

SB2768

Relating to Kindergarten

EDU, WAM



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of
S.B. 2768, Relating to Kindergarten
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Education
January 29, 2014
1:30 p.m., Room 414

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

Good afternoon. I am GG Weisenfeld, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning. EOEL is in support of Senate Bill 2768.

The purpose of this bill is to make kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year. The bill further requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Executive Office on Early Learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness process and establish an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

EOEL supports the provision to make kindergarten mandatory.

Across the nation, most school districts require that a child be five years old before entering kindergarten or become five in the first month of school. In 2012, 39 states and the District of Columbia had cutoff dates of September (usually the first day of school) or earlier.

With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards for K-12, it is important that Hawaii's children are both developmentally and academically ready for kindergarten.

EOEL also supports the requirement of this bill that EOEL cooperate with the Department of Education to develop a kindergarten readiness assessment system.

As EOEL develops a prekindergarten program for four-year-olds, it is important that the School Readiness and Early Childhood Education programs align with the DOE kindergarten program.

A kindergarten readiness assessment system is an important part of achieving this alignment. EOEL recommends that perhaps the uniform statewide “individualized kindergarten readiness process” be called the “individualized kindergarten readiness tool” and that the “individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system” be called the “individualized kindergarten readiness assessment process.”

Please make sure that this bill does not inadvertently re-establish junior kindergarten as it appears to do in section 2.

EOEL respectfully asks that the committee move this bill forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 01/29/2014

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2768 RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN.

Purpose of Bill: Makes kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year. Requires the department of education, in collaboration with the executive office on early learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program. Establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system. Makes an appropriation to the department of education.

Department's Position:

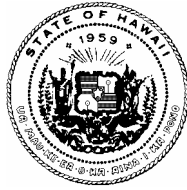
The Department of Education (Department) supports mandatory kindergarten for children who will be five years of age by July 31 of the school year.

The Department, in collaboration with the Executive Office on Early Learning, is committed to developing a comprehensive kindergarten program of instruction, providing professional development for kindergarten teachers, and implementing an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system. We appreciate the support that this bill provides by including an appropriation to assist with the effective implementation of this measure as the Department would not have the means to do so under our budget appropriation.

The Department is committed to a kindergarten system that balances quality learning experiences with developmentally appropriate practices in classrooms to support every child's journey towards a college- and career-ready future in Hawaii.

Additionally, we ask that the bill be amended to remove the reference to junior kindergartens in Section 2, subsection (a).

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN
DIRECTOR

BARBARA A. YAMASHITA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

January 29, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 2768 – RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN**

Hearing: Wednesday, January 29, 2014; 1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 414, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purposes of S.B. 2768 are to make kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year; requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Executive Office on Early Learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program; establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment; and makes an appropriation to the Department of Education.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill and defers to the Department of Education and the Executive Office on Early Learning on the implementation of its provisions.

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

The Preschool Open Doors (POD) program serves 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.

Requiring that kindergarten attendance be mandatory under the compulsory education law would require children enrolled in the POD program to attend kindergarten in the following year and will promote continuity of the children's early learning experiences and thus maximizing the value of the POD program. Children will have the needed school-readiness skills they experienced in a preschool setting through the POD program and will be ready to apply those skills in kindergarten.

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



January 28, 2014

TO: Chair Jill Tokuda
Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani
Members of the Senate Education Committee

FROM: Deborah Zysman
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Testimony in support of SB2768: RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN.**

The Good Beginnings Alliance **supports SB2768**, which seeks to make kindergarten mandatory in Hawaii for a child who is at least five years old on July 31 of the school year. The measure also calls on the Department of Education and the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to collaborate on developing kindergarten readiness program and an individual readiness assessment system. The Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) is a policy and advocacy organization focused on ensuring that Hawaii's young children are healthy, safe, and ready for school. We strive to support our stakeholder community to this end, as well as provide relevant information to our families and fellow advocate community.

As the Hawaii state legislature continues to develop and invest in a comprehensive early childhood education system, the inclusion of mandatory Kindergarten makes sense. Kindergarten education provides Hawaii's children an unparalleled educational experience that ensures age appropriate reading and writing proficiency, as well important interpersonal skills. Currently, over 95% of Hawaii children attend kindergarten.

Importantly, SB2768 also provides for the development of a new individual student assessment system to replace the current Hawaii state school readiness assessment (HSSRA). GBA supports this effort as it is an invaluable tool to help measure the skills and abilities of children entering the DOE system, as well as the range of preschool and childcare experiences that a child may or may not have had. This information helps teachers and families better address an individual student's needs, and helps policymakers better address the needs of our overall education system.

