



Ed Chevy <livechevy59@yahoo.com>

09/04/2019 10:22 AM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc "edchevy59@gmail.com"
<edchevy59@gmail.com>
Subject HSDB Deaf faculty predominately
controlled by hearing institutions.

Aloha! My name is Ed Chevy. I am a deaf parent from a 3rd generation Deaf Family. I had access to power of communication, growing up deaf in America using the American Sign Language. I attended a Deaf school in Berkeley, California and Gallaudet College, now university at Washington DC. Growing up in a deaf school helped me be who I am without fear. Having a deaf principal at the HSDB is an important matter for deaf students who look up to a Deaf principal as a role model and to employ a sense of self-esteem because no one is left out.

The idea of having a hearing principal to replace a Deaf principal is not right, not smart. It hurts the deaf students, the school and community as well. I believe that if we educate the hearing institutions about deaf culture, deaf education and our language, we will be able to have equal rights. Please consider what is right for us, working together having the hearing community and deaf community to be partner and have good attitude.

Thank you very much

E!

Sent from my iPhone

**

This email was scanned by the Cisco IronPort Email Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to spamreport@notes.k12.hi.us. This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection.

**



Kathy <kakikoma@icloud.com>

09/04/2019 12:06 PM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc
Subject Testimony: Deaf Principal Back!
Please!

Aloha. It's for the sake Deaf Hawaii kids. They really need a good role model. I rather have a Deaf or signing principal than using an interpreter for the non-signing principal.

Yesterday there was a toddler storytime at one library, and they had an interpreter there. I notice few Deaf toddlers didn't pay attention much like Hearing toddlers. I could tell our granddaughter Aria prefers a signing story teller.

Since 1956, I went to HSDB (formerly Diamond Head School) until I graduated in 1968. I grew up with oral education until 1963 or 1964. I was struggling very hard with speech training, keeping me in the dark age. My education was terrible at this time.

Thanks to Mr. Dunning, he introduced American Sign Language (ASL) to HSDB in 1963 or 1964. My eyes opened big, and I had only 4-5 years of sign language training until I then entered Gallaudet (Deaf college). I have to thank my family, too, for using sign language "under the table."

Sadly, many of my school friends could not go to the college, for today they still have problems reading and writing. But they still use sign language for effective communication.

I support that Bilingual Education is a very important tool for Deaf Kids, using both ASL and English. So they'll get best education that way.

Granddaughter Aria is only 2 1/2 years old. She can count to 40 by rote in sign language. She can sign over 500 signs. Plus she can even finger-spell over 50 words. Her Deaf mother really works hard with Aria. Wow!

Please think of our Deaf Hawaii kids' special needs first. Thank you for listening.

~ Kathy Thomas, Kaneohe

Aria's grandmother
1968 "HSDB" graduate

**

This email was scanned by the Cisco IronPort Email Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to spamreport@notes.k12.hi.us. This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection.

**



Thomas Graham <tgrahamonline@icloud.com>

09/04/2019 12:40 PM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us

cc

Subject Testimony for returning Dr. Ramos as
Principal of HSDB at General
Business Meeting 09/05/19

Tom Graham, long time teacher and supporter of Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB)

Aloha! I'm a Deaf person and grew up in Hawaii's DOE system (I graduated from Kalani High School - 1979 and from UH Manoa - 1987). After receiving my Masters in Deaf Education, I returned my family to Hawaii and have worked as a DOE Teacher for the past 26 years. 23 of these years, I've worked at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB). This is one of the most unique schools in Hawaii where the staff uses American Sign Language to communicate and teach its children and to bridge this language to textual English. I have worked under a number of administrators and Principals and even served as a TA Vice Principal for one year.

Three years ago, after an expensive and time consuming national search, Dr. Angel Ramos was hired to lead HSDB. As the school's Registrar, I work very closely with him. I have watch him empower our staff and support us as we expanded the school's ASL Program, the After School Program, the Robotics Program (of which I co-coach) and many other programs. Dr. Ramos has created a welcoming environment where communication is clear and has helped our student population increase (not an easy task for a school that only accepts Special Ed students based on their IEP needs). Under his Leadership, the HSDB Dorms opened for Oahu students (for those who live far from the school or have various challenges - including homelessness). Dr. Ramos has worked under three Complex Area Superintendents (CAS) - including the BOE Chair, Ms. Catherine Payne. Until the most recent CAS, he has received favorable evaluations of his work at HSDB.

On August 1st, Dr. Ramos was reassigned to a hearing school as a Vice Principal w/ ASL Interpreter support and a TA Principal who is non-signing and has no training in Deaf Education (esp. w/ the use of ASL) was assigned (w/ interpreter

support) to our school. It is like being on a ship and having the captain reassigned then receiving a new captain who can only speak to its staff and students through an interpreter and has no real idea where to guide the ship. We strongly encourage the Board of Education to investigate this matter and encourage CAS Mahoe to reinstate Dr. Ramos. This action has caused our ship, our house to become divided and without direction. Returning Dr. Ramos is the pono thing to do and will help our school to reunite and regain its sense of direction. Mahalo!

**

This email was scanned by the Cisco IronPort Email Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to spamreport@notes.k12.hi.us. This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection.

**



Shannon McMahon <aslart7@icloud.com>

09/04/2019 12:58 PM

To testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us
cc
Subject Testimony: Deaf Principal Back

Aloha! I support that Bilingual Education is a very important tool for Deaf Kids, using both ASL (American Sign Language) and English. So they'll get best education that way.

My granddaughter Aria is only 2 1/2 years old. She can count to 40 by rote in ASL. She can sign over 500 signs. Plus she can even finger-spell over 50 words. Wow!

Yesterday there was a toddler storytime at one library, and they had an interpreter there. I noticed few Deaf toddlers didn't pay attention much like Hearing toddlers. My granddaughter Aria loves me for a "signing" story teller.

So, I rather have a Deaf or signing principal than using an interpreter for the non-signing principal. I'd want that for my granddaughter's advanced education!

Please think of our Deaf Hawaii kids' educational needs first. Mahalo for listening.

Shannon McMahon, Kaneohe
Aria's Deaf grandfather

Sent from my iPhone

**

This email was scanned by the Cisco IronPort Email Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to spamreport@notes.k12.hi.us. This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection.

**



"B. Nakamoto" <honukahu@icloud.com>

09/04/2019 02:24 PM

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

Aloha,

My name is Brian Nakamoto and I am currently a teacher at Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB), teaching mathematics to high school students. I have been working at HSDB since 2011.

I am also the former student of HSDB from 1991 to 1999. I returned to Hawai'i after spending nearly a decade in the mainland for high school and college years in Los Angeles and Washington D.C., respectively.

I reminisce into my years at HSDB and I remembered fondly that there was a Deaf administrator, Dr. Jane K. Fernandes, who was an excellent role model. She also has extensive depth of Deaf education as an administrator at HSDB, formerly Statewide Center for Students with Hearing and Visual Impairments at the time of her presence as the administrator. I remembered vividly that the school spirit during her administration was pretty high. All students treat each other like one big 'ohana. That even continued after Dr. Jane K. Fernandes's departure and the administrator position was filled with Dr. Jeanne G. Prickett.

Dