

June 21, 2011, Student Achievement Committee -- Hawaii State Board of Education

Committee	First and Last Name	Organization	Subject/Agenda Item	Testimony
1	Student Achievement	Brandy Ann Sato	"HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>I foresee as an erroneous proposition before us today: to decrease the graduation requirements in social studies education from 4.0 to 3.0 credits in our public schools. The national statistics are alarming. According to the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress, commonly known as NAEP, "more than half of all 12th graders scored below the "basic" level... in the area of U.S. History.... with just 12 percent of seniors scoring at least proficient." These startling figures highlight the failure of our national, state, and local educational policies to teach our children the knowledge and value of our own history. More than ever before, in an increasingly global world fraught with political and financial instability, knowledge of history and other social sciences within the field of social studies is a necessary and invaluable part of a holistic education that every child has the right to receive in our great state. An excellent K-12 social studies education not only encompasses the rigorous academic skills necessary to succeed in college and in the 21st century workplace, but also empowers our children to become the well-informed citizenry equipped to solve our state and nation's growing, complex challenges now and in the future. To conclude, we have only to look to our own history and stories, our own mo'olelo, for guidance on this matter. Kamehameha's every decision was informed through the wisdom and guidance he received from his most trusted advisors. He did not solely consult his kuhina, governors, but also drew upon the knowledge from others, those who were involved in traditional warfare, his kahuna, and his orators amongst many others. It was the combination of all these sources of knowledge that led to his successful reign. Just so, it is our duty to provide our children with all sources of knowledge to draw upon in order to live happy, fulfilled lives and to return us to the status our great state held in the 1800s as being one of the most educated citizenry in the world.</p>

2	Student Achievement	Florentino Tamondong Jr.	Social Studies Teacher, Mililani High School	Reduction of social studies credits from four to three for graduation.	I've been a social studies teacher for over thirty years and it really bothers me to see that our BOE has taken the direction of reducing social studies credits. Just look at our newspaper headlines and see that we probably need more social studies classes. We have citizens committing more crimes like stealing, bullying, assaulting, harassing, abusing, neglecting, etc. and many of these situations are discussed and covered in our social studies classes to help our students as future taxpayers to understand the rights and wrongs of our current society. I understand trying to improve the diploma policy to raise the standards of our students but ultimately there is one standard we should not sacrifice and that is the standard of not offering enough classes for students to help shape their morals and values. Social studies classes help our students to make better decisions about what is morally right and wrong. It also helps them to become good citizens and understand their role in American society. Our society has many social ills and I feel our students need as many social studies classes as they can get to help them become socially adjusted to our changing society and world.
3	Student Achievement	Sheryl S. Ogawa	Teacher	Credit Reduction for Social Studies	Do not drop the Social Studies credit. Keep it to 4 credits. And, increase Math credit to 4 instead of 3. In Social Studies classes, it's real life: you apply all the skills you learn from the other disciplines. You USE all the skills from other classes in Social Studies: analyzing graphs (Math) Learning about History (Reading and Writing, Debate - oral communication), learn about inventions that made the U.S. progressive (Science), sportsmanship (PE - I think politics can be associated with sportsmanship) and culture (Fine Arts and Music). Every facet of life (political, economic, social) is taught in Social Studies classes. Where else can you discuss freely current events. If students don't like Social Studies: it's not being taught correctly! DO not eliminate the 4th credit. Look at the voter turn out as a clear indicator where citizenship is headed. It's not the course that is the problem, it's HOW it's being taught - Social Studies is NOT in a text book. Social Studies is look outside one's window, read a lot of newspapers, and talking to peers. Social Studies is real life. If you want bad citizens, eliminate a Social Studies credit to let students know it's not important - as it is, I tell Students, "Social Studies is important for developing you guys into productive citizens - why else would it be a 4 credit requirement" (now math is 3 credits, can you remember when you used Algebra recently?!) (I feel I filled this out before, if this is a duplicate, please disregard this)
4	Student Achievement	Sean Abe		New graduation requirements	The idea that students would choose to take social studies instead of a class such as weightlifting if given the choice is ridiculous. A class such as Participation In Democracy would benefit students a lot more than just about any elective class that would be offered. Expository Writing should already be taught in English classes. I have some doubts as to whether all students will be able to complete the Algebra and Geometry requirements.

5	Student Achievement	Sandra Cruze	retired DOE, UH supervisor of SS student teachers	reducing credits required for Social Studies	<p>Thank you for considering the following points, some new and others which are intended to address the concerns raised during Q and A raised today .</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Value of social studies as reflected in DOE's mission and vision statement, current events, and changing reality: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Informed citizenry needed for any democracy to flourish with exchange of differing ideas, b) globalization of workforce, intermingled economies, c) interrelationship of our planet's various ecosystems. d) multiculturalism born of immigration and social media e) immediacy of technological communication f) rapidity of change 2. Methodology: Social studies teachers organize and facilitate collaborative learning in preparation for non agrarian current work environments. Whereas, collection of data and evaluation of resources may be shared with other disciplines; ethical decision making, moral dilemmas and public policy issues, non deductive inquiry, empathy, recognizing and respecting others frame of reference and thus point of view is the charge of social studies. 3. Participation in voting and juries are simulated in educational setting lessening the chance that non familiarity affect real life statistics. The lack luster numbers for adults are due to factors beyond the scope of the social studies classroom. 4. Required vs elective Social studies: Only students with a keen interest and career possibilities will consider senior year elective social studies. Right now there are about 4 choices for students within the required 4th year at each high school. Students will have a knee jerk reaction to having one less requirement. Students do not have the life experiences to realize that they will use social studies daily no matter what their eventual occupation. Students don't always know what is good for them or society. Understanding Macro Economics is necessary but Psychology more glamorous. 5. Staffing and resource allocation: The registration count will drop drastically as testified to and that DOES affect allocation of sections and thus teacher lines and quality of teachers. Principals are tempted to assign non social studies trained personnel to teach social studies courses. This "farming out sections" saves warm bodies in many elective fields. 6. Please restore sanity to this time of testina drivina curriculum policv decisions. Standardized tests
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6	Student Achievement	Anatalio C. (Pat) Morales, Jr.	DOE Secondary PS Teacher - Farrington High School	Student Achievement and the reduction of Social Studies credits from 4 to 3.	<p>1st, Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to comment on why reducing Social Studies credits from 4 to 3 is a step into the Dark Ages. 2nd, I did attend this mornings BOE meeting at the Queen Liliuokalani Bldg. and was called to testify, but before I could complete the reading of my statement w/in the 2 min. allotted, the Chairperson cut me off. Why? I really don't know, but just the same, if I spoke to loud, or read incomprehensibly, or did something inappropriate while reading my testimony, I apologize to the Board. It is not in my character to embarrass the Board of Education in any manner. I respect our DOE and all the sincere work being conducted by the BOE in it's agenda to clarify a policy for a sound curriculum & instruction process toward a meaningful diploma. 3rd, I am a Highly Qualified Teacher, and dually certified both in Social Studies and Special Education and currently a 17 year vertan teacher at Farrington High School where I've been Dept. Chair for the SPED dept. and have taught Social Studies to SPED students, and looking forward to develop the Occupational Services CBI section of the SPED dept. and/or participating in Inclusive teaching in the academies for the upcoming year. 4rth, I am a father of 4, and all of my children have graduated from Hawaii's Public High Schools with honors and now active and constructive Citizens following their calling. My oldest is an Employment Counselor and Administrator for ALTRES, Inc. and a Sr. at UofH majoring in Business Psychology and Human Resources. My 2nd oldest is an artist and a Mental Health Counselor and studying for her Master's at Colorado Christian University. My 3rd, child is a soccer ace who was OIA first team his Sr. year in High School and played on the All Star Team and went to Bethel Bible College and was called into the ministry and is now a Youth Pastor. My youngest is an award winning Hula dancer and May Day Queen in her Sr. year of high school, who is now Kumu for her Hula Halau sponsored by Refresh Ministries of Honolulu and will be entering the U. of Hawaii as a sophomore this upcoming Spring majoring in computer technology and business management. She holds a part-time job at Apple Corporation. 5th, I believe the Social Studies Credits should NOT be reduced from (4) to three (3) credits because of the following reasons: A) Social Studies Curriculum is the soul, the essence, and the intricately woven fabric which brings to life all the other curriculums into compatibility with the ethics of critical thinking skills needed for survival in the 21st Century. B) Social Studies is the forefunner for the discussion of an ethical, moral, constitutional democracy which is still the best form of government yet to exist on this planet as it brings the greatest optimum of liberties to Human Rights. C) Science & Math produces nuclear bombs, but Social Studies builds & enables leadership to determine the moral and ethical use of it for the survival of mankind, and the same can be stated for every issue (abortion; drugs, mental illness; prostitution; murder; divorce; etc.); that can destroy the values, sound traditions, and</p>
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				<p>historical truths of a democratic society. D) Social Studies courses listed as electives is not a motivating factor for students to choose from because I help students develop their curriculum for the next year and never have I seen a student choose a social studies course as an elective unless he/she failed it and needs to recover credit. They will choose (band, language, art, culinary arts, key board; digital media; writing workshop; Industrial workshop; Weightlifting;etc) as opposed to (American Studies; Civics; Global Studies; Modern Hawaiian History; Psychology; Participation in Democracy). They will take it only if it is offered as a core requirement or if they've decided they want to become an attorney. E) Social Studies is the best most enriching environment for the development of expository writing. Every Great American Hero whether in Government; Business; Science; Religion; Agriculture; Politics; Labor; Military; Athletics; all cry out expository writing through their biographies and how beautiful it is when a student of social studies recognizes that their life is not mediocre when they know that they were created in the image of intelligence and love with infinite value, worth, and dignity, an idea that I teach which comes alive in a Social Studies Class and that heroes exist w/in their own families. F) Social Studies is everywhere in the home, community, private business, government, international trade, united nations, every culture of the world, and afixed in every person's DNA to grow and venture where one can be all he/she can be. Social Studies is necessary for the debate of what defines a civilization that will optimize PEACE and right relationship for all mankind. The absence of War is not peace. And we learned that in the Civil Rights Movement where although the Emancipation Proclamation gave all men, non-white and white, equality, there was no peace between the races. Peace is the absence of racism; ethnocentrism; hate; cultural ignorance; dehumanization; deceit; lies, wicked games, immoral politics, and any decadent, corrupt, and perverted behavior that brings no rest to mankind's soul. This Utopian Dream for a more perfect union can best be discussed and played out in a Social Studies Course. G) Finally, I implore you not to reduce the number of credits because I take it personally. 20 years ago as a Sales Manager for a major Insurance Corporation, I did something creative. Instead of making promotional speeches through my Toastmaster's Club, I decided to substitute in the Middle Schools for a week and give eighth graders a hands-on experience about financial development / insurance / torts / and family security. I was excited but not prepared to encounter what I thought would be a captive audience of young minds to influence. On my 1st day, as the doors opened and students came into class, I immediately noticed that I was the only minority in the class. They came in and took their seats and as the tardy bell rang I was excited to say, "Good morning ladies and gentlemen". But before I could say anything, a girl came running through</p>
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				<p>the doors and fell on her knees before me saying, "My uncle raped me, my uncle raped me...". I bent down to grasp her arms to bring her up, but with great opposition and defiance she shook off my touch and started to cry. I turned toward the class and immediately instructed them to take out their homework, or to busy themselves reading their textbooks while I brought the student to the counselor's office. In my mind, I was thinking, this is a joke, that these students were master's at psyching out a substitute teacher, but the heaviness of the drama and the tears on the student's face convinced me that this was real. I walked her silently to the counselor's office explained the incident, and returned to class. When I got back, I was shocked again! Student's were not obediently sitting and studying as instructed. Instead, boys were spit wading, chairs were falling on the floor; boys were pulling girl pigtails; girls were chasing and hitting boys; and it was a panorama of chaos. I did get things in order and I did have a constructive week, but I didn't know what happened to the girl as it was confidential. However, I did learn that the students appreciated me and was sad to see me leave, and I did assess that this was a unique experience. What hit me the most was that it would change me life. For the next year, I couldn't get that experience out of my head. I kept thinking, is this what the next generation is coming to with abuse, neglect, feeling bored in school, and rebelling against their families, acting out without self-discipline, street wise runaways, and disrespectful of authority? Finally, it seemed it was my fate to make a decision. I felt burdened to teach in a Social Studies Class where I might be able to make a difference. This was more than a Opportunity Cost Decision since I would be sacrificing an already well-employed corporate career with income three times a beginning teacher's salary. For the next year, I sought counsel w/ appropriate professionals in the legal and educational worlds and with my family's approval, I prepared to transfer careers into the Public Schools. I chose to return to Hawaii where I could best raise my family and at the same humbly give back to the youths of Hawaii. I've been teaching now for 17 years and I can testify that I do not regret my decision to switch careers. I consider the contact with students in the classroom to be my mission and which has been my calling all these years. I have seen many a student who have returned to me and thanked me for opening their minds to an appreciation for themselves and others as human beings in a world that cries out for peace and the pursuit of happiness two of the most comprehensive concepts that at the high school level can only be brainstormed in a Social Studies Classroom. It is so comprehensive that to meet the requirements of the HCPSII standards and benchmarks, it would take more than 4 credits. I take this personally because to shorten the required time to passionately teach Social Studies to a generation that needs to have strategies to better understand and to problem solve for 21st century</p>
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7	Student Achievement	Terry Low	Reduction of Credits for Social Studies	I read with great concern the BOE's plan to reduce the number of credits in Social Studies required for graduation. I have been a high school English teacher for almost twenty years now, and I see a serious lack of knowledge of history, geography, and politics in many students. Improving students knowledge in those areas is critical to their becoming responsible citizens. I believe the efforts to improve that knowledge are already being hampered in many ways. For example, our school library is no longer able to buy magazine subscriptions. This is difficult to even imagine in an educational setting, especially when many families do not subscribe to magazines. The internet has of course offset this to some degree, but students can gain a quick perspective on the world around them by even a scanning a magazine like Time or Newsweek. Last year, I was able to use Up Front magazine, the New York Times student news magazine as part of my Expository Writing class. I had to fight to get it back next year because of a DOE directive about not buying subscriptions. Due to increased budget cuts, it will be interesting to see if it actually gets funded. It will have a very negative effect on my classes if it doesn't. To cut Social Studies requirements at this time seems to be a mistake, and further hurt the effort to help students gain critical knowledge of the world around them. It certainly shouldn't be done in a rush, which seems to be the case here. Please at least take more time to consider the ramifications of this change. Mahalo, Terry Low Kauai High School

