



HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF

EDUCATION

News Release

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Five Schools Selected to Open State-Funded Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms in School Year 2018-19

HONOLULU - A child's early years are critical in establishing a strong foundation for education and research has shown that early childhood education sets the foundation for life-long learning and success. Investing in high quality early childhood programs have resulted in narrowing achievement gaps, decreasing the need for special education and increasing high school graduation and college attendance rates.

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) launched Hawaii's first publicly funded Pre-Kindergarten program in the 2014-15 school year. The program provides high-quality early learning experiences to students in the year prior to kindergarten eligibility. As a partnership between the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) and Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL), 21 pre-kindergarten classrooms on 19 HIDOE elementary school campuses statewide constitute Hawaii's first State-funded pre-kindergarten program. The program is a first step toward developing Hawaii's early learning system and is currently in its fourth year.

EOEL has selected five new schools to open new public pre-kindergarten classrooms in the 2018-19 school year. Schools were selected based on a competitive application process and include:

- Kohala Elementary (Big Island)
- Kula Elementary (Maui)
- Kilohana Elementary (Molokai)
- Kailua Elementary (Oahu)
- Kalihi Uka Elementary (Oahu)

"Through this program, we have the opportunity to empower young children who otherwise would not have access to high quality early childhood education," said Lauren Moriguchi, EOEL Executive Director. "This partnership has the potential to shape lives and change future trajectories. We are fortunate to have received funding for expansion of the program and are excited to open five new pre-k classrooms in the 2018-19 school year."

Kapalama and Keolu Elementary Schools have been designated as alternates and have been invited to participate in EOEL's Early Learning Induction Program, which is required for school teams to attend prior to opening a new EOEL Pre-Kindergarten Classroom.

For more information on pre-kindergarten and early learning, please visit <http://bit.ly/1P9ewxx>.

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About the Hawaii State Department of Education

The Hawaii State Department of Education is the ninth-largest U.S. school district and the only statewide educational system in the country. It is comprised of 256 schools and 34 charter schools, and serves 179,902 students. King Kamehameha III established Hawaii's public school system in 1840. To learn more, visit HawaiiPublicSchools.org. □□

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