Fees;
- (2) Grants;
- (3) Donations;
- (4) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund; and
- (5) Revenues regardless of their source,

and earnings on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund shall be used for the procurement of health and human services under the preschool open doors program. Expenditures from the fund may be made by the department without appropriation or allotment but shall not be made for capital improvement projects.

(b) The department shall submit an annual report to the legislature, no later than August 31, on the sources of moneys deposited into the fund and expenditures of moneys in the fund.

§346- Preschool grant program special fund; established. (a) There is established within the state treasury the preschool grant program special fund, to be administered by the department, into which shall be deposited:

- (1) Donations to the fund;
- (2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund;
- (3) Revenues regardless of their source; and
- (4) Earnings on moneys in the fund.

(b) The department shall expend moneys in the special fund to award funds to private entities for the operating costs of new preschools or expansion of existing preschools at the private entity's place of business.

(c) Expenditures from the fund may be made by the department without appropriation or allotment.

(d) Any grant awarded pursuant to this section or expenditure of funds for the administration of the preschool open doors program shall be exempt from chapters 103D and 103F. The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 to effectuate the grant program.

(e) The department shall submit an annual report to the legislature, no later than August 31, on the sources of moneys deposited into the fund and expenditures of moneys in the fund.

§346- Preschool open doors program; provider accreditation. (a) Each service provider of the preschool open doors program shall be accredited or shall obtain accreditation within seven calendar years of first receiving any funds from the preschool open doors program; provided that any existing service provider unaccredited on July 1, 2020, shall commence the accreditation process no later than July 1, 2022, and obtain accreditation by July 1, 2027; provided further that the director may grant to any service provider one or more extensions to obtain accreditation on a case by case basis.

(b) Accreditation under this section shall be obtained from one or more of the following national early learning accrediting organizations:

- (1) National Association for the Education of Young Children;
- (2) National Early Childhood Program Accreditation;
- (3) National Association of Family Child Care; or
- (4) An accrediting organization approved by the director; provided that the accrediting organization is comparable to the organizations specified in paragraphs (1) through (3).

(c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), a service provider may receive or continue to receive funding through the preschool open doors program if the service provider maintains a satisfactory performance rating under the Classroom Assessment Scoring System developed by the University of Virginia and performed in conformance with United States Department of Health and Human Services guidelines.

(d) The department shall provide operational and financial support to service providers to assist the service providers in obtaining accreditation. The department may contract with a private entity to assist service providers in obtaining accreditation.

§346- Preschool open doors; procurement exemption. Effective July 1, 2020, any expenditure of funds by the department to implement, operate, or expand the preschool open doors program may be made without regard to chapters 103D and 103F."

SECTION 8. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part VIII to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§346- Prior early learning program information. (a) The department shall establish or augment an existing database to collect and analyze information it receives from the department of education pursuant to sections 302A-A, and 302A-B and the state public charter school commission pursuant to sections 302D-A and 302D-B and any other information the department may collect on all children in the State who are three to four years old and children who will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year.

(ab) To the extent not prohibited by administrative rule or law, the department, department of education, public charter school commission, and executive office on early learning shall share any information gathered pursuant to 302A-A, 302A-B, 302D-A, 302D-B, with each other along with any other information the department, department of education, or public charter school commission may collect on all children in the State who are three to four years old and children who will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, with each other and the statewide longitudinal data system in accordance with section 27-7.

(be) Any procurement executed pursuant to this section shall be exempt from chapters 103D and 103F."

SECTION 9. Section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsections (b) and (c) to read as follows:

"(b) Subject to the availability of funds, the program shall serve three- and four-year-old children~~;~~ who are in the two years prior to kindergarten entry pursuant to section 302A-411, with priority extended ~~[to:]~~ in the following order to any:

~~[(1) Children who are not eligible to attend public school kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn five years of age because their birth date occurs after the kindergarten eligibility date pursuant to section 302A-411; and~~

~~(2)~~ (1) Underserved or at-risk ~~[children,]~~ four-year-old child who was previously served as a three-year old child, as defined by rules adopted by the department~~[-];~~

(2) Four-year-old child who was previously served as a three-year-old child;

(3) Four-year-old child;

(4) Underserved or at-risk three-year-old child, as defined by rules adopted by the department; and

(5) Three-year-old child.

(c) Enrollment in the program shall be voluntary. A parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the program ~~[shall]~~ may share in the costs of the program through a copayment according to a sliding fee scale that is based on need pursuant to rules adopted by the department."

SECTION 10. There is appropriated out of the _____ special fund the sum of \$ _____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for twelve permanent full-time (12.0 FTE) positions for the preschool open doors program.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of human services for the purposes of this Act.

PART IV. OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SECTION 11. Chapter 26, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"PART . EARLY LEARNING

§26- Benchmarks; Duties. (a) The department of human services and the executive office on early learning shall ensure access to learning through preschool programs that meet or exceed the following benchmarks:

(1) Fifty per cent of all otherwise unserved children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, shall have access to enrollment in a preschool program by December 31, 2027; and

(2) One hundred per cent of all children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, shall have access to enrollment in a preschool program by December 31, 2032.

The department of human services and the executive office on early learning shall submit an annual report to the legislature, no later than August 31 of each year, on the progress toward achieving the benchmarks until all children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, are enrolled in a preschool program.

(b) The department of human services and the executive office on early learning shall collaborate to identify the need for child care and early learning in geographic regions of the State and consider using public facilities including schools, libraries, and the university of Hawaii system as locations for child care and early learning programs.

(c) The department of human services may create programs and private sector delivery systems that can pose the essential information and policy questions, monitor the progress of the implementation of this part, and generate timely detailed reports to the extent allowable by law.

(d) The department of human services shall facilitate and support data sharing among public and private entities to the extent not otherwise prohibited by law or rule."

SECTION 12. Section 27-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[§27-7] Departmental data sharing. (a) The department of education, the University of Hawaii, the department of labor and industrial relations, and other state agencies, as appropriate, shall share individual-level data for the statewide longitudinal data system to support research and evaluation that will improve the educational and workforce outcomes for the state of Hawaii and meet the longitudinal data requirements of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, as amended. The data to be shared shall be determined jointly by the department of education, the University of Hawaii, the department of labor and

industrial relations, and other state agencies, as appropriate, and shall be shared no less than annually.

(b) The department of education, the University of Hawaii, the department of labor and industrial relations, and other state agencies, as appropriate, shall share data in a manner that safeguards the confidentiality of student education records, as defined by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and workforce data, as provided by applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations.

(c) The statewide longitudinal data system shall store and analyze early childhood data it receives from the department of education pursuant to sections 302A-A, and 302A-B, the state public charter school commission pursuant to sections 302D-A and 302D-B, and the department of human services on children in the State who are three to four years old and children who will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year to determine the cross-agency longitudinal outcomes of children who attended prekindergarten and were provided with early childhood services pursuant to section 346. Data to be shared shall be determined jointly by the relevant agency(ies) and shall be shared no less than annually.

All data shared by or with the department of human services, department of education, public charter school authorizers, public charter schools, executive office on early learning, and other entities as required by statute shall be subject to any administrative rule regarding privacy adopted by the department or agency that collected the data.

~~(e)~~ (d) The department of education, the University of Hawaii, the department of labor and industrial relations, and other state agencies, as appropriate, shall establish a data governance and access committee that meets on a quarterly basis to determine protocols to:

(1) Prioritize analyses and research questions that will provide information to improve educational and workforce outcomes and policies; and

(2) Approve requests for access to data provided by the department of education, the University of Hawaii, the department of labor and industrial ~~[[~~relations~~]]~~, and other state agencies, as appropriate.

~~(d)~~ (e) All state agency directors shall consider sharing data for the statewide longitudinal data system."

PART V. HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION

SECTION 13. There is appropriated out of the early learning special fund the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for deposit into a special fund for the purpose of assisting Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani, in partnership with the Imiloa astronomy center and other public or private partners as appropriate or required by law, to build two or more classrooms for Hawaiian language medium pre-kindergarten programs that shall be used to establish a pathway for the development of other Hawaiian language medium pre-kindergarten and Hawaiian language immersion classes.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of Hawaii at Hilo for the purposes of this Act.

PART VI. LIBRARIES

SECTION 14. Chapter 312, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§312- Early learning classrooms and services on public library property; authorized. (a) The Hawaii state public library system, in consultation and partnership with the department of human services or the executive office on early learning, may establish new early learning classrooms and contract for early learning services licensed by the department of human services or authorized by the executive office on early learning at any library under the jurisdiction of the Hawaii state public library system; provided that:

(1) The entity with which the Hawaii state public library system partners to establish a new early learning classroom shall be the same entity responsible for the oversight of that early learning classroom; and

(2) The oversight of that early learning classroom shall be conducted pursuant to administrative rules adopted by that entity.

(b) The planning, constructing, equipping, and operating of new early learning classrooms and the contracting of early learning services shall not be subject to chapters 103D or 103F."

PART VII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 15. In codifying the new sections added by sections 2 and 3 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating the new sections in this Act.

SECTION 16. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 17. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024; provided that:

(1) Sections 5, 10, 18, 11, 13, and 14 shall take effect upon approval of this Act; and

(2) Sections 2 and 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2022; except that new Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 302D-C as set forth in Section 3 of this Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Report Title:

DHS; DOE; Preschool Open Doors Program; Executive Office on Early Learning; Appropriation

Description:

Requires parents or guardians of public school and charter school kindergarten students to disclose information on the student's prior child care program or prekindergarten attendance, if any, for the purpose of determining areas having the highest need for prekindergarten and child care programs. Requires assessment of public school and charter school kindergarten students. Removes public charter school prekindergarten programs from the administrative authority of the Executive Office on Early Learning. Establishes that the state public charter school commission has administrative authority over all state-funded early learning programs in public charter schools. Establishes the preschool open doors special fund. Expands Preschool Open Doors Program eligibility from 4-year-old children to all children who are 3 to 4 years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry. Requires annual reporting regarding the revenues and expenditures of the early learning special fund. Establishes a program for DHS to award grants for preschools. Appropriates funds and authorizes positions for the Preschool Open Doors Program ~~and to contract for and operate preschools and child care programs~~. Appropriates funds for the ~~Department of Human Services statewide longitudinal data system to be expanded its information technology system~~ for the purpose of managing information on prekindergarten attendance, ~~and~~ child care need, ~~and longitudinal outcomes of students who received early childhood services. and to contract for and operate preschool and child care programs.~~ Establishes the goal of providing all children who are 3 to 4 years old who are in the 2 years prior to kindergarten entry with enrollment in a preschool program by the year 2030. Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for building classrooms for Hawaiian language immersion pre-kindergarten programs. Establishes an early education scholarship program. Appropriates funds for building early learning services classrooms on public library property. (SD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

LATE



PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION

June 26, 2020

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Hearing on Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 10:15 a.m., Auditorium
Regarding HB 2543, HD1, SD1 "A Bill for an Act Relating to Access To Learning"

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I ask that you **strongly support HB 2543, HD1, SD1** to support access to early learning programs in preparation for kindergarten and future school success.

Since 1997 Partners in Development Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity has served over 110,000 of at-risk children and families through its nine programs across the state. PIDF has invested heavily in early learning support through its three major family child interaction learning programs Ka Pa'alana Homeless Family Education, Tūtū and Me Traveling Preschool and Nā Pono No Nā 'Ohana Family Education since 2001 impacting thousands of 0-5 year olds and their caregivers in order to equip these children and families for school success.

The most recent data collected by the State of Hawai'i Department of Education (2013-2014) revealed that **only 10.7%** of children entering kindergarten displayed the skills and characteristics necessary for success in school life. Even more importantly now given the educational disruptions caused by COVID-19, this bill will help to provide the many services for those most needy to positively impact our state. **Therefore, I humbly and strongly ask that you support HB 2543.**

Me ke aloha,

Shawn M. Kana'iaupuni, PhD
President and CEO

Serving Hawai'i's Families, Living Hawaiian Values

LATE

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

SUBJECT: **Measure:** HB No. 2543, H.D. , S.D. 1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING
Hearing Date: June 30, 2020
Time: 10:15 am.
Location: Auditorium

EARLY LEARNING BOARD’S POSITION: Support the Intent and Comments

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of the Early Learning Board (ELB) in support of the purpose and intent of H.B. No. 2543, H.D. 1, S. D. 1 with comments. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the ELB.

The ELB is the governing board for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and policy-making entity for the State early learning system. The Board appreciates the support given by the Legislature in the past 5 years to expand public pre-K and develop the EOEL infrastructure as it works to develop a State Early Learning System. The ELB anticipates working with the Legislature to expand access to, and affordability of safe, healthy early learning environments that maximize quality early learning experiences as part of this effort.

