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Executive Office on Early Learning Announces Research-Based Standards for Early Learning

HONOLULU – The Executive Office on Early Learning released new research-based standards, which identify the expectations of knowledge and behavior for children from birth up through kindergarten entry.

The Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) will be used to support early childhood professionals in the development of their programs, and provide guidance on how to integrate strategies to educate young children. HELDS will also be used to help inform and reassure parents about the development of their child, and can support communication between teachers/caregivers and families.

“This is the first time a set of standards have been released that address the development needs of the whole child from birth to kindergarten entry,” said Terry Lock, director, Executive Office on Early Learning. “In addition to national research, the updated HELDS are based on decades of work within the Hawaii early childhood community and show our state’s commitment to ensure that all children receive a high quality early learning experience.”

This mark the first time Hawaii’s early childhood field has a set of standards that align with the Hawaii State Department of Education and the Common Core State Standards. HELDS aims to allow for a smoother transition for students from early childhood into kindergarten.

“The HELDS standards provides the framework, goals and language to help put everyone on the same page both in the early childhood field and across the entire educational pipeline,” said GG Weisenfeld, director of Early Learning at Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education.

The new standards are an expected set of knowledge and behaviors categorized into five areas based on the National Education Goals Panel framework. These areas are:

- Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development
- Social and Emotional Development

- Approaches to Learning
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Language and literacy

The standards were developed and researched by an advisory group that included representatives from Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, Center on the Family at the University of Hawaii (COF), the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB), Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA), the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC), and the Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE).

For more information on HELDS visit <http://p3hawaii.org>.

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