
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Section 302A-1151.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
2 is amended to read as follows:

3 "§302A-1151.5 Use of vacant public school facilities.

4 (a) When the department considers whether to close any
5 particular public school, it shall simultaneously give
6 reasonable consideration to making all or portions of the
7 facilities of the public school available to charter schools and
8 ~~[pre-plus]~~ early learning programs; provided that the facilities
9 may be used for any other purpose the board deems appropriate.

10 (b) The department shall identify unused public school
11 facilities that may be appropriate for:

12 (1) Charter schools;

13 (2) Early learning programs [~~, such as the pre plus~~
14 ~~program~~]; and

15 (3) Any other purpose the board deems appropriate.

16 Suitable empty classrooms, as determined by the department,
17 shall be inventoried for potential use by charter schools, early
18 learning programs, [~~such as the pre plus program,~~] or for any

H.B. NO. 2398

1 other purpose the board deems appropriate. Priority shall be
2 given to facilities on sites with sufficient space for three or
3 more classrooms.

4 (c) The department shall adopt rules necessary to carry
5 out the purposes of this section.

6 (d) For purposes of this section, "public school" means
7 any school that falls within the definition of public schools in
8 section 302A-101, except for charter schools.

9 [H] (e) [H] Upon receipt of a notice pursuant to subsection
10 (b), the executive office on early learning shall solicit
11 applications from [~~pre-plus~~] early learning programs interested
12 in using and occupying all or portions of the facilities of the
13 public school and submit a prioritized list of [~~pre-plus~~] early
14 learning programs to the department for final determination of
15 which [~~pre-plus~~] early learning program, if any, shall be
16 authorized to use and occupy the public school facilities."

17 SECTION 2. Section 302D-35, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

19 "(b) Each department shall provide notice to the
20 superintendent and state public charter school commission
21 identifying suitable unused facilities that may be appropriate
22 for:

H.B. NO. 2398

- 1 (1) Public charter schools; and
- 2 (2) Early learning programs [~~, including the pre-plus~~
- 3 ~~program,~~] that are affiliated with a public charter
- 4 school.

5 The department of accounting and general services shall
6 inventory the suitable facilities, and, in determining
7 suitability for educational reuse, priority shall be given to
8 facilities on sites with sufficient space for three or more
9 classrooms."

10 SECTION 3. Section 302L-1.7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended to read as follows:

12 "§302L-1.7 Early learning [~~facilities; pre-plus~~]
13 programs. (a) There is established [~~the pre-plus~~] a program
14 within the office to expand access to affordable and high-
15 quality early learning for children from low-income families who
16 are not otherwise eligible for kindergarten, by allowing
17 [~~preschool programs~~] early learning programs to be established
18 on public school campuses and other available public properties
19 through public-private partnerships.

20 (b) The office [~~, the department of education, and the~~
21 ~~department of human services~~] shall work collaboratively with
22 other applicable public agencies to [~~develop suitable pre-plus~~

H.B. NO. 2398

1 ~~classrooms on department of education campuses]~~ contract with
2 early learning programs statewide [~~, including charter conversion~~
3 ~~charter school campuses]~~. The [executive] office [~~on early~~
4 ~~learning, with the department of education and department of~~
5 ~~human services,~~] and other applicable public agencies shall
6 coordinate site selection for additional [~~pre plus programs at]~~
7 early learning programs on public school sites [~~]~~ and other
8 available public properties, with priority given to [~~public~~
9 ~~school sites that serve at risk children as defined in section~~
10 ~~302L-1, including]~~ sites located in areas with limited access to
11 early learning programs and services."

12 SECTION 4. Section 302L-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by amending subsection (p) to read as follows:

14 "(p) The department of education may use available
15 classrooms for public preschool programs statewide. Preschool
16 classrooms established pursuant to this section shall be in
17 addition to any classrooms used for [~~the pre plus program]~~ early
18 learning programs established pursuant to section 302L-1.7."

19 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

H.B. NO. 2398

1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: 

4

BY REQUEST

JAN 22 2024

H .B. NO. 2398

Report Title:

Executive Office on Early Learning; Early Learning Facilities

Description:

Expands access to early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides Department of Education public school campuses.

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JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Education

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

PURPOSE: To expand access to affordable and high-quality early learning programs on other state properties and public lands besides those located on Department of Education public school campuses.

MEANS: Amends sections 302A-1151.5, 302D-35, 302L-1.7, and 302L-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

JUSTIFICATION: Research affirms the immediate and long-term positive effects of high-quality early learning programs on the physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional outcomes of children. Studies also demonstrate that high-quality early learning programs are especially effective for at-risk children, yielding significant benefits to their lifetime trajectories. Act 46, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020, demonstrated the State's commitment to increase access to early learning programs by charging the Executive Office on Early Learning and the Department of Human Services with ensuring all three and four-year olds have access to prekindergarten by 2032. However, access and affordability continue to be a significant barrier for Hawaii's families. Despite efforts to keep rates low, private early learning providers are operating on razor-thin margins. Presently, section 302L-1.7, HRS, authorizes the Executive Office on Early Learning to administer a pre-plus program through public-private partnerships for children from families with low-incomes on Department of Education public school campuses. The amendments to this section would amend the name of the pre-plus program to early learning program in order to expand access to affordable

early learning programs through private-public partnerships and broaden the program to be administered on other state properties besides the Department of Education public school campuses, opening more affordable opportunities for families to access an array of early learning programs. The amendments to sections 302A-1151.5, 302D-35, and 302L-7 amend the references to the pre-plus program to align with amendments made in section 302L-1.7, HRS.

Impact on the public: Expands access to the public to affordable early learning programs.

Impact on the department and other agencies: Agencies would have the ability to establish early learning programs on state properties and public lands in collaboration with the Executive Office on Early Learning.

GENERAL FUND: None.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: None.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: All agencies that oversee state properties or public lands.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.