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STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

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DATE: December 23, 2019

TO: The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President
Hawai'i State Senate

The Honorable Scott Saiki, Speaker
Hawai'i State House of Representatives

FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director 
State Public Charter School Commission

SUBJECT: Report on University Laboratory School Admissions

Pursuant to Act 111, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, the State Public Charter School Commission submits the enclosed report on admissions and enrollment at University Laboratory School, a Hawai'i public charter school. In accordance with HRS, Section 93-16, I am also informing you that an electronic version of this report may be found online at: <https://www.chartercommission.hawaii.gov/reports>



UNIVERSITY LABORATORY SCHOOL

A Hawai'i Public Charter School
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October 15 , 2019

TO: State Public Charter School Commission
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

FROM: University Laboratory School

RE: ULS admissions reporting requirements for 2019-2020

The University Laboratory School is providing the following information to the State Public Charter School Commission as required by the Commission and to assist in the reporting requirements included in HRS, §302D-34(d), which states:

Any law to the contrary notwithstanding, the University Laboratory School may conform its student enrollment profile to the standard prescribed by the University of Hawaii College of Education in order to meet the University of Hawaii College of Education's research requirements.

No later than twenty days prior convening of the regular sessions of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020, the state Public Charter School Commission prepare report to the Legislature that contains a review of University Laboratory School's actual admissions to support that the school conforms to its admissions policy. The report shall include but not be limited to:

- 1) An explanation of the admissions policy and practices applied;*
 - 2) An explanation of the research requirements underlying the admissions policy and practices;*
 - 3) The goals and targeted enrollment results that the admissions policy and practices are designed to achieve;*
 - 4) The actual enrollment numbers based on the demographic categories used;*
 - 5) Any significant variances between actual enrollment numbers versus the goals and targeted enrollment results;*
 - 6) An evaluation of the reasons behind any such variances; and*
 - 7) Any actions that the university laboratory school will take to lessen or eliminate any such variances.*
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1) An explanation of the admissions policy and practices applied

ULS Admissions Policy and Practices

University Laboratory School (ULS) is a public charter school serving two interlocking missions: to design and deliver the best possible education to our own students, and to serve the educational research and development community as a seedbed for curriculum research and development. We are the only school in Hawaii focused on supporting educational research and development, and disseminating educational

materials and improvement strategies. With our purposive enrollment, heterogeneous classes, emphasis on innovation and research, and provision of ongoing professional development for in-service and pre-service educators, our school serves as an experimental site for teaching, learning, and assessment in grades K–12.

We operate in close partnership with the Curriculum Research & Development Group (CRDG) in the University of Hawaii (UH) College of Education (COE), serving as a laboratory for researching, developing, and evaluating innovative approaches to improving teaching, learning, and assessment. ULS and CRDG conduct systematic research, design, development, publication, teacher training and related services for elementary and secondary schools in Hawaii and elsewhere. Over the past 50 years, the ULS–CRDG partnership has produced exemplary programs in science, mathematics, English language arts, Pacific and Asian Studies, marine studies, environmental studies, Hawaiian and Polynesian studies, Japanese language and culture, music, nutrition, art, drama, technology, health and computer education that are used by schools in Hawaii, the U.S. and other countries.

To serve our dual interlocking mission of education research and curriculum development, as well as providing a comprehensive academic program which prepares our students to become critical and engaged thinkers, our school enrolls about 450 students, comprising a cross section of Hawaii’s diverse population, from kindergarten through grade 12. Students are selected by lottery within the applicant pool to create a student body evenly distributed by gender that reflects the ethnic distribution of Hawaii, and includes a broad range of student academic achievement and family socioeconomic levels.

This admission system addresses the need for conducting research with a group of students that reflects the demographic makeup of the state as closely as possible (within the constraints of a self-selected group of applicants) and conforms to the parameters required by the University of Hawaii College of Education in order to meet these research needs. See response to question 2. The resulting student body provides curriculum developers with the opportunity—found in few other K–12 schools—to examine the extent to which innovative approaches to teaching and learning as reflected in teaching materials and programs can be implemented fully and well with the typical full range of included students to achieve their intended outcomes. Developing curricula and programs in such a setting is necessary to collect evidence about the actual success of the innovation.

Each year 10 students are admitted to kindergarten, and 46 students are admitted to grade 6. Applications are accepted for all grade levels, but openings are rare in grades other than kindergarten and 6 and occur only when families choose to leave the school.

Families are informed of the opportunity to seek enrollment in the school through announcements in the public media. Application materials and timelines are available on the school website (www.universitylaboratoryschool.org/admission/) or by calling (808-956-7844).

Families are notified of their children’s admission status by late-February. Parents are required to attend an orientation to fully understand the expectations and opportunities for their child at ULS. Parents must be willing to have their children participate in the research and development activities of ULS–CRDG and students must be willing participants.

ULS Admissions Event Dates 2019–2020

Date	Event
September 6, 2018	Announcement of Admissions Public Information Meeting
November 1, 2018	Applications made available
December 1, 2018	Admissions Public Information Meeting
January 31, 2019	Deadline for families to complete application
February 19-22, 2019	Approve and enter applications into the lottery
February 25-28, 2019	Process the lottery
March 1, 2019	Communicate results to families
March 9, 2019	Required meeting for selected students and parents
March 29, 2019	Deadline for acceptance of selection and enrollment forms
March 29, 2019	Returning families complete Intent to Return forms
April-July	Manage waitlists and seated lists
Early August	Deliver student data to SIS and welcome students

ULS Admissions Criteria

The University Laboratory School selects students by lottery from within the available pool of applicants into categories using four factors: family socioeconomic status (SES) based on parents' levels of education and occupation, ethnicity based on Hawaii Department of Education public school percentages at the grade 6 intake level, gender, and ability measured by test score. The goal of the process is to select a student population that approximates the state distribution of ability of included students, that is evenly distributed by gender, and that includes a broad range of SES, from within the available applicant pool. The particular steps of the process have had to be modified somewhat as the state assessment system has changed from using the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)—a standardized test with national norms and individual test results reported as percentiles and stanines—to using the Hawaii State Assessment which from now on includes the Smarter Balanced Assessments as well—criterion-referenced exams with individual results reported as a category indicating the level of meeting standards. Despite the changes in State assessments, the goal of the process has remained the same: to select a student body that reflects the population of Hawaii public school students included in typical school general education classrooms. This is the target group that our research and development efforts are designed to serve and the student enrollment profile that conforms to the standard prescribed to meet the University of Hawaii College of Education's research requirements.

2) An explanation of the research requirements underlying the admissions policy and practices

To serve our dual interlocking mission of education research and curriculum development, as well as providing a comprehensive academic program to provide our students the best opportunities to become critical and engaged thinkers, our school enrolls about 450 students, comprising a cross section of Hawaii's diverse population, from kindergarten through grade 12. Students are selected by lottery to create a student body evenly distributed by gender that reflects the ethnic distribution of Hawaii, and includes a broad range of student academic achievement and family socioeconomic levels. Maintaining a student body that reflects the gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and academic achievement of the included in the public schools' population is critical to the credibility and utility of the research conducted at ULS and to our ability to fulfill the mission of the school.

We operate in close partnership with the Curriculum Research & Development Group (CRDG) in the University of Hawaii (UH) College of Education (COE). ULS serves as a laboratory for researching, developing, and evaluating innovative approaches to improving teaching, learning, and assessment. ULS and CRDG conduct systematic research, design, development, publication, teacher training and related services for elementary and secondary schools in Hawaii and elsewhere. Over the past 50 years, the ULS-CRDG partnership has produced exemplary programs in science, mathematics, English language arts, Pacific and Asian Studies, marine studies, environmental studies, Hawaiian and Polynesian studies, Japanese language and culture, music, nutrition, art, drama, technology, health and computer education that are used by schools in Hawaii, the U.S. and other countries.

