

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

February 18, 2024

**TO:** Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** S.B. No. 3087 S.D. 1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
**Hearing Date:** Friday, February 23, 2024  
**Time:** 10:30 am  
**Location:** Conference Room 211

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

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is committed to expanding early learning opportunities for all keiki across the State and is in **strong support** of S.B. No. 3087 S.D. 1.

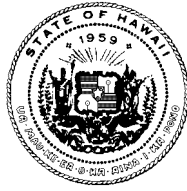
The intention of this bill is to expand public-private partnerships for all young keiki by administering programs in existing vacant public spaces. Presently, section 302L-1.7, HRS, authorizes EOEL to administer pre-plus programs through private-public partnerships on Department of Education (HIDOE) public school campuses. S.B. No. 3087 would expand access to affordable early learning programs through offering potentially more cost-effective spaces by allowing programs to be administered on other public properties in addition to HIDOE campuses. **This measure does not require funding or fiscal support.**

We would also like to note that this bill utilizes the terminology “early learning”, rather than “pre-plus”, as “early learning” is already defined in section 302 L-1, HRS. This bill also does not require any funding or fiscal support.

As EOEL continues to expand the EOEL public prekindergarten program, it is critical to also focus on expanding community-based options as these programs are necessary to meet families’ unique needs and demands. Community-based programs offer services that may be longer in duration, assisting families who work traditional and non-traditional hours; culturally and linguistically based; provided in a home-setting, which may be more comfortable or preferred by families; or may accept younger children from birth onward.

We appreciate the Legislature’s continued investments to our youngest keiki and families and respectfully request the committee pass this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 20, 2024

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 3087 SD1 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.**

Hearing: February 23, 2024, 10:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol & Video Conference

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this administration measure and defers to the Executive Office on Early Learning for implementation.

**PURPOSE:** This bill expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses (SD1).

The Committee on Education amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

The Department supports the expansion of early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides the Department of Education public school campuses since it may provide more opportunities for families to access child care throughout the State. DHS will work with the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and child care providers who are authorized to use and occupy the public school facilities and other available public properties should they be required to be licensed by DHS.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/23/2024

**Time:** 10:30 AM

**Location:** CR 211 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 3087, SD1 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

**Purpose of Bill:** Expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) is providing testimony in support of SB 3087, SD1.

Studies have shown that quality early learning opportunities have a lifelong positive impact on Hawaii's keiki and their families. These learning environments offer keiki a critical first step toward social and emotional skills, motor development, math, literacy, and critical thinking. Early learning opportunities also provide parents and caregivers a chance to work outside the home when their young ones have safe and nurturing environments to spend their day.

Over the last several months, the Department has been working collaboratively with the Lieutenant Governor, the School Facilities Authority, and other public and private stakeholders to renovate and upgrade existing public school facilities to increase the number of public early learning classrooms. Expanding this effort to include other state properties and public lands will no doubt have a positive impact on making access to early education opportunities available to a broader community. The Department looks forward to contributing to and supporting this effort.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 3087, SD1.





**SB3087**  
RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 23, 2024

10:30 AM

Room 211

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS and offers comments** on SB3087 SD1, which expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses.

OHA is in its fourth year of its 15-year strategic plan, Mana i Maui Ola. The development of this strategic plan included gathering community input via surveys and focus groups as well as mana‘o from internal staff. **One of the most critical needs that our community repeated was ‘ohana’s ability to provide high-quality keiki and kūpuna care.**

SB3087 will support the state’s ongoing efforts to expand early childhood care and education. In 2020—the same year our strategic plan began—the State Legislature passed Act 46 setting a vision for 100% access to early learning opportunities. We believe this measure is one component that will help the state both achieve the Legislature’s vision and meet the needs that OHA has identified for the Hawaiian people.

The Pre-Plus Program has been an important piece of the early learning puzzle, allowing community-based Head Start providers to offer early learning programs on public school campuses. OHA sees this bill as having the potential to expand the impact of a program like Pre-Plus. It sets the tone to prioritize the development of early learning programs in facilities, and it adjusts the existing pre-plus statute to have the possibility for greater reach. The inclusion of other public properties will provide the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) the authority to work beyond public schools to realize its obligations for universal access.

