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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that investing in early  
2 childhood education is in the best interest of our community.  
3 Statistics show that approximately fifty per cent of all  
4 children who enter kindergarten in public schools in Hawaii have  
5 inadequate skills needed to learn at that age, and that the  
6 skill deficit is often never made up. National studies show  
7 that for every dollar spent on early childhood education, the  
8 State saves \$7 in addressing subsequent remedial and social  
9 problems.

10           The legislature believes that a prudent step to improving  
11 learning is to establish a pre-kindergarten academy program  
12 focused on early childhood development to prepare children for  
13 kindergarten, its rituals and routines, and to foster overall  
14 school readiness. To make the best use of public facilities and  
15 resources, the academy will be operated during the summer. The  
16 program will be designed for four-year-old children who will be  
17 entering kindergarten. The program will focus on, but not be  
18 limited to, early childhood development and preparing children



1 to develop the tools necessary to learn prior to entering  
2 kindergarten.

3 The legislature also realizes that a new program needs to  
4 be placed in the context of existing, ongoing programs such as  
5 K-12 education. The pre-kindergarten academy program shall  
6 accept children universally. Thus, program participants will  
7 provide financial support similar to the manner in which the  
8 A-plus program subsidizes its operating costs.

9 The legislature also recognizes that parents need the  
10 resources and tools to help them with the development of their  
11 young child, particularly parents who have a newborn child.

12 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pre-kindergarten  
13 academy program for four-year-old children and an educational  
14 resource center for parents of newborn children.

15 SECTION 2. The department of education shall plan, design,  
16 and implement a pre-kindergarten academy program to provide  
17 four-year-old children early childhood development and to  
18 prepare them for entry into kindergarten. The program shall be  
19 offered during summer months and, when possible, in existing  
20 department of education facilities and be designed to provide a  
21 full day of care. The program shall begin no later than summer  
22 2009. The program shall be developed in consultation with the



1 Good Beginnings Alliance and in accordance with accepted  
2 practices and standards. The program shall also offer materials  
3 and resources that will assist parents during the months when  
4 the academy is not in operation.

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the  
8 department of education to plan and design a pre-kindergarten  
9 academy program established under this Act. The department of  
10 education may use these funds as it deems appropriate to plan,  
11 design, and implement the program.

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

14 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$350,000 or so much  
16 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the  
17 department of education to contract for the planning, design,  
18 and operation of an educational resource program for parents of  
19 newborn children. The program may include, but not be limited  
20 to, providing educational material, information on available  
21 resources, and information on early childhood development. The  
22 program shall be provided to parents as perinatal care and may



1 include follow up contact, as necessary. This educational  
 2 resource program shall be implemented in conjunction with other  
 3 early childhood programs that have set standards and assist  
 4 parents with the development of their child.

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

7 SECTION 5. The department of education shall submit a  
 8 report to the legislature not later than twenty days prior to  
 9 the convening of the 2009 regular session on its progress in  
 10 developing the pre-kindergarten academy program and the  
 11 educational resource program. The report shall include  
 12 financial statements and any other information as the  
 13 legislature may request.

14 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.  
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INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*Paul Chung*  
*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*  
*[Signature]*

JAN 17 2008



**Report Title:**

Early Childhood Development; Pre-Kindergarten; Newborn Children

**Description:**

Requires the department of education to plan, design, and implement a pre-kindergarten academy for four-year-old children and an educational resource program for parents of newborn children. Appropriates funds.

