



Mireille Ellsworth <ellsworthhsta@gmail.com>

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To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc
Subject TESTIMONY for SAC Mtg. 2-7-17

TESTIMONY for Hawai'i State Board of Education -- Student Achievement Committee

Feb. 7, 2017 11:00 am

Agenda Item IV. B. ESSA Impacts on School Accountability

SUPPORT FOR: AUTHENTIC ASSESSEMENTS and APPLYING FOR THE "INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY" PILOT UNDER ESSA

Honorable Chair Cox and members of the Committee:

My name is Mireille Ellsworth, an English teacher for 18 1/2 years, 12 of which have been at Waiakea High School in Hilo on the Big Island. I am also a member of the Teacher Leader Work Group (TLWG), and we were asked to provide feedback on many of the slides in OSIP's slide show that is being presented to you today.

I want the Board to know that the TLWG's feedback is not reflected in the presentation by DOE. The TLWG had a vigorous discussion during a webinar on January 19, and I was one of many teachers who expressed concern with HIDOE's approach to measuring a "well-rounded education," as shown on slide 12 today. One teacher even commented that it seemed the feedback we provided at the TLWG meeting we had late last year was completely ignored "as if it had never happened."

In fact, we mentioned at that webinar the importance of measuring inputs as opposed to excessive standardized testing that is taking place currently, robbing our students of a well-rounded education in many respects. It seems the HIDOE anticipated pushback in its presentation today and added slide 2 as a rebuttal to the suggestions of the TLWG by portraying the consideration of inputs, meaning the opportunities provided to students through programs, resources, and facilities, as an outdated concept for defining "a good school."

When parents are looking for a quality education for their children, they want diverse and interesting course offerings, low class sizes, a variety of clubs and activities, exciting projects in which students are engaged, and impressive facilities. Test scores are a minor consideration, yet the DOE seems oblivious to these criteria and remain obsessed with standardized tests as the way to measure student success.

When TLWG members pointed out the absence of electives and extra-curricular activities as part of the measures for a well-rounded education (which you will see on slide 12), the answer we were given was that since there had been complaints about limiting the testing to language arts and reading, that is why they added science test scores! More test scores! Clearly, the DOE's criteria are not in alignment with stakeholders' viewpoints, even when they provide feedback.

However, I am encouraged by the bullet points under Well-Rounded Education (on slide 12) that suggest Performance-Based Assessments and Senior Project, but those are labeled as merely "examples of optional locally selected measures to supplement common statewide measures." When I asked during the TLWG webinar if the state would be giving schools technical assistance or extra budget or personnel to collect data above and beyond the Strategic Plan's numerous data points, the OSIP personnel on the call said no supports were planned to be given to schools that opt in to more measures.

What is the **solution**, you may ask? Well, ESSA provides a very good solution, something I saw again and again on sticky notes at the numerous community meetings meant to gather input from our island community. There have been numerous calls for **Authentic Assessments**, sometimes referred to as Project-Based Learning. ESSA offers the opportunity for us to apply for the "Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority" in order to pilot authentic assessments as a measure of student success. Having mentored a few seniors over the years on their Senior Projects and having attended several years of our school's Senior Project Night, a showcase of the real-world application of students' skills and knowledge as well as a reflection of their interests, I have come to realize the incredible learning experiences these students are through Authentic Assessments.

No student remembers a standardized test as a meaningful learning experience whereas Senior Projects are eye-opening, life-changing experiences. Some students have gotten jobs through their internships, others have used their experiences to write essays for scholarships to help fund their higher education, and yet others have realized that their career goal was not what they wanted to do with their lives, saving them thousands of dollars and years of their youth they would have spent in college for a career choice they didn't like after all!

I urge the Board to set policy for HIDOE to **apply for the testing pilot available through the Every Student Succeeds Act, the "Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority."** Here is a link to a very informative report about the possibilities.

<http://www.fairtest.org/assessment-matters-constructing-model-state-system>.

With the governor's vision of innovation and Hawaii's unique statewide school district, our state is uniquely poised to be an innovative leader in education that the rest of the nation would look to for guidance and inspiration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. I trust you will actually take it to heart as opposed to ignoring it or refuting claims that innovative practices that have been used successfully elsewhere (see www.performanceassessment.org). Hawaii should be at the cutting edge of education innovation. Let's make it happen!

Sincerely,

Mireille Ellsworth,

Waiakea High School, Hilo, Big Island

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11:00 a.m. Student Achievement Committee Meeting 7 February 2017 Agenda item:
Presentation on Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") Impacts on School Accountability

Debbie Anderson, M.Ed., MLIS, Hawaii State Senior Project Co-Chair; HASL
Corresponding Secretary; initiator of the AASL National Task Force on Capstone Projects

Position: **Apply to participate in the authentic assessment pilot** available under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a process which will help us move away from over reliance on standardized testing and towards Assessment For Learning. Over 3 years, 7 states (initially) to pilot innovative systems of assessments with a subset of districts, or to provide local flexibility around the items and tasks they can use from the state system.

Title I, part B Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority January 9, 2017 Regulations
§ 200.106 Demonstration authority selection criteria:

(b) Prior experience, **capacity**, and **stakeholder support**.

(B) Effective and high-quality supports for school staff to implement innovative assessments and innovative assessment items, including professional development...

How could Hawaii participate in the ESSA opportunity Authentic Assessments? Given our National Leadership in Senior Project implementation and backwards mapping, a culminating project is achievable upon exiting each grade span (i.e., 3–5, 6–8, 9–12).

About half of HGEA's Principals supported keeping the Senior Project as a graduation requirement, while half were reticent to overload their responsibilities. When the elected Board of Education was replaced with a Board appointed by the Governor, the choice was made to prioritize a Personal Transition Plan (PTP) graduation requirement, and downgrade the Senior Project to an option. A review of our capacity by grade span:

9–12 Many high schools chose to continue to require Senior Project as a school level graduation expectation. Exemplary implementations continue to demonstrate the value of Capstone Projects across Hawaii's private and public school systems. Molokai High School (MHS) graduates are required to complete the long-term [senior inquiry project](#) before the end of their senior year. The exit project incorporates a research paper, a portfolio, community service action, and a panel presentation. The overarching essential question is "How Can I Make A Difference?" Molokai High School Principal Stan Hao stated: "I firmly believe the Senior Project is one of the greatest forms of authentic assessment of a student's collective understanding of their entire educational experience! It challenges our students to go beyond the common and integrates various forms of synthesis of their learning..." Rubrics created by our Senior Project Committee are available for each component, such as: Evaluating Senior Project Presentations.

6–8 My Waiakea Intermediate school participated in the PEARL project specifically to develop a role model for middle level school students with its Grade 8 iSearch projects.

3–5 To meet elementary school standardized testing requirements, an overemphasis on reading has reduced preparation for the writing requirements of middle school. Before completing their final elementary grade, elementary students could produce Project-Based Learning (PBL) portfolio samples. Possibilities range from Science Fair, etc.

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Stakeholder support for this initiative is accessible readily: ESSA Task Force Blueprint draft: "Hawaii will elect to pursue a new assessment model through the ESSA Pilot Program for Authentic Assessment. All assessments we implement will recognize that the student is the center of all our professional practices and the accomplishments that we monitor should reflect our whole-child vision and values."

K-12 Educators: The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) believes in the need to broaden accountability for the attainment of educational goals by including more authentic measures reflective of the goal to prepare students for life, rather than for tests, and to de-emphasize the use of standardized tests as the dominant measure.

Much work has been done through the foundations of our state's work in Senior Project. P-20 networking supports: The University of Hawaii Manoa (UHM) group published a manual *PEARL Training Model: Facilitating Inquiry-Based Research in K-12 Schools*, and have extensive Trainer and Student materials available still in a variety of accessible repositories. This effective PEARL network continues to encourage Senior Project coordinators and their partner School Library Media Specialists.

We would align with our Governor's vision for innovation for the Board and the Department to apply for the pilot through ESSA to continue the development of the senior project as an authentic assessment far exceeding the potential to showcase student success compared to the restrictive standardized tests, like Smarter Balanced.

Given my corresponding 9:30 and 1:30 p.m. testimonies on the Assessment System and Libraries with Librarians, entertaining participation in ESSA's Authentic Assessment is reasonable. We believe our Board wants to get things right with the new opportunity ESSA allows. Let's work together to bring authenticity and relevance to our students' public school experience, meet our goal of empowering the most fundamental people in education, our teachers and students

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testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us P.O. Box 2360, Honolulu, HI 96813 (808) 586-3433

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testimony_boc@notes.k12.hi.us P.O. Box 2360, Honolulu, HI 96813 (808) 586-3433

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February 7, 2017

Student Achievement Committee

Agenda Item IV. B.

Honorable Chair Cox and Members of the Committee,

I am David Negaard, a teacher at Henry Perrine Baldwin High School on Maui. I have been a public school teacher for 19 years. I am writing to implore the Board of Education to direct the Department of Education to apply for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) authentic assessment pilot. Authentic assessment (including “performance assessment”) allows students to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their learning in meaningful, creative ways. A broad and deep authentic assessment of student learning honors Hawai‘i students by assessing them holistically, rather than on a narrow and limited metric, and additionally honors teachers as professionals who teach much more than just the specific skills of English or math literacy.

In my experience, many students struggle to perform well on tests (even when they apply themselves fully, something that does not always happen with so-called “high stakes” standardized tests) but actually understand what they have been asked to learn and can demonstrate their understanding through projects, in writing, or in media. My goal as a teacher is for students to understand the concepts I teach; it is unfair and verging on educational malpractice to expect diverse students to all demonstrate mastery in exactly the same way. Authentic assessment (Senior Project is a decent example) provides students with a variety of ways of demonstrating mastery. Standardized tests assess one skill more than any other; the ability to perform on standardized tests.

The system as it currently operates is rigged against schools, teachers, and students. The tests are not transparent: the commercial providers—the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)—zealously and jealously guard their “intellectual property.” The cut scores are set not by educators but by corporate interests who stand to profit from school failure. They can create a market for their educational “products” by manipulating the results of their tests via cut scores

and even through the way questions are written—they have a vested and fiduciary interest in schools seeming to fail.

And where is the evidence that these tests are valid, meaningful, or that they even measure what it is claimed they measure? Even what is claimed of them is hollow, sterile, and narrow! I have seen no credible evidence—just superficial reassurances from on high that they are “great!”

ESSA eliminates the mandate for high stakes testing (although assessment is, appropriately, still expected). With the passage of ESSA comes an opportunity to participate in a pilot of “authentic assessment”—the use of something other than commercial, multiple-choice standardized testing—to assess broad learning, and Hawai‘i should be in the forefront of this movement. We could decide how best to assess Hawai‘i student learning in this particular time and place; assess it broadly and deeply and meaningfully, through instruments that themselves are learning opportunities—project-based learning (similar to Senior Project), portfolios of learning, and other innovative assessments that provide a broader, more inclusive picture of the totality of student growth and capacity, honoring their diversity and valuing their unique strengths.

It is heartbreaking and demoralizing for teachers to have the art and craft of teaching (and all that is good about our beloved students, their growth, and their learning) reduced to a single number that narrowly reflects our students’ capabilities and only limited aspects of what happens in our classrooms. It is heartbreaking and demoralizing for teachers to be implicitly expected to structure instruction around those on “the bubble,” neglecting those both far above and far below. It is heartbreaking and demoralizing for teachers to have all the passion and creativity (innovation!) and humanity of our work reduced to a multiple-choice question: “Did enough students master a narrow set of skills deemed important by those who stand to profit from school failure?”

Teaching is sufficiently heartbreaking—and that is some of the beauty of the work; because we care deeply about our students, when some students do not grow as we had hoped, it wounds—without the imposition of a system of testing that seems designed to break our hearts all over again. Please eliminate requirements for high-stakes standardized tests and apply for the

ESSA authentic assessment pilot—act to give Hawai‘i teachers and students the opportunity to show ALL of what we do and can do.

Allow students to show what they are learning by using their learning to create something meaningful to them. Let them demonstrate their competence through an assessment that itself offers opportunities for continued learning and growth. Direct the Department of Education to apply for the Every Student Succeeds Act “Innovative Assessment Pilot” and allow teachers to work with the DoE to develop meaningful performance-based assessments, building on the expertise developed with Senior Project.

Sincerely,

David Negaard, Teacher, H.P. Baldwin High School, Maui



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

February 7, 2017

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*
Dr. Patricia Sheehey, *Vice
Chair*
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Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

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

RE: IV. A. Presentation on special education inclusion in the
Department of Education

Dear Chair Cox and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) welcomes this opportunity to provide testimony on the Department's presentation on special education inclusion in the Department of Education.

Inclusion vs. Least Restrictive Environment Data

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has a strong preference for the least restrictive environment (LRE)--educating students with disabilities with their same age peers to the maximum extent possible. IDEA cautions schools against removing students from the regular educational environment unless the nature or severity of the student's disability requires an alternative placement. The Office of Special Education Programs requires Hawaii to measure how many students are educated in regular education classrooms for 80% or more of the school day as an indicator of proper implementation of IDEA.

The Board is well aware that Hawaii has extremely low LRE data for placement in the regular education classroom (only 36.8% compared to a national average of 61.2%). However, SEAC cautions against assuming that the "inclusion rate" is equivalent. It is very likely that the actual rate of inclusion is much lower. SEAC has received countless examples over the years of students included in the general education classroom, but not given the necessary supplemental aids and services needed for academic success--hence not truly included. Indeed, there is no reliable source of statewide inclusion data that SEAC is aware of--data that has been vetted to ensure that students are receiving adequate supports, that staffing is appropriate and that



teachers have adequate planning time.

Recommendation: SEAC recommends that additional time and effort is invested to ensure that metrics for the new Inclusion Rate student success indicator measure quality as well as quantity of time in the general education environment.

Continuum of Alternative Placements

IDEA recognizes that not every student can have his or her educational needs satisfactorily met in the regular education classroom. That is why schools are required to provide a range of placements that also includes special classes, special schools, home instruction and instruction in hospitals and institutions. After determining each student's unique needs, the IEP must find the placement that is the LRE for that student.

As the emphasis to include more students with disabilities in regular education classroom gets stronger, some schools are tempted to adopt an "all inclusion" program, meaning that students are only placed in regular education classrooms irregardless of their unique needs.

Recommendation: While SEAC is a strong proponent of inclusive education, we urge the Department to ensure that schools are also aware of their responsibility to provide alternative placements where appropriate.

Vision for Inclusion

As part of our Leading by Convening process and with the urging of Deputy Superintendent Schatz, SEAC is currently developing a vision for inclusion to share with all stakeholders. We found that nationally promoted vision language for including students with disabilities meshes beautifully with the components of Nā Hopena A'ō. Consequently we contacted Jessica Worchel, Nā Hopena A'ō Special Projects Manager in the Office of Hawaii Education, who offered her edits and strong encouragement for aligning the inclusion vision with HĀ. We look forward to sharing that vision with the Board once it is adopted by SEAC.

Thank you for this important opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please feel free to contact me or Ivalee Sinclair, our Legislative Committee Chair.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan
SEAC Chair

Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee 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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Ms. Jasmine Williams
Ms. Susan Wood

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

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

RE: IV. B. Presentation on Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA")
Impacts on School Accountability

Dear Chair Cox and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) welcomes this opportunity to provide testimony on the Department's proposed accountability system under ESSA - Strive HI 3.0. Specifically we have recommendations regarding an accountability measure--achievement gap--and the parameters for identifying student subgroups in need of Targeted Supports and Intervention.

