



SCHOOL CHOICE MATTERS

Hawaii Policy Report

Introduction

PURPOSE

A combination of well-designed policies give all students access to the broadest range of educational opportunities, including key core policies and helpful policy enhancers. The purpose of this document is to provide insight to how well your state is doing at implementing the Ecosystem of School Choice Policies. This state report summarizes evidence across the seven policy buckets, with each policy component detailed in individual cells.

CORE POLICIES

Key policies expand student opportunities.



[Open Enrollment](#)



[Charter Schools](#)



[Private School Choice](#)



[Homeschooling](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS

Supporting policies enhance those opportunities.



[Part-time Enrollment/Course Access](#)



[Learn Everywhere](#)



[Transportation](#)

CORE POLICIES



Open Enrollment in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Transfers Between Districts	<p>N/A</p> <p>Does not qualify for policy rating</p>	<p>Hawaii has only one school district – the State Department of Education functions as the statewide district. There is no policy relating to attending school outside district boundaries.</p>
Transfers Within Districts	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>School officials can block transfers</p>	<p>Students in Hawaii are required to attend school in the geographic area in which they live. The Hawaii State Department of Education may grant permission to attend another school, where a geographic exception to attend a school in another service area is requested and granted at the discretion of the department.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302A-1143 Attending school in what service area)</p> <p>The Department of Education is required through Administrative Rules and State Board Policy to establish procedures to handle and approve geographical exceptions requests.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-13 Geographical Exceptions; HI State Board Policy 500-12 Geographic Exceptions to the Mandatory School Attendance Law)</p> <p>Hawaii Administrative Rules specify that the principal of the receiving school must approve or disapprove geographic exceptions based on established criteria and procedures. This must be approved based on the ability of a school to accommodate the request.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-13-4 Authority)</p>

<p>Year-round Transfer Window</p>	<p>LIMITED Restricted transfer window</p>	<p>Hawaii Administrative Rules makes clear that applications for geographical exceptions must be submitted between January 1 and March 1 so that a decision can be made before the end of the school year. Applications must also be accepted at other time periods, whenever “unforeseen circumstances arise.”</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-13-7 Application procedure; see also Hawaii State Department of Education, Geographic Exception Flowchart for PARENTS/GUARDIANS)</p>
<p>Tuition-Free Public Schools</p>	<p>N/A Does not qualify for policy rating</p>	<p>Hawaii policy does not address whether school districts are prohibited from charging tuition to parents.</p>
<p>School Capacity Transparency</p>	<p>NO No transparency policy</p>	<p>Hawaii policy does not require school districts to publicly report capacity by school and grade level.</p>
<p>Transfer Data Transparency</p>	<p>N/A Does not qualify for policy rating</p>	<p>Hawaii does not collect and publicly report district-level open enrollment data. Hawaii comprises only one school district.</p>
<p>Transparent Appeal Process</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Hawaii Administrative Rules allow applicants to appeal the denial of a geographic exception by filing a request within 10 days after the denial. The appeal is sent to the district superintendent of the receiving school. The district superintendent has 10 days to decide, which must be done in consultation with the home school district superintendent, which is considered final.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-13-8 Appeal procedure)</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[HI Rev. Statute 302A-1143 Attending school in what service area](#)

Administrative Code

[HI Admin. Rules 8-13 Geographical Exceptions](#)

State Department of Education/State Board of Education

[HI State Board Policy 500-12 Geographic Exceptions to the Mandatory School Attendance Law](#)

[HI State Dept of Education, Geographic Exception Flowchart for PARENTS/GUARDIANS](#)



Charter Schools in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Multiple Charter Authorizers</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>Multiple authorizers</p>	<p>Hawaii Statute establishes the state public charter school commission with statewide chartering authority. The mission of the commission is to authorize high-quality public charter schools in the state.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302D-3 State public charter school commission; establishment; appointment)</p> <p>Hawaii also provides that the following entities may apply to the Board for chartering authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> governing boards of accredited public and private postsecondary institutions, including community colleges, technical colleges, and four-year universities; a county or state agency; or governing boards of non-profit or charitable organizations. <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302D-4 Chartering authority application for eligible entities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hawaii State Board has established Administrative Rules relating to chartering authority. <p>Administrative Rules address applications for chartering authority.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-515-5 Subchapter 2 Applications for Chartering Authority)</p>
<p>Charter Appeal Process</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>Independent appeals process</p>	<p>Hawaii Statute provides that charter schools may appeal the decision of authorizers to deny an application of a charter application, a renewal of a charter contract, or revoke a charter school’s charter contract to the Board.</p> <p>The Board must review the appeal and issue a final decision within 60 days. The Board’s decision will be final.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302D-15 Appeals; charter applications, renewals, or revocations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hawaii State Board has established Administrative Rules to implement the charter school laws. <p>Administrative Rules confirm the requirements in law relating to appeals.</p>

		<p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-510 Charter schools – Appeals)</p>
<p>Charter Regulatory Flexibility</p>	<p>LIMITED Some or no exemptions</p>	<p>Hawaii Statutes exempt charter schools from chapters 91 (Administrative Procedure) and 92 (Public Agency Meetings and Records) and all other state laws in conflict with the charter school chapter. Charter schools, however, are not exempt from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective bargaining • Discriminatory practices under the law • Teacher certification requirements • Health and safety requirements <p>Charter schools, the commission, and authorizers are exempt from chapter 103D (Hawaii Public Procurement Code) and section 302A-1401 (Administration and use of federal funds).</p> <p>Charter schools are subject to chapter 84.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302D-25 Applicability of state laws)</p>
<p>Equitable Charter Funding</p>	<p>LIMITED Disparities exist</p>	<p>Hawaii Statutes provide that the non-facility general fund per-pupil funding request for charter school students must be the same as the general fund per-pupil amount to the department in the most recently approved executive budget recommendation and must be based upon “reasonable projected enrollment figures” for all charter schools.</p> <p>Charter schools are eligible for all federal financial support to the same extent as department schools. Federal funds received by the department for charter schools must be transferred to authorizers for distribution.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302D-28 Funding and finance)</p>
<p>Charter Facilities Funding</p>	<p>LIMITED Some or no facilities funding</p>	<p>The legislature appropriates funds and provides for bond authorizations to the commission for the design, planning, construction, repair, and maintenance of public charter school improvements for health, safety, and legal compliance; to expand or improve instructional space; provide for food services; or provide restroom facilities.</p> <p>Hawaii statute also creates a charter school facilities funding working group, which acts in an advisory capacity to “prioritize the allocation of general fund appropriations and bond proceeds for public charter schools to expend based on criteria that has been established by the commission.”</p>

		(HI Rev. Statute 302D-29.5 Facilities funding)
Options for High-Performing Charters	LIMITED No opportunities for high-performing charter schools	Hawaii charter school policy does not address high-performing charter schools.
Charter Zoning Exemptions	LIMITED Less than full protections	Hawaii charter school policy does not address exemptions from local zoning and ordinances.

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes	Administrative Code	State Department of Education
HI Rev. Statute 302D Public Charter Schools	HI Admin. Rules 8-510 Charter schools – Appeals HI Admin. Rules 8-515-5 Subchapter 2 Applications for Chartering Authority	HI State Dept of Education, Charter Schools HI Public Charter School Commission



Private School Choice in Hawaii

POLICY	OVERALL RATING	PROGRAM OVERVIEW
Universal Eligibility	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	<p>Hawaii does not have a private school choice program.</p>
Comparable Student Funding	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Uncapped Student Access	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Extended Application Window	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Student Testing Options	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
School Autonomy	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	

Accessible School Participation	NO No choice program	
ESAs and Parent-Directed Spending		
Freedom to Customize	NO No ESA or microgrant program	Hawaii does not have an education scholarship account or microgrant program.
Freedom to Access	NO No ESA or microgrant program	
Carry-Over Funding	NO No ESA or microgrant program	
Tax Credits		
Full Tax Credit	NO No choice program	Hawaii does not have an education tax credit program.



Homeschooling in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Homeschool without Prior Approval</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>No permission required</p>	<p>Hawaii Statutes compel attendance of all students between the ages of 5 and 18.</p> <p>Attendance is not compulsory where a parent has submitted a notification of intent to home school to the principal of the public school that the child would otherwise be required to attend.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302A-1132 Attendance compulsory; exceptions)</p> <p>Hawaii Statutes do not require parents to receive permission to homeschool their child.</p>
<p>No Extra Homeschool Notifications</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>One-time or no notification</p>	<p>Attendance is not compulsory where a parent has submitted a notification of intent to home school to the principal of the public school that the child would otherwise be required to attend.</p> <p>(HI Rev. Statute 302A-1132 Attendance compulsory; exceptions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hawaii has promulgated rules to implement the compulsory attendance requirements. <p>Hawaii Administrative Rules require parents to submit the notification to the principal before the homeschooling begins. The notification of intent must be acknowledged by the principal and district superintendent.</p> <p>The notification of intent does not need to be resubmitted annually, so long as the parent submits an annual progress report to the principal.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-12-13 Notification of intent to home school)</p> <p>Hawaii has created Form 4140, a template parents may use to provide notification of the intent to homeschool to the principal.</p>

<p>No Certification to Homeschool</p>	<p>YES No certification requirement</p>	<p>Hawaii Administrative Rules specify that a parent testing the parent’s child at home is deemed a “qualified instructor” – no teacher certification is required.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-12-19 Instructional personnel of home-schooled children)</p>
<p>Flexible Assessment Options</p>	<p>NO Standardized testing required</p>	<p>Hawaii requires students to participate in the Statewide Testing Program in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10. These may be taken at the local public school, or a parent may elect to arrange for private testing, at the parent’s own expense. The tests used when a parent arranges for private tutoring must be “comparable to the appropriate criterion or norm-referenced tests used by the department in the grades concerned.”</p> <p>Parents may also request, with the principal’s approval, other means of evaluation to meet the Statewide Testing Program requirements.</p> <p>Parents are also required to submit an annual report of a child’s progress, which may be demonstrated through satisfactory progress in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A score on a nationally norm-referenced standardized achievement test which demonstrates grade level achievement appropriate to a child’s age; • Progress on a nationally norm-referenced standardized achievement test that is equivalent to one grade level per calendar year, even if the overall achievement falls short of grade level standards; • A written evaluation by a person certified to teach in the state that a child demonstrates appropriate grade level achievement or significant annual advancement commensurate with a child’s abilities; or • A written evaluation by the parent, which must include certain elements. <p>For the years that the student participates in the Statewide Testing Program (grades 3, 5, 8, and 10), the parent may choose to have the child participation in those statewide tests serve as the results of assessing annual progress for that particular year.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-12-18 Testing and progress reports of home-schooled children)</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[HI Rev. Statute 302A-1132 Attendance compulsory; exceptions](#)

Administrative Code

[Hawaii Admin. Rules 8-12 Compulsory Attendance Exceptions](#)

State Department of Education

[HI State Dept of Education, Home-Schooling](#)

[HI State Dept of Education, Form 4140](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS



Part-time Enrollment in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Resident Course Access	<div style="background-color: red; width: 10px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>NO</p> <p>No policy</p>	<p>Hawaii policy does not provide for access to individual courses within a school for nonpublic and homeschool students.</p>
Nonresident Course Access	<div style="background-color: gray; width: 10px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>N/A</p> <p>Does not qualify for policy rating</p>	<p>As there is only one school district in Hawaii, part-time enrollment students cannot access public school courses outside their district of residence.</p>
Virtual Course Access	<div style="background-color: gold; width: 10px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>LIMITED</p> <p>Access denied to some resident students, or students must take at least one class in a public school</p>	<p>Students in Hawaii can take up to two virtual courses for free through the Hawaii Virtual Learning Network – Hawaii Online Courses. These courses are for secondary students enrolled in any Hawaii public school and charter school. Access is provided to courses that otherwise may not be available at the student’s home campus.</p> <p>(HI State Dept of Education, HVLN Hawaii Online Courses (formerly known as E-School); Hawaii Online Courses)</p> <p>Summer School Registration for the Hawaii Online Courses program makes clear that private school students and homeschool students may apply. It is not clear that private school students and homeschool students can enroll in school during the regular school year. 2024 Spring Registration notes that a student must be enrolled in a Hawaii Department of Education public school or charter school.</p>

<p>Extracurricular Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Access denied to some resident students, or students must take at least one class in a public school</p>	<p>Charter School Students Hawaii students attending charter schools may participate in sports programs at department schools in the service area in which the student resides, if there is no program offered at the student’s charter school. (HI Rev. Statute 302D-31 Athletics)</p> <p>Homeschool Students Hawaii policy does not address homeschool student participation in public schools for athletics or other extracurricular activities. Access to these activities will be a local decision, made by individual schools.</p> <p>Private School Students The Hawaii State Department of Education for Athletics provides for participation in athletic events by private school students; however, regulations do not address public school access to athletics by private school students. (Administrative Regulations of the Hawaii High School Athletic Association)</p>
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SOURCE CITATIONS

<p>Statutes</p> <p>HI Rev. Statute 302D-31 Athletics</p>	<p>State Department of Education</p> <p>HI State Dept of Education, HVLN Hawaii Online Courses (formerly known as E-School)</p> <p>Hawaii Online Courses</p>	<p>Other Resources</p> <p>Administrative Regulations of the Hawaii High School Athletic Association</p>
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Learn Everywhere in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Provider Qualification Standard	NO No program	Hawaii has not established a Learn Everywhere program.
Course Credit Standard	NO No program	
Core Course Opportunities	NO No program	
Central State List	NO No program	



Transportation in Hawaii

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Open Enrollment Transit	<p>N/A</p> <p>Does not qualify for policy rating</p>	<p>Hawaii Administrative Rules provide that students who attend schools that are outside of their public-school attendance area are not eligible for transportation or transportation subsidy.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-27-4 Limitations)</p>
Fair Transportation Access	<p>NO</p>	<p>Charter School Students Hawaii Administrative Rules provide that students who attend charter schools are not eligible for transportation services or subsidies.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-27-4 Limitations)</p> <p>Private School Students Hawaii Administrative Rules that govern student transportation provide for transportation for “students” – this is defined to mean students attending public school classes. While not explicit in the Rule, it appears transportation is only provided for students in public schools.</p> <p>(HI Admin. Rules 8-27-2 Definitions)</p>
Vehicle Flexibility	<p>YES</p>	<p>Administrative Rules govern safety requirements relating to school buses.</p> <p>“School vehicle or school bus” is defined to mean “any publicly or privately owned motor vehicle used to transport pupils to and from a school...or school functions or school related events” – this does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a motor vehicle used for transportation of students attending schools beyond the twelfth grade or students over 18 years of age; • privately owned passenger vehicles when that transportation is provided without compensation of any kind; • a motor vehicle used for transportation of students together with other passengers as a part of the regularly scheduled operation of a mass transit system; or

- a privately owned passenger van when such transportation is provided by a community association duly incorporated with the department of commerce and consumer affairs which operates for the purpose of promoting recreation, health, safety, or social group functions.

[\(HI Admin. Rules 19-143 Pupil Transportation Safety\)](#)

Hawaii Administrative Rules make clear that the “passenger capacity” of a bus is the number of passengers that can be safely seated. The Rules do not limit the number of seats that may be in a bus.

[\(HI Admin. Rules 19-143-9 Passenger capacity\)](#)

SOURCE CITATIONS

Administrative Code

[HI Admin. Rules 8-27-2 Definitions](#)

[HI Admin. Rules 8-27-4 Limitations](#)

[HI Admin. Rules 19-143 Pupil Transportation Safety](#)

[HI Admin. Rules 19-143-9 Passenger capacity](#)

