

The University of Hawaii
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The Center on Disability Studies, College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa is pleased to submit this proposal for a Hawaii Family Engagement Center in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Education and Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii, Hawaii's Parent Training and Information Center authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Also joining us will be the Special Parent Information Network, Hawaii Business Leadership Network, Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific, and other community-based organizations. Each partner brings a unique set of resources and expertise, as well as networks, to our disposal, so that the HFEC will hit the ground running.

The overarching goal of the HFEC will be to build the capacity in every community in Hawaii to develop and sustain strong, productive relationships among schools, parents, and community organizations so that children thrive developmentally and academically statewide.

Its principal partner, the Community Engagement Office of the Hawaii Department of Education, through its Community Children's Councils, School Community Councils, Parent-Community Networking Centers, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, School Liaison Officers and other units within HIDOE, along with parents and other community-based organizations will help us reach schools and communities where there is a high concentration of students who are in special education, and/or English language learners, and/or economically disadvantaged.

One of the first steps is to form an Advisory Committee on family engagement, with a majority of the council members being parents. The HFEC will conduct roadshows on Hawaii's five main islands to alert the public about the launching of the center, its mission, and obtain feedback on a survey about what types of help on family engagement is most needed in Hawaii's communities. It will invite schools to participate in special groups that will receive technical assistance on how to build, implement, evaluate and sustain effective forms of family-school partnerships such as creating a welcoming school climate, using effective communication, supporting various forms of effective family engagement (i.e., high expectations, home learning activities), increasing parents' proficiency in technology literacy, showing parents how to serve as advocates for children, encouraging parents to mentor other parents, and asking parents to participate in decision making and policy development at all levels. The project will also provide training to parents on these topics.

Special groups will begin receiving technical assistance in year 2 of the project and continue through year five. Additionally, new special groups will be added each year. People who participate in technical assistance will be invited to an annual symposium on family engagement where they will hear from national experts on the topic and share their own experiences. Schools that participate in special groups receiving technical assistance will be invited to submit proposals for partial funding for family engagement projects. The Advisory Council will select projects to receive funding in years 2 through 5.

In year 5 the HFEC will develop a legislative proposal, supported by feedback from stakeholders, for the Hawaii legislature that, if considered and enacted, would make the HFEC permanent and provide money for its staff and operations.