
HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THE 2025 HAWAI'I PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND THE 2025 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR FOR SCHOOL COMPLEX AREAS IN THE LEEWARD DISTRICT, HAWAI'I DISTRICT, AND MAUI DISTRICT.

1 WHEREAS, ROBIN BARROS was recently named the 2025 Hawai'i
2 Public Charter School Teacher of the Year; and

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4 WHEREAS, ROBIN BARROS received her Bachelor of Arts in
5 studio art from Linfield College and her Master of Fine Arts in
6 visual studies from the Pacific Northwest College of Art; she
7 furthered her education with a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in
8 Secondary Education with an emphasis in art from the University
9 of Hawai'i at Mānoa; and

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11 WHEREAS, with five years of experience as an educator at
12 SEEQS, ROBIN BARROS has held leadership roles as the yearbook
13 coordinator, faculty representative for the Hawai'i State
14 Teachers Association, and volleyball club's advisor and as part
15 of the school leadership team; and

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17 WHEREAS, as a co-learner, co-teacher, and collaborator
18 passionate about getting in the mix with her students, ROBIN
19 BARROS has designed curriculum for and taught a variety of
20 sculpture and nature-based art courses, multimedia electives,
21 and interdisciplinary sustainability classes; by creating
22 cyanotypes, using natural dyes and incorporating audio-visual
23 aspects into full-scale installations, these classes allow
24 students to explore and find their passion for art; and

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26 WHEREAS, passionate about doing meaningful work on behalf
27 of the community she grew up in, ROBIN BARROS has demonstrated
28 an unwavering commitment to sustaining Hawai'i's people, land,
29 and culture; she has contributed through her unending support



1 and advocacy for her colleagues and students, setting aside
2 extra time to check in on her school community, as well as
3 through her outstanding work product and expertise, engaging
4 personality, and the empathy and understanding she shows for
5 others; and

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7 WHEREAS, TENNELLE CLARK was recently named the Leeward
8 District Nānākuli-Wai‘anae Complex Area 2025 Teacher of the Year;
9 and

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11 WHEREAS, a graduate of the University of Hawai‘i-West O‘ahu,
12 TENNELLE CLARK has dedicated the last five years to educating
13 fourth and fifth grade students, going above and beyond to
14 create meaningful learning opportunities and impactful
15 experiences for her students; and

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17 WHEREAS, a proud resident born and raised in the Nānākuli-
18 Wai‘anae area, TENNELLE CLARK has always felt a sense of purpose
19 in her work as an educator, which led her to spearhead quarterly
20 career days and a student-led career fair to expose her students
21 to various career and trade pathways, while also ensuring that
22 these events reflected the interests and needs of the diverse
23 student body; and

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25 WHEREAS, through collaboration with teachers and
26 prioritizing student input, TENNELLE CLARK has successfully
27 created a platform for students to explore their future
28 aspirations; she has also served as a mentor to aspiring
29 teachers and the grade level chair at Wai‘anae Elementary School,
30 fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment for
31 all; and

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33 WHEREAS, TENNELLE CLARK views her accolades and recognition
34 as a reflection of the support and opportunities provided by her
35 community and is inspired to continue giving back, dedicating
36 herself to encouraging and supporting future generations of
37 students in the Nānākuli-Wai‘anae area; and

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39 WHEREAS, LEAH GOUKER was recently named the Hawai‘i District
40 Ka‘ū-Kea‘au-Pāhoa Complex Area 2025 Teacher of the Year; and



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WHEREAS, a Pāhoa resident since 1990, LEAH GOUKER is wholly dedicated to the betterment of her community and advocates for social, environmental, political, and economic justice for Kānaka Maoli, the indigenous people of Hawai‘i; she is a driven single mother of two and a homeowner in the same neighborhood in which she was raised; and

WHEREAS, LEAH GOUKER received a Bachelor of Arts in journalism and a Certificate in Peace Studies from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa; she also holds a teaching certification from Kaho‘iwai; and

WHEREAS, returning to her alma mater, Pāhoa High & Intermediate School, LEAH GOUKER has been teaching seventh and eleventh grade social studies, blending Hawaiian history with ‘aina-based learning and community service; she advises the school's Pacific Islander and Kōnane clubs and mentors for ‘Aha Lamakū ‘Oia‘i‘o, a culturally-responsive leadership development program; she also serves as a lead organizer for the school's annual holiday Ho‘olaule‘a, a craft fair and school fundraising event held every December; and

