



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

April 3, 2019

**TO:** Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Lauren Moriguchi, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure:** H.B. No. 1527, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING BUDGET  
**Hearing Date:** April 4, 2019  
**Time:** 10:35 a.m.  
**Location:** Room 211

**Bill Description:** Appropriates funds for the fiscal biennium 2019-2021 operating budget of the Department of Education's Executive Office on Early Learning program. Effective 7/1/2030.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

Good morning. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL is in strong support of H.B. 1527, S.D. 1, and respectfully requests amendments.

We appreciate the Legislature's support of EOEL's work to increase access to high-quality early learning. EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

We appreciate this vehicle for our budget requests this fiscal biennium. We would also like to note, for purposes of the bill description, that EOEL is attached to DOE for administrative purposes only. Thank you for allowing us to highlight the following items in our budget request:

**1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Program Specialist position for workforce development**

In addition to administering the EOEL Public Pre-K Program, EOEL is responsible for coordination of the comprehensive early childhood system to help ensure a solid foundation for Hawaii's young children, prenatal to age five, by working with partners, families, and communities, connecting policies, programs, and funding in relation to health, safety, early childhood education, and school

readiness and success. Included in EOEL's responsibilities is the coordination of efforts to develop a highly-qualified, stable and diverse workforce, which is one of the key components needed to ensure the positive outcomes that are associated with early learning. At best, Hawaii's early childhood workforce can be described as fragmented where providers work in disparate systems, and the expectations and requirements for their preparation and credentials have not kept pace with what the science of child development and early learning indicates children need. Better support for early care and education professionals requires mobilizing leadership at the local and state levels; building a culture in higher education, and ongoing professional learning that reflects the importance of establishing a cohesive workforce for our young children; ensuring practice environments that enable and reinforce the quality of their work; making substantial improvements in working conditions, well-being, compensation, and perceived status; and creating consistency across local, state, and national systems, policies, and infrastructure. EOEL is requesting this position to coordinate efforts that support the development of Hawaii's early childhood workforce.

## **2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Communications Specialist position**

The EOEL Public Pre-K Program prioritizes children who are at risk, pursuant to statute – research shows that early learning benefits all children, but more so those who are at risk, helping to minimize the achievement gap. To help ensure the Program reaches especially these families, they must be made aware of the importance of early learning and the availability of the Program for their children through a broad range of communication methods. Currently, the primary method EOEL employs to communicate with families is its website, which must be improved significantly to be made more family-friendly. A Communications Specialist dedicated to improving website content as part of his or her overall responsibility to share information about early learning will greatly enhance EOEL's ability to communicate more widely with families as well as the general public. The position will also help address EOEL's statutory responsibilities to build the State's early learning system for children from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, which involves coordinating across the public and private sectors to maximize the engagement of families, caregivers, and teachers in the early learning system; releasing data relating to early learning in the state; generally promoting awareness of early learning opportunities to families and the general public; and consulting with community groups ... all of which involve communications efforts. In addition, the Communications Specialist will address the communications needs of the Early Learning Board (ELB), EOEL's governing board. EOEL and ELB are facilitating the next phase of Hawaii's Early Childhood State Plan. ELB will be monitoring progress made by public and private partners toward achieving shared goals delineated in the Plan, and the Plan will need to be widely communicated to maximize engagement in work around early childhood.

**We respectfully request that the following be re-inserted into the bill:**

### **1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Institutional Analyst position**

EOEL is requesting an Institutional Analyst position for the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program to:

- Oversee evaluation of the Program's child outcomes, teacher-student interactions, and coordination of professional learning sessions;

- Provide information, guidelines, and technical assistance including training related to the assessment tools and communication platforms;
- Collect, review, analyze, monitor, and report data for the program, including student data, staff qualification and stability data, and professional learning support data;
- Assist in coordination, preparation, and review of policies, guidelines, and procedures related to the implementation of the Program; and
- Plan, direct, and coordinate the application process for the Program as well as communicate and coordinate the application process with schools.

