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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THE 2025 HAWAI'I NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL,  
2025 MASAYUKI TOKIOKA EXCELLENCE IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP  
AWARDEE, 2026 HAWAI'I STATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR, AND 2026  
UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM DELEGATES.

1           WHEREAS, GAVIN TSUE was recently named the 2025 Hawai'i  
2 National Distinguished Principal; and

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4           WHEREAS, an exceptional administrator and principal of  
5 Palisades Elementary School, GAVIN TSUE has been selected as the  
6 2025 Hawai'i National Distinguished Principal by the Hawaii  
7 Elementary and Middle School Administrators Association, the  
8 National Association of Elementary School Principals affiliate  
9 for the State; and

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11           WHEREAS, with a career spanning multiple decades in Hawai'i  
12 schools, GAVIN TSUE has served as a vice principal for 11 years,  
13 third grade teacher for three years, and reading specialist for  
14 four years; he has led Palisades Elementary School for over a  
15 decade, guided by a "One 'Ohana" philosophy that prioritizes  
16 collaboration, communication, and compassion among parents,  
17 students, faculty, staff, and community partners; and

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19           WHEREAS, under GAVIN TSUE's leadership, the school  
20 consistently exceeds state benchmarks for reading and math and  
21 impressively exceeds pre-pandemic achievement levels, despite  
22 the challenges of pandemic-related learning loss; after the  
23 return to in-person teaching, he spearheaded multiple  
24 initiatives that promoted student engagement in learning by  
25 centering student interests, including clubs that were focused  
26 on leadership, culinary arts, gaming, fitness, and STEM  
27 subjects; and  
28



1 WHEREAS, GAVIN TSUE leads with purpose and humility,  
2 creating meaningful project-based learning experiences in  
3 emerging fields such as renewable energy and artificial  
4 intelligence; the school earned a top prize in a Design  
5 Intelligence Lab contest, where students were empowered to  
6 create real-world solutions to complex challenges, despite  
7 competing against high school and middle school students; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, BABĀ YIM was recently named the 2025 Masayuki  
10 Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Awardee; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, as the proud leader of one of the State's finest  
13 K-12 Hawaiian language immersion schools, po'o kumu (principal)  
14 BABĀ YIM of Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenuenu has played a crucial role  
15 in the revitalization of Native Hawaiian language and culture,  
16 while also offering a first-rate, high-quality educational  
17 experience to each keiki enrolled in the school; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, blessed with the ability to offer innovative  
20 solutions to problems, BABĀ YIM has overcome the numerous  
21 challenges of operating a standalone Hawaiian immersion school  
22 and has united the school community around a shared vision for  
23 Native Hawaiian-centric education; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, BABĀ YIM plans on investing in a number of  
26 initiatives at Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenuenu, including projects to  
27 maintain the lo'i that run along the neighboring stream, expand  
28 performing arts, and beautify the campus, with plans to work  
29 with a local artist to transform storage containers at the  
30 school into works of art with murals inspired by student art  
31 pieces; and  
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33 WHEREAS, BABĀ YIM has been committed to instilling the  
34 importance of language and culture into each of his students,  
35 empowering them to become future stewards who strive to preserve  
36 Hawai'i's unique cultural legacy and traditions as well as its  
37 natural environment and resources; and  
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39 WHEREAS, J. ELISE HANNIGAN was recently named the 2026  
40 Hawai'i State Teacher of the Year; and



1  
2 WHEREAS, a lifelong scholar, J. ELISE HANNIGAN earned an  
3 Associate in Arts in early childhood education from Olympic  
4 College, a Bachelor of Arts in humanities from Washington State  
5 University, and a Master of Education from the University of  
6 Hawai'i at Hilo; she has offered her knowledge and expertise as a  
7 mentor to new teachers and for various committees with the  
8 Hawai'i Department of Education, Smarter Balanced Assessment  
9 Consortium, and Hawai'i State Teachers Association; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, J. ELISE HANNIGAN has served with distinction at  
12 Kea'au High School for 13 years; having previously taught a wide  
13 range of grade levels and subjects, she now dedicates her time  
14 to assisting freshmen students, helping to cultivate a safe and  
15 inclusive environment for them as they transition to high  
16 school; and