WHEREAS, beyond the classroom, LEAH GOUKER is a grassroots community activist, spending the last two decades working with many local non-profit organizations and governmental entities; as Community Co-Chair of the Cultural Resilience Capacity Area for Kilauea Eruption Recovery, she leads community action to nurture and sustain local knowledge and wisdom, cultural practice and heritage, and cultural places, values, and identity; additionally, she serves as the Board Secretary of Pōhaku Pelemaka, a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect, perpetuate, and enhance the intrinsic qualities of Puna makai, Native Hawaiian wellbeing, and the transmission of intergenerational knowledge and practices in partnership with ‘ohana, county and state government, and the private sector; and

WHEREAS, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ was recently named the Hawai‘i District Honoka‘a-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena Complex Area 2025 Teacher of the Year; and



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WHEREAS, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ earned her Bachelor of Arts in sociology from California State University, Fullerton, and her Master of Science in education from Johns Hopkins University; to further expand her knowledge base, she acquired her TESOL Certificate of Competence from Kapi'olani Community College; and

WHEREAS, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ is the English language learner coordinator and English language arts teacher at Konawaena High School and has taught in the Honoka'a-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena Complex Area since 2014, after beginning her career in the Teach for America Corps; as a former foster youth, teaching the next generation is how she expresses gratitude for the opportunities her own teachers afforded her; and

WHEREAS, serving a community that has rewarded her with peace, purpose, and perspective, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ dedicates her time to community engagement, partnering with organizations like the Hawai'i Island Community Health Center and mentoring young leaders through service learning as the Pacific & Asian Affairs Council Club Advisor; her work is a testament to the profound impact that passionate educators in Hawai'i have on students, their families, and the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, as an advocate for immigrant children and an immigrant herself, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ has used her professional training and lived experience to lead a community-wide effort to support multilingual learners; her advocacy has resulted in statewide legal protections for immigrant children, a parent engagement network for South Kona's multilingual families, and a Multilingual Empowerment Center at her school; and

WHEREAS, JESSIE O'NEILL-PREST was recently named the Maui District Baldwin-Kekaulike-Kūlanihāko'i-Maui Complex Area 2025 Teacher of the Year; and

WHEREAS, a trusted colleague, teacher mentor, and active member of the Kihei community for over 16 years, JESSIE O'NEILL-



1 PREST has used her academic expertise throughout her career to
 2 champion literacy, arts integration, place-based learning, and
 3 aquatics for her community; her passion lies in creating
 4 engaging educational experiences that empower students to become
 5 lifelong learners; and

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 7 WHEREAS, as Kihei Elementary School's Curriculum
 8 Coordinator, JESSIE O'NEILL-PREST promotes creativity,
 9 inclusivity, and place-based learning to enhance student
 10 education; she is a member of community organizations such as
 11 Island Aquatics and Grow Some Good and accesses additional
 12 resources for her students through partnerships, including
 13 arranging for visiting songwriters and sports organizations; and
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15 WHEREAS, JESSIE O'NEILL-PREST's notable projects include
 16 rebuilding the school library, creating the school garden,
 17 establishing an electives department, and working with alumni
 18 and cultural practitioners to design a new school oli; she also
 19 helped coordinate a book giveaway, which resulted in over 500
 20 books donated to students; and

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 22 WHEREAS, acknowledging the contributions of colleagues,
 23 staff, and the students and community she serves, JESSIE
 24 O'NEILL-PREST continues to work tirelessly to give back to the
 25 community that nurtured her and hopes to inspire others to do
 26 the same; now, therefore,

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 28 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 29 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session
 30 of 2025, that this body hereby congratulates ROBIN BARROS,
 31 TENNELLE CLARK, LEAH GOUKER, KARLA "VIVIANA" MARTINEZ, and
 32 JESSIE O'NEILL-PREST for their outstanding accomplishments and
 33 much-deserved recognition as 2025 Teachers of the Year and
 34 extends to them its warmest aloha and best wishes for continued
 35 success in all future endeavors.

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OFFERED BY: _____

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