



NAME: Dr. Kat O'Dell

ISLAND: Oahu

BIO: Kathleen O'Dell is the Chair of the LGBTQ+ Commission. She has a PhD from Kent State University in Multicultural and International Early Childhood Education. Her lines of inquiry are grounded in early childhood education, family engagement, and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion in education). She is a member of the Hawai'i Department of Education PreK Leadership Committee, the Hawai'i Statewide Family Engagement Center Advisory Board, and several Hawai'i Early Childhood Education Strategy workgroups, including chairing the preservice workgroup on the Hawai'i Comprehensive Systems of Personnel Development team. During her time working as a Complex Academic Officer for the Hawai'i Department of Education, Dr. O'Dell started school-based Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in five of the Kailua-Kalaheo Complex Title 1 schools and was a recipient of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Grant to support that work. She started and is the Network Coordinator for the Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network (HOSN), a statewide steering committee of government agencies and non-profit organizations to support the work of school and community FRCs. Through the HOSN, Dr. O'Dell continues to support the expansion of school-based family resource centers in Hawai'i. She is a certified trainer for the National Family Support Network Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support and the Five Family Protective Factors Framework and has trained hundreds of participants in Hawai'i. In addition, Dr. O'Dell continues to provide professional development in early childhood education, family engagement and DEI including LGBTQ+ awareness for educators and family facing professionals and has presented locally, nationally, and internationally. She is currently a full-time instructor in Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Hawai'i.

PRIORITIES: LGBTQ+ Advocacy, Education, and Equal Opportunities for our LGBTQ+ students and their families within our public education system is my priority.