

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

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, April 1, 2021
9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211

House Bill 1362, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Access to Learning

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

The Board of Education ("Board") supports the intent of HB1362 HD1 SD1, which would establish the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program, require the application of a uniform assessment for public and charter school kindergarten students, and allow early learning educational data to be shared, among other things.

The Board supports proposed legislation that expands access to quality early learning opportunities for more children. The Board understands the profound effects early education has on K-12 student outcomes. The uniform assessment of kindergarten students is a critical piece for ensuring the quality of our early learning system, and the Board is more than willing to take responsibility for adopting the kindergarten entry assessment.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Payne
Chairperson, Board of Education
Chairperson, 2021 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee



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

Date: 04/01/2021

Time: 09:30 AM

Location: 4/01/2021 9:30 AM

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: HB 1362, HD1, SD1 RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING.

Purpose of Bill: Removes the prohibition for private funds to go directly to the Department of Education schools for the purposes of opening prekindergarten classrooms. Establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address shortage of early childhood education educators. Extends certain effective dates for implementation of Act 46, SLH 2020. Requires the application of a uniform assessment for public and charter school kindergarten students. Allows educational data to be shared using an existing system. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB 1362, HD1, SD1, but requests additional time and resources to fully implement the required kindergarten entry assessment and ensure equity for all of our students including those in our Hawaiian immersion schools.

Currently, the Department has assembled work groups to assess available kindergarten entry assessments utilized by other states that meet the criteria set in Act 46 (2020) as well as other options. The Department is requesting an extension of the implementation of the kindergarten entry assessment with full implementation in July 2023 as has been granted to other parts of the bill. Through our planning process, we have found the need to adjust our timeline in order to meet the requirements of a valid and reliable kindergarten entry assessment. Procurement procedures, data sharing agreements, updates to our data system and other requirements will require additional time to complete.

An adjustment to our implementation timeline will also be needed to procure a quality kindergarten entry assessment and to modify specific domain items (e.g., Language and Literacy) of the adopted kindergarten entry assessment to meet the needs of our Hawaiian immersion schools. Assessment items will need to be created and validated to ensure these items are culturally responsive to our Hawaiian immersion student population in alignment with the rigor of the adopted kindergarten entry assessment.

The Department respectfully asks for funding to carry out the task of identifying and purchasing a kindergarten entry assessment that provides valid and reliable data as well as addresses the readiness domains of early childhood. For the kindergarten entry assessment to be available for the 2023-2024 school year, funds for the kindergarten entry assessment would be required one to one and one-half years prior to implementation to meet procurement requirements. The Department also respectfully requests funding to cover costs incurred for training of staff, required materials, and supports needed to implement the assessment with fidelity across the state. Estimated first-year costs at this time include approximately \$350,000 for a ready-to-use kindergarten entry assessment and \$800,000 for the translation of applicable sections of the assessment and development of the remaining sections for the Hawaiian language version. In addition, should the Department be granted the one-year extension to School Year 2023-24, it will allow time to train the approximately 1,000 teachers and school coaches during School Year 2022-23 at an approximate cost of \$400,000. Should the timeline remain at July 2022, the procurement process and time needed to address the Hawaiian portion of the assessment would require the training to occur in the summer. This requires the Department to pay teachers at their recall rate which would be approximately \$1,030,000. The total estimate if the timeline remains at July 2022 is approximately \$2,180,000. Should the Department be granted the one-year extension to School Year 2023-24, the total approximate cost would be \$1,550,000. If a ready-to-use kindergarten entry assessment is not selected, the cost of developing a valid and reliable state kindergarten entry assessment is anticipated to be significantly higher.

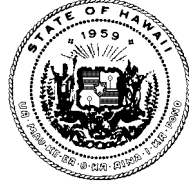
Please note that the Department is also currently assessing any necessary changes to forms and processes as well as modifications to its information systems to accommodate the requirements for data on attendance in learning programs for incoming kindergarten students. Depending on the final assessment of data collection needs, there may be incurred costs for modifications of the Department's information systems.

Finally, the Department would like to note concerns with Section 4 of the bill that changes the cut-off date from July 31 to December 31 for when a child must be at least five years of age to be enrolled in Kindergarten. Schools have had to recently adjust to the July 31 cut-off date as mandated in Act 76, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014, with the class impacted currently in the sixth grade. Changing this date would cause an additional burden on schools to have to adjust to the sudden influx of students for that one year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1362, 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.

DAVID Y. IGE
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CATHY BETTS
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 31, 2021

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1362 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING.**

Hearing: Thursday, April 1, 2021, 9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this measure, respectfully requests three amendments (see pp. 6-7 below), significantly, we request the effective dates in Section 12.5, at page 44, starting at line 18, be amended to read as follows:

"(3) Section 8 shall take effect on July 1, 2021;
[~~(3)~~] (4) Section 13 shall take effect on July 1, 2023;
and
(5) Section 12 shall take effect on July 1, 2024."

These amendments are required to allow DHS to begin the procurement process with the provided procurement exemptions for the data collection and IT modifications.

DHS also provides comments and defers to the Department of Education (DOE), Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission (HSPCSC), and the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) on the impact this proposal may have on them. DHS also respectfully requests that any appropriation does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget.

The House Committee on Education amended the measure by:

1. Removing language requiring EOEL to partner with HSPCSC to provide the early childhood education program;
2. Restoring the language requiring DHS to establish or augment its existing database to collect and analyze information it receives from DOE and HSPCSC regarding standardized assessments for students entering kindergarten and prior early learning programs attendance disclosure;
3. Repealing the requirement for DHS and EOEL to collaborate to identify the need for child care and early learning in geographic regions of the State;
4. Requiring DHS and EOEL to collect annual data on the total number of available seats, total number of vacancies, and available waitlist information, to be aggregated by age, program type, and zip code, and allow DHS and EOEL to work with outside providers and entities to aggregate the collected data;
5. Changing the effective date to be July 1, 2050; and
6. Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The House Committee on Finance passed the measure unamended.

The Senate Committee on Education amended the measure by:

1. Clarifying that the purpose of the measure is to improve assessment of the longitudinal education and workforce outcomes of students who were provided with early childhood services;
2. Removing the prohibition for private partnership funds to go directly to Department of Education schools for the purposes of opening prekindergarten classrooms;
3. Specifying that beginning with the 2024 school year, any parent, guardian, or other person having the responsibility for, or care of, a child who will be at least five years of age on or before December 31 of the school year shall enroll the child in a public school kindergarten unless the child is enrolled at a private kindergarten or the child's attendance is otherwise exempt;
4. Specifying that a collection agency that is contracted by the Executive Office on Early Learning is allowed to collect a commission;
5. Clarifying that 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 school, libraries, and the University of Hawaii System as locations for child care and early learning programs rather than collect annual data;
6. Clarifying that joint reports to be submitted by the Department of Human Services and Executive Office on Early Learning to monitor the progress of implementing the early care and education sector programs shall be submitted to the Legislature prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2024, 2025,

- 2026, and 2027;
7. Inserting section 13 of Act 46, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2020, to be amended to clarify that the Department of Human Services will work with other state departments and agencies to provide inter-departmental data sharing through the statewide longitudinal data system for the purposes of evaluating outcomes through early education to workforce;
 8. Clarifying that the Department of Human Services will provide licensure for all programs funded by section 15 of Act 46, SLH 2020, for the purposes of health and safety;
 9. Inserting a blank appropriation to fund one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to coordinate, staff, and facilitate the implementation of Act 46, SLH 2020, which will report to the Early Learning Board; and
 10. Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill removes the prohibition for private funds to go directly to the Department of Education schools for the purposes of opening prekindergarten classrooms. Establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address shortage of early childhood education educators. Extends certain effective dates for implementation of Act 46, SLH 2020. Requires the application of a uniform assessment for public and charter school kindergarten students. Allows educational data to be shared using an existing system. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

DHS supports the need to increase the affordability, availability, and capacity of child care facilities for Hawaii's families and children. DHS is the regulatory agency of the State's child care system codified in Chapter 346, Part VIII, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

DHS also administers the federal Child Care and Development Fund block grants, the Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) child care subsidy program, and the state funded school readiness program called the Preschool Open Doors (POD) child care subsidy program. Additionally, DHS is the primary agency to distribute and provide oversight of the utilization of additional federal child care stimulus funds.

