



To: House Labor & Public Employment Committee
Re: Support for SB 712
From: Deborah Bond-Upson, HE'E Interim Director
Date: February 26, 2025

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," is a statewide coalition of diverse stakeholders committed to working collaboratively to identify opportunities to improve public education. We work to provide Hawai'i families and organizations with a resource for educational policy.

We write in support of SB 712 in order to expand the preschool open door programs eligibility criteria. This measure would allow families with children ages two up to kindergarten entry to apply for Preschool Open Doors (POD) subsidies. This expansion of state subsidies will greatly benefit Hawai'i's working families.

The return on investment of providing access to quality early learning for children is extremely high. As we look at the difficulty of raising student attendance and achievement in upper grades, we can know that quality early learning for children would result in more secure, confident, achieving students.

We strongly support this measure to help Hawai'i families to ensure that their children will be able to thrive in the present and future. Thank you for this opportunity to share our thoughts.

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants -----

Academy 21
Alliance for Place Based Learning
American Civil Liberties Union
Atherton YMCA
Education Institute of Hawai'i
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawai'i
*HawaiiKidsCAN
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Education Association
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawai'i State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Special Education Provider Alliance
*Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
*Youth Service Hawai'i

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the Coalition.*