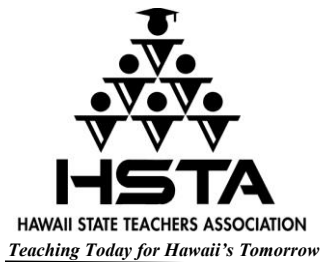
The ELB recognizes the urgency of achieving the goals of this legislation if we are to create equitable access to quality early learning experiences for our keiki and realize the benefits attributed to early learning as a pathway to school and life success. We wish to optimize the chances of successfully achieving that goal and, at the same time, to do so in the most efficient fashion building upon what already exists while addressing the infrastructure and resource needs to provide access to underserved members of our communities. It is achievable if we support our existing providers who are struggling in the face of COVID-19. And, it is achievable if we address our workforce capacity challenges; if not for the passion of a dedicated workforce, there would not be many who would want to work and stay in the early childhood field given the challenging pay levels. At the same time, the ELB appreciates the impact of the cost of childcare for families and the need to provide supports to offset those costs for our struggling families.

The ELB thanks the Legislature for designing a bill that,

- Works toward better information to inform policy and decision-making around early learning;
- Supports our private providers through DHS grants;
- Expands the Preschool Open Doors Program;
- Eliminates the early learning coordinator position which would have duplicated EOEL and Early Learning Board responsibilities;
- Supports expansion of the early learning system through Hawaiian language pathways for our children; and
- Considers alternative locations for early learning programs such as in the libraries. EOEL had previously discussed the possibility of establishing family-child interaction learning programs with the State Librarian and look forward to advancing this effort

While the Board has not yet had the opportunity to discuss the specifics of this current iteration of HB No. 2543, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, it will do so at its July 9, 2020, meeting. I anticipate there will be questions raised about the separation of charter preschools from EOEL administrative authority, what is meant by “create programs and private sector delivery systems that can pose the essential information and policy questions, monitor the progress of the implementation of this part, and generate timely detailed reports” as DHS responsibilities, and whether it might be prudent to have P-20 assume the DHS data-base responsibilities.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to expand access to high-quality early learning programs and services in the state and make its vision a reality. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



LATE

Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui, Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

RE: HB 2543, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Committee,

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **is providing comments on HB 2543, HD1, SD1**, relating to access to learning.

We support our state's goal of preschool expansion; however, we believe the most cost-effective approach is to continue to expand public preschool classrooms. High quality early childhood education represents one of the best investments our country can make.

Expanding public preschool is a more economical choice. The state is able to expand public preschool faster, better, and with less funding than it would be to allocate any funds to private entities.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association also believes that Section 7, page 20, lines 12-21 and page 21, lines 1-12 “§346— Preschool grant program special fund; established”, may be unconstitutional in that the word “expansion” and the words “operating costs” is unspecified and may be used to supplement private employees’ salaries with public funding. This section states, “(2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund; (3) Revenues regardless of their source; and (4) Earnings on moneys in the fund. (b) The department shall expend moneys in the special fund to award funds to private entities for the operating costs of 2020-new preschools or expansion of existing preschools at the private entity’s place of business. (c) Expenditures from the fund may be made by the department without appropriation or allotment”. This is concerning, to say the least. HSTA cannot support this bill in its current form.

The barriers to expanding preschool are: personnel, facilities, cost, and maintaining quality.



Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui, Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

Personnel

According to the Hawaii Early Learning Assessment, even though most providers have a waitlist, 80% are not interested in expanding their operations, citing lack of facilities and the inability to hire key staff. The average salary for preschool workers in Hawaii is \$34,360, which compared to a DOE teachers' average salary at \$65,000.

According to HTSB data there are currently 500 licensed pre-school teachers in the DOE. There are only 26 pre-K **classrooms** operating in 24 DOE schools serving up to 520 4-year-olds according to 2019 data. In 2017-2018 the DOE hired over 650 elementary school teachers. In fact, over 37% of DOE teachers have a master's degree or higher, thus contributing to the quality of the teaching workforce. The problem is NOT that the department is unable to hire enough preschool teachers, but instead the problem is retaining them, and there is a bill in front of the legislature to help with retaining them.