The federally funded CCCH program is intended to provide child care subsidy for families who are employed, pursuing post-secondary education, or in a job training program, and need child care, so that they are able to pursue and maintain self-sufficiency.

The state funded POD program is intended to provide a school readiness experience by providing the opportunity for children to attend a group child care setting for up to one year prior to their entry into kindergarten. Because the POD program's intent is on the child's school readiness opportunity, there is no qualifying activity required of the family.

DHS provides comments, supports the following amendments, and identifies areas of concern.

- Section 2, at pages 1-4, starting at line 10, to establish the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to be administered by EOEL, as such a stipend program could provide increased access to continuing post-secondary education and be a useful incentive to expanding the early care and education workforce;
- Sections 4 and 5, at pages 8-9, starting at line 10, DHS is concerned about the administrative processes that will be required with the proposed amendments to change the kindergarten entry age to be five years of age on or before December 31 of the school year starting the 2024 school year. This amendment will require over 400 licensed group child care facilities (i.e. preschools) statewide and the DOE to engage in significant planning to ensure enrollment processes are realigned with the proposed changes and begin outreach efforts to inform families of the proposed change of the kindergarten entry age. While we understand that there may be families who lack resources or are in communities that lack enough capacity to serve those 4 year olds who turn 5 years old after July 31, recall that Act 178, SLH 2012, enacted the kindergarten entry age to be five years of age on July 31 of the school year to better support children's cognitive and social emotional development. At that time, Hawaii had one of the youngest kindergarten entry ages in the nation when 4 year olds were allowed to enter kindergarten.
- Section 9, at pages 19-21, starting at line 18, given there is continuing pandemic impacts that practically eliminate additional general fund appropriations, DHS supports the proposal to remove the language to expand the POD program to serve 3 year olds and the clarification of program priorities. As the SD1 is drafted, per

Section 14 (2) at pages 45-46, starting at line 19, these provisions are temporary and will be repealed on July 1, 2024, reverting back to provisions of Act 46, SLH 2020.

- Section 10, at page 21, starting at line 3, the measure extends the deadline by two years by which national accreditation shall commence and be obtained for each service provider of the POD program. DHS supports a long term goal of increasing the number of group child care facilities that are nationally accredited when there is consistent funding to support attaining and maintaining accreditation. Without consistent funding, DHS has significant concerns whether it is feasible that all licensed group child care centers and group child care homes (i.e., preschools) that provide care for children who participate in the POD program would be able to obtain accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Association for Family Child Care, or an accrediting organization approved by DHS.

DHS currently supports family choice by offering higher child care subsidy payment rates to families that choose preschools that are accredited by NAEYC or NECPA for both the POD program and the CCCH program. Requiring all preschools providing care for POD children to become nationally accredited may disincentivize preschools from accepting POD children, thereby accepting only CCCH children, or have other unintended consequences.

DHS notes that the child care sector has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and many have reduced the number of children in care, or families have not returned to utilizing group care settings, so these additional factors may require reconsideration by the Legislature regarding these provider accreditation requirements and timelines;

- Section 12.1, at pages 22-24 and 25-26, clarifies the conditions and uses of the standardized assessment for students entering kindergarten (i.e. kindergarten entry

assessment); DHS defers to DOE and HSPCSC as to the impact of the proposed amendments;

- Section 12.3, at pages 37-38, starting at page 37, line 21, clarifies that funds appropriated by Section 11 of Act 46, SLH 2020, shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated, provided that all moneys from the appropriation that are unencumbered as of June 30, 2023 shall lapse as of that date; and
- Section 12.5, at page 44, starting at line 10, delays the effective date of the provisions under paragraph (2) until July 1, 2023 to allow DHS, DOE, HSPCSC, and EOEL additional time to implement the data components of Act 46, SLH 2020. State agencies have all been responding to the immediate needs of the COVID-19 pandemic, quickly pivoting services and operations to ensure the health and safety of our employees, families, children, and our local communities. It is clear that the pandemic response efforts will continue through calendar year 2021 and possibly into 2022.

DHS supports the intent of Act 46, SLH 2020, and continues to work on implementing its provisions; DHS does note that the positions provided to DHS were not funded, and therefore have not been filled to increase DHS capacity to support the implementation work for Act 46, SLH 2020; therefore, the additional time to implement is greatly appreciated.

DHS requests the following amendments:

- Under Section 12.5, at page 44, starting at line 18, amending it to read:
"~~(3)~~ Section 8 shall take effect on July 1, 2021;
~~[(3)]~~ (4) Section 13 shall take effect on July 1, 2023;
and
(5) Section 12 shall take effect on July 1, 2024."

The requested amendment to the effective date for Section 8 of Act 46, SLH 2020, will allow DHS to begin the procurement and award for the contract

needed for DHS to begin working on the analysis and assessment of IT data system modifications to implement the provisions under Act 46, SLH 2020. Leaving the effective date of Section 8 of Act 46, SLH 2020, as July 1, 2023 as proposed in this SD1 version will delay any work on the IT data system modifications. Without the change in effective date, DHS will have to go through a competitive procurement process to award the contract or require DHS to determine if there is a different exemption to complete the procurement and award of the contract.

- Under Section 12.3 (amending Section 12 of Act 46, SLH 2020), at pages 40, starting at line 10, amending the latter part of subsection (c) to read:

(c) ... No later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of ~~2024,~~ 2025, 2026, and 2027, the department of human services and the executive office on early learning shall submit to the legislature a joint report on the progress of implementing the early care and education sector programs.

(d) The department ...

This amendment is requested to align with the SD1 amendment of Section 12.5 amending Section 12 of Act 46, SLH 2020, to be effective July 1, 2024. The first legislative report would be provided for the 2025 legislative session if Section 12 of Act 46 (2020) is effective July 1, 2024 as proposed.

DHS provides the following comments:

- Section 12.3, at pages 38-39, starting at line 17, regarding the benchmarks as established under Act 46, SLH 2020, DHS notes that the child care sector has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as many child care facilities have reduced the number of children in care due to increased distancing and smaller groups, or families have not returned to utilizing group care settings. The uncertainty around the vaccine roll out to the general population and to children, and how often these COVID-19 vaccines will need to be administered, will likely impact future capacity of

the child care sector. All of these new factors may require reconsideration by the Legislature of the benchmarks and timelines.

- Section 12.4, at pages 43-44, starting at line 4, the proposed language to require licensure by DHS for health and safety purposes of the pre-kindergarten program operated by the University of Hawaii at Hilo Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani or in partnership with the Imiloa Astronomy Center aligns with existing statutes as DHS does regulate other child care facilities operated by the University of Hawaii or its community colleges. DHS notes that section 346-152(b), HRS, exempts staff members of programs taught solely in Hawaiian that promote fluency in the Hawaiian language from any DHS rules requiring academic training or certification, while the *other* health and safety requirements of the department continue to apply.

DHS appreciates the restoration of POD program funding for 4 year olds in HB 200 HD1. If the Legislature intends to fully fund the POD program to serve 3 year olds per Act 46, SLH 2020, we provide the following information to add the 3 year old population based upon current expenditures for the 4 year old program:

- We will require an additional appropriation of \$11.6M;
- Additional annual appropriation for additional contract services at approximately \$536,000 per year;
- Additionally, we require an additional \$500,000 for system enhancements (timing for this will be dependent on completion of the CCBDG HANA system requirements that would need to be done first; we may be able use federal funds for these improvements)
- We will need 6-9 months to amend the existing administrative rules; and
- To facilitate the contracting and purchase of services a procurement exemption would be helpful.

Lastly, DHS requests the support of the Legislature to implement this and other measures. DHS needs to be properly resourced with staff and operational funding to remain responsive to residents' and providers' needs and remain compliant with multiple existing program requirements. Additional proposed cuts to positions and existing operational funds,

will have long term negative consequences on the agency's ability to support our workforce, sustain current caseloads, distribute and provide oversight over additional federal stimulus funds, develop new programs, and maintain the level of services delivered by community providers. Continuing to reduce the capacity of DHS to deliver needed services will impact the residents and the communities we serve and will hamper our ability to work on innovative programming.

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



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

March 31, 2021

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. 1362 H.D. 1 S.D. 1 – RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING
Hearing Date: Thursday April 1, 2021
Time: 9:30 am
Location: Videoconference

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

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.

We greatly appreciate the Legislature's strong support of early learning. Hawaii was one of the last states to start investing in public prekindergarten in 2014. Since that initial investment, we are grateful to the Legislature for its continued support of EOEL in our efforts to develop and coordinate the early care and education system in Hawaii.

EOEL supports the intent of H.B. 1362 H.D. 1 S.D. 1 to clarify and amend Act 046, which would expand access to early learning for our keiki, and provides comments.

We thank the legislature for including the Early Childhood Stipend program. One of the things we have learned from our Program as well as our collaborative work across private and public partners in the field is that most, if not all, of us cannot find enough qualified staff to expand quickly. We must be sure this workforce is in place if we want new classrooms to have qualified teachers.

We also appreciate the legislature's inclusion of a uniform, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that aligns with federal guidance within the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) and Hawaii State Public Charter Schools. When this information is collected through a standardized system and format that allows for comparison across and within districts, it can be used more broadly to improve outcomes for young children.

Additionally, we thank the Legislature for the restoration of language clarifying that the Department of Human Services (DHS) and EOEL shall collaborate to identify the need for child care and early learning in geographic regions.

Moreover, we appreciate the inclusion of 1.00 FTE position to coordinate and facilitate implementation of Act 046. As Act 046 requires coordination across different departments and partnership with community stakeholders across sectors for successful implementation, appropriations for a 1.00 FTE position under either the EOEL or Early Learning Board (ELB) would support implementation efforts, noting that housing the position in EOEL would permit greater flexibility in moving the work forward.

EOEL respectfully requests the following amendments:

- Reinsert “including private partnership funded classrooms” (page 5, line 2), and “private partnership funded prekindergarten programs in the public schools” (page 6, lines 2 to 4) under section 3.

The purpose of Act 276, SLH 2019, was to “clearly establish the executive office on early learning as the administrative authority for state-funded prekindergarten programs, and private partnership-funded prekindergarten programs in the public schools, except for special education and Title 1-funded prekindergarten programs.” Act 276, SLH 2019, also indicates that under policies established by the Early Learning Board, the EOEL shall have administrative authority over all state-funded prekindergarten programs and private partnership-funded prekindergarten programs in the public schools.

If the Legislature doesn’t reinsert this language, we recommend amending section 3 to include:

Private partnership-funded prekindergarten classrooms shall adhere to the quality standards incorporated by the executive office on early learning in the executive office on early learning public prekindergarten program pursuant to section 302L-7. HIDOE shall ensure these programs:

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

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

(a) Prior to opening a new private partnership-funded classroom, the department shall conduct an assessment of community need including:

(A) The percentage of the population in the school or community that meets the definitions of at-risk and underserved children pursuant to section 302L-1; and

(B) The availability and capacity of existing early learning programs or services for four-year-old children on the school campus and in the surrounding area;

(2) The availability of a classroom and outdoor play area that meet department of human services requirements for health and safety for four-year-old children; and

(3) The commitment of the principal to implementing a high-quality prekindergarten classroom including through active participation in professional development sessions , and to 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.

(a) The classrooms shall serve children in the year prior to the year of kindergarten eligibility, with priority extended to underserved or at-risk children, as defined in section 302L-1, and follow the academic year schedule of the department of education and be aligned with the full-day

kindergarten classroom schedule of each school. Enrollment priority shall be given but is not limited to children who attend prekindergarten at schools to which the children will be assigned upon entering kindergarten under section 302A-1143.

(b) The classrooms shall include students with disabilities based on individualized education program placement, recognizing that the in-classroom ratio of students with disabilities to the general population shall be based on the inclusion of children with disabilities in proportion to their presence in the general population; provided that application of this principle 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. 1400-1409, 1411-1419, 1431-1444, 1450-1482).

(c) Enrollment shall be voluntary. A child who is required to attend school pursuant to section 302A-1132, shall not be eligible for enrollment

(d) Each classroom shall enroll a maximum of twenty children.

(e) HIDOE shall incorporate high-quality standards which shall be research-based, developmentally-appropriate practices associated with better educational outcomes for children, including:

(1) Positive teacher-child interactions that shall be evaluated through observations conducted by the HIDOE using a tool several times a year; provided that the observations shall not be used for the purposes of teacher evaluation;

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

(3) Family engagement in partnership with the schools, including conducting outreach for enrollment and engagement of families in their children's education;

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

(5) A teacher who has coursework in early childhood education pursuant to Hawaii teacher standards board licensing requirements for a prekindergarten teacher. For program purposes, a teacher shall satisfy the Hawaii teacher standards board licensing requirements for a prekindergarten teacher or be enrolled in a State-approved teacher education program and working toward satisfying the Hawaii teacher standards board licensing requirements; and

(6) An educational assistant who has a child development associate credential or the associated coursework. For program purposes, an educational assistant shall have a current child development associate credential, coursework for a certificate that meets the requirements for child development associate credential preparation or is enrolled in and working toward completing a program that prepares the individual to obtain the credential.

The office shall monitor HIDOE's implementation of the high-quality educational experience for children.

—
(a) The department shall work with the executive office on early learning regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, family engagement, and transition of children in and out of the prekindergarten classroom.

(b) The department and executive office on early learning shall enter into a memorandum of agreement or memorandum of understanding for the executive office on early learning to provide consultation with respect to ongoing professional development support for teachers and principals of private partnership-funded prekindergarten classrooms.

(c) The department shall submit an annual report to the executive office on early learning on its implementation of private partnership-funded prekindergarten classrooms pursuant to section 3 (e).

(d) Prior to opening a public prekindergarten class in a school, the principal, and other school personnel shall participate in an early learning induction program.

(e) HIDOE shall provide support to incorporate the high-quality standards developed pursuant to subsection (g), including support related to teacher-child interactions, individual child assessments, and family engagement. Teaching staff participating in the program shall participate in coaching and mentoring provided by individuals who specialize in early learning

(f) The teacher and educational assistant teaching in the classroom through the program shall provide direct services solely to students enrolled in the program and shall be provided time for meetings regarding program implementation in the program.

(g) The teacher and educational assistant teaching in the classroom through the program shall be included in school meetings and activities to promote alignment between all grade levels and settings, including school-wide professional development relating to social emotional learning, cultural and place-based instructional strategies, and transition to kindergarten.

(h) Each school shall develop and annually update a written two- to three-year plan to promote, within the school and community, alignment of and transitions between high-quality learning experiences, and submit to the office and the appropriate complex area superintendent a report on progress made toward the plan by the end of each school year.

(i) the department shall coordinate with other agencies and programs to facilitate comprehensive services for early learning.

(j) To promote the development of a cohesive, comprehensive, and sustainable early learning system, HIDOE shall partner with the schools participating in the program to collaborate with:

(k) Other early learning providers, including those providing the programs and services specified in section 302L-2(2)(A), to promote alignment between prekindergarten and elementary school programs and to support children and their families in making successful transitions from prekindergarten into kindergarten; and

(2) Early intervention programs.

(o) the department shall collect data based on a schedule to be determined by the department, to:

(1) Evaluate the services provided;

(2) Inform policy; and

(3) Make any improvements to the program.

(l) The department of education may use available classrooms for public preschool programs statewide. 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.

(m) All processes involved in implementation of this section related to students having special needs shall comply with federal law.

(n) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, including compliance with all applicable state and federal laws.

(o) The department shall prohibit the use of suspension in the program due to a child's behavior; provided that a temporary suspension may be used when there is a serious safety threat as determined by the administrator of the school.

(p) The department shall prohibit the permanent removal of a student from the program due to a child's behavior; provided that when a child exhibits persistent and serious challenging behaviors, the administrator of the school shall consult with the office on how to address the behaviors.

- We respectfully request Section 12 subsection (c) (page 40, line 11), be amended as follows:

“The department of human services shall work jointly with the executive office on early learning to monitor the progress of implementing the early care and education sector programs. No later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of ~~2024~~, 2025, 2026, and 2027, the department of humans services and the executive office on early learning shall submit to the legislature a joint report on the progress of implementing the early care and education sector programs.”

The effective date of Section 12 (page 44, line 20) is July 1, 2024. As such, EOEL will commence its work with DHS to prepare legislative reports to submit 20 days in advance of the 2025 legislative session.

- We also respectfully request that section 4, subsection (b) (page 8, lines 12-15) restore the original language of the section, which would keep the kindergarten entry age as is.

Keeping the kindergarten entry age as is currently in statute aligns with national practices. Furthermore, changing the kindergarten entry age may have adverse impact on programs and services, which may require the need to expend valuable resources and confuse families who are already dealing with high-stress during a pandemic.

We defer to the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education, and the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission on the other parts of this bill.

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.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

LATE

FOR: HB 1362 SD 1 Relating to Access to Learning
DATE: April 1, 2021
TIME: 9:30 A.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Ways & Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony providing **COMMENTS on HB 1362 SD1** which establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address shortage of early childhood education educators, extends certain effective dates for implementation of Act 46, SLH 2020; requires the application of a uniform assessment for public and charter school kindergarten students, allows educational data to be shared using an existing system, and appropriates funds.

In a one-year pilot project, 174 early learning educators were served. This project provided over \$330,000 in tuition subsidies to support teachers and educational assistants in completing college-level early childhood education coursework or coursework that will lead to a degree in early childhood education. The success of this program clearly illustrates the demand and need for these kinds of educational supports for our early education workforce. We **strongly support** the provision in this bill that establishes an early childhood education stipend program.

Lastly, in Section 3, page 24, lines 8-9, the Commission has concerns on the proposal to give the Commission the authority to waive the requirement for the kindergarten entry assessment on a case by case basis. Instead, the Commission recommends that Native Hawaiian language medium early learning programs be allowed to use their own language and culture based assessments and be required to provide the data in developmental areas that the kindergarten readiness assessments are seeking to capture. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Early Childhood Services: Promoting Positive Outcomes for Young Children

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) supports effective early childhood education and intervention as a means of promoting positive outcomes for all young children (Pianta, Barnett, Justice, & Sheridan, 2012). NASP believes that school psychology services should be provided for young children with and without identified disabilities and risk factors from birth to age 8. NASP advocates for services that are coordinated, prevention-oriented, developmentally appropriate, and grounded in evidence-based practice. Furthermore, NASP recognizes that children develop in the context of families, communities, and culture, and therefore, services must be sensitive and relevant to the cultural and linguistic diversity of young children and their families. NASP supports active roles for school psychologists in early childhood education and intervention that result in innovative approaches to collaboration, assessment and evaluation, and instruction and intervention across multiple settings, including schools, primary practice settings, and early childhood centers. Effective practices across these environments support behavioral and social–emotional development, school readiness, transition to school, and early school success for all young children.

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Young children must be valued within the context of their families, cultures, communities, and society (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2015). School psychologists form collaborative relationships with families, early educators, and communities to best understand young children and meet their needs. Collaborative relationships with families demonstrate value of the role of parents' engagement in early learning, and such relationships support young children in the transition from early education to kindergarten and later school experiences (McIntyre, Eckert, Fiese, Reed, & Wildenger, 2010). School psychologists develop relationships with families of young children that are consistent with family needs and build on family strengths (Coffee, Ray-Subramaian, Schanding, & Feeney-Kettler, 2013). School psychologists collaborate with families in assessment and intervention practices to ensure that practices result in meaningful outcomes that increase children's participation in their daily environments.

Collaborative relationships with community partners—such as physicians, preschool teachers, child care providers, parent support groups, early childhood educators, and related service providers (e.g., occupational and physical therapists, speech-language pathologists and mental health service providers)—facilitate comprehensive and thorough Child Find¹ activities and ensure access to services across a wide spectrum of supports. Collaboration with early childhood professionals promotes high-quality experiences for children that foster early learning and social–emotional competencies linked to continued school success (Pierce & Bruns, 2013). These collaborations also provide a connection between settings to support children's transition to elementary school (McGoey, Rispoli, Schneider, Clark, & Novak, 2013). Alignment of learning goals, linked systems of assessment, coordination of

¹ Child Find is a component of special education that involves evaluation of children's developmental progress to identify children at risk for disabilities.

services, communication, and planning facilitate transition and promote adaptation to the next environment.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

NASP believes that effective assessment and evaluation practices are likely to result in improved outcomes for all young children. To promote accurate and meaningful assessment for young children, school psychologists encourage families' active engagement in assessment efforts and ensure that practices are responsive to the cultural, linguistic, and diverse needs of young children and their families (Ortiz, 2008). Collaborative relationships with families and early educators facilitate the identification of important goals for learning and development, methods of formative assessment, carefully planned instruction, and program evaluation. Additionally, consideration of the purpose and utility of screening and assessment data, criteria for data-based decision making, and the technical adequacy of the tools selected is paramount in early education. Assessment and evaluation efforts emphasize multimethod, multi-informant approaches that incorporate observations in natural environments that contextualize data, and that provide a more comprehensive understanding of the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of young children in classrooms and early education settings.

A multitiered system of services (MTSS) delivery framework for assessment and instruction and intervention to meet the diverse needs of young children is likely to be the most effective (Coffee et al., 2013). Multitiered services include successively more intensive assessment and instruction for children based on their needs. At the universal level (i.e., Tier 1), school psychologists promote universal screening practices that facilitate identification of young children who may benefit from additional intervention to support the development of adaptive early learning and social-emotional competencies (Kettler & Feeney-Kettler, 2011). School psychologists support universal screening by working toward the inclusion of all children in evaluation and accountability efforts and by implementing screening practices at regular intervals using technically adequate indicators of growth and learning in key domains. Finally, school psychologists support universal screening by analyzing screening results in the context of an MTSS, using data to develop criteria for determining when children are at risk for not acquiring necessary foundational skills. With regard to instruction, at the universal level, school psychologists collaborate with early educators to identify positive classroom practices for all children that increase opportunities for learning in key domains.

Early childhood education should be guided by formative assessment approaches that are grounded in developmental science and are developmentally appropriate. For young children participating in early childhood services, effective progress monitoring of early learning and social-emotional skills promotes formative data-based decision making (Greenwood, Carta, & McConnell, 2011). School psychologists collect data in naturalistic settings across a range of targets, including observations of child performance and behavior as well as contextual variables that support early learning and social interactions. Collectively, these data are used to guide effective intervention and evaluation of intervention efforts. Such data also can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of early intervention programs and inform any necessary changes (Greenwood et al., 2011). At the targeted level (i.e., Tier 2), school psychologists assist educators, related service providers, and families in developing supplementary instructional strategies for children who may benefit from additional support, which may include additional supplemental practice of a behavioral, social-emotional, and/or academic skill delivered through small group instruction.

At the intensive level (i.e., Tier 3), school psychologists integrate assessment data with other sources to identify appropriate supports for children, promoting flexibility in defining outcomes so individual child progress is meaningful and functional. School psychologists also guide educators and families in identifying targets for skill development, developing individualized appropriate interventions, and evaluating interventions to determine effectiveness (Conroy, Sutherland, Vo, Carr, & Ogston, 2014).

At all levels, school psychologists support effective implementation of assessment practices and instruction and intervention by monitoring the integrity of procedures and the meaningfulness of outcomes. School psychologists consult with families, teachers, physicians, and educational personnel, providing professional development, support, and technical assistance in data-based decision making (e.g., methods of data collection, creating and interpreting graphs, and linking data to program changes) to plan and evaluate instruction to accommodate all young learners in early education and as they enter kindergarten (Sheridan, Clarke, Knoche, & Edwards, 2006).

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION

NASP believes there are core features of effective early childhood educational environments, regardless of the service delivery system used. Through intentional and strategic experiences, children develop learning-related skills that allow them to participate in classroom activities and routines; gain social and emotional skills that facilitate positive interpersonal relationships; and acquire fundamental skills related to communication, literacy, mathematics, and critical thinking. Effective early childhood instruction includes specific learning goals across domains of development (e.g., social and emotional, motor, language and communication, cognitive, and early academics) to promote interactions, instruction, and interventions that are focused and intentional (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, & Fox, 2006). Teaching practices incorporate appropriate learning goals for all children with a focus on functional skills that increase children's participation in their daily environments (Hojnoski & Missal, 2010; McGoey et al., 2013) as well as attention to maintenance and generalization of skills across settings and time. Teacher-directed instruction is balanced with strategic and thoughtful learning experiences that allow children to play, explore, and discover independently. All instructional approaches are authentic, culturally responsive, and contextually appropriate. Consideration is given to ecological congruence, sustainability over time, and acceptability to families and teachers.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

To promote high-quality early education practices, school psychologists partner with early educators and families to create rich learning experiences that will provide children with the skills for school success. Through collaboration with early educators, they identify classroom strengths and instructional needs to create effective learning environments. By promoting research-based instructional strategies that support children's learning, and by using a scientific framework in developing instruction and intervention, school psychologists collaborate with families and early educators to create home-school connections that support children's learning (Sheridan et al., 2006). They support ongoing evaluation of instruction and intervention at the program, classroom, and individual child levels to ensure that children are making adequate progress towards meaningful outcomes.

