

## BFED Committee

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**From:** County Clerk  
**Sent:** Friday, April 28, 2023 7:41 AM  
**To:** BFED Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Budget testimony  
**Attachments:** MEO Head Start - Kalei Pa-Gutierrez.pdf; MEO Head Start - Deandra J. Massey.pdf; MEO Head Start - Kawehi.pdf; MEO Head Start - Mandy Nakooka.pdf

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**From:** Lee Imada <lee.imada@meoinc.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 27, 2023 5:21 PM  
**To:** County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>  
**Subject:** Budget testimony

To Whom It May Concern.

This testimony is a little late but wanted to submit it anyway on behalf of the testifiers.

Please confirm receipt.

Thank you.

Lee

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**Lee Imada**, Executive Assistant

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*MEO's mission is to strengthen the community while helping people in need restore their hope, reach their potential, and enrich their lives.*

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# Fiscal Year 2024 Community Budget Testimony

Agency: Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.

Program: MEO Head Start

Name: Mandy Nakooka

Email Address: NAKOOKAM@gmail.com

I Am writing this ~~to~~ in regards to Wailuku A MEO Headstart. Wailuku A has been such a blessing to my child & our family. The teaching staff is beyond amazing and work so well with our keikis!! I believe that MEO Headstart Wailuku A would highly benefit from a ① replacing Air conditioning units in the classroom. They have approx 20 kids inside the classroom, and it can get hot on keikis & teachers - which isn't safe. Another important piece I believe would help to make the center better would be to put a canopy covering over the outside playground area - teachers spend time outside with our children everyday during school, it could benefit the teachers & students from too much sun exposure which can have some bad health effects also. Wailuku A center deserves these i feel, because they take the absolute best care of our children, and its time to return the favor & take care of Wailuku A - MEO Headstart Center.

Aloha,

My name is Kawehi and my child is currently enrolled at the MEO Headstart program. I am writing to you all to express how important it is for Keiki continue to receive funding. As a born and raised Maui Girl I cannot express how grateful I am to have been selected to have my child receive this free/qualified education classes. Growing up in the 1990's I watched my parents struggle to find educational care for my younger siblings but finding out how pricey it is and times have not changed that is why having funding available to help our Keiki stay in school and continue to learn and thrive toward their future is Imperative. Our main focus as the Older generation should be to give our Keiki the best Education as they are OUR FUTURE!

There are so many local families yearly struggling with educational care and the cost of living here, the MEO HEADSTART program has been a blessing to us all and that funding is what makes this all possible. Mahalo Nui for all your hard work for our Keiki, Let's Continue to work hard in keeping our Keiki Successful.

# Fiscal Year 2024 Community Budget Testimony

Agency: Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.

Program: MEO Head Start

Name: Kalici Pa-Gutierrez

Email Address: KKalimalwood@gmail.com

MEO head start is widely known program that is pretty much a no pocket out of pocket to parents. For a step-parent like me, the program does help alot towards helping the kids to learn and grow. My stepbabies love it, they love going to school. They talk about everything they do when they come home. From the time that they started school, that I've seen. All I've ever seen is nothing but growth in knowledge, and learning to become independent as they do things themselves. Also, growth in their communication. There is a lot of good things coming out from this program. I'm hoping this program remains open for alot of families and for years to come.

# Fiscal Year 2024 Community Budget Testimony

Agency: Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.

Program: MEO Head Start

Name: Deandra J. Massey

Email Address: Djmassey@hawaii.edu

MEO School not only focuses on improving my child's areas of need but also really puts a huge emphasis on bolstering his individual strengths. My son has grown in a way that he never would have without MEO's excellent individualized warm environment. The teachers are highly educated, thoughtful, and nurturing. They provide tools and strategies needed for my son to succeed in the school years to come. MEO has not only helped my child but has also helped me to be able to graduate with a Associate of Applied Science in Culinary Arts at UHMC this year. From the bottom of my heart I thank MEO for paving the way to success for me and my family.