



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING  
HONOLULU

TERRY LOCK  
DIRECTOR

**House Committee on Finance  
Informational Briefing Testimony  
For Fiscal Biennium 2013-2015  
By Terry Lock, Director  
(Program ID EDN700)**

**January 14, 2013  
9:00 a.m., Room 309**

Honorable Chairs and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am Terry Lock, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning. I am here today to present the EDN700 portion of the budget briefing for fiscal biennium 2013-2015.

In the 2012-2013 school year, less than 1/4 of kindergarten classes had the majority of their students entering school with essential reading and math skills – and only 57% of students who entered kindergarten had attended preschool. The correlation is not a coincidence.

High-quality early learning programs 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 high-risk children, including low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children, with the great potential to alter their lifetime trajectories.

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. Hawaii is one of the last 11 states without a State-funded early learning program.

Every \$1 invested in early learning generates \$4.20 in future savings and increased earnings for Hawaii. Societies that invest boast higher levels of educational attainment; reduced homelessness, crime, and substance abuse; improved health; and better overall social and

economic well-being. Many in the education field, including DOE educators, agree that if we're going to put our money anywhere in education, it should be in early learning.

We have another pressing need to address: as a result of Act 178 which was passed last year, children will have to be five years old by July 31 to be able to enter kindergarten beginning in 2014. The change creates a gap in school readiness services for late-born four-year-olds.

All of this is why we are putting forth our proposal for a program that will provide access to high-quality school readiness opportunities for four-year-old children.

The Program will address:

- Affordability and access;
- Shared responsibility between families and the State;
- Partnerships with the private sector to build resources and funding; and
- Quality.

Families will participate on a voluntary basis.

Our PowerPoint presentation will provide you with more details on how we plan to implement the Program, and our funding request, which falls under two program IDs: GOV100 and EDN700. Our request for positions and other operational funding fall under GOV100. Our funding request for direct services and capacity building and quality assurance fall under EDN700.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have after our presentation. Thank you.