SUMMARY

NASP advocates for school psychologists as active partners in early childhood education. School psychologists can serve to link early childhood settings with K–12 systems to promote a more seamless

continuum of services. The NASP domains of training and practice are highly relevant to the provision of effective services for young children with and without identified disabilities and risk factors, from birth to age 8. Collaborative relationships, responsive assessment, evaluation and accountability efforts, and effective developmentally appropriate instruction and interventions are all elements of practice consistent with NASP's vision and mission. NASP advocates for school psychologists to have active roles in early education and intervention to prevent later school problems and support optimal outcomes for all young children.

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Acknowledgment of position statement writing group members: Robin Hojnoski (chair), Kara McGoey, Gina Coffee, and Kristen Missall. Adopted by the NASP Leadership Assembly September 26, 2015.

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Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

April 1, 2021

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

This testimony is submitted in **support of HB 1362 HD1 SD1**.

HE'E Coalition continues to support the bold vision of building the infrastructure and resources of our system to achieve the goal of providing all three, four, and late-born five-year-old children in the state access to learning by the year 2032.

We are pleased that the bill adds more detailed language regarding the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) and sets a definitive effective date of July 1, 2022. We feel that a state-wide KEA is critical to knowing where each student is and to determine systematic and strategic approaches for teaching and learning. In order to make sure we are on track for implementation by July 1, 2022, we suggest that as soon as possible, the Board of Education work with the Department of Education to create a plan with a timeline and milestones for choosing and implementing the assessment. We also suggest that the legislature receive regular updates through July 1, 2022 via public reports or informational briefings so that stakeholders are fully informed.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents a 75% consensus or more of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director



Academy 21	Junior Achievement of Hawaii
After-School All-Stars Hawai'i	Kamehameha Schools
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kanu Hawai'i
*Castle Complex Community Council	*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	Kupu A'e
Education Institute of Hawai'i	*Leaders for the Next Generation
*Faith Action for Community Equity	Learning First
Fresh Leadership LLC	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Girl Scouts Hawaii	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	Our Public School
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	*Parents and Children Together
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	*Parents for Public Schools
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	*Teach for America
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	The Learning Coalition
*Hawai'i Charter School Network	US PACOM
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	University of Hawai'i College of Education
Hawa'i Education Association	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	
* Hawai'i State PTSA	
Hawai'i State Student Council	
Hawai'i State Teachers Association	
Hawai'i P-20	
Hawai'i 3Rs	
Head Start Collaboration Office	
It's All About Kids	
*INPEACE	
Joint Venture Education Forum	



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

DATE: Thursday, April 1, 2021
TIME: 9:30 A.M.
PLACE: Via Videoconference
State Capitol Room 211

TESTIMONY

By Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, EdD
Kamehameha Schools

RE: **HB 1362 HD1, SD1 Relating to Access to Learning**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalua Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalua Keith-Agaran, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa‘a a me nā Ho‘olilo o ka ‘Aha Kenekoa! My name is Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, the Vice President of Hi‘ialo at Kamehameha Schools.

We offer our **support with comments** on HB 1362 HD1, SD1, which advances Act 46 (2020) in reaching the promise of access to learning for all unserved three to four-year-old children by the year 2032.

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 start their journey.

Yet we know that despite our efforts and the efforts of many others, there are still many keiki who do not get a fair start in their early years. During this pandemic alone, Hawai‘i has lost about 3,300 seats, at least 6 preschools and many more family childcare providers. Our keiki cannot lose any more. The enactment of Act 46 (2020) was a pivotal step and we must remain steadfast in our commitment to this future in Hawai‘i. *Such a massive undertaking needs a full-time coordinator and we commend the Education committee’s amendment to include a coordinator position.* We also support the amendment to expedite public prekindergarten classroom expansion by permitting private partnership funds to be leveraged directly with Department of Education schools in order to open more classrooms.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We

believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

‘A‘ohe ‘ulu e loa‘a i ka pōkole o ka lou. There is no success without preparation. **Please advance this measure and consider our request.**

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
April 1, 2021

The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Thirty-First Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: HB1362 HD1 SD1 Relating to Access to Learning

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS HB1362 HD1 SD1** specifically the section which establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address early childhood education educators' shortage.

We appreciate that the legislature has continued to prioritize early learning despite the challenges the state has had to face with COVID-19. The early learning community has been working to increase access for decades but has not had the resources needed to achieve this goal. We believe the Legislature's goal is achievable through this plan if there are funding and resources to support as well as sustain it.

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities understands the dire economic situation the state is facing. However, we know the trajectory will get worse if cuts to investments in our youngest children and their families are made. Investing in the earliest years can help improve outcomes for kids, ultimately reducing social costs to the state in later years. These goals are 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **supporting HB1362 HD1 SD1**.

Sincerely,
Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

Date: March 30, 2021

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

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for HB1362 SD1, Relating to Access to Early Learning

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS supports the intent of HB 1362 SD1, which addresses key concerns and limitations in access to early learning opportunities in Hawai'i. The measure would help to expand and strengthen the early childhood workforce, clarify key dates in the implementation of Act 46, and clarifies that a uniform assessment of kindergarten readiness will be used to support the readiness and learning of all students entering kindergarten in public and charter schools across the state.

In particular, ECAS:

- Supports the establishment of an early childhood educator stipend program to address the shortage of early care and education professionals in the field;
- Supports the planned implementation of a uniform, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) and encourages consideration of an allowance for Native Hawaiian culture medium early learning programs to use their own assessments (in lieu of potential participation waivers), contingent on their ability to provide the data that the KEA seeks to capture;
- Supports amendments to retain three-year-olds in the planned expansion of Preschool Open Doors, albeit on a delayed timeline; and
- Supports giving departments additional time to implement other programmatic pieces as long as the goal date of 2032 remains unchanged.

We ask the committee to consider the following:

- **Reverting the language in Sections 4 (b) and 5 (c), concerning the state's kindergarten entry birthdate requirement, back from December 31 to the currently used date of July 31.** The December date lies well outside national norms for kindergarten entry and does not account for the range in stages of child development and the variance in appropriate early-learning settings for children.

- **Establishing data metrics for inclusion in the annual report on the progress toward achieving benchmarks.** ECAS believes that it is consistent with the intent of Act 46 to conduct ongoing assessment of child care and early learning needs and to measure our progress in meeting those needs. These objectives are supported and enhanced by collecting and reviewing basic evaluation data. *Basic data metrics for evaluating any preschool expansion should include child population counts, by geographical areas, compared against ongoing counts of total and available seats for preschool-age children in child care and early learning programs.*
- **Reassigning the newly appropriated 1 FTE position, designated to coordinate, staff, and facilitate the implementation of Act 46, from the Early Learning Board (ELB) to the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL).** The ELB does not have any infrastructure at this time for supporting funded staff positions. The placement of the Coordinator position under the purview of the ELB is also complicated by the Sunshine Law requirements to which the ELB must adhere, which may hinder the efficacy of the Coordinator and efficiency of implementation efforts. Based on the statutory oversight of EOEL by ELB, placement of the Coordinator under EOEL will allow for greater flexibility while maintaining ELB's role in coordinating and facilitating implementation efforts.

We appreciate the Legislature's continued prioritization of early learning despite the challenges the state has faced from COVID-19. The early care and education needs of Hawaii's children and families have only increased and become more complex in light of the pandemic, and the expansion of the state's early childhood system will be critical to the state's ultimate recovery and wellness.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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: **HB 1362 HD1 SD1- Relating to Access to Learning**
9:30AM, April 1, 2021

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

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of House Bill 1362 HD SD11**, a bill to establish an early learning educator stipend and making amendments to Act 46.

