



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of
H.B. 1676 S.D. 1, Relating to Early Learning
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
March 25, 2014
9:00 a.m., Room 211

Chair Ige, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is in support of House Bill 1676, Senate Draft 1.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and charter schools to use available classrooms for public preschool classrooms statewide.

EOEL requests that \$4,470,208 be appropriated for this purpose to be used in FY2015 for the 2014-2015 school year. This will provide an additional 640 four-year-old children with access to preschool.

Partnering with the Department of Education is an important part of the early learning system that EOEL is charged with developing pursuant to Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012. Our objective is to increase the number of four-year-olds who will have the opportunity for a prekindergarten experience.

To prepare as many four-year-olds for kindergarten as possible, it is important to use and expand the already-existing mixed-delivery system. EOEL's approach is to support such a mixed-delivery system, which includes private, community-based preschools; Head Start programs; family child care homes; special education prekindergarten classrooms; family-child interaction learning programs; and DOE-EOEL prekindergarten programs.

All of these options are funded through a variety of funding streams, including federal, parent (which make up the highest percentage), private foundation (such as Kamehameha Schools), special education, and state funds.

This session, EOEL is seeking funds for the school year beginning August 2014 for:

- Family-child interaction learning programs (\$1 million for 400 children*); and
- The DOE-EOEL Prekindergarten Program (\$4,470,208 for 640 children*).

*Free- and reduced-price meal eligible – a family of four could qualify if its income is at or below \$50,117.

The proposed DOE-EOEL program will have the following characteristics:

- Operates within the DOE structure
 - 32 classrooms at 30 schools statewide (list attached)
 - Schools identified using the following criteria: Title I status, rural location or limited preschool choices, existing preschool with Race to the Top or other federal funding support that is ending, and principal support
 - Staffed by HSTA/DOE teachers and HGEA assistants
- Serves 640 children (those eligible for free- and reduced-price meals)
- EOEL will offer professional development support

Each component of our budget request for the DOE-EOEL program is linked to building a quality prekindergarten program. Prekindergarten experiences must be of high quality to make a difference in outcomes for children. The greatest line item in our budget is for staff (80.4%). We will require highly qualified teachers who have early childhood experience. To meet the recommended teacher-child ratio and optimal classroom size for children's learning as identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, two teachers are needed per classroom. They will be DOE employees who will also need to meet the DOE licensing and educational requirements. However, to ensure high quality is implemented, we have identified five key elements that must be incorporated within the program:

- **Ongoing professional development.** Research has shown that the most successful method for creating high-quality teachers is systematic, ongoing professional development. That is why we will contract for services (\$80,000) that will coordinate targeted professional development workshops for the participating school principals and teachers on topics such as child development, use of individual child formative assessments, effective family engagement techniques, and curriculum. For teachers to participate in the required monthly workshops, substitute pay (\$102,400) and travel for neighbor island staff to participate in biannual seminars (\$7,200) has been included.

- **Mentoring.** What improves teaching and learning most substantially is the use of in-class mentoring or coaching. Resource teachers will be hired within each of the 10 DOE districts to mentor teachers and support principals in understanding the nuances of implementing a prekindergarten program on their campuses (\$900,000).
- **Focus on Child Outcomes.** To ensure children are learning and progressing in their growth and development, the curriculum implemented in the program must be aligned with the Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS). HELDS are research-based standards that identify the expectations of knowledge and behavior for children from birth through kindergarten entry. They are a set of expected knowledge and behaviors categorized into five “domains” or areas based on the National Education Goals Panel framework: Physical Well-being, Health, and Motor Development; Social and Emotional Development; Approaches to Learning; Cognition and General Knowledge; and Language and Literacy. To measure a child’s progress in these domains, the teachers will be required to conduct ongoing formative assessments on each child (\$6,400).
- **Program Assessment.** To evaluate the quality of teacher-child interactions, EOEL would use one of several tools available to provide direct feedback to the teachers as well as to the resource teachers so they can support the classroom teachers. The indicators that would be collected biannually include: the climate of the environment and emotional support provided to the students; classroom organization including the use of materials and behavior management; and instructional support that is occurring, such as concept development and language modeling (\$6,400).
- **Environment.** To establish a high-quality program, an appropriate environment must be created. 26 of the 32 classrooms would need equipment (\$624,000). All of the 32 classrooms would need consumable materials for the children to use, such as writing materials and paper (\$48,800).