ULS has long been a seedbed for curriculum innovation and development with its partner CRDG. We believe that all of our teachers should learn the basics of education research, and we are dedicated to supporting all of our faculty's engagement in research as well as curriculum development. As part of our mission to research and disseminate best practices in education, ULS serves as the development and demonstration site for some of the most cutting-edge professional development available in Hawaii, and the United States generally. We host hundreds of visitors annually who come to learn from our school program, and we conduct professional development for other schools, districts, and countries regularly across a wide range of content areas. The credibility and utility of the research and development and training done at ULS rely in great part on it being done with a representative population.

One of the most innovative and unique strengths of our school is our design to allow for opportunities to conduct educational research with the widest range of methods possible. In addition to educational research methods that can be used in non-laboratory settings (e.g., case study and comparative analysis), our purposive enrollment creates a setting where the following scientifically rigorous, but rarely achievable, educational research conditions are available:

- Within-group testing so attribution and correlation studies can be designed for subgroups by gender, ethnicity, SES, previous academic achievement, and other factors, at a level of rigor not possible in a non-laboratory setting
- Repeated testing of educational innovation with similar student populations until we have determined with confidence that the innovation works for diverse student populations
- Ability to longitudinally study positive effects over time within and between groups of students with identical profiles, as provided by the purposive lottery using consistent subgroup parameters

3) The goals and targeted enrollment results that the admissions policy and practices are designed to achieve

As mentioned above, students are selected to create a student body, evenly distributed by gender that reflects the ethnic distribution of Hawaii and includes a broad range of student academic achievement and family socioeconomic levels. To meet these requirements, students are selected from the applicant pool by lottery into categories. The goal of this lottery is to select a student body, to serve as a research sample, that reflects the part of the Hawaii public school student population that is the target group our research and development products are designed to serve. These distributions are illustrated and examined below.

4) The actual enrollment numbers based on the demographic categories used

Kindergarten New Student Admissions Data for School Year 2019–2020

Kindergarten (10)	Ethnicity	Number of students
	Caucasian	1
	Filipino	1
	Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian	3
	Japanese	1
	Mixed (Other than part-Hawaiian)	2
	Unmixed (Chinese, Korean, SE Asian)	1
	Unmixed (Non-Asian)	1
Kindergarten (10)	Socioeconomic Status (SES)	
	SES1	3
	SES2	2
	SES3	4
	SES4	1
	SES5 (* no SES 5 in the pool)	0
Kindergarten (10)	Gender	
	Male	5
	Female	5

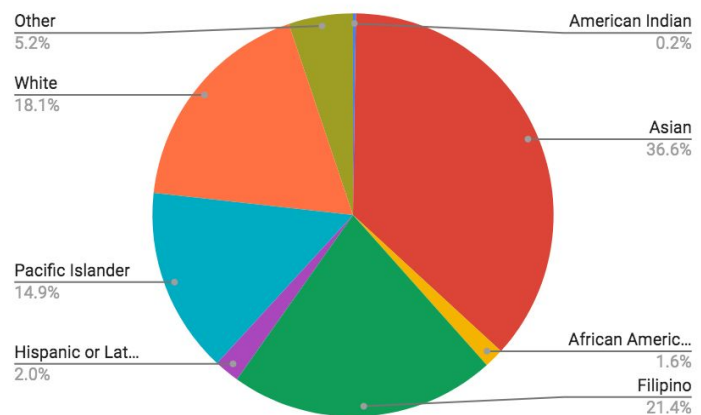
Grade 6 Student Admissions Data for School Year 2019–2020

Grade 6 (56)	Ethnicity	Number of students
	Caucasian	7
	Filipino	8
	Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian	14
	Japanese	6
	Mixed (Other than part-Hawaiian)	12
	Unmixed (Chinese, Korean, SE Asian)	4
	Unmixed (Non-Asian)	5

Grade 6 (56)	Socioeconomic Status (SES)	
	SES1	9
	SES2	13
	SES3	28
	SES4	6
	SES5 (no SES 5 in the applicant pool)	0
Grade 6 (56)	Gender	
	Male	28
	Female	28
Grade 6 (56)	Average Stanine	
	1-3	1
	4-5	19
	6-7	26
	8-9	11

ULS is a K–12 school with a 2019 enrollment of 443 students. The student body is further described in the following graphs and tables.

