



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING  
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD  
DIRECTOR

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Aloha,

As the new year has taken hold, our office continues its work to fulfill the Legislature's mandate to develop the State's early childhood development and learning system. Our objective in 2014 is to increase the number of four-year-olds who will have the opportunity for a prekindergarten experience.

This November, there will be a question on the ballot that will ask voters whether the State Constitution should be changed to permit public monies to be used to fund private, community-based preschools. If voters approve, the State will be allowed to contract with private, community-based preschools for quality preschool experiences.

While we await the outcome of the vote, we are requesting additional resources from the Legislature to increase the number of four-year-olds who will be able to attend preschool this August 2014.

Last year, the Hawaii State Legislature funded the Department of Human Services' Preschool Open Doors program with additional funds that will help a small portion of our four-year-old population attend private, community-based preschools.

However, there are about 17,000 four-year-olds in Hawaii -- many more families want access to quality preschools. And many cannot afford the cost.

To prepare as many four-year-olds for kindergarten as possible, it is important to use and expand the already-existing mixed-delivery system. EOEL's approach is to support such a mixed-delivery system, which includes private, community-based preschools; Head Start programs; family child care homes; special education prekindergarten classrooms; family-child interaction learning programs; and DOE-EOEL prekindergarten programs.

State funds would make up only a small percentage of the cost of this system -- the rest is funded by sources such as federal, parent, private foundation monies.

This session, EOEL is seeking funds for the school year beginning August 2014 for family-child interaction learning programs and the DOE-EOEL Prekindergarten Program. The request will allow an additional 1,040 children to attend prekindergarten.

For more details about our proposal, please visit our [Fact Sheets](#) page.

We appreciate the support you have shown, and continue to show. Your participation in the legislative process is key to increasing access to early learning opportunities for as many of our keiki as possible.

Sincerely,

*GG Weisenfeld, Ed.D.*

Director