NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 30, 2014

Mr. Wil Okabe, President
Hawaii State Teachers Assoc.
1200 Ala Kapuna Street
Honolulu, HI 96819

Dear Mr. Okabe:

The Department of Education's primary focus is on Goal 1 of its Strategic Plan: student success. With that focus, we maintain our commitment that measures of student performance must be included in our educator evaluation systems. At the same time, we reiterate our commitment to fair and thoughtful evaluation systems grounded in improving teacher and principal practice. This is why our educator evaluations systems are designed with a dual focus on student outcomes and professional practices.

The Department also remains committed to continually reviewing and improving its policies and practices. With that in mind, I am writing to share the Department's intentions with respect to the role that student assessment results play in educator evaluation systems.

Students and educators are still transitioning to the new, more rigorous Hawaii Common Core (known nationally as the Common Core State Standards), to ensure students graduate from high school ready for success in college and careers. The new state assessment aligned to those more rigorous standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), will be administered for the first time this school year.

In order to allow more time to transition to the new assessments, we are exploring the feasibility of delaying the use of SBA results in evaluation systems until the *second administration of the test*, which would be the test administered in the SY2015-16 school year. Therefore, student proficiency and growth results from School Year (SY) 2014-2015 would not be used as part of educator evaluation systems in the current year.

While it is prudent to explore delaying its use in individual evaluation determinations, student performance on the new assessments is an important component of understanding schools' needs for improvement and support. Therefore, there is no need to delay the use of SY14-15

SBA results in the school accountability and improvement system known as the Strive HI Performance System.

This would mean the following:

System	Note	Proposed Delay		
		SY14-15	*SY15-16*	*SY16-17*
Educator Evaluation System (EES)	The teacher evaluation system currently uses lagged test results due to contractual requirements to provide teacher evaluation results before the end of the school year. For example, the SY2014-15 teacher evaluation uses student growth data from the SY2013-14 assessments.	No student assessment results from SBA included. Continued use of Student Learning Objectives/ School-System Improvement Objectives.	No student assessment results from SBA included. Continued use of Student Learning Objectives/ School-System Improvement Objectives.	Include student assessment results from SY15-16 SBA, subject to further review and analysis.
Comprehensive Evaluation System of School Administrators (CESSA)	The principal evaluation system currently includes multiple measures of student achievement, including proficiency, growth, and "Additional Indicators" selected by the Principal and CAS. Evaluation results are provided in the fall of the following year, so there is no lag in the data.	No student assessment results from SBA included. Continued use of existing other metrics from the "Additional Indicators" category, as selected by the Principal and CAS.	Include student assessment results from SY15-16 SBA.	Include student assessment results from SY16-17 SBA.
Strive HI Performance System	The Department would continue to use student proficiency and growth results as part of the school accountability and improvement system.	Include student assessment results from the SY14-15 SBA.	Include student assessment results from the SY15-16 SBA.	Include student assessment results from the SY16-17 SBA.

We believe these modifications to our implementation timeline will provide the time necessary for a successful transition in line with feedback we have received from the field.

Next Steps

There are number of next steps that must be taken to implement these changes:

- We intend to work with the Board of Education (BOE) to explore delaying the use of student assessment results in the EES and the CESSA in alignment with BOE policy.

- We intend to propose the delayed use of student assessment results in the EES for SY2014-15 and SY2015-16 to the Joint Committee of the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) and Department;

- We intend to propose the delayed use of student assessment results in the CESSA to Unit 6 of Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA);

- As the proposed delays in using the student assessment results in evaluation systems would be a departure from our approved waiver for flexibility from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), we will explore the submission of a waiver to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to permit such a delay. This would require that we continue to calculate student growth data for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and provide that data to every teacher and principal to support improvement efforts. There is no guarantee the USED would approve our waiver request; and

- The Department is also continuing to review and obtain feedback from educators about EES, CESSA, and Strive HI. There are a number of mechanisms for that underway, including the continued convening of the Teacher-Leader Workgroup, the Principals Roundtable, the Technical Advisory Group, the HSTA-DOE Joint Committee, and surveys of teachers and principals.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve our school accountability and educator evaluation systems to be useful tools for reflection, support, and improvement.

Very truly yours,

Kathryn S. Matayoshi
Superintendent

KSM:csa