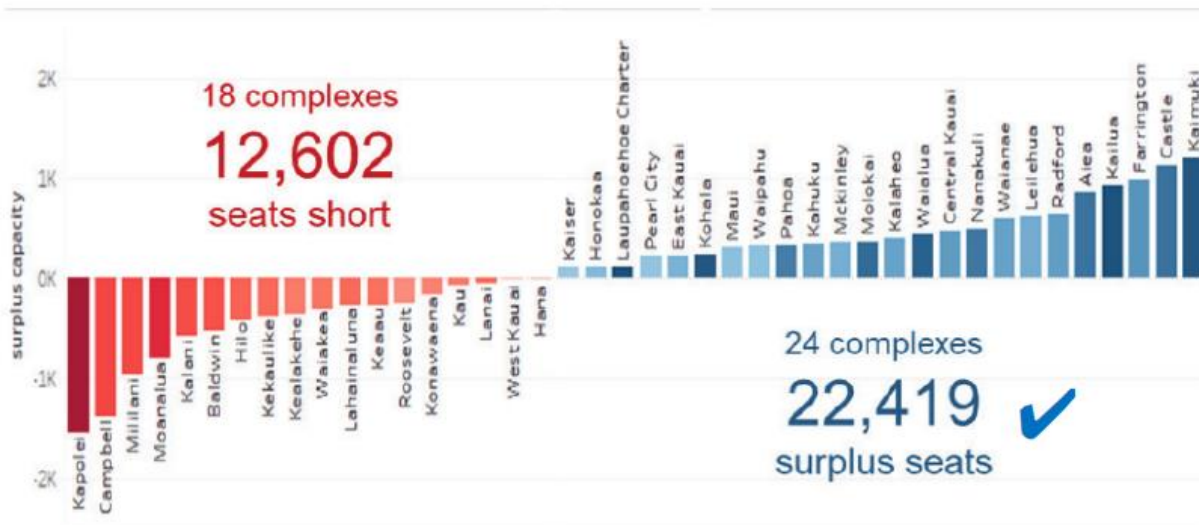
Facilities

Desired capacity: 20,639 (93%)
Licensed capacity: 21,893 (87%)

A survey sent out by the DOE to their Complex Area Superintendents stated that they already have 50 classrooms available right now for preschool classrooms. Accordingly, if you add the data from the recent Jacob's Facility study on available DOE classrooms in the table provided below, there are other classrooms available too, if preschool classrooms become the priority and funding is provided to create preschool classrooms. Finally, in our public schools, if we utilize our existing SPED preschool classrooms that service 1,500 students with special needs, and instead of having these classrooms fully self-contained, they could be turned into inclusion classrooms with the proper supports needed, of course, you could expand the preschools seats available as well. Private preschools are almost full. In the Ka'u area for example, there are six applicants for every one space available.

SOLUTION

Data from the HIDEOE Facility Master Plan Final Report



BARRIER- Cost of Preschool

How much does it cost to send a child to preschool?

PRIVATE SECTOR

- \$8,928 per student per year [ages 3–4- PATCH 2018 ANNUAL REPORT]
- \$9,500 per student year [EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING]
- \$12,000 per student per year [CIVIL BEAT]

PUBLIC SECTOR

\$134,000 per classroom

20 students

1 licensed teacher, 1 EA

Total: ~\$7,000 per student per year, but parents would not have to pay these funds out of pocket, instead they, along with all our community will pay taxes to support this investment in our future. Parents, especially those from low income, should not have to pay for preschool out of their pockets and by not offering public preschool, the state is practicing exclusion, as those in low income areas cannot afford private preschool.

Lastly, preschool teachers in the private sector are severely underpaid. To have a stable workforce, preschool teachers need to be paid a competitive wage, and although we still have a way to go to pay our teachers the salary they need to thrive in our state with its high cost of living, public preschool teachers are paid a significant amount more than the average of the pay offered at private preschools in Hawaii.



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The early childhood field is characterized by low pay and benefits, limited opportunity for career advancement, and a demoralizing lack of public regard for the dedication and professionalism of those who choose to be in this line of work. For example, almost half of childcare workers and one-third of preschool teachers nationwide earn so little that they must rely on financial benefit programs like food stamps or earned income tax credits (Whitebook, et al, 2016).

Public money should be going to the expansion of public preschools. If cost is the factor, start with preschools for 4 years olds across the state and later expand to the private sector for 3 year olds, as our public schools currently do not serve 3 year olds in early care.