Student Ethnicity Data 2019–20	Percent
American Indian	0.23%
Asian	36.57%
African American	1.58%
Filipino	21.44%
Hispanic or Latino	2.03%
Pacific Islander	14.90%
White	18.06%
Other	5.19%



Student Count SY 2019-2020					
Grade	Male	Female	Regular Education	Special Education	Total
Kindergarten	5	5	10	0	10
Grade 1	5	5	10	0	10
Grade 2	5	5	10	0	10
Grade 3	5	5	10	0	10
Grade 4	5	5	9	1	10
Grade 5	5	5	10	0	10
Grade 6	28	28	54	2	56
Grade 7	28	28	53	3	56
Grade 8	28	28	54	2	56
Grade 9	28	28	53	3	56
Grade 10	27	29	54	2	56
Grade 11	28	27	49	6	55
Grade 12	20	28	47	1	48

Additional information on subgroups and Free-Reduced Lunch counts by school year are included in the table below. Information is confirmed on October 15 and the last day of each school year, so not all of the 2019-20 data is included. Our numbers are relatively stable, and we do not anticipate finding major shifts in any subcategory.

Year	Count Date (Oct. 15)	Last Day of school year	Free or Reduced-price Lunch		SPED		ELL	
	Number		Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
2019-20	441		57	13%	20	5%	3	0.7%
2018-19	435	432	45	10%	18	4%	1	0.2%
2017-18	437	431	54	12%	21	5%	2	0.5%
2016-17	440	434	65	15%	19	4%	1	0.2%
2015-16	439	431	88	20%	26	6%	1	0.2%
2014-15	442	433	66	15%	23	5%	4	1%
2013-14	444	438	75	17%	18	4%	6	1%
2012-13	446	442	71	16%	15	3%	3	1%

Information on the highest level of education attained by our parents is one of the components we consider when evaluating SES levels, as opposed to household income levels (which we do not request information on).

Parent Education Level (School Year 2019-20)	Number
High School Graduate	100
Some College	263
Bachelor’s Degree	273
Master’s Degree	143
Doctorate or Other Terminal Degree	75

Maintaining a student body that represents the ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement of the target student population in the public schools of Hawaii in a gender-balanced setting is critical to the credibility and applicability of the research conducted at ULS and to our ability to fulfill the mission of the school.

5) Any significant variances between actual enrollment numbers versus the goals and targeted enrollment results

The distribution of ability levels reflects slightly larger population in the higher end scores than targeted. The distribution of SES levels is also greater in the higher end than targeted, and contains below target representation from the lowest level.

6) An evaluation of the reasons behind any such variances

Our applicant pool is often not reflective of the diversity of the student population of the Hawaii public school system. We often have fewer applicants that fit one particular profile (e.g., SES by academic achievement) than is our goal; the opposite is also true, where we have disproportionately more applicants in one target pool than others. Thus, our actual enrollment, while close to our targets, is not always reflective of our projected and desired enrollment. This is why we use a random lottery into categories, as opposed to a completely random lottery.

The geographic location of the school may also be a factor that discourages applicants from neighborhoods with low SES and achievement located at distance because the school provides no transportation services. The costs in time and money to provide transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the family.

7) Any actions that the University Laboratory School will take to lessen or eliminate any such variances

To more broadly advertise the school program and encourage applications among populations with historically lower SES and lower test scores, a letter describing our school and explaining our application procedures (including Admissions Public Information Meeting flyers) was sent to community organizations such as O’ahu public libraries, YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Times Supermarket, and Moiliili Community Center.