

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR



**MAKALAPUA ALENCASTRE, Ed.D.**  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

**APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

---

DATE OF SUBMITTAL: April 4, 2025

DATE OF MEETING: April 10, 2025

TO: Cathy K. Ikeda, Chairperson  
State Public Charter School Commission

FROM: Darlene Flores, Applications Specialist  
State Public Charter School Commission

AGENDA ITEM: V. Action on the K-12 Charter School Application: Miloli‘i Charter School

---

I. DESCRIPTION

Action on Charter School Application for Proposed K-12 Charter School, Miloli‘i Charter School.

II. AUTHORITY

**Charter School Applications:** Pursuant to §302D-5(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), “[a]uthorizers are responsible for executing the following essential powers and duties: . . . (1) Soliciting and evaluating charter applications; (2) Approving quality charter applications that meet identified educational needs and promote a diversity of educational choices; [and] (3) Declining to approve weak or inadequate charter applications[.]”

III. BACKGROUND

For the 2024 application cycle, the application was assessed by an evaluation team consisting of Dr. Ed H. Noh, Danny Vasconcellos, Jr., Dr. Puanani Ka‘ai, Jackie Bersson, Cerina Livaudais, and Dr. Jerelyn Watanabe. The evaluation team assessed the school’s purpose, academic, financial, and governance plans submitted in the application.

The evaluation team’s role in the applications process is to evaluate the application against the evaluation criteria to develop recommendations for approval or denial to the State Public Charter School Commission (Commission). In developing its recommendation, the evaluation team assessed

the application and conducted an interview with applicant group members. The evaluation team does not consider public hearing testimony in developing its recommendation or any comments that have been submitted by the Department of Education (DOE) in developing its recommendation.

Key components of the evaluation process are as follows:

- **Application Review:** Evaluators assess the applicant's responses to the application questions, submitted attachments, and overall proposal, focusing on school purpose, academic, facility/financial, governance, and virtual/blended learning plan.
- **Capacity Interview:** As required by Section 302D-13, HRS, the evaluation team conducted a capacity interview with Miloli'i Charter School on January 28, 2025. The applicant group members that attended the interview were: Ka'imi Kaupiko, Leivallyn Kaupu, Moana Ching, Scott Atkinson, Charlie Young, Meleana Smith, Eric Edwards, Greg Asner, Monica Traub, and Luika Imaoka.
- **Public Hearing:** Section 302D-13, HRS, requires the Commission to hold a public hearing to allow the public an opportunity to provide its input on each charter application. As such, the Commission held a public hearing on the application on February 27, 2025. The public hearing was held at the Commission office and via Zoom to enable the public to testify and receive a presentation from the applicant about their proposed charter school. Oral testimony<sup>1</sup> provided by 14 individuals and written testimony<sup>2</sup> submitted by 82 individuals/organizations were provided at this meeting.
- **Evaluation Team Recommendation Report:** This report was produced by the evaluation team summarizing their review of the application and capacity interview. There are five components of the recommendation report, each corresponding to the main sections of the K-12 charter application: school purpose, academic plan, facility/financial plan, governance, and virtual/blended learning plan. Each section includes a rating, a summary of the submitted plan and analysis of evidence supporting Miloli'i's capacity to execute their plan. This report was transmitted to the applicant on April 4, 2025, and attached as part of the submittal for the Applications Committee meeting on April 10, 2025.
- **DOE Comments Solicited:** Commission staff solicited comments from the Department of Education (DOE)—including all Complex Area Superintendents on the island of Hawai'i on Miloli'i Charter School's application, as they seek to serve the following geographic locations: Hilo- Waiākea, Ka'ū-Kea'au-Pāhoa, Kona-Kohala-Hamakua, and Honoka'a-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena. The Commission received comments from Deputy Superintendent, Tammi Oyadomari-Chun. The letter has been attached as **Exhibit 1** for your review.

#### IV. INFORMATION FOR CONSIDERATION

##### **Summary of Section Ratings**

---

<sup>1</sup> Public hearing video recording of the February 27, 2025 meeting:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iG0oZnIC9QjWCioB9HEmlyDi6hWZi-Yd/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iG0oZnIC9QjWCioB9HEmlyDi6hWZi-Yd/view?usp=drive_link)

<sup>2</sup> Written testimony of the February 27, 2025 meeting

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/12ml3Dv84tPgGr6cehHv9kfHa-4X-WO9X/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/12ml3Dv84tPgGr6cehHv9kfHa-4X-WO9X/view?usp=drive_link)

Opening a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan. It is not an endeavor for which strength in one area can compensate for material weakness in another. Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must demonstrate evidence of capacity to implement the proposed plan, meet the criteria for all main sections of the application school purpose, academic plan, facility/financial plan, governance plan, and, virtual/blended Learning, and present an overall proposal that is likely to result in the successful opening of a *high-quality charter school*, as defined in the Application.

