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## **Hawaii One of Only Six States to Achieve 10 Out of 10 Quality Standards for State-Funded Public Preschools**

HONOLULU, HI – Hawai'i's Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) Public Prekindergarten Program was recognized for meeting all 10 of the 10 quality standard benchmarks identified by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). The national ranking for these benchmarks is part of NIEER's annual State Preschool Yearbook that it released this morning. The ten standards serve as indicators of what's required to establish a high-quality public preschool program. **Hawai'i is one of only six states to meet all 10 benchmarks.**

"We're incredibly proud of the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program, which is still in its infancy, having been established in 2015. Achieving 10 out of 10 quality standard benchmarks within a fairly short period of time is a testament to the partnerships we've built – with Department of Education schools and educators, with UH Mānoa College of Education, with the State Legislature and more," said EOEL Director Lauren Moriguchi. "Attaining these benchmarks signifies that the foundation we've built is solid. With a solid foundation, we know that our educators, families and, most importantly, students are supported. This is especially relevant as the early childhood community looks to fulfill the State Legislature's vision for expanded access to early learning opportunities," she continued.

Over the last several years, EOEL has worked with the State Legislature to establish the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program as well as dedicate funding to building out the program on more campuses.

"It is a great honor to be recognized as one of the top-performing prekindergarten systems in the country. Over the past couple of years, we made great strides to expand access to high-quality early learning opportunities, and we will continue to prioritize Hawai'i's keiki to provide them with the proper foundation to foster conducive learning," said State Representative Justin Woodson (D-9, Kahului, Pu'unēnē, Old Sand Hills, Maui Lani) who chairs the House Committee on Education.

Among other things, NIEER's State Preschool Yearbook assesses and ranks state-run public preschool programs according to how much each state spends per student and the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds the programs serve. Hawai'i ranks fourth for per-student state spending for the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program. It ranks 43rd for access all 4-year-olds have to the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program. Hawai'i is among nearly 40% of states whose public prekindergarten program does not currently serve 3-year-olds.

The full State Preschool Yearbook is available [online here](#).

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