SB2768 ensures that mandatory Kindergarten in our state comes with the quality oversight, investment in teacher training and resources, and protections for parents who choose not to take part in the proposed assessment system.

Thank you for allowing GBA to offer testimony in support of SB2768.

Sincerely,
Deborah Zysman
Executive Director

INPEACE- Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture

TESTIMONY

SBs 2975, 2826, 2236, & 2768

RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, LEARNING and KINDERGARTEN

Testimony Presented Before Committee on Education

January 29, 2014, in Conference Room 414 @ 1:30 pm

by Dr. Kanoe Nāone, Chief Executive Officer, INPEACE

INPEACE, the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture, **supports SBs 2975, 2826, 2236, & 2768.**

We know that 85% of the brain is developed by the time children turn 5. As a former Department of Education elementary teacher and as a mother I have seen the benefits of early education and what happens when children don't have access to quality learning. The single largest impact on the well being of our K-12 system is access to early childhood education. By providing families, especially those in low-income areas, access to early learning we can dramatically and positively shift the well being of the children in those schools and areas. We believe an equitable early learning system is of critical importance to the success of our children and the economic future of our state. The elimination of Junior Kindergarten will affect more than 5,000 children in our communities, with the largest impact on those most at risk and who will not have access to preschool or early education before entering kindergarten.

As a Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) provider, INPEACE **strongly supports SB 2975** because we understand the value of this program in providing vital and culturally responsive services to some of the state's highest need populations. We are able to achieve success via FCILs by empowering families with the knowledge they need in order to support their children throughout school and life. Collectively, there are 6 organizations who are a part of 'Eleu (an early childhood consortium) and collectively we annually serve more than 25,000 children and their families statewide. Our FCILs are strategically placed in underserved areas where there are high concentrations of Native Hawaiians and minority populations. As a result, these families have access to FREE & high quality early childhood education, a critical need in at-risk areas. Support of FCILs through SB 2975 sends a clear message that the state is willing to diversify the early learning options based on family need and choice!

We **support SB 2826**, upon ratification, because it will move our state one step closer to building a viable early learning system. To establish this, we are committed to working with multiple organizations and agencies to offer a range of early learning programs that meet different needs and values to effectively serve the community more broadly and support the success of our most at-risk children. We support a system that provides families with culturally responsive, high-quality early learning opportunities that enables healthy, successful development, and the ability of each child to reach their full potential.

We **support SB 2236** to amend H.R.S. §302L to authorize agreements to use underutilized DOE and charter school facilities for preschool programs **with reservations**. We currently utilize classrooms in the DOE for 11 of our preschool sites already and have been doing so in some cases for the last 15 years, so we want to be sure that we are able to continue those partnerships if this bill passes. The lack of facilities and the high cost associated with them make it very difficult for preschool programs to thrive. This amendment has the ability to support preschools and systems alignment between the HIDOE and the early childhood system to ensure our children and their families have a smooth transition from their preschool programs into kindergarten.

We **support SB 2768** because this bill encourages collaboration & alignment between the early learning system and the HIDOE to establish a kindergarten readiness program.

INPEACE is a non-profit, educational organization that annually serves more than 4,500 children, parents and community members through its early childhood and workforce development programs on five different islands. The work of INPEACE over the past 20 years has been extensive and progressive in Hawai'i, particularly within communities that do not otherwise have access to the services it provides. On a daily basis, we see the critical role early learning plays in the economic wellbeing of communities, especially those in areas where poverty is prevalent. We also have statistically significant educational outcomes for the children in our FCIL programs making it a viable option for school readiness.



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Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, January 29, 2014
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 414

SB 2768 – Relating to mandatory kindergarten

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee. Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC) supports the intent of SB 2768.

Making kindergarten mandatory would demonstrate the state's continued commitment to quality early childhood education. HAEYC supports the use of an appropriate assessment system that is used to benefit the child, used in planning curriculum, and is not used for high stakes decisions. Data collected should be used appropriately to improve classroom instruction. Data used to evaluate teacher effectiveness must be carefully thought out and planned.

HAEYC also supports the reinstatement of a state level Early Childhood Specialist with appropriate support at the district levels.

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.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 P.M.
Conference Room 414, State Capitol**

RE: SENATE BILL 2768 RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

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

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 2768 – Relating to Kindergarten.

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 properly equip Hawaii’s youth with important life skills. The Chamber strongly believes that children need to attend kindergarten or risk following behind their peers. While non-attendance is not a large segment of the population it is important that as many children attend kindergarten. Also as it is voluntary, sometimes children who are not ready to advance to the next level are allowed to move forward.

On a broader level, 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.



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

320 Ward Avenue, Suite 209 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

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The Twenty-Seventh Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
January 29, 2014

S.B. 2768 – RELATING TO
KINDERGARTEN

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO supports S.B. 2768 which makes kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year and requires the department of education, in collaboration with the executive office on early learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establish an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

Investments in education, especially early childhood education are important for our keiki's success. Making kindergarten mandatory is an investment that will payoff for future generations and help students succeed and perform well in school.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira".

Randy Perreira
President



*For over 100 years,
preparing children for success*

2707 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

Phone: (808) 941-9414
Fax: (808) 946-1468

www.kcaapreschools.org

January 29, 2014

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

From: Christina Cox, President
KCAA Preschools of Hawaii

Subject: SB2768 Relating to Kindergarten

KCAA Preschools of Hawaii was established in 1895 by the Woman's Board of Missions to serve the children of immigrant workers. We serve over 900 children per year in 7 NAEYC accredited preschools on Oahu. More than 50% of our students are low-income and over 80% go on to attend DOE elementary schools. We manage tuition subsidies from 7 different sources, each with its own set of requirements. We have a \$7 million annual operating budget with 130 employees. This past year, KCAA completed the construction of Hawaii's first professional development center for early educators at a cost of \$3.2 million. It is located on our Mother Rice campus in Moiliili. The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Center for Early Education and Development was funded exclusively by private businesses and Hawaii's dedicated philanthropic community. KCAA's Board was instrumental in this effort and is committed to working with the State, the DOE, UH and Chaminade University as well as the early education community to increase the number of qualified teachers, to improve their practice and to improve outcomes for Hawaii's *keiki*.

Please note that while I presently serve as the center-based program provider representative on the Early Learning Advisory Board and also serve as the Liaison for the Childcare Business Coalition of Hawaii which represents more than 90 centers throughout the State I am testifying in support of the intent of this measure today as the President of KCAA Preschools of Hawaii, a position that I have held for the past 13 years.

A 2012 report issued by the National Center for Education Statistics reported that 16 states require kindergarten attendance. While that issue remains open for discussion, the value of using a statewide individualized kindergarten readiness system to inform instruction and to measure progress is critical to improving outcomes for children.

KCAA has a long-standing commitment to providing a high quality program for young children. A key component of such a program must include curriculum instruction informed by assessment.

ATHERTON - KAILUA

KUAPA - HAWAII KAI

LAURA MORGAN - KAPALAMA HEIGHTS

MOTHER RICE - MOILIILI

MURIEL - KAKAOKO

NA LEI - KALIHI

WAI-KAHALA - KAHALA



KCAA has used the nationally recognized Teaching Strategies GOLD® formative assessment for more than 10 years. We employ Hawaii's only certified GOLD® trainers and conducted multiple training sessions for both preschool and DOE teachers at our new training center this past year.

Teaching Strategies has developed kindergarten entries for a number of states, using the widely researched GOLD® assessment. It is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and the Hawaii Early Learning Guidelines.

We have worked closely with our P-3 partners at UH to support their initial work with Teaching Strategies a few years ago to develop the current DOE GOLD® pilot project.

We have worked closely with UH and P-20 to provide data on our students for the past number of years to support their work to develop a data base that would track students across systems from their preschool years to DOE high school graduation. The State Longitudinal Data System project is one that will ultimately be able to provide guidance to educators in all settings as to how best to invest both human and financial resources.

Regardless of the assessment that the State ultimately selects for the purposes of collecting information and data to measure child development across domains, we are in strong support of the effort to implement such an assessment to inform instruction and improve outcomes for children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

January 29, 2014

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

This testimony is submitted in support for SB2768, requiring Kindergarten to be mandatory, and establishing a statewide Kindergarten readiness and assessment system.

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 supports mandatory Kindergarten for our students. The Coalition in recent years has supported Early Learning legislation, as our members believe that the earlier a child is exposed to school, the better outcomes for student achievement. SB2768 makes clear that all five-year olds are required to attend school, ensuring consistency from a pre-Kindergarten program to a Kindergarten program. We have heard from school administrators that while most children enroll in Kindergarten, because it is not mandatory, some families will not feel compelled to send their children to school on consistent basis. Therefore, along with the change in legislation, we also recommend an outreach program be implemented to educate families about the change in the law along with the importance of daily attendance.

The Coalition also supports establishing a uniform statewide Kindergarten readiness process as well as an individualized Kindergarten readiness assessment system. We like that there will be collaboration between the Executive Office of Early Learning and the Department of Education, so that alignment is maintained.

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
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
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 (*)



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TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2768, RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

**Senate Committee on Education
Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 414**

Honorable Chair Tokuda and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 175 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2768, relating to kindergarten.

Kindergarten is an essential part of early education, setting the stage for success in school and beyond. In all but 14 states, however, kindergarten is not mandatory for keiki, who can miss out on key introductions to reading, writing, mathematics, science, and peer socialization, all without repercussions redounding to parents. This has got to change.

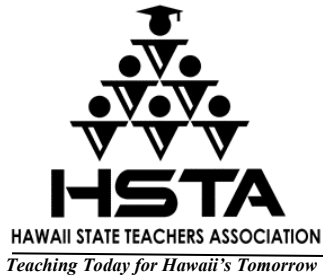
equal playing field, especially when it comes to educational achievement.

for Education Statistics has states that over the course of a single year, kindergarten students can improve reading and math scores by 10 and 8 percentile points, respectively. Kindergarten offers long-term benefits to society as well. When coupled with quality early childhood education programs, mandatory kindergarten can enhance and accelerate crime reduction, decreased healthcare costs, and improved economic prospects. Between promoting academic success and advancing socioeconomic prosperity, kindergarten effectively defines success for future generations.

All children
The National

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

RE: S.B. 2768 – RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

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 Jill Tokuda, The Honorable Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani and the Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) wholeheartedly **strongly supports S.B. 2768, Mandatory Kindergarten.**

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 that kindergarten should be mandatory as well as adequate funding should be provided by the state so that kindergarten education will be available to all five year olds.

In last night's state of the union address, President Obama referred to the proliferation of pre-kindergarten programs. As such, kindergarten may no longer be the primary bridge between home and formal education. However, it still serves as an important transitional function as kindergarteners are expected to learn basic academic and social skills that prepare them for the demands of first and subsequent grades. In order to ensure that this expectation is met, kindergarten attendance should be mandatory, and Hawaii should offer a publicly –funded, quality kindergarten program.

HSTA supports full day mandatory Kindergarten programs. If early childhood education is a priority, then schools should have mandatory kindergarten in our compulsory attendance laws before a new project is started.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB 2768.**



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Wednesday, January 29, 2014, Room 414

S.B. 2768, RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Chair, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters Hawaii opposes SB2768. Everyone agrees with the concept of a good early childhood education. However, integral to a good early education experience is having qualified teachers in the early education classroom. SB2768, which makes kindergarten attendance mandatory for Hawaii's children beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, is problematic on several levels.

First, mandatory kindergarten for Hawaii's five year old population should only be considered when each child has the opportunity to be taught by a teacher having a PK-3 license for a public school teacher and an appropriate education degree or coursework for private school teachers. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), founded by early childhood education professionals, has listed a set of criteria for coursework that consists of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) for this youngest age group. The PK-3 license is gained after having such DAP early childhood courses from an accredited post-secondary education program, and passing the PK-3 praxis.

Second, data collected from a 2008 survey of Hawaii public school kindergarten teachers indicates that 73.8% of teachers surveyed had no early childhood education qualifications (DOE/ELC, 20211). If kindergarten becomes mandatory for all five year olds in Hawaii, the kindergarten population will increase significantly. Children will be mandated to attend a classroom with a very real possibility of being taught in what for most will be their first formal education experience by a teacher who has no previous classroom experience with children at this youngest level - or has had no early childhood education coursework.

Third, the League believes that all children are entitled to an equitable education. It is problematic to LWV Hawaii that an increased pool of children will potentially attend kindergarten in Hawaii's public and private schools without the assurance of a fully qualified early childhood education teacher for this youngest age group.

We respectfully request that the Legislature reconsider the idea of mandatory kindergarten for five year olds until the fully qualified and PK-3 licensed kindergarten teacher workforce increases adequately.

We urge you to hold this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
January 29, 2014, 1:30 p.m.
by

Donald B. Young
Personal Testimony

SB 2768 RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Education;

My name is Donald Young. I am the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

On behalf of the College of Education, I support SB 2768. While we continue to struggle with how to provide quality early learning opportunities for all young children, it remains an anomaly that we do not require Kindergarten attendance. It is true that in Hawai‘i a very large number of families voluntarily enroll their children in Kindergarten. However, leaving early learning to chance is unacceptable if we truly intend to create a literate, productive workforce and ensure all children have access to life opportunities they may wish to achieve.

Section 4 of SB 2768 calls for the development of an individual assessment system to determine a child’s readiness for Kindergarten. I wish to respectfully remind the Committee that the College of Education has considerable faculty expertise in developing early learning systems, including assessment protocols and instruments appropriate for young children, that could contribute to fulfilling the intent of this bill.

I wish to also point out that several years ago the Hawaii Educational Policy Center (HEPC) engaged in a statewide effort focused on the transition of young children into Kindergarten. In addition to the research conducted, there were two instruments developed, one assessing the readiness of groups of children to enter Kindergarten, and another assessing the readiness of schools to accept and provide quality educational services for them. I respectfully suggest that should SB 2768 pass that we re-look and build upon the earlier HEPC work rather than assuming that we are starting from scratch all over again. The reports can be found on the HEPC website.

- [Ready for Success In Kindergarten — A Comparative Analysis of Community Beliefs: Preschool and Kindergarten Parents, Teachers, and Administrators \[POLICY BRIEF ALSO AVAILABLE\]](#), (114 pp, 608K, PDF)
- [Development, Validation and Field Testing of Readiness Instruments: Schools Ready for Children and Children Ready for School](#)(83 pp, 764K, PDF)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senate Education Committee

Re: SB 2768 Relating to Kindergarten

Wednesday, January 29, 2014
1:30 pm, Conference Rm. 414

As the newly appointed Early Learning Specialist for Windward District, I am pleased to write in support of SB 2768.

As we consider the educational needs of preschool children, it only makes sense to develop a systematic view of educational programs for all young children. Mandatory Kindergarten is a step in the right direction.

On many fronts in the early childhood community, we are considering how best to create a seamless early childhood education system. We are working to promote the Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards, promote developmentally appropriate teaching practices, and incorporate a wider use of formative assessments in P-3 classrooms to guide teaching to meet individual needs.

As we incorporate these improvements into our system, we must not allow children to be exempt from the benefits of these changes. Although the number of children who do not attend Kindergarten in Hawaii is small, we cannot simply overlook them since they are in the minority. It is difficult to imagine the amount of time it takes a child in first grade to catch up to her/his peers if s/he has not been to school before. I am sure that children who face such a challenge do not feel successful in school. That is not something that should be allowed. It doesn't make sense to allow children to start school significantly behind their peers.

As we work toward universal preschool, it makes sense to fill in the gap for children not attending Kindergarten. We should make it mandatory. Successful passage of this bill will be life changing for so many of our five-year olds. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Gillentine, PhD, NBCT
Early Learning Specialist
Windward District

Jan. 28, 2014

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Senate Education Chair; Senator Michelle Kidani, Senate Education Vice Chair; and committee members

I am in strong support of proposed legislation (SB 2826, SB 2236, SB 2975 and SB 2768) RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND KINDERGARTEN.

High-quality early education or developmentally (culturally and linguistically) appropriate programs, prior to entering kindergarten, positively affect the physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional outcomes of young children. Provided with such opportunities, children are more likely to succeed in kindergarten and beyond, and more likely to grow into healthy, capable, and contributing adults. Studies have proven that high-quality programs are especially effective for at-risk children, including low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children, with the great potential to alter their lifetime trajectories.

In Hawaii only 40% of our 4 year olds receive early childhood education services to prepare them for kindergarten and not all are high quality. Children with a lack of readiness for school creates an achievement gap that often follows children to later grades in school. In addition, 1 in 6 children in Hawaii live in poverty, and most do not have equal access to high quality early childhood education. This not only affects individual children, families, communities but also affects the rest of society.

Societies that invest in quality early learning boast higher levels of educational attainment; reduced homelessness, crime, and substance abuse; improved health; and better overall social and economic well-being. In Hawaii every \$1 invested in early learning generates \$4.20 in future savings and increased earnings. Many in Hawaii's education field, including DOE educators, agree that if we're going to put our money anywhere in education, it should be in early learning.

Recognizing the significant benefits of high-quality early learning programs, federal, state, as well as local governments have substantially increased their investments in preschool programs in the past decade. Unfortunately, Hawaii is one of the last 10 states without a State-funded early learning program and if this bill is passed, we will finally join the rest of the states with our own State-funded early learning program.

I am in strong support of **SB 2826 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**, which will enable Hawaii to implement a statewide early childhood education program, upon ratification of amendment to article X, section 1 of the Hawaii State Constitution. This early childhood education program with providers of high quality early learning education will be established within the Early Learning System, established by section 302L-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

SB 2826, outlines Hawaii's over 25 year that our state has been slowly building support for an early learning system. With increased attention nationwide on the positive results from high quality prekindergarten programs, more opportunities for federal funding and increased rigor

in early learning and K-12 educational standards, Hawaii cannot afford to take any more time. We need to act as soon as the constitutional amendment is ratified. Once ratified, public dollars could go to qualified private early childhood providers as well as the DOE to build a mixed service delivery system of high quality early childhood education.

With the passage of SB 2826, the State will:

- Build capacity for 4 year olds.
- Build on the existing and private investments.
- Establish developmentally appropriate quality standards linked to children's educational outcomes.
- Utilize a mixed service delivery system (e.g. center-based, group child care homes, family child care programs, family child interaction learning programs, faith-based, DOE) and contract with eligible providers.
- Contract with eligible providers who meet structural quality (physical environment, child-adult ratios, group size, caregiver qualifications, compensation), have a quality curriculum and provide intentional teaching. In addition, there will be particular focus on positive teacher-child interactions, individual child formative assessment, and family engagement.
- Recognize that eligible providers administer early education programs conducted in Hawaiian and English languages.
- Have eligible programs that address multiple domains of children's learning and development (physical, social, emotional, linguistic, cognitive, approaches to learning).
- Offer voluntary early learning programs to 3 and 4 year olds, with priority to children in year before kindergarten, and underserved or at-risk children.
- Enable EOEL to provide support to eligible providers about how to implement quality standards (positive teacher-child interactions, individual child formative assessment, family engagement, and curriculum aligned with Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

In addition, I am in strong support of **SB 2236 RELATED TO EARLY LEARNING**, which authorizes EOEL to enter into agreements with the DOE and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. These classrooms will give priority to DOE and charter schools serving at-risk children and these classroom are in addition to current pre-plus programs. It is sound fiscal policy to use existing classrooms before constructing new ones.

Another bill that I am in strong support of is **SB 2975 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNIG**, which will make an appropriation for the EOEL to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs (FCILs). High quality FCILs are a vital and important part of the mixed delivery early learning system in Hawaii, often serving Native Hawaiian rural and urban communities for many years.

Finally, I am in strong support of **SB 2768 RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN**, which will make DOE kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year. This legislation will also require the DOE, in collaboration with the EOEL, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establish an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

Studies have shown that high quality full day kindergarten is very beneficial for young children's short term and long term success in school and life. Yet, this critical grade is often overlooked in the K-12 system. And with attention to a voluntary prekindergarten program it makes sense to make DOE kindergarten mandatory. Full day DOE kindergarten mandatory will confirm Hawaii's commitment to our future kindergarteners and their families. High quality kindergarten, should not be a push down of first grade curriculum but it needs to be an enriching developmentally (culturally and linguistic) appropriate kindergarten where each and every child can reach challenging yet achievable goals.

In addition, I support the passage of SB 2768 to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program, with an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system. I believe this kindergarten readiness program, along with the state prekindergarten program needs to be part of the birth through 3rd grade (or P-3) continuum. The individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system should be an entry assessment that is developmentally appropriate and assess multiple domains of learning (e.g. physical, social-emotional, cognitive, linguistic, approaches to learning) and a formative assessment that is used by teachers to link with curriculum and improve instruction and educational outcomes.

With SB 2768, I support the appropriation to the DOE for \$450,000 for 2014-15. This funding will help DOE with administration, technology, and support for establishing the individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system and provide for 4 full time equivalent (FTE) positions for professional development and training of kindergarten teachers.

Thank you for your compassion, commitment and leadership establishing high quality early education and kindergarten for Hawaii' keiki, their families and our entire society.

Sincerely,

Terry Lock
Junior Specialist
University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education
Institute for Teacher Education
Everly Hall, Room 224
locktf@hawaii.edu

January 27, 2014
Hearing on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.
Senate Education Ways and Means Committee
Conference Room 414
In support of SB 2768

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 am writing this testimony to ask for your support of SB 2768 as it requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Executive Office of Early Learning, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system while making kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of their kindergarten school year

There is a need for this particular measure in order for the state to proceed with its educational plan for Hawaii's young children.

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.

If a child does not arrive at kindergarten ready to learn because of his/her lack of or access to quality early learning opportunities, he/she will most likely struggle to keep up.

A lack of school readiness directly undermines reading proficiency, the leading indicator of long-term academic and life success. This could lead to the child losing interest and a motivation to learn. With each subsequent year of education, the child's achievement gap only widens.

It is safe to say that if a child does not have preschool experience and does not attend kindergarten because it is not mandatory, there is a possibility that the child's achievement gap will begin to look like and feel like a canyon.

One of the first steps in closing the achievement gap is by making kindergarten attendance mandatory.

I also support the bill requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to work collaboratively with the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) to create a statewide kindergarten readiness program as this will aide in the closing of the achievement gap.

The EOEL is staffed by individuals who have experience in addressing the needs of the whole child ~ that is education, health, safety and welfare. They are also skilled in working with a variety of partners, both private and public, to address the needs of the whole child and his/her family.

Having the DOE work with the EOEL is a collaboration that will put Hawaii's keiki on a road to a successful life.

It is time for us to seriously invest in Hawaii's future by investing in its keiki.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2768.

January 27, 2014
Hearing on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.
Senate Education Ways and Means Committee
Conference Room 414
In support of SB 2768

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Celia Chang Takahashi and I am an Early Childhood Professional asking you to support SB 2768 relating to early childhood education, as it requires the department of Education (DOE) to work collaboratively with the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program, establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system, and makes kindergarten mandatory.

As an early childhood professional 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.

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.

A lack of school readiness that is provided by quality early learning experiences prior to kindergarten (i.e., preschool) undermines reading proficiency, the leading indicator of long term academic and life success. This in evidently creates an achievement gap and has a negative impact on the child as he/she may lose interest and motivation to learn because he/she lacks the foundation to establish reading proficiency.

If a child does not attend preschool and does not attend kindergarten because it is not mandatory, the problem is magnified making the achievement gap larger and larger.

Making kindergarten mandatory is one of the things that should be done to ensure that the future of our keiki is a bright and successful one.

I also support the bill as it requires the Department of Education (DOE) to work collaboratively with the Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) to create a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establishes an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

The EOEL is staffed by individuals who have a diverse background that will guide them in addressing the needs of the whole child; that is education, health, safety and welfare ~ not just the child's physical health, but his/her social and emotional health as well.

The EOEL staff also understand how important the early years are and that children develop at their own pace. Establishing an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment that is guided by individuals who understand child development, health, safety and welfare insures that each child will be seen as an individual. This will, I believe, dramatically decrease the number of children falling through the cracks and close the achievement gap.

As an educator I am in support of SB2768 as it continues to help Hawaii move towards investing its future by investing in our keiki.

The time to invest in our keiki is now. Hawaii cannot wait any longer. The Aloha State deserves better. Our keiki deserve better.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2768.

February 28, 2014

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

From: Robyn S. B. Chun
rsbchun@gmail.com

Education Committee Hearing
February 28, 2014

Honorable Chairs & Committee Members:

Thank you for your policy leadership when it comes to addressing the needs of Hawai'i's youngest keiki as well as your tireless work in the community supporting many of the early childhood organizations and practitioners across a diverse spectrum that are care passionately about young children (birth through 8 years) and their families.

I am testifying in support of S.B. 2826, S.B. 2236, S.B. 2975 and S.B. 2768 which enable Hawai'i to establish an Early Childhood Education Program that is part of the larger Early Learning System established in section 302L-2 Hawai'i Revised Statutes. The proposed amendments to the Act and supporting bills build on previous legislation and incorporates the contributions from multiple stakeholders. It allows the state to begin work on a mixed-delivery system for children birth through 8-years-old that builds on the strengths and collective public and private sector resources in our communities on behalf of our most needy young children and their families.

My work as a teacher in preschools and DOE K-1 classrooms, as family child care provider and teacher educator, and my personal experience as a mother of twins, has impressed upon me the importance of providing each child with a meaningful and culturally relevant early experience that will address each child's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development.

The Executive Office on Early Learning has demonstrated it is a partner that works hand-in-hand with families, advocacy agencies and diverse organizations within our early childhood professional Ohana. Their work builds upon years of effort on behalf of many groups and will assure that we move forward building on the wisdom and expertise of representatives of our island community and field as we design and implement an early learning system where:

- each young child is assured of a strong foundation to succeed educationally and in life,

- families and communities are supported and empowered as partners in assuring their keiki succeed as lifelong learners and contributing members of our communities and society; and,
- there are culturally and geographically responsive program options to address the needs and concerns of our most vulnerable keiki and families.

I support incorporating of quality standards that focus on as positive teacher-child interactions and commitments to family engagement as essential components of a sound early childhood program. I also support the value of assessments that will take into account all developmental domains and which facilitate continuity of each child's experience across birth – 8 settings, with the caveat that we must provide practitioners and programs with the professional development resources and support needed to be able to assess children and evaluate programs using ethically responsible methods that respect and honor each child's individual and cultural uniqueness. We shall also need to nurture in our practitioners the ability to use formative assessment to inform meaningful, integrated, content rich and child centered curriculum that supports all areas of development and provides a strong foundation for later educational experiences. In my experience, practitioners across the PK-K spectrum are actively seeking guidance on how to address development and content standards appropriately.

The field of early childhood education has existed for many years without a steady funding base and as a result is characterized by difficulty retaining and growing a highly skilled workforce. As a teacher educator, I am mindful of the investment needed to provide for an adequate infrastructure that results in high quality programs. In order to ensure children can benefit from the kind of services that can lead to lifelong positive outcomes, I hope that adequate funding will be designated to support early educators in their professional development needs, to create career and educational pathways for the field, and to attract and retain a highly trained workforce. I am also hopeful that this support will create opportunities for professional development that crosses over the boundaries of institutions and that fosters opportunities for collaboration and community across settings. It seems it would be necessary for practitioners across the spectrum of settings to have shared experiences and understanding we are to build an early learning system together.

Preparing our children for the future means, in part, investing in their well-being from the start. These bills collectively are a positive step forward in helping Hawaii's families provide for their keiki during the early childhood years (birth through age 8 years). It creates an opportunity for shared leadership that listens to and reflects the needs, wisdom, and expertise of our community. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S.B. 2826, S.B. 2236, S.B. 2975, and S.B. 2768.

Sincerely yours,
Robyn S. B. Chun
Early Childhood Teacher Educator

January 28, 2014

Dear Chair Tokuda and Vice-Chair Kidani,

I am writing to express my support of the following bills:

SB2826

SB2236

SB2975

SB2768

I believe these bills will promote the welfare of the children and families of Hawaii. I am concerned that our youngest, most impressionable members of our society receive every measure we can provide to equip them for a bright and successful future. Thank you for your tireless support of our people and for working for the best interests of Hawaii. Please vote in support of these important measures.

Mahalo,

Terry Nakamura

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: Lynne_Fukuda@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2768 on Jan 29, 2014 13:30PM
Date: Monday, January 27, 2014 1:23:40 PM

SB2768

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for EDU on Jan 29, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynne Marie Fukuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments: To Whom it May Concern: This is a testimonial letter to let you know that early childhood ed that is provided free of charge is very needed due to the cut off age of 5 for grade K. Our Gr K is now the gr 1 of yours and my past- very hard, academic, not handson and not age appropriate. Imagine lateborns and 4 yr olds missing a yr before gr K and unprepared psychologically, behaviorally, and academically. Gr K must be able to count to 100, add/subtract, know sight words, write, and do all thigns gr 1 students did. In my preschool class attached to Pahala Elem that is federally funded, we have provided valuable teaching/care/and training of young 3 and half and 4 yr olds who truly need a good preschool in our area which does not provide for them. Even if preschool existed the parents would not be able to pay for it or would not be convinced to let them go since tutu would watch them at home . The quality of ed we have at our preschool is very similar to what PreK students received before. They are academically aligned to HELDS standards, have rituals and routines, set behaviors expectations, fun crafts and science, lots of equipment and supplied due to \$5000 fed funds, visits to library and places, a full time EA, and limit of 20 students in our class which is now 18 students. All parents are very happy and continue to bring students regularly, benefit from advice on raising/teaching children, and also benefit from time freed up to pursue schooling, career, work, and also to have a breather from large family of young children. I have also connected recently with Tutu and Me to channel their graduates to our school. Tutu and Me has benefited me by setting up behaviors, and also training parents in teaching their kids and caring for them as responsible parents who are aware of the value of early cchildhood ed and its effects on brain development. If we are able to continue to provide preschool or junior K to our students, we will have quality students who will go onto college and also struggle less in the upper grades. I am very joyful each day to have naptime, snack, excursions, centers, art, crafts, adn science in addition to ELA and math with my students who love what they do and do things that are age-appropriate, fun, engaging and will impact them as students all theri days. I am also in the process of getting certified for ECE but hold a gr K-6 certification, qualification in science, and also have taught for 30 yrs with young children. I also presently take PATCH classes and and sign language. I love my field and hope to stay for many years. All of the parents, relatives, staff, faculty, and tutus in our community of Pahala have told me of how valuable our preschool ed is. Please

continue to fight for our children who need this to get out of poverty in the Kau area and to have a bright future. Lynne Marie Fukuda PreK Teacher, Pahala Elementary MA Anthropology, MA Elem Ed BS Biology Former Catholic school teacher and college instructor

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: [Alfred Castle](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Support for Early Childhood Education
Date: Monday, January 27, 2014 6:27:22 AM

I fully support SG 2975, SB 2236, SB2826, and 2768.

Alfred L. Castle
Executive Director and Treasurer
Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation
733 Bishop Street, Suite 1275
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone (808) 522-1101
Fax (808) 522-1103

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lani Carson	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: As a preschool teacher and director I highly encourage you to make kindergarten mandatory, and to publish for all of Hawaii to see the kindergarten readiness expectations so that existing preschools, parents, and home care programs can properly prepare the children in their care for success in Hawaii's kindergarten classes. Mahalo!