

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM



# Highlighting Innovations in Early Childhood Teacher Preparation in Hawai'i

*University of Hawai'i at Mānoa: Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity (ECE<sup>3</sup>) Project  
Dr. Terry Lock, Principal Investigator and Project Director*



The image features a decorative border of various tropical leaves, including palm fronds and monstera leaves, in shades of green, framing the central text. Two thin horizontal lines are positioned above and below the text.

# **Transforming ECE Preparation Program and Compensation/ Financing Systems**

**Advance the highest standards of educator quality—and make them possible through equitable access to pre-service preparation and continued professional learning coupled with professional compensation that reflects the transformational value of early childhood educators.**

Transforming  
Early Educator  
Lead Teacher  
Preparation  
Through  
Multi-partner  
Innovation



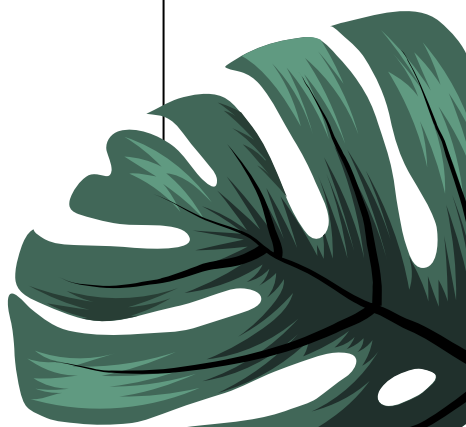
- ❖ California State University, Sacramento
- ❖ College of Menominee Nation
- ❖ Georgia State University
- ❖ North Seattle College
- ❖ University of Colorado Denver
- ❖ University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
- ❖ Salish Kootenai College
- ❖ University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Funded by Early Educator Investment Collaborative (EEIC) a national funders collaborative for 3 years from 2021-2024

**Professional Educators.  
Professional Compensation.  
Prepared Children.**

# Transforming Early Educator Lead Teacher Preparation Programs through Multi-partner Innovation

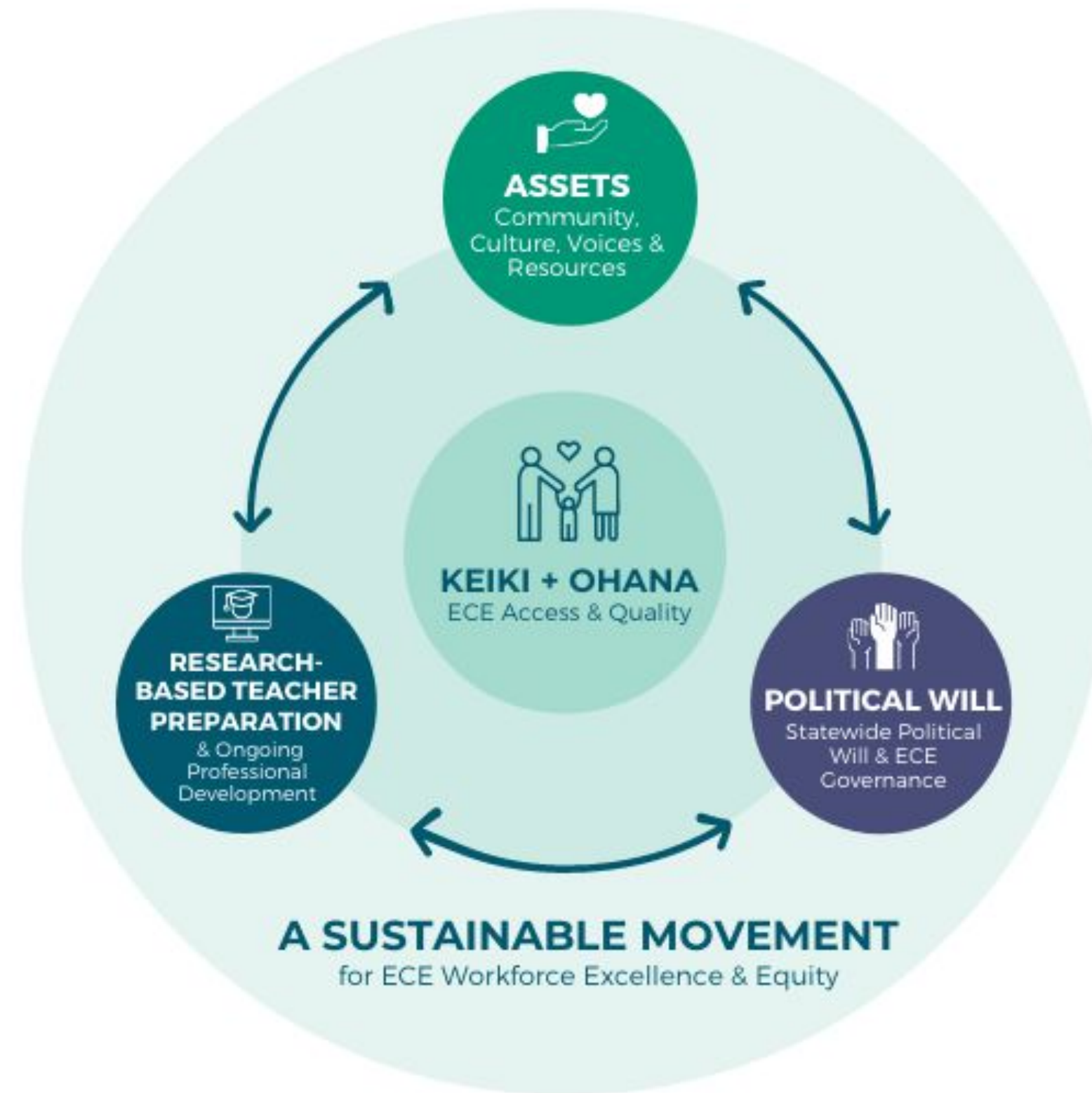
- EEIC partners with states, territories, and tribal nations to break down systemic and financial barriers students face pursuing early childhood education degrees.
- IHEs and their partners have been identifying and dismantling obstacles to establish more equitable teacher preparation landscape.
- Collaboration among IHEs, community organizations, policymakers, and other leaders has been vital for creating a holistic approach to teacher preparation that addresses the root causes of inequities and fosters lasting change.





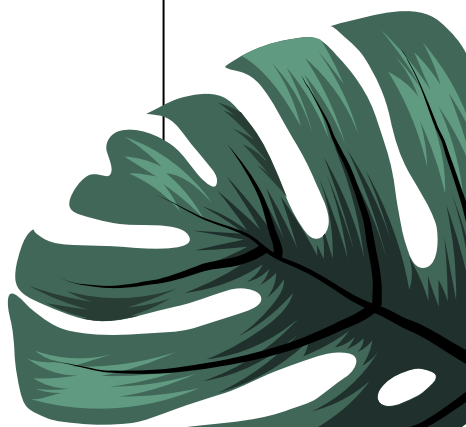
# Theory of Improvement

This theory of improvement maps an ecosystem of elements (*community voices, research-based professional learning, and political will*) that need to be present to create a sustainable movement for ECE workforce excellence and equity.



# Challenges and Needs related to our Hawai'i Early Educators

1. **Increasing number of qualified diverse early educators** for growing publicly funded prekindergarten program serving 4 and 3 year olds in communities across the state
2. Creating more **qualified infant and toddler programs** and **infant and toddler educators**
3. Advocating for **funds for wage supplements** to address **recruitment and retention** challenges in our early care and education workforce.
4. Creating **affordable, accessible and high quality competency-based** early educator teacher preparation programs
5. Developing **pathways with articulation and transfer agreements** between two-year community colleges and four-year university
6. Early educators want to **continually improve program quality** but need guidance, support, and resources



# Celebrating the Accomplishments



**Implementing the Power to the Profession Unifying Framework:** Launched Advancing the ECE Professional Initiative. Adopted a national competency-based framework and aligned existing and new courses and field experiences at entry, associate and bachelor in ECE degree programs.

**Accelerating efforts to increase compensation:** Contracted RAND Corporation to complete a workforce compensation study and roadmap of policy recommendations. Formed a compensation design team to build shared understanding about the roadmap's policy recommendations and work with HECAA to support state legislative priorities.

**Creating accessible career pathways:** Developed and piloted an infant-toddler certificate pathway and a portfolio -based assessment for prior learning credit; updated early childhood program administration courses; launched first ECE registered apprenticeship program with Keiki O Ka 'Aina Family Learning Centers and HonCC; and developing a statewide bachelor in education in ECE, birth through age 8, program.

**Assuring student success:** Implemented a student ambassador program to assist faculty in recruiting and retaining students; piloted a professional learning community for mentor teachers for practicum students; more financial assistance for ECE students.

**Laying foundation for continuous quality improvement:** Met with DOH home visiting program CQI, developing foundational documents,







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# **Implementing the Power to the Profession Unifying Framework**

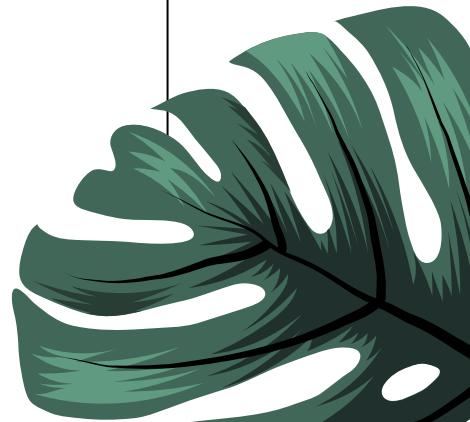
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# Unifying Framework - History



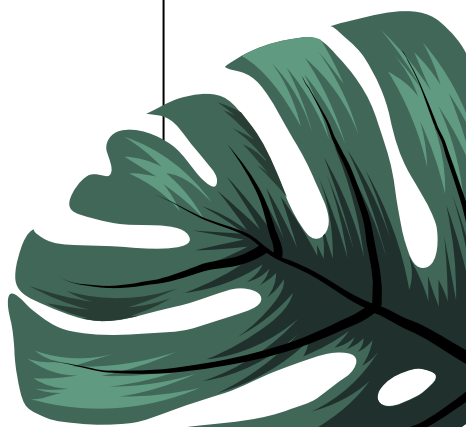
1. The *Unifying Framework* is a result of the Power to the Profession (P2P), a multi-year consensus formed by professionals in the early childhood field on a set of recommendations to advance the vision:

***“each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high-quality early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, equitable, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce of ECE professionals, working across all states and settings.”***

1. Informed by other professionals like nursing the *Unifying Framework* calls for **significant increases in public investments that advance a shared vision defined by a set of compensation goals, supports, qualifications, preparation pathways, accountability structures, and partners.**
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# 3 key things to know about the Unifying Framework:

1. It's a **roadmap** to an **inclusive, equitable future** where **competent early childhood educators**, working with children from **birth to 8**, are **trusted, autonomous**, and **fairly compensated** for their essential and valuable work in all states and settings.
2. It was created and designed by **centering early childhood educators' perspectives** and expertise, simplifying systems and structures for a coherent, transparent, and accessible ECE profession. It **prioritizes investment in educators' preparation, support, and compensation**.
3. It addresses current challenges and future needs with an ambitious vision and **evidence-based recommendations** rooted in early learning research. It acknowledges the realities of the current ECE workforce and pathways landscape.

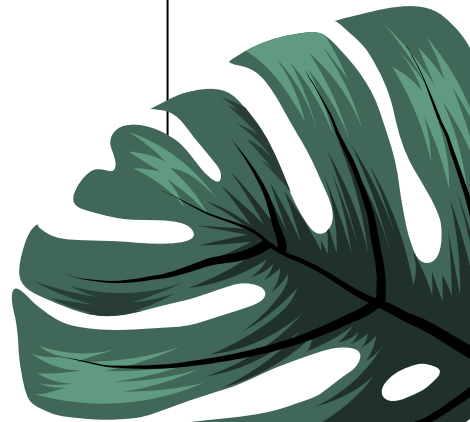




# Advancing the Early Childhood Education Profession Initiative

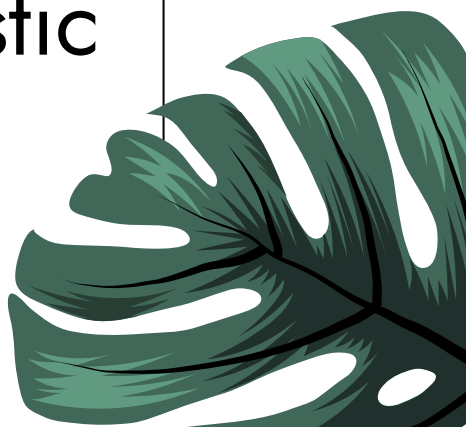


Partnership between ECE<sup>3</sup> Project, Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HIAEYC) and Hawai'i Careers with Young Children (HCYC). We advocates for a collaborative systems change approach that involves the entire ECE ecosystem:

- early childhood educators
  - professional preparation programs
  - early learning programs
  - employers and owners
  - state and local government and agencies
  - policy makers, philanthropic organizations
  - federal government
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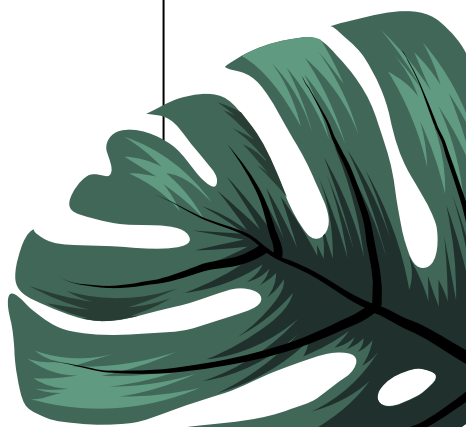
# Phased-In Implementation that Honors the Existing and Future Workforce

1. We will not advocate for increased educational requirements without advocating for funding to provide requisite supports and attendant compensation.
2. We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating for increased funding and capacity supports so that programs, institutions, and educators across all settings can implement them.
3. We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating to establish and implement realistic timelines that recognize the challenges faced by the existing workforce, across all settings.



# Phased-In Implementation that Honors the Existing and Future Workforce

4. We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating for implementation plans and timelines that recognize the particular challenges that family child care and other community-based providers face, so as not to contribute to or worsen their widespread decline.
5. We will not advocate for policies that disproportionately and negatively impact educators from communities of color.
6. We will not advocate for policies that advance the early childhood education profession without doing the work to mitigate unintended consequences and create meaningful pathways for advancement.





# National Workforce Initiatives

Alignment & accreditation of ECE preparation programs with National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) **Professional Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators**.

## 3 Levels of Expertise

**ECE I** - Entry level

**ECE II** - Associate degree

**ECE III** - Baccalaureate or Initial License  
(SATEP recommendation)

Coherent, comprehensive system of educational expectations and levels and SUPPORTS to obtain credentials.

## Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

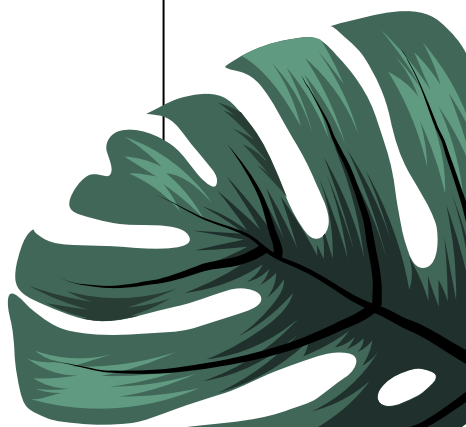
Effective early childhood educators are critical for realizing the early childhood profession's vision that each and every young child, birth through age 8, have equitable access to high-quality learning and care environments. As such, there is a core body of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions early childhood educators must demonstrate to effectively promote the development, learning, and well-being of all young children.


[Disponible en Español: NAEYC.org/competencies](https://naeyc.org/competencies)

A Position Statement Held on Behalf of the Early Childhood Education Profession  
Adopted by the NAEYC National Governing Board November 2019

# Cross-Sector Curriculum Mapping and Alignment with NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies

- Adopted the NAEYC professional standards and competencies and aligned existing and new courses and field experiences at entry, associate and bachelor in ECE degree programs.
- Over a two summers the Program Coordinators and Faculty from Kauai Community College (KauCC), Honolulu Community College (HonCC), University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC), Hawai'i Community College (HawCC) and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Education (UHM COE)
- Identify our strengths and where we can improve.
- Discussed how to differentiate our curriculum for diverse students starting from different pathways
- Participated in training on NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation System



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# Accelerating efforts to increase compensation

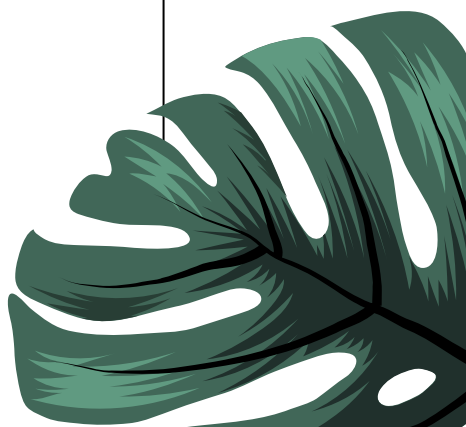


# Commissioned RAND Corporation to Conduct Study

The goal of the study was to help to accelerate efforts to increase wages, benefits and working conditions for early childhood educators and support recruitment and retention of early care and education workforce working in DHS licensed child care centers and regulated family child care programs

Data collected through surveys, focus groups expert interviews, and interaction workshops from November 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022

Small Hawai'i team met weekly to offer historical and contextual guidance to the RAND research team led by Dr. Lynn Karoly, Senior Economist



# Final Report



The final report by RAND Corporation, *Early Childhood Educators in Hawai'i: Addressing Compensation, Working Conditions, and Professional Advancement* was published on October 25, 2022.

This report described the current landscape of early childhood educator wages, benefits, working conditions, recruitment and turnover issues among DHS licensed centers and regulated family child care homes in Hawai'i.

Along with the study's findings, the final report identified policy and financing options and a high-level roadmap on how to advance these options statewide.



# RAND Final Report: Three-pillar road map for ECE workforce in Hawai‘i

	Complementary strategy, Phases 1 and 2:		
	Primary Strategy, Phase 1 Stabilize the ECE Workforce	Primary Strategy, Phase 2 Strengthen and Sustain the ECE Workforce	Support ECE workforce policies
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more rounds of wage supplements across ECE workforce</li> <li>• Pilot initiatives to address access to benefits</li> <li>• Pilot initiatives to address working conditions</li> <li>• Pilot salary scale</li> <li>• Expand apprenticeships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase in salary scale / compensation parity across ECE workforce</li> <li>• Scale-up initiatives to address access to benefits</li> <li>• Scale-up initiatives to address working conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities investments</li> <li>• Build an effective ECE workforce registry</li> <li>• Invest in other data systems</li> <li>• Develop capacity for benchmarking compensation</li> <li>• Develop key ECE workforce indicators</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable uses of existing federal/state funds</li> <li>• More efficient use of existing federal/state funds</li> <li>• Strategic state investments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce new funding streams as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same sources as Phases 1 and 2, typically one-time investments</li> </ul>



# Compensation Design Team

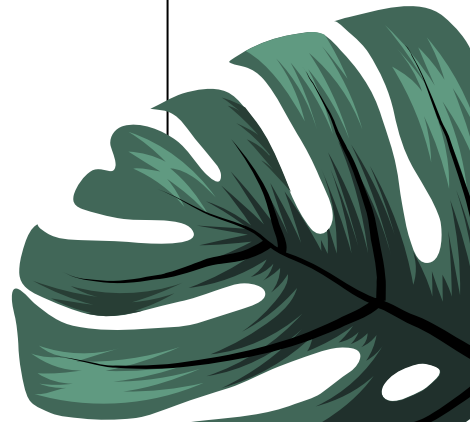


ECE<sup>3</sup> Project convening a Compensation Design Team to establish a process to further analyze each of the policy options in Phase 1 of the RAND's roadmap and build awareness among early educators and stakeholders about these policy options.

ECE<sup>3</sup> Project has written dynamic or “living” documents on the following policy options

- wage supplement programs
- contracts and grants
- working conditions
- benefits
- apprenticeships
- salary scale

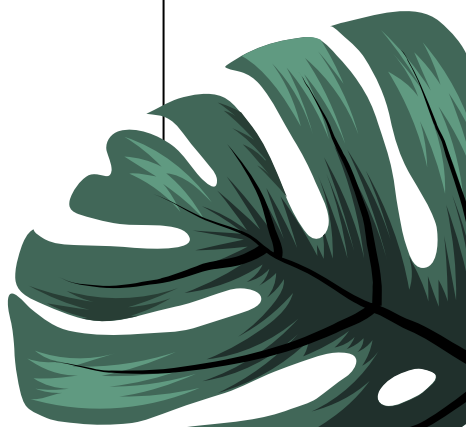
These documents incorporate lessons learned from other states; and how Hawai'i could pilot these policy options at a smaller scale and eventually expand them.



## **Partner with Hawai'i Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance (HECAA) to support state legislative priorities**

The personnel cost represents the largest portion of the cost in high quality ECE, as a result - in the absence of requirements for competitive pay and benefits— staff compensation is often the budget component that gets squeezed to close the gap between the actual cost and the funding available (public subsidies combined with what families can afford to contribute)

Ultimately public funding is key for closing the gap between the cost of high quality ECE and how much families can pay.





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# Creating accessible career pathways

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# Sheryl Ann's Story

- Family Child Care
- Non-credit to Credit conversion
- Completed a Portfolio -Based Assessment  
a Type of Prior Learning Credit
- Practicum in Infant/Toddler Laboratory  
Classroom
- Graduating this semester



# Keiki O Ka Aina Registered Apprenticeship Program

- Competencies aligned with NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators
- Related Training Instruction in the UHCCs
- Leads to an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education
- Mentor
- Credit for On-the-Job Learning



# Upcoming Statewide BEd in ECE, B-8 through UHM COE



## Available Across Island

Primarily online, which means teacher candidates from all islands are welcome to enroll!



## Online Early & Evening Class

Courses online and in the early evenings. We believe that your career should not be an obstacle to higher learning!



## Articulated

Prior ECE credits need not go to waste. New track is designed to articulate smoothly with the ECE programs at HonCC, HCC, KauCC, and UHMC



## Cohorted Program

To instill a sense of community and belonging, we plan to design the program in reasonably sized cohorts.





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# Assuring student success

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# Student Ambassador Program

Since the Fall of 2021, the Early Childhood Education (ECED) Programs at four of our UH community colleges, HonCC, HawCC, UHMC and KauCC began a Student Ambassador program.

The Student Ambassador is a part-time student assistant who is supervised by the program coordinator or faculty and represents and promotes the ECE program.





# Peer Support

Building relationships is essential to students' success and the program's success.

The Student Ambassador provides personalized outreach, connecting ECED students with services helping them overcome personal issues and getting assistance with classes such as tutoring.



Peer Support



Increased Retention





# Recruitment



- An annual spring event, “Parent Child Fair” at Kukui Grove Center on Kaua’i, where most preschool programs participate allowing parents to meet Preschool directors and teachers for an informal conversation as parents seek placement for childcare.
- ECED students provide engaging hands-on activities for the keiki.
- Also allowing for interaction and discussions with parents about working with children and becoming preschool teachers.



# Improved Communication



Activities ECED students participated in the Health Fair provided by the HED which ECED comes under. KauCC's student ambassador Liana created heart-shaped scrolls with affirmations for everyone. This was a great networking event learning about other health and mental resources provided by the community and student services on campus.



**One of the biggest barriers to attending college is the cost**





# The Hawai'i ECE Tuition Stipend Program

A collaboration with the Executive Office on Early Learning &  
Samuel N. & Mary Tenney Castle Foundation

Administered by  
Graduate ECE Programs, College of Education, UH Mānoa  
together with  
UH System

ECE Faculty, Campus Advisors & Cashier's Offices  
at

Hawai'i CC  
Honolulu CC  
Kauai CC  
UH Maui College

UH West 'Oahu  
UH Hilo  
UH Manoa



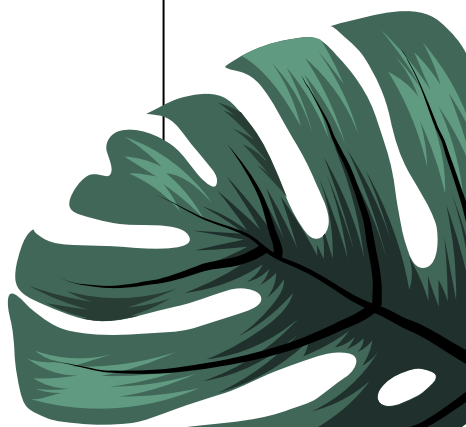


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# Laying the Foundation for our Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) System

# Key insights about how to effect change drawn from improvement science

- Ensure that the **drivers of change** are those who know the work best and are **closest to the work**
- Focus more on action, **avoiding and the tendency to get stuck in the planning stage**
- Buy-in matters at all levels and depends on **champions in many places.**
- Be intentional about building **positive relationships** and **mutual respect.** In order to foster a culture of learning
- Continually **use data** to inform and guide improvement.



