
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. (a) The legislature recognizes that a
3 coherent, comprehensive, and sustainable early learning system
4 is necessary to promote the healthy development and school
5 readiness of Hawaii's young children from birth to age five. An
6 early learning system is the prerequisite for the fulfillment of
7 Act 51, Session Laws of 2004, the purpose of which is to provide
8 a road map for public education to guide and prepare our
9 children to take on their civil roles in society. The early
10 learning system should involve high-quality, public and private
11 programs that are responsive to the cultural needs and diversity
12 unique to Hawaii.

13 The legislature finds that significant milestones have
14 already been achieved thus far in the promotion of young
15 children's development and school readiness through both public
16 and private efforts. More recent efforts include:

17 (1) Act 259, Session Laws of Hawaii 2006, the four-fold
18 purpose of which included:



- 1 (A) The establishment of an early learning
2 educational task force to develop a plan for an
3 early learning system;
- 4 (B) The enhancement of junior kindergarten services;
- 5 (C) The expansion of head start program services; and
- 6 (D) The expansion of the department of education's
7 families for R.E.A.L. parent-child interaction
8 program;
- 9 (2) Act 219, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004, which
10 established a junior kindergarten in public elementary
11 schools, the intent of which was to implement a
12 flexible, developmentally-appropriate program for
13 children who are ineligible for kindergarten;
- 14 (3) Act 13, Session Laws of Hawaii 2002, with which the
15 State adopted the definition of school readiness as,
16 "young children are ready to have successful learning
17 experiences in school when there is a positive
18 interaction among the child's developmental
19 characteristics, school practices, and family and
20 community support." This definition later spearheaded
21 the development of the Hawaii preschool content
22 standards with accompanying family and community



1 guidelines, and the Hawaii state kindergarten
2 readiness assessment and transition to kindergarten
3 protocols;

4 (4) The establishment of the pre-plus initiative in 2002
5 to finance the development of preschool classroom
6 facilities on public elementary school campuses, thus
7 increasing the availability of early education
8 opportunities for four-year-old children with high
9 needs; and

10 (5) Act 77, Session Laws of Hawaii 1997, which established
11 the interdepartmental council, four county-level
12 community councils, and a corporation to facilitate
13 the implementation of a coordinated system of early
14 childhood education and care services.

15 However, the legislature finds that clarification of the
16 following terms remains necessary:

17 (1) "Early childhood education", which currently means
18 programs designed to support young children's healthy
19 development and learning and success in school,
20 through developmentally-appropriate and culturally-
21 responsive instructional practices that adhere to the
22 quality components of standards, curriculum,



1 assessments, and transitions. Programs may include
2 both center-based preschools as well as family-child
3 interaction learning models; and

4 (2) "Child care", which currently means the supervision
5 and responsibility for the well-being of a child over
6 a period of time.

7 (b) The legislature also finds that, according to an
8 interim report submitted by the early learning educational task
9 force, skilled and knowledgeable early childhood education and
10 care practitioners are an essential key to quality. But to be
11 able to succeed, practitioners must have access to education and
12 training opportunities and receive equitable compensation and
13 opportunities.

14 The task force noted five key elements to proactively
15 increase early educator capacity, as follows:

16 (1) Expand the availability and reach of scholarship, with
17 state-funded financial aid, to support early childhood
18 educators in completing college degrees and early
19 childhood education-related coursework;

20 (2) Expand distance learning options for all early
21 childhood educators;



- 1 (3) Expand offerings of early childhood education-related
2 college courses and community-based training to meet
3 the needs of early childhood educators, junior
4 kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten teachers who
5 are currently in the workforce;
- 6 (4) Establish a mentoring and coaching program, in
7 conjunction with early learning programs, to improve
8 quality in early childhood programs statewide,
9 beginning with a focus on programs for four-year-olds;
10 and
- 11 (5) Establish a recruitment and retention initiative to
12 attract new entrants to the early childhood field,
13 encourage practitioners to improve their
14 qualifications, and entice highly-qualified early
15 childhood educators to remain in Hawaii's early
16 learning community.

17 The legislature finds that an effective incentive program
18 can be designed based on the model used for the annual incentive
19 pay awarded to licensed teachers who receive national board
20 certification.

21 (c) The legislature finds that according to a 2006 junior
22 kindergarten pilot program evaluation report commissioned by the



1 Hawaii educational policy center, additional funding is needed
 2 for junior kindergarten to enhance professional development,
 3 modify classroom environments, and assure appropriate student-
 4 to-teacher ratios according to national standards. These
 5 provisions would further the intent of Act 219, Session Laws of
 6 Hawaii 2004, to offer a quality educational program to four-
 7 year-old children born after August 1 and before December 31,
 8 who are ineligible to enter kindergarten.

9 (d) The pre-plus initiative successfully constructed an
 10 additional seventeen early childhood classrooms that can serve
 11 over three hundred fifty children with high needs. However, the
 12 legislature finds that there is still an insufficient supply of
 13 classrooms for early childhood programs statewide.

14 (e) Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:

15 (1) Enhance the supply and quality of early childhood
 16 education programs that serve three- and four-year-old
 17 children on public school campuses by establishing an
 18 early childhood educator incentive program to, among
 19 other things:

20 (A) Support the licensure and professional
 21 development of early childhood educators and
 22 administrators in the private sector;



- 1 (B) Provide wage subsidies for private early
- 2 childhood educators who do not have a teaching
- 3 license recognized by the Hawaii teacher
- 4 standards board but are working toward licensure;
- 5 and
- 6 (C) Encourage better program alignment and
- 7 articulation among private preschools and family-
- 8 child interaction programs operating on public
- 9 elementary school campuses, and the elementary
- 10 school program;
- 11 and
- 12 (2) Enhance the quality of the junior kindergarten program
- 13 by, among other things:
 - 14 (A) Reducing the student-to-teacher ratio per
 - 15 four-year-old classroom to meet national
 - 16 standards;
 - 17 (B) Providing for the professional development
 - 18 of junior kindergarten administrators and
 - 19 educators; and
 - 20 (C) Providing for developmentally-appropriate
 - 21 classroom materials;
 - 22



- 1 (3) Increasing the offering of college coursework to the
2 early childhood education workforce by funding
3 additional online and distance learning courses;
- 4 (4) Increasing the supply of suitable early childhood
5 education facilities located on public school campuses
6 through the continuation of the pre-plus initiative
7 for classroom construction; and
- 8 (5) Strengthening and clarifying the interdepartmental
9 council's role in the coordination of early childhood
10 education programs at the school and complex levels.

PART II

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately
14 designated and to read as follows:

15 **"§302A - Early childhood educator incentive program.**

16 There is established an early childhood educator incentive
17 program that shall be administered through a qualified nonprofit
18 organization awarded through a competitive process. The
19 University of Hawaii college of education shall award a
20 nonprofit organization a contract to administer a program with
21 the following characteristics:



- 1 (1) The administrator shall create a competitive award
2 system for early childhood education programs that are
3 willing to participate in the incentive program and
4 become aligned with a public school;
- 5 (2) Early childhood education programs may receive up to
6 \$ _____ per designated employee per year for the
7 following:
- 8 (A) Designation of one or more employees who do not
9 yet have a license recognized by the Hawaii
10 teacher standards board to teach in a Hawaii
11 public school, who complete a state-approved
12 program leading to licensure in early childhood
13 education;
- 14 (B) Costs for the professional development of the
15 designated employee or employees and pay for a
16 wage subsidy of up to \$ _____ per employee for
17 up to five years following receipt of a license;
- 18 (C) Development of a memorandum of agreement with a
19 public school, including charter schools, to
20 develop a collaborative and seamless educational
21 plan that would maximize continuity between the



1 child's early education and public school
2 learning environment and curriculum;

3 (D) Provision for the part-time assignment of the
4 early childhood education employee in the public
5 school as an assistant to regular teaching
6 faculty; and

7 (E) Creation of opportunities for the movement of
8 participating personnel with the children as they
9 move from the preschool to the public school to
10 minimize disruptions and maximize the readiness
11 of children to enter public school, and the
12 readiness of the schools to receive them.

13 **§302A- Early childhood education facilities;**

14 **identifying sites; inspections.** (a) The department shall
15 identify unused public school land or facilities for use by
16 state early childhood education programs. Suitable empty
17 classrooms, as determined by the department, shall be prepared
18 and used for state early childhood education programs; provided
19 that the classrooms meet the licensing standards determined by
20 the department of education and department of human services.
21 Priority shall be given to land or facilities on sites with
22 sufficient space for three or more classrooms.



1 2008-2009 for junior kindergarten faculty, faculty professional
2 development, and classroom materials; provided that the ratio of
3 students-to-faculty shall not be greater than national standards
4 for student age levels.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
6 of education for the purposes of this section.

7 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 and the
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
11 2008-2009 for additional courses for early childhood education
12 teachers, including online and distance learning courses.

13 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
14 of Hawaii college of education for the purposes of this section.

15 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 and the
18 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
19 2008-2009 for additional family-child interaction programs
20 located on public elementary school campuses.



1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of health, family health service division, parenting support
3 programs, for the purposes of this section.

4 PART IV

5 SECTION 7. The director of finance is authorized to issue
6 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$ or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof
8 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2007-2008
9 for the plans, design, and construction of additional schools as
10 part of the pre-plus initiative.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
12 education for the purposes of this section.

13 SECTION 8. The appropriation made for the capital
14 improvement project authorized in section 7 shall not lapse at
15 the end of the fiscal year for which the appropriation is made;
16 provided that all moneys that are unencumbered as of June 30,
17 2011, shall lapse of that date.

18 PART V

19 SECTION 9. New statutory material is underscored.

20 SECTION 10. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.



Report Title:

Early Childhood Education; Junior Kindergarten

Description:

Establishes an Early Childhood Educator Incentive Program. Enhances the quality of the junior kindergarten program. Funds additional courses for early childhood educators. Increases the supply of suitable early childhood education facilities.
(HB1722 HD1)