Achievement Gap. At the December 6th General Business meeting of the Board, the achievement gap was added as a Statewide Student Success Indicator in the final version of the Joint Strategic Plan. Achievement gap was defined as "the difference in meeting achievement standard between high-needs students (e.g., economic disadvantage, special needs, English Learners) and non-high-needs students."

Currently students with disabilities make up less than one fifth of the high-needs students measured in the achievement gap metric. The lackluster growth in achievement outcomes for students with IEPs is being masked by achievement gains by the other two high-needs student groups--students with an economic disadvantage and English Learners. ESSA has determined that states will no longer be able to combine groups of students into "super-subgroups" for accountability purposes. Therefore it is unclear to SEAC how Hawaii will apply this indicator.

Recommendation: SEAC recommends that targets be set for each of the subgroups included in the Strategic Plan achievement gap indicator



Recommendation (cont.):

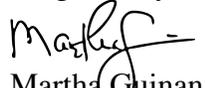
to signify progress in reducing the overall achievement gap.

Targeted Supports and Intervention. The Department is proposing using an “n” size of 20 to trigger data reporting for any particular student subgroup for the purpose of providing targeted supports and intervention. SEAC appreciates that this minimum number of students for federal reporting and accountability purposes is smaller than the current “n” size of 30. However, we are concerned that some students are being left out of the accountability system.

Recommendation: SEAC strongly recommends using an “n” size of 10 students in order to ensure that more academically vulnerable students are identified and provided supports.

Thank you for this important opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please feel free to contact me or Ivalee Sinclair, our Legislative Committee Chair.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
SEAC Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair

Testimony to support a Pilot Project on Authentic Assessment

E lawe i ke a'ō a mālama a e 'oi mau ka na'auao
He who takes his teachings and applies them increases his knowledge.

Authentic Assessment: A World-Wide Phenomenon

Fact/Research Idea #1: Knowledge is more than what we think it is.

Fact/Research Idea #2: Thinking of knowledge in the field of Education is called Epistemology

Fact/Research Idea #3: The field of Epistemology has changed radically in the last 40 years

Fact/Research Idea #4: Observable + useful knowledge is being called for throughout the world

Fact/Research Idea #5: Authentic Assessment brings forward observable/reflective knowledge

1. *How has your program helped develop teacher competency around authentic assessment?*

Answer: Authentic Assessment has been a pedagogical priority throughout my entire life in Education. For the past 15+ years I have used it in my university teacher education classrooms to help pre-service and seasoned teachers experience something beyond Standardized Testing and the inevitable collapse of creativity and initiative. I now support Authentic Assessment through a Ho'ike format at the University of Hawaii West Oahu campus in my job to "Indigenize the University." We do this within a Learning Communities format with faculty and student services staff.

2. *Why is this good for students?*

Answer: Authentic Assessment is good for students because it helps them know themselves and gives them real-world understanding tied to function and relevance. It produces dimensional experiences that allow thinking and creativity to co-exist. It also gives family members an awareness of the growth of their child and therefore simultaneously assists in that child's development. Some Authentic Assessment ideas I have used in my career:

- Ho'ike with experts in the fields of study with family and community members
- Embedded and on-going evaluation processes that induce reflection/change
- Meta Memos of process that encourage individual/collective growth
- Metaphor 'Mooring's' to increase factual usage within functional space
- Knowledge Carnivals with real world benefits to both student and society
- On-going self-reflections to keep relevance + function tied to coherence

Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer
Director of Indigenous Education
University of Hawaii West Oahu
manulani@hawaii.edu

Aloha, name is Momi Vincent.

I am a preschool Special Education teacher at Kā'umana Elementary School on the Big Island. We have all been that age once, and many have children and grandchildren who have matriculated through the Public School system. Do you remember what kind of experience you had at school when you first started? It is very different in the schools currently.....

At age 2 ½, toddlers are subjected to a comprehensive evaluation (seven assessments) that span over a 3-4 week period if parents feel a need to have their child tested for special education services. During testing, some children suffer from performance anxiety. They cry, tantrum, run away or refuse to answer questions.

