



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hawaii's first public preschool program accepts applications, opens new classrooms

HONOLULU – The Executive Office on Early Learning announced that five classrooms providing free preschool for 100 total additional children statewide for the upcoming 2018-'19 school year stand ready to open. Now accepting applications, EOEL has also forged new partnerships with local colleges to develop qualified prekindergarten teachers and to support them.

The new classrooms located in Hawaii County, Honolulu County and Maui County are each equipped to serve 20 prekindergartners and are staffed with a licensed teacher and an educational assistant. They are located at:

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

Startup agency EOEL, which launched Hawaii's first publicly funded early-education program just four years ago, also recently partnered with Chaminade University of Honolulu and the University of Hawaii system. The alliances are developing strategies to address the critical statewide shortage of a qualified early-education workforce; increase access to professional development and support for educators; and increase career-advancement and educational opportunities for those who enter the specialized early-education field.

"These partnerships are helping to develop a strong, high-quality program that will produce the well-equipped instructors who are needed to obtain the best results for our keiki," said EOEL Director Lauren Moriguchi.

Accessing affordable, excellent-quality preschool is important in Hawaii for many reasons including:

- Eighty-five percent of the brain is developed before age 5.
- It costs \$9,500 on average for one year of full-time preschool – equal to nearly one year's tuition at UH.
- Married parents of two children living at the poverty line spend 79 percent of their income on commercial-business childcare.
- Single parents spend 46 percent of their income on commercial-business childcare.

EOEL – which oversees the development of Hawaii’s only state-funded preschool program – now offers 26 prekindergarten classrooms serving 520 keiki statewide.

For year-round registration, visit <http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/eoel-public-pre-kindergarten-program/>.

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