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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RE: AGENDA ITEM IV, A, PRESENTATION ON ANNUAL REPORTING OF THE 2017-2020 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND BOARD OF EDUCATION JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN INDICATORS FOR GOAL 2 (STAFF SUCCESS)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2017

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

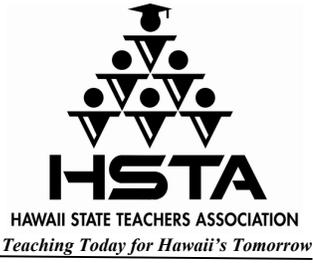
Chair De Lima and Members of the Committee:

According to Department of Education data being reported on today, for the 2017-2018 school year, the number of teaching positions filled with teachers who have completed a state approved teacher education program (SATEP) fell by 1 percent from the 2016-2017 school year. In raw numbers, the state saw 1,011 SATEP vacancies for the 2017-2018 school year, up from 920 SATEP vacancies in 2016-2017 (SATEP vacancies include positions that are filled with emergency hires and long-term substitutes, teachers who have completed a SATEP certification and are teaching outside of their field of expertise).

While the special education SATEP vacancy rate remained the same from the 2016-2017 school year to the 2017-2018 school year, at 86 percent, the raw data shows a slight increase in SPED SATEP vacancies, from 290 in 2016-2017 to 311 in 2017-2018. Again, though, these numbers do not account for teachers who have obtained SATEP certification in a field other than special education, but are placed in a SPED teaching position because of the statewide shortage of qualified SPED teachers. Thus, we can conclude that the problem of SPED teacher attrition—in which 1 out of every 6 current SPED teachers have not completed state-sanctioned teacher training—shows no signs of abating and may, in fact, be on the cusp of getting worse.

To address the magnitude of our state's teacher recruitment and retention problems, we must evaluate the long-term impact of the ongoing teacher shortage. A typical general education public school student will encounter approximately 45-50 teachers over the course of their academic career. During their time in school, such a student would likely receive instruction from at least 4 or 5 non-SATEP teachers. We know, however, that instructional inequality is worse in high-poverty, high-minority districts. As the DOE found in its 2015 study *Equitable Access to Excellent Educators*, 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.

Today, we are asking the board to consider the following suggestions. First, we ask you to follow the model set forth in *Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* and direct the department to break down SATEP fill rates by complex area and school, for both general and special education, to determine which areas have the most difficult time filling positions with qualified teachers. We also request that the department release the number of teacher positions not filled by a SATEP certified teacher that were, in turn, filled by emergency hires or remained vacant at the beginning of this school year. Second, we urge you to continue to support investing in "Grow Your Own" initiatives that provide a pathway for educational assistants and substitute teachers to become certified classroom teachers, often in hard-to-fill and high-minority schools. Waianae High School, Nanakuli High School, and Campbell High School have received teachers from INPEACE's Kulia and Ka Lama Education Academy, for example, who provide quality instruction to students who share their communal backgrounds. Relatedly, we believe that the board and department should connect high school students with educational careers by providing scholarships to low-income students who enroll in teacher training programs. Third, we encourage you to deliver on your promise to empower teachers by limiting the amount of time spent on standardized testing, expanding the use of authentic assessments in our schools, and providing more time for teachers to collaborate with one another on implementing innovative instructional methods. Fourth and finally, we ask that you continue to support the establishment of a dedicated funding stream for education. Without adequate funding, we cannot create the schools our keiki deserve.



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For our students to succeed, we must resolve our teacher shortage crisis. We look forward to working with you to ensure that all of our children are given the chance to learn from excellent, professionally trained educators.



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council

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November 21, 2017

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Advisory Council**

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Brian De Lima, Chair
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Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
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RE: IV. A. Presentation on annual reporting of the 2017-2020
Department of Education and Board of Education Joint Strategic
Plan indicators for Goal 2 (Staff Success)

Dear Chair De Lima and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) appreciates this opportunity to comment and make recommendations related to the two key Strategic Plan indicators of staff success--teacher recruitment and retention.

Teacher recruitment. The gap between special education and general education teacher recruitment has remained static at 8 percentage points for the past two school years. While acknowledging the nationwide shortage of special education teachers, SEAC recommends the following actions to increase the availability of qualified and effective special education teachers:

- 1) Identify how many of the special education teachers who graduated from a state approved teacher education program received preservice coursework in special education. SEAC is aware of a number of general education teachers who are serving as special education teachers without having any foundational preparation. Targeting these teachers for professional development will help to ensure that students receive effective instruction.
- 2) Set a specific statewide target for special education teacher recruitment to ensure adequate focus and resources.

Teacher retention. SEAC recommended adding teacher retention as a Strategic Plan student success indicator last October. We specifically were seeking information regarding the retention of special education teachers; however, this information is missing from the dynamic



Teacher retention (cont.)

report tool. Given that it may be difficult to recruit 100% of the special education teachers needed by our students with disabilities, it is vitally important that we retain the teachers that we currently have who may leave the field for reasons other than retirement or a move to the Mainland. The true costs of not retaining qualified teachers is far greater than recruitment and training costs. The loss to student achievement cannot be underestimated. We therefore request that this data be available as a field in the dynamic display, so that it may result in a higher prioritization of efforts to provide supports that help to retain special education teachers, such as induction and mentoring by special education master teachers.

Thank you for your attention to our comments and recommendations. If you have any questions, please contact us. We are always ready to partner with the Board and the Department to be part of the solution to long-standing problems in the delivery of quality special education services.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
SEAC Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair