

# APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

## I. Applicant Summary

<b>Proposed School</b>
<b>Name:</b> Kūlia Academy.
<b>School Type:</b> Start-Up, STEM Charter School for grades 6-12. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start-Up Charter School <input type="checkbox"/> Conversion Charter School, Name of DOE school to be converted: .
<b>Geographic Location:</b> 640 Puuhale Rd, Honolulu, HI 96819.
<b>Grades Served Year 1 (SY 2024-25):</b> 6
<b>Grades Served at Capacity:</b> 6-12
<b>Commission’s Priority Need(s) the proposed school will address, if applicable:</b> Our proposal meets both priority needs: I. Our school is STEM-focused, specifically Data Science and Artificial Intelligence. II. Some of the existing public schools in our area are not performing well academically, as measured by the State’s Strive HI Performance System and other student outcomes. Based on the 2019 Strive HI master data file, our target area has some of the lowest performing schools in the state. ●Kalihi Elementary School was the 3rd lowest performing elementary school in the state with a 19% proficiency rate in Math (23% reading); ●Fern Elementary School was the 5th lowest performing elementary school in the state with a 21% proficiency rate in Math (24% reading); ●Dole Middle School in our target area was the 2nd lowest performing middle school in the state with a 14% proficiency rate in Math (26% reading); ●While Farrington High School had a 49% proficiency rate in Reading, only 21% of its students were proficient in Math in 2019. We aim to help close the achievement gap in our service (target) area through our instructional model and through using a robust response to intervention program, as detailed in our narrative proposal. In addition, Kūlia Academy will make its educational program and resources available to other public and charter schools, as well as invite teachers and administrators to join us for professional development and learning.
<b>(If not addressing a Priority Need) Other significant, documented educational need the proposed school will address:</b>
<b>Mission Statement (limit 100 words):</b> The mission of Kūlia Academy is to prepare a diverse student population to strive and thrive in college and beyond.
<b>Enrollment Preferences or Priorities, if any (consistent with HRS §302D-34):</b>

## Applicant Information Sheet

Only one preference: children of board and staff members.

### Primary Contact Information

**Name:** Andy Omer Gokce.

**Current Employer and Position/Title:** Teacher / Hawaii Department of Education

**Expected Role with the Proposed School:** Secretary of the School Board.

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Proposed School Description

School Model/Focus (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative <input type="checkbox"/> Arts <input type="checkbox"/> Blended Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Career and Technical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Focus ( <i>specify</i> ): <input type="checkbox"/> Disability ( <i>specify</i> ):	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Immersion ( <i>specify</i> ): <input type="checkbox"/> Montessori <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STEM <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>specify</i> ):
---	---	---

*(If identified)* Provide information below about the proposed School Director, and include in Attachment A1 the individual's professional biography and full resume (including contact information).

### Proposed School Director (if identified)

**Name:** not finalized yet

**Current Employer and Position/Title:** N/A

Below, list the members of the Applicant Governing Board and the relevant expertise they bring to the board. In Attachment A2, include professional biographies and full resumes (including contact information) for each member of the Applicant Governing Board. Applicant Governing Boards must meet the requirements of HRS §302D-12. At a minimum, the Applicant Governing Board must possess expertise in academic and financial management and oversight, best practices in nonprofit governance, human resources, and fundraising. Other recommended areas of expertise for the board include legal expertise, community relations, and facilities development. *(Add lines to table as needed)*

### Applicant Governing Board Members

Name	Current Employer & Position/Title:	Relevant Expertise for the Board
Dr. Robert Bley-Vroman	Professor Emeritus of English as a Second	Academic Management, Nonprofit Management, Human Resources,

## Applicant Information Sheet

	<p>Language (ESL) – Former Chancellor of University of Hawaii – Manoa. Kūlia Academy Board President</p>	<p>Financial Management, General Operations and Oversight: Dr. Robert Bley-Vroman, our board president and a former Chancellor of University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH), has served at the UH for a long time and served as Chair of the Department of Second Language Studies and Director of the Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center. He was also the first Director of the National Foreign Language Resource Center. His research is concentrated in second language acquisition theory. Dr. Vroman brings along his expertise as an educational administrator and an expert in second language acquisition and training.</p>
<p>Dr. Robert Littman</p>	<p>University of Hawaii-Manoa, Professor of Archaeology, Kūlia Academy Board Vice President</p>	<p>Nonprofit Management, Financial Management, Facilities and Oversight: Dr. Robert Littman, our board vice president, a respected community member, an award-winning scholar and an accomplished businessman, has a long-time real estate brokerage and management experience and runs his own real estate company. He has extensive experience in zoning, renovations and facility management experience and has been serving as a treasurer on multiple non-profits and he has expertise on nonprofit bookkeeping, segregation of duties, and multiple check signers.</p>
<p>Benjamin Cabrerros</p>	<p>Retired bank branch manager, mortgage broker, former state representative. Kūlia Academy Board Member</p>	<p>Nonprofit Management, Financial Management, Human Resources, Fundraising and Involvement of Filipino Community: Mr. Benjamin Cabrerros works as a Senior Program Specialist and as a community services program coordinator for State Capital Improvement Projects and State Community Liaison at the State Office of Community Services/Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. Prior to that, he worked as a branch manager at</p>

Applicant Information Sheet

		different banks and as a principal broker at different mortgage companies. He was a former member of the Hawaii State House of Representatives, representing House District 30 (Kalihi Kai, Sand Island, Hickam, Pearl Harbor, Ford Island, and Halawa Valley Estate). Mr. Benjamin serves/served as either board president or treasurer at multiple nonprofit organizations.
Karen Leinani Awana	former state representative. Kūlia Academy Board Member.	Nonprofit Management, Human Resources, Fundraising and Involvement of Native Hawaiian Community: Ms. Karen Leinani Awana, our board member and a former Hawaii legislator, is a well-respected member of the Native Hawaiian community and has been very active in her local and wider community. She partially grew up in Kalihi having her father's home located on Puuhale Street, the same as our proposed school location. She is well-connected with the local Native Hawaiian community. Throughout her service as a state legislator, her focus has been toward improving education, streamlining transportation, addressing housing solutions, combating illegal drug use, and supporting economic revitalization. She brings along her expertise from her 6 years at Kamehameha Schools. She also has nonprofit governance experience at several organizations.
Andy Gokce	Special Education Math Teacher and Care Coordinator, Department of Education, Kalani High School. Kūlia Academy Board Secretary/Treasurer	Academic Management, Nonprofit Management, Human Resources, Financial Management, Professional Development, General Operations, Fundraising and Oversight: Andy Gokce has a long history and experience working at charter schools as a teacher, administrator and executive team member. He has 6 years of experience as a teacher

Applicant Information Sheet

		<p>teaching Middle and High School Math, Middle School Physical Science, 6th Grade Science, High School Physics, and Computer Science. One of his students, Stan Vishnevsky, went on to start one of the biggest tech companies in Silicon Valley, Discord. Another one, Zarathustra E. Brady (Zeb), received the first gold medal from a charter school at The International Mathematical Olympiad. Zeb is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at MIT. Most recently, Andy has taught Algebra-1, Algebra-2, Geometry, and PreCalculus at Kalani High School. He holds a Hawaii Provisional Teaching License in Physics. He is currently a Special Education Math Teacher and a Care Coordinator at Kalani High School, scheduling and conducting IEP meetings, re-evaluation meetings and processes, progress reports, coordinating special education services with vice principals, guidance counselors, behavior and health specialists, general and special education teachers and educational assistants. He received Chapter 60 training from HIDOE. He served as a vice principal designing curricula at Magnolia Science Academy including technology integrated education. He was the key person in starting more than 10 Charter schools before. He served as the Chief of Staff at Magnolia Public Schools supervising all home office departments serving and managing 10 schools with Academics, Finance, HR, Operations and Compliance. He was the leading person preparing fiscal and financial policies and budgets for board approval and worked with experts at FCMAT. The policies he developed</p>
--	--	---

## Applicant Information Sheet

		<p>included segregation of duties, approval limits, procurement procedures, record keeping procedures and timelines, creating paper trails, human resources record keeping. He hired more than 20 teachers and assistant principals and fired more than 5 employees in his years as a school administrator. He conducted over 100 teacher and school administrator evaluations. He attended a 3-day training by the Federal Department of Education on Title III regulations and reporting in 2015. He supervised the textbook adoption for Magnolia Public Schools, a \$1.3m project. He was also the leading administrator in applying and receiving more than \$6m in grants from California Department of Education and Walton Family Foundation for Magnolia Public Schools and \$1.2m for Kūlia Academy. Mr. Gokce is also planning to be a parent at Kūlia Academy in its 4th year of operations by enrolling his son in the school.</p>

If the applicant is planning to contract or partner with a Service Provider, fill out the table below.

Service Provider Information (if applicable)	
Education Service Provider (includes existing charter school operators)	Name: N/A. Primary Contact: N/A. Mailing Address: N/A. Phone: N/A. Email: N/A.

Does the applicant currently operate charter schools in Hawaii or any other state?

Yes (if so, complete this table, adding lines as needed)
  No

State	Authorizer	School Name	Grades Served	Opening Date

## Applicant Information Sheet

--	--	--	--	--

Does the applicant, any members of the Applicant Governing Board, or any Service Providers of the applicant have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the U.S.?

Yes (*if so, complete this table, adding lines as needed*)                       No

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date

Does the applicant, any members of the Applicant Governing Board, or any Service Providers of the applicant have any new schools scheduled to open in the U.S. in the next five years?

Yes (*if so, complete this table, adding lines as needed*)                       No

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Grades Served	Opening Date