



NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Executive Office on Early Learning Sponsors Symposium  
on Early Childhood Development**

HONOLULU — Gov. Neil Abercrombie's Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) today presented a symposium for the Hawaii State Legislature, the state's multi-level educational systems and the private sector.

The event, *Charting our Future: The Governor's Symposium on Early Childhood Development and Learning*, took place at The Plaza Club in Downtown Honolulu.

"This is our chance; we are ready and are working diligently to establish a statewide early learning program, which will benefit Hawaii's four-year-olds," Gov. Abercrombie said. "We need to provide every young child in Hawaii access to high-quality preschool."

"The symposium brings together private and public entities serving Hawaii's young children to align future strategies and initiatives in early learning," said Dr. GG Weisenfeld, EOEL director. "The Governor made it very clear at the outset that our best investment of public dollars is early childhood education. Coordination with our partners in the community and across state departments will enable our children to have relevant and appropriate early learning experiences which will prepare them for success in future academic endeavors."

The symposium included remarks by Gov. Abercrombie; Dr. Kristie Kauerz, research assistant professor of P-3 Policy and Leadership from the University of Washington; and Albert Wat, senior policy analyst of the Education Division of the National Governors Association (NGA). Both Kauerz and Wat shared the national perspective on efforts underway to develop and sustain a comprehensive early childhood development learning system for children birth through age 8.

In June, Hawaii was recognized for its progress toward improving access to early education, and the state was selected by NGA as one of six states to participate in a joint effort to improve learning outcomes from early childhood through third grade.

*The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) was established by Act 178 (passed as Senate Bill 2545) and signed into law by Gov. Abercrombie in June 2012. The creation of EOEL provides government wide authority to guide the development of a comprehensive and integrated statewide early childhood development and learning system. For more information, visit [earlylearning.hawaii.gov](http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov).*

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