



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

January 30, 2019

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice-Chair, Lower Education
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice-Chair, Higher Education
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 1346 – Relating to Early Childhood Education
Hearing Date: January 31, 2019
Time: 2:15 p.m.
Location: Room 309

Bill Description: Prohibits the suspension or expulsion of children participating in the Executive Office on Early Learning's Public Prekindergarten Program, except under limited circumstances.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

Good afternoon. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL is in strong support of House Bill 1346.

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 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.

Included in EOEL's responsibilities is administration of the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program. We are wholeheartedly requesting that this prohibition on suspension and expulsion be imposed on ourselves.

The rate at which children are expelled from state-funded preschool or prekindergarten across the nation is alarming – a rate more than three times that of their peers in kindergarten through grade 12. Many more children are suspended, with the data demonstrating severe racial disparities. It is important to note that "(g)irls who are Black, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander represent 30 percent or more of all out-of-school suspensions even though they have a much smaller total population in preschool than girls in other racial or ethnic groups" (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014).

A study published in 2005 by Walter S. Gilliam at Yale University Child Study Center ranked Hawaii 17th in terms of states with high numbers of preschool expulsions. For every 1,000

children in Hawaii, 7.56 children were expelled from pre-k settings (6.67 = national average) and 14.86% of pre-k teachers reported expelling a student (10.39% = national average).

The EOEL Public Pre-K Program specifically prioritizes our underserved and at-risk populations – those children who can benefit the most from early learning – and suspending or expelling them would not only leave them with no early learning opportunities but send them a completely wrong message that may affect them for a lifetime.

We note that other states have also introduced and enacted legislation to prohibit suspension/expulsion in the early years, and that the National Conference of State Legislatures supports states in the crafting of policies that prohibit suspension and expulsion. The federal Departments of Health and Human Services, and Education also issued a joint policy statement in 2014 to support states and localities in prohibiting suspension and expulsion, "with state and local recommendations to address expulsion and suspension in early learning settings ... affirm(ing) the Departments' efforts to prevent and eventually eliminate expulsion and suspension in all early childhood settings and support young children's social, emotional, and behavioral development."

It recognized that suspensions and expulsions "may be products of misguided or absent policies and/or insufficient training and support services for staff, especially in managing challenging behavior, recognizing trauma, and promoting social and emotional development." Research has shown an association between program and teacher quality, and suspensions/expulsions.

EOEL has already made it a priority to provide professional learning support to the educators in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program, as well as work with school leadership on staffing, and has been partnering with the University of Hawaii system to strengthen the pipeline of early childhood educators, to prevent suspensions and expulsions by arming educators with the appropriate competencies.

Since the start of the EOEL Public Pre-K Program in fall 2014, we have had some cases in which a school wanted to consider exiting a child participating in the Program. EOEL provided support and guidance to help the teacher more appropriately address challenging behaviors and better support the children, which, as mentioned, is instrumental to avoiding suspension/expulsion ... and the children ended up staying at the school in the Program.

This bill is modeled after federal law governing the Head Start Program, the federal government's early learning program. A long-standing and continuing practice in Head Start is not to expel or suspend any child.

We respectfully request that the committee consider moving this bill forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



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

Date: 01/31/2019

Time: 02:15 PM

Location: 309

Committee: House Lower & Higher
Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1346 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Prohibits the suspension or expulsion of children participating in the Executive Office on Early Learning's Public Prekindergarten Program, except under limited circumstances.

Department's Position:

Aligned in content with HB 994, an administrative proposal, the Department of Education (Department) supports HB 1346 as it aligns to its vision that ensures all of Hawaii's children are provided with opportunities that foster health, safety, education, school readiness, and success.

The Department believes that young children thrive in an environment with stable, supportive and caring adults who understand how preschoolers learn. Expulsions and suspensions in early childhood settings threaten the development of these positive relationships, disrupt the learning process, and deny children access to critical supports that a high-quality early childhood education can provide. Further, expulsion and suspension is not an effective nor developmentally appropriate intervention for young children.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education released a joint policy statement (source: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>) that supports fostering the social-emotional and behavioral development of all children and eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings.

The Department remains fully committed to working with other agencies and organizations to ensure that Hawaii's preschoolers are provided with opportunities that foster health, safety, early childhood education, school readiness, and success.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1346.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan

which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.

To: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Mark I. Hashem, Vice Chair
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** HB 921 -- Relating to Education
Hearing Date: Jan. 29, 2019
Time: 2:00 pm
Location: Room 309

Description: Housekeeping amendments relating to the transfer of early childhood educations from the Department of Education to the Executive Office on Early Learning

Early Learning Board Position: Support

I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of the ELB in support of HB 1346.

This bill reflects national guidelines and best practices as well as regulations in other states which have enacted legislation to prohibit suspension/expulsion in the early years such as Illinois and Ohio. It is modeled after federal law governing the Head Start Program and aligns the Executive Office on Early Learning's Public Education Prekindergarten program with the Department of Health and Human Services and Education Departments' joint policy statement in 2014 "affirm(ing) the Departments efforts to prevent and eventually eliminate expulsion and suspension in all early childhood settings and support young children's social, emotional and behavioral development."

Educators are becoming more informed about, and attuned to the social emotional needs of children, recognizing their impact on learning. Children dealing with trauma or toxic home conditions are not ready to learn and often preoccupied, not able to focus on learning. It is not unusual for children who bring these problems to school to "act out." In young children, especially, it is often difficult to determine if such behaviors are developmental in nature or issues of genuine concern. Expulsion and suspension are often responses to challenging behaviors of this type.

Research indicates that prekindergarten expulsion and suspension of children at this critical juncture in their growth and development are often repeated throughout a student's school history and associated with negative educational and life outcomes. It also demonstrates that there are racial and gender disparities, with boys receiving a majority of out-of-school suspensions. Data from the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, in 2014

revealed that Black, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander girls represented a higher percentage rate of out-of-school suspensions despite their smaller representation in the total girl population in preschool.

This bill's provisions for EOEL public Pre-Kindergarten programs seek to provide guidelines for school administrators to "short-circuit" expulsion/suspension practices with alternative processes to keep children in school and to support families searching to help children with challenging behaviors. The EOEL has made it a priority to prevent expulsion by providing professional learning support to educators in their Pre-K program, as well as work with school leadership, to recognize when challenging behaviors are truly serious and needing additional attention versus when they are within the natural developmental trajectory of all children. Suggested steps to keep children with challenging behaviors in school and resources to address individual needs has complemented the EOEL's efforts to work with UH in developing the competencies of future teachers needed to meet individual needs.

The ELB urges the Committee to recommend the passage of this bill to prevent expulsion and suspension at this critical stage of a child's development, the preschool years.

To: Committee Chair Representative Justin H. Woodson
Committee Vice Chair Representative Mark J. Hashem
Committee Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso
Committee on Lower and Higher Education

Date: January 31, 2019; Room 309

RE: **Support for HB 1346; Suspension or Expulsion of Public Prekindergarten Students**

The Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS brings together government and non-governmental organizations to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki. We strongly support HB 1346, which prohibits the suspension or expulsion of children participating in the Executive Office on Early Learning's (EOEL) Public Prekindergarten Program.

Research conducted across 40 states found a national rate of 6.7 children expelled per 1,000 in publicly funded prekindergarten programs—a rate triple that of expulsion of k-12 students. Research also finds there are equity issues and stark racial and gender disparities in suspension/expulsion practices. Boys receive more than three-quarters of out-of-school suspensions and girls who are Black, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander represent 30 percent or more of all out-of-school suspensions even though they have a much smaller total population in preschool. Hawaii ranked 17th in terms of states with high numbers of preschool expulsions based on a study published in 2005 by Walter S. Gilliam at Yale University Child Study Center.

This bill follows national guidance and best practice and is modeled after federal law governing the Head Start Program, which has a long-standing and continuing practice of no expulsion or suspension. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education issued a joint policy statement in 2014 supporting prohibiting suspension and expulsion recognizing these actions may be "products of misguided or absent policies and/or insufficient training and support services for staff, especially in managing challenging behavior, recognizing trauma, and promoting social and emotional development." EOEL has made it a priority to provide professional learning support to the educators in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program by working with school leadership on staffing, partnering with the UH system to strengthen the pipeline of early childhood educators, and prevent suspensions/expulsions by arming educators with appropriate competencies.

We urge the committee to pass HB 1346 and prohibit the suspension/expulsion of children participating in EOEL's Public Prekindergarten Program. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1346

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:54:54 AM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Toni Fujimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a grandmother with five children, public pre-k needs to continue. We cannot lose the Head Start Programs as it is vital to our families.



Parents And
Children Together

BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT MATTER MOST

LATE

TO: Chair Woodson, Vice Chairs Hashem and Perruso, and Members of the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

DATE/LOCATION: January 31, 2019; 2:15 p.m., Conference Room 309

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1346– RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

We ask you to support HB 491 which seeks to prohibit the suspension or expulsion of children participating in the Executive Office on Early Learning's Public Prekindergarten Program, except under limited circumstances. We strongly support this bill which aligns with national best practice and allows for each young child to be supported through his/her earliest learning experiences and be given the opportunity to fulfill his/her highest potential.

As a provider of Head Start and Early Head Start services, we believe in high-quality early childhood education opportunities for every child. We believe in each child's innate abilities and the critical importance of caring for all children and families, especially those who need the most support. Data shows that high-quality care and education during the earliest stages of a child's development provides a critical foundation for later educational and life success. Early learning programs play a key role in early detection and early intervention for students who display extreme and challenging behaviors and it is important that we work with families to address the underlying root causes of these behaviors and work with both students and families to explore and implement every reasonable modification to support the child.

Schools are places of learning where our youngest children along with their families should have every chance to succeed. High quality early learning programs, like Head Start and EOEL's public pre-K program, with strong training and professional development, have the capacity to train and support staff in dealing with challenging behaviors. They also provide the support for staff to proactively work with children and families to identify a child's needs, connect them with resources and employ effective strategies in the classroom that can best support each child. This bill is consistent with national best practice and the current Head Start mandates that our PACT programs currently adhere to and we believe that these practices are best for all high-quality early learning programs, including EOEL's public Pre-K program. We commend EOEL for recognizing the importance of this measure and for committing to continued best practice.

This bill provides an added measure to ensure that each child and their family has a chance to address issues early on with the help of highly-qualified education professionals and sets the foundation for future success, especially for those children who would not otherwise have access to early childhood.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse support services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 1346**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.

LATE

HB-1346

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:16:20 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steven Sullivan	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1346

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 5:30:56 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Roberta Meier-Mcgrath	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1346

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:46:34 PM

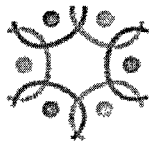
Testimony for LHE on 1/31/2019 2:15:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Soga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As an early childhood educator, I support HB1346. Young children need time in high quality early childhood education to support their social and emotional development. By suspending and expelling preschool children, we take away the support and opportunity that they need to develop the skills that we are trying to punish them for. There is a plethora of research that established that suspension of children in preschool leads to continued suspension in later schooling, often ending in imprisonment, otherwise referred to as the school to prison pipeline. We need to be providing opportunities for learning for our at-risk children not be taking away learning opportunities from them to ensure bright futures for all of our keiki.



January 30, 2019

Late Testimony

To: Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

From: Deborah Zysman Executive Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **H.B. 1346— Relating to Early Childhood Education**
Capitol, Room 309, January 31, 2:15 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), I am writing in SUPPORT of H.B. 1346, which would prohibit the suspension or expulsion of children participating in the Executive of Early Learning's Public Public Prekindergarten Program, except under limited circumstances.

This bill is following national guidelines and best practices on suspension and expulsion in early years.

Suspension and expulsion in these early years has long-term negative educational and life outcomes.

Hawaii ranks 17th in the nation

Girls who are Black, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander experience expulsion at a higher rate

At HCAN, as an organization that advocates for all of Hawaii's children to be healthy, safe and ready to learn, we strongly believe that no child should be expelled or suspended at this early age.

For these reasons, HCAN asks that you pass H.B. 1346.

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.