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An AmeriCorps Program

September 1, 2017

The Honorable Brian De Lima  
Chairperson, Human Resources Committee  
Board of Education  
PO Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96804



RE: Testimony in Support of HR Committee Agenda Item III.A: Committee Action on  
Committee strategic priorities for the 2017-2018 school year

Chair De Lima and Members of the Committee,

Teach For America - Hawai'i (TFA Hawai'i) supports HR Committee Chairperson De Lima's recommendation to adopt the strategic priorities presented for decision on September 5, 2017.

Providing an excellent education for all students requires sustained partnership and support from a broad and diverse coalition. TFA Hawai'i is proud to be a long standing partner of the Department of Education in working to recruit, develop, and support a network of leaders committed to educational equity. This includes supporting teachers in the classroom and alumni pursuing careers as school administrators, state-level leaders, and other positions of influence.

Several proposed priorities resonate with our organization. First, we appreciate your recognition that addressing teacher vacancies is a complex and widespread problem that requires monitoring, creative solutions, and partnerships. TFA Hawai'i invests significant resources into helping find, place, and mentor outstanding new teachers committed to serving in hard to fill positions. To that end, we work closely with our teachers and partners to engage students in teaching as a career choice. We also encourage strong kama'āina and Native Hawaiian candidates to positively impact their communities by joining the teaching profession.

Second, we share your interest in protecting our special education and English language learner populations. While TFA Hawai'i endeavors to provide our teachers with the support necessary to succeed in any placement, we remain sensitive to the need to invest additional resources and support to serve our most vulnerable students. We support any effort to ensure that systemic disadvantages do not impede the educational opportunities open to these students.

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Finally, we support your efforts to strengthen leadership pipelines. Given our commitment to developing leaders that will continue to advocate for students throughout their lifetimes, TFA Hawai'i values the partnership of the Department of Education and the Board of Education in helping to expand opportunities for passionate and effective educators to serve students at all levels of leadership.

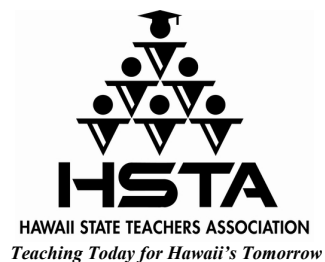
Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. We look forward to continuing to partner towards the vision that one day, all students will have access to an excellent education.

Mahalo,



Jill Baldemor  
Executive Director  
Teach For America - Hawai'i

**TEACHFORAMERICA**



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RE: AGENDA ITEM III, A, COMMITTEE ACTION ON STRATEGIC  
PRIORITIES FOR THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2017

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair De Lima and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports** adoption of the proposed Human Resources Committee strategic priorities for the 2017-2018 school year.

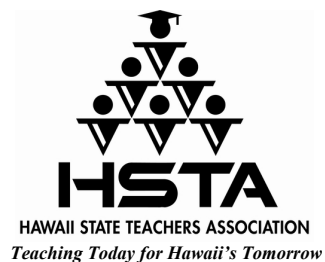
Hawai'i is experiencing a teacher shortage crisis. From 2011 to 2014, the DOE suffered an average of 359 unfilled vacancies per year. Yet, departmental data showed 531 vacancies for the 2016-2017 school year, a 45 percent increase from the 2013-14 school year.

Even more troublingly, the highest rates of inexperienced and unqualified teachers are found in high-poverty communities. In *Equitable Access to Excellent Educators*, a DOE report published in 2015, the department found that an average of 14.48 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools are inexperienced (haven't completed one full year of full-time teaching), unqualified (have not obtained full licensure in Hawai'i), or teaching out of their field of expertise. In high-poverty schools, however, an average of 21.48 percent of teachers are inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field. In other words, high-poverty schools have roughly 50 percent more teachers who are inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field than their low-poverty peers.

For example, the study determined that in the Aiea-Moanalua-Radford Complex Area, the state's lowest-poverty complex area with a poverty rate of 38 percent, only 10 percent of teachers are inexperienced, 3 percent unlicensed, and 2 percent

teaching out of their field of expertise, totaling 15 percent of the complex's teacher workforce. The Nanakuli-Waianae Complex Area, in contrast, has an 81 percent student poverty rate, with 21 percent of the school's teachers being inexperienced, 8 percent unlicensed, and 9 percent teaching out-of-field, totaling 38 percent of the complex's teacher workforce. Similar disparities in teacher quality were discovered throughout the state, as the chart below shows (taken from p. 28 of the study; see end of testimony for DOE definitions taken from p. 30 of the study).