8	Student Achievement	Daniel Addis	Roosevelt High School	High School Graduation and Commencement Policy 4540	<p>Aloha DOE Board Members, My name is Daniel Addis and I am currently a Social Studies teacher at Roosevelt High School, recently having completed my 10th year of being an educator. During the previous four years, I served as the Curriculum Coordinator at Roosevelt and feel that through my experiences in that job, I have gained a fairly global perspective of education and the system(s) that operate it. I am writing this testimony in strong opposition to Policy 4540 to reduce the number of required Social Studies credits from 4.0 to 3.0, and to propose another solution. First of all, I wanted to state that I attended this morning's BOE meeting and heard from many of my constituents about the need to maintain the 4 Social Studies credits required for graduation. I completely agree and support everything they mentioned from the DOE Vision of a Public High School Graduate to the need to understand and analyze local, national, and global issues (especially during a fourth Social Studies class in the senior year) as our students graduate and become adults. It is vital that students have this opportunity to study the Humanities throughout their four years of high school. Secondly, I spoke with Clayton Kaninaw during the 9:48-10:00 am recess about why this change was being proposed. He informed me that it was about giving students choices or options about the courses they take while in high school, something that many Board members seemed to be trying to understand, based on the questions during public testimony. I completely understand why this is important for students as high school should also be a time of exploring different options and beginning to determine what students' potential career choices may be. However, eliminating a Social Studies course in order gain a 7th elective credit should not be the way to do so. Why I say</p>
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9	Student Achievement	Kelly Uyeda	Waiakea High School	ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540 "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>"Our vision of a Hawaii high school graduate is that all public school graduates will: Realize their individual goals and aspirations; Possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and compete in a global society; Exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and Pursue post-secondary education and/or careers without need for remediation." <http://doe.k12.hi.us/about/intro_vision.htm> If this is the state vision of a high school graduate, then dropping the requirements for social studies from 4 to 3 credits will not prepare our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to compete in the real world. During the students' senior year, students have choices among the many social studies courses that align to their career and academic goals. Having one more year of social studies will reinforce the skills needed for college, career, and life. There are many benchmarks that address economic and financial literacy skills that are addressed in these elective social studies courses as well as social, psychological, and global skills. In this technological society, students need to address these skills especially since students intro to social studies are not fully addressed until the 6th grade. Elementary students do not get much social studies content or skills because their focus is mainly on improving language arts, math, and science test scores. If we want to prepare our students for the 21st century then we need to keep the social studies requirement of 4 credits so that our students can be exposed to the various social sciences and succeed as active educated citizens of our society. Many schools across our state have aligned their senior elective social studies courses to the various academies within their Smaller Learning Communities on campus. These all tie into students college and career choices. Again, please consider keeping the social studies requirement to 4 credits so that our students are prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global society of the 21st century. Mahalo for your time and consideration.</p>
10	Student Achievement	Laura Buller	Molokai High School	Reducing high school social studies requirements	<p>Aloha BOE members, I teach at Molokai High in the social studies department. I am asking the board to not approve the reduction of required credits for our students. Our students in Hawaii need to be prepared to interact with a global community. Social studies courses provide the insight and exposure to the world's diversity in culture, language, politics, and history. By excluding the fourth year elective we are limiting students ability to understand and relate to other peoples whose cultures are different. Social studies electives also expose students to very specific skills not covered in other subjects. Courses like psychology, economics, geography, and the humanities prepare students with life skills that assist them as global citizens. PLEASE DO NOT REDUCE THE REQUIRED CREDITS FOR GRADUATION IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES. Thank you for your time and careful consideration of this decision. Laura Buller</p>

11	Student Achievement	McShane Dator		Student Achievement Committee	As a soon to be Social Studies teacher I am appalled at the direction we are headed. I feel that Social Studies is vital to create critical thinking citizens. Our students will be at a great loss if we decide to offer less Social Studies classes and more Science. I hope that the Committee does what is right.
12	Student Achievement	Gail Sandstrom	parent	Action on board policy 4540 "High School Graduation & Commencement Policy"	Please keep the social studies requirement at 4 credits for graduation. Students should be encouraged to take elective social studies courses (economics, sociology, psychology, geography, etc.) so that they can be well rounded citizens who are prepared to be successful as active and educated participants in society. Just because these electives are in the social sciences doesn't mean other content areas (math, english, science) can't be integrated into these courses. In fact, reading a map, reading a graph, learning about chemical warfare, or the AIDS epidemic can all be examined in a social studies class. I do not believe there is any reason the number of credits required for graduation should be changed and it should remain at 4 for social studies. Thank you.
13	Student Achievement	Leonard Wilson	Public School Teacher	New Requirements for College and Career Ready Diploma	Dear Board of Education, Thank you for providing an opportunity to submit testimony on the proposed "College and Career Ready" Diploma for the class of 2018. The proposal to require geometry and some other math class seems realistic, since mathematical and logical reasoning are an intelligence that is not evenly distributed to all students. The notion of some other math class to replace algebra II is excellent as it would provide the opportunity for students to apply math in everyday life. The proposal to require two credits of laboratory science or equivalents also seems to realistic. However, what is construed as an equivalent experience for laboratory experiences needs to be carefully defined. Furthermore, given the shortage of resources of for present curricula, where would the extra resources to equip and maintain science lab courses come from? Please visit our science classrooms as you may be shocked by the deficiencies that currently exist. The proposal to reduce social studies to 3.0 credits is ill-conceived as the nature of human action and its interdependency require new models of politics and understanding for which there are currently no discursive practices. Therefore, please consider the need for not only four years of social studies, but also a complete restructuring of social studies. For example, some schools are implementing two year world history classes whose first year comprise human and world geography. Also, there seems to be a trend for eliminating "state histories" as well as U.S. History and creating larger concepts of histories that include both state and national histories. Thank you for your valuable time and the opportunity to submit testimony. Leonard Wilson Social Studies Teacher

14	Student Achievement	Loren Walker	Loren Walker JD, MPH	Proposal to reduce number of social study requirements for secondary students	<p>I strongly oppose reducing the number of social study classes for secondary students to graduate from public school. I have developed, implemented, studied, and published the results of a number educational of interventions for marginalized populations as a public health educator with law background (see: www.lorenwalker.com) for many years. I consult with people in different states and countries about my work. The challenges the world and Hawai'i face today concern social issues (see: <i>The Social Animal</i>, David Brooks) and our students especially need to understand their life experiences in terms of society, which is the purpose of good social studies courses. By understanding how we are influenced by social experiences we can more effectively control our futures and be free to be more creative. Understanding of civil duties and rights also begins with social studies. The mastery of hard sciences will not increase our understanding of the social aspect of our lives without the study of social studies. Hard sciences alone will not provide what is needed for healthy and productive lives. My professional and personal experiences including having been a disenfranchised youth (on my own age 14, a high school drop out age 15), but going on to succeed in life despite the odds against me socially by becoming a Montessori teacher age 19, lawyer age 30 and health educator age 43, contribute to my position for continued social studies courses. If you want to contact me regarding my position on this issue please call me at 637 2385 or email lorenn@hawaii.edu Thank you for your work to improve the education for our youth.</p>
15	Student Achievement	Jim Dator		Reducing Social Studies Credit Requirements	<p>Reducing the number of social studies credits while increasing the number of lab science credits is as mistaken an idea as I can imagine our school board could possibly make, unless the purpose is to ensure that our future citizens are even more powerless to effect positive change in their lives than they are now. If you want democratic dummies, that is surely the way to produce them. Certainly citizens need to understand the principles by which the natural world operates, but nature is less and less "natural" because of increased human interference. We are now in the "Anthropocene Age". More social studies credits are needed, not fewer. Jim Dator Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies Department of Political Science, UHM</p>

16	General Business Meeting	Cher Nakachi		Social studies credits being lowered to 3	Hello I am currently a Social Studies middle school teacher. However I am writing as a concerned citizen who has valued her social studies education. As a graduate of the public school system in Hawaii, I must say that I learned citizenship from my social studies classes. I also learned the importance of being a contributing member to society through my Social Studies classes. Math and Language Arts I agree are important but they did nothing to teach me about being a contributing member of society. Yes we need our students to be college and career ready, but they also need to be ready for the world and how to contribute to it. Social Studies does this. Student learn civic responsibility and actually practice that through their social studies classes. Please do not lower the graduation requirement for Social Studies. It will further cost jobs for Social Studies teachers. Thank you for your time Cher Nakachi
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17	Student Achievement	Kimo Kelii	NHIS-PTSA	BOE Policy 4540 - Opposed to the Senior Contracts in Public High Schools	<p>Aloha Kakou BOE Committee Members (June 21, 2011) Because this system cannot upload my testimony, I will be bringing numerous copies of my testimony for the committee members to read and review. Consequently, this testimony is for the Tuesday, June 21st, 2011, 8:00am meeting with the BOE Student Achievement Committee members in which I want to share the gist of my concern as it pertains to the BOE and DOE's current position with allowing all Public High Schools in Hawaii the liberty of drafting, implementing, maintaining and monitoring their own "Senior Contract" agreements which incorporates the BOE Policy 4540 and HRS DOE Chapter 19 Policy as the source documents used to mandate and enforce a contract between the public high school administration, the senior students along with their parents/guardians' -- with all of their signatures finalizing the contractual agreement. The following comments, remarks and opinions basically translates the various reasons why I strongly oppose and disagree with the Senior Contract's current appearance and implementation process -- especially since this contract uses the BOE Policy 4540 and Chapter 19 as its foundational structure in establishing its enforcement components. Please note that I am not against the purpose and need for this very important Senior Contract agreement to exist; however, I am concerned about the inability of the DOE and the BOE with referring and directing me to the source documents that validate this policy and initiative. Furthermore, I am extremely concerned about the inconsistent manner as to how this Contract's purpose and consequences are translated to the students, parents, senior class teachers and staff, and campus security team each year. Nevertheless, I want to know what type of evaluation or assessment tools have been used to gain insight as to the parents and student's comprehension or interpretation of this Contract's seriousness? What type of contingencies or safety zone areas have been provided for Seniors to access if and when they are confronted with violence or want to prevent being in a situation that may provoke them into violence? Bottom line, I believe this important State-wide policy has not been given the appropriate oversight or monitoring that it requires with keeping the DOE and us tax-payers free from lawsuits that may eventually have merit or standing! I. After reading the BOE Policy 4540 during numerous focus and concentrated episodes; whereby, I was spending quality time evaluating and researching every aspect and portion of this policy's language in hopes of discerning at least the "intent" of the policy's creation. Hence, I have finally come to the conclusion that this policy's intent and creation was never written to establish a DOE practice and procedure (via the Senior Contract) which allows for the "elimination and termination of a student's right to participate in the Graduation Commencement Ceremony"; but, on the contrary, in a rather ironic twist of interpretation (or lack thereof) what has occurred is that the BOE has allowed the DOE</p>
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to use Policy 4540 in grossly distorting (via the Senior Contract) the BOE's clarity, simplicity and intention in conveying to all students and parents/guardians in the State of Hawaii the current criteria, standards and requirements for a successful completion, attainment and achievement of the following Graduation and Commencement Requirements: Page 2

1. Meet the requirements for a diploma or a certificate (22 credits with its course details):
 - a. Establish rigorous Standards of Learning
 - b. Demonstrate proficiency in the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards and GLO
 - c. Provide opportunities and instructions for students in attaining a BOE Recognition Diploma (with Honors if possible)
 - d. Provide opportunities for students with disabilities based on their IEP the option to pursue a diploma or certificate of completion.
2. Have fulfilled their financial obligations and
3. Meet other conditions, established by the DOE, which meet the standards of clarity, reasonableness and justifiability.

II. Upon researching and investigating all three BOE Policy 4540 requirements and mandates, I had a strong belief that the Senior Contract was perhaps developed in alignment with 4540's requirement #3; in view of the fact that the terms "meet other conditions" or "meet standards of clarity, reasonableness and justifiability" were enough of a "Catch 22 Type-Statements" that would provide the DOE a legitimate piece of language to create "other conditions and standards" in the formation of the Senior Contract agreement.

III. Hence, in realizing that BOE Policy 4540 Requirement #3 was the only possible or legal angle for the Senior Contract's existence, I decided to call various DOE agencies or departments in wanting to obtain either the minutes or source documents that substantiate the DOE and BOE's establishment of the "Senior Contract" agreement? I called the DOE Compliance Requirements branch -- more of a SPED compliance entity; CSSS -- was not able to assist me with my request; Information Resource Management branch -- could not help with my request; Curriculum and Instruction branch -- Director of this division could verify only the establishment of the Senior Project initiative, but not the Senior Contract agreement. I was told to call the Nanakuli Complex Area Superintendent, Lisa Delong, in which I did and she could not direct me to the agency who had or provide me with the source documents that validated the creation of the Senior Contract by the DOE or BOE. We had an interesting and productive discussion, but I was not satisfied with her attempt with redirecting me away from acquiring the documents that establishes the Senior Contract program. I called the BOE and talked with a staff member that referred to herself as Mrs. Lady. She politely listened to my concerns and also directed me to the DOE's Office of Curriculum and Instruction (Did that with Senior Project being established and not Senior Contract); Lady directed me to CAS (Did that with no results in my specific request for the source documents that establishes the Senior Contract

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agreement); Lady then gave me the email addresses of the BOE members in which I had asked her for the Leeward Representative. Lady said that the current BOE members are all At-Large positions with no specific area on Oahu being represented; Page 3 however, Lady said that there were 4 or 5 BOE members who represented Oahu. Anyhow, I decided to email all the new members in hopes of getting an opportunity to share my plight and concern regarding the Senior Contract dilemma and fiasco. IV. In making my final assessment of BOE Policy 4540, a very serious statement is made in this policy that I believe has been overlooked in terms of its significance which states: "Students shall be permitted to participate in Commencement exercises if the meet all three (3) requirements"! The word shall is defined as being a promise, determination or command which are extremely strong terms to use in any piece of narrative or policy language. If it is discovered that this Senior Contract was created without any public hearing or notice on the matter for the general public to express their concerns, I believe this revelation would constitute a purposeful violation of our constitutional rights for due process. V. Other major issues I have with the Senior Contract agreement supported and approved by the DOE in its current status are: 1. No standard or consistent format or application process throughout the State of Hawaii: a. Hilo High School; Castle High School; Kalaheo High School; Nanakuli High & Intermediate School; Baldwin High School and Waimea High School's (just to name a few) Senior Contracts are all written and presented in different formats; emphasizing different concerns and responsibilities; different effective dates on the contracts; inconsistent references as to citing BOE policy 4540 with some schools citing 4540.1a and b; ambiguous statements filled in contracts; etc. b. Certain schools making "Indemnification type clauses" with other schools "Declaring No Liability or Responsibility type of statements" on the signature pages. c. Certain schools list the names and involvement of their SCC or PTSA representatives with the creation of their Senior Contracts to include their signatures on the contract validating their participation in this policy process. Some schools list only School Personnel with the creation of their Senior Contracts with no Parent or Community involvement which speaks volumes in terms of the poor relationship the school has with the parents and community leaders or its residents. d. Parent meetings and presentations on the Senior Contracts are not standardized or consistently conveyed throughout the State; whereby, each school is not on the same page in terms of translating accurate data, policies or laws that govern the Senior Contract's legitimacy. Unlike the OIA policies that govern student athletes and school sports, the consistent presentations made by each school is monitored by OIA officials; Athletic Directors and its coaches in terms of quality assurance and accountability. 2. The ramifications and affects of "engaging Chapter 19

consequences with establishing and reinforcing the terms of the Senior Contract agreement have several confusing and unclear methods of applicability and severability issues. Based on my recent research of Chapter 19, it is clearly stated in the "Applicability" section that "no action relating to suspension, serious discipline, or restitution for vandalism of negligence shall be taken except in accordance with this chapter". Hence, applying a chapter 19 consequence to a Page 4 School created contract violation appears to have a double jeopardy type of affect on the student. Furthermore, in sorting out the due process or student's rights with presenting a defense to his/her case, although the student will be punished twice for violating the Senior Contract (loss of privilege to participate in the Graduation Commencement Ceremony) and Chapter 19 (suspension for three days) he or she will only be allowed one opportunity to assert any defense claim for both violations. *For example (True story): Senior student involved in a physical altercation with an adult that was on the school's campus. School accepts responsibility for lack of care or safety of its students in that this adult should not have been on the school's campus without signing into the office for a campus pass -- possible breach of school safety and security protocols. Student not suspended for fight, but because he violated the Senior Contract, the administrator enforced the "loss the privilege" consequence in that he could not participate in the Graduation Commencement Ceremony. Too much subjectivity given to Principal with very little due process or rights provided to student. This is the double-jeopardy type of results a Senior may experience for having a Contract that has not been reviewed or examined since its inception; therefore, reinforcing a program with very good intentions and results, but igniting a sense of no-confidence amongst the parent and community segments as it pertains to the school's leadership abilities with the Contract's viability. In conclusion, I hope this BOE Committee can engage more community input and take this issue outside of this building to gather more State-wide feedback and consensus as to the pros and cons; positives and negatives; good and bad; merits and demerits of this very important policy, practice and contract being imposed upon our students, parents and communities! Mahalo Nui Loa, Kimo Kelii, Community Leader & Education Advocate Nanakuli Hawaiian Homestead Community & the Waianae Coast

18	Student Achievement	Devika Follosco		Social Studies: Cutting back courses	<p>Social Studies courses are essential for providing young citizens and/or residents of this country a broad perspective and sense of their role of having rights AND responsibilities as citizens of this or any nation. It is shortsighted not to have specifically Civics classes as a requirement for graduation from high school. Students of all ages need to see themselves as part of a larger society, as a citizen who is expected to earn privileges and to be responsible for their roles as contributing members of their communities. The younger generation need to know that whatever choices they make for themselves, whatever they decide to do with their lives, will have affect the larger community in its own way. Civics classes teach citizenship -- the privileges AND responsibilities of being a citizen/resident living in this country. The Hawaiian word, kuleana, is a word which doesn't keep separate these two qualities, and with every privilege comes a responsibility; they are two sides of the same coin. Each member of society needs to learn, the earlier the better, that we each can add to the quality of our communities by the choices we make.</p>
19	Student Achievement	Namji Steinemann	East-West Center	Dropping social studies credit	<p>I am writing to ask the BOE to reconsider its decision to drop social studies credit from 4 to 3, eliminating 1 social studies elective credit requirement. While I understand that the social studies elective credits will continue to exist ON PAPER and that the rationale for dropping the required credit to 3 is to give students more choice in other elective credits, I cannot stress enough the importance of Social Studies, for it directly benefits the State of Hawaii by preparing our youth with the knowledge and skills they will need to ensure that Hawaii remains a vibrant place in our global economy and an important place for our students to work and live. Moreover, it strengthens the college- and career-readiness of our students by teaching them the literacy and numeracy skills that they will need to succeed in today's world. In short, Social Studies is an essential discipline for strengthening opportunities for our students. Therefore, I urge the BOE to support and reinforce Social Studies teaching and learning in our schools rather than cutting its credit requirements as is being proposed. Thank you, Namji Steinemann Director, AsiaPacificEd Program East-West Center</p>

20	Student Achievement	W R Welch	The World History Association	BOE proposed reduction of social studies elective requirement from 2018	<p>Dear Board Members, The World History Association is the largest organization of its kind representing the field of world history. The proposed elimination of one elective credit of social studies from graduation requirements is short-sighted and cuts out exactly what students need even MORE of in today's world—a vigorous social studies curriculum. We see time and again through many studies that social studies reinforce critical thinking, English, math, science, and other subjects, and are essential for a well-rounded education. Removing any social studies requirement cheats all these areas. Students in today's world cannot be thrust out into the world without knowing what that world is. As the global community gets closer, our keiki must have the knowledge and understanding of their place as individuals and members of the local, state, national and international environments. We must not deprive them of this understanding, lest we doom them to a life of less--less awareness, understanding, civic involvement and responsibility. We urge that the Board of Education absolutely not cut this requirement, but instead, look at increasing the social studies requirements for graduation. Thank you for your consideration on this matter. W R Welch Executive Director The World History Association</p>
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21	Student Achievement	Dr. Coop DeRenne	Depart of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science, UH-Manoa	Discussion/recommendation for Board Action on Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation & Commencement Policy	<p>I apologize for not testifying this morning. I am teaching two summer writing intensive courses. It has come to the attention of our physical education profession that the current Student Achievement Committee (SAC) may recommend to the BOE, a revision to our high school graduation requirements. Specifically, SAC may review the possibility of allowing participation in varsity and junior varsity athletics to be a substitute for the physical education graduation requirement. May I address this equivalency issue. I believe my educational and coaching parallel careers qualifies me to address this important issue. My careers expand 42 years as a physical educator at the elementary, secondary, and university levels; and over 20 years as a former high school and university coach, including 12 years as a former UH assistant baseball coach. Physical Education and coaching of athletes are not equivalent for two main reasons. The two reasons are as follows: (1) the national standards of these two professions are uniquely different, and (2) the employment qualifications of physical educators and coaches are drastically different. First, physical education like all Hawaii state high school courses are standard-based. As such, physical educators must teach, and most importantly, assess their respective courses according to our six national standards developed by our National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). These six standards and their respective sub-elements are as follows: (1) Scientific and Theoretical Knowledge; (2) Skill and Fitness Based Competence; (3) Planning and Implementation; (4) Instructional Delivery and Management; (5) Impact on Student Learning; and (6) Professionalism. The two main goals of the physical educator are to implement these standards into the state curriculum, and to regularly and formally assess the curricular content in order to produce student learning outcomes. In addition, this implementation and assessment processes lead to teacher accountability for the BOE, DOE personnel, schools, parents, and students. In contrast, NASPES' 40 National Standards for Athletic Coaches lie within the eight following domains: (1) Injuries; (2) Risk Management; (3) Growth, Development and Learning; (4) Training, Conditioning and Nutrition, (5) Social/psychological Aspects of Coaching; (6) Tactics and Strategies; (7) Teaching and Administration; and (8) Professional Preparation and Development. These domains do have some similar content with the physical education standards; but reviewed as a whole, the domains' content is very different from the physical education content. Second, the physical educator is a true professional. He/she must have a college degree and pass a national licensure examination within his/her chosen field. In contrast, Hawaii's high school coaches are not required to have a college degree. They are required to pass a national certification exam, but it is a generalized exam lacking specific sport content. This certification examination and process is weak, in comparison, to the</p>
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22	Student Achievement	Maya Soetoro Ng		BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>Aloha esteemed Chairperson, Vice Chair, and BOE Members. I am writing to you regarding Board Policy 4540, the "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy. It is my understanding that you are proposing a change to the minimum requirement for social studies from 4 credits to 3 credits. I know that you have to make hard choices and tough decisions, and some electives are of enormous importance to a well-rounded education, but I feel very strongly that we cannot begin to sacrifice social studies for electives of uncertain value (or for anything else for that matter). I have been a social studies teacher for fifteen years and there are numerous reasons why I think social studies is important. Through social studies, students learn about themselves, about what they've inherited and what came before and, in learning all this, they develop reverence, appreciation, and pride. Students learn about their world and come to understand the global interconnectedness that is an unavoidable part of their present and future. Through social studies, students learn to empathize and develop a sense of social responsibility and, in learning this, they become benevolent community members and begin lives of service and lifetime action. Students learn about economic systems and come closer to figuring out how to stimulate the economy and find new roads to economic productivity and prosperity. Students come to know their Constitution and, in learning the language of the law, students begin to consider their rights, responsibilities, and issues of social justice. Through social studies, students learn about the depths to which human beings can fall as well as the heights to which they can rise and, in learning this, they figure out how to avoid following the paths of the former and become inspired by examples the latter. Through social studies, students problem solve and connect school with society. Students learn geography so that their vision and world don't become too narrow and their path predictable. As students philosophize and think critically, their logic becomes more sophisticated. Students learn how to negotiate between ideas and people; they learn to deliberate and mediate, as well as persuade. There is no subject more important and worthy of full recognition, placement, and support in our public schools. Please support social studies education and find another way to accomplish what you desire.</p> <p>Respectfully, Maya Soetoro</p>
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23	Student Achievement	Angela Meixell	University of Hawaii	Board policy 4540,High School Graduation and Commencement Policy	I am the State Director for Career and Technical Education, and I am testifying in support of the Superintendents proposed revisions to the graduation requirements in Board Policy 4540. We are particularly pleased with the flexibility and opportunity provided by the increase in elective credits. I would like to ask you to associate elective credits with opportunity. We have often seen elective credits as an opportunity for balance, even respite, from core courses. They do provide that, but much more. Elective credits also provide an opportunity for students to explore passions and aptitudes and make choices that will help them choose a pathway for their future. With today's Career and Technical Education programs of study, based on rigorous standards developed in collaboration with employers, elective credits allow students the opportunity to begin in high school to build a foundation that will serve them in their future. careers. So I ask you to think of elective credits as "opportunity credits" and support the revised graduation requirement proposal that includes 7 elective credits. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.
24	Student Achievement	Wally Wake	Hawaii resident/grandparent	4th year social studies credit	I find it amazing that our newly appointed Board of Education would seek to delete a year of vital social studies curriculum in the face of national publicity about American's lack of understanding and knowledge about the history of this country. The other courses offered under social studies such as psychology, sociology, and economics prepare high school students for the practical application of life skills. I urge the Board to retain the 4th year requirement of social studies for high school graduates. Why was this proposal not made known earlier? Why the last minute announcement?

