



GOV. MSG. NO. 1274

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

July 3, 2023

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate,  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on July 3, 2023, the following bill was signed into law:

HB961 HD1 SD2 CD1

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.  
**ACT 171**

Sincerely,

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. Section 346-184, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
3 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

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

- 7 (1) National Association for the Education of Young
- 8 Children;
- 9 (2) National Early Childhood Program Accreditation;
- 10 (3) National Association for Family Child Care; or
- 11 (4) An accrediting organization approved by the director[+  
12 ~~provided that the accrediting organization is~~  
13 ~~comparable to the organizations specified in~~  
14 ~~paragraphs (1) through (3)]."~~

15 PART II

16 SECTION 2. Section 302L-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17 amended by amending subsections (b) and (c) to read as follows:



1           "(b) The office shall implement an application process for  
2 schools that are interested in participating in the program.

3 The criteria to prioritize applications shall include:

4           (1) Community need, including:

5                 (A) The percentage of the population in the school or  
6                         community that meets the definitions of at-risk  
7                         and underserved children pursuant to section  
8                         302L-1; and

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

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

17           (3) The commitment of the principal to implementing a  
18                high-quality prekindergarten program including through  
19                active participation in professional development  
20                sessions offered through the office, and to promoting  
21                continuity and alignment between and across other



1 early learning programs in the community and other  
2 grade levels in the school to ensure the positive  
3 outcomes of children are sustained.

4 (c) The program shall serve [~~children in the year prior to~~  
5 ~~the year of kindergarten eligibility,~~] three- and four-year-old  
6 children who are in the two years prior to kindergarten entry  
7 pursuant to section 302A-411, with priority extended to  
8 underserved or at-risk children, as defined in section 302L-1,  
9 and follow the academic year schedule of the department of  
10 education and be aligned with the full-day kindergarten  
11 classroom schedule of each school. Enrollment priority shall be  
12 given but is not limited to children who attend prekindergarten  
13 at schools to which the children will be assigned upon entering  
14 kindergarten under section 302A-1143."

15 SECTION 3. Section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
16 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

17 "(b) Subject to the availability of funds, the program  
18 shall serve three- and four-year-old children[7] who are in the  
19 two years prior to kindergarten entry pursuant to section  
20 302A-411, with priority extended in the following order to:



- 1 (1) Children who are not eligible to attend public school
- 2 kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn
- 3 five years of age because their birth date occurs
- 4 after the kindergarten eligibility date pursuant to
- 5 section 302A-411; [~~and~~]
- 6 (2) Underserved or at-risk [~~children,~~] four-year-old
- 7 children who were previously served as a
- 8 three-year-old child, as defined by rules adopted by
- 9 the department[~~;~~];
- 10 (3) Four-year-old children who were previously served as a
- 11 three-year-old child;
- 12 (4) Four-year-old children;
- 13 (5) Underserved or at-risk three-year-old children, as
- 14 defined by rules adopted by the department; and
- 15 (6) Three-year-old children."

16 SECTION 4. Act 210, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, is  
 17 amended by amending section 14 to read as follows:

18 "SECTION 14. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;  
 19 provided that:

- 20 (1) Section 5 shall be repealed on July 1, 2022, and
- 21 section [~~302L-7,~~] 302L-7(o) and (p), Hawaii Revised

1 Statutes, shall be reenacted in the form in which it  
2 read on the day prior to the effective date of this  
3 Act;

4 [~~(2)~~ Section 6 shall be repealed on July 1, 2024, and  
5 section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be  
6 reenacted in the form in which it read on the day  
7 prior to the effective date of this Act;] and

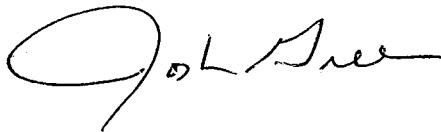
8 [~~(3)~~] (2) Section 11 shall take effect on July 1, 2021."

9 PART III

10 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
11 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;  
13 provided that section 3 of this Act shall take effect on  
14 January 1, 2024.

APPROVED this 3rd day of July , 2023



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII



HB No. 961, HD 1, SD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 2, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023.



Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker  
House of Representatives





Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives

**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I**

Date: May 2, 2023  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2023.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate