

May 1, 2016

To: State of Hawai'i Board of Education Members

re: **May 3, 2016 SAC Meeting Agenda Item IV.B.** - Update on competency-based education, Department of Education's progress since December 6, 2015

Aloha BOE Members,

In February, I sent the following letter to all Board Members. Patricia Halagao, Chair of the Student Achievement Committee, suggested that this might be an important topic when the Board has a presentation on competency based education.

It *is* important. There are children whose lives are being ruined by being placed in a Grade Level that is too advanced for their competency when they transfer into a Hawai'i DOE school. For the rest of their time in school, and probably for the rest of their lives, they are going to be at a disadvantage.

Please take corrective action immediately so that beginning with SY 2016-2017 there exists a policy that students transferring into the DOE will be given competency assessments to determine the best Grade Level for placement. Please prevent any more transfer students from having their lives ruined by improper grade placement when transferring from another school.

Mahalo,

Vanessa Ott

February 25, 2016

Aloha BOE Members,

I am writing to request an improvement to Board Policy 101.6 that I believe will be very beneficial for *all* students, and one that is essential for English Language Learners to have a chance at success in school.

When a student transfers to the DOE from another school system, there is no evaluation by a qualified educator or academic assessment to determine what is the best grade level placement for that student. Placement is done by an office worker, and is based on (1) the grade level the in which the student was enrolled in an entirely different school system, and (2) the student's birth date.

What if Grade 5 curriculum in the previous school system is not as advanced as the DOE Grade 5 curriculum?

Then, placing a student in Grade 5 in a DOE school will surely set the student up for a lifetime of struggle being placed at a disadvantage from the time s/he enters the DOE system. It will be even harder for a student who does not speak English to close the gap, and many will not be able to do it.

What if the Grade 5 curriculum in the previous school system is more advanced than the DOE Grade 5 curriculum?

Then, placing a student in Grade 5 in a DOE school has the potential of disengaging a high achieving student through pure boredom with skills already learned.

Some parents will be able to advocate for proper placement for their children when they arrive in Hawai'i, but many will not. At a significant disadvantage are students whose parents do not understand how the Hawai'i school system works, and cannot speak English very well, if at all.

In order to make sure that all transferring students are placed in the best grade level to ensure their academic success when transferring from another school system, we need the Board of Education to set a policy that requires appropriate grade level placement, and we need the DOE to establish guidelines for evaluating what is the appropriate placement for transfer students that is based on both age *and* academic ability.

Therefore, I ask that the BOE amend Board Policy 101.6 so that the comprehensive student support system framework supports and implements the following:

(3) Appropriate grade level placement for each student;


I have included the suggested revision to BOE Policy 101.6 below. I've also included personal stories from my days as a DOE teacher that illustrate the need for this requested improvement to the DOE system. I think the data I provide should be sufficient to open this topic for discussion.

We'd all like to believe that Principals will do whatever is in the best interests of the students. However, they're only human. If there is a conflict of interest between their own well being and that of a student, we as a people cannot, in good conscience, expect them to sacrifice themselves.

Therefore, along with a policy that mandates appropriate grade placement for transfer students, especially in the formative, early years of elementary school, we must remove the shackles placed on administrators. We must eliminate any penalties for retention statistics. I do believe the way the system works is that if a mistake is made when placing a transfer student, and the student is moved to a lower grade, the system will report this as a retention. Administrators should not be penalized for making these important adjustments. They should be encouraged to act in the best interests of every student.

I ask that you put this issue on the BOE SAC agenda, and implement positive improvements.

Mahalo,



Vanessa Ott

POLICY 101.6
COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM

The Board of Education (BOE) recognizes the importance of providing effective instruction in a safe, positive, caring and supportive learning environment. A comprehensive student support system will ensure that all students attain state performance standards as approved by the BOE and the General Learner Outcomes (GLOs), in order to become public school graduates prepared for civic life and postsecondary education and/or careers.

Therefore, the Department shall provide a comprehensive student support system framework to support the implementation, with fidelity, of:

- (1) Effective standards-based instruction for all students;
- (2) Appropriate student support through an array of services;
- (3) Appropriate grade level placement for each student; ← Suggested addition.
- ~~(3)~~ Positive, fair, and consistent discipline policies;
- ~~(4)~~ Involvement of families and community stakeholders as partners in the education process;
- ~~(5)~~ Management of decision-making driven by ongoing assessment of student progress; and
- ~~(6)~~ An effective single all-student database.

Personal Stories To Support Positive Change

In 2008, my second year as a full-time teacher in Hawai‘i, I began a very long and surprisingly bitter battle on behalf of late year birth (LYB) students. At that time, Hawai‘i Revised Statute §302A-411 allowed for “Junior Kindergarten.” This was intended to provide a place in school for students who would become 5 years old between August 1st and December 31st each school year. These LYB students were supposed to enter Junior Kindergarten, proceed to Kindergarten the following year, and enter Grade 1 if they were five years old as of August 1st.

Junior Kindergarten was a debacle for many reasons, and LYB students were still being placed in a grade level where they were disadvantaged by lower physical and emotional maturity as well as brain development and cognitive ability. In 2014, the Hawai‘i legislature finally resolved part of the issue by abolishing Junior Kindergarten, and establishing August 1st as the date cut-off date for five year old entry into Kindergarten.

However, the changes in the law do nothing to help LYB students who enter the Hawai‘i DOE public school system *after Kindergarten*. Many English Language Learners coming from other countries fall into this category.

ONE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS NOT AN IMMIGRANT

I became aware of the late year birth problem in 2008 when a little, tiny girl in my Grade 3 class had very high absenteeism. She would cry hysterically, begging her dad to let her come home when he tried to drop her off at school; he would cave in to her pleas with the kindest intentions for her well-being. Compared to her classmates she was physically smaller, and both mentally and emotionally less mature. I looked at her birthday. She was only seven years old! No wonder she was academically far behind and fearful of school. New to teaching, and fresh out of the California State University Teacher Education program, this seemed very odd to me.

I asked her Grade 2 teacher, someone who’d been working at the school for a while, why she hadn’t retained the little girl in second grade? She said that as standard practice, the school would not retain any students whether it was appropriate or not, so it was useless to try. I eventually discovered that this was close to the truth. If a teacher fought hard enough for a student, it *was* possible to do the right thing for the student in terms of appropriate grade placement, but the cost to the teacher was too great, and the rate of success too low. Any such battle with the administration on behalf of a student would leave scars on the teacher and deplete far too much energy to be healthy. It was close to impossible.

When I explained to the little girl’s parents in September of that gut-wrenching school year why I thought their daughter should be in Grade 2, they readily agreed. The SpEd teacher agreed. The little girl agreed. The only person who did not want to move her to Grade 2 immediately was the Principal. He finally consented to allow her to repeat Grade 3 the next year, but for the remaining eight months of school, she’d have to stay in Grade 3. Preposterous.

Why in the world would a Principal not do what is in the best interests of a student, even when the parents are asking for this kind of support? I never got an answer to that question, but after years of fighting for LYB students who were inappropriately placed, and researching the sources of this problem, I developed this theory:

Principals have significant motivation to act in their own self interest, and under the current system, grade retention (even when in the best interests of the child and encouraged by the parents) is a statistic that reflects negatively on a Principal's performance.

Under No Child Left Behind, high retention statistics were a punishable offense. So, the system is set up to reward Principals for *not* retaining students, even when a student might desperately need this kind of adjustment as soon as possible.

BATTLES FOR INDIVIDUAL LYB STUDENTS FALL BY THE WAYSIDE

In subsequent years of research and data collection, I noticed a pattern. On average, LYB students consistently had higher rates of being below proficiency in Math and English Language Arts (ELA). Students who were English Language Learners (ELL), as a subgroup, had higher rates of low proficiency, and LYB ELLs had even higher rates of low proficiency than other ELL students!

After my debilitating battle for the little girl, I abandoned efforts, as other teachers had done, to retain individual students even if they needed it because Principals do not let it happen. It would be wasted effort. Instead, I worked for years to convince the School Community Council to adopt better grade placement procedures, which they did, but the Principal refused to allow this to be documented in the SCC minutes. It was as if all those years of work had never happened.

ONE LITTLE BOY WHO WAS AN IMMIGRANT

In 2011 there was a new Principal at the school who had been the Vice Principal the previous year during the end of my multiple-year struggle advocating for improvements in grade placement for new students. She was aware of my research and advocacy for changes in admissions procedures at SCC meetings.

One month after school started in 2011, a new student fresh from the Marshall Islands enrolled in the school and wound up in my Grade 6 Math class. He was very small in stature and could not do multiplication yet even though he was obviously very bright. I immediately checked his birth date and confirmed my suspicion that he was a late year birth student.

Note that multiplication is a Grade 3 curriculum standard. Just by virtue of the fact that the little guy did not speak English was enough of a barrier to his future success in school. Add to that the fact that he was *years* behind his classmates in Math instruction, and I felt that he was being set up for academic failure for the rest of his life in a DOE school. Why, for goodness sake? As for sports, he was *always* going to be smaller than his cohorts because he was so much younger, and I envisioned him becoming an easy target of bullies in the locker room. This roadmap for a tortuous future for him in school prompted me to action once again – to my career detriment and spiritual salvation. Seems like the two go hand in hand these days at the DOE. One must choose between personal well-being and student well-being. There is something very wrong with this.

I ***immediately*** appealed to the Principal to move the little man to Grade 5 where he would have a greater chance of success. The Principal refused to move him. I talked to the student's mother (the only parent available in Hawai'i). She, too, was quite bright, and was able to explain eloquently in limited English that the office staff, upon enrollment, had asked what Grade her son had been in the previous year. She told them Grade 5. They looked at his birth date, and based on old habits, when the cutoff date for Kindergarten was December 31st and not August 1st, the office staff had plopped him into Grade 6. **He was only 10 years old!** The boy's mother wanted him moved into Grade 5, and said that if she had only known more about how the school system worked, she would have asked that her son be put in Grade 5 when she enrolled him.

Based on Act 51, which mandated that students be five years old by August 1, 2004 to enter Kindergarten, a student in Grade 6 should be 11 years old when entering Grade 6. The following table illustrates the discrepancy that had occurred by the office staff's misplacement.

Year	Grade	Act 51 Appropriate Age on 8/1/11	The ELL Student's Age on 8/1/11
2005	K	5	4
2006	1	6	5
2007	2	7	6
2008	3	8	7
2009	4	9	8
2010	5	10	9
2011	6	11	10

I was getting nowhere with local and complex area administrations. As of 2011, the elected Board of Education had been useless in progressive changes (which is why I support an appointed BOE for which the Governor is responsible). So, I wrote to everyone listed on the Senate EDU committee and the House EDN committee in a desperate attempt to help these kids.

The only response I received was from John Kawamura in Representative Dela Au Bellati's office. She was the Vice Chair of the House Education Committee at that time.

I provided statistical information on page 4 of the letter (copied below) that showed the Math results for the Grade 6 Hawai'i State Assessments in Math my school from the previous year.

64% of all students are well below.
79% of LYB students are well below.
15% more LYB students are Well Below than all students.

72% of all ELL students are well below.
90% of LYB ELL students are well below.
18% more LYB ELL students are Well Below than all ELL students.

80% of all SpEd students are well below.
100% of LYB SpEd students are well below.
20% more LYB SpEd students are Well Below than all SpEd students.

Guess what happened? The legislature did nothing, and the Principal reprimanded me for violating FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act). Since I have copied the letter to Representative Au Bellati's verbatim, any reasonably intelligent person can see that there is no FERPA violation. I tell you this so you understand the lengths the DOE will go to hide unfavorable data, and why teachers are not more forthcoming.

DON'T BELIEVE ME

Even though I think it's common sense, you don't have to believe my claims that misplacement of LYB transfer students is a problem.

With its student data systems, the DOE should be able to generate a report easily for the BOE with the following data filled into the yellow cells (see table below) for both Math and English Language Arts. This is the format I used when providing data to Representative Au Bellati of one school's Grade 6 student math scores (see page 4 of my letter to the Vice Chair of the House Education Committee).

Total # of Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%
Total # of LYB Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%
Total # of ELL Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%
Total # of LYB ELL Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%
Total # of SpEd Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%
Total # of LYB SpEd Students in DOE:	#		
	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
	%	%	%

A **Late Year Birth Student** is defined as a person who has not yet reached the normal age of entry by August 1st of the school year for the following Grade Levels:

Normal Age of Entry (as of 8/1)	Grade Level
5 years old	K
6 years old	1
7 years old	2
8 years old	3
9 years old	4
10 years old	5

Normal Age of Entry (as of 8/1)	Grade Level
11 years old	6
13 years old	8
14 years old	9
15 years old	10
16 years old	11
17 years old	12

I hypothesize that the data will show:

1. There is a statistically significant number of LYB students in the DOE (inappropriate grade level assignment);
2. Academic proficiency for LYB students, on average, is lower than the population as a whole;
3. The percentage of LYB ELL students is greater than the percentage of LYB students throughout the DOE as a whole.
4. Although ELL Late Year Birth students will probably have significantly lower proficiency rates in English Language Arts, they also will have lower rates of proficiency in Math than the overall DOE student population;

THE SOLUTION

I propose:

1. A Board Policy that requires guidelines for appropriate grade placement of students.
2. DOE guidelines for grade placement of transfer students that include:
 - a. evaluation by a qualified educator;
 - b. standard grade level assessment to determine proficiency before placement;
 - c. student age and birth date.
3. Easy, non-punitive systems for accommodating students with grade level adjustments (i.e., eliminating the stigma of “retention” and not penalizing schools for operating in the best interests of each individual student).

4-Page Letter to Representative Della Au Bellati

Vanessa Ott
P.O. Box 825
Na'alehu, HI 96772
msott_teacher@yahoo.com
808-854-1018
September 24, 2011



attn: John Kawamura
Office of Representative Della Au Belatti, House District 25 (Vice Chair House Education Committee)
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 331

Dear John,

Thank you for taking your time to talk with me yesterday regarding Hawai'i's lack of legal guidelines regarding students' age of entry into public schools in our state. I have researched this subject for many years. The information I've gathered is available on my web site at:

www.freespeech4us.com/PublicEducation/GradeLevel/

The only legislation I've been able to find that governs age of entry into public school in Hawai'i is HRS §302A-411. This specifies the age for entering Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten only. As far as I can tell, there is no legislation addressing placement of students who enter after Kindergarten.

With enactment of HRS §302A-411, the cutoff date for age of entry into Kindergarten was changed from December 31 to August 1. Senate Bill 2315 ([www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2004/bills/SB2315 .htm](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2004/bills/SB2315.htm)), lead to the enactment of HRS §302A-411. It was based on this reasoning:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that studies nationally and locally have found substantial differences between "older" students and "younger" students within a grade, in terms of their performance and ability....Comparisons between Hawaii students and students in other states on national achievement tests in later grades are likely to be more equitable if the entry age of Hawaii students is more closely aligned to that of most other states.

In light of these and other findings, the legislature believes that a change in the minimum age requirement for entrance to kindergarten will provide a more level playing field for students born in the latter half of the calendar year...

However, this "equitable" playing field stops after Kindergarten. Page 2 of this letter explains how "younger" students who enter public school after the age of 5 (a common occurrence in our school district), are placed at a disadvantage compared to those who attended Kindergarten. I

do believe it is standard practice throughout the Department of Education to ignore the findings of SB 2315 recommending August 1st as a cut-off date for grade placement. The DOE continues to use the old standard of December 31. This puts a significant number of “younger” students at greater risk for failure.

Page 3 of this letter shows my data for Grade 6 Math students last year. The findings concur with the studies that guided SB 2315. In all categories, my data shows that students born after on or after August 1st had a significantly higher percentage of failure.

The sample letter on my web site above provides a framework for legislation to fix this ongoing problem. It is very crucial for the success of all students that we place our children in a grade level in which they have a fighting chance to succeed. Currently, the law and DOE practices are not aligned with this goal.

Thank you,

Vanessa Ott

Late Year Birth Students Get a Raw Deal in Hawai'i Public Schools

Hawai'i law specifies an age of entry only for Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten (**purple text** in the grid below). The grid shows what the progression of age would be as a student advances normally through the Grade Levels. The intent of SB 2315 was to “level the playing field” for students born in the latter half of the calendar year. These “younger” students are also called “Late Year Birth” (LYB) students. However, in our district, when a student older than 5 years with no formal record of prior schooling enters the Hawai'i public school system, the old cut-off date of December 31st is used as the initial criteria for placement. Department of Education practices regarding student grade placement after Kindergarten ignore the intent of SB 2315. LYB students entering public school when they are older than 5 years old are routinely placed in one grade higher than they would be had they attended Kindergarten.

Case Study: I teach Grade 6 Math at Na‘alehu Elementary School. This week, a 10 year old student was enrolled in Grade 6 because he was born in 2000. He will not turn 11 years old until October 16th. He is a classic case of a Late Year Birth student. There are no records from a previous school, though the parent (a recent immigrant) says that the child attended school in another country. The child speaks very little English, so our school did not administer any assessments to determine placement based on ability. If he cannot speak or read English, he is certain to fail an English Language Arts (ELA) exam at the Grade 6 level. He probably couldn't even pass a Grade 2 ELA assessment. Placement was determined by *year* of birth without consideration of the cut-off date August 1st.

This is not an isolated case. It is standard practice! Late year birth students with no prior record of formal school (such as home-schooled and immigrant students without school records) are routinely placed in one grade level higher than they should be. For those who do not speak English, this additional disadvantage (LYB) sets them up for near certain failure. It also has a deleterious effect on all the students in that classroom as the teacher is expected to spend inordinate amounts of time attending to the nearly impossible task of educating LYB students whose minds are too young to grasp current rigorous content standards for academic benchmarks.

What Typical Age of Entry Should Be

Junior Kindergarten:	at least 5 years old after July 31 and before January 1 of current SY
Kindergarten:	5 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 1	6 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 2	7 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 3	8 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 4	9 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 5	10 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 6	11 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 7	12 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 8	13 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 9	14 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 10	15 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 11	16 years old by August 1 of current SY
Grade 12	17 years old by August 1 of current SY

Na'alehu Elementary Grade 6 Math HSA Performance Statistics – School Year 2010-2011

(**LYB** = Late Year Birth Students born August 1st to December 31st of a calendar year; **ELL** = English Language Learner; **SpEd** = Special Education)

Total # of Students: 55

Meets	Approaches	Well Below
15%	22%	64%

64% of all students are well below.

Total # of LYB Students: 19

Meets	Approaches	Well Below
11%	11%	79%

79% of LYB students are well below.

15% more LYB students are Well Below than all students.

Total # of ELL Students: 25

Meets	Approaches	Well Below
8%	20%	72%

72% of all ELL students are well below.

Total # of LYB ELL Students: 10

Meets	Approaches	Well Below
0%	10%	90%

90% of LYB ELL students are well below.

18% more LYB ELL students are Well Below than all ELL students.

