



## Hawai'i's Early Learning Program: Providers and Settings

To provide families with options that best suit their needs and values, the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) proposes that the Hawai'i early learning program be offered through a mix of public and private programs, in a variety of settings. This enables the State to make the best use of available resources in the public and private sectors and foster the development of new ones. We know that contract terms will include guidelines that participating providers must adhere to, though EOEL is still working on these details.

### ***Types of Early Learning Settings***

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**Center-based:** Programs that take place in preschools, nursery schools, and child care centers operated by non-profit and for-profit organizations, including faith-based programs. The Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS) licenses these programs. Currently, there are about 400 center-based programs around the state.

**School-based:** Programs operated in DOE and private elementary schools, including charter schools and special education preschools. These are DHS-licensed if operated by a private provider. There are about 30 school-based early learning classrooms on public school campuses.

**Home-based:** Typically smaller programs that operate from a private residence, these include DHS-licensed family child care homes and group child care homes. There are about 500 home-based programs in Hawaii.

- Family child care homes: Provide care and education for up to six children in the provider's own home. DHS-licensed if more than two unrelated children are enrolled.
- Group child care homes: DHS-licensed for up to 12 children, with two adults.

**Head Start:** A federal program that promotes the school readiness of children, from birth to age five, from low-income families, and delivered by local organizations in a variety of settings including center-based, school-based, and home-based. There are seven Head Start grantee organizations serving low-income children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs throughout the state.

**Family-Child Interaction Learning (FCIL):** Typically operated by non-profit organizations, FCIL programs are offered in a variety of settings within neighborhood communities, and on average, three hours a day and two to three days a week. The FCIL program delivery model involves parent participation and child learning time. There are seven organizations that operate FCIL programs in communities across the state.

## ***What's Next?***

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As part of our Action Strategy (goal 4), EOEL is working to establish the School Readiness Program, which will lay the foundation for the planned Early Childhood Education Program. EOEL believes it is necessary to include the state's existing network of private programs as delivered via the aforementioned settings, which:

- Make up the backbone of the state's early learning services (expertise and available capacity); and
- Have a clear educational purpose (explicit educational goals and standards will result in the higher-quality services that will help us achieve the outcomes we need to make a difference for our keiki and our state).

To do this, the Attorney General says we need a Constitutional amendment to address the State's prohibition on private early childhood education programs receiving public funds.

Unfortunately, we cannot wait until adoption of the Constitutional amendment to implement an early learning program: Hawaii's underserved and at-risk children and late-born four-year-olds (due to the 2014 change in kindergarten entry age that was mandated by the Legislature) need a place to go. To address this critical need, the Governor introduced a bill (HB862 / SB1093) in his 2013 legislative package to establish the School Readiness Program (phase 1 of the early learning system). EOEL supports the amendment included in HB862 that makes it possible for license-exempt child care providers to be included in the delivery of Program services.