

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Governor David Y. Ige
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania St
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Ige,

Child care is critical to sustain Hawai'i's economy and economic recovery. No recovery will be successful if families do not have access to child care when they return to work.

Roughly 44,768 children birth to age 5 in Hawai'i attend child care each week so their parents are able to work.

If child care is not supported today, we stand to lose a significant share of our child care capacity. Last week, the National Association for the Education of Young Children surveyed 3,000 child care providers to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the child care sector. Nationally, 30% of providers said they would not survive a closure of more than 2 weeks without significant public investment and support that would allow them to retain staff, pay rent or mortgages, and cover other fixed expenses. Nearly 1 in 5 reported they would not be able to survive a closure for any amount of time. A loss of 30% of available childcare slots would mean a loss of approximately 1,300 jobs and a potentially permanent loss of child care for 13,430 children in our state. Hawai'i was already experiencing a child care shortage. In the state, for each DHS-regulated child care seat, there are four children under the age of six competing for it.¹

The implications of these findings for childcare in Hawai'i are significant. A child care provider closing would ripple across our communities and state with lasting impact. We cannot allow that to happen. We are calling for the state to take action to safeguard our precious child care resources and make investments to maintain their open doors.

We have a path forward. We need to utilize all available tools, including:

1. Waivers to the Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements
2. State appropriations
3. Local level appropriations

Seventeen states have already taken bold steps to ensure their child care industries are able to survive the COVID-19 crisis. The most common strategy is to use CCDF and state funds to continue to sustain providers. Connecticut, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah and Vermont, as well as the District of Columbia, Louisiana, Massachusetts and Ohio all plan to continue all child care subsidy payments to centers that close during the crisis.

Four states (Illinois, Louisiana, Oregon and Texas) have announced they will help to relieve the financial burden on families by waiving family co-payments. Meanwhile, Oregon has raised family-income eligibility limits, extending child care subsidies to more families.²

¹ Committee for Economic Development. 2019. Childcare in State Economies, Hawai'i.
https://www.ced.org/assets/reports/childcareimpact/fact_sheets/revised/Hawaii%20Fact%20Sheet%201312019.pdf

² [Information compiled](#) by Advocates for Children of New Jersey.

All of these measures are allowed by CCDF in the face of the COVID-19 crisis.³

The Governor of New Mexico issued authorizations for \$3.25 million in humanitarian aid under the statewide public health emergency declaration, including \$750,000 for temporary child care policy changes.

We recommend:

- Ensuring child care for essential workers (including first responders and emergency-related employees, health care, telcom, and grocery workers) is solidified IMMEDIATELY and the state, counties, and the departments work collaboratively to ensure all existing child care facilities can sustain their operations over the next few months.

Child Care Development Block Grant:

- Extend all contracts funded through CCDF without review or reapplication for the next 6 months to ensure programs and services can maintain uninterrupted
- Temporarily waive requirements that would disqualify a family for subsidy due to number of absences
- Continue to provide subsidy even if a child does not continue to attend due to COVID-19 or if the facility closes due to COVID-19
- Waive all parent co-pay requirements for families that are impacted by COVID-19 emergency
- Use quality dollars to provide assistance to families needing care regardless of eligibility for subsidy, prioritizing essential workers (health care, first responders, others deemed by city and county etc.)

Grant program:

- Create a grant program that would provide direct funding based on enrollment to licensed and registered child care facilities impacted by COVID-19 to ensure they can maintain operations over the next 6 months prioritizing those that are in rural/high need areas)

Licensing Waivers:

- Allow temporary waivers for licensing capacity for licensed or registered child care providers for only those that are providing care to essential individuals (not allowing more than 10 children in FCC homes or 15 children in Group child care homes).

Health and Safety:

- Ensure providers can maintain their operations safely during this time, including necessary sanitation equipment, supplies, and services.

State/local Level:

- Allocate funds specifically for child care providers impacted by COVID-19

We, the undersigned, respectfully submit this written statement and recommendations. Together, we can prevent devastation to our child care sector. We are ready to work with the state and local leaders to protect our families and providers.

³ [Flexibilities in CCDF law](#). Office on Child Care, Administration for Children and Families.

Angeli Joy Villon

Angelique Naholowaa

Barbara DeBaryshe, PhD

Interim Director, UH Center on the Family

Barbara Green, Bachelors of child psychology,
master of early childhood education

President kids inc, president mountainside school Ltd

Barbara Ozaki

Operations Manager/Teacher

Catherine Awong, Masters in Ed Leadership,
Bachelors in El. Ed., Associates in Liberal Arts

Treasurer Kia I Ka Ike

Cherilyn Shiinoki, M.Ed. Early Childhood Education

Executive Director, Family Hui Hawaii
Board Treasurer, Hawaii Association for Infant Mental
Health

Christine S. Jackson, M.Ed.

Hawaii Head Start Collaboration Office

Cindy Barley, BA - Psychology

Executive Director, Rainbow Schools

Daniel Plunkett, Masters

Headmaster, Kauai Christian Academy

Deborah Zysman, MPH

Executive Director, Hawaii Children's Action Network

Dr. Sharon M. Tisza, MD

22 years

Dr. Wai'ale'ale Sarsona, EdD, MEd, MBA, BEd

Kamehameha Schools

E Malama I Na Keiki O Lana'i

Keiki O Lana'i Preschool

Edeluisa Baguio-Larena, M.A.

Emily Stark, 18 ECU's (Assistant Teacher)

Children's Garden-Kihei

Erica Yamauchi

Board President, Hawaii Children's Action Network

Eva Dayao, BA

Little Gardeners Outdoor Preschool

Gavin Thornton

Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice

Hale Aloha Nazarene School, B.S. in ECE

Director/ Hale Aloha Nazarene School

Ivette Stern, MSW

Hawaii KIDS COUNT

Ivy Grace Capinpin, BA Psychology

Mililani Baptist Preschool

Jan Dill, MA - International Affairs; MA - Law & Diplomacy	President/Partners in Development Foundation
Jay Hanamura, BA	Board of Trustees Member - Montessori Community School
Jayne Arasaki, Masters in Education	Rainbow Schools
Jodine Souza	T.R.A.C.E. Academy Preschool
Johanna Nielsen, MEd, BEd	Program Evaluation and Assessment Specialist, Family Hui Hawaii
Julie Kalakau, BS, Human Services	Director, Sunshine School
Kainoa Fukumoto	Principal / St. Michael School
Kalei DeMello, BA in ECE	Preschool Director, Pali Preschool United Church of Christ
Karen Harmer, Bachelors of Science in Early Childhood Education	Director, Waipuna Chapel Preschool
Katherine Murphy	Executive Director Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children
Kathy Bennett, MEdECE	Director, Nā Kamali'i Hoaloha
Kelle M Shodahl, High School	Owner of Blessings from Heaven Preschool
Kerrie Urosevich, PhD	Lead, Network Design and Innovation Hawai'i Early Childhood Action Strategy
Kim Guieb	
Kim McCarty, Business Administration	Haili Christian School, Administrator
Kimberly Kuloloia, Early Childhood	Little Explorers Maui Preschool
Kupono Lucero, LCSW, CSAC	Counselor II, Malama Family Recovery Center
Lara Wasson, BS in Elem. Ed.	Bright Beginning Learning Center Bright Beginning Preschool
Lauren Toker, Bachelor	Director, Children's Garden Preschool
Leanne Abe, BS Elementary Education, BS Fashion Merchandising	Director, Kona Hongwanji Preschool
Leanne Abe, BS Elementary Education, BS Fashion Merchandising	Director, Kona Hongwanji Preschool
Lihla Noori, Masters in Experiential Education, BS Environmental Studies	

Lisa Browning, B.A, MSW, AMS 6-9	Teacher, Lower Elementary, Montessori Community School
Liz Sager	Hawaii State Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)
Mahina Paishon-Duarte, M.B.A.	Paepae o He'eia
Marci Whitman	Naeyc, Montessori
Mariah Luna	Teacher
Megan McCorrison, Ph.D. (Education)	Seagull Schools, Inc.
Melanie Adams, AA early childhood education Bachelors degree elementary education	Director, owner and preschool teacher Aloha Kai Academy NAEYC HiaeYC
Melanie Nishita, BA Early Childhood Education	Preschool Director, Member at Large - HBEEA, NAEYC Accredited, ACSI Member
Melissa McCarty, AA	Children's Garden - Co-Director/Teacher
Michael Ching, MD, MPH, MD, MPH	President, American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter
Michelle Fuller	Regional manager
Michelle Kitagawa, Psychology BA	
Napua Rosehill, BA. MAEd	Project Manager
Noelle Kamaunu, CDA, NAC	Director & Teacher, Children of the Rainbow Preschool
Pablo Penaloza, Masters	President of Alaka'i Academy
Pam Viveiros	Co-Director/Teacher 'Ae Kamali'i Preschool
Pamela Strode, Masters of Education and AMS I/T Training	Owner of Strode Montessori
Penni Taketa, CDA BA IN ECE	Ae Kamali'i Preschool-Teacher/Co-Director, NAEYC & HiaeYC
Penni Taketa, CDA, AA & BA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	Ae Kamali'i Preschool-- Teacher/Co-Director Member NAEYC & HIAEYC
Rhiannon Guevara, Associates	Director and Teacher- Rainbow Schools, Teacher and Aide- Kamaaina Kids, Aide- Keiki Hauoli Children's Center
Sayoko Yamaguchi, Associates in Early Childhood Education	Preschool Director/Calvary Chapel West Oahu Preschool

Shelly Taira, A.S. in Early Childhood Education	Director
Sherri Solt, BA Elementary Education	JumpStart Preschool (Honolulu & Hilo)
Sister Cecilia Fabular, O.P, Master of Art in Catholic Schools Leadership	NAEYC
Suzanne Skjold, MA	
Sylvie Berg, Childcare	
Tasha Murashige, Bachelor of Science Family Resources	Rainbow School - Center Director
Terry Lock	
Tiana Kamen, M.S. Nutrition	Farm to Keiki Director, Author, Trainer
Toni Respicio, BS in ECE	First Baptist Preschool of Haleiwa
U`ilani Corr-Yorkman, Bachelors, Elem. Edu. and Masters Edu. Tech.	Founder/Executive Director Haloalaunuiakea Early Learning Center
Valerie E Rita, Bachelor Degree ECE	Owner/Director/Teacher A Room to Grow Preschool 1/Too
Veronica Higa, B.A Art Associates of Early Education	Director of Kaumana Baptist Keikiland preschool
Veronique Braithwaite, Masters of Ed - ECE & Elementray	Preschool Director/Central Union Church Preschool
Vivian Eto, MA, Educational Psychology	
Wailani Robins, Montessori	Executive Director at Kūlaniākea

CC: Pankaj Bhanot, Director Department of Human Services
 Brian Donohoe, Benefit, Employment Support Services Division Administrator
 Scott Nakasone, Benefit, Employment Support Services Division Assistant Administrator
 Dana Balansag, Child Care Program Administrator

Signatures updated on 3/27/2020