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KEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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

Date: 03/24/2022
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309 Via Videoconference
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: HCR 0019 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SPACE AVAILABLE TO BE USED FOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS AND THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS CERTIFIED TO TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HCR 19 and its purpose to assess the availability of public school space to be used for preschool classrooms and the number of public school teachers certified to teach early childhood education.

With the adoption of this resolution, the Department will undertake an assessment and provide a report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

March 23, 2022

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

FROM: Coleen Momohara, Interim Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** HR 17 / HCR 19
Hearing Date: Thursday, March 24, 2022
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Location: Room 309 and videoconference

Bill Description: Urging the Department of Education to report to the Legislature regarding the amount of public school space available to be used for preschool classrooms and the number of public school teachers certified to each early childhood education.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING: Comments

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL provides comments on HR 17 / HCR 19 and defers to the Department of Education (HIDOE) related to the provisions in and implementation of the resolution.

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 also administer the EOEL Public Pre-K Program in collaboration with HIDOE. This resolution urges the HIDOE to report to the Legislature amount of public-school space available to be used for preschool classrooms. We would like to emphasize that classrooms also need to be assessed to determine if the space is conducive for young learners. Although space may be available, some classrooms may need to be repurposed or reconstructed to meet the needs of preschool-aged children.

This resolution also urges the HIDOE to include in its report the number of teachers qualified to teach early childhood education. If the intention of this request is to assess workforce capacity, **one of the things we've learned from our Program, as well as our collaborative work across private and public partners in the field, is that most, if not all, of us cannot find enough qualified staff to expand quickly.** We must be sure this workforce is in place if we want new classrooms and programs to have qualified educators and for successful expansion. In addition, if the request is to determine the number of teachers qualified to teach in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program, reference needs to be made to the requirements set forth in Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 302 L-7. Furthermore, pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter

302 L-7, both teachers and educational assistants provide direct services to children in the EOEL Public Pre-K classroom.

High-quality early childhood programs help “build the foundations for stronger family lives that result in larger gains for their children” and have “substantial second-generation effects on education, employment, crime, school suspensions, and health” (Heckman, James, and Ganesh Karapukula, 2019). We are committed to increasing access while building the infrastructure needed to make sure the State’s investment reaps the intended returns and should this resolution move forward, we look forward to working with the HIDEOE to provide more pertinent information to the Legislature regarding public preschool expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.