25	Student Achievement	Renee Adams	private individual	BOE proposed amendments to Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy"	<p>Aloha mai kakou apau. My name is Renee Adams and I believe in Hawaii's public schools. I went to Manoa Elementary, Stevenson Intermediate, and Roosevelt High School. I received a Bachelor's in Education from the University of Hawaii Manoa, and in May, an online Masters in Education in Educational Technology from the University of Hawaii Manoa. I have been a public school teacher in secondary social studies for over 30 years, from Oahu's leeward coast to Lahaina and the slopes of Haleakala on Maui. I cannot imagine teaching in a private school. My three children only attended public schools. So I come before you today from the na hono a 'o Pi'ilani, the island of Maui, as a parent, an educator, and a citizen intensely vested in the system you have been entrusted to oversee. While I agree with the first section of the department's argument for amending Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy," that states that "students will need more knowledge and communication skills to be prepared for the changing global economy based on proficiency determined by college and career standards," I find the second section to be both contradictory and confusing. It states, "the decrease in the number of credits and core content course credits required for graduation will allow for flexibility in course options and opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. In addition, the department is proposing that the opportunity for 'proficiency equivalent' coursework credit be stated explicitly in the policy, to allow continued and robust development of alternatives." I strongly disagree that it is necessary to decrease the number of credits and core content credits in order to allow for flexibility in course options and opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Students currently enjoy flexibility in course options with five or six elective choices within the current options. To take a required social studies credit and convert this to an elective credit is absolutely a lessening of expectations. Until the "robust development of alternatives" has been established to a measurable degree, wouldn't this be putting the horse before the cart here? Let's also take a look at the Education implications in section (i) of the amendment. I fail to see a connection between the stated implications and the change requested: First, "students possess the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to contribute positively and to compete in a global society." Second, "students possess competencies aligned of internationally benchmarked common core standards and assessments Next, the DOE will develop structures to support student learning and multiple opportunities for demonstrating proficiency? The implications are inherently logical and beneficial to learners. Yet the decrease in social studies credit to increase elective credit contradicts these stated intentions. Until the development of robust alternatives becomes much more than words, this amendment does indeed decrease the rigor of a public school education. Earlier this month I participated in the Teaching American History Grant</p>
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				<p>2011 Summer Institute for social studies teachers. Among other learning opportunities, I met and listened to Carlotta Walls LaNier, one of the Little Rock Nine who required a military escort in order practice her right to attend Central High School in Arkansas. She reminded us all that it has been over 50 years, and our work is not done. Here in Hawaii, our educational system is living proof. As we have moved from a time when Hawaiians were physically punished for speaking Hawaiian in school, to a double standard “English standard” system, as we remember what happened to our students before the Felix decree, think about the role of social studies education has played historically in Hawaii. Are we done? Can we afford to give up the assurance that every learner in our public schools already has the basic understandings to take on the challenges they will inevitably face in a democracy? I have to be speaking to the choir. Each one of you on this committee is here because of your understanding and commitment to this responsibility. You are living testaments to social studies education. Or you would not be here. From where did that arise? I'd like to say it had its beginnings in your social studies classes. Just the fact that you were required to take it for four years firmly underscored its importance to you as a student. In an article from the National Council for the Social Studies publication Connected, US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently referred to research that indicates “access to a challenging high school curriculum has a greater impact on whether a student will earn a four-year college degree than his or her high school test scores, class rank, or grades.” He goes on to state, “The real objective is not to get students to score well on myriad bubble tests of content knowledge, but to help them all to become engaged and thinking citizens who are prepared for college and careers. The social studies play a critical role in creating civically competent young people who make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good and who contribute to an increasingly diverse, but interdependent world.” [The entire article has been submitted separately as an electronic document.] I became a teacher to teach social studies - so that our keiki would learn to think critically and creatively, and stand up for a future that promises hope, fairness, and equality for all the people who choose to call this home. Change is occurring today at a rate that leaves us to only guess at the future for which we are trying to prepare our children. Social studies education is a critical key that ensures they will be able to uphold the democratic ideals that are held by our society. You and I know from history and our personal experiences, it doesn't happen by itself. Please do not cut a social studies credit from the graduation credit requirements and replace it with an elective. Mahalo nui. Aloha.</p>
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26	Student Achievement	Kathy Bryant	HE'E	Item IV and V	<p>HE'E Coalition 4348 Waiialae Ave., Suite 322 Honolulu, HI 96816 HI 96816 Tel: 808-926-1530 Fax: 808-926-1533 www.HEECoalition.org Board of Education Student Achievement Committee June 21, 2011 Agenda Item: IV. DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION ON THE BOE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE CHARTER V. DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION ON THE BOE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS OF ENGAGEMENT Dear Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, Committee Chair, Keith Amemiya, Committee Vice Chairperson and Committee Members: Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," is a statewide coalition of diverse stakeholders committed to working collaboratively to identify opportunities to improve public education in Hawai'i. HE'E seeks to be the focal point for community and parent engagement while serving as a public resource for educational policy. One of our working groups is looking at parent and community engagement in schools. The working group, in response to SCR 145, is reviewing the DOE parent Involvement Policy 2403 and developing metrics to better assess parent involvement and student achievement. The Working Group is reviewing national research on parent engagement policies to compare with our policy and make any amendments. In addition, the working group is looking at specific metrics to evaluate our parent involvement policy so that parents and principals can better assess the effectiveness of parent engagement and student achievement. We would like to be involved with the Student Achievement Committee's efforts and would be willing to support your efforts in any way possible. Please let us know the process and timeframe to submit comments and recommendations on this issue. Sincerely, Cheri Nakamura HE'E Coalition Director BOE Policy 2403</p> <p>PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT The Board of Education recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family during the entire period the child spends in school. To support the goal of the Department of Education (Department) to educate all students effectively, schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. Although parents are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they share the schools' commitment in the educational success of their children. The Department and its schools, in collaboration with parents, shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families. To this end, the Board of Education supports the Department in the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of parent involvement programs in each school. The implementation will involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles, including input in decision-making processes and practices. The parent involvement program will be comprehensive and coordinated in nature. It will include, but not be limited to, the following components of</p>
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				<p>successful parent involvement programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.• Responsible parenting is promoted and supported.• Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning, including successful achievement of the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards.• Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.• Parents are partners in the decisions that affect children and families.• Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning. <p>The Department shall implement administrative guidelines that support professional development opportunities for staff members to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies. The Department recognizes the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. Engaging parents is essential to improved student achievement and to realize the Vision of a Public School Graduate. Approved: 05/03/01; Revised: 09/18/03</p>
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27	Student Achievement	Danielle Espiritu	DOE	Proposed Ammendments BP 4540	<p>Dear Committee, I would respectfully like to express my opposition to the Proposed Amendment to the Board of Education Policy 4540 “High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy,” which will reduce the number of Social Studies credits required for graduation. Many believe that Social Studies education is restricted to historical fact and the memorization of people, events, and dates. This cannot be further from the truth. While part of Social Studies curriculum does include History, it has roots in Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Economics, and Political Science. We, as Social Studies teachers, teach the content standards while drawing on themes rooted in these larger fields. Thus, while learning about the Overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai’i, my 7th graders were able track how various events influence one another and to analyze an event from multiple perspectives in order to see how individuals’ culture and background shaped their actions. They looked at the connectedness of business interests and politics and the political interaction of nations during this time. This is what Social Studies curriculum is all about. It allows students to explore people, events, and issues, both past and present, to learn skills and lessons that will help them to make more sound decisions as invested citizens. The major goals of Social Studies curriculum are not only to get our students to a place where they can question the world around them, but also to get them invested enough to make it better. One argument in support of the committee’s proposal to reduce the number of required Social Studies credits stated, “students will need more knowledge and communication skills to be prepared for the changing global economy based on proficiency determined by college and career standards.” Reducing Social Studies requirements goes against this goal of preparing students for college and career standards, as Social Studies courses would be a space where students learn to hone their research and inquiry skills, both of which students will need in order to be successful in both college and career fields. In addition, Social Studies does not work in isolation of other core subjects, such as Math and Science. Instead, Social Studies classes allow students to apply their skills of data collection & analysis to real world situations, creating more opportunities for higher-order thinking and for knowledge retention. Without these courses, students may not learn to apply these essential skills to issues, such as homelessness and poverty, which affect our communities and our world. If students are not exposed to these topics, how can they learn the analytical skills they need to problem-solve in the work force? I agree with the committee that “increased credits do not ensure rigor” and that lessening credits does not necessarily mean we are lessening the expectations we have of our students. However, how can we as educators ensure that all of our students will learn to analyze and evaluate situations and to create tangible solutions to social issues, if it is not required of all of them? If Social Studies</p>
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28	Student Achievement	Valerie Okihara	Kids Voting Hawaii	Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation & Commencement Policy"	<p>June 20, 2011 Ms. Cheryl Lapenui, Chairperson and Members of the Student Achievement Committee: I am opposed to reducing the Social Studies requirements for graduation from four credits to three. One of the main goals of education is to prepare students to be responsible citizens in a democracy and a global society. Not everyone will need advanced mathematics and science in their daily lives but all will be members of society needing to know how to make responsible decisions. Basic skills help students make a living. The knowledge and skills gained in Social Studies can help them make life better for themselves and others. The only content area which addresses social and world issues is Social Studies. Students apply knowledge and skills to real-life situations. History helps them understand why things are the way they are. Critical thinking and cooperative/collaborative skills help students solve problems, make decisions, plan and implement actions. In addition, the technological world of the 21st century is inundated by information via the media and the internet. Students must learn to distinguish facts, opinions, and propaganda. Through Social Studies, students are not only prepared for citizenship but can be active participants in democracy. There is much to learn in the first three years of required Social Studies courses and often little time to do in-depth research and problem-solving. The fourth year gives students the opportunity to use knowledge and skills gained. I strongly urge you to support the current graduation requirement of four credits in Social Studies and to oppose a reduction to three credits. Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony. Valerie Okihara Retired D.O.E. Principal & Social Studies Teacher</p>
29	Student Achievement	Julie Patten	Hawaii State Teachers Association	Board Policy 4540 High School Graduation and Commencement Policy	<p>Testimony in opposition to removal of the 4th Social Studies credit. My name is Julie Patten, I am the Leeward Chapter President of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. I am also a public school teacher at Ma'ili Elementary on the Leeward coast. I have been teaching for 26 years. In that time I have seen the decline in the teaching of humanities. At the elementary level this means, art, music, social studies, economics, science, etc. It has recently been in the media that our students do not know historical events or geography concepts. Now the Board of Education for the State of Hawaii wants to remove the 4th Social Studies credit. How will this help our students to be prepared for the future? How will this improve our students chances in the global marketplace? How will this better prepare our students to be productive members of society? It will not do any of these things. It will only further disadvantage our promising young people and lower our educational standards. How will students meet critical benchmarks of the Hawaii State Standards if these classes are not even offered? As a strong union leader it will also lead to fewer course offerings for teachers to teach. Which of these subjects are not important in the world today, economics, psychology, sociology, pacific island studies? Please reconsider this seemingly small change that could have huge negative impact on Hawaii's students and teachers. Mahalo Julie Patten</p>