## **2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Office Assistant position**

EOEL is requesting an Office Assistant to provide administrative support for the EOEL Public Pre-K Program. The Office Assistant will be responsible for such tasks as intake and tracking of applications, preparing purchase orders for needed materials and supplies required for Program staff to provide support to schools, preparing the necessary paperwork for travel and making travel arrangements for the educational specialist and early learning resource teachers, securing meeting rooms for Early Learning Induction Program and Early Learning Academy sessions, and preparing materials for Early Learning Induction Program and Early Learning Academy sessions.

EOEL's Educational Specialist, who has taken on many of these other responsibilities, has therefore not been able to fully focus on her primary responsibility to provide the direct support schools need in order to implement the EOEL Public Pre-K Program. The schools participating in the Program have expressed the need to develop the knowledge and experience required to appropriately serve prekindergarten-aged children, and the Educational Specialist, who is required to have a master's degree in early childhood education, helps address this need for the school leadership, teachers, educational assistants, and their students. To address the demands of this current workload, especially with the recent expansion of the Program to more schools, the Educational Specialist requires the assistance of an Institutional Analyst and Office Assistant.

**Please note that we are respectfully requesting these 2 positions regardless of funding for expansion of the EOEL Public Pre-K Program – they will provide much-needed support for the Program now.**

## **3) Expansion of the EOEL Public Pre-K Program**

To address the need to increase access to pre-K for our keiki, the 2014 Legislature allocated funds to EOEL to implement a high-quality pre-K program starting with 20 classrooms in the 2014-2015 school year. In 2017, EOEL requested funds for 10 additional classrooms and received funding for five classrooms, for which we are grateful. As a result, the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program can serve up to 520 four-year-old children in Hawaii; EOEL recognizes that other providers, including federal Head Start and community-based providers, also play a critical role in increasing access for our children. EOEL has plans to expand the Program to ensure high-quality pre-K for our keiki as it continues to work intently with its partners to develop the severely limited pool of qualified early childhood educators needed to teach in new classrooms. In fall 2018, DOE identified 22 public schools at which classrooms are available for pre-K. EOEL is currently working with DOE to review the applications received from 30 schools to

participate in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program. The review process relies on four main criteria, described on the next page, that EOEL has used for the past few years:

- (1) **Community need.** The percentage of the population of school/community that meets the priority categories identified in statute – targeting those who can benefit the most from early learning opportunities – is considered. In addition to the following underserved and at-risk populations, EOEL must prioritize families with incomes at or below 300% of the federal poverty guidelines for Hawaii:
  - a. Special education;
  - b. English language learners;
  - c. Foster children; and
  - d. Homeless.
- (2) **Community need.** Existing programs on the school campus and in the surrounding area, as well as the community’s need for additional seats, is considered. (An existing program may have already developed good relationships with families, the community, and school, and should not be replaced by a new pre-K classroom.)
  - a. Schools are required to include this information on applications. EOEL also looks into information on EOEL’s end (including community data, the results of the 2017 Early Learning Needs Assessment, and location of federal Head Start and charter school pre-K classrooms).
- (3) **Availability of space.** The school has a classroom and identified outdoor play space that addresses (or which may reasonably be retrofitted to address) the health and safety requirements of a program for 4-year-old children (based on Hawaii Department of Human Services administrative rules).
  - a. The school has a classroom and identified outdoor play space that addresses (or which may reasonably be retrofitted to address) the health and safety requirements of a program for 4-year-old children (based on Hawaii Department of Human Services child care licensing regulations). We recognize the high costs of facilities and want to be fiscally responsible.
- (4) **Principal interest.** The principal is committed to implementing a high-quality early learning program through active participation in professional development sessions with school teams and professional learning communities, with the end goal of having a high-quality early learning program in which there is continuity and alignment between and across programs and grade levels. The principal, as the school’s leader and who supports and evaluates his/her pre-K teachers, is key to implementation of a successful pre-K program and ensuring positive outcomes are sustained beyond pre-K.
  - a. As other states across the nation are building up their public pre-K programs, they too are finding that their principals need ongoing support and training.

For each of the positions and to otherwise support EOEL’s work, we are requesting computer equipment and software, phones and phone lines, and furniture.