OHA would also like to respectfully remind the State Legislature of the state’s obligations to steward crown and government lands, also known as ceded or public land trust lands. Our understanding of this measure is that it will provide facilities for low- or no-cost to community-based providers. This is consistent with the way **early childhood**



**SENATE BILL 3087**  
RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING  
Senate Committee on Education

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**care and education must be seen as a public good.** We support these lands being used for this purpose rather than for the purpose of generating revenue. We would also like to ensure that the implementation of this expanded program taking careful precautions not to allow for the alienation of any public property that may be part of the public land trust.

OHA believes this program can be an integral component to the State's efforts to actualize Act 46 (SLH 2020). We respectfully request the committee advance SB3087 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

February 23, 2024

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

We support SB 3087 SD1, which expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides DOE campuses.

Expansion of early learning programs beyond DOE properties is an innovative and effective way to use State properties that are underutilized or are in locations where early learning programs can grow. This legislation aligns with Act 46, which created a goal to expand preschool access to all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2032.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support for this measure represents at least a 75% consensus of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director



Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

Atherton YMCA

Education Institute of Hawai'i

\*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

\*HawaiiKidsCAN

\*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

\*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and  
Economic Justice

\*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

\*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

\* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

\*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

\*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

\*Parents and Children Together

\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Special Education Provider Alliance

\*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

\* Youth Service Hawai'i

*Voting Members (\*) Voting member  
organizations vote on action items while  
individual and non-voting participants may  
collaborate on all efforts within the*



To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**Re: SB 3087 SD 1 – in strong support**

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

February 23, 2024; 10:30AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill 3087 SD 1 relating to Early Learning.**

Early childhood education is a crucial foundation for lifelong learning and success. Research consistently demonstrates that children who have access to high-quality early learning programs are more likely to excel academically, exhibit better social skills, and experience improved long-term outcomes in terms of health and economic well-being. By extending early learning opportunities to state-owned properties and public lands, we can reach a broader and more diverse population of young learners and create equitable access to early learning opportunities across Hawai'i.

This thoughtful approach not only enhances educational outcomes but can also strengthen community engagement and collaboration. By involving various stakeholders, including local communities, non-profit organizations, and businesses, we can create a network of support that extends beyond traditional educational settings. This collaborative approach will enrich children's learning experience and foster a sense of shared responsibility for their well-being and development.

HCAN Speaks! urges the committee to consider the long-term benefits and positive impact that this proposed bill can have on our state's early learning efforts and the overall well-being of our young keiki and communities. Utilizing existing buildings on state-owned properties and public lands is a visionary step towards creating a more inclusive, innovative, and effective early learning system that is cost-effective to the state, early learning programs, and, most of all, our families.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on this critical issue. **Please pass SB 3087 SD 1.**

Mahalo,

Chevelle Davis, MPH

Director of Early Childhood & Health Policy

Date: February 20, 2024

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for **SB3087 SD1**, Relating to Early Learning

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Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

**ECAS strongly supports passage of SB3087 SD1**, which would expand access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses.

High-quality early care and learning programs are fundamental to providing children with dependable, nurturing relationships, safe environments, and stimulating experiences that are critical for brain development and school readiness. Experiences in high-quality early care and learning programs can lead to improved educational, economic, health and well-being outcomes for children, lasting into adulthood. Hawaii, however, faces a significant shortage of early care and learning programs, with only one program space for every four children under the age of six.

**SB3087 SD1** would support the State's commitment to increasing access to early learning programs by allowing for the use of space for early learning programs beyond HIDOE campuses to other, existing vacant public spaces. This expansion of options will help facilitate growth of a larger spectrum of early care and learning programs to better meet the unique needs and preferences of children and families, such as the needs for full-day, full-year programs, or programs for infants and toddlers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of SB3087 SD1**. With the limited availability of quality early care and learning seats we strongly support the bill's proposal to expand available options and increase access to early learning opportunities for a wider range of children.



# Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Date: February 23, 2024

Where: Conference Room 211

## TESTIMONY

By Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona  
Kamehameha Schools

RE: **SB 3087, SD1, Relating to Early Learning**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalu Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Moriwaki, a me nā lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa‘a a me nā Ho‘olilo o ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, aloha nui kākou! My name is Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, Vice President of Hi‘ialo at Kamehameha Schools.