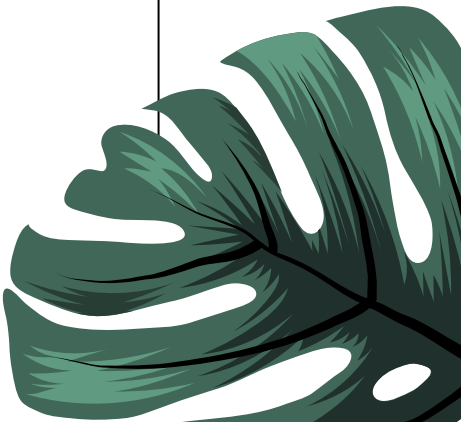
# CQI - A Culture of Continual Learning and Distributive Leadership



“Foster a culture of continuous learning and distributed leadership. (Douglass, et.al, 2022)

CQI is based on relationships, it is a collaborative practice, a process to test and evaluate strategies, and an inquiry mindset (Douglass 2022).

“CQI is a leadership philosophy and an ongoing process that involves the Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle. It is proactive, not reactive. It is related to the internal “owning” of a process by the team in a program. It goes beyond meeting the externally applied regulations and standards – and moves the lever for change internally, using data to guide decisions and reflect upon the results of the improvement plan to increase program quality.” (ExceleRate Illinois)





# First Steps for Statewide CQI



The ECE<sup>3</sup> Project and Dept of Human Services (DHS) through Hawai'i's Preschool Development Grant - Birth through Five, are responsible for the development of the foundational components of our CQI System for the early care and education sector.

Working closely with the HCYC Work Groups to develop foundational documents and get feedback from early educators.

Foundational documents: updated Career Framework, revised E Mālama I Nā Keiki (core competencies for early care and education practitioners), a coaching framework, etc.

Working with Jeremy Heyer of Dept. of Health (DOH) who is responsible for coordinating the CQI System for home visiting programs in Hawai'i.





# Some Strategies Continuing with PDG Funding and Local Private Funders



**Implementing the Power to the Profession Unifying Framework:** Advancing the ECE Professional Initiative. Adopted a national competency-based framework for other roles in early care and education sector..

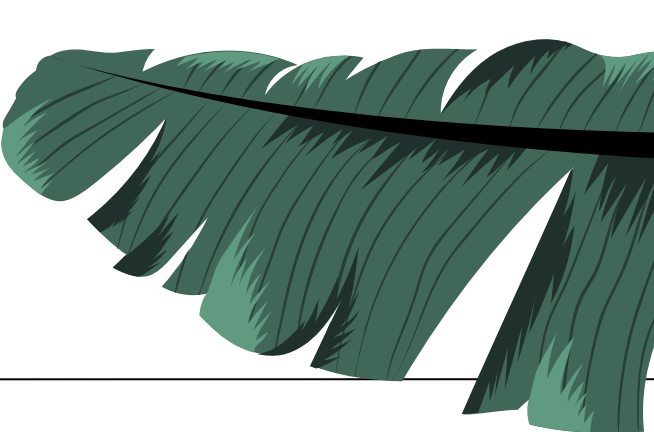
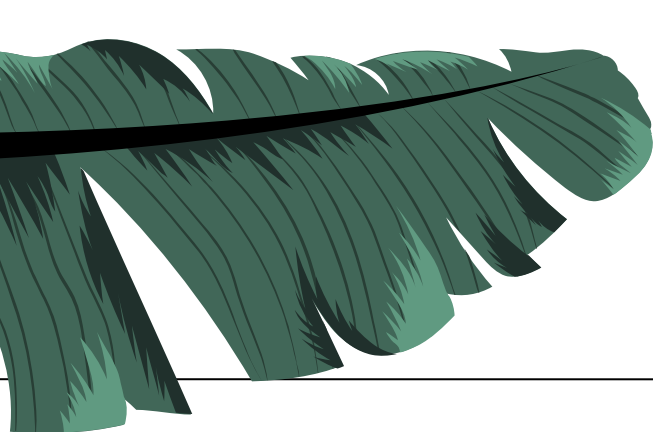
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**Creating accessible career pathways:** Implementing infant-toddler certificate pathway and a portfolio-based assessment for prior learning credit; developing next steps for early childhood program administration courses; expanding ECE registered apprenticeship program with Keiki O Ka 'Aina Family Learning Centers and HonCC; marketing of statewide bachelor in education in ECE, birth through age 8, program.

**Assuring student success:** Implemented a student ambassador program to assist faculty in recruiting and retaining students; continuing the professional learning community for mentor teachers for practicum students; coordinated system of financial assistance for ECE students.

**Laying foundation for continuous quality improvement:** Continuing to develop and finalize foundational documents and use a Leading for Change framework,





**If you have questions or  
want to know more:**

**Hawai'i Early Childhood Educator  
Excellence and Equity (ECE<sup>3</sup>) Project**

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