Thank you for your consideration, and for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

**TO:** Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Robert G. Peters, Chair, Early Learning Board

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** H.B. No. 1527, S. D. 1– Relating to the Executive Office on Early Learning Budget  
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**Early Learning Board’s Position: Support**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Early Learning Board in support of H.B. 1527, S. D. 1 which appropriates funds for the Executive Office on Early Learning and respectfully request amendments.

The Early Learning Board supports the Executive Office on Early Learning’s request and appreciates the opportunity to highlight key elements of the EOEL request:

**1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Program Specialist position for workforce development**

Included in EOEL's responsibilities is the coordination of efforts to develop a highly-qualified, stable and diverse workforce, which is one of the key components needed to ensure the positive outcomes that are associated with early learning. Better support for early care and education professionals requires mobilizing leadership at the local and state levels; building a culture in higher education, and ongoing professional learning that reflects the importance of establishing a cohesive workforce for our young children; ensuring practice environments that enable and reinforce the quality of their work; making substantial improvements in working conditions, well-being, compensation, and perceived status; and creating consistency across local, state, and national systems, policies, and infrastructure. EOEL is requesting this position to coordinate efforts that support the development of Hawaii's early childhood workforce.

**2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Communications Specialist position**

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especially these families, they must be made aware of the importance of early learning and the availability of the Program for their children through a broad range of communication methods. Currently, the primary method EOEL employs to communicate with families is its website, which must be improved significantly to be made more family-friendly. A Communications Specialist dedicated to improving website content as part of his or her overall responsibility to share information about early learning will greatly enhance EOEL's ability to communicate more widely with families as well as the general public. The position will also help address EOEL's statutory responsibilities to build the State's early learning system for children from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, which involves coordinating across the public and private sectors to maximize the engagement of families, caregivers, and teachers in the early learning system; releasing data relating to early learning in the state; generally promoting awareness of early learning opportunities to families and the general public; and consulting with community groups ... all of which involve communications efforts. In addition, the Communications Specialist will address the communications needs of the Early Learning Board (ELB), EOEL's governing board. EOEL and ELB are facilitating the next phase of Hawaii's Early Childhood State Plan. ELB will be monitoring progress made by public and private partners toward achieving shared goals delineated in the Plan, and the Plan will need to be widely communicated to maximize engagement in work around early childhood.

*We respectfully request that the following be re-inserted into the bill:*

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EOEL's Educational Specialist, who has taken on many of these other responsibilities, has therefore not been able to fully focus on her primary responsibility to provide the direct support schools need in order to implement the EOEL Public Pre-K Program. DOE has traditionally served the kindergarten through grade 12 population. As a result, the schools have not yet developed, or are still developing, the knowledge and experience needed to appropriately serve prekindergarten-aged children, and the Educational Specialist, who is required to have a master's degree in early childhood education, fills a large need for the schools, school leadership, teachers, educational assistants, and their students. To address the demands of this current workload, especially with the recent expansion of the Program to more schools, the Educational Specialist requires the assistance of an Institutional Analyst and Office Assistant.

### **3) Expansion of the EOEL Public Pre-K Program**

To address the need to increase access to pre-K for our keiki, the 2014 Legislature allocated funds to EOEL to implement a high-quality pre-K program starting with 20 classrooms in the 2014- 2015 school year. In 2017, EOEL requested funds for 10 additional classrooms and received funding for five classrooms. As a result, the EOEL Public Pre-K Program can serve up to 520 four-year-old children in Hawaii; EOEL recognizes that other providers, including federal Head Start and community-based providers, also play a critical role in increasing access for our children. EOEL has plans to expand the Program to ensure high-quality pre-K for our keiki as it continues to work intently with its partners to develop the severely limited pool of qualified early childhood educators needed to teach in new classrooms. In fall 2018, DOE identified 22 public schools at which classrooms are available for pre-K. EOEL is currently working with DOE to review school applications.

For each of the positions and to otherwise support EOEL's work, we are requesting computer equipment and software, phones and phone lines, and furniture.

The Early Learning Board appreciates the opportunity to testify on this bill in support of the Executive Office on Early Learning's efforts to develop a Statewide early learning system.