NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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STATE OF HAWAI'I
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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

February 7, 2011

TO: The Honorable Garrett Toguchi, Chairperson
Board of Education

FROM: Kathryn S. Matayoshi
Superintendent

SUBJECT: Discussion/Recommendation for Board Action on the Closure of Kalihi Elementary School

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Kalihi Elementary School be closed.

2. RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE DATE

June 30, 2011.

3. RECOMMENDED COMPLIANCE DATE (if different from the effective date)

Not applicable.

4. DISCUSSION

a. Conditions leading to the recommendation.

Pursuant to Chapter 8-38 ("Consolidation of Public Schools), Hawaii Administrative Rules, the Department initiated a study of the possible consolidation of elementary schools in the Farrington complex because it appeared, based on a comparison of enrollment at the Farrington complex elementary schools with the inventory of classrooms, that the supply of classrooms exceeded the current and projected enrollment by a sufficient margin to indicate that two of the existing elementary schools could be closed.

One of the elementary schools, Linapuni, is in the process of being converted from a K-2 school to a pre-K K, and grade 1 school, to meet the needs of the children in Kuhio Park Terrance and its immediate environs for preschool programs that prepare the children for kindergarten. The conversion of Linapuni to a pre-K through grade 1 school means the grade 2 students at Linapuni will be transferred to neighboring elementary schools. In this study, Linapuni is included because of its overall role in the enrollment picture of the Farrington complex. This study did not consider the closure of Linapuni.

The Department solicited and incorporated input from school administrators and school community councils in the complex.

The enrollment of the nine schools, the number of classrooms needed to accommodate the current enrollment, the number of classrooms, and the classroom surplus or shortage, are shown in the table below:

	SY 2010-11 Enrollment	SY 2010-11 classroom need	Classroom inventory	Classroom excess (shortage)
Fern	497	22	30	8
Kaewai	346	19	30	11
Kalihi	294	16	30	14
Kalihi Kai	605	28	45	17
Kalihi Uka	251	13	25	12
Kalihi Waena	572	29	33	4
Kapalama	668	31	37	6
Linapuni	255	18	16	(2)
Puuhale	234	11	21	10
Total	3722	187	267	80

See the consolidation report, page 4 for the enrollment history and enrollment projection for elementary schools in the Farrington complex. Enrollment has been relatively stable and is projected to increase slightly.

As provided by Chapter 38, the Department held a public hearing on the draft consolidation study on December 16, 2010 at Kalakaua Middle School. Public testimony was overwhelmingly supportive of the status quo. The consolidation study, revised following the public hearing, together with written testimony received prior to, at, and subsequent to the public hearing, notes of oral testimony presented at the public hearing, two petitions presented at the public hearing, and the sign-in sheet at the public hearing are all attached to this memorandum or, for the larger files, are available on the Department's school consolidation website.

There are two reasons for the recommendation to close Kalihi Elementary. One is to save money. The estimated annual savings in FY 2011-12 are about $544,000, without considering possible savings from consolidating the special education staff and savings and efficiencies that would result if some DOE state and/or district office functions were relocated to the Kalihi campus if the school were closed (consolidation report, pages 26-27). The second reason is that as the subsidy for small schools is reduced over time, it will be increasingly difficult for students to receive the same level of educational opportunities that are available at neighboring schools. The table below shows the weighted student formula allocation to the eight elementary schools (excluding Linapuni, which is not comparable) on a per student basis:

	Enrollment incl pre-K		WSF Alloc/Student		
	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	Incr/(decr)
Fern	502	522	4,512	4,631	119
Kaewai	350	358	5,052	4,625	-427
Kalihi	300	295	5,291	5,039	-253
Kalihi Kai	608	596	4,479	4,534	55
Kalihi Uka	257	270	5,191	4,628	-536
Kalihi Waena	579	587	4,421	4,536	115
Kapalama	674	655	4,285	4,364	79
Puuhale	234	227	5,643	5,447	-196

The per-student WSF allocations are projected to decrease for all the small schools, while the per-student WSF allocation are projected to increase for the large schools.

The closure of Kalihi and the transfer of some of its students will help Kaewai students by providing additional weighted student formula funds that will reduce the per-student non-instructional costs of operating Kaewai.

Kalihi's academic performance has been on a par with other schools in the complex, after considering the schools' demographics. The data in the table are medians for the most recent three years of the percentages of students economically disadvantaged, the percentages of students who are proficient or better in reading and math, as measured by the Hawaii state assessment, broken down by students who are and are not, economically disadvantaged, and the "achievement gap" between students who are economically disadvantaged and those who are not. These data show that Kalihi's closure is not warranted because of any deficiencies in its educational program.

	Percent economically disad-vantaged	Percent proficient in reading			Percent proficient in math		
		Not economically disad-vantaged	Economically disad-vantaged	Gap	Not economically disad-vantaged	Economically disad-vantaged	Gap
Fern	80%	55	40	-15	44	34	-10
Kaewai	83%	65	44	-21	63	26	-37
Kalihi	72%	72	47	-25	60	37	-23
Kalihi Kai	72%	53	48	- 5	47	38	- 9
Kalihi Uka	60%	62	57	- 5	55	46	- 9
Kalihi Waena	77%	67	50	-17	63	43	-20
Kapalama	58%	76	63	-13	57	48	- 9
Puuhale	72%	59	54	- 5	57	32	-25

There is capacity at Kaewai and Kalihi Uka to between them accommodate all the Kalihi students.

b. Previous action of the Board on the same or similar matter

The consolidation of schools in the Farrington complex has not been considered by the Board. In May 2009 the Board approved the closure of Wailupe Valley Elementary

School and the transfer of its students to Aina Haina Elementary School, and in February 2010 the Board approved the closure of Keanae School, formerly a K-3 school. Keanae students had been attending Hana School since the opening of SY 2005-06. Consistent with the Department's recommendation, the Board voted not to consolidate the following schools on the dates shown below:

Kohala schools	August 19, 2010
Maunaloa Elementary School	September 16, 2010
Kaaawa Elementary School	October 7, 2010
Waialua schools	October 21, 2010

The Board has my January 31 recommendation to close Liliuokalani School and my February 7 recommendation to close Puuhale School.

c. Other policies affected

None.

d. Arguments in support of the recommendation

See above.

e. Arguments against the recommendation

Three general arguments have been expressed about the possible closure of Kalihi.

First is that the school provides a nurturing environment for its students. This is true. However, Kaewai and Kalihi Uka parents and students would make the same argument – that Kaewai and Kalihi Uka provide nurturing environments for their students.

Second is that larger class sizes for Kalihi students, as well as students at Keawai and Kalihi Uka, would result if Kalihi were closed. The table below shows the teacher-student ratio at the eight Farrington complex elementary schools (excluding Linapuni). Kalihi has the lowest student-teacher ratio of the eight schools. However, the difference between Kalihi, Kaewai, and Kalihi Uka is not great, and, as noted above, the reduced per-student allocation that the smaller schools will receive next year mean neither Kalihi nor Kalihi Uka will likely be able to maintain their student-teacher ratios next year.

	Fern	Kaewai	Kalihi	Kalihi Kai	Kalihi Uka	Kalihi Waena	Kapalama	Puuhale
Elem tchr	26	19.5	19	33	13.5	30	33	13
Art VI tchr	1	1	1	2		1		1
SpEd tchr	4	4	3	2	2	4	1	1
SpEd tchr pk	1	1	1	5	1	1	3	1
Total tchr	32	25. 5	24	42	16.5	36	37	16
# students	502	350	300	608	257	579	674	234
Students/tchr	16	14	12	15	16	16	18	14

The table on page 2 of this memorandum shows Kalihi's enrollment currently requires 16 classrooms, and that Kaewai and Kalihi Uka between them currently have 23 more classrooms than are needed to accommodate their current enrollments.

Third is that Kalihi Elementary students who now walk to school will have a longer and more dangerous walk to school if they have to go to Kaewai or Kalihi Uka. The proposed division of the Kalihi Elementary attendance area between Kaewai and Kalihi Uka is that students living on the Kaewai side of Likelike Highway would be transferred to Kaewai and students living on the Kalihi Uka side of Likelike Highway would be transferred to Kalihi Uka. The distance from upper Kalihi Valley to Kalihi Uka is approximately 0.1 mile longer than the distance from upper Kalihi Valley to Kalihi Elementary. It is true that the sidewalk along Kalihi Street, along which the Kalihi Elementary students living in upper Kalihi Valley would have to walk to Kalihi Uka, is unimproved and barely exists in stretches. However, students living in upper Kalihi Valley who walk to Kalihi Elementary must already walk along most of this stretch of Kalihi Street to get to Kalihi Elementary.