Total # of SpEd Students: 5

% LYB	Meets	Approaches	Well Below
40%	0%	20%	80%

80% of all SpEd students are well below.

Total # of LYB SpEd Students: 2

Meets	Approaches	Well Below
0%	0%	100%

100% of LYB SpEd students are well below.

20% more LYB SpEd students are Well Below than all SpEd students.

40% of identified Na'alehu SpEd Students are LYB ("younger") students. This concurs with national statistics cited in Senate Bill 2315.

Senate Bill 2315. (Lead to the enactment of HRS §302A-411)

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that studies nationally and locally have found substantial differences between "older" students and "younger" students within a grade, in terms of their performance and ability. Additional data relating to students' birth dates and specific learning disabilities have been analyzed locally. **Analysis of March 1998 statewide data indicated a correlation between birth month and learning disability certification. It was found that a disproportionate number of those born in the latter half of the calendar year (July through December) were classified as learning disabled.** Students at greatest risk are boys born between July and December. They account for a disproportionate number of students who are retained at their present grade level, have school adjustment problems, or are certified as learning disabled. Comparisons between Hawaii students and students in other states on national achievement tests in later grades are likely to be more equitable if the entry age of Hawaii students is more closely aligned to that of most other states.



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129

email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

May 3, 2016

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta

Dr. Tammy Bopp

Dr. Robert Campbell, *liaison
to the military*

Ms. Deborah Cheeseman

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Mr. Sage Goto

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Ms. Deborah Kobayakawa

Ms. Bernadette Lane

Ms. Dale Matsuura

Ms. Stacey Oshio

Ms. Zaidarene Place

Ms. Barbara Pretty

Ms. Kau'i Rezentes

Ms. Rosie Rowe

Dr. Patricia Sheehey

Ms. Ivalee Sinclair

Mr. Tom Smith

Ms. Lani Solomona

Dr. Todd Takahashi

Dr. Daniel Ulrich

Dr. Amy Wiech

Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Susan Wood

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff

Susan Rocco, Staff

Patricia Halagao, Chair
Student Achievement Committee
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: V. A. Committee Action on a proposed new Student Health Services Policy combining Board Policies 103.2 Student Health Services and 103.4 School-based Health Service Centers

Dear Chair Halagao and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is in support of your proposed new Board Policy 103.4, School Health Services, which aims to enhance the academic achievement of all our public school students by improving their health and wellness.

Board member Amy Asselbaye modeled partnership between public and private agencies seeking to further improve the health of Hawaii's youth by convening over two dozen stakeholder groups, including SEAC, to help craft the draft policy and encourage ongoing collaboration to meet the diverse health needs of school communities across the state. SEAC appreciated an opportunity to discuss health issues related to students with disabilities reflected in the array of possible services listed in the policy.

We look forward to providing input into the Department's subsequent implementation plan for coordinating with its health partners and establishing the framework for schools to adopt evidence based school health practices. If the Board or the Department have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan, Chair



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129

email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

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Board member Amy Asselbaye modeled partnership between public and private agencies seeking to further improve the health of Hawaii's youth by convening over two dozen stakeholder groups, including SEAC, to help craft the draft policy and encourage ongoing collaboration to meet the diverse health needs of school communities across the state. SEAC appreciated an opportunity to discuss health issues related to students with disabilities reflected in the array of possible services listed in the policy.

We look forward to providing input into the Department's subsequent implementation plan for coordinating with its health partners and establishing the framework for schools to adopt evidence based school health practices. If the Board or the Department have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan, Chair



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129

email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

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Amanda Kaahanui, Staff

Susan Rocco, Staff

Patricia Halagao, Chair
Student Achievement Committee
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: V. B. Committee Action on the following Board of Education
("Board") policies: #105.12 - Special Education and Related
Services and #105.13 - Inclusion

Dear Chair Halagao and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) supports the
above two proposed policies that significantly impact the education
of students with disabilities. We offer the following comments and
recommendations:

#105.12 - Special Education and Related Services

It appears that your committee intends to maintain the wording of the
last revision to this policy (#2160) made in November of 2010. SEAC
supported those revisions at the time and continues to do so today.
Historically, it is important to note that while the policy sets forth
worthy goals, they continue to pose a challenge to the Department to
implement.

For example, Goal #1 included the aim to "ensure that all professionals
and/or paraprofessionals providing services possess a level of
proficiency to meet the unique needs of the student." It was added in
response to a problem encountered in some schools that were shifting
from contracted services to employee-based services for children with
autism. Families and advocacy organizations protested to the Board
and the Department when the training and competencies of the DOE
paraprofessionals were not comparable to those of contracted personnel.
Indeed, this issue of a lack of proficiency posing a barrier to student
success continues to be problematic. It is evidenced by the recent
auditor's report of inadequate training of special education staff, and
the current concern of the autism community over applied behavioral
analysis as an IEP service being delivered by uncertified staff.



#105.12 - Special Education and Related Services (cont.)

Additionally, Board Policy 2160 sought to promote greater inclusion of students with disabilities with their typical peers, including the goal of developing Centers for Excellence to educate students together while teachers and faculty received training on “recognized best practices in scientifically based research on inclusive education.” This latter goal was an encouragement of the Department’s plan to pilot inclusive education models through Project Po’okela. Unfortunately, these demonstration models failed to scale up to address the broad need for inclusive programming at all public schools.

#105.13 - Inclusion

At the April 5th Student Achievement Committee meeting there was a rich discussion of the benefits of inclusion for students with disabilities, as well as students without disabilities. Given the poor academic achievement of our special education population today and the fact that two-thirds of these students are not learning in the general education classroom for the majority of their day, it is important to reference research cited by the U.S. Department of Education:

- Children with disabilities who spend more time in general education classes tend to be absent fewer days from school and have higher test scores in reading and math than those who spend less time in inclusive classrooms; and
- Spending more time in general education classes has been correlated with a higher probability of employment and higher earnings after graduation.

SEAC would like to offer the same three recommendations that were offered at the April meeting:

1) Provide a definition of “inclusion” within the policy.

SEAC favors the definition by Villa and Thousand that is widely utilized around the country: *[Inclusion is] “the commitment to educate each student, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. Inclusion brings the support services to the student (rather than moving the student to the services) and requires only that the student with a disability benefits from being in the class (rather than having to ‘keep up’ with the other students).”*

2) Clarify that inclusion applies to preschool through Grade 12.

SEAC agrees with the U.S. DOE that “all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in meeting high expectations.”

3) Include additional inclusive elements/practices in the Board’s proposed policy.

For greater clarity, we suggest that you consider adding additional inclusive elements, such as the following:

- Early intervening supports and strategies to support students at risk of school failure due to academic or behavioral challenges;

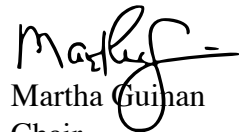
--continued on page 3



- 3) **Include additional inclusive elements/practices in the Board's proposed policy (cont.)**
- Authority and resources for IEP teams to discuss the full range of supports (i.e. behavioral supports, class size, accommodations, staff support, etc.) necessary to maintain a student in the least restrictive setting;
 - Staffing and funding options that support collaboration and the provision of educational services in the Least Restrictive Environment;
 - Inclusion of students with disabilities in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the individual student;
 - Multiple teaching/learning approaches like team teaching, co-teaching, peer partners, cooperative learning, etc., and
 - Support and training to general education teachers and ensuring adequate staffing ratios so that students can be successful.

SEAC stands ready to support the Department in implementing these policies and evaluating the implementation efforts. We appreciate this important opportunity to offer input. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair

Dear Chair Halagao and Student Achievement Committee members,

As a teacher of over 25 years in Hawai'i, I am a Non-Classroom Library Media Specialist at Waiakea Intermediate School on the island of Hawaii. The Action on BP106.2 contains a particularly misleading phrase, that "Student teacher ratios are ultimately determined by each school." To claim that the change to "optimizing" from reducing has "NO educational impacts" is unacceptable, as is not realizing that there are great financial impacts involved that are external to each school's control. I am writing to support changes in this BOE Class Size policy, particularly:

1. Differentiating in the definition between Classroom Teachers and Non-Classroom Teachers (NCTs) as has been accomplished in the Educator Evaluation System (EES).
2. Maintaining the clear emphasis on reducing the largest class sizes which are untenable learning situations.

CLASS SIZE MATTERS

Research conducted by the Institute of Education Sciences, within the U.S. Department of Education, concludes that "class size reduction is **one of only four** evidence-based reforms that have been **proven to increase student achievement**."^[1] Experiments in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and other states have demonstrated that students in smaller classes have higher academic achievement, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance. A study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education analyzed the achievement of students in 2,561 schools across the nation by their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. After controlling for student background, the only **objective** factor that **correlated** with higher test scores was class size.^[2] Directing funding to address class size is a worthwhile investment.

Class Size is a Social Justice Issue

The students benefiting the most from smaller class sizes are from poor and minority backgrounds, and they experience twice the achievement gains of the average student when they are placed in smaller classes.

Class Size Matters for All Grade Levels

Reducing class size drastically affects student learning positively, especially with younger students in grades K-3, as shown by the well-known Tennessee Project STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Ratio) that included smaller class sizes.^[3]

In addition, it has also been shown that reduced class size has particularly positive effects on secondary students who are performing at lower levels. If placed in larger class sizes, these lower achieving students continue to perform at low levels and their achievement levels actually decline in larger class settings. If these lower achieving students are placed in larger classes, they tend to have off-task behaviors that interfere with their learning. Instead of focusing on important instruction, teachers then spend the majority of their time redirecting student behavior. When these lower achieving secondary students are placed in smaller classes, their academic progress and achievement dramatically increase; and, if they remain in lower class sizes, they continue to make great gains in their achievement over an extended period of time.^[4]

In the state of Hawaii, at the secondary level, teachers currently instruct at least 6 classes. A teacher's student load, if each class consists of 30-35 students, multiplies to a detrimental total of 180-210 students (or more, if they have more classes). A total load of fewer than 150 students at the secondary level support developing more quality relationships for family support.

Class Size and Teaching

A smaller class size allows teachers to be able to use a variety of pedagogical approaches more effectively as well as provide more individualized instruction and deeper teacher feedback while also improving students' non-cognitive skills such as engagement and attentiveness, contributing to higher graduation rates and fewer dropping out of school.^[5] Another point that should not be overlooked is that smaller class sizes allow teachers to develop stronger connections with students and more frequent communication with their families. School connectedness is vital for student success.^[6]

Class Size in Our Local Context

Although Hawaii has a class size limit for grades K-2 of 25 students, no clear limit has been established yet for class sizes in grades 3-12. Campbell High School class sizes hit 52 last fall [7]. Even core academic subjects often have 40 or more students.

Heading: Testimony for greater change from 2237 Class Size to 106.2 (04/29/2016)

The student-teacher ratios listed for each Hawai'i Department of Education (DOE) school represent an average of the total number of students enrolled at a school divided by the total number of Bargaining Unit 5 teachers at a school. This ratio is distorted because the DOE includes non-classroom teacher (NCT) positions, such as registrars, librarians, curriculum coordinators, curriculum coaches, and counselors.

The DOE has shown its capability in the Educator Evaluation System (EES) to differentiate between classroom teachers (CTs) and non-classroom teachers (NCTs) [school librarians, counselors, registrars.] "Teacher" means a person whose duties in the public educational system are primarily teaching or instruction of students or related activities centered primarily on students and who is in close and continuous contact with students, and shall include but not be limited to classroom teachers [, and special education teachers].

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol05_Ch0261-0319/HRS0302A/HRS_0302A-0101.htm

In reality, class size should refer to the actual number of students on a teacher's roster for a particular class, not a ratio or average. For example, at a middle school, the student-teacher ratio might state that it is 15-to-1, but their actual class size at that particular middle school might be from 30-35 students, or more, depending on the class. Dedicated special education classes should be smaller, due to the needs of the special education students. As more English language learners and Special Needs students are mainstreamed or included into regular education classes, a 26 student limit benefits all.

Setting a limit of a class size of 20 students for grades K-3 and a limit of 26 students for grades 4-12, as was recommended by Hawai'i Board of Education Policy 2237, is an integral step necessary to support student learning. It is needed to increase student achievement, to improve attendance rates, contribute to student connectedness, reduce off-task behaviors, and generally provide a better learning environment for all students to be successful.

Please do not pass the requested changes to BP106.2, because the impact statements do not reflect accurately the reality of our classrooms. We ask that you defer this decision and consider gathering more input significantly a factor such as this, which is so critical to Student Achievement.

Thank you for your time and support of Education on this Student Achievement Committee.

Sincerely,

Debbie Anderson, NBCT

[1] "Class Size Reduction Research." Class Size Matters RSS. Classsizematters.org, 05 Nov. 2012. Web. 16 Jan. 2016.

[2] Haimson, Leonie. Is There a Threshold Effect in Reducing Class Size? (2009): 1-4. Class Size Matters. Classsizematters.org, 9 Dec. 2009. Web. 16 Jan. 2016. Akelheilm, Karen. "Does Class Size Matter?" Science Direct. Elsevier Ltd, June 2002. Web. 16 Jan. 2016.

[3] Boyd-Zaharias, J., & Pate-Bain, H. 2000. "Early and new findings from Tennessee's Project STAR." The CEIC Review, 9(2), 4.

[4] Blatchford, P., Bassett, P. & Brown, P. "Examining the effect of class size on classroom engagement and teacher - pupil interaction: Differences in relation to pupil prior attainment and primary vs. secondary schools," Report of the Department of Psychology and Human Development, University of London, 1 April 2011.

[5] Evertson, C. M., & Randolph, C. H. 1989. "Teaching Practices and Class Size: A New Look at an Old Issue." Peabody Journal of Education, 67(1), 85-105. Graue, E., Rauscher, E., & Sherfinski, M. (2008). Using Multiple Data Sources to Understand the Synergy of Class Size Reduction & Classroom Practice in Wisconsin. Paper to American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New York. Dee, T., West, M. (2011) "The non-cognitive returns to class size." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. 33-1:23-46. Boyd-Zaharias, J., & Pate-Bain, H. 2000. "Early and new findings from Tennessee's Project STAR." The CEIC Review, 9(2), 4.

[6] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth." Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2009.

[7] [Mangieri](#), Gina. August 19, 2015. "Large class sizes, teacher shortages linger into school year." Honolulu: KHONTV2.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Hawaii Board of Education
Student Achievement Committee
Patricia Halagao, Chair
Jim Williams, Vice Chair

May 3, 2016

Dear Chair Halagao, Vice Chair Williams and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for the proposed BOE Policy 103.4 on Student Health Services, which combines Board Policies 103.2 on Student Health Services and 103.4 on School Based Health Service Centers.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

One of HE'E's priorities is to create family empowerment by collaborating to meet the basic needs of every child, and this new proposed policy is aligned with this priority. In the January 15, 2016 guidance by the U.S. Department of Human Services and Department of Education, it states, "We know that healthy students are better learners who are more likely to thrive in school and in life.¹ In communities across the country, educators, health care providers, and families are working each day to help children grow into healthy and well-educated adults. They cannot do this alone. This work depends on strong and sustainable partnerships and commitments between health and education agencies at the local, state, and federal levels."²

We like that the policy encourages collaboration among the Hawaii Department of Education, Department of Health and the Department of Human so that a framework, which supports culturally responsive, evidence based health service, can be provided. Moreover, Complex Areas and schools can create a framework that best suits their community and students. We encourage you to support this policy.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

¹ Ickovics, J., A. Carroll-Scott, S. Peters, M. Schwartz, K. Gilstad-Hayden, and C. McCaslin. (2014). "Health and Academic Achievement: Cumulative Effects of Health Assets on Standardized Test Scores Among Urban Youth in the United States." *Journal of School Health*, 84 (1): 40-48

² <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/160115.html>

HE'E Member List

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. BOX 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

April 29, 2016

Hawaii State Board of Education
Student Achievement Committee
P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Board of Education:

The Department of Health (DOH) **strongly supports** the proposed revision of Board Policy 103.2 School Health. This proposed policy reflects an approach that emphasizes that government agencies, community organizations, schools, and other community members work together on a comprehensive approach to the delivery of health-related services to promote the most positive impact on the health outcomes of students. Research shows that the health of students is directly linked to academic achievement as learning and health are interrelated.

The proposed policy also facilitates and encourages community participation to adopt a variety of health-related services in a manner that best fits their individual communities. The proposed policy is in alignment with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) "Whole Community, Whole School, Whole Child" model. The CDC's model promotes a coordinated school health approach to support academic achievement and recognizes that learning, health, and the school are a part of and reflection of the local community.

The DOH is committed to furthering our partnership with the DOE to support student health and school health and wellness. This policy will foster DOE's vision of "Hawaii's students are educated, healthy and joyful lifelong learners who contribute positively to our community and global society." Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of this policy.

Sincerely,

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
Director of Health



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Written Testimony Presented Before the
Student Achievement Committee
State of Hawai'i Board of Education
May 3, 2016, 10:00 a.m.

by

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
School of Nursing & Dental Hygiene
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

RE: STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES POLICY

Chair Patricia Halagao and members of the Student Achievement Committee of the Board of Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the proposed new Student Health Services Policy.

I am pleased to collaborate with the Department of Education on health and education initiatives to achieve student and school success. Since 2014, we have been partnering to support the *Hawai'i Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn Program* (Hawai'i Keiki). Through this program we are enhancing and building school based health services so that students come to school ready to learn and succeed academically.

Hawai'i Keiki uses the Whole School Whole Community, Whole Child Modelⁱ as recommended by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We recognize that schools are one of the most efficient systems for reaching children and youth, and that integrating wellness activity and health programs into the day-to-day life of schools and students is a tool for raising academic achievement and improving learning while improving health.

Furthermore, we are finding a growing awareness in the community about the link between health and academic success. There is great potential to build on current community organization support to enhance and build school based health services. UH Mānoa Nursing and Hawai'i Keiki support the creation of a Board of Education school health policy that will facilitate partnerships and initiatives to promote the health and safety of Hawai'i's keiki and cultivate lifelong healthy behavior patterns.

Thank you.

ⁱ ASCD. (2014). Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child. <http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wsc-model.aspx>



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Written Testimony Presented Before the
Student Achievement Committee
State of Hawai'i Board of Education
May 3, 2016, 10:00 a.m.

by

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
School of Nursing & Dental Hygiene
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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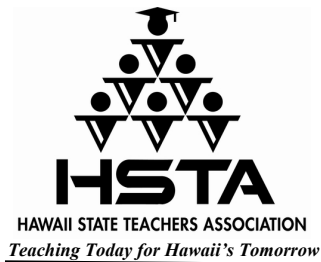
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ⁱ ASCD. (2014). Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child. <http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wscc-model.aspx>



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

RE: AGENDA ITEM VII, D, POLICY 106.2

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Mizumoto and Members of the Board:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association appreciates the Board of Education's ongoing policy audit, which ensures that our state's education policies are aligned with our scholastic priorities. We would like to offer the following recommendation on 106.2 Class Size.

