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House Committee on Education  
Representative Roy Takumi, Chair  
Representative Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair

House Committee on Higher Education  
Representative Isaac Choy, Chair  
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair

March 20, 2015

Dear Chairs Takumi and Choy, Vice Chairs Ohno and Ichiyama, and Committee Members:

This testimony is in support of SB374 SD2, which renames the “running start program” as the “dual credit program.”

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition understands that having a post-secondary degree gives choices to our youth, allowing them to prepare for jobs in our workforce as well as challenging them with higher-level thinking. However, we hear that many students do not think that college is an option because they do not have the confidence or the financial support. Jump Start and Running Start Programs have allowed high school students to experience college classes, start accumulating college credits and gain the confidence that they can succeed in a post-secondary program. We applaud these programs for giving students the opportunity and exposure while still in high school.

We support this bill, which expands the eligibility to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, giving more students the opportunity to participate in the dual credit program. In addition, we support the financial appropriation, which will allow students to participate in the dual credit program tuition free. From a parent, family and student perspective, the cost of college tuition is extremely daunting. If a student can participate in their high school years to gain college credits tuition free, it eases the burden on families and the student, especially for those families and students who are contemplating pursuing a post-secondary education because of costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director

Academy 21	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
After-School All-Stars Hawaii	Punahou School PUEO Program
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Teach for America
*Castle Complex Community Council	The Learning Coalition
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS	US PACOM
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	University of Hawai'i College of Education
*Faith Action for Community Equity	YMCA of Honolulu
Fresh Leadership LLC	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
Girl Scouts Hawaii	
*Good Beginnings Alliance	
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	
*Hawai'i Charter School Network	
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	
*Hawaii State PTSA	
Hawai'i State Student Council	
Hawai'i State Teachers Association	
Hawai'i P-20	
Hawai'i 3Rs	
Head Start Collaboration Office	
It's All About Kids	
*INPEACE	
Joint Venture Education Forum	
Junior Achievement of Hawaii	
*Kaho'omiki	
Kamehameha Schools	
Kanu Hawai'i	
*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council	
Keiki to Career Kaua'i	
Kupu A'e	
*Leaders for the Next Generation	
Learning First	
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds	
Our Public School	
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning	
*Parents and Children Together	