For students taking the bus to school from upper Kalihi Valley, Kalihi Uka would be more convenient than Kalihi Elementary. Kalihi Uka is located on Kalihi Street. City bus #7 travels down Kalihi Street every 10 minutes between 6:40 and 7:30 a.m. and up Kalihi Street about every 15 minutes between 1:45 and 3:30 p.m. Students living in upper Kalihi Valley who take the bus to Kalihi Elementary must walk from the bus stop at the intersection of Kalihi St. and Nalanieha St. to school, across the Likelike Highway pedestrian overpass, a distance of approximately 0.2 mile.

For students living on the Kaewai side of Likelike Highway who now attend Kalihi Elementary, to go to Kaewai would be a longer trip. The distance between Kalihi Elementary and Kaewai is about 0.8 mile. The attendance area boundary between the two schools is approximately half-way between the them, so depending on where the student lives, the additional distance to Kaewai, compared to Kalihi, will be between zero and 0.8 mile. There is no City bus service to Kalihi Elementary from the portion of the school's attendance area that is on the Kalihi Valley Homes side of Likelike Highway. There is frequent City bus service (route #7) from Kalihi Valley Housing to Kaewai, but the distance is so short (about 0.6 mile) that it is unlikely many students would use it.

The Kalihi Elementary students most affected by a closure of the school would be those who live in the school's immediate neighborhood on Kula Kolea Drive and Naai Street. If walking to school, they would need to walk on the sidewalk along Likelike Highway for a distance of about 0.2 mile, before reaching Kalihi Valley Homes, where they would walk within the Kalihi Valley Homes roadway until they reached Kamehemeha IV Road. The sidewalk along Likelike Highway is separated from the highway by a chain link fence. Walking students would need to cross Kamehemeha IV Road (to get to the side of the street on which Kaewai is located) at a signalized intersection, along with the students from Kalihi Valley Homes who now attend Kaewai. From the furthest home in the Kula Kolea Drive neighborhood to Kaewai is a driving distance of about 1.0 mile, about 0.7 mile farther than from the end of Kula Kolea Drive to Kalihi Elementary.

f. Findings and conclusions of the Board committee

To be determined.

g. Other agencies or departments of the State of Hawaii involved in the action

None.

h. Possible reaction of the public, professional organizations, unions, DOE staff and/or others to the recommendations

As noted above, both written and oral testimony submitted prior to, at, and subsequent to the public hearing was unanimous in favor of keeping Kalihi open.

DOE also received a petition to keep Kalihi open signed by 1,361 individuals living all over the island.

i. Educational implication

See above.

j. Personnel implications

Consolidation will eliminate all of the positions at Kalihi Elementary. All regular full- and part-time Kalihi Elementary employees will be placed elsewhere in the Honolulu district.

k. Facilities implications

Closure of Kalihi School will make the facilities available to other users. There is an extensive list of prospective uses of the facilities on pages 26-27 of the consolidation study.

l. Financial implications

The closure of Kalihi Elementary is estimated to save approximately $544,000 annually, including fringes of approximately $103,000 that will be reflected in the Department of Budget and Finance. Additional financial savings, operational efficiencies, and educational improvements will result from the reuse of the school's facilities, depending on the futures uses of the facility. The Department intends to place a portion of the anticipated first-year savings from consolidation at the disposal of the complex area superintendent this school year and next to facilitate the transition for students and staff at Kalihi, Kaewai, and Kalihi Uka.

5. OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

KSM:RGM:ck

Attachment: Consolidation Study

c: Calvin Nomiyama, Acting Complex Area Superintendent
David Pila, Principal, Kalihi Elementary School
Laura Ahn, Principal, Kalihi Uka Elementary School
Bert Carter, Principal, Kaewai Elementary School
Randolph G. Moore, Assistant Superintendent