Kamehameha Schools **supports** SB 3087, SD1, which expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses.

The pivotal enactment of Act 46 (2020) set Hawai‘i on the important pathway of ensuring that every three- and four-year-old has access to early learning by 2032. As of September 2023, according to data aggregated by Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS), Hawai‘i childcare providers reported their capacity to care for keiki between birth and age 5 at 19,983 seats. However, this is still 16% below pre-pandemic levels.

In the Hawai‘i Early Learning Needs Assessment (2017), center-based program directors listed the lack of space or appropriate facilities as the most common barrier to increasing the number of seats in their classrooms for three- and four-year-old keiki across Hawai‘i. By expanding access to early learning programs on state properties and public lands, more seats can be made available. Our keiki cannot afford to lose any more opportunities. **Please advance this measure.**

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

‘A‘ohe ‘ulu e loa‘a i ka pōkole o ka lou. There is no success without preparation.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Friday, February 23, 2024, at 10:30AM  
Conference Room 211**

**RE: SB3087 SD1 Relating to Early Learning**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Supports (“The Chamber”) **supports SB3087 SD1**, which expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses.

The Chamber completed its 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii Initiative earlier this year to create a data-based action plan and vision for business to lead and shape Hawaii’s economic future as a top place to do business. Results clearly presented that despite efforts to keep costs down, affordability remains a significant obstacle for families in Hawai’i. Community-based programs often operate on narrow profit margins, making it challenging to sustain these valuable services. The Chamber is in support of this proposed bill which will foster public-private partnerships to ensure access for all young children by utilizing existing vacant public spaces and increase access to affordable early learning programs by potentially utilizing more cost-effective spaces, including utilization of other public properties alongside HODOE campuses.

Furthermore, effective early learning programs offer significant and lasting advantages for both present and future generations. Moreover, they afford families the chance to pursue further education or employment by offering a reliable and nurturing environment for their children to be enrolled in while enabling workforce entrance accessibility.

In 2020, legislation was passed affirming the State's dedication to enhancing access to early learning programs and entrusted EOEL and DHS with the responsibility of ensuring that all three and four-year-old children have access to prekindergarten by 2032. While public prekindergarten initiatives are expanding, it's vital to prioritize the expansion of community-based options to cater to families' diverse needs and preferences. These community-based programs offer various services, such as longer hours to accommodate families with traditional and non-traditional work schedules, culturally and linguistically tailored approaches, home-based settings preferred by some families, and the acceptance of younger children from birth.

Enacting the strategy presented through this measure not only enhances educational outcomes but also encourages community engagement and collaboration. The Chamber's 2030

Blueprint for Hawaii Initiative similarly proposed involving a variety of stakeholders, including local communities, non-profit organizations, and businesses, to create a supportive network that extends beyond traditional educational settings. This collaborative approach not only enriches children's learning experiences but also cultivates a shared dedication to our state's early learning efforts and long-term benefits towards the mutual goal of economic success. Utilizing existing buildings on state-owned properties and public lands is a visionary step towards creating a more inclusive, innovative, and effective early learning system that is cost-effective to the state, early learning programs, and, most of all, our families.

The Chamber strongly supports initiatives that expand equity and access to educational opportunity. As it stands, affordability stands as a major barrier to early learning access. The emergence of more readily available early childhood education programs will help break down current economic barriers to early learning programs.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ 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.

On behalf of The Chamber, thank you for this opportunity to testify.

February 18, 2024

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
From: Jacqueline Valoy, MSW Candidate  
Re: Support for SB3087- Relating to Early Learning

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

As a community member, single mother and social work professional, I am in strong **support of SB3087**. Access to quality early childhood education can have a positive impact on a child's socio emotional development and academic success. Currently, affordable early childhood education is extremely limited and often not feasible for families that are struggling financially and especially for single parents that may be surviving on a single income. Having the opportunity to enroll a child in a free or affordable early childhood program can allow a family to increase their earning potential and reduce stress while setting their children up for a positive future. Overall, this measure will create a win-win situation that will allow the development of more affordable early childhood facilities. I am in strong support of this bill and appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony for SB3087.

Mahalo,

Jacqueline Valoy