Last session Hawai'i made the commitment to children and families that by 2032, all 3- and 4-year old underserved students would have access to a preschool program. Even with the ongoing pandemic, we must take steps to meet that ambitious goal. We appreciate the changes to Act 46 in this bill to allow for better implementation coordination. We also ask the committee to consider the following:

- We ask that the coordinator position be assigned to the Executive Office on Early Learning and that the salary of the coordinator not impact EOEL's budget requests
- Because of the quick passage of Act 46 last session, some key provisions were left unfunded. We ask that the 12 FTE for the Preschool Open Doors Program be funded so the Department of Human Services has the resources to meet the legislation's intentions.
- We support giving departments additional time to implement programmatic pieces as long as the goal date of 2032 remains unchanged.
- We request the kindergarten entry birthday revert back to the original date, July 31 instead of Dec. 31.
- On page 5, line 2, we request that any private partnership prekindergarten classrooms the DOE might create meet the standards established by the EOEL.
- We encourage the legislature to consider adopting a new revenue stream to fund and sustain the Preschool Open Doors program, which is currently facing a funding reduction of over \$6M.

We appreciate the legislature's continue commitment to our youngest learners. We know the benefits of expanding learning opportunities to a child are life-long and beneficial to our entire community. For these reasons, we ask that the committee report favorably on HB 1362 and pass the bill out of the committees.

Thank you,
Kathleen Algire
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

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

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** HB 1362, HD 1, SD 1, Relating to Access to Learning
Hearing Date: Thursday, April 1, 2021
Time: 9:30 AM
Location: Via Video Conference, Conference Room 211

Description: Removes the prohibition for private funds to go directly to the Department of Education schools for the purposes of opening prekindergarten classrooms. Establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address shortage of early childhood education educators. Extends certain effective dates for implementation of Act 46, SLH 2020. Requires the application of a uniform assessment for public and charter school kindergarten students. Allows educational data to be shared using an existing system. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD 1)

Early Learning Board Position: Support the Intent with Comments

Good Morning members of the Committee on Ways and Means. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer written testimony supporting the intent of HB 1362, HD 1, SD 1 with comments on behalf of the Early Learning Board.

Through Act 202, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, ELB transitioned from an advisory to a governing board for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and is charged with formulating statewide policy relating to early learning. We are composed of members from across the early childhood field, in both the public and private sectors.

ELB's mission is to support children's academic and lifelong well-being by directing and supporting the EOEL for an effective, coordinated, high-quality early learning system from prenatal to kindergarten entry. We support efforts that promote the development of this system for our keiki and families.

The ELB appreciates the Legislature's efforts to amend Act 046, SLH 2020 given current circumstances, and for maintaining its priority to increase access and opportunity to quality early learning by recognizing that the childcare needs of Hawaii's families have not diminished but only become more challenging. COVID-19 has had an inordinate impact upon childcare providers in our State. While some have not been able to open at all, those who have reopened or continued to offer childcare find themselves dealing with additional expenses and needing to reduce the number of seats available in order to ensure the health and safety of their *keiki*. The result has been fewer options for families and the need for some to leave the workforce to care for their children.

The Early Learning Board respectfully recommends repealing the SD 1 amendment that changes the Kindergarten entry start age to "on or before December 31 of the school year." The amendment does not reflect what research indicates about appropriate child development settings for young children and may, actually, have negative effects for young children. Reverting to the language currently in statute is a better path to support a successful transition to Kindergarten.

Among the 2021 priorities for the Early Learning Board is supporting efforts to sustain available childcare placements pre-pandemic while, at the same time, supporting the Legislature's vision to

continue initiatives to lay the foundation for expansion of access to quality early care opportunities for more children and their families as outlined in Act 046.

Recognizing the critical importance of building the needed infrastructure to expand access, particularly workforce capacity, the ELB supports the stipend program to be administered by EOEL in partnership with the University of Hawaii included in HB 1362, HD 1. This provision of the bill leverages private funding for upfront financial assistance. The Board also supports amendments to extend the implementation and benchmark timelines along with those related to accreditation requirements for providers receiving Preschool Open Doors funding.

ELB supports the Kindergarten Entry Assessment provisions, calling for alignment with federal guidelines with the Department of Education and Charter Schools, along with the addition of language that allows the P-20 longitudinal data system to include prior early learning program information from various departments.

The Board supported keeping POD open to 3-year olds but extending the timeline for implementation and has sought clarification about the language change on childcare subsidies from Act 046 “families may contribute” to “families shall contribute” in HB 1362, HD 1. The ELB appreciates the amendment in the current bill version clarifying that 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 school, libraries, and the University of Hawaii System as locations for child care and early learning programs.

The Board also appreciates the amendment to include an appropriation to fund one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to coordinate, staff and facilitate the implementation of Act 46, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020, which will report to the Early Learning Board, noting that a position housed in the Executive Office on Early Learning might permit greater flexibility. This provision will facilitate the development of a coordination plan among the agencies involved.

The Early Learning Board remains committed to working with the Legislators, along with the public and private sectors, to increase access to early learning opportunities, while building the infrastructure needed to make sure the State’s investment in early learning yields the positive impact for our keiki, their families and our community that we know it promises.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on HB 1362, HD 1, SD 1.

To: Senate Ways and Means Committee, Honorable Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz
From: Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HIAEYC) State
Board. President: Alexandria Domingo
Re: HB 1362 HD1 SD1.

LATE

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee

The Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HIAEYC), opposes the proposed change to kindergarten entry to December 31 from the current July 31.

The change will cause much confusion among families, who have adjusted to the July 31 kindergarten entry date. It will cause consternation and confusion to early childhood programs, who have also adjusted to the age change with appropriate curriculum and programmatic changes.

HIAEYC has ___ members statewide, mostly early childhood educators who work with children birth to kindergarten entry. We are an affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), with 60,000 members nationwide.

We respectfully request that the kindergarten entry date remain July 31.

On behalf of the HIAEYC State Board,

Alexandria Domingo, President
Board Members:
Gemma Medina
Brenda Watanabe
Valley Varma
Kapua Hussey
Judy Mailheau
Wendy Correa
Sue Macklin
Kathleen Cadiz
Jayne Arasaki
Alessandra Coletti

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2021 4:55:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	No

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports HB1362. One of our board members is an early childhood educator and we all know how important early childhood education is for their overall development. Please pass this bill. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 12:03:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alana Ducroix-Miyamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Children of all socio-economic backgrounds deserve a chance to receive early education as it has proven to be extremely valuable for later school and life success. Working with children in a Hawaiian rural community in which the population is highly considered to be of lower socio-economic status, we often lose students, especially at registration time but sometimes in the middle of the school year because families cannot afford to pay the high cost of quality childcare. It does not matter which type of preschool program (whether private or public) the funds are distributed to as long as these funds go towards providing young children with quality care and education so that they will have a better chance to adjust to formal schooling when the time comes. If the DOE through the EOEL is able to serve more vulnerable children and provide them with quality education, why wouldn't the funds be also allocated to them? The whole point or goal here is to provide children with quality services because it will only be beneficial to them and the community in the long run and this cannot be possible without receiving funds to provide these services. I am in favor of this bill to authorize funds to also be distributed to the EOEL branch of the DOE.

Mahalo,

Alana Ducroix-Miyamoto

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 10:35:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward Akiu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Qualified educators are especially needed in working with children who experience adversities that place the learning and development at-risk. A qualified workforce is critical to promoting equity for all children.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the tuition stipend portion of this bill.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 10:47:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryoko Yamamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the portion of this bill that establishes an early childhood educator stipend program to address the shortage of early childhood educators. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 12:11:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Micah Akiu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

One of the most fundamental components of high-quality early learning is a qualified educator. At the core of this complex and important work with young children is strengthening the workforce to reflect the science of learning and development. For these reasons, I strongly **SUPPORT** the tuition stipend provisions of this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 11:16:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John D. Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support. P

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 8:27:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary A S Paglinawan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been an early childhood educator for 15 years now and it wasn't until my 12th year teaching that I decided to obtain a master's degree in early childhood education. I taught Kindergarten and First Grade for the first 8 years of my career and when I began teaching prek, I felt unqualified to teach this age group. This is why I decided to go back to school.

One of the biggest reasons that held me back from pursuing a graduate degree was the cost. I have 2 children and much of my time, energy, and finances go toward raising them. Thankfully, my academic advisor was able to point me towards getting my college courses financed through grants and scholarships. Because of her diligence in ensuring that my courses were paid for, I was able to go back to school almost fully funded.

Unfortunately, not everyone is or will be as lucky as I am. There are many educators out there who are apprehensive to go back to school because it would cost them too much. I believe that a stipend program like what the House Bill 1362 HD1 SD1 is proposing will help teachers like me achieve their goals of going back to school. Not only will this impact fellow educators, it will also impact their students because their teachers will be considered highly qualified upon completing their program.

