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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Parker School Announces New Early Childhood Education Program to Meet Community Needs

Waimea, HI – Parker School is excited to announce the launch of its new Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program, designed to provide exceptional early learning opportunities for young children ages 2 to 5 while addressing the need for childcare of faculty, staff, and the broader community. With an initial focus on a small-scale, 12-student pilot program set to open on or before August 2026, Parker School is laying the foundation for a potential full-scale expansion projected to 48 students by 2028 to meet the growing need for childcare in the Waimea and surrounding communities.

“As an organization deeply rooted in Waimea and lifelong learning, Parker School is proud to extend its educational continuum to serve our community’s youngest learners,” said Stephen Dunn, Head of Parker School. “This program will not only offer a nurturing, joyful, inquiry-driven learning environment for children but also provide much-needed childcare solutions for working families in our community.”

Backed by extensive research from its Early Childhood Education Task Force made up of school board and community members, Parker School’s new early childhood education program aims to stand out through its play-based, nature-integrated curriculum that fosters curiosity, independence, and social-emotional resilience. Recognizing the increasing demand for early childhood education in Waimea, Parker School is launching this program not to compete, but to complement and support existing early learning efforts, ensuring more families have access to early education. The initiative aligns with the school’s long-term vision to enhance educational

offerings, strengthen community partnerships, and support faculty and staff by providing high-quality early childhood care.

The small-scale pilot program will serve as a model for future growth, with the school actively exploring additional facility options and philanthropic funding to support a full-scale expansion projected for August 2028. The school is also currently engaging stakeholders—including faculty, staff, and community partners—to shape the program's design.

“As we approach our school’s 50th year since our founding in 1976, we are excited to evolve alongside the Waimea community, meeting its changing needs and growing stronger together,” added Dunn.

For more information about Parker School’s new Early Childhood Education Program and its impact on the community, please contact Stephen Dunn, Head of Parker School at sdunn@parkerschoolhawaii.org or 808-885-7933.

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Parker School Background: Established in 1976 by community leaders, Parker School is an important community resource for education, dedicated to serving a diverse student body for over four decades. Educating 342 kindergarten through twelfth grade students, Parker School’s mission is that every student is known, valued and nurtured. A small-school setting and dynamic program fosters confident, compassionate individuals who are thoroughly prepared for college, who enthusiastically engage in life and who positively contribute to an ever-changing global community. Parker School’s guiding values include excellence, integrity, and compassion.