30	Student Achievement	Lisa Hayashi	Kalani High School	High School Graduation and Commencement Policy	<p>Done are the days where students sit down, memorize dates, facts, and people. Today, the Social Studies curriculum has become much more than that. Problem based learning, applying math and science skills, learning civic responsibilities, understanding culture, learning about tolerance, is just a glimpse of what occurs in many of the Social Studies classroom. The Department of Education’s vision of a high school graduate is to, “Possess the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to contribute positively and competes in a global society; Exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and Pursue post-secondary education and or careers.” These goals are directly tied to the goals of the Social Studies curriculum. We not only expose students to other cultures around the world, but we critically examine their past, their present, and the impact of globalization. The more these students learn, read, and write, study about others, the more informed they would be when they move out into the world. Through Social Studies, we learn, analyze, and break apart the Constitution, the rights of American citizens, the rights of other citizens in other countries, etc., to ensure that our future generations will not be ignorant or passive when it comes to the future leaders and laws of our own country. When students take up Social Studies for their fourth year in high school, they challenge themselves and expose themselves to college-style courses such as Economics or Psychology. It helps them prepare for those that are in pursuit of a post-secondary education to courses that are offered in college. The purpose of decreasing the number of credits: “allow for flexibility in course options and opportunities to demonstrate proficiency” (pg. 3 Discussion/Recommendation for Board Action on Proposed Amendments to Board of Education Policy 4540, June 21, 2011), seems to go against the vision and goals stated by Hawaii’s Department of Education, University of Hawaii, the Governor, and the U.S. Department of Education. Keeping up rigorous curriculum and having graduates prepared for both college and the workforce in a global society stresses just how valuable the Social Studies curriculum would be to the students of Hawaii. I taught high school seniors for the first time this year. Many of them would not have taken Economics and Psychology if it was not a required course. They would have jumped at the opportunity to take another course that required fewer presentations, fewer essay writing, and fewer reading requirements. Imagine being a high school senior and being told that they have the freedom to take another elective. How many do you think would sign up for course knowing that it’s challenging or requires more “work” out of them? Many students sign up to take Running Start courses at KCC and expose themselves to college level courses whether it be Psychology or History 151. How many high school students do you think would be continued to be motivated to take Running Start courses if they only needed to complete 3 credits of Social Studies? The word “senioritis” was not invented without reason. Just like parents set rules and expectations for their children, we need to continue setting our expectations for graduation that align with the goals stated above.</p>
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31	Student Achievement	Keith Hamada		DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>Re: Testimony opposing removal of the 4th Social Studies credit. Chair Lupenui and Members of the Student Achievement Committee: My name is Keith Hamada and I strongly oppose removing the 4th social studies credit as part of the graduation requirement for public school students in the State of Hawaii. I am currently a social studies teacher at Kapolei High School. I have trouble understanding why topics such as financial literacy, politics, and critical thinking would not be important enough to be required in the State of Hawaii, if more people understood economics and finance perhaps we would not be in the trouble we are in now. We, the teachers, will tell the students that these things are important, but if you take away the 4th credit requirement you will be telling them that it may be important but not so important that they need to learn about them. I know that many people believe that if a class is worth while and useful for a students future they would certainly take that class. However, I live in the real world and I understand that teenagers do not always do what is best for them. If they did, parents would have a much easier job. I understand that giving students a wide selection of classes to choose from looks like a great idea but in reality, children are in school to learn what they need to learn, to be successful in their future pursuits. How many people would have taken an economics class in high school if it didn't fulfill a requirement. Economics doesn't sound fun, but it is extremely important. Where else would someone learn to be financially literate? They could learn about it in college but as we know, not all people go to college. The first three years in High school social studies, focuses on History, expect for one semester of Participation in Democracy. It is the forth year where students receive the opportunity to take a social studies elective. If the 4th year credit requirement is removed it may mean the end of elective social studies classes in the smaller schools. If a economics, sociology, or psychology class was up against a free non instructional period what would the student choose? A free period is a strong enticement for a senior in high school. When you were that age what would you have chosen; a class that was academically rigorous that you probably didn't know was important or a free period. I respectfully urge that the Board of Education maintain the 4 credit social studies requirement.</p>
32	Student Achievement	Malialina Derden		High School Graduation and Commencement Policy 4540 (Reduction of Social Studies Credits)	<p>History/social studies promotes critical thinking and develops the ability to make connections between the past and present, its a way for students to form their own opinions about how the world has and will work. This subject is very important because if students don't learn how to use critical thinking, if students don't learn how to analyze a perdicament then they will lose the ability to think for themselves.</p>

33	Student Achievement	Kyle Cabellero	Waiakea High School	ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY	"ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY." Cutting mandatory Social Studies credits from 4 to 3 provides no beneficial consequences. It is vital to keep things as the status quo because with intelligence already declining in the U.S., there is no logic in cutting required credits. This is indirectly conveying a negative message to the youth of today. What purpose does this serve? Conservation of resources in the education department? With all that is occurring with our country, there are more concerning matters that deserve the attention of the government. For example, our nation's government continues to waste scarce resources on conflicts that never involved our country to begin with. Instead of cutting funds and affecting the future of this nation, search for other solutions. Non-mandatory social studies subjects such as sociology and psychology are important. These classes are important because they help in refining specific skills for careers in their future. It gives access to more possibilities and broadens knowledge. Before my senior year in high school, knowing that four credits were required for graduation I signed up for both of those classes. It resulted in being an advantageous decision, with college being on the horizon I've selected my declared major as psychology stemming from my experience while taking sociology and psychology. Honestly, if social studies required only 3 credits, I would never have taken psychology or sociology thus altering my future. In short, cutting the required amount of credits for social studies only brings forth negative consequences with no benefits for the children, who have the most important say when making decisions regarding our education. Sincerely, Kyle Cabellero Waiakea High School Graduate of 2011
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34	Student Achievement	Jason Duncan	Hawaii Department of Education - Kapolei Middle School	Social Studies High School Elective Requirements	<p>Aloha Board of Education Student Achievement Committee, I am writing to express my disapproval and disappointment with the Hawaii Department of Education's proposal to nullify the elective requirement for Social Studies. As a firm believer in a well-rounded education I believe these actions will be detrimental to the long-term educational development and maturity of our student population. For the past 7 years I have been an 8th grade American History and Government teacher in Hawaii's Leeward district. Every year my students come to me with seemingly minimal understanding of the foundational principles and history of the United States of America. At the beginning of every year I find myself needing to review the most basic information that should have been addressed in 5th grade Social Studies standards/benchmarks such as the principles embedded in the Declaration of Independence. Why? Very likely this information has been glossed over because of the unhealthy focus on subpar approaches to improving student scores on the Hawaii State Assessment. This approach to "putting Social Studies in the back seat" is not only felt as a American History and Government teacher but directly seen with the allocation of time and resources my school spends focusing on Math and English. The whole idealistic push for truly interdisciplinary work is put aside when a school and district develops and unhealthy obsession with test scores. As a result, not only are Hawaii's Keiki not receiving a holistic education they are also losing a real sense of our history as a state and a nation. More importantly, they are not recognizing how this knowledge and wisdom is transferred into active civic participation. For example, Hawaii has the lowest voter turnout in the whole nation and the numbers are horrifically low for young adults 18-24. I see one of my primary goals as a Social Studies educator to empower students with the knowledge and skills to make a difference in their community. Using excellent civic education resources like Project Citizen and Kids Voting I have been able establish real world connections for my students. Just recently my students for the culmination of the Project Citizen process did the most amazing and inspiring presentation called a simulated congressional hearing I have ever seen by students in my life. In their presentation they identified their problem with school lunch, examined alternative policies, created their own class policy, and developed an action plan to solve the problem. A panel of judges made up of my principal, local legislators, and heads of community organizations challenged them with EXTREMELY difficult questions. I had to stop the audience of 300+ students, parents, teachers, and staff from roaring with applause after each insightful response. All 135 of my student stood on stage let their VOICE BE HEARD with all-inclusive pride. It was TRULY inspiring! Furthermore, it was a clear example of how standards/benchmarks in Social Studies, Math, and English can be infused to create a meaningful learning experience. Board of</p>
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					<p>Education Student Achievement members I ask you to look deeply at this issue and think about not only the message you are sending to our children but also the long term impacts of this possible decision. I would suggest that instead of removing the Social Studies elective requirement that you challenge teachers and schools to establish more real world connections, interdisciplinary opportunities, and authentic learning experiences. Also, focus on programs and strategies that promotes excellence among our student population like History Day, Mock Trial, We The People, Project Citizen, Kids Voting, and Hawaii Spech League. The future of Hawaii depends on an informed, engaged, and most of all empowered electorate! Mahalo for your time and consideration.</p>
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35	Student Achievement	Dean Kai	DoE	Proposed Amendments to Board of Education Policy 4540	<p>Dear Mrs. Chairwoman, In regards to the memorandum addressing the Discussion / Recommendation for Board Action on Proposed Amendments to Board of Education Policy 4540 "High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy" dated June 21, 2011, I submit the following in opposition to the cited recommendation: Paragraph 4, "Discussion", of the memorandum states, "The Department of Education (DOE) is committed to the vision of the public school graduate who will ...possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and competes in a global society; exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship..."</p> <p>The memorandum continues by stating, "The recommendation... also supports the implementation of the Common Core State Standards that are aligned with college and work expectations; include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order skills; informed by top-performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society..."</p> <p>The proposal seeks to achieve these ambitious goals by allowing for a "decrease in the number of credits and core content course credits," from the current requirement of four credits to three credits. Essentially this is a degradation of the knowledge and skills base of our students that is supposedly being reinforced. As a veteran of our nation's army, I was taught that in order to be triumphant, one needs to "train how you fight." In other words, the training that one receives and participates in, before being ultimately put to the test, needs to be as realistic and relevant as possible to ensure success. This adage applies equally well to students preparing for life. If those of us whom are charged with preparing them for adult life do not challenge each and every single one of our next generation with an education that is both realistic and relevant, we are setting these students up for abject failure in the "real world." Please allow me to explain. The social studies, specifically the content which deals directly with Hawaiian, American and World histories, are more than what is often erroneously portrayed as the regurgitation of dusty, outmoded and irrelevant facts. As a social studies professor so poignantly clarified for me, "As a social studies teacher, do not teach your students meaningless dates and pointless facts. Teach them the value of perspective and give them the ability to think with a critical eye." Without the social studies, how can we truly expect our students to "possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and compete in a global society?" Without Participation in Democracy (US Civics), how can our students, in a practical learning environment "exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?" Without United States history, how can our students be expected to know what their rights and responsibilities under the Constitution are? How can our children be expected to prepare themselves to be contributors and leaders of the future if they do not know the origins from whence</p>
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				<p>they came? The state directs our students to become idyllic and dynamic citizens, yet the Board of Education is proposing that the future of our state do this without adequate preparation. If we cut the number of credits that students are to achieve in the area of social studies, we are inadequately preparing our children for their future, setting them up for failure in the global arena. In what class are students able to “include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order skills?” Most certainly, in World History class, students are able to apply what they learn in class, and to combine that knowledge with their varied, individual life experiences and perspectives in a “higher-order” fashion to develop solutions to real-world issues challenging our society as a part of the larger, global community. My World History students were challenged on a daily basis to step outside of their comfort zones, and to view the world through “the other guys” lens. By understanding, not necessarily agreeing with or condoning the actions of the opposing viewpoint, my students were able to come up with practical and sound solutions to any number of issues to include war / conflict, economy, social welfare, etc. The understanding that other cultures have practices that are sometimes completely foreign to what we accept as the norm, and vice versa, allowed my students to anticipate potential points of conflict, prepare accordingly and to make adjustments in the problem solving process and to achieve a significant degree of success in terms of understanding the complexity of the modern, global society within which we all live. I challenge anyone to find another content area that will allow students a comparable opportunity to prepare them “...to succeed in our global economy and society...” Mrs. Chairwoman and members of the Student Achievement Committee, it is because of these reasons, and many more, that I respectfully ask for the Board of Education to reconsider implementation of Proposed Amendments to Board of Education Policy 4540 “High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy.” My students learned that there is intrinsic value to learning about the past, and in doing so, to use that knowledge as a way to effectively plan for our future. If we do not allow our children to learn about our past, we will most certainly doom ourselves to repeat these often dire and costly mistakes again. At the risk of sounding banal, Albert Einstein noted that insanity is doing the same thing again and again while expecting different results. Let our generation not be guilty of insanity by expecting our children to become what they cannot because they were not given the means to achieve what they could not. Thank you for your time in consideration of this request. Respectfully, Dean C. Kai</p>
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36	Student Achievement	Patricia Halagao		BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Student Achievement Committee, My name is Patricia Halagao and I am a Professor at the College of Education at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. I specialize in the area of social studies and multicultural education. I'm not writing this testimony in an official capacity of the University, but rather I am writing from the perspective as an educator - a teacher for the past 20 years. I am in opposition to the proposed amendments to reduce the social studies requirements. The DOE has stated that its vision of the public school graduate as one who will "possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and competes in a global society" and one who will "exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship." In other words, we want our schools to produce someone who will contribute to a global society, one who exercises her rights as a citizen. If this is truly our vision, then reducing the social studies credits will actually undermine the very purpose we are trying to achieve. Under this proposal, the specific disciplines that will suffer the most will be courses like Asian studies, ethnic studies, global studies, psychology, current problems, geography, and economics. These are the courses that enable students to deepen their understanding of the world around them. These are where students engage in real-world issues and current events, learn about the national economy, the global economy and understand diversity and multiculturalism in our own backyard. The fact that I am writing this testimony is exercising my free speech rights and are lessons and skills that I learned in social studies. The fact that you are serving on this board is a function of a democracy and what we learned in social studies. Social studies is all around us and we need to give it the space and time it deserves. I respectfully urge you to reject the DOE's recommendation to reduce the number of social studies credits. Thank you.</p>
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37	Student Achievement	Yvette L. Bright-Poai	Waiakea High School	"ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY."	"ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY." As a social studies teacher of 27 years, I find it disturbing that, again, the social studies is devalued in the scheme of graduation requirements. To reduce the current requirement of 4 credits to 3 credits is to label the social studies electives as unnecessary. There is no question that our students need history and civics in order to understand our society. But it is usually forgotten that the social studies electives delve into specialty studies in social science, geography and international studies. The last 7 years at Waiakea High School have truly been exciting. As the social studies component in the Public and Human Services Academy, I have the opportunity to work with other disciplines to bring meaningful, rigorous lessons and units to our students. Senior and junior level social studies courses are integrated with Language Arts. In my case, it allows for psychology and sociology to find its place beside and within other subject areas. It is finally a chance to bring relevance to subject matter that would otherwise "stand alone". Let us not forget that our goal, our duty, is to prepare our children to be productive citizens of society, a global society. Our children need to understand the value of people unlike themselves. Our children need to gain knowledge of global economies, cultures, and belief systems. Our children need to better understand themselves to understand others. Our students need social studies. Sincerely, Yvette L. Bright-Poai Waiakea High School Social Studies teacher
38	Student Achievement	Yannabah Lewis	Kealakehe High School	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	I'm submitting testimony in support of maintaining the current graduation requirement of 4.0 social studies credits. As a secondary public school teacher of almost 20 years, I believe it's imperative to include the current requirement of one semester of Participation in a Democracy (as one of the first 3 social studies credits). In particular, this requirement speaks to the DOE vision of the public school graduate who will: •Possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and competes in a global society; •Exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship Additionally, the 4th social studies credit (for example: psychology, sociology, Pacific Island cultures, Hawaiian studies) allows students to more deeply explore and prepare to "realize their individual goals and aspirations." If anything, I would advocate in this day and age of heavy emphasis on mathematics and English, that more attention is needed to ensure a well-rounded education. In the words of one of our 2010 graduates "Aside from all the emphasis that we have on H.S.A. scores, reading, math, science, I feel like ethics (a current general social studies elective credit) is really important to be included in an educational system. It really prepares the students for going out into the world and being a socially capable adult that can make good decisions and has a sense of values and their own personal ethics that they will use to build their life." Thank you for your consideration, Yannabah Lewis 2009 Presidential Awardee for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching

39	Student Achievement	Carol Emerson	Retired educator/Alpha Delta Kappa Organization for Women Educators/Kids Voting Hawaii supporter	Student Achievement: No elective social studies credit required for students from 2018 on	<p>In the Race to the Top's five-point plan, #1 is "tying high-quality college- and career-ready standards and assessments to a statewide curriculum." The Social Studies/Social Sciences electives presently available for high school seniors definitely address that focus. As a culmination of all students' high school education, these courses encourage further analysis, interpretation, and application of concepts and precepts previously learned. They also provide students with opportunities to enhance their reading, writing, and oral communication skills via economics, geography, Hawaiian/Polynesian/Asian/European studies, ethnic studies, psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, humanities, and especially Advanced Placement courses - thus emphasizing the "high-quality college- and career-ready standards" deemed as crucial in our state's Race to the Top. These elective courses also promote the global/cultural awareness necessary to help these young adults understand these turbulent times and address contemporary issues with educated dialogue as responsible citizens of Hawaii and the world at large. Finally, the nationally recognized "new" 3 R's of education - Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships - are also being addressed via the 4th year electives, with seniors being given additional and varied opportunities to become engaged in meaningful activities and projects in depth, utilizing the skills and concepts introduced in previous grades.</p>
40	Student Achievement	Dr. Amber Makaiau	Department of Education, Kailua High School	Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy"	<p>Dear BOE Student Achievement Committee Members, PLEASE DO NOT REDUCE THE FOUR REQUIRED SOCIAL STUDIES CREDITS FOR GRADUATION TO THREE. The proposal to reduce the number of required social studies credits from four down to three would lessen the rigor and relevance of the Department of Education's curricular requirements for graduation. Social studies courses teach students how to think critically as members of a democratic society. The proposed social studies credit reduction would adversely affect Hawaii's communities. Social studies classes, like the electives that will be cut under the proposal, provide students with the skills they need to be happy, healthy and productive members of society. For example, at Kailua High School, under the current graduation requirements, Ethnic Studies is a mandatory class for all incoming ninth graders. Funded under a grant from the Center for Disease Control, Ethnic Studies is a violence prevention initiative that was created by the Asian Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center and teachers from the Department of Education who found this social studies elective to be the ideal platform for teaching students about diversity, empathy and prejudice reduction. Since the course's implementation it has had profound and positive impact on the culture of Kailua High School, and the two communities of Kailua and Waimanalo that the school services. It has also received national recognition, and highlights Hawaii's public school system as a leader in tolerance education. By eliminating the four social studies credits required for graduation important programs like this would not continue. If you have you further questions please contact me. I have a lot more to say.</p>

41	Student Achievement	Peter Wagner	social studies teacher	Action on Board Policy 4540 "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy"	<p>My name is Peter Wagner and I'm a social studies teacher at Waiakea Intermediate School in Hilo. I was terribly disappointed to discover that the Board of Education was discussing the idea of dropping one of the social studies requirements for graduation. I believe social studies is an important subject for developing students into future citizens. There are several reasons for this. First of all, social studies makes students look for patterns, analyze data, and then reach rational decisions. Decisions that will help them to make informed conclusions as citizens. The second reason I believe social studies is important is because it allows students to become tolerant of other cultures and to understand the reason why people act the way they do. Social studies also helps people to become sensitive to other cultures as well. A third reason I believe social studies to be important is because it allows students to learn from the mistakes of others. Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it. In conclusion, I hope you do not drop a year of social studies as a graduation requirement. It would be a detriment to our youth as well as to our future.</p> <p>Sincerely, Peter Wagner</p>
42	Student Achievement	Patricia Young		4th year Social Studies credit	<p>I am a Social Studies teacher at Kapolei High school and I understand that the Board of Education is considering eliminating the fourth year of Social Studies in our public schools. I truly believe that would be a big mistake and a disservice to Hawaii's youth. The Social Studies courses that are offered for seniors are the most relevant since they are so near to participating in society in a variety of ways. This is when they would be exposed and introduced to topics such as Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Global Studies, etc. Please consider the fact that these students need to be aware of these topics in order to be successful in such a diverse world and may not have the chance to if the 4th year Social Studies credit is eliminated. Thank you in advance for considering my testimony.</p>

43	Student Achievement	Alan Suzuki		Action on Board Policy 4540 "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy"	<p>Board of Education: We strongly encourage the Board to keep the number of required Social Studies credits needed for high school graduation at 4 and NOT lower it to 3. Our son, Alan Kenji Suzuki, is currently a senior at the University of Miami in Florida and has been on the Dean's List for the last 4 semesters. He is a 2008 Summa Cum Laude graduate of Waiakea High School in Hilo and his success in college and high school is directly attributed to not only his Social Studies teacher for 3 years, Mrs. Pam King, but also the rigors of her program. This current generation will be the first in U.S. history to be less educated than the previous generation. On Newsweek's list of the 100 Best Countries in the World, the U.S.A. is ranked No. 11. Now that the president is turning his attention to improving education, Obama's education secretary, Arne Duncan, said recently that "we've flatlined while other countries have passed us by," referring to another grim milestone: a report by the College Board that showed an alarming decline in young American adults who have completed college; once a global leader, the U.S. now ranks 12th in the world by that measure. Arne Duncan also warned that the country that out-educates us today will out-compete us tomorrow. A recent study by McKinsey & Co. showed that the growing gaps in educational achievement between the U.S. and other leading nations "impose the economic equivalent of a permanent national recession - one substantially larger than the deep recession we are currently experiencing." In our opinion, we are long overdue in raising our educational standards and eliminating one Social Studies credit from the core requirement and replacing it with a Career & Technical elective would be a drastic step backwards. We believe that Social Studies courses offer the ideal venue for the integration with the other core disciplines. Language Arts can be incorporated by reading various texts & writing for various audiences; basic Mathematic skills can be put into real world context such as reading graphs-supply & demand & reading maps; Science and /or Health topics such as chemical & biological warfare and the AIDS epidemic can be examined. What we need are more dedicated teachers like Mrs. Pam King and at the very least, retain the present core requirements to prepare students for success as active and educated participants in our society. Alan & Angela Suzuki P. O. Box 1435 Honokaa, HI 96727 (808) 775-9574</p>
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44	Student Achievement	Jill Takasaki Canfield	Pacific and Asian Affairs Council	RE: 06-21-11 Student Achievement Committee, Item VI: DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIO N FOR BOARD ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY	STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION/STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, Committee Chairperson Keith Amemiya, Committee Vice Chairperson Committee Members: Nancy Budd, Charlene Cuaresma, Mark Dannog and James Williams Dear BOE Student Achievement Committee: Instead of starting with quotes from people like Secretary Duncan on how "social studies play a critical role in creating civically competent young people who make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good and who contribute to an increasingly diverse, but interdependent world"* or studies that "suggest that young people in the United States...are unprepared for an increasingly global future. Far too many lack even the most basic skills for navigating the international economy or understanding the relationships among people and places that provide critical context for world events,"*** I want to tell you a story... After graduating from UH, I was working in Florida when one day in the lunchroom in 1991, a couple of my colleagues were discussing a story that had been in the news about Castro regime's response to the AIDS crisis of mandatory nation-wide testing with forced incarceration for anyone who tested positive for the HIV virus. One person said how horrible it was to do that to people. Another said that something like that would never happen in the US. And everyone agreed...except me. I told them that something like that had happened in the US. Fear is a powerful thing. When I mentioned the internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during WWII, a part of US History, I was shocked to hear that no one knew what I was talking about. I then told them about my auntie who was born here, but sent to an internment camp in Arkansas during WWII, then sent on the "Exchange Ship" and traded outside of Japan for Americans who got stuck in Japan when war broke out. I knew about the internment and was able to make connections to the world around me, not because I am sansei and had a family connection, but because of the foundation I received through my social studies teachers in Hawaii's public schools. In fact, my auntie rarely ever spoke about her experiences during WWII - the one day I can recall hearing a few stories was on September 11th. I arrived for a visit the night before and woke in the early morning hours of the 11th because my auntie called my mom and dad's and when I picked up, started yelling that we were being attacked again! Among the horror and sadness of the day, of our many questions, one that came to mind: How will we respond? Will there be internments again? A reduction the social studies graduation requirement from 4 to 3 years, as currently proposed, would reduce schools' ability to provide the civic education and global awareness that are critical for today's youth. More than ever, our public schools must prepare all students to think critically about complex issues so they can participate responsibly in a democratic society, be an engaged global citizen, and compete in the global marketplace. Hawaii DOE's
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website indicates a vision for Hawaii's high school graduates that they should "possess the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to contribute positively and compete in a global society" and be able to "exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship." Having at least four years of social studies required for graduation is vital to achieving this - please do not reduce the graduation requirement to three years. According the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2010 "Report Card" study, when measuring knowledge of American history in the context of democracy, culture, technological and economic changes, and America's changing world role--less than one-quarter of students perform at or above the Proficient level; the study showed that most fourth graders are unable to say why Abraham Lincoln was an important figure and few high school seniors were able to identify China as the North Korean ally that fought American troops during the Korean War. According to the National Geographic-Roper Public Affairs 2006 Geographic Literacy Study, "Six in ten (63%) cannot find Iraq on a map of the Middle East, despite near-constant news coverage since the U.S. invasion of March 2003. Three-quarters cannot find Indonesia on a map, even after images of the tsunami and the damage it caused to this region of the world played prominently across televisions screens and in the pages of print media over many months in 2005. Also striking is young Americans' ignorance of how the United States fits into the wider world. Majorities overestimate the total size of the U.S. population and fail to understand how much larger the population of China is.....Taken together, these results suggest that young people in the United States, the most recent graduates of our educational system, are unprepared for an increasingly global future. Far too many lack even the most basic skills for navigating the international economy or understanding the relationships among people and places that provide critical context for world events."** In the May/June 2011 issue of Social Education, Secretary Duncan states that "social studies play a critical role in creating civically competent young people who make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good and who contribute to an increasingly diverse, but interdependent world."* Steve Goldman, former president of the National Council for Social Studies states, "I have stressed that social studies is an essential discipline for literacy. Through our efforts, students can analyze historical text; they can interpret graphs and charts of data relating to stock market fluctuations or election results; they can read a photograph or a historical painting; they can measure distances on maps. These are the literacy and numeracy skills that are necessary to function in the real world. We are much more than a core discipline essential to a well-rounded curriculum. We are as critical as reading and mathematics, because our charge is much greater." The world into which today's high school students will graduate is fundamentally different from the one in which many of us grew up.

