

SB931

Date: 02/11/2011

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0931 Relating to Early Learning

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to support operations of the early learning council.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports SB 931 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2011-2013.

The Early Learning Council provides guidance and direction to the development of Hawaii's comprehensive early learning system. The council plays an important role in identifying and promoting statewide efforts to improve the readiness of young people in Hawaii. Restoring funds for its operations will help the council forward their mission of all children in Hawaii beginning school in a safe, culturally appropriate, educationally sound, and healthy condition.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education

Hearing Date: Friday, February 11, 2011

1:15 p.m. – Conference Room 225

SB 931: Relating to Early Learning

Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer
Kamehameha Schools

Good afternoon Chair Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair Michelle Kidani and members of the Senate Committee on Education. My name is Dee Jay Mailer, Chief Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of SB 931, relating to early learning.

Kamehameha Schools supports the efforts of the legislature to enhance the early education opportunities of children across the state through the Early Learning Council. In order for the Council to do its work, it needs resources and therefore Kamehameha Schools strongly supports efforts to prevent any lapse of funding that the Council needs to fulfill its charter.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is a statewide educational system supported by a trust endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve 5,400 K-12 students through campus programs on O‘ahu, Hawai‘i and Maui, and 1,317 three-and-four-year-olds at 31 preschool sites statewide. In 2004, the ECE Division also began serving keiki from birth to three years old, as part of its Hi‘ilani Early Childhood Collaborative program. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other pre-schools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai‘i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii’s pre-kindergarten children.

The private sector has largely supported the Council and its workgroup efforts since its inception, with the public sector, through the Department of Education, contributing last year. We humbly ask for continued public support through this Bill’s funding to compliment private funding of early education improvements generated by the Council and its legislative charter.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the legislature, the Department of Education and other public and private stakeholders in the community for the benefit of the children of Hawai‘i.



February 11, 2011
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 931 – Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

The Association is in strong support of Senate Bill 931 – Relating to Early Learning, which appropriates urgently needed funds to support the operations of the Early Learning Council, without which it will be unable to continue its work.

HAIS has always been an advocate for educational programming and services for young children and is a great supporter of the Early Learning Council – of which the head of one of our member schools, Dr. Robert Peters of Hanahau’oli School, serves as co-chair – and its work to develop a comprehensive early childhood education system for our state. The funding requested in this measure will provide the Council with the financial support needed to continue the good work that it has already begun.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Senate Committee on Education
Testimony by
Early Learning Council
February 11, 2011
S.B. 931 – Relating to Early Learning

Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:

The Early Learning Council (“ELC”) offers this testimony in support S.B. 931.

Established under Act 14, First Special Session 2008, the Early Learning Council is entrusted with the development and administration of the state’s early learning system. The ELC was chartered to establish a cohesive, comprehensive, and sustainable early learning system that ensures a spectrum of quality early learning opportunities for young children from their prenatal period until the time they enter kindergarten.

Since 2008, the Early Learning Council has accomplished the following towards its charter:

- Completed a framework with input of hundreds of industry experts and community stakeholders that sets the comprehensive elements and services of a system that serves children and their families. The framework outlines the four essential focus areas of an early learning system and specifies the strategies and actions needed to deliver quality outcomes: Early Education and Care; Health; Parent Education and Family Support; and Workforce and Professional Development.
- Established a local database of national accreditation quality components to guide the development of a state Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS).
- Completed community resource assessments.
- Completed community outreach, inputs into the plan and pilot readiness feedback.
- Implemented videoconference services to engage neighbor island stakeholder input.
- Began study of DOE Junior Kindergarten programs, methods and possible recommendations.

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Senate Committee on Education
Testimony by
Early Learning Council
February 11, 2011
S.B. 931 – Relating to Early Learning

- Developed professional development outreach and training plan.
- Identified needs of the professional and system improvement plan developed.
- Engaged in leveraging partnerships with P-20, P-3.
- Collaborated with RTTT Zones of Innovation to increase access and availability for 4 year-olds in quality programs.
- Launched Public Will Campaign with thousands of stakeholders, families and community members supporting this initiative.

Important to the work and deliverables, is the success of the ELC in establishing collaborative discussions and initiatives with public and private stakeholders in early child development and learning. The ELC has facilitated, convened, collaborated and consulted with organizations such as statewide community councils, The Department of Education, The Department of Health, and The Department of Human Services, Hawaii Careers with Young Children, Good Beginnings Alliance, Hawaii P-20, Hawaii P-3, Zero to Three, Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children, Keiki Funders Network, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, Community Councils and The Hawaii Business Roundtable.