<b>Complex Area Averages</b>	<b>% Poverty</b>	<b>% New Teachers (Inexp)</b>	<b>% Not Licensed (Unqual)</b>	<b>% NHQT (OOF)</b>
<b>Statewide Poverty Average %</b>	<b>55%</b>			
<b>Statewide Average for High Native Hawaiian Schools</b>		<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Statewide Average for High Pacific Islander Schools</b>		<b>12%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>
CA Aiea-Moanalua-Radford	38%	10%	3%	2%
CA Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui	53%	9%	3%	4%
CA Campbell-Kapolei	46%	12%	3%	3%
CA Castle-Kahuku	56%	9%	4%	3%
CA Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani	50%	8%	2%	2%
CA Hana-Lahainaluna-Lanai-Molokai	67%	8%	4%	5%
CA Honokaa-Kealahou-Kohala-Konawaena	68%	12%	8%	8%
CA Hilo-Waiakea	63%	6%	2%	3%
CA Kailua-Kalaheo	44%	9%	6%	3%
CA Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt	57%	7%	3%	2%
CA Kapaa-Kauai-Waimea	51%	11%	4%	6%
CA Kau-Keaau-Pahoa	86%	15%	4%	6%
CA Leilehua-Mililani-Waialua	46%	9%	2%	4%
CA Nanakuli-Waianae	81%	21%	8%	9%
CA Pearl City-Waipahu	46%	7%	3%	3%
<b>SCHOOLS WITH UNIQUE CONDITIONS</b>				
CA Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani – Hawai'i School for the Deaf and Blind	71%	67%	42%	75%
CA Kailua-Kalaheo – Olomana School - For incarcerated youth	59%	15%	12%	27%
CA Kapaa-Kauai-Waimea - Niihau School - There are only 2 teachers who teach on Niihau. Niihau is a privately owned island that requires permission from the Robinson family to access/enter the island.	50%	0%	50%	50%



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We must not allow inadequate instructional quality to impair the futures of our most vulnerable children. As your committee considers creative ways to address the teacher recruitment and retention crisis over the coming year, we hope that you will continue to monitor, evaluate, and publicly report the differences in teacher workforce equity in our schools and make the closure of the teacher equity gap a top priority. Specifically, we ask that as you continue to report on teacher equity, you require the department to disaggregate future data by: 1) including the raw data regarding the number of inexperienced, unqualified, and out-of-field teachers in each school, rather than just percentages of such teachers; 2) adding teacher vacancies to the report to determine to what extent vacancies may be higher at high-poverty schools than low-poverty schools; and 3) including data on the number of teachers who fall into overlapping categories, i.e. how many teachers are both inexperienced *and* teaching out-of-field.

We know that we can solve this problem. In fact, some schools are already paving the way. A school I recently visited, Ka Waihona o Ka Na'auao Public Charter School in Waianae, has a 100 percent teacher retention rate. Their success has been achieved by recruiting from within their own community and employing a whole child educational model that emphasizes arts and cultural content. Rather than teaching to improve test scores, Ka Waihona's teachers are leading small, air conditioned classes in cultural literacy courses, like Hawaiian language, hula, and environmental sustainability, and they are being rewarded for their efforts with better-than-average pay. Ka Waihona should not be an outlier in our education department. Instead, it should serve as a model for how to retain great teachers at all schools in our public school system.

To ensure that all of Hawai'i's children receive a quality education, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** the strategic priorities set before you today.

## Gap Identification

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The data discussed above was presented to an initial stakeholder group for discussion focused on using the data collected to determine any significant gaps. The initial stakeholder group came to a consensus that:

1. Poverty is dispersed across the state, and
2. Minority populations have a higher percentage of Unqualified and Out-of-Field teachers.

After studying the data and taking into consideration the identified confidence intervals, the initial stakeholder group identified the most significant gaps were with respect to Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students, as follows:

### **Equity Gap 1 (High Poverty/High Minority – Unqualified):**

High poverty/high minority students of Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnicity are more likely to have an *Unqualified* teacher in comparison to schools with low poverty or low Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnic student population(s).

### **Equity Gap 2 (High Poverty/High Minority – Out-of-Field):**

High poverty/ high minority students of Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnicity are more likely to have an *Out-of-Field* teacher in comparison to schools with low poverty or low Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnic student population(s).

As HIDOE continued to meet with additional stakeholder groups and analyze data for specific areas/populations, it became evident that an additional equity gap exists:

### **Equity Gap 3 (High Poverty/High Minority – Inexperienced):**

High poverty/ high minority students of Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnicity are more likely to have an *Inexperienced* teacher in comparison to schools with low poverty or low Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander ethnic student population(s).

The HIDOE's Plan addresses these three identified gaps. .