In January of 2019 Governor Ige announced his plan for expanding public preschool. The proposal is to expand from 26 to 300 pre-K classrooms in 10 years is actually part of a working paper developed between the DOE, EOEL, State Public Charter School Commission and Kamehameha Schools. For the state to eventually reach that number would require \$51 million in annual preschool operating costs, and about \$125 million for new facilities. We should continue with this plan to provide universal pre-schools for our 4 year olds. Private entities can invest in public preschools, or they can choose to expand 3-year-old programs in the private sector with their private dollars, but our public money should be going toward our public preschool expansion.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association also believes that Section 7, page 20, lines 12-21 and page 21, lines 1-12 “§346— Preschool grant program special fund; established”, may be unconstitutional in that the word expansion is unspecified and may be used to supplement private employees’ salaries with public funding. This section states, “(2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund; (3) Revenues regardless of their source; and (4) Earnings on moneys in the fund. (b) The department shall expend moneys in the special fund to award funds to private entities for the operating costs of 2020-new preschools **or expansion of existing preschools at the private entity’s place of business.** (c) **Expenditures from the fund may be made by the department without appropriation or allotment**”. This is concerning, to say the least.

Therefore, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **consider our comments, and make suggested amendments to ensure an expansion of public preschool for this bill.** It is more cost-effective and if followed, within 10 years we will have public preschool for all 4 year olds.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 10:15 A.M.
Auditorium, State Capitol**

RE: HB 2543 HD1 SD1, RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 2543 HD1 SD1, which looks to build the foundation to provide access to learning by the year 2030 to all children three to four years of age and children who will be eligible for kindergarten within two years.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Chamber recognizes that access to early learning leads to better outcomes in education and in life. We also recognize that the cost of child care is a significant burden on many Hawaii families. The 2017 Hawaii Early Learning Needs Assessment found that the average cost of full-time, year-round center care for one child was more than \$9,500. This proposal would help to alleviate this financial hardship through the creation of publicly funded, early learning programs.

The Chamber believes that focusing on early childhood is critical because brain development takes place by age five. We believe that it is imperative to begin investing early in a child's life, when the brain is in this state of tremendous growth potential.

According to the First Five Years Fund, a non-profit organization working to ensure that all children through age five have equal access to affordable, comprehensive, high-quality care and education to support healthy development, high-quality early childhood education is proven to dramatically improve a child's opportunities for a better future while offering parents improved job stability and overall economic security.

Early learning and care can have an immediate impact on state economies by increasing labor force participation and supporting parents who seek additional education and training, contributing to a more sustainable and active workforce. Additionally, the First Five Years Fund noted that research has shown that for every \$1 invested in the education and child care of a child from birth to age five generates \$7.30 in return for the country.



Chamber *of* Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

The Chamber also recognizes the financial toll that the current COVID-19 pandemic has caused on our State's budget, residents, and the impact it will have on the way that our education system will operate moving forward. We are hopeful that the State Legislature will be able to continue to move this bill in order to provide much needed support to improve our keiki's early learning needs.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 2543 HD1 SD1.

HB-2543-SD-1

Submitted on: 6/28/2020 7:18:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 6/30/2020 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2543 proposed HD1 SD1. Providing access to early learning and school readiness for all 3 and 4 year olds by 2032 is an applaudable goal. All our children should have access to quality education, regardless of where they live. Currently, about 1500 children receive a Preschool Open Doors subsidy and expanding the program to 3 year olds will hopefully increase the number of children served. The POD subsidy will help families afford care for their children and increase access to early learning.

Mahalo,

Shay Chan Hodges

Haiku, Maui

HB 2543 Proposed draft 1 breakdown:

- Would create standardized assessment of all kindergartens collected by Department of Education and the department would share data collected with the Department of Human Services
 - Meet the benchmarks:
 - (1) Fifty per cent of all otherwise unserved children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, shall be enrolled in a preschool program by December 31, 2027; and
 - (2) One hundred per cent of all children who are three to four years of age, or will not be at least five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year, shall be enrolled in a preschool program by December 31, 2032.
 - Would also create an Access to Learning Trust Fund, used to fulfil the duties of the Coordinator
- Would expand Dept. of Human Services' preschool open doors program (a child care program run through their Child Care Program Office) to three and four year olds

- Would create a POD special fund and grant making program to establish preschool open doors classroom/programs, requires accreditation for programs receiving POD and program has 5 years for accrediting
- Give authority of the Imiloa astronomy center to build two or more classrooms for Hawaiian language immersion pre-kindergarten programs that shall be used to establish a pathway for the development of other Hawaiian language immersion classes.
- Would grant state librarian, in coordination with Early Learning Coordinator, the authority to establish early learning classrooms and contract for early learning services at any library within their jurisdiction