106.2 Class Size: The Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, concludes that class size reduction is one of only four evidence-based reforms that have been proven to increase student achievement. Experiments in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and other states have demonstrated that students in smaller classes score better on standardized tests, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance.

Moreover, poor and minority students benefit the most from smaller class sizes, experiencing twice the achievement gains of the average student. A study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education analyzed the achievement of students in 2,561 schools across the nation by their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress exams. After controlling for student background, the only objective factor that correlated with higher test scores was class size.

Yet, teachers regularly oversee classes above the board's suggested—and currently permissive—maximums, sometimes managing rosters with as many as 40 or 50

enrollees and total workloads of over 200 students. While the DOE reports, each year, on teacher-student ratios, these numbers are often skewed by the number of teachers pulled out of the classroom to serve as *de facto* departmental employees or “resource teachers,” and do not account for the total number of classes above the department’s reported, or BOE’s suggested, ratios. Non–classroom teachers include counselors, registrars, curriculum coordinators, librarians, and academic coaches, all who don’t have students, or a class. As the number of special needs students or English language learners increases in any class, so does the need for individualized instruction. Accordingly, we view lowering class size as one of the most instrumental and obvious methods of boosting learning growth and improving teachers’ work conditions.

We appreciate the board’s continued commitment to class size reduction. We are concerned with several elements of the new class size policy, however, and request consideration of the following policy rewrites, which: 1) establish maximum class sizes 2) require the department to report annually on the number of classes above and below the policy’s prescribed class size limits. We encourage you to revise proposed policy 106.2 on class size to read as follows:

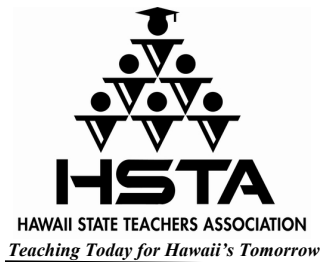
The Board of Education is committed to ~~[optimizing]~~ reducing class size in order to promote quality instruction and positive teacher-student interaction.

The optimum class size for grades [K-3] shall be 20:1 provided that the maximum class size for grades K-2 shall be 25:1. The ~~[optimum]~~ maximum class size for grades 4-12 shall be 26:1.

The maximum class size ratios shall not apply to any class that provides instruction in band, orchestra, choir, or theatre.

The Department of Education shall implement this policy to ensure that instructional personnel and other staff are allocated in a manner that is educationally sound, instructionally appropriate, and as funds are available.

The Department of Education shall provide an annual report to the Board on the number of classes at each school in compliance with this policy, including findings and recommendations for lowering class size throughout the Department.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

RE: AGENDA ITEM VII, D, POLICY 105.12

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Mizumoto and Members of the Board:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association appreciates the Board of Education's ongoing policy audit, which ensures that our state's education policies are aligned with our scholastic priorities. We would like to offer the following comments on proposed policy 105.12 Reporting Student Progress and Achievement.

105.12 Special Education and Related Services: HSTA supports the adoption of proposed BOE Policy 105.12, with suggested amendments. Special education instruction meets the unique needs of students with disabilities, including academic, speech-language, psychological, physical, occupational, and counseling accommodations. Governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and state regulations requiring the Hawai'i State Department of Education to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible students, special education services are made available to any student aged 3 to 22 who demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction.

Despite reform efforts over the past 15 years, special education in Hawai'i requires additional support. On statewide assessments, most of Hawaii's special needs students are performing below grade level in reading and mathematics. In the 2013-2014 academic year, only 22 percent were proficient in reading and 15 percent proficient in math. Moreover, between the 2004-2005 and 2013-2014 academic years, the achievement gap between special education students and their general

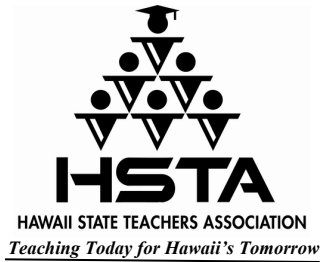
education peers increased to 48.2 percent in reading and 48.8 percent in math, an approximate change of 10 percent in reading and 27 percent in math.

To boost performance, we must decrease the workload of special education teachers and provide additional funding for special needs classrooms. This can only be achieved, however, if special needs students are not viewed as homogenous, but instead as existing on a wide spectrum of capabilities and needs. Moreover, in some schools, as many as a third of our students have individual education plans (IEPs). Special education teachers are often overburdened with paperwork, lack adequate time to complete IEP tasks, and have insufficient funds for learning materials and equipment. In a 2015 HSTA survey of special education teachers, more than 70 percent reported that they were not given adequate time to lesson plan or complete IEP reporting during the work day, while 60 percent of SPED teachers said that they did not receive appropriate support from school administrators.

SPED teachers' plight was exacerbated in the 2010-2011 school year, when, due to a loss of federal funding, the DOE discontinued yearly supplemental supply funding of \$1,690 per teacher. As a result, 63 percent of SPED teachers responding to the survey revealed that they had not received any separate SPED allocation from school administrators for supplies or curricular materials, and more than 80 percent stated that they had made out-of-pocket purchases to meet specific student needs.

Therefore, we urge you to amend proposed policy 105.12 to include an additional enumerated point under the department's list of SPED-related responsibilities, to read, "**Provide teachers with adequate instructional resources, preparation time, and support staff to meet the individual needs of students.**" We note that a similar provision is included in proposed policy 105.13 Inclusion, and feel that this principle should be included in our state's primary special education policy, too, to promote resource, staffing, and professional equity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify **in support** of this policy.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
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Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

RE: AGENDA ITEM VII, D, POLICY 102.12

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Mizumoto and Members of the Board:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association appreciates the Board of Education's ongoing policy audit, which ensures that our state's education policies are aligned with our scholastic priorities. We would like to offer the following comments on proposed policy 102.12 Reporting Student Progress and Achievement.

102.12 Reporting Student Progress and Achievement: HSTA supports and proposes amendments for the change codification of proposed policy 102.12. We understand the need to provide timely feedback to students and parents about academic progress. Yet, too often, student assessment is tied to excessive amounts of standardized testing—"toxic testing"—and curricula of which such testing is a part and designed to facilitate. Since the enactment of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and Race to the Top program in 2009, Hawai'i has been obliged to shift its public education focus from teaching to testing. Undue emphasis on testing leads to teachers spending more time preparing students to take tests and less time educating, while students spend more time taking tests and less time learning.

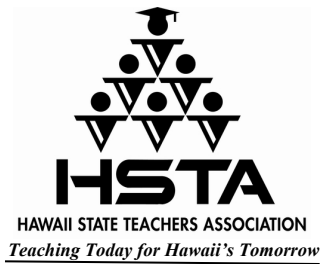
According to a 2014 study conducted by the National Education Association, 72 percent of teachers feel considerable pressure to improve test scores. Over half of teachers surveyed reported spending too much time on testing and test preparation, with the average teacher spending approximately 30 percent of their time on tasks related to standardized tests. At the same time, a 2014 PDK/Gallup poll on public attitudes toward public schools found that only 31 percent of parents support using

standardized test scores to evaluate teachers, despite the implementation of numerous reforms increasing the use of test scores in assessing the performance of students, schools, and educators alike.

This no longer need be the case. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act, passed in December of 2015, provides states with increased flexibility in the use of standardized testing, including eliminating federally mandated inclusion of standardized tests in teacher evaluations, and allowing states to choose what test to use for annual school assessments. ESSA also permits states to limit the amount of time that students spend preparing for and taking standardized tests, and provides funding to states for auditing and streamlining assessment systems. Ultimately, ESSA diminishes the role of standardized testing in public education, reflecting years of public outcry over the toxic levels of testing that have flooded our state's and nation's schools. We have the opportunity to make bold changes to our "test and punish" education culture. We must seize it.

We must turn toward a system of authentic student assessments that foster whole child education. While the adoption of high-stakes standardization has emphasized testing and, in turn, testable subjects, like mathematics and language arts, alternative approaches are being developed in Hawai'i that support a more holistic vision of education. These approaches involve integrated teaching that "links individual subjects, instructional units, and lessons to their larger meaning; helps students see connections incorporating a variety of instructional approaches," and promote "a deep sense of community and acceptance." This "whole child" approach to instruction requires not only broadening the curriculum, but also examining the struggles faced by students who come from underprivileged ethnic and social classes—52 percent of the student population in Hawai'i public schools hail from economically disadvantaged households.

Thus, children should have the opportunity to learn about Polynesian and Hawaiian cultural traditions and actively practice Hawaiian language, arts, and customs. Our state constitution repeatedly cites the importance of Hawaiian language and culture, and we need to ensure that our public schools preserve and promote the Native Hawaiian identity and an appreciation of cultural differences. Moreover,



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President

Justin Hughey
Vice President

Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

according to a 2014 study performed by Lois Hetland and Ellen Winner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, education in music and drama shows a generalizable causal relationship to increases in verbal achievement and spatial reasoning. Researchers in the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas likewise found, in 2013, that instruction in visual arts led to gains in critical thinking skills. Finally, both arts and place-based curricula immerse students in the culture, history, and heritage of their local communities, engaging students in applying cultural content to local community experiences. Given the unique history of Hawai'i as a former sovereign nation and problems faced by communities dealing with the legacy of annexation, including higher risks of poverty and lower levels of academic achievement for Native Hawaiians, place-based education is crucial to giving students the skills necessary to solve community problems.

Whole child education is supported by the state's general learner outcomes, which include becoming a community contributor, complex thinker, and effective communicator. To accomplish each of these requires a creative mindset in the face complicated problems and a deep knowledge of the community within which one is working to forge solutions. That said, we urge the board to delete general learner outcomes from the student evaluation reporting requirements contained in paragraph five of proposed policy 102.12. There are six GLOs:

- Self-directed Learner (The ability to be responsible for one's own learning);
- Community Contributor (The understanding that it is essential for human beings to work together);
- Complex Thinker (The ability to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving);
- Quality Producer (The ability to recognize and produce quality performance and quality products);
- Effective Communicator (The ability to communicate effectively);
- Effective and Ethical User of Technology (The ability to use a variety of technologies effectively and ethically).

Providing separate GLO-related progress evaluations for each student, when teachers often carry workloads of over 150 and in some cases over 200 students,

requires educators to provide assessments composed of over 1,000 data points. At a time when teachers are already encumbered by high-stakes testing and teacher evaluations, it is unreasonable to expect them to provide both standards-based academic grades and GLO-based ratings with any sort of validity or reliability. We request that paragraph five of proposed policy 102.12 be amended as follows: “Student attendance [~~and General Learner Outcomes performance ratings~~] will appear in student evaluations, but reported separately from academic grades. Student attendance [~~and General Learning Outcomes~~] for secondary schools will be reported separately.”

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this policy.



May 3, 2016

TO: Patricia Halagao, Chair,
BOE Student Achievement Committee

FROM : Dina R. Yoshimi, Director,
Hawai'i Language Roadmap Initiative

RE: Student Achievement Committee (May 3, 2016),
Agenda Item IV.A, Update on Board Policy 105.15

I am writing on behalf of the Hawai'i Language Roadmap Initiative (HLRI) to applaud the progress towards implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy that today's DOE presentation demonstrates. Through these thoughtful and earnest efforts, the DOE has made significant steps towards fostering a climate of acceptance of all languages spoken by the students in Hawaii's public schools, and towards creating a culture of valuing those languages as tools for college, career, and community readiness. HLRI looks forward to continuing to work with the DOE as a partner in reaching out to communities where languages other than English are spoken, as well as among the many classroom language learners in DOE schools, to raise awareness of the value of language as tool for strengthening one's capacity to work, learn, and engage with others.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



RACHAEL WONG, DrPH
DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Med-QUEST Division
Administration
P. O. Box 700190
Kapolei, Hawaii 96709-0190

May 2, 2016

The Honorable Lance Mizumoto, Chair
Board of Education
1390 Miller Street, Room 404
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Mizumoto and Board Members:

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF NEW STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The Med-QUEST Division of the Department of Human Services would like to submit testimony in strong support of the draft school policy on health services, Health and Wellness. We ask that you please give the policy your positive consideration.

As one of the agencies that has and will continue to work closely with the Department of Education on health related topics, the adoption of this policy strengthens and enhances our work together. It recognizes the fundamental link of children's readiness to learn and their health. From the Medicaid, health perspective, we also recognize that an individual's educational attainment is also a strong indicator for their health as an adult. Thus, education and health are inextricably linked. We applaud the work that was done to re-write this policy, and enthusiastically support it. We would urge your adoption of this revised policy. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Judy Mohr Peterson, PhD
Med-QUEST Division Administrator