					WE'RE INCREASINGLY LIVING IN A GLOBALIZED SOCIETY THAT HAS A WHOLE NEW SET OF CHALLENGES WHERE INTERNATIONAL COMPETENCE IS NECESSARY, NO MATTER WHAT FIELD OR LINE OF WORK THEY CHOOSE. A COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION, INCLUDING 4 YEARS OF SOCIAL STUDIES, IS MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER TO OUR ABILITY TO PREPARE STUDENTS WITH THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE AN ACTIVE AND PARTICIPATING CITIZEN IN OUR COMMUNITY, STATE, NATION AND WORLD.
45	Student Achievement	Jerome Narciso		Social Studies Credit	The 4th quarter credit of Social Studies is from Psychology and Economics. Psychology deals with the study of the brain and personality. Teenagers today are in a constant battle with themselves. We as teenagers are trying to figure out who we are. Psychology helps us figure things out in a sense that we learn about ourselves. We learn about why we act like we do and why we think like we do. For my Psychology class, we took multiple types personality quizzes and test to deepen our understanding of ourselves. Psychology teaches us about our behaviors and if they are good or bad. The State of Hawaii is full of small, locally owned businesses. The social studies credit in economics sets a foundations on how businesses work and the different types. In the Aiea High School Economics class, we were responsible for running a class business. We went through most of the process on how to start a business from choosing the right products and to setting up the area for the store. We even did our own advertising and product manufacturing. The economics class also prepares us for college especially those who are taking a business course such as myself.

46	Student Achievement	Katrina Abes	Mililani High School	Social Studies credit from 4.0 to 3.0	<p>To Whom It May Concern, My name is Katrina Abes and I am currently a Social Studies teacher at Mililani High School. I have taught Social Studies in the DOE system for the past 5 years. Over the past 5 years, I have learned alot from my students and in the same respect, many students have learned from me and the entire Social Studies department. The purpose and goal of Social Studies is to create active citizens and to promote civic competence. Our Social Studies department is very strong in that our students take multiple Social Studies courses as electives. This shows that there is a strong interest - not only are they taking the 4.0 credits required, but they are also taking more than the required courses. Many of our electives are also AP courses. Our students want to get ahead with their college career therefore they take the Social Studies AP classes to achieve this. We have also taken upon ourselves to integrate much of the Senior Project within our curriculum, other than the English department. What Senior Project asks for is what we teach in Social Studies - thesis construction, research skills, and taking research and putting it into an action plan. How will Senior Project be implemented if you take away Social Studies in their 4th year? Many of their topics come from their Social Studies classes, if it is not an extracurricular class. In any Social Studies class, especially with their electives, they learn tolerance, civic values, and how to provide leadership and service through the Social Sciences. Why would you want to take away classes that teach them something of value? Can any other class teach them this? Why would you want to take away student interest? If it were not required, how will they be able to know how to be a citizen, how to act dutifully, take AP courses and receive college credit? I ask you to reconsider your decision and Social Studies is a valuable subject. The subject has transformed from memorizing dates, events to taking research into action and to think critically and how to interact with the world that they live in. These students will run our society and they will be in charge of these decisions that may still affect us. Do you want to risk their decision-making skills if you take away the required 4.0 credits of Social Studies? Thank you for your consideration. Katrina Abes</p>
47	Student Achievement	Ricky Itagaki	Colorado State U Pueblo	4th year social studies credit	<p>I urge you as a former student of Aiea high school not to cut Economics. I have been away at Colorado State U for three years and have learned how crucial it is to understand the topics I learned my senior year in Economics. My roommate from Kauai graduate 2008 had no idea his sophomore year in college how to write a check or un4th year social studies creditderstand how a debit card works. When I was a senior at aiea in 2008 my economics teacher, Mrs Bento had taught us so many important life skills no other subject teaches. I learned more in that class then preet muc my entire high school years. She taught us about debit and credit cards. Then we got to do a stock market simulation which taught me so much I have already invest real money into the stock market. I urge you not to cut Economics because there are so many things high school students need to learn before they enter the real world.</p>

48	Student Achievement	Marilyn Billingsley		4th year social studies credit	<p>I oppose eliminating 12th grade social studies as a mandatory credit in order to offer another elective thus making the above-mentioned core subject an elective. Recently on the national news, a random survey had been done in an interview style which showed the poor knowledge of U.S. citizens about the basic fundamental historical information which has been the backbone of our great nation. For example, one adult could not identify the Constitution as the document which protects our legal rights nor did he/she know who authored the Declaration of Independence. Having lived abroad, my colleagues in the foreign country worked in watched the United States news channel so they would be prepared to react to situations which also affected their nation and consequently, themselves. Highly regarded professions such as lawyers, political scientists, doctors and university professors rely on credits earned from social studies or history classes in order to advance in their studies. If we demonstrate to our youth that not making the teaching of the historical perspective and information which shaped our nation, state or county is not important, then good character-building characteristics such as responsibility, resourcefulness, respect for others, and good citizenship are at risk. Please do not eliminate 4th year social studies credit as mandatory in order to make it a mere elective which a student might consider to be unimportant in order to graduate.</p>
49	Student Achievement	Janice Kim	DOE	ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540 "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY	<p>As a social studies teacher, the number one goal I have for my students is that they act responsibly and participate positively...not just in the classroom, but more so when they leave the school setting entirely. I truly believe that if we are to invest in the future, we must do so by way of educating our students to become contributing members of society. It would be unrealistic to expect students to make a positive impact in society if we do not give them the tools and knowledge necessary to make an impact. I sincerely ask you to reconsider reducing the required number of SS credits toward graduation. Reducing the amount of credits may send a message to students that Social Studies skills are not essential to their success. Civic responsibility requires that citizens not only participate, but that they are knowledgeable and make responsible choices. I believe a student's senior year is a critical time to strengthen the values of civic responsibility and prepare them to be active participants. Please preserve the SS requirements and the values they stand for.</p>

50	Student Achievement	Leisha Bento	Aiea High School	4th year social studies credit	<p>I am writing to express my deep concern about the possibility that, beginning with the class of 2018, the required social studies credits will decrease from 4 to 3. I am a 22 year social studies teacher and have taught senior social studies for about half that time. I can say with deep conviction and certainty that courses such as Psychology, Economics, Sociology, Geography, as well as various AP courses are invaluable to our students. These are courses that give them a glimpse of what to expect in college and more importantly, help them learn about themselves and society. In this day and age where technology has crippled personal relationships, students are searching for opportunities in which they can make sense of the world around them. In Psychology, among the myriad of topics I cover, I teach students about child development in a way that helps them understand what to expect when they someday become parents. They also learn about psychological disorders and discover the symptoms and treatments. They learn to analyze real life experiences by using the theories to explain behavior. In Economics, students not only learn about demand and supply but they also learn about personal finance and responsibility. Many enter my class not knowing the difference between a debit card and credit card and have no clue what APR is. They have no experience with balancing a checkbook or applying for a loan. Where else will these youngsters learn about these important life skills? During these tough economic times, is it wise to deny students the opportunity to learn about these crucial life experiences? In my class, students not only learn about personal finance but they also but into action what they learned about demand, supply, prices, scarcity, surplus, and shortage (to name a few) as they implement a small business venture. Isn't this the type of learning you want our future citizens to experience before they go out into the real world? Additionally, our school has seen a threefold jump in the number of students interested in Economics. My enrollment in this course went from 25 two years ago to about 90 next year. This is amazing to me given that Economics is considered a difficult course. Clearly there is an interest in these senior social studies courses! If you decide to eliminate the 4th required credit of social studies, students will invariably opt for something "easier" instead of challenging themselves with college prep courses such as these. Instead of making the 4th year of social studies an option, it should continue to be a mandatory credit just as Language Arts is. Through these classes, students can learn and practice critical thinking skills, time management, and problem solving. Where else will they learn these valuable lessons but in a social studies class! Many graduates have returned to tell me how helpful these classes were in giving them a "leg up" in college but more importantly, they've voiced how these courses have given them relevant experiences that will last a lifetime. Please do not eliminate the 4th required credit of social studies for the sake of our students, our society, and our futures!</p>
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51	Student Achievement	Louise Ing		Board Policy No. 450	<p>Dear Ms. Lupenui and Committee Members, I respectfully submit written testimony on the proposed ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY" currently before the Committee for consideration. I am testifying against reducing the number of Social Studies credits from four to three. I was born and raised in Hawai'i and have practiced law here for over 30 years. I am a lawyer with Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing and a director and shareholder of my law firm. I have served on various local nonprofit and for-profit boards and donated faithfully to local charities and political campaigns, as my small contributions to helping our community. As a lawyer, parent and believer in life-long learning, I have come to appreciate more and more the important role of social studies and history (state, national and global) in helping us and our children become better and more engaged citizens. In particular, civics education is and should remain a vital part of our schools' social studies and history curriculum. I have watched with dismay the deterioration in the political discourse and educational levels in our country. Understanding the history and purpose of our system of government, as well as our founding principles, values and institutions are important for creating informed citizens who will vote and act in the best interests of our community, state and nation. The President of the American Bar Association, Stephen Zack, and retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor are ardent, articulate and tireless advocates for the protection and expansion of civics education in our schools. The wheel (ie, civics education curricula) has already been invented. The American Bar Association and the Hawaii Judicial History Center, as well as Justice O'Connor's civics site, offer rich resources to assist educators in furthering the important mission of schooling the next generation in civics education. Thank you for giving careful consideration to the important topic of preserving the study of history, social studies and civics education in our public schools. Sincerely, Louise Ing</p>
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52	Student Achievement	Melissa Beavers	Moanalua High School	Board Policy 4540	<p>Aloha, My name is Melissa Seu Beavers. I am a studies teacher at Moanalua High School, and I am writing in opposition to the proposal to reduce the number of social studies credits required for graduation from 4 credits to 3. Social studies includes more than history. It also covers the content areas of geography, economics, philosophy, sociology, and much more. A well balanced and complete social studies curricula is critical to develop young people who are creative, inquisitive critical thinkers who can compete in today's world. Just this month, in the periodical, Social Education, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recognized, "To marginalize social studies for the sake of reading and math is not only misguided, it is educational neglect. Educators and policymakers need to recognize that social studies is a core subject, critical to sustaining an informed democracy and a globally competitive workforce." Duncan, Arne . "The Social Studies Are Essential To A Well-Rounded Education." SocialEducation May. - Jun. 2011: 124-125. Print.) According to Secretary Duncan, "The real objective is not to get students to score well on myriad bubble tests of content knowledge, but to help them all to become engaged and thinking citizens who are prepared for college and careers. The social studies play a critical role in creating civically competent young people who make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good and who contribute to an increasingly diverse but interdependent world." (Duncan, 125.) As such, Secretary Duncan advocates that social studies, including, but not limited to, economics, history, philosophy, and civics are critical for a well-rounded education. As it stands now, Hawai'i's current public school social studies curricula is complete, well-balanced and effective in producing students with the skills necessary to compete in today's world. However, if that curriculum is abbreviated as proposed, Hawai'i's students and our community at large will be short changed. As it stands now, Hawai'i's public school students are required to take: 1 credit of US History, 1 credit of World History, .5 credit of Modern History of Hawaii, .5 credit of Participation in a Democracy, and 1.0 credit of social studies elective classes (a student may choose from a menu of SS courses such as Economics, Geography, Global Issues, Political Processes, Hawaiian Studies, Pacific Island Studies, Ethnic Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Asian Studies, Anthropology, Philosophy, Humanities, and many Advanced Placement (AP) courses.) Eliminating the social studies elective courses as proposed would greatly reduce the effectiveness and depth of Hawai'i's social studies curriculum. The elective courses allow students to take the information they have learned in their classes such as World History, and apply it in more specific relevant settings. For example, at Moanalua High School, the elective classes are reserved for seniors. Seniors, with their increased maturity, willingness to question the world around them, and their imminent entrance to the adult</p>
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					<p>world are particularly well-suited to engage in critical thinking and problem solving. In my Global Studies class, my students develop peace proposals for the Arab-Israeli conflict, write letters of advice to world leaders on global issues and debate ideas such as the causes and solutions to genocide and revolution. The knowledge they gained in their underclassmen history and civics classes aid in our discussions and their analysis. The senior Global Studies class allows this inquiry and analysis to take place in a specialized and in-depth context. In sum, Hawai'i's students need 4 years of high school social studies in order to gain the skills necessary to compete in today's world. The current social studies curriculum which includes classes in history, civics, economics, geography, and global studies, provides our students with a strong historic foundation. It also gives them the chance to delve deeper into subjects that not only interest them, but allows them to scaffold and apply what they have learned in the other survey classes, so they can analyze, understand and evaluate real-world problems. In light of this, I respectfully request that you continue to the social studies graduation requirements as it currently stands and reject the proposal to reduce the number of credits for graduation from 4 to 3.</p>
53	Student Achievement	David Grossman	Chaminade University of Honolulu	High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement Policy (BOE Policy 4540)	<p>I am writing in support of a four credit requirement for a high school diploma. In the June 2011 issue of Social Education, the U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has an article, "The Social Studies are Essential to a Well-Rounded Education (pp. 124-125), In it he argues that social studies should be brought back from the periphery of our schools' curriculum and he says that is time for a renewed national emphasis on social studies and citizenship education. As he argues, a well-educated person needs to learn more than math, science, and how to read in their native tongue. The social studies play a critical role in creating civically competent citizens who make informed decisions for the public good. I couldn't agree more with Secretary Duncan and support a four credit diploma requirement for the social studies. Mahalo for your consideration.</p>