In the classroom, my students, 3-year old toddlers, used to spend 15-20 minutes daily on iPads using the Smarty Ants app. The program assesses individuals in Language Arts, particularly alphabet names/sounds, mastery of simple words and reading comprehension in a series of games. At first, while tapping on keys "playing" games, they seem excited but quickly grow tired. They don't always understand what to do. Within a few weeks, students were "bored" -they didn't want to "play" iPad- they wanted to "go to centers": put together puzzles, build with Lego or blocks, paint, create tunnels, towers, cities, castles or "pretend" that they were princesses, policemen, or unicorns in the dramatic play center! This is a more suitable approach for teaching preschoolers. As a proponent for authentic assessment, I would rather observe and assess children interacting with one another in play scenarios and learning center areas to capture learning as it takes place in the context of their typical daily routine. When they are not allowed to create using tangible objects, they cannot process how to think for themselves-being a Complex Thinker/Independent Learner; or work/consult with their peers – being a Community Contributor/Effective Communicator; or see how to start and finish a project (Quality Producer)....all the attributes that allowed you to become who you are today. I am sure that you did not learn all the duties of your profession just by sitting in front of a computer being assessed.

In grades K-6, a considerable amount of classroom time is also spent on computers, laptops or iPads participating in assessments: Smarty Ants, KidBiz, TeenBiz, and Achieve 3000; *products of Achieve3000*; that provide the only patented, cloud-based solution that delivers daily differentiated instruction for nonfiction reading and writing that's precisely tailored to each student's Lexile [reading level] and iReady – a product of *Curriculum Associates* “built for the Common Core, and combines a valid and reliable growth measure and individualized instruction in a single online product that saves teachers time at a fraction of the cost of similar products”. [Imagine how much money these two companies are making from the DOE]

I have observed how these tests consume much instructional time and create extreme stress for students! In fact, I recently spoke with a few 5th and 6th graders and they expressed their dislike for Achieve 3000 and KidBiz because if they don't pass their article selection with a 75%, they have to read it again and take the quiz again! They are actually afraid of pressing the submit button! Why? Many times when they pressed submit, their score was one point shy of passing and had to retake the test! Many times, they received an even lower score! In most classes students must complete/pass 2-3 articles a week. They all agreed that they would rather **do** things like group projects or collaborate with classmates to present to their class via speeches or using a power point. - Effective and Ethical User of Technology).

In our conversation, we also talked about the SBA (Smarter Balanced Assessment) a test that is required for students in grades 3-8 and 11.. everyone groaned. Clearly, this assessment is loathed. They expressed that they worry a lot about their test scores and during the testing dates, school is boring because all they do is the test! They are already dreading the SBA even though it begins on May 4th for our school. They all agreed that school is not fun anymore because we are on our computers for most of the class period!

Please allow teachers to teach meaningful lessons to our students again! Please help make the right decision to support the Dept. of Education to apply for the Every Student Succeeds Act “Innovative Assessment Pilot” and allow teachers to “teach” and students to practice higher order thinking skills and have the ability to integrate what they learn.



hughey2000@aol.com

02/07/2017 07:26 AM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc
Subject 2-7-17 Student Achievement Committee
Testimony

Honorable Chair Ron Mizumoto and members of the Board of Education,
[Agenda Item A. Presentation on special education inclusion in the Department of Education](#)

Having a strategic plan goal of 51% inclusion raises many red flags.

1. **The least restrictive environment mandated by federal law cannot be a top-down decision forced by the DOE.** It is a decision that the IEP (Individual Education Plan) team decides together. Setting a goal creates the assumption that placement will be prearranged. Also every school must provide the full array of placements.
2. I have been informed some schools are not allowing kids to receive pull-out placement, (Special Education teachers providing instruction in the small Special Education classroom). This will lead to more due process cases.
3. How will the Department of Education change the Special Education Staffing Formula to ensure more teachers are able to offer more inclusion instruction? The current Proportional Formula is not adequate.

I have taught Special Education here for eleven years. The problem of inclusion is due to over crowded schools and a lack of Special Education teachers. Most Special Education teachers teach multiple grades and their variance list (Lists of students they have to service) has too many students to service during the school day.

