

Praying for A's

A Kalihi shrine holds its annual back-to-school blessing for students

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Taylor Isono, 5, of Pearl City, received a bowl of shave ice from Miwako Sumida. At right is grandfather David Shimogawa, who recalls attending sumo rituals at the temple nearly 50 years ago.



The annual Back-to-School Education Blessing at the Shinto shrine Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha-Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu in Kalihi honors students of all ages so they may enjoy learning, take delight in new discoveries and persevere in their studies for the coming school year. Tessa Uchimura, 4, couldn't contain her enthusiasm yesterday morning before a blessing by priest Shinken Naitoh.



Matthew Hino, 11, an Iolani sixth-grader, pulls on the misuzu, a bell rung with a rope, to ward off negative energy.



Joey Teruya, 4, a Mililani Uka kindergartner, picks from an assortment of goodies for school on the grounds of the seven-shrine complex, which began with the Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha in 1920.