#### **Evaluation Team Recommendation Report**

In creating its Recommendation Report for Miloli'i Charter School, the following was assessed:

- Miloli'i Charter School application was assessed against the evaluation criteria presented in the K-12 Charter School Application; and
- Capacity interview

In the recommendation report, the evaluation team recommends that the Commission **deny** Miloli'i Charter School's application, as they did not meet the standard of approval in all applicable areas of the application. The Evaluation Team Recommendation Report is attached as **Exhibit 2** of this submittal.

#### **V. SCOPE OF COMMISSIONER REVIEW**

To make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding the approval or denial the application, the Application states that the Applications Committee will consider the following:

- Application Sheet
- Application materials
- Capacity Interview
- Evaluation Team Recommendation Report
- Public hearing testimony
- Department of Education Comments

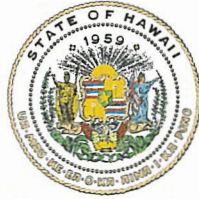
Applicants were advised at the beginning of the application process that the Application should be a complete and accurate depiction of their proposed plans, and that **no new information will be accepted**. For the purposes of the application process, **new information means any information that substantially differs from what is provided in the application and is revisionary in nature. Applicants shall not provide any new information beyond the information provided to the Evaluation Team in the Application, and interviews because such new information would not have been completely evaluated by the Evaluation Team.**

Further, the Application states that **the Commission shall not consider new information** that was not available to the Evaluation Team. As such, when conducting a review of the application, and during decision-making, Commissioners should not consider any new information submitted by the applicant.

#### **VI. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION MAKING STATEMENT:**

The Application Committee should consider the recommendation by the evaluation team and deliberate whether to recommend approval or denial of the K-12 charter application for Miloli'i Charter School to the full Commission.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Department of Education Comments**  
**Miloli'i Charter School**



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF STRATEGY AND ADMINISTRATION

February 27, 2025

**Via email: [applications@spcsc.hawaii.gov](mailto:applications@spcsc.hawaii.gov)**

Ed H. Noh, Ed. D.  
State Public Charter School Commission  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Executive Director Noh:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Miloli'i Charter School. The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) acknowledges the potential benefits of this charter but also notes its impact on nearby public schools.

**Key Considerations:**

- **Enrollment, Funding, Staffing & Programs:** Nearby public schools in the Hilo-Waiākea, Ka'ū-Keaau-Pāhoa, Kona-Kohala-Hāmākua, and Honoka'a-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena vicinity may experience declining enrollment, affecting funding, staffing adjustments and program changes.
- **Equity & Access:** The Department encourages the Commission to evaluate the charter's enrollment policies, transportation plans, and support services to ensure inclusivity for all students, including those with special needs.
- **Community Engagement:** We recommend that the Commission engage with parents, educators, and local leaders to gather public feedback and address any concerns related to the new charter school's opening.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide this feedback and supports continued discussions to ensure that the establishment of Miloli'i Charter School benefits the broader educational community.

Sincerely,

Tammi Oyadomari-Chun  
Deputy Superintendent

TOC:ldy  
c: Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance

**Exhibit 2**

**2024 Evaluation Team Recommendation Report  
Miloli'i Charter School**



# State Public Charter School Commission

## 2024 Recommendation Report

Charter Application for  
**Miloli'i Charter School**

### ***Evaluation Team***

*Ed H. Noh, Ed.D.*

*Danny Vasconcellos Jr.*

*Puanani Mills Ka'ai, Ed.D.*

*Jackie Bersson*

*Cerina Livaudais, MS*

*Jerelyn Watanabe, Ed.D.*



## Introduction

In 2012, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed Act 130, replacing the state's previous charter school law, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 302B, with our new law, codified as HRS Chapter 302D. Act 130 instituted a rigorous, transparent accountability system that at the same time honors the autonomy and local decision-making of Hawai'i's charter schools. The law created the State Public Charter School Commission (Commission), assigned it statewide chartering jurisdiction and authority, and directed it to enter into State Public Charter School Contracts (Charter Contract) with every existing charter school and every newly approved charter school applicant.

The Commission's 2024 application and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous, thorough, transparent, and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that potential charter school operators possess the capacity to implement sound strategies, practices, and methodologies. Successful applicants must clearly demonstrate high levels of expertise in the areas of education, school finance, administration, and governance as well as high expectations for excellence in professional standards and student achievement.

## Process

To ensure a rigorous and objective process, the Commission has adopted standardized application and evaluation procedures aligned with national best practices for authorizing high-performing charter schools. This includes structured evaluation frameworks, evaluator training, and multi-member review teams to ensure consistency and integrity. The process is informed by guidance from national authorizing experts and lessons learned from previous application cycles.

For the 2024 application cycle, each application underwent a comprehensive review by both internal and external evaluators. The process consists of the following key components:

**Application Review.** Evaluators assess the applicant's responses to the application questions, submitted attachments, and overall proposal, focusing on school purpose, academic, facility/financial, and governance plan.

**Capacity Interview.** As required by HRS §302D-13(c)(4)(A), evaluators conduct an in-person interview (or virtual if necessary) with the applicant's governing board, proposed school director, and key personnel. This interview allows for clarification of application responses and further assessment of the applicant's capacity to successfully implement the proposed charter school. The interview is recorded for Commissioner review.

**Public Hearing.** Applicants present an overview of their application and vision to the Commission in a public forum, as required by HRS §302D-13(c)(4)(B). This is not an interview but an opportunity for the public to provide input on the application.

**Department of Education (DOE) Comments.** If applicable, the DOE may submit comments on any application for consideration.

**Final Evaluation and Recommendation.** Upon concluding this comprehensive evaluation, the evaluation team compiles a recommendation report, advising either approval or denial of the application based on the findings.

## Report Contents

This Recommendation Report includes the following:

### Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

### Recommendation

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

### Evaluation Summary

Analysis of the proposal based on these primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant team to execute the plan as presented:

*School Purpose:* Purpose overview, mission and vision, development process, governing board makeup, and relationship with nonprofit entity.

*Academic Performance:* Mission Aligned Initiative (MAI), student academic performance, system of assessment, accountability systems, and, if applicable, high school program.

*Facility and Financial Performance:* Facility description, budget and staffing plan, pre-opening funding, budgetary priorities, and fiscal management.

*Governance:* Governing board expertise, contributions, systems of support, transition process, and oversight of MAI.

*Virtual/Blended Learning:* Financial and governance aspects, quality instructional program, system of assessment, community need, teacher and administrator qualifications to operate, and special education and 504 requirements.

### Rating Characteristics

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the proposed school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.
<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>	The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps, lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas and does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues. It does not provide enough accurate, specific information to show thorough preparation; fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and does not inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

# Proposal Overview

## Proposed School Name

Miloli'i Charter School

## Mission and Vision

Mission: To foster academic excellence, cultural understanding, and holistic development through an education grounded in Hawaiian values and traditions. The school aims to develop students who are critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible stewards of Hawai'i's land and community

Vision: Hānai i nā pua

## Geographic Location

Hilo- Waiākea, Ka'ū-Kea'au-Pāhoa, Kona-Kohala-Hamakua, and Honoka'a-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena

## Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Grades Served
2026 - 2027	80 or 75 <sup>1</sup>	6-9
2027 - 2028	100	6-10
2028 - 2029	120	6-11
2029 - 2030	140	6-12
2030 - 2031	190	3-12 or 6-12 <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> There were inconsistencies in the planned number of students for academic year 2026-2027

<sup>2</sup> There were inconsistencies on grades served for 2030 -2031 within the application and the capacity interview.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Miloli'i Charter School**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Deny**

### Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends denial of the Miloli'i Charter School application because it does not meet the criteria for approval in the following areas: School Purpose, Academic Performance, Facility/Financial, and Virtual/Blended Learning.

The applicant assembled a strong and committed governing board composed of individuals with experience in education, finance, governance, and cultural preservation. The governing board members have demonstrated a clear dedication to the community and actively participated in the development of the application, as evidenced in both the written proposal and the capacity interview. The school's mission and vision are well articulated, emphasizing place-based learning, Hawaiian culture, and flexible learning opportunities for students in rural and underserved communities. However, the applicant has not made a compelling case supported by evidence for the need and demand for the school, nor has it provided sufficient evidence that a virtual/blended learning model is the best educational approach for the targeted student population beyond addressing transportation challenges.

The academic plan lacks specificity in instructional design, curriculum alignment, and intervention strategies for struggling students. While the application references formative and summative assessments aligned with state standards, it does not provide clear details on how these assessments will be adapted for a virtual setting or how individualized learning will be monitored and adjusted. The middle school program is incomplete, lacking information about promotion requirements. The high school program is also incomplete, with unclear graduation requirements and credit accumulation processes. Additionally, the application does not effectively differentiate itself from existing public virtual programs or demonstrate how it will meet the needs of students in rural and remote areas more effectively than current options.

The facility and financial plan is incomplete and does not ensure long-term sustainability. The budget spreadsheet contained errors and omissions, preventing an accurate evaluation of the school's financial feasibility. The financial plan relies heavily on unsecured grant funding, and during the capacity interview, the applicant confirmed that the \$500,000 Native Hawaiian Education Act (NHEA) grant was not awarded, which significantly impacts the viability of the proposed budget. Without a clear alternative funding strategy, the applicant has not demonstrated that it can maintain financial stability.

The virtual/blended learning plan lacks clarity in its day-to-day implementation, with no structured weekly instructional schedule or clear plan for integrating technology into culturally responsive instruction. While the applicant describes technical support needs, there are inconsistencies with the staffing plan provided and the narrative depicting the need for five full-time IT positions within the first five years, and it is unclear whether the \$670,000 technology budget is included in the overall budget. The plan also fails to outline how IDEA students will receive accommodations and interventions in a virtual setting or how SPED staffing will be allocated across multiple locations to ensure equitable access. While the school plans to use learning management systems and digital tools, it does not clearly explain how technology will be integrated into instruction in a way that aligns with its culturally responsive mission. Additionally, other than addressing transportation issues, the applicant did not provide a rationale for why a virtual program is the best model for its intended student population.

The evaluation team recognizes the dedication of the governing board and applauds the applicant's commitment to providing educational opportunities for students in Miloli'i and surrounding communities. However, the application lacks the necessary evidence, specificity, planning, and secured financial resources to ensure a successful and sustainable charter school. As such, the evaluation team recommends denial of the application.

#### Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weakness in others.

Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must receive a "Meets the Standard" rating in all areas.

<b>School Purpose</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>
<b>Academic Performance</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>
<b>Facility/Financial</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>
<b>Governance</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<b>Virtual/Blended</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>

## SCHOOL PURPOSE

**Miloli'i Charter School**

## RATING

**Does Not Meet**

### Plan Summary

Miloli'i Charter School's mission is to foster academic excellence, cultural understanding, and holistic development through an education grounded in Hawaiian values and traditions. The school aims to develop students who are critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible stewards of Hawai'i's land and community. The school's target student population includes students from rural and underserved communities on Hawai'i Island, particularly in Miloli'i, Ka'u, and Puna. The school will serve grades 6-12 with an initial focus on grades 6-9 in its opening year and expanding to full capacity over time.

A core component of Miloli'i Charter School's model is a blended and virtual learning structure, designed to support students in geographically remote areas. The model integrates place-based learning, career and technical education (CTE), Hawaiian language immersion, and STEM-focused instruction.

### Analysis

The applicant does not meet the criteria for approval in this section due to significant gaps in clarity, alignment, and demonstrated community demand for the proposed school supported by evidence.

### Strengths of School Purpose

The applicant presents a mission and vision deeply rooted in community, cultural preservation, and place-based learning. The school aims to address geographic and accessibility challenges faced by students in rural areas through a blended learning model that incorporates Hawaiian language, environmental stewardship, and traditional fishing practices. The applicant governing board demonstrates strong community ties, with individuals who have extensive experience working in Miloli'i and surrounding areas. The application also reflects a multi-year effort to refine and develop the school's concept, demonstrating persistence and dedication to meeting the educational needs of the region.

Additionally, the school's governance structure is well-positioned to provide local control over education, ensuring that decision-making aligns with cultural and community values. The blended model, with a mix of in-person and virtual learning, offers flexibility for students and an alternative educational pathway in a geographically isolated region. The applicant also emphasizes project-based and individualized learning, which has the potential to offer a student-centered approach if properly designed and implemented.

### Weaknesses of School Purpose

The grade levels to be served lack consistency, as the applicant presented grades 3-12 during the capacity interview, which contradicts the written application and raises concern about the program scope and readiness. Additionally, the geographic focus is unclear, with the application stating a primary focus on Miloli'i while also including Ocean View and Pāhoa, yet without sufficient justification for why the broad scope is necessary. The applicant does not provide a well-defined strategy for engaging students across multiple locations, leaving questions about how the school will balance resources, staffing, and community involvement across these regions.

The applicant provided insufficient evidence of community demand and enrollment feasibility, as the application did not include concrete enrollment projections, or data supporting long-term student interest specifically in areas outside of Miloli'i. The application does not explicitly define how the school expands public school options beyond addressing transportation barriers. Without a comparative analysis of existing public school programs, it remains unclear whether the proposed blended learning model provides a unique and necessary alternative.

The definition of innovation with the instructional model is vague, with no clear explanation of how the school will integrate technology, adaptive learning platforms, or culturally responsive digital tools into its curriculum. The instructional framework lacks a detailed scope and sequence, a weekly schedule, or a structured plan for balancing virtual learning with place-based experiences.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## RATING

Miloli'i Charter School

Does Not Meet

### Plan Summary

The applicant submitted an academic model that incorporates place-based, project-based, and community-based learning, emphasizing Hawaiian cultural education and blended learning opportunities. The application articulates key instructional components and mentions the use of formative and summative assessments. The proposed assessment system outlines data-driven instructional strategies and monthly data reviews to evaluate student progress, with weekly and monthly check-ins.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will be used as an early identification of student needs, including interventions for English Learners (ELs), students with disabilities, and at-risk students. Teachers will also engage in weekly vertical and horizontal planning meetings.