If a Special Education teacher has one grade level and twenty kids, all with Special Education Language arts goals, then that teacher needs to be in all seven classrooms at the same time to provide the minutes in the IEP. If you put all 20 kids in one classroom the parents get upset that its a Special Education Classroom.

The contract has no collaboration time. No set time for teachers to collaborate. The Department of education does not provide the salary for teachers to stay after school and do it on non contractual time, 40% of teachers work a second job.

I foresee more money wasted in due process hearings because a premature goal of 51% of all students having to receive their special education instruction in an inclusion setting has no regard for every individual IEP team's decision making process, nor how the state is going to ensure the Special Education Staffing Formula is adequate. Not to mention the great highly qualified Special Education teachers we do have will leave from burn out

Recommended questions for the Board of Education to the Department of Education

1. What is the plan to fulfill the strategic plan goal of increased inclusion?
2. Is placement an IEP decision and if so then how can the Department of Education over ride the IEP teams decision making process?
3. Will Principals be asked to deny parents the full array of placement options due to the strategic plan focus on more inclusion?
4. Has the Department of Education currently or in the past, forced schools to only provide full inclusion and if so, how many due process hearings were a result?
5. Since you highlighted collaboration time, how much collaboration time during the contractual school day will be provided for teachers to collaborate?
6. Does the Department of Education have any data that the current number of special education teachers can fill the minutes in their IEP's?
7. More inclusion means more teachers, how will the Department of Education adapt their Special Education formula to ensure more inclusion is even possible?
8. How much has the Department of Education spent on settlements since the change from a Weighted Staffing formula to the Proportional Staffing formula in 2008?

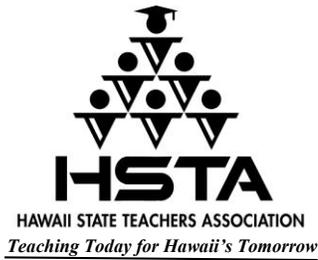
Best,

Justin Hughey
2nd Grade Special Education Teacher
King Kamehameha II Elementary

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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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Justin Hughey
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MEETING

TUESDAY, FEBURARY 7, 2017

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Cox and Members of the Board:

On today's agenda the student achievement committee will hear reports on inclusion and accountability under ESSA. HSTA believes this is an excellent opportunity to begin the discussion of using inputs, instead of only outputs for our new accountability system that will replace Strive HI.

Under ESSA, "States must create an accountability system that relies on both academic indicators like test scores, graduation rates, and English-language proficiency, plus at least one indicator of school quality or student success. Each of these indicators must carry "substantial" weight. And the academic indicators, as a group, must be given a weight "much greater" than the school-quality or student-success indicator." Basically 49% of the accountability can be about school quality and student success, the inputs.

Currently we know in Hawaii that we have an achievement gap and that our special education students are still struggling with their achievement outcomes, but what we are missing are the reasons why. Under ESSA 7% of Title I funding can be used for school improvement. When we have underperforming schools, the current method schools are told to focus on is to narrow their curriculum, in order to achieve higher scores. This approach does not deal with the real underlying problems or the whole child. It doesn't provide us with a complete picture.

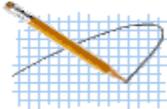
Instead what HSTA is advocating for is that we should be also looking at those possible underlying reasons that affect student achievement and measure these inputs that may contribute to the achievement gap. Once identified, we will be able to focus on placing the resources needed for those identified students to help them, and their school address those needs and close the achievement gap.

The ideal inclusion setting would place two qualified teachers, a content specialist and a special education teacher in the same classroom, as a co-teaching model. At the same time in order for those teachers to be able to do their job effectively, it is essential that the class size be low enough to be able to address their individual needs, and ensure that most of the students are regular education with only a few special education students. We also must ensure that these two teachers receive ongoing professional development and time in their workdays to analyze their instruction together and plan for meeting the needs of their students' diverse needs as the co-teaching model instructs, to be successful.

By measuring that the teachers are qualified and that the students with special needs and the regular education students are within the optimal class size ratio, then our accountability system will be able to identify potential causes of the gap, not just the outputs, and be able to apply the resources needed to solve the problem.

HSTA is advocating to the Board that if we really want to improve the problems in our schools, then when creating an accountability system we must include inputs, rather than just outputs. Both metrics go hand in hand. Just measuring outputs will not solve the achievement gap alone. We must measure inputs as well so that we may address them.

Late Testimony



Amanda Seymore <hstaseymore@gmail.com>
02/07/2017 09:50 AM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc
Subject Testimony

Have you spoken to our students their thoughts and opinions on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA)? Have you spoken to teachers to ask their professional opinion on teaching to a test?

I have. My 7th and 8th grade students feel the SBA is so hard, confusing and stressful. I have students that physically get sick and just have a mental breakdown because they are so stressed. My students feel that SBA does nothing for them. Teachers, including myself, hate teaching to a test because we have to. We have to teach to a test because the State pushes down on the schools that test poorly. Therefore, administrators push onto the teachers to practice the test more. To present more practice test questions to students. We are tired of all the SBA components. when the test scores come out, how does it benefit the students? If we are not able to link a specific aspect of SBA that has better prepared our students, we should look into Authentic Assessments.

My students have an IEP, SBA should not be part of their curriculum. They are significantly below grade level and I have to teach them a state mandated grade level curriculum and give them a grade level assessment because the State says so. My students don't deserve that.

Mahalo for your time,
Amanda Seymore
Aliamanu Middle School

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Late Testimony



Jodi Kunimitsu <jodikunimitsu@gmail.com>

02/07/2017 11:04 AM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us

cc

Subject Testimony

Chair Cox, Vice Chair Bergin, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jodi Kunimitsu and I am a math teacher at Maui High School. I am here to share with you my thoughts on the over-emphasis of testing in our public schools. I am a product of the Hawaii public school system, having attended grades K-12 on the island of Kaua'i. In addition to this, 13 of my 14 years of teaching has been in this public school system. Throughout my lifetime, I have seen the shift from educating the "whole child" to the focus on "standards based" education.

When I was in school, we were taught that things like respecting others, showing up on time, and participating in class were more important than the grades on our report card or a test score. These are not things that we are currently emphasizing in our schools. The main emphasis has been on testing and standards-based grading. In other words – students can be absent the entire quarter, disrespect teachers all day long, refuse to participate in the lessons, but must still be given the opportunity to pass the test – the test, which is the only thing that should be determining their grade. It sounds crazy, but this is the reality of today's classroom.

I strongly believe that student achievement can be measured in many different ways. We must learn to value and educate the whole-child, not simply focus on grades and test scores. As a math teacher I see the negative effects of testing on a daily basis. My students experience with math is this: learn a lesson, take a test, learn a lesson, take a test, repeat, repeat, repeat. For a student who struggles with math, it is a recurring nightmare that will not end until they earn their third credit of high school math. As teachers, we try our best to make the lessons interesting and emphasize the learning over the grades, but in the end, they will still need to be assessed on their learning and for them, that equates to "tests" and "grades".

If you are thinking "well, why don't those teachers learn to be more innovative?", here's why: our students are tested in math almost every single year until they graduate. Do you want to know how our math teachers are judged on our teaching performance? Test scores. Every year. Let's see how our students do on the STAR Renaissance test? Let's test them at least twice a year so that we can see if they have made progress on that test. Oh, but we can't test them in the third quarter, because they have to take the ACT test. Don't forget about the Smarter Balanced

Assessment and those End-of-Course exams during the fourth quarter. What ends up happening is schools then look at those test scores and try to restructure whatever is happening just to bring the test scores up. Everything centers around test scores.

As a Hawaii public school graduate and teacher, I take pride in our school system and want it to be the best it can be. I want all Hawaii public school graduates to be proud of our system. This won't happen if we are constantly focusing on testing and not focusing on all the other positive ways our students are achieving success.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jodi T. M. Kunimitsu

Kihei, Maui

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