I am writing to testify how very important it is to have a stipend program to help educators reach their goal of acquiring either an early childhood education certificate, degree, or license. Financially supporting early childhood educators by providing a tuition stipend will help address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1362 HD1 SD1.

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

CJ Ibara
University of Hawaii Manoa Thompson School of Social Work

Thursday, April 1, 2021

Support for H.B. N.O. 1362, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, Relating to Access to Learning

My name is CJ Ibara, and I am a current Master student in University of Hawaii's Thompson School of Social Work. I am strongly in support of H.B. N.O. 1362, HD 1, SD 1, Relating to Access to Learning, which would establish the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address the shortage of early childhood educators.

With the stipend program in place, it will give teachers who are enrolled at a University of Hawaii campus an opportunity to teach Hawaiian language in prekindergarten classes. With the shortage of early childhood educators, children from ages 0-5 are not getting the education they would like to receive. If teachers are given a stipend to teach Hawaiian language and Hawaiian immersion settings, prekindergarten students will have an advantage when enrolled in an elementary school.

Families are wanting their child (ren) to learn and get introduced to the Hawaiian language and culture before going into regular school. Children ages 0-5 deserve to receive early childhood education to better their knowledge and understanding of the Hawaiian culture. With the pandemic going on, it would be a great opportunity to fund teachers who may not have a job. Allowing children to learn at an early age can be essential for their educational development. Those who may require special needs or attention, may benefit from early childhood education as they get to familiarize themselves with school like settings.

With the drastic loss of Hawaiian knowledge, the best way to revive Hawaiian knowledge is to incorporate the language and culture into the youth. Starting with prekindergarten kids will allow these students to have an early exposure to the Hawaiian language, hopefully igniting interest in the language and possibly reviving the language and culture for generations to come. Studies show that learning a second language while kids are young can benefit them in more ways than one. By incorporating Hawaiian language into the prekindergarten curriculum, not only will they learn the native language of Hawaii, but their problem solving, critical thinking, and listening skills will also be improved. I urge the committee to pass H.B. N.O. 1362, HD 1, SD 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

STATE OF HAWAII
THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2020

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ, CHAIR

SEN. GILBERT KEITH-AGARAN, VICE CHAIR

SEN. J. KALANI ENGLISH

SEN. KURT FEVELLA

SEN. LORRAINE INOUE

SEN. SHARON MORIWAKI

SEN. MICHELLE KIDANI

SEN. BRIAN TANIGUCHI

SEN. MAILE SHIMABUKURO

SEN. GLENN WAKAI

SEN. DRU MAMO KANUHA

Charis-Ann Sole
Charis.Sole@gmail.com

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Aloha. My name is Charis-Ann Sole, I am a current graduate student in a Master's program at University of Hawaii at Manoa in Early Childhood Education (ECE). I have worked in the ECE field in various positions and capacities for a little over a decade. I am providing my personal testimony in support of the tuition stipend portion of HB 1362, HB1, SD1.

“Transforming the Workforce” (2015), is a pivotal report which “explores the science of child development and its implications for professionals who work with young children” (Katz & Loewenberg, 2019, p. 5). In the document, Transforming the Workforce Recommendation 2 states that comprehensive pathways should be developed and implemented at the individual, institutional, and policy levels for transitioning a workforce in the ECE setting to a minimum bachelor's degree qualification requirement, with specialized knowledge and competencies, for all lead educators working with children birth through age 8 (p. 6-8).

HB 1362, HB1, SD1 through the tuition stipend portion of this bill, recognizes the need for a more highly educated ECE workforce and seeks to financially support that workforce in achieving higher educational goals across the University of Hawaii system.

The document “Putting Degrees Within Reach: Strategies for Financing Early Educator Degrees” (2019) from the New America Foundation offers other things to consider when thinking about scholarship programs, such as:

1. Assistance to early educators earning college degrees **must occur simultaneously with a push for better compensation** for the ECE workforce and
2. **Scholarship programs should provide more than tuition support.** The cost of books, fees, transportation, and childcare for parents can prevent higher education from being financially feasible for early educators.

But, one thing at a time.

It is no secret that the workers in the ECE field are paid notoriously low wages, even for highly educated, talented, and motivated people. Educational barriers, including expenses can be formidable. My own story echoes the need for financial support. I would not have been able to further my studies or enroll in UHM's Master's program without the stipend monies funded through the Federal government's Preschool Development Grant (USPDG) that ended in 2019. My ability to pursue an education in the ECE field is solely due to the monies I received in order to fund my education; through the USPDG and some scholarship awards. These sources have allowed me to be able to continue my schooling without taking on more debt, which I am thankful for.

My story is not an isolated one. Many people cannot afford to work in the ECE field without taking on second and third jobs. I myself am one of them. Furthering educational endeavors are often seen as out-of-reach. This bill will relieve some of the financial burden associated with pursuing an education in the early education field. A sustainable tuition stipend program would allow a vehicle for practitioners/teachers of early education to attain higher degrees. This, in turn, would support the State of Hawaii toward achieving Recommendation 2 in the Transforming the Workforce document, and moreover in the State's efforts to build and sustain an Early Learning system. Due to this, I stand in **support of the tuition stipend portion of this bill.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Charis-Ann Sole

References:

Katz, A. & Loewenberg, A. (2019). Putting degrees within reach: Strategies for financing early educator degrees. Washington, DC: New America. Retrieved from [newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/putting-degrees-within-reach/](https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/putting-degrees-within-reach/)

National Research Council. (2015). Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

PERSON TESTIFYING: Ariel Mateo

DATE: April 1, 2021

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

TITLE OF BILL: HB1362 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members English, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, Taniguchi, Wakai, & Fevella,

I am submitting testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of **HB1362 HD1 SD1**.

As an early childhood educator with an Associate and Baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood Education, I solely work with three-month-old to three-year-old children.

I struggle to stay confident in my passion, working with our most vulnerable and youngest population, not only because of the very low pay, but because of the lack of respect given to those who pursue this profession.

Although services for children preschool age and higher are such hot topics, we tend to forget that the youngest, most vulnerable aged children during the period from birth through age three, are also learning. In fact, public investment to help families with young children in the first three years of a child's life result in an even higher return on investment than programs for older children ([Heckman, 2018](#)). 42% of our families are ALICE families, struggling to make ends meet, and it is important to start early to support parents in these households with safe places for their infants and toddlers while parents work ([Aloha United Way, 2020](#)).

The quality of education these children experience is very important especially during the period from birth to the age of five. This is why providing tuition support for students to pursue higher education in Early Childhood Education is important. As Early Childhood Educators, our wages are not equitable with the compensation earned by other students with similar degree attainment. I was fortunate because as a graduate student, I received stipends like the program that is being proposed which helped make it possible for me to continue to my higher education. Hawaii is so expensive, but allowing educators to receive financial support is making it possible for me to reach my educational goals.

I strongly support HB1362 HD1 SD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.
Ariel Mateo

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

PERSONS TESTIFYING

DATE: April 1, 2021

TIME: 9:30 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

TITLE OF BILL: HB1362 HD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members English, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, Taniguchi, Wakai, & Fevella,

I am submitting testimony in support of **HB1362 HD1**.

I am a mother, immigrant, and assistant teacher at a private preschool.

It is no secret that Early Childhood Educators are some of the poorest compensated in the field of education, earning much less than their counterparts at the Elementary or Secondary levels. Data shows that Hawaii Childcare Workers annual median wage is \$18,860, Preschool Teachers for \$33,690, and Elementary school teachers for \$56,020 (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Passionate Early Childhood workers and educators put the work with the children in their classes at the expense of their own livelihoods. Some are more fortunate than others, being able to rely on a significant other to make up the difference of their cost of living, but others are not so lucky. Some enter the field with nothing but passion, but are drained and disillusioned when they see that the pay they receive is a reflection of how little they are valued by society as a whole. I have seen classmates that started out in this field leave after they realize that they will make more working at Costco, collecting shopping carts than they do as a preschool teacher.

Although the issue of pay equity for early childhood educators is a separate, but related issue. What is important is that many practitioners committed to work in the early childhood education would likely be willing to remain in the workplace if they have the opportunity to receive a stipend that can enable them to elevate their knowledge and skillset in the field and thus seek out a position which enables them to pay their bills. The financial burden of a higher education is steep, especially if one has a family to tend to and wages are among the lowest of all types of jobs. It is often the case that having their own children was the reason that opened many early childhood educators eyes to the importance of this work. For many, obtaining a higher degree in a field that already pays so little is unjustifiable when they are already putting their own paychecks into supplying their classrooms.

