



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Prekindergarten Classrooms Available at 18 Public Schools This Fall

HONOLULU – A new program developed jointly by the governor’s Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE) will allow families to enroll their 4-year-old children in one of 21 prekindergarten classrooms at 18 public elementary schools across the state this fall.

The program is intended to serve 420 children who qualify based on income (eligible for free- and reduced-price meals) and age requirements. For the 2014-2015 school year, children must be 4 years old on or before by July 31, 2014 – following the new kindergarten age requirement – and priority will be given to children born on or between Aug. 1 and Dec. 31, 2009.

This is the first time Hawaii has designated state funds for prekindergarten education, joining 41 other states that already do. The Legislature provided \$3 million in the supplemental budget for only 21 of the 32 classrooms requested by the Abercrombie Administration. The majority of the classrooms are located on the neighbor islands and in rural areas.

“We are on our way to creating access to early learning for our children statewide,” Gov. Neil Abercrombie said. “This partnership between my Executive Office on Early Learning and the DOE is an important part of our vision to prepare as many 4-year-olds as possible for kindergarten. It is a key component of the mixed-delivery system of public and private providers that has worked for many states, and that I believe is best for the future of Hawaii’s keiki.”

Schools Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi said, “The Department of Education fully supports any initiative that encourages families to give their children a solid foundation for their learning. Providing a quality early learning experience for our youngest students is vital to their academic success later in life.”

EOEL worked closely with DOE to create the infrastructure for the program and will provide the support needed to ensure that children leave the program with the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten. Classrooms will be staffed by DOE teachers and educational assistants. EOEL will offer early childhood education and development expertise and training.

“This is definite progress for Hawaii,” said EOEL Director GG Weisenfeld. “It is a systematic approach to ensuring high-quality early childhood education with dedicated funding and professional development support. It also puts us in a good position to qualify for federal funding. All of this means more opportunities and better outcomes for our children.”

State Senate Education Committee Chair Sen. Jill Tokuda said, “While we would have liked to have gotten more resources to increase the number of children served statewide, these 21

classrooms will greatly enhance our school readiness efforts in our most rural and underserved communities.”

"We're excited to work with more families in the community," said Linapuni Elementary Principal Cindy Sunahara. "We know these students will receive a valuable start to their academic careers in our early learning classrooms."

Karen Lee, executive director of Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education, said, "We are very pleased about the advent of a state-funded, high-quality prekindergarten program at the Hawaii Department of Education. This program will build upon the work already started by several early learning sites and elementary schools to smoothen the transition to K-12 education and beyond. Our keiki will have early access to a solid foundation that will allow them to be college-, career- and community-ready."

Selection of the classrooms was based on: Title I status, limited preschool capacity in the community such as in rural areas, available space at schools, currently operating DOE prekindergarten classrooms with funding that is about to end, and the interest and willingness of principals to work with EOEL on implementing a quality program.

Student application packets will be available at the respective school offices. The first deadline to submit an application is May 30, 2014.

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, statewide early learning system. For more information, visit: <http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov>

**EOEL-DOE Prekindergarten Program Schools
2014-2015 School Year**

School	Principal	Island	Complex Area Superintendent
Honokaa Elementary	Rory Souza	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
Hookena Elementary	Joyce K. Crisafi	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
Kau High & Pahala Elementary	Sharon Beck	Hawaii	Mary Correa
Keonepoko Elementary	Kathleen Romero	Hawaii	Mary Correa
Konawaena Elementary	Claire Yoshida	Hawaii	Arthur Souza
Mountain View Elementary	Barbara Riley	Hawaii	Mary Correa
Naalehu Elementary	Darlene Javar	Hawaii	Mary Correa
Pahoa Elementary	Michelle Payne-Arakaki	Hawaii	Mary Correa
Eleele Elementary	Fred Rose	Kauai	William Arakaki
Kekaha Elementary	Jason Yoshida	Kauai	William Arakaki
Lanai High & Elementary	Elton Kinoshita	Lanai	Lindsay Ball
Hana High & Elementary	Richard Paul	Maui	Lindsay Ball
Kaunakakai Elementary	Janice Espiritu	Molokai	Lindsay Ball
Likelike Elementary	Kelly Bart	Oahu	Ruth Silberstein
Linapuni Elementary	Cindy Sunahara	Oahu	Donna Lum Kagawa
Nanakuli Elementary	Lisa Ann Higa	Oahu	Ann Mahi
Waiahole Elementary	Louise Wolcott	Oahu	Lea Albert
Waiialua Elementary	Scott Moore	Oahu	John Brummel

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Media Contact:

Justin Fujioka

Press Secretary

(808) 586-0012

Justin.Fujioka@hawaii.gov

<http://governor.hawaii.gov>