The ELC's accomplishments to date and the growing willingness of both public and private organizations to work together to improve the plight of our children and families positions this State for important gains related to early learning over the next few years, despite very challenging fiscal times.

Acknowledging this difficult economic period, S.B. 931 asks for \$250,000 per year in this biennium for the ELC to continue its work as mandated in Act 14, to develop and design:

- A plan to expand and improve programs to achieve high quality standards in 4 settings affecting children 0 to 5
- A Quality Ratings Improvement System (QRIS)

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Senate Committee on Education
Testimony by
Early Learning Council
February 11, 2011
S.B. 931 – Relating to Early Learning

- A Training plan and technical supports to improve quality in programs
- Quality curriculum and curriculum training programs
- Staff qualifications to define quality in 4 settings
- A system for achieving and rewarding professional credentials
- Incentives for achieving professional credentials
- An evaluation system for teachers, staff and administrators
- A coaching and training system for teachers, staff and administrators
- A retention plan for teachers, staff and administrators
- Policies and procedures for children with special needs
- Early learning content standards
- Child measurement standards and evaluations
- Program standards and evaluations
- System standards and evaluations
- Family engagement and strengthening standards and evaluation
- Prenatal, screening, early intervention, referral policies and standards
- A data system that works seamlessly with P-20
- Data criteria fields and a collection system
- A data publication system and security access to the system for meaningful data mining
- Cost models and multi-year phased implementation plans for children age 0-5
- Criteria and a system to administer a family income based subsidy
- Criteria and a system to administer program grants and administration policies
- Research, Collection, Reporting of public and private funds and potential facilities to leverage existing resources

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Senate Committee on Education
Testimony by
Early Learning Council
February 11, 2011
S.B. 931 – Relating to Early Learning

- Recommendation of public/private funding models for a future phased implementation plan

The ELC has been fortunate to have received funding from the DOE last year to continue its work, but has no other source of funding this year. This requested funding compliments the private funding that local and national foundations and nonprofit organizations such as W. K Kellogg Foundation, Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, Hawaii P-3, and Good Beginnings Alliance have committed to system building initiatives over the next 3 years amounting to over \$700,000.00. Their work will be complimentary and coordinated with the ELC system design and development. In addition, the Federal grant to the Hawaii State Advisory Council will begin to put some funds directly into programs, but the system planning that the ELC is charged with must still be done prior to that.

As in the past, the ELC will continue to work diligently to identify additional sources of public and private funding for these system building efforts and work on a long-term and fiscally responsible plan to launch such a system.

Much has been accomplished by the Early Learning Council, however, further funding is necessary to continue to deliver all the directives as mandated by Act 14, and to deliver a comprehensive plan for which to build Hawaii's Early Learning System.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Robert Peters
Chair, Early Learning Council



Hearing date:
Friday, Feb 11,
2011; 1:15 p.m.
Senate Committee
Education
Room 225

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

From: Elisabeth Chun, Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Friday, February 11, 2011, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

Subject: **SB 931: Appropriates funds to support operations of the Early Learning Council.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance is a policy and advocacy organization focused on Hawaii's youngest children and their families. We strive to ensure a nurturing, safe and healthy development for all children from pre-birth to age eight. We believe all children deserve safe and supportive environments that meet their needs as they grow and develop. Good Beginnings is also a member of One Voice for Hawaii's Children (www.onevoiceforchildren.net), an alliance of organizations and individuals committed to the development of an effective and equitably funded early childhood system that gives all young children the opportunity to arrive at kindergarten safe, healthy and ready to succeed. The following information is provided to help you in your decision-making process.

The Early Learning Council was established by Act 14, Special Session 2008, to develop and administer the early learning system for Hawaii. To accomplish its mission, it will need these funds to hire consultants to develop a quality system as the council is comprised of all volunteers with no paid staff at this time. Moreover, indications are that the Governor will soon designate the Early Learning Council as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Care and Education as mandated in the federal Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. There will be some significant deliverables, and the proposed funding in this bill will help the Early Learning Council succeed for Hawaii's keiki.

Mahalo for your consideration. For more information contact: Good Beginnings Alliance; phone: 531-5502; Ichun@goodbeginnings.org