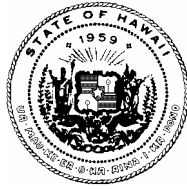
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. I am happy to provide you with any additional information you may need.



#	School	Principal	Island	Complex Area Superintendent
1	Kahaluu Elementary	Naomi Matsuzaki	Oahu	Lea Albert
2	Waiahole Elementary	Wendy Matsuzaki	Oahu	Lea Albert
3	Hauula Elementary	Samuel Izumi	Oahu	Lea Albert
4	Linapuni Elementary	Cindy Sunahara	Oahu	Calvin Nomiya
5	Hana High & Elementary	Richard Paul	Maui	Lindsay Ball
6	Lanai High & Elementary	Elton Kinoshita	Lanai	Lindsay Ball
7	Kaunakakai Elementary	Janice Espiritu	Molokai	Lindsay Ball
8	Honokaa Elementary	Rory Souza	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
9	Honaunau Elementary	Noreen Kunitomo	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
10	Hookena Elementary	Joyce K. Crisafi	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
11	Konawaena Elementary	Claire Yoshida	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
12	Keolu Elementary	Gay Kong	Oahu	Suzanne Mulcahy
13	Kailua Elementary	Lanelle Hibbs	Oahu	Suzanne Mulcahy
14	Kaiulani Elementary	Rodney Moriwake	Oahu	Ruth Silberstein
15	Likeli Elementary	Kelly Bart	Oahu	Ruth Silberstein
16	Eleele Elementary	Fred Rose	Kauai	William Arakaki
17	Kekaha Elementary	Jason Yoshida	Kauai	William Arakaki
18	Kau High & Pahala Elementary	Sharon Beck	Hawaii	Mary Correa
19	Naalehu Elementary	Darlene Javar	Hawaii	Mary Correa
20	Keaau Elementary	Chad Farias	Hawaii	Mary Correa
21	Mountain View Elementary	Barbara Riley	Hawaii	Mary Correa
22	Keonepoko Elementary	Kathleen Romero	Hawaii	Mary Correa
23	Pahoa Elementary	Michelle Payne-Arakaki	Hawaii	Mary Correa
24	Waialua Elementary	Scott Moore	Oahu	John Brummel
25	Nanaikapono Elementary	Debra Knight	Oahu	Ann Mahi
26	Nanakuli Elementary	Lisa Ann Higa	Oahu	Ann Mahi
27	Leihoku Elementary	Randall Miura	Oahu	Ann Mahi
28	Mali Elementary	Disa Hauge	Oahu	Ann Mahi
29	Makaha Elementary	Lynn Okamura	Oahu	Ann Mahi
30	Waianae Elementary	Wendy Takahashi	Oahu	Ann Mahi



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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 25, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 1676, H.D. 1, S.D.1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 25, 2014; 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 1676, H.D. 1, S.D.1, is to authorize the Executive Office on Early Learning to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and public charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill.

Act 169, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, established the existing child care assistance program, called Preschool Open Doors (POD), as the statewide school readiness program and that the program will be administered by the Department of Human Services.

The POD program will serve low- to moderate-income families whose late-born children are affected by the change in kindergarten entry age in the 2014-2015 school year or whose children will be eligible for kindergarten in the following school year.

There are, however, communities throughout the State which do not have preschools available to which families could send their children, even if the families are eligible for the POD program. Therefore, the POD program would not benefit families for whom community-based preschools are not available.

Therefore, the ability of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the Department of Education (DOE) and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms and an appropriation for such agreements would benefit families in communities where community-based preschools are not available.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
March 25, 2014
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211

Re: HB 1676, HD1, SD1 Relating to Early Learning

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

The Early Learning Advisory Board supports HB 1676, HD1, SD1 which would authorize the executive office on early learning to enter into agreements with the department of education and public charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms.

Established under Act 178 (2012), the Early Learning Advisory Board replaced the Early Learning Council and is responsible for advising the Executive Office on Early Learning, providing recommendations to the Executive Office on Early Learning, promoting collaboration among state agencies, and being an independent voice for the overall well-being of Hawaii's children.

Hawai'i has been a national leader in ensuring access to quality health care, family support and community based models that improve the lives of young children. The Early Learning Advisory Board seeks to ensure that all children are valued, safe, healthy and ready to succeed. The board has adopted a comprehensive action strategy to achieve its goals. We strongly support advancing this bill and look forward to working collaboratively and proactively with the legislature and the broader community. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Robert Peters
Chair, Early Learning Advisory Board

State of Hawaii Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB)
elab.k12.hi.us



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 9:00 A.M.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol**

RE: HOUSE BILL 1676 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 1676 HD1 SD1 Relating to Early Learning.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing over 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Chamber believes that this measure must be in place to provide services to the gap group that will result from the 2014 change in kindergarten entry age (children must be five years old by July 31 of the school year to enroll in DOE kindergarten) mandated by Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012. DOE estimates there are 5,100 children in the gap. It is critical that immediate action is taken to make sure these children are covered.

The Chamber supports the bill's intent to provide facilities for early childhood learning – a necessary tool to shape the future of Hawaii. Providing a proper environment for the children of Hawaii is the first step to investing in a bright future for the next generation.

Also, the Chamber strongly believes that focusing on early childhood is critical because brain development takes place by age five. We believe it's imperative to begin investing early in a child's life, when the brain is in this state of tremendous growth potential. In 2008, the Hawaii Economic Benefits Study of early education for Hawai'i showed that for every \$1 Hawai'i invests in a quality four-year early learning program, the state will receive a return of \$4.20. This is not only about return of investment but in providing for our employees and their children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator David Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

March 25, 2014

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for HB1676 HD1 SD1, allowing the Executive Office of Early Learning to enter into agreements with the Department of Education to use available classrooms for public preschools statewide.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition has consistently supported the establishment of a statewide early childhood learning program, supporting of the formation of the Executive Office of Early Learning, and the school readiness program, which targets the underserved and at-risk four-year-olds that will not be able to attend Junior Kindergarten from the 2014-2015 school year. Accordingly, the Coalition also supports the effort to expand pre-school at our public schools and the financial appropriation to do so, as an option to provide our children under the age of five, a high quality education experience. Access is key, especially in rural areas. We also continue to recommend an outreach program to families so that they understand the options available for their pre-Kindergarten children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Member List

Academy 21

After-School All-Stars Hawaii

Alliance for Place Based Learning

*Castle Complex Community Council

Center for Civic Education

Coalition for Children with Special Needs

*DOE Windward District

*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawaii

*Good Beginnings Alliance

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

*Hawai'i Charter School Network

*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

*Hawaii State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Hawai'i P-20

Hawai'i 3Rs

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members (*)



March 23, 2014

TO: Chair David Ige
Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Deborah Zysman
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Support for HB1676 HD1 SD1: RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) **supports HB1676 HD1 SD1**, which authorizes the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the department of education and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. GBA strongly supports efforts by EOEL, DOE, and charter schools to work collaboratively in this way to expand preschool options to more of Hawai'i's children.

HB1676 HD1 SD1 provides EOEL with the statutory authority to act in executing its mission to ensure that Hawai'i's four-year-olds have the quality early learning experiences they need to prepare them for success in kindergarten and beyond.

GBA is in support of HB1676 HD1 SD1 and thanks the committee for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Zysman", with a large, stylized initial "D" and a long, flowing tail.

Deborah Zysman
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance



1806 So. King Street | Suite 30 | Honolulu, HI 96826 | (808)942-4708 | FAX (808)955-2739 | haeyc@hawaiihaeyc.org

The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, March 25, 2014, 9:00 a.m.
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

House Bill 1676, HD1, SD1 – Relating to Early Learning

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee. Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC) **supports** the intent HB1676, HD1, SD1.

This bill authorizes the executive office on early learning to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and public charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms.

Funding for the classrooms for 4-year-olds is crucial in order to provide safe, high quality, developmentally appropriate environments.

HAEYC acknowledges the vision and courage it takes for legislators to enact laws that will come to full fruition after they leave office. Investing in early childhood development and education will be a lasting legacy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Katherine E. Murphy
Executive Director
HAEYC



Tuesday, March 25, 2014
9:00 AM
Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: HB 1676 HD1 SD1– Relating to Early Learning

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

HAIS is in strong support of HB 1676 HD1 SD1 as this is one of the first and necessary steps needed to proceed with the establishment of a statewide early learning system to enhance school readiness. Hawaii is one of only ten states that does not have an established statewide early learning program, which means that we are missing a very crucial window of opportunity in the neural brain development of our young children.

The passage of this bill is particularly important because it will target the children of our most at-risk families; those who are most likely to enter kindergarten without the necessary foundational skills for learning and those who are unable to pay for a preschool education—640 children to be exact.

State subsidy programs such as Preschool Open Doors help families to supplement payments to existing private preschool providers, however for many families the co-payment is still unreasonably high and a preschool education is unattainable. Furthermore, the oversight of the creation of the preschool program by EOEL will add the element of “quality” to the equation. We know from research that preschool experiences are most effective when they are of high quality.

It makes sound fiscal sense to utilize already-existing vacant and underutilized public and charter school classrooms and to create additional jobs within the public school system.

Regardless of the outcome of the Constitutional Amendment vote at the next election, the state can, and should, proceed with building a public preschool system to accommodate the increased number of children who are ineligible to attend kindergarten during school year 2014-2015 due to the change in entry age requirements; the passage of this bill and the requested appropriation are crucial for doing so.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

Board of Directors

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Nanci Kreidman, Vice Chair
Joanne Lundstrom, Vice Chair
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Alan Shinn
Laura Smith*

TO: Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Scott Morishige, Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: Senate Committee on Ways & Means
Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. in Conf. Rm. 211

Testimony in Support of HB1676 HD1 SD1, Relating to Early Learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of HB1676 HD1 SD1, which authorizes the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the department of education and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. PHOCUSED is a statewide coalition of health, housing, and human services organizations committed to strengthening policies and programs that benefit the marginalized and underserved in Hawaii.

Education can provide a leveling of socio-economic impacts experienced by children from low-income families. These families are dealing with the challenges of Hawaii's high cost of living realities and are focused on providing the necessities, like food and housing. As a result children from low-income families are less likely to have the "extra" resources necessary to access high quality early childhood education programs. As studies have clearly shown, investing in a high-quality early childhood education will result in higher levels of educational attainment and stronger social and economic well-being. A strong start with early education provides a bridge to a different future for these children.

Once again, PHOCUSED supports HB1676 HD1 SD1 and the efforts by EOEL, DOE, and charter schools to work collaboratively to expand preschool options to more of Hawaii's children. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this critical issue.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

The Senate
Twenty-Seventh Legislature 2014
State of Hawai'i

TO: Honorable David Ige, Chair
Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

DATE: Tuesday, March 25, 2014

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 211
Hawai'i State Capitol

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

RE: HOUSE BILL 1676, HD1, SD1, RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING Vacant Classrooms

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB1676, HD1, SD1, relating to early learning. Kamehameha Schools offers comments in support of authorizing the executive office on early learning to enter into agreements with the department of education and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. This bill also makes an appropriation.

Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and three-and-four-year-olds at preschool sites statewide. In 2004, the Early Childhood Education division also began serving keiki from birth to three years old, as part of its Hi'ilani Early Childhood Collaborative program. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other preschools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii's pre-kindergarten children.

To: Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice-Chair

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Liz Chun, Early Education Policy Consultant

Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2014, 9:00 am, Conference Room 211

Subject: **HB 1676 HD1 SD1: Relating to Early Childhood Education**

I submit this testimony **in strong support for the early childhood education plan as described in HB1676 HD1 SD1.**

For over 20 years the Hawaii legislature repeatedly passed legislation which professes to support young children – but not truly included the funding nor allowed the implementation of an early childhood program. This year is the time for action that truly begins a program.

Across the State, parents have come forward to plead for investment in a statewide preschool system. Kindergarten teachers tell us children who have not attended preschool – especially those at risk – are not ready. Local advocates for young children have made the research case as to why a state investment in early learning is essential for Hawaii.

No excuses --There is a plan!

- A variety of sites for delivering programs have been articulated.
- Child assessment and data collection plans have been defined.
- Programs will be required to follow early childhood standards for programs and content.
- Quality of programs will be assured.

Please let this be the year in which the quality early childhood program finally becomes a reality.

Contact Information: lizchun@hawaii.rr.com

Testimony to
The Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Tuesday, March 25, 2014
Conference Room 211
Hawaii State Capitol

Re: House Bill 1676, HD1, SD1 Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1676, HD1, SD1, relating to early learning. My name is Robert G. Peters and I am a retired school head of an independent school in Honolulu which has a pre-K program. I am testifying in support of authorizing the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with the Department of Education and public charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms as part of a mixed-delivery system to ensure school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to kindergarten.

Research demonstrates the critical importance of early education in the life-long success for all children and recognizes that parents are a child's first teachers. As an educator and through my involvement with early learning since the creation of the early learning educational task force in 2006, I have increasingly appreciated programs that integrate parents in the educational process of their children. Not only is family engagement important in setting a child on the right course for school, but programs like the family child interaction learning programs support the education of parents about how they can best teach their own children.

Choice is something we celebrate in Hawaii. The inclusion of family child interaction learning programs as part of the early learning system for our State ensures that choice is offered and that the system is responsive to our citizenry.

I urge the legislature to consider this bill favorably as it approaches addressing the needs of Hawaii's *keiki*.

Sincerely,
Robert G. Peters, EdD



March 24, 2014
Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2014 at 9 a.m.
Committee on Ways and Means
Conference Room 211
In support of HB1676, HD1 SD1

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Celia Chang Takahashi and I am an Early Childhood Professional and mother of two.

I am writing this testimony to ask for your support of HB1676 HD1 SD1 relating to early childhood education, makes appropriation to authorize the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. It also requires the EOEL to enter into agreements with no more than five charter schools for the use of available classrooms for public preschool classrooms through June 30, 2019.

As an early childhood professional and parent I understand & am in support of the measures outlined in this bill. They are needed in order for the EOEL to proceed with its educational plan for Hawaii's young children & shape the future of the Aloha State.

In her Legislative Testimony, GG Weisenfeld, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL), stated there are more than 17,000 four-year-old keiki in Hawaii. She also informed us that when the kindergarten age change takes place with School Year 2014 – 2015 (children will need to be 5 on or before July 31st the year they enter kindergarten) approximately 5,100 children will be too young to enter kindergarten.

Last year the Legislature funded the Department of Human Services (DHS) with \$6 million for Preschool Open Doors (POD) a program that allows qualifying families to take their child care subsidy to a community-based preschool of their choice. While a step in the right direction, this funding will only cover approximately 1,200 of the 5,100

keiki affected by the kindergarten age change. *That is less than 25%*. Even with subsidies from POD, some qualifying families may find their co-payment unreasonably high and may decide not to send their child to preschool.

The Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) for the 2012 -2013 School Year estimates that approximately 43% of Hawaii's keiki entered kindergarten without preschool experience. I believe that a fair amount of those keiki entered kindergarten without preschool experience because their families could not afford the monthly tuition.

(Note: The statistics for SY 2013 -2014 were not available at the time when this testimony was written.)

If more than 40% of Hawaii's keiki were entering kindergarten without preschool experience during SY 2012 - 2013, the numbers in the near future could go up as families are impacted by the kindergarten age change & are still unable to find or afford preschool tuition or qualify for Head Start.

Supporting a variety of quality early learning experiences, including ones that uses vacant or underutilized classrooms on public school & charter school campuses is crucial as it provides eligible families with another option when considering developmentally appropriate, high quality early learning opportunities for their keiki.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB1676 HD1 SD1.



HPCCA

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION



Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The Hon. David Y. Ige, Chair

The Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of HB1676, HD1, SD1

Relating to Early Learning

Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer

March 27, 2014, 9:00 am, Room 211

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified community health centers in Hawaii, supports House Bill 1676, which sets aside vacant or unused classrooms as preschool classrooms.

The HPCA is a staunch believer in the social determinants of health, those economic and social conditions that influence an individual and a community's health status. These conditions serve as risk factors endemic to a person's living and working environment, rather than their behavioral or genetic histories. Factors such as income, education, access to recreation and healthy foods, housing, and employment, can and do have measurable impacts on a person and a community, both in health and financial outcomes.

Chief amongst social determinants is education. Research has found that the earliest years of a child's development can have lasting impacts on their educational attainment. Children with the opportunity for high-quality early childhood education are more likely to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Such attainment can lead to higher rates of degree completion, higher incomes later in life, and better overall physical and mental well-being.

For these reasons, we support House Bill 1676. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



March 24, 2014
Hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2014 at 9 a.m.
Committee on Ways and Means
Conference Room 211
In support of HB1676, HD1 SD1

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Phyllis Ida and I am a retired DOE Special Educator, and the former 619 Coordinator for the Windward District. I also over see the grant administration for the Windward District P-3 Demonstration Project that focuses on keiki reading on grade level by third grade, providing model program of seamless early learning experiences from early childhood programs through elementary school for young children in the Windward District.

I am writing this testimony to ask for your support of HB1676 HD1 SD1 relating to early childhood education, as it authorizes the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and public charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms.

The Windward P- 3 Grant & its Demonstration Project appreciates and acknowledges the need for this particular measure in order for the Executive Office on Early Learning to proceed with its educational plan for Hawaii's young children.

The Windward P-3 Demonstration project works collaboratively with DOE elementary schools, early learning programs of varying auspices, community based programs, health, safety, welfare providers, and families. We passionately work towards having developmentally appropriate early learning programs and services on our public and charter elementary campuses.

As an educator I am in support of HB1676 HD1 SD1 as it provides eligible families with another option when considering developmentally appropriate, high quality early learning opportunities for their keiki.

In January 2014 the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported that the average preschool tuition in Hawaii is about \$800 a month or \$9,600 a year.¹ According to the University of Hawaii Manoa 2013 -2014 catalog, fulltime undergraduate resident tuition for one semester is \$4,572 or \$9,144 for a school year (Spring & Fall Semesters only).² In short it costs approximately the same amount of money to send one child to preschool as it does to send one to UHM.

When you look at the numbers it is easy to see why the Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) for the 2012 -2013 School Year estimates that approximately 43% of Hawaii's keiki entered kindergarten *without* preschool experience. (Note: The statistics for SY 2013 -2014 were not available at the time when this testimony was written.)

Studies have clearly shown that the single largest impact on the well being of our K-12 system is access to quality early learning experiences. Studies have also clearly shown that investing in high-quality education will result in stronger social & economic well being for both the individual & the community as a whole.

As we work towards creating a comprehensive early learning, health, safety & welfare system it is wise for our state to invest in using vacant or underutilized public & charter classrooms to create preschool environments as it will create additional options for Hawaii's families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

¹ [A Step Ahead At School](#), Christine Donnelly, Honolulu Star-Advertiser, January 12, 2014

² [Regular Tuition Schedule 2013 – 2014](#)



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2014

RE: H.B. 1676, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING

PERSON TESTIFYING: WIL OKABE
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Wil Okabe
President
Joan Kamila Lewis
Vice President
Colleen Pasco
Secretary-Treasurer
Alvin Nagasako
Executive Director

The Honorable Chair David Ige and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports and recommends amendments to H.B. 1676, H.D. 1, S.D. 1** relating to the usage of vacant and underutilized classrooms for public preschool classrooms.

HSTA is the exclusive representative of more than 13,500 public and charter schoolteachers statewide. As the state affiliate of the 3.2 million members of the National Education Association, HSTA believes in public preschools being taught by public school teachers. The association recognizes the value of quality early childhood education program in preparing young children to enter schools ready to learn.

HSTA is seeking clarification in the proposed definition of a “qualified educational professional”. HSTA believes that high quality early childhood programs should be staffed by highly qualified teachers, as they possess a deep understanding of child development and specialized training in early childhood education. As such, we recommend that all teachers working in publicly funded preschools hold a bachelor’s degree in child development and/or early childhood education.

Further, we believe that federal legislation should be enacted to assist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs must be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of H.B. 1676, HD1, S.D. 1.**