And yet, despite all of that, people like me, who choose to remain in the field and hope to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of young children, are faced with making the difficult choice between bettering themselves and their practice by gaining new knowledge and understanding through higher education or taking care of our families.

When I started my current program, was afraid that I was going to be put in that very position. After working alongside my current colleagues — all of them having Master’s degrees — and hearing how they were able to engage with children and how much more of the child they were able to see as compared to what I could with only a Bachelor’s degree, I wished to pursue my Masters in Early Childhood Education. I, too, wanted to be able to support children’s learning with the same capacity. However, just as I was beginning the program, I became the primary source of income for my household, and I began to question my ability to complete my education while simultaneously supporting my husband and daughter. I do not have words to express my gratitude upon receiving the financial support that I was provided through stipends and scholarships.

It is undeniably vital to the field of Early Childhood Education that we continue to raise up highly qualified educators, and in order to do that, we must first provide access to those who are struggling to stay in the field so that they do not need to rely solely on passion and grit to survive. Without the knowledge and understanding of the science of learning and development, teachers of our youngest children cannot provide the kind of care and education that many children need, and specifically children at-risk for not reaching their developmental potential.

I strongly supporting HB1362 HD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Emiko Kurosawa Arakaki

Reference

U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *Fact Sheet: Troubling Pay Gap for Early Childhood Teachers*.
<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-troubling-pay-gap-early-childhood-teachers>

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 2:41:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Akiu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the section in HB1362 HD1 SD1 that establishes the Hawaii early childhood educator stipend program to address shortage of early childhood education educators. It's important to build a strong foundation for children, families, and the entire community. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 2:49:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Godinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB1632 HD1 SD1 and the provisions for a tuition stipend program for early childhood educators. Thank you.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 2:59:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chelsie Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of HB1362 HD1 SD1.

Currently, the supply of qualified early care and education providers do not meet the demand. Addressing workforce barriers are necessary for expansion to meet the needs of families and children.

This bill makes no appropriations recognizing the dire economic situation our state is in. However, there are private funds committed to establish and implement this early childhood stipend program.

For these reasons, I strongly **support** the early childhood educator stipend program as proposed by this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 3:03:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jane Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the tuition stipend section of HB1632 HD1 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to share my support for this bill.

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 7:24:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Arimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Honorable Chair Dela Cruz

Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members English, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, Taniguchi, Wakai, & Fevella

From: Alan Arimoto, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher

Subject: Measure: H.B. No. 1362 H.D. 1 – Relating to Access to Learning

Hearing Date: Thursday, April 1, 2021

Time:9:30 A.M.

Location: Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

Good morning. My name is Alan Arimoto and I am respectfully submitting this testimony in **support**of House Bill 1362, HD 1.

I am a pre-k teacher on the windward side of Oahu in Kailua at Keolu Elementary school. I have been a special education teacher for approximately 14 years and have worked in a fully self-contained (FSC) K-6 and preschool setting, as well as preschool inclusion. This is my third year teaching the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) public pre-k.

By having upfront funding to help early childhood educators earn their degree, it will attract, build and retain the much needed workforce. I am in my final stages of completing my master’s program in early childhood education at the University of Hawaii at MÅ• noa and have been fortunate to receive some financial support. If we had this bill in place, it would definitely help our family financially. Therefore, by having something like this in place it would create ease and encouragement for people who want to enter the ECE profession.

This pandemic has been devastating to many, particularly with financial hardships, getting laid off from their job, acquiring quality childcare, teaching/supporting their children (with and without technology) and the list goes on and on. However, this bill

sheds new light to those that want to make a difference in our keiki's lives. For those who got laid off, this could be a good opportunity for a career change. Others may seize this opportunity to become an early childhood educator not only because they can receive financial assistance, but they can better see the importance and value of what we have to offer our keiki.

Moving forward, we need a solid foundation in place to work from. This is also why I support the Kindergarten Entry Assessment. With your support and guidance in this journey, investments are needed to build a quality workforce where our keiki will thrive to their fullest ability.

I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1362, HD 1.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

PERSONS TESTIFYING: Melanie Soma (Lead Teacher, Seagull Schools at Ocean Pointe)

DATE: April 1, 2021

TIME: 9:30 am

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

TITLE OF BILL: HB1362 HD1 RELATING TO ACCESS TO LEARNING

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members English, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, Taniguchi, Wakai, & Fevella,

I am submitting testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of **HB1362 HD1**.

Early learning is so important and at the core of providing high-quality early education is having highly qualified educators. Furthermore, a qualified workforce is critical to promoting equity for all children. Currently, there aren't enough qualified early care and education providers to meet the demand of the growing field. Addressing some of the workforce barriers is necessary for expansion to meet the needs of families and children in Hawaii.

This bill makes no appropriations recognizing the dire economic situation our state is in, however, there are private funds committed to establish and implement this early childhood stipend program. When I first started thinking about going back to school to pursue a master's degree in Early Childhood Education, one of my main concerns was how I could afford it on my salary. We all know that ECE educators do not make a lot of money, so this was a genuine concern for me, as I know it is probably a main concern for many others like me. Luckily, I was informed of the early childhood stipend program through the University, which was a lifesaver for me. I cannot put into words how valuable this stipend program was for me. It took so much of the stress and burden off of my shoulders, that I was able to fully commit to and concentrate on furthering my education.

In conclusion, the ECE field is growing and I believe our workforce needs to grow with it. By providing financial assistance (i.e. early childhood stipend program) to prospective ECE professionals who want to further their education, we are making an investment, not only in them, but in the families and children of Hawaii.

I strongly SUPPORT the early childhood stipend provisions of HB1362 HD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Melanie Soma

HB-1362-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 7:28:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mei Arakaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Having grown up watching my mother put herself through school to become an Early Childhood Educator, then watching her put in her own time and money into crafting and creating materials for her classroom and her children, then decide that she wanted to continue furthering her education for the sake of the children she serves, has all been tremendously inspiring. However, I am also aware that it would not have been possible for her to do so if it were not for the stipends and other financial aid she recieved throughout her college career. It has been because of financial support that she has been able to continue pursuing her passion of providing quality care to the young children that she works with, without having to worry about making ends meet for our family.

By supporting the teachers of our earliest learners, we can best support young children who need -- and deserve -- high-quality education from highly-qualified educators, and in order to support teachers, we must first remove the barriers to the workforce, making higher education more accessible.

I hope to one day follow in my mother's footsteps of becoming an Early Childhood educator, and provide young children with quality care, and this wish has been fostered and nurtured by the knowledge that support for the Early Childhood Education field continues to grow.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

PERSON TESTIFYING: Dena Akiu

DATE: April 1, 2021

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

TITLE OF BILL: HB1362 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members English, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, Taniguchi, Wakai, & Fevella,

I am submitting testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of **HB1362 HD1 SD1**.

I'm a mother, grandmother and an early childhood educator. The long-term benefits and supports that quality early learning programs provide are crucial in a young child's most formative years (Workman & Ullrich, 2017). In strengthening the early childhood educator workforce, we strengthen our youngest learners by building their brain development and self-regulation skills and instilling a positive disposition for life-long learning.

I'm currently pursuing a Master's in Early Childhood Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, while working full-time. I was a fortunate recipient of the U.S. Preschool Development Grant and several other scholarships. I would never have been able to pursue a master's program without that financial help. It has provided the means to further my education and professional goals, while allowing me to provide for my family. Pursuing my degree enabled me to apply and be hired into a mentor teacher position where I'm now able to support early childhood education students who are just starting their careers.

It's important to provide financial support to help people, like me, preserve their commitments to this noble profession and pursue their passion to make a difference in children's lives. Allen & Backes (2018) mentions that high-quality early education requires a skilled and competent workforce, and that professionals in the field should be able to have access to higher education to gain the skills and competencies required without adding to their financial burden.

An investment in building our early childhood education workforce is an investment to strengthen the children and families of Hawai'i.

For these reasons, **I strongly support HB1362 HD1 SD1**, and the provision that establishes a tuition stipend for early childhood educators.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Dena Akiu

Allen, L., & Backes, E. (2018). *Transforming the financing of early care and education*. The National Academies Press.

Workman, S., & Ullrich, R. (2017). *Quality 101: Identifying the Core Components of a High-Quality Early Childhood Program*. 16. Center for American Progress