54	Student Achievement	Ted N. Pettit	Individual	Board Policy 4540	<p>Ted N. Pettit 1559 St. Louis Drive Honolulu, Hawaii 96816 June 17, 2011 Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, Chairperson Student Achievement Committee Board of Education State of Hawaii</p> <p>Re:Submission of Written Testimony Board Policy 4540 Dear Ms. Lupenui and Committee Members, I submit to you my written testimony regarding the ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY" currently before the Committee for consideration. I am opposed to any reduction in civics education. I am a graduate of the William S. Richardson School of Law, an attorney with Case Lombardi & Pettit, and a director and shareholder of my law firm. I was raised in a family of teachers and professors, and I have been interested in civics education in public schools for many years. I have been a resident of Hawai'i for 34 years and believe that a strong social studies curriculum must emphasize the importance of civics education to promote citizenship in our state and local communities. The need to educate students in public schools about civics education cannot be overstated. Learning about how federal, state and local governments operate, the rights of citizens, the meaning and implementation of our constitutions, freedom and civic responsibilities, voting and other law-related topics are essential to promoting civic competence and participation in democracy. Civic education is the foundation of democracy in this country. It is especially important to promote the democratic objectives of our diverse state. I fully support social studies in all aspects of public schooling, but I specifically support the need to upgrade, enrich and maintain all civics education programs in the public schools. I am opposed to any reduction in civics education. Thank you for allowing me to state my support for civics education. Sincerely, Ted N. Pettit</p>
55	Student Achievement	Cathy Levinson		Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy"	<p>I am testifying against reducing the number of Social Studies credits from four to three. As U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan wrote recently, "...we absolutely cannot focus exclusively on reading and mathematics to the exclusion of other important disciplines, including social studies, as well as science, the arts, physical education, and others necessary for a well-rounded education. To marginalize social studies for the sake of reading and math is not only misguided, it is educational neglect." Our public schools must prepare our students to live full and productive lives in the world at large. To deprive them of the opportunity to study social studies and citizenship education in depth places them in jeopardy of fully functioning in our society - of contributing in a meaningful way to a better life for themselves, their family and our community. Please ensure that students have a meaningful educational experience.</p>

56	Student Achievement	Faith Pascua		High School Graduation and Commencement Policy 4540 (Reduction of Social Studies Credits)	Hello, My name is Faith Pascua and I'm a student as well as student teacher (In the teaching academy as a upcoming senior) at Farrington High School. As a student, I think this is important that we continue having 4 Social Studies credits. What I've observed as a student as well as a student teacher for a 9th grade social studies class is that already we put so much emphasis in Math and Reading/Writing that these students dont know adequate information in Social studies. Simple basic stuff like presidents, geography, etc have been hard for my students to even recall. As well as myself who currently finished my Junior year in high school felt like in my Social studies class that there are information I've learned recently, which I should of already. This I learned, while also taking a social science at Honolulu community college when my professor asked me whether I knew who the 16th president was. And embarrassingly enough, I did not.
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57	Student Achievement	Matt Mattice		VI. DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>Matt Mattice 2115 Ala Wai Blvd., Apt. 605 Honolulu HI 97815 June 20, 2011 Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, Chairperson Student Achievement Committee Board of Education State of Hawaii</p> <p>Re:Submission of Written Testimony Board Policy 4540 Dear Ms. Lupenui and Committee Members, This testimony regards the ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY" currently before the Committee for consideration. I wish to testify against lowering the required credits for Social Studies from four to three. A strong Social Studies curriculum is essential in fostering civic competence in our students - the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of citizens to be active and engaged participants in public life. Young people who are knowledgeable, skillful, and committed to democracy are necessary to sustain and improve our democratic way of life, and to participate as members of a global community. Because civic competence is more central to Social Studies than any other subject area, our local, national, and global future depends to a large extent on a strong and robust Social Studies presence in our schools. It's ironic to note that the proposal to reduce the number of required Social Studies credits in Hawaii's public schools comes just days after the results of The National Assessment of Education Progress (The Nation's Report Card) were released, revealing an alarming lack of student proficiency in American History and civic knowledge. The results indicate that now, more than ever, our students are in dire need of Social Studies instruction. I have worked in the field of Social Studies for the last twenty years - first as a Social Studies teacher at Farrington High School, and currently as the Executive Director of the Judiciary History Center. I have witnessed firsthand what Hawaii's teachers and students can accomplish through strong Social Studies programs and coursework. I understand the Board's need to improve student proficiency in all areas of curriculum, but please do not attempt to do so at the expense of Social Studies. Thank you very much for considering my testimony not to reduce the number of required Social Studies credits. I may be reached for comment at matt@jhchawaii.net, or 256-8204. Aloha, Matt Mattice</p>
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58	Student Achievement	Kenneth Shimizu	Hawaii Community College Automotive Technology	Policy#4540	<p>June 19, 2011 TO:State of Hawaii Board of Education Student Achievement Committee FROM: Kenneth Shimizu Associate Professor - Automotive Technology Program Hawaii Community College 200 W. Kawili St. Hilo, Hawaii 96720 Ph# 974-7433 (Div. Office) 974-7409 (shop) RE:Action on Board Policy #4540 High School Graduation and Commencement Policy I have been employed as an educator in the Automotive Program at Hawaii Community College for more than 20 years and had owned and operated a repair business in Hilo for 16 years prior to that. I have recently been informed that there may be a policy change in reducing core subject requirements and replacing them with electives. I would like to say that I would strongly urge you not to reduce the core courses. From past experiences, I have noticed a sharp decline in student preparedness as they enter the college system. The college itself likes the situation as they enroll the bulk of students into prep classes. These are classes that are designed to bring students "up to par" before they are allowed to register for classes that they desire. These courses are designed to ensure student success in whatever they enroll in. The reality of the situation is that students are taking much longer to fulfill college requirements and graduate. That translates into increased tuition costs, and an extended time frame before they can graduate and seek gainful employment in the community. Please keep the core classes. I see the majority of today's students always looking for the easy way out. If given a choice, the majority would probably take meaningless electives that would not be beneficial for their future.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
59	Student Achievement	Charlotte Alabanza	Parent	4th year social studies credit	<p>Come on now, our children in Hawaii are so behind in education already. Why on earth would you want to take this away. If anything you might want to relook at that super diploma thing. Most people don't even understand it. Why aren't we thinking about going back to the basics where children actually learn from a qualified teacher in the class room and not have to worry about seeking out a mentor that may or may not be qualified. Hmmm</p>

60	Student Achievement	Caroline L. Tolentino		ACTION ON BOARD POLICY 4540, "HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT POLICY"	<p>This testimony is in reference to the Action on Board Policy 4540, "High School Graduation and Commencement Policy" regarding the possible change in required Social Studies Credits from 4 to 3. Social studies courses are valuable to all students at all grade levels, including those taken in high school. The proposal to change the current Social Studies requirement from 4 credits to 3 credits is not in the best interest of the students. The diverse Social Studies courses provide a plethora of ways to prepare our students to be college and career ready as well as to become productive global citizens in the 21st Century. As a student of Social Studies with a BA in American Studies, Minor in Sociology, Social Studies teacher and now Curriculum Coordinator, I have seen and am a product of the benefits of having 4 years of Social Studies. What students learn in Social Studies courses goes far beyond the classroom, creating a well-rounded person ready for the real world. The following list is just some of the things that students learn in social studies and this list would be severely limited should you choose to lessen the necessary credits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Uphold all GLOs (General Learner Outcomes) b) Teach presentation and oral speaking skills c) Teach use of technology including power point, iMovie, Pod casts, Promethean/Smart board use, internet etiquette, etc. d) Allow and encourage students to work together in groups, creating positive environments that build trust among one another and give students the opportunities to tackle problems together e) Allow students to learn through a variety of ways including but not limited to presentations, projects, posters, newspapers, poetry, building models, writing essays, reading historical documents and non-fiction texts, internet research, f) Encourage and create students that are critical thinkers which will help them problem solve, analyze and interpret information. g) Helps students with Senior Project. h) Provides a safe place for students to discuss issues happening around the world and in Hawai'i. i) Provides an environment that encourages participation in a civic-minded manner & encourages students to participate actively in their government. j) Allows students to take courses that will be offered in college so they may decide which courses to select in college (Sociology, Economics, Psychology, Geography, Hawaiian Studies). k) Allows students to take various courses that provide them with college credits (AP Economics, AP European History, AP Psychology, AP United States History, etc..) l) Provide an environment that encourages and promotes life-long learning and a love of learning. <p>Social Studies is not just a course to fulfill a requirement, it is a course that teaches the whole student. What students gain is something that they will take with them from graduation, into college, the work force or the military, and whatever they do beyond. Changing the requirement changes what the students will get out of their high school education and alters how prepared they may be and what type of individual they will become. I strongly urge you to keep the requirement of Social Studies credits at 4.</p> <p>Sincerely, Caroline L. Tolentino Curriculum Coordinator, Social Studies Teacher Roosevelt High School</p>
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61	Student Achievement	Pete Doktor	Farrington High	High School Graduation and Commencement Policy 4540 (Reduction of Social Studies Credits)	<p>I became a social studies teacher quite by accident, by way of ignorance. Sparing the whole story, let's just say I enlisted into the US military while in high school, quite naïve of what I was getting into, aside from slick commercials and societal rhetoric. While posed for active duty reactivation, I started using my G.I. Bill to prepare myself by learning about the history of the Middle East. Long story short, I couldn't believe what we never learned in school. In my ignorance of history, or rather, a poor public education in California, I was ready to kill or be killed over a nation I couldn't find on the map. Had I received a quality and extensive social studies education, I would have had the critical thinking skills and historical insight before making such a lethal decision with my life. However, having completed most of my required credits, I opted to take early dismissal during my junior and senior year to take easy credits at our community college. I am not advocating a four-credit requirement for social studies because I am a social scientist and educator. I am advocating for it because that's what I would have wanted and needed while a high school student myself. Had I had a more extensive social studies requirements, I would have been much better prepared for life, including the ability to make better, more informed choices. Social studies is much more than learning about the past; it's a critical way for societies to understand themselves better, and lessons on how to maneuver through the present and future. This is not to slight other subjects- they are also important, but my experience shows that social studies can provide the most relevance to students within a curriculum- in other words, social studies injects real life into our classes that is critical for student buy-in. I am advocating for it because of my freshmen students' feedback. When I asked them in a episode of career exhaustion if I should keep teaching, students unanimously asked me to keep teaching, with comments that our world history class had been one of their most meaningful classes, and was wiping the naivety from their eyes, helping them be better prepared for post-high school. Many students professed that our class more than any other brought current events to the forefront, and that it was one of the few classes where it's also fun to learn. For some of our students, they need classes like social studies that talk about life rather than the abstract, to keep them positive and coming to school. A few years ago, I ran into some young Marines in Waikiki, returning from an Iraq deployment. I asked them if they had knew much about Iraq or Afghanistan before being deployed there, of which they said virtually knew nothing. After discussing some of the history, they had the same responses I had when I was a young military veteran: "I didn't know that" with a tinge of indignation from the feeling that youth are thrown into the world with little understanding of it, sometimes only to be exploited for one's ignorance. This pattern will only worsen if social studies requirements are cut even more. Instead of making decisions</p>
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