The professional development plan highlights ongoing training in culturally responsive teaching, Hawaiian language integration, and virtual instruction. Teachers will participate in collaborative data analysis and curriculum planning. Administrators will use the McRel Balanced Leadership Framework for leadership evaluation, and teachers will be assessed using the Performance Appraisal System (PAS).

### Analysis

The applicant does not meet the criteria for academic performance due to significant gaps in accountability measures, assessment implementation, and academic structure clarity supported by evidence.

### Strengths of the Academic Plan

The applicant presents a clear Mission-Aligned Initiative (MAI) that integrates Hawaiian cultural traditions, environmental stewardship, and community involvement into its educational framework. The applicant describes multiple forms of assessment, including formative and summative assessments, data-driven instructional practices, and student check-ins, which could support a holistic approach to student learning.

The applicant outlines an accountability system for school leadership and staff, stating that administrators will be evaluated using the McRel Balanced Leadership Framework and teachers assessed using the Performance Appraisal System (PAS). The applicant acknowledges the importance of adhering to bargaining unit requirements, demonstrating some awareness of regulatory expectations. Governance structures, including monthly data reviews and family engagement efforts suggest an effort to create a transparent and accountable school environment.

### Weaknesses of Academic Plan

The proposed accountability system lacks explicit measures for tracking student performance, identifying struggling learners, and adjusting instruction accordingly. While the application states that teachers and administrators will use data to inform instructional practices, it does not provide clear evidence of a systematic process for data analysis, intervention strategies, or ongoing progress monitoring. There is no explanation of how formative and summative assessments will be standardized, nor how results will be



used to modify instruction. Additionally, the application mentions using Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) and Kaiapuni Assessment of Education Outcomes (KĀ'EO) but does not provide examples of site-specific diagnostic tools or assessment benchmarks. This makes it difficult to assess how student learning will be effectively monitored and improved over time. The issue is further compounded by the lack of consistency that Hawaiian immersion will be offered as an instructional model.

The MAI is conceptually strong but lacks defined metrics for evaluation. While the application mentions that the governing board will receive regular, data-informed updates on student performance, there is no structured accountability process that ensures mission-aligned learning is consistently assessed and integrated into instructional practices. The lack of a framework for evaluating the impact of cultural and community-based education raises concerns about whether the school can effectively track progress toward its stated goals.

There are also significant deficiencies in the proposed middle school program and promotion requirements and high school program and graduation requirements. The application does not provide a clear breakdown of credits assigned to each course, nor does it specify how alternative credit options will align with the Board of Education (BOE) graduation requirements. The lack of a well-defined plan for credit accumulation, grade-level progression, and curriculum sequencing creates uncertainty regarding whether students will successfully meet graduation requirements. Additionally, no explanation is given for how non-traditional learning experiences, such as 'āina-based education or project-based learning, will be converted into recognized academic credits.

The assessment system does not adequately address the needs of diverse learners, including English Learners (ELs), students with disabilities, at-risk students, and students performing far below or above grade level. While the application notes that individualized academic plans will be developed, it does not provide concrete intervention strategies, small-group instruction models, or differentiated learning pathways. The absence of structured remediation programs, scaffolding approaches, and targeted supports raises concerns about the school's ability to meet the academic needs of all students equitably.

Additionally, the role of teacher collaboration and professional development remains vague. The application states that teachers will engage in weekly planning sessions for vertical and horizontal alignment, but it does not provide specific details on how these meetings will be structured or how professional learning communities (PLCs) will be used to drive continuous improvement. Without a clear schedule for embedded teacher planning time and professional development, it is unclear how staff will systematically analyze student performance data and implement instructional adjustments.

Finally, while the school states that administrators and teachers will be evaluated using established frameworks, it does not outline how accountability measures will ensure instructional consistency and student success. There is no clear process for holding teachers accountable for student performance, nor an explanation of how the "lead teacher manager" role will function between administrators and teaching staff. The hierarchy of instructional oversight remains ambiguous, raising concerns about how leadership will ensure instructional quality across multiple learning environments.

## FACILITY/FINANCIAL PLAN

## RATING

Miloli'i Charter School

Does Not Meet

### Plan Summary

Miloli'i Charter School plans to operate as a virtual and blended learning school with multiple community-based learning hubs across Hawai'i Island, including Miloli'i, Ocean View, and Pāhoa. The Miloli'i Community Center is designated as the primary hub and administrative office for the school, while the Ocean View Community Center and Kalapana Mauna Kea Church in Pāhoa are identified as secondary locations to serve students in those regions. While no formal agreements have been secured for these sites, the school plans to formalize usage agreements before opening.

The financial plan prioritizes fiscal sustainability through a combination of state per-pupil funding and grant opportunities. The applicant projects a first-year enrollment of 75 students generating approximately \$585,000 in state per-pupil funding which is intended to cover initial operational costs, including staffing, curriculum development, and technology infrastructure. The school anticipates additional funding through grant requests from the Stupski Foundation (\$500,000), Kamehameha Schools and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (\$500,000), and Native Hawaiian Education Funds (\$250,000–\$500,000). These funds will support facilities, technology, instructional resources, and culturally responsive programming. The financial oversight system includes budget monitoring by the executive leadership and board treasurer, monthly financial reporting, and external CPA audits to ensure accountability and alignment with state regulations.

### Analysis

The applicant does not meet the standard for approval for facility/finance as the plan is incomplete, not fully developed, and does not provide adequate assurance that the proposed school would be fiscally viable and stable.

### Strengths of Facility/Financial Plan

The governing board has been actively involved in developing the financial and facilities plan, contributing to outreach efforts, securing partnerships, and identifying financial priorities. The applicant references systems of financial organizational support including Characteristics of High-Quality Charter Schools and Charter Contract Performance Framework, to establish financial oversight and accountability mechanisms.

The applicant's plan to utilize multiple community-based learning hubs aligns with its blended learning model and ensures geographically dispersed students have access to in-person learning opportunities. The use of existing community spaces in Miloli'i, Ocean View, and Pāhoa could provide a cost-effective plan.

### Weakness of Facility/Financial Plan

The applicant's budget spreadsheet submitted contained errors and omissions that resulted in an incomplete budget that cannot be properly evaluated. There is no information provided for Year 1 and Year 2 in the Community Services line item, Operating Expenses, and Total Operating Gain (loss) show an error in the sheet, and Changes in Net Assets and Net Assets at the End of the Year are not provided.

Since a large portion of the proposed budget is incomplete, the evaluation team cannot make an accurate and well-informed assessment of the applicant's financial plan. As a result, it must be concluded that the applicant's financial plan does not meet the standard for approval.

In addition to the incomplete budget submitted, the applicant noted several components of the financial plan and budget that are no longer viable or accurate. In the budget submitted, the applicant included \$500,000 in contributions as the sole means for funding during the pre-opening phase (Year 0) and \$750,000 in grant funding and contributions for Year 1. However, the applicant has not provided evidence or assurance that these grant funds and contributions listed are either already secured or would be received. Also, during the capacity interview, the applicant stated that they would probably not receive one of the primary grants that their budget depended on in Year 1, the NHEA grant. In the applicant's budget, the NHEA grant accounted for about one-third of Year 1 funding; \$500,000 out of total Year 1 funding of \$1,484,640. Without this funding, the viability and feasibility of the applicant's financial plan and budget is uncertain.

## GOVERNANCE PLAN

**Miloli'i Charter School**

## RATING

**Meets**

### Plan Summary

The applicant governing board for Miloli'i Charter School is composed of community leaders, educators, and professionals with expertise in education, finance, governance, and cultural preservation. The application describes a student-centered governance approach that emphasizes transparency, accountability, and sustainability, ensuring that decision-making remains aligned with the needs of the Miloli'i community.

The governing board has played a critical role in the development of the application, participating in organized meetings, strategic planning, and outreach efforts. Agendas and minutes provided in the application document a collaborative process in shaping the school's mission, academic model, and operational framework. The governing board has also established systems of support for financial, organizational, and academic oversight, referencing the charter contract performance frameworks as a guide for monitoring school progress.

The application states that the operational board will maintain a diverse composition, balancing professional expertise, community representation, and stakeholder involvement while adhering to conflict-of-interest policies. The governing board will oversee staff development, budget implementation, and mission alignment, ensuring that the school remains sustainable and responsive to student needs.

### Analysis

The applicant meets the standard for approval in their governance plan.

### **Strengths of the Governance Plan**

The applicant governing board demonstrates strong expertise, deep community connections, and a clear commitment to the school's mission and vision. The governing board members bring diverse professional skills, including education, finance, community development, and cultural expertise, which will support the school in startup, operations, and long-term sustainability.

The governing board's contributions to the development of the application are well-documented, with detailed descriptions of each member's role in research, outreach, and finalizing the proposal. Governing Board meeting agendas and minutes provided strong evidence of a collaborative, well-organized process, with consistent engagement and strategic planning.

The applicant outlines systems of support for financial, organizational, and academic frameworks, referencing Hawai'i's charter contract performance frameworks. The governing board commits to student-centered governance, transparency, and sustainability, with annual governance and compliance training, cultural responsiveness training, and clearly defined board responsibilities.

The transition process from a planning governing board to an operational governing board is well-defined, ensuring compliance with HRS 302D-12. The governing board will maintain a diverse composition balancing professional expertise, community representation, and stakeholder involvement, while adhering to conflict-of-interest policies.

### **Weaknesses of Governance Plan**

While the governance plan is well-developed, the systems for regularly reviewing governance documents and ensuring compliance need further clarification. Establishing a structured review cycle for nonprofit policies and board governance documents would strengthen the governing board's ability to maintain compliance and accountability over time.

Additionally, while the governing board demonstrates strong expertise and deep connections within the Miloli'i community, its representation is largely concentrated in Miloli'i, with limited involvement from the broader communities the school intends to serve, such as Ocean View and Pāhoa. This lack of regional diversity raises concerns about whether decision-making will adequately reflect the needs and perspectives of all students and families within the school's proposed geographic reach.

Although the governing board's responsibilities and oversight roles are clearly defined, the application does not fully articulate how the governing board will hold school leadership accountable for meeting instructional and operational goals. Providing more specific governance policies on leadership evaluation and performance tracking would enhance the board's ability to maintain high standards of accountability.

## VIRTUAL/BLENDED

## RATING

**Miloli'i Charter School**

**Does Not Meet**

### Plan Summary

Miloli'i Charter School proposes a virtual and blended learning model designed to meet the educational and cultural needs of students in rural and underserved communities on Hawai'i Island. The program will combine synchronous (live, teacher-led) and asynchronous (independent, self-paced) instruction, allowing students flexibility while ensuring engagement in Hawaiian culture, community-based learning, and core academic subjects. The virtual component will provide access to students in geographically isolated areas, while the in-person learning hubs in Miloli'i, Ocean View, and Pāhoa will offer hands-on, project-based learning opportunities.

The blended model incorporates a comprehensive technology infrastructure, including learning management systems (LMS), digital curriculum resources, and internet access support for students in need. Teachers and administrators will undergo specialized training in virtual instruction, culturally responsive pedagogy, and digital learning tools to ensure high-quality instruction. Additionally, the school will implement a MTSS to identify and assist struggling students, integrating formative and summative assessments to monitor progress. A structured weekly instructional schedule will balance live instruction with independent learning, community engagement, and state assessment preparation, ensuring students receive a rigorous and flexible education tailored to their needs.

### Analysis

The applicant does not meet the standard for approval for virtual/blended as the plan lacks clarity in instructional design, budgeting, and staffing.

### **Strengths of Virtual/Blended Plan**

The proposed virtual/blended learning model for Miloli'i Charter School is designed to increase access to education for students in geographically isolated areas, providing flexibility between online instruction and in-person learning hubs. The curriculum integrates Hawaiian culture, language, and traditions, aligning with the school's mission and vision. The proposed use of learning management systems and digital tools aims to facilitate engagement and streamline communication between students and teachers.

The applicant plans to align student assessments with standards and incorporate assessments into the instructional process to ensure students are fully prepared for state standardized tests. Teachers will use data from these assessments to guide instructional decisions and make necessary adjustments.

The applicant outlines a professional development plan for teachers and administrators focusing on technology training, culturally responsive teaching, and trauma-informed practices. Administrators will receive training in virtual/blended management, data analytics for instructional leadership, and culturally responsive leadership. The school also plans to comply with IDEA and Section 504 requirements, ensuring students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations and support.

### Weaknesses of Virtual/Blended Plan

Despite the strengths, the virtual/blended learning plan lacks specificity in key areas, particularly in aligning the instructional program with virtual/blended learning guidelines, curriculum implementation, budget sustainability, staffing roles, and student support services.

Overall, the application does not clearly articulate how the virtual/blended model will function on a day-to-day basis. While it describes student flexibility in choosing virtual or in-person instruction, it does not explain how decisions will be made regarding when students require face-to-face interventions. For example, the application indicated a full-day synchronous online learning model for middle school, which is not a best practice per the Commission's Virtual/Blended Guidelines. Furthermore, the complete weekly instructional schedule for each grade band is not provided, making it difficult to assess how students will balance synchronous and asynchronous learning. The scope and sequence of each grade level lacks detail, and the application does not sufficiently explain how the curriculum is adapted for a blended setting or how instructional quality will be maintained across virtual and in-person learning environments while also incorporating their place-based curriculum that ties to the natural and cultural landscape of Hawai'i.

The applicant includes statements complying with IDEA and Section 504 requirements, but there is no clear plan for how students receiving services under IDEA will be supported in a virtual capacity. The application does not outline a structured plan for how special education students will receive accommodations, individualized support, or access to intervention services in an online setting. There is no indication of how staffing will be structured to ensure equitable access to resources for students with disabilities across multiple locations, raising concerns about how case management, related services, and compliance with federal and state special education laws will be implemented and monitored.

While the school plans to use state assessments and practice assessments to monitor progress, it does not clearly outline how formative and summative assessments will be adapted to the virtual setting or how individualized student progress will be tracked beyond standardized testing.

Additionally, the plan for technology infrastructure and tech support is unclear, particularly in ensuring equitable access for students in more remote areas. The applicant acknowledges that technical support is needed and states that they will require a dedicated IT team or outsourced tech support to assist both students and staff with device troubleshooting, help desk services, and network maintenance. However, while the applicant's support staff is projected to include five full-time IT support personnel, the staffing plan provided does not indicate these positions will be in place within the first five years of operation. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the proposed \$670,000 technology breakdown is included in their overall budget.

The applicant's budget and cost analysis for the virtual/blended program is incomplete. While the application includes some estimated costs for technology, training, and staffing, it does not provide a long-term budget projection or a cost analysis that accounts for expected fluctuations over time. The staffing model lacks clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of teachers, administrators, and support staff in delivering virtual instruction and ensuring student success. Additionally, while the application references multiple funding sources, the capacity interview revealed that several of these sources, including the \$500,000 NHEA grant, were not awarded.

## Evaluator Biographies

### Dr. Ed H. Noh

Dr. Noh is the Executive Director of the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission, bringing over 30 years of experience in education. Prior to this role, he served as the Complex Area Superintendent for the Castle-Kahuku Complex Area, overseeing 16 schools with more than 7,400 students. Dr. Noh's leadership experience includes serving as the School Director of Ka'ōhāo Public Charter School, where he achieved top-tier elementary school rankings, annual enrollment growth, and a balanced budget while introducing new classroom technologies.

He holds a Doctorate in Professional Educational Practice from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Washington. Dr. Noh's extensive background in educational leadership and his commitment to fostering innovation and excellence make him a valuable asset to Hawai'i's public charter school system.

### Danny Vasconcellos Jr.

Danny Vasconcellos serves as the Finance & Administration Director for the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission. An alumnus of 'Iolani School, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. His professional background includes six years with the State Office of the Auditor and experience with the Hawai'i State Legislature. Prior to his current role, Danny contributed to the Commission as the Organizational Performance Specialist.

### Dr. Pua Kaai

Dr. Pua Ka'ai serves as the Frameworks Lead with an academic focus at the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission. In this role, she collaborates with educational specialists and fiscal management to support charter schools, providing school improvement and technical assistance, particularly for those identified under federal programs such as Title I, Comprehensive Support Improvement (CSI), and Targeted Support Improvement (TSI). Her team offers professional development, fiscal guidance, and ensures alignment of school plans with their mission and vision, aiming to empower schools to effectively serve their communities within federal spending guidelines.

She holds a Doctorate in Professional Educational Practice from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, as well as two Master's degrees, one in curriculum and instruction and another in Private School Leadership.

### Jackie Bersson

Jackie Bersson is a Frameworks Specialist with a financial focus at the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission. Her responsibilities include overseeing the financial performance framework of the contract, ensuring fiscal accountability and compliance. Jackie is also a member of the Hawai'i-Pacific Evaluation Association, highlighting her commitment to effective evaluation practices within the educational sector.



### **Cerina Livaudais**

Cerina Livaudais is an award-winning educator and leader specializing in computer science education and culturally responsive teaching. As Lead Education Technologist at Purple Mai'a, she develops technology programs for Hawaiian immersion charter schools and broadens access to computer science for underrepresented students. Previously, Cerina was a founding teacher and Academic Lead at DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach Public Charter School, where she created an indigenous computer science program, secured \$75,000 in grants, and supported students in earning national app competition awards. She has also served as a teacher coach with Teach for America and taught in California and Myanmar, fostering equitable and engaging learning environments.

Cerina earned a Master's of Science in Education from Johns Hopkins University and a B.A. in Economics from the University of Southern California. Named the 2023 Hawai'i Charter School Teacher of the Year, she remains dedicated to reimagining education and empowering students and educators.

### **Dr. Jerelyn Watanabe**

Dr. Jerelyn Watanabe is the Community Engagement and Development Officer at the Pacific Islands Development Program, East-West Center, supporting leadership programs, community-based research, and professional development initiatives.

Previously, Jerelyn spent nearly two decades at Myron B. Thompson Academy, where she served in roles such as Educational Specialist and Math and Science Teacher, designing innovative curricula, leading accreditation efforts, and supporting school operations. Jerelyn holds an Ed.D. in Professional Educational Practice from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and an M.A. in Mathematics from University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, as well as dual bachelor's degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her work in culturally sustaining education and leadership development reflects her commitment to fostering excellence and equity in education across Hawai'i and the Pacific.