
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HAWAIIAN MEDIUM EARLY LEARNING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. In 1983, 'Aha Pūnana Leo was established by a
2 group of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i educators to help revive the Hawaiian
3 language throughout Hawai'i. The first 'Aha Pūnana Leo
4 preschool using 'Ōlelo Hawai'i medium education started in
5 Kekaha, Kaua'i one year later, followed by 11 more sites
6 currently in operation across the state. The focus of these
7 schools and other 'Aha Pūnana Leo programs is to nurture new
8 generations of native speakers who are able to describe their
9 world through the lens of their unique language and culture, as
10 well as master English and other languages using diverse and
11 proven methods.

12 Although 'Ōlelo Hawai'i has been one of the state's
13 official languages for over 40 years since 1978, 'Aha Pūnana Leo
14 remains the only statewide early learning system conducted
15 entirely in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i immersion for infants, toddlers, and
16 preschoolers.

17 As the foremost and sole entity representing 'Ōlelo Hawai'i
18 and its incorporation into early learning educational

1 opportunities across Hawai'i, 'Aha Pūnana Leo has identified its
2 need to better facilitate continued representation on the
3 state's early learning board, established under section 302L-
4 1.6, Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

5 The early learning board is responsible for directing the
6 executive office on early learning, and providing
7 recommendations for meeting the developmental and educational
8 needs of Hawai'i's keiki from prenatal care to entry into
9 kindergarten, as well as promoting collaboration across keiki-
10 serving agencies and stakeholders.

11 'Aha Pūnana Leo has historically filled a position on the
12 early learning board as the statutory "representative of
13 Hawaiian medium early learning providers," being Hawai'i's
14 leader in pre-kindergarten 'Ōlelo Hawai'i educational
15 opportunities. Unfortunately, 'Aha Pūnana Leo has experienced
16 issues with sustaining this position on the early learning board
17 with statutory language limiting the Hawaiian medium
18 representative to short, two-year terms, as well as Hawai'i
19 Revised Statutes section 26-34 effectively prohibiting
20 individual 'Aha Pūnana Leo representatives from serving more
21 than a maximum of two consecutive terms. These term limits
22 inhibit 'Aha Pūnana Leo's representatives from accruing and
23 maintaining the necessary institutional knowledge and continuous

1 presence to ensure understading and recognition within the early
2 learning board of the important role of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i education
3 for Hawai'i's growing keiki. These term limits also negatively
4 affect the overall dire need to perpetuate and normalize 'Ōlelo
5 Hawai'i, as an official state language, for future generations
6 to come.

7 The legislature finds that 'Aha Pūnana Leo could better
8 fulfill its mission and purpose by securing an expressly
9 "invited" position on the early learning board. Currently, the
10 early learning board must invite the "chief executive officer of
11 Kamehameha Schools" and the "executive director of the Hawai'i
12 Association of Independent Schools," or their designees, to
13 serve as voting members. These members are not subject to the
14 term limits currently hindering 'Aha Pūnana Leo's historically-
15 filled position as the "representative of Hawaiian medium early
16 learning providers." 'Aha Pūnana Leo, as the predominant
17 statewide entity solely dedicated to advancing 'Ōlelo Hawai'i
18 medium early learning education, deserves this same "invited"
19 member status to ensure its continued institutional presence on
20 the early learning board.

21 Accordingly, the legislature intends to support and
22 maintain the representation of 'Aha Pūnana Leo on the early
23 learning board to ensure the understanding and recognition of

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1 the importance of Hawaiian medium early learning in Hawai'i.
2 The legislature further intends to ensure greater normalization
3 and perpetuation of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i usage in the state as an
4 official state language since 1978. The purpose of this measure
5 is to enable 'Aha Pūnana Leo to more effectively and
6 consistently advocate for 'Ōlelo Hawai'i medium early learning
7 programming across the state; assist the early learning board in
8 its efforts to enhance 'Ōlelo Hawai'i developmental and
9 educational programs and opportunities for Hawai'i's keiki; and
10 support overall efforts to perpetuate and normalize 'Ōlelo
11 Hawai'i as an official state language for future generations to
12 come; by amending the composition of the early learning board to
13 expressly recognize 'Aha Pūnana Leo as a standing "invited"
14 member, not subject to term limits.

15 SECTION 2. Section 302L-1.6, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsections (b) and (c) to read as follows:

17 "(b) The board shall consist of the following voting
18 members:

- 19 (1) A representative of center-based program providers or
20 the representative's designee;
21 (2) A representative of family child care program
22 providers;

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1 (3) A representative of family-child interaction learning
2 program providers;

3 (4) A representative of philanthropic organizations that
4 support early learning or the representative's
5 designee;

6 (5) A representative from a head start provider agency;

7 (6) A representative from the Hawaii Early Intervention
8 Coordinating Council;

9 (7) A parent representative;

10 (8) A representative from the Hawaii chapter of the
11 American Academy of Pediatrics;

12 (9) A representative of home-visiting program providers;

13 [~~(10) A representative of Hawaiian medium early learning~~
14 ~~providers; and~~

15 ~~(11)] and~~

16 (10) A representative of the Hawaii Council of Mayors, or
17 the representative's designee.

18 The superintendent of education, director of human
19 services, director of health, and president of the University of
20 Hawaii shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting members of the
21 board.

22 The board shall invite the chief executive officer of
23 Kamehameha Schools [~~and~~], the executive director of the Hawaii

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1 Association of Independent Schools, and the chief executive
2 officer of 'Aha 'Pūnana Leo, or their designees, to serve as
3 voting members of the board.

4 (c) Except for the superintendent of education, directors
5 of state departments, president of the University of Hawaii,
6 chief executive officer of Kamehameha Schools, [~~and the~~]
7 executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent
8 Schools, and chief executive officer of 'Aha Pūnana Leo, or
9 their designees, the members of the board shall serve staggered
10 terms as follows:

- 11 (1) The representative of center-based program providers
12 shall serve a two-year term;
- 13 (2) The representative of family child care program
14 providers shall serve a three-year term;
- 15 (3) The representative of family-child interaction
16 learning program providers shall serve a three-year
17 term;
- 18 (4) The representative of philanthropic organizations that
19 support early learning shall serve a two-year term;
- 20 (5) The representative from a head start provider agency
21 shall serve a three-year term;
- 22 (6) The representative from the Hawaii Early Intervention
23 Coordinating Council shall serve a three-year term;

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1 (7) The parent representative shall serve a two-year term;

2 (8) The representative from the Hawaii chapter of the
3 American Academy of Pediatrics shall serve a two-year
4 term;

5 (9) The representative of home-visiting program providers
6 shall serve a three-year term;

7 [~~(10) The representative of Hawaiian medium early learning~~
8 ~~providers shall serve a two-year term; and~~

9 ~~(11)]~~ and

10 (10) The representative of the Hawaii Council of Mayors
11 shall serve a three-year term."

12 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
13 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

By Request