

# GM 787

Early Learning Advisory Board

**M. Nalani Mattox-Primacio**

April 14, 2015

To: The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, President,  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

And Members of the Senate

Dear Senate President Kim and Members of the Senate:

On behalf of Nalani Mattox-Primacio I would like to submit testimony in favor and support of her confirmation to represent Family Child Interaction Learning Programs on the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB).

I have had the honor of knowing Nalani for over 20 years. She has exhibited the professionalism, dedication, passion, and commitment necessary to working on behalf of families and young children. Her knowledge and expertise will serve our state well as a member of ELAB. She will also bring a valuable cultural perspective that is vital to the success of family and early learning in our communities.

I humbly request that you confirm Nalani Mattox-Primacio as the Family Child Interaction Learning Programs representative on the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Respectfully,

Melodie Vega, Director  
Early Childhood Programs  
Keiki O Ka 'Āina Family Learning Centers

**INPEACE- Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture**

**TESTIMONY**

**GM 787**

**RELATING TO M. NALANI MATTOX-PRIMACIO APPOINTMENT TO EARLY LEARNING  
COMMITTEE**

Testimony Presented Before Committee on Education  
Friday, April 17, in Conference Room 229, 1:15 pm  
by Dr. Kanoe Nāone, Chief Executive Officer, INPEACE

**INPEACE, the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture, strongly supports the appointment of M. Nalani Mattox-Primacio to the Early Learning Council.**

INPEACE is a non-profit, educational organization that annually serves more than 6,200 children, parents and community members through its early childhood and workforce development programs on five different islands. The work of INPEACE over the past 20 years has been extensive and progressive in Hawai'i, particularly within communities that do not otherwise have access to the services it provides. On a daily basis, we see the critical role early learning plays in the economic wellbeing of communities, especially those in areas where poverty is prevalent. We also have statistically significant educational outcomes for the children in our Family Child Interaction Learning Programs making it a viable option for school readiness.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for GM787 on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM\*  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015 10:32:49 PM

---

**GM787**

Submitted on: 4/14/2015

Testimony for EDU on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for GM787 on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM  
**Date:** Friday, April 10, 2015 4:09:23 PM

---

**GM787**

Submitted on: 4/10/2015

Testimony for EDU on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
B. Noelani Iokepa-Guerrero	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support M. Nalani Mattox-Primacio for the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)



## Representative Feki Pouha

47<sup>th</sup> House District: Waiahole-Kahuku-Waialua

April 17, 2015

1:15pm

State Capitol, Rm 229

GM 787

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board, gubernatorial Nominee, M. NALANI MATTOX-PRIMACIO, for a term to expire 6-30-2017

### **CHAIR KIDANI, VICE CHAIR HARIMOTO AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:**

I fully **SUPPORT** the gubernatorial nomination of Nalani Mattox-Primacio as a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board. Her dedication to early childhood learning and community building clearly indicates to me that she will be an asset as a member of the Early Learning Advisory Board.

As a constituent of the 47<sup>th</sup> House District, Nalani's long record of community service is impressive and indicative of her leadership, talents and character. My 'ohana and I have witnessed her service and the fruits of her dedication. In fact, two of my younger sisters participated in the Na Kamalei early childhood education program that Nalani started and also led for a decade in the Ko'olauloa moku. Her work blessed my family.

Nalani has consistently demonstrated great problem-solving abilities whilst also being known for her keen observation and listening skills. For example, her grant writing skills have been utilized to bring resources into our community for the benefit of many keiki and their 'ohana. Although Nalani is fully engaged in her administrative duties, she also takes time to know those she serves.

Nalani is a great organizer with attention to detail and thoroughness in carrying out the tasks and missions she is assigned in community or organizational building. She also has vision and is acutely aware of the challenges and opportunities families face. She has helped many families to improve their quality of life through her service.

I believe that Nalani's impressive resume is more than enough to justify her swift confirmation. I pray this is the case for a servant-leader of our community and our state.

With Kind Regards,

Representative Feki Pouha

April 17, 2015

To: Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair Senate Committee on Education and Members of the Senate  
Committee on Education

From: GG Weisenfeld

RE: GM785, GM786, GM787: Early Learning Advisory Board Nominees

Chair Kidani and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

I am presenting testimony in support of the following three nominees for the Early Learning Advisory Board: Ann Tom, Douglas Mersberger, and Nalani Mattox-Primacio.

I am a private citizen who is interested in advancing early learning in our state.

I personally know all three nominees and think they would be valuable contributors to the Early Learning Advisory Board. All three have established themselves as experts in three out of the four early childhood settings officially recognized in Hawaii: Family Child Care homes; center-based programs, and Family Child Interaction Learning programs. In addition, they are all contributors to statewide policy discussions, present on the national scene, and well respected by their peers; all of which would make them valuable members of the ELAB.

**I therefore support the nominations of Ann Tom (GM 785); Douglas Mersberger (GM 786); and Nalani Mattox-Primacio (GM 787) to the Early Learning Advisory Board.** I urge the committee to confirm these three candidates.

Thank you for your support in advancing early learning in Hawaii.

GG Weisenfeld

193 Pauahilani Place

Kailua HI 96734

April 12, 2015

Aloha e na po`e 'Eleu!

Please consider Nalani Mattox-Primacio as your top nomination for the Early Learning Advisory Board.

I first met Nalani when I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She was my Olelo media teacher, and she was the very first mentor to show me how to properly handle and use video equipment, and editing techniques. She was a wonderful teacher, the kind you never forget. I have always had an interest in video production since then, and I have used those skills professionally, creating short clips, short films, PSA's, even managing to assist in co-editing a 90 minute documentary (The Hawaiian Room) that just recently came out on DVD February, 2015.

Now I am a mother of three, with 5 year old twin boys who attend Punana Leo o Ko`olau Poko, and a daughter, although just 2 years old, acts like she is 4. We have a good number of Na Kamalei books in our home, and these were the first Hawaiian books that I have been reading to them almost every night before bed. I only have been focusing on reading to my keiki in Hawaiian, and I can honestly say that I have improved my Hawaiian reading skills, and my twins can also read those books all by themselves. I highly recommend these books in every home as it's helped our family use the Hawaiian language in our daily lives.

My husband also recently battled cancer, and there was a time where I was unemployed for 4 months; so our family struggled. Nalani saw that time as an opportunity for us to participate in the Laulima Giving program. If she didn't mention anything, we wouldn't have the most humbling holiday season. Her simple gesture of considering us for the program made a huge impact on our family. We were very grateful for what we have received and we plan to participate again in the program, as a donor.

Recently, I was able to assist Nalani in coordinating the 2015 Hawaii Conference Supporting Children of Incarcerated Parents. Here I was able to see her, on multiple accounts, bring people together, and expedite laying differences aside, and allow them to work together to support Hawaii's keiki. I've seen walls come down and bridges built, because of her. This is a time where everyone, on all levels of service, are experiencing limited funds, and if we do not work together, we will keep struggling. This is what Nalani continues to promote.

Overall, I feel that Nalani would be the best candidate for your Early Learning Advisory Board. She's an excellent leader, who works hard, is a big thinker, yet pays attention to detail. And as long as I've known her, she has always strived to strengthen families by creating successful programs that empower and educate children through culture, thus enriching our communities.

Mahalo for your time,

Kealani Makaiwi

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for GM787 on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM  
**Date:** Sunday, April 12, 2015 6:38:50 AM

---

**GM787**

Submitted on: 4/12/2015

Testimony for EDU on Apr 17, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lehua Rowlaand	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Aloha, I am writing this testimony in support of nominating M. Nalani Mattox-Primacio to the Early Learning Advisory Board. Nalani has a heart of gold; her persistence in lobbying to make things better for the families of Hawaii is phenomenal. She is is relentless in working towards developing programs to help children of incarcerated parents and programs that support family/child interactions. I feel she is highly qualified for this position and will be an excellent member of the Early Learning team.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

GM787

In support of Nalani Mattox-Primacio  
Early Learning Advisory Board

April 12, 2015

This letter is sent to support Nalani Mattox-Primacio to secure a role as a member of the **Early Learning Advisory Board** for the state of Hawaii. I have worked with Nalani at Keiki O Ka Aina for this past year and know first-hand the kind of integrated thinker and expansive heart she holds for our children. She is a cultural thinker that brings light and coherence into meetings. I think she is an excellent and timely choice.

Her work facilitating the first conference focusing on children of incarcerated parents was a huge and unqualified success. It brought together 300+ social workers, teachers, parents, policy makers, prison guards, administrators and community members to creatively and intentionally look at all facets of this issue. Next year Nalani is committed to gathering the active and cultural solution-sets already underway in our communities. She, of course, has already focused on how she can improve this event. There is a growing movement of caring child-care workers because of the quality of relationships Nalani has cultivated through the vision she holds for Hawaii that we all are inspired by.

Nalani is clear, hard-working, experienced, visionary and is ready to address our issues differently in ways that inspire collaboration and long-term understanding. We are fortunate to have her interest in this area. You are fortunate she is available to be on this Advisory Board.

Ho'oulu lahui o Hawaiiinuiakea,



Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer  
Keiki O Ka Aina  
UH West Oahu, UH Hilo  
[manulani@hawaii.edu](mailto:manulani@hawaii.edu)

Committee on Education  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Friday, April 17, 2015  
1:15p  
Conference Room 229

Aloha Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair and Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am honored to submit this letter of support for Ms. M. Nālani Mattox-Primacio who is nominated to the Governor's Early Learning Advisory Board as a representative of Family and Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Programs provider.

My name is Nāmaka Rawlins. I am the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations for the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo is the sole statewide provider of Hawaiian medium early learning. I am also a member on the Early Learning Advisory Board representing Hawaiian Medium Early Learning.

Ms. Mattox-Primacio has spent the past 15 years in service to keiki and 'ohana and most recently with Keiki O Ka 'Āina, a community based organization dedicated to educating children, strengthening families, enriching communities and perpetuating culture. Keiki o ka 'Āina is also a member of 'Eleu, the hui of Family Child Interaction Learning programs. This group has been advocating for Native Hawaiian children and families around a common vision of flourishing communities.

Given her experience in this area of program service and with support of our hui, 'Eleu, Nālani Mattox-Primacio would be an excellent representative for the Family and Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Programs provider to sit on the Executive Office on Early Learning's Advisory Board.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide support for Ms. Nālani Mattox.

**Testimony for GM 787 in Support of M. Nālani Mattox-Primacio for confirmation to Early Learning Advisory Board  
April 15, 2015**

**Honorable Chair Kidani, Chairs Harimoto and Senate Committee on Education,**

**I support of GM 787 - M. Nālani Mattox-Primacio's confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board as a representative of the Family Child Interactive Learning programs (FCILs).**


Nālani has been involved in programs the Native Hawaiian community for over twenty years, holding a variety of leadership roles in organizations such as Nā Kamalei K.E.E.P., and Keiki O Ka 'Āina. In her work, she has been a tireless advocate for the rights and interests of our most vulnerable keiki and families, making sure that when decisions are made, all populations are considered. She extends her *kuleana* to include not just Native Hawaiian children, but others from marginalized populations, such as children who are houseless or whose parents may be incarcerated.

She is a bridge builder, representing vulnerable families served by the Family Child Interactive Learning programs and other Eleu programs in broader fieldwide efforts such as the Action Strategy Group Committees and work with other stakeholders in the early childhood education community. In addition, Nālani reaches out to faculty and students in the Master of Early Childhood Education program to provide historical and cultural context about Native Hawaiian serving early learning organizations and to help us learn how to better support and empower the children and families she knows well. She is gracious, wise, and truthful, a voice that gently pushes students recognize personal bias and institutional discrimination that can hurt *keiki* and their *'ohana* while gently offering advice on how we can more effectively work together to build an early learning system that respects all the members of our island community.

I cannot speak as a member of the Family Child Interactive Learning programs, however I can speak as a friend and supporter of the programs. FCILs perform a vital role in our early learning system and serve some of our hardest to reach families who may not feel safe embracing other programs. Nālani has the support of Eleu and will be a thoughtful representative who respectfully asks the questions that need to be asked and raises the important issues that need to be considered in order to ensure that our early learning system is sensitive to *kānaka maoli kumu*, *keiki* and *'ohana*.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support** of GM 787 - M. Nālani Mattox-Primacio's confirmation to the Early Learning Advisory Board as a representative of the Family Child Interactive Learning programs.

Sincerely yours,



Robyn Chun, M.Ed.  
Director, ECE Graduate Programs  
College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
1776 University Ave, Everly 224D  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
[rchun@hawaii.edu](mailto:rchun@hawaii.edu)  
ph. 956-0337 (w) 223-6691 (c)

TESTIMONY ON GM 787 RELATING TO CONFIRMATION OF M. NALANI MATTOX-PRIMACIO TO THE EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY BOARD

April 17, 2015

1:15 pm

Conference Rm. 229

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Harimoto, and members of the Senate Committee on Education, **my name is Stephen Morse. I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change (BFC) and am here today to support the confirmation of Nalani Mattox-Primacio to the Early Learning Advisory Board.**

Members, for the record, BFC is the fiscal, technical, and administrative support entity for seven Neighborhood Place centers statewide that provide support and strengthening services to families at risk of child abuse and neglect under a POS contract with the Department of Human Services. The several varied risk factors in the families, including homelessness or unstable housing, unemployment and low incomes, substance abuse, chronic health problems, and physical disabilities.

Over the past year and a half, I have had the honor of chairing the Family Reunification Working Group (FRWG), a sub-committee of the Legislative Keiki Caucus. The group was formed to explore the issues surrounding children and families impacted by incarceration and to come up with solutions to breaking the “cycle of incarceration” that sadly becomes generational in some families. It was comprised of representatives from several organizations and service providers, including Blueprint for Change, Hawaii Prisoners Resource Center, dba Holomua Center, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, ALU LIKE, Inc., Queen Lili’uokalani Children’s Center, Keiki O Ka Aina Learning Centers, Family Programs Hawaii, Adult Friends for Youth, Community Alliance on Prisons, TJ Mahoney, Chaminade University’s Native Hawaiian Program, Makana O Ke Akua Clean and Sober Living, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Hawaii Technology Institute, Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery, and Ted Sakai & Associates, among others.

Representing Keiki O Ka Aina Family Learning Center in our discussions was Nalani Mattox-Primacio. It was truly a privilege to have her participate in these discussions. With her wealth of knowledge and experience in working in early learning programs and the Children of Incarcerated Parents (COIP) population, she brought an amazing amount of substance and clarity to our discussions. With her input, the working group was able to draft a bill that required the Department of Public Safety to begin collecting data regarding the number of offenders coming into the corrections system who are parents and how many minor children they have. This data is significant, because it will finally help those of us who are trying to serve this population define the scope of the problem, target services, and leverage funding from federal programs who are trying to successfully reintegrate ex-offenders into society through programs that help reunite them with their children and families. Thanks to the efforts of Nalani and other members of the group, the bill passed through both houses of the Legislature this session and has been enrolled to the Governor.

I also recently had the opportunity to witness Nalani’s astute ability to organize and bring several hundred people together in a conference to share concerns and possible solutions to the problem of children and families impacted by incarceration. I believe this conference laid a strong foundation in building a coalition that will address and resolve this issue in the next three years.

With her knowledge, experience, and skills, I firmly believe that Nalani will be a strong asset on the Early Learning Advisory Board.

Mahalo for allowing me to share my support for her nomination with the Committee.