HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 25-280

RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING AND REAFFIRMING THE KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS' MISSION AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN COMMUNITY.

WHEREAS, Bernice Pauahi Bishop ("Pauahi") witnessed the rapid decline of the Native Hawaiian population in the 19th century due to disease, cultural disruption, and dispossession of their ancestral lands, and in her will of 1883 created the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate ("Bishop Estate"), a charitable trust dedicated to the establishment of schools for Native Hawaiian children; and

WHEREAS, believing education essential to the survival and advancement of her people, Pauahi expressly directed the trustees of Bishop Estate to establish schools to be known as the Kamehameha Schools, supporting and educating orphans and indigent children, giving preference to "Hawaiians of pure or part aboriginal blood"; and

WHEREAS, following Pauahi's death in 1884, the Kamehameha Schools was founded in 1887 as a private educational institution under the terms of her will; and

WHEREAS, conditions for Native Hawaiians worsened after the illegal occupation and overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, further compounding the challenges that Pauahi sought to address through the Kamehameha Schools; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has formally acknowledged the illegality of, and its complicity in, the overthrow in Public Law 103-150 (the "Apology Resolution"), which also supported a reconciliation process between the United States and the Native Hawaiian people; and

WHEREAS, since 1910, the United States Congress has passed more than 250 legislative provisions for Native Hawaiians, including the Native Hawaiian Education Act; and

WHEREAS, while Native Hawaiian education programs such as the Native Hawaiian Education Act have been enacted, Native Hawaiians continue to experience disparities in educational attainment and socioeconomic well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Kamehameha Schools' admissions policy has been repeatedly challenged in federal courts but consistently upheld, most notably in 2006 when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the policy as a legitimate remedy for the longstanding educational and socioeconomic disadvantages faced by Native Hawaiians,

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with subsequent lawsuits—including one in 2008 that was withdrawn after the United States Supreme Court declined review—further affirming its legal foundation; and

WHEREAS, *Students for Fair Admissions*, a Virginia-based non-profit organization, has now sought to challenge the Kamehameha Schools' 140-year-old admissions policy; and

WHEREAS, the Kamehameha Schools has faithfully carried out Pauahi's legacy through its three K-12 campuses, 30 preschools, extensive scholarship programs, and community educational initiatives, all funded by its private endowment without reliance on federal funding; and

WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") believes that preserving Pauahi's enduring legacy while supporting reconciliation with the Native Hawaiian people is of utmost importance, and that the City and County of Honolulu and the State of Hawai'i must stand united in protecting the Kamehameha Schools' admissions policy and preventing interference with the charitable trust established by Pauahi; and

WHEREAS, the Council supports the Trustees of the Bishop Estate in fulfilling their fiduciary duties to administer and uphold the charitable trust that created the Kamehameha Schools for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian people; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it strongly supports and reaffirms the Kamehameha Schools' mission, its contributions to the Native Hawaiian community, and the preservation of Bernice Pauahi Bishop's will and legacy for future generations; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Mayor, the President of the Hawai'i State Senate, the Speaker of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Kamehameha Schools.

INTRODUCED BY:

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

SEP 25 2025

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 25-280

Introduced:	09/25/25	By:	TOMMY WATERS ESTHER KIA'ĀINA ANDRIA TUPOLA	Committee:	COUNCIL (CCL)

Title: SUPPORTING AND REAFFIRMING THE KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS' MISSION AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN COMMUNITY.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

09/25/25	INTRO	Introduced.
10/01/25	CCL	Adopted. 8 AYES: CORDERO, DOS SANTOS-TAM, KIA'ĀINA, NISHIMOTO, OKIMOTO, TULBA, WATERS, WEYER 1 ABSENT: TUPOLA

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.

GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK

TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER