



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING  
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD  
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of  
S.B. 2236, Relating to Early Learning  
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Education  
January 29, 2014  
1:30 p.m., Room 414

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. I am GG Weisenfeld, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning. EOEL is in support of Senate Bill 2236.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Executive Office on Early Learning to enter into agreements with the Department of Education and charter schools to use vacant or underutilized classrooms for public preschool classrooms statewide.

EOEL requests that \$4,470,208 be appropriated for this purpose to be used in FY2015 for the 2014-2015 school year. This will provide an additional 640 four-year-old children with access to preschool.

Partnering with the Department of Education is an important part of the early learning system that EOEL is charged with developing pursuant to Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012.

To understand where we are today and where we want to go in 2014, it is important to know the following:

This November, there will be a question on the ballot that will ask voters whether public funds can be used to fund private, community-based preschools. If voters approve, the State will be allowed to fund quality preschool experiences at private, community-based preschools such as those operated by KCAA Preschools of Hawaii, Kama'aina Kids, and

Seagull Schools. While we await the outcome of the vote, the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is requesting additional resources to increase the number of four-year-olds who will be able to access preschool in August 2014.

There will be an increased number of four-year-olds – about 5,100 – who need a preschool experience but are too young to go to kindergarten due to the change in kindergarten entry age that takes effect the 2014-2015 school year.

Last year, the Legislature funded the Preschool Open Doors program (\$6 million to the Department of Human Services), which covers 1,200 of the 5,100 children at private, community-based preschools. However, with over 17,000 four-year-olds in Hawaii, many more families want access to quality preschools.

The Hawaii Department of Education has identified 32 classrooms at 30 public schools that can operate a prekindergarten program. Some of these schools already have prekindergarten programs using funding sources that will be ending. The supplemental budget request for \$4.5 million will be able to support access to prekindergarten experiences for 640 free- and reduced-price meal eligible children.

The supplemental budget request also asks for \$1 million for EOEL to contract with family-child interaction learning programs (where a parent attends with their child) to increase the number of four-year-olds – about 400 – who will benefit from this learning opportunity.

The purpose of all of these programs is to increase the number of four-year-olds (1040) who will have the opportunity for a prekindergarten experience.

The proposed DOE-EOEL program will have the following characteristics:

- Operates within the DOE structure
  - 32 classrooms at 30 schools statewide (list attached)
    - Schools identified using the following criteria: Title I status, rural location or limited preschool choices, existing preschool with Race to the Top or other federal funding support that is ending, and principal support
  - Staffed by HSTA/DOE teachers and HGEA assistants
- Serves 640 children (those eligible for free- and reduced-price meals)
- EOEL will offer professional development support

EOEL requests that the following amendments be made to further clarify the program:

*Page 1, lines 8-10:*

**“... to use vacant or underutilized classrooms or classrooms currently being used for preschool for public preschool classrooms statewide.”**

*Page 1, line 11:*

**“... The office shall only enter into contracts or memorandums of agreement ...”**

*Page 2, line 9:*

**“... vacant or underutilized classrooms or classrooms currently being used for preschool for use as public preschool classrooms.”**

EOEL respectfully asks that the committee move this bill forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



#	School	Principal	Island	Complex Area Superintendent
1	Kahaluu Elementary	Naomi Matsuzaki	Oahu	Lea Albert
2	Waiahole Elementary	Wendy Matsuzaki	Oahu	Lea Albert
3	Hauula Elementary	Samuel Izumi	Oahu	Lea Albert
4	Linapuni Elementary	Cindy Sunahara	Oahu	Calvin Nomiyama
5	Hana High & Elementary	Richard Paul	Maui	Lindsay Ball
6	Lanai High & Elementary	Elton Kinoshita	Lanai	Lindsay Ball
7	Kaunakakai Elementary	Janice Espiritu	Molokai	Lindsay Ball
8	Honokaa Elementary	Rory Souza	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
9	Honaunau Elementary	Noreen Kunitomo	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
10	Hookena Elementary	Joyce K. Crisafi	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
11	Konawaena Elementary	Claire Yoshida	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
12	Keolu Elementary	Gay Kong	Oahu	Suzanne Mulcahy
13	Kailua Elementary	Lanelle Hibbs	Oahu	Suzanne Mulcahy
14	Kaiulani Elementary	Rodney Moriwake	Oahu	Ruth Silberstein
15	Likelike Elementary	Kelly Bart	Oahu	Ruth Silberstein
16	Eleele Elementary	Fred Rose	Kauai	William Arakaki
17	Kekaha Elementary	Jason Yoshida	Kauai	William Arakaki
18	Kau High & Pahala Elementary	Sharon Beck	Hawaii	Mary Correa
19	Naalehu Elementary	Darlene Javar	Hawaii	Mary Correa
20	Keaau Elementary	Chad Farias	Hawaii	Mary Correa
21	Mountain View Elementary	Barbara Riley	Hawaii	Mary Correa
22	Keonepoko Elementary	Kathleen Romero	Hawaii	Mary Correa
23	Pahoa Elementary	Michelle Payne-Arakaki	Hawaii	Mary Correa
24	Waialua Elementary	Scott Moore	Oahu	John Brummel
25	Nanaikapono Elementary	Debra Knight	Oahu	Ann Mahi
26	Nanakuli Elementary	Lisa Ann Higa	Oahu	Ann Mahi
27	Leihoku Elementary	Randall Miura	Oahu	Ann Mahi
28	Maili Elementary	Disa Hauge	Oahu	Ann Mahi
29	Makaha Elementary	Lynn Okamura	Oahu	Ann Mahi
30	Waianae Elementary	Wendy Takahashi	Oahu	Ann Mahi