17  
18 WHEREAS, as Freshman Academy Coordinator, J. ELISE HANNIGAN  
19 has reestablished the school's "Summer Bridge" program, which  
20 helps new students develop connections and a sense of belonging  
21 before the first day of school; as a result of this initiative  
22 and others, the school has experienced significant improvements,  
23 including a reduction in ninth grade retention rates from over  
24 15 percent to five percent, and the school's Freshman Academy  
25 has been recognized as a Model Academy by the National Career  
26 Academy Coalition; and

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28 WHEREAS, J. ELISE HANNIGAN exemplifies the profound impact  
29 that educators can have in preparing students to become globally  
30 competitive and locally committed leaders in the community; her  
31 holistic approach to student success, particularly with Kea'au  
32 High School's nationally recognized Freshman Academy, has  
33 created a supportive school culture where students can thrive  
34 academically, socially, and emotionally; and

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36 WHEREAS, ANNA NGUYEN was recently named a 2026 United  
37 States Senate Youth Program Delegate; and

38  
39 WHEREAS, a senior at Maui Preparatory Academy, ANNA NGUYEN  
40 is a policy fellow at Housing Hawai'i's Future, where she works



1 closely with policy advisors to research Maui's zoning code and  
2 its implications on housing production; she also serves as the  
3 President of the National Honor Society, Co-President of Model  
4 UN, and Treasurer of the Student Senate; and

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6 WHEREAS, as a founding member of Mock Trial, ANNA NGUYEN  
7 has earned Outstanding Attorney recognition eight times and  
8 advanced to the state finals round alongside her teammates; she  
9 was also a Coca-Cola Scholars Program Semifinalist, a two-time  
10 LegaleagleBee winner for the State, and a keynote speaker at a  
11 statewide policy conference; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, ANNA NGUYEN plans to further her interest in civic  
14 affairs by studying economics and politics, with the ultimate  
15 goal of becoming an attorney; she is immensely grateful for her  
16 family, friends, and mentors, whose guidance has helped inspire  
17 her core belief in empathy and solutions-oriented change; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, LOTUS YASUDA was recently named a 2026 United  
20 States Senate Youth Program Delegate; and

21  
22 WHEREAS, a senior at Waipahu High School, LOTUS YASUDA has  
23 served as President of the Student Government and as the  
24 Chairperson of the Hawai'i State Student Council, where she  
25 represents and advocates for over 165,000 public and charter  
26 school students across the islands by driving positive change  
27 through engagement with education officials; her advocacy  
28 focuses on crucial areas of interest to youth, including civic  
29 engagement, leadership, and social-emotional well-being; and

30  
31 WHEREAS, collaborating with student leaders statewide,  
32 LOTUS YASUDA helps organize the annual Secondary Student  
33 Conference and Student Leadership Conference; she also serves as  
34 an ambassador for the Pledge to Our Keiki Student Ambassador  
35 Program, highlighting her strong commitment to environmental  
36 stewardship; and

37  
38 WHEREAS, in collaboration with Hui o Ho'ohonua, LOTUS YASUDA  
39 has contributed to the creation of a community garden in  
40 Waipahu, combining traditional and modern agricultural practices  
41 to support conservation of Hawai'i's natural ecosystems; and

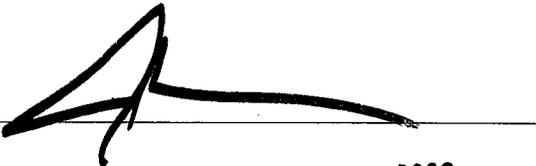


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WHEREAS, LOTUS YASUDA is deeply committed to her academics and is on track to earn her Associate in Arts degree from Leeward Community College in May of 2026; she plans to pursue her post-secondary education in environmental studies and international relations, aspiring to fulfill her dream of becoming a global citizen who creates meaningful impact in sustainability efforts worldwide; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2026, that this body hereby congratulates GAVIN TSUE for being selected as the 2025 Hawai'i National Distinguished Principal, BABĀ YIM for receiving the 2025 Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award, J. ELISE HANNIGAN for being selected as the 2026 Hawai'i State Teacher of the Year, and ANNA NGUYEN and LOTUS YASUDA for being selected as 2026 United States Senate Youth Program Delegates and extends to them its warmest aloha and best wishes for continued success in all future endeavors.

OFFERED BY:



MAR 17 2026

