Promoting Increased Preschool Access for At-Risk Children & Families

The Preschool Development Grant is jointly administered by the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Hawai‘i was one of only five states to be awarded this highly competitive grant.

Grant focus: To support state and local efforts to build or enhance high-quality preschool programs so that more children from low- and moderately-income families enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life (USDOE & USDHHS, 2014). This grant was designed to provide high-quality preschool opportunities to those who would not be able to afford it.

- Eligibility criteria: Children must be four-years-old with family incomes of 200% or less of the federal poverty level.
- Currently, Hawai‘i is in Year Three of the four year grant. Funding is available until School Year 2018-2019.
- Teachers and Educational Assistant positions funded by this grant: 40
- Number of participating schools: 12
- Number of pre-K classrooms created: 18
- Number of pre-K slots created by this grant: 360
- Number of Native Hawaiian Immersion pre-K classrooms: 5
- Number of Native Hawaiian-focused pre-K classrooms: 18
- Number of children who entered without no prior preschool experience: 148
"I'm a single mom and financially I just could not afford to send my daughter to other preschools. It was just too expensive. I feel without preschool my daughter would lack confidence and she may even fall behind academically without getting the head start socially with other children. I hope families like mine can continue to receive the benefits our keiki deserve for preschool. They are our future!"

-Mom from Waiʻalae School

What Are the High-Quality Components of Pre-K Programs in Hawaiʻi’s Charter Schools?

All facilities are DHS licensed

All classrooms have a qualified teacher with a bachelor’s degree or higher

A one to ten teacher to child ratio and no more than 20 students per class

A data-driven professional development system is based on assessments of student learning and the quality of both teacher-child interaction and the classroom environment. This includes:

- At least 10 teacher workshops per year
- An annual Early Learning Leadership Symposium and follow-up meeting
- One-to-one coaching and mentoring

Sustained high-quality instructional practices from preschool through grade 3

Strong family engagement component focusing on families as partners to children’s learning

Developmental curriculum that is aligned to the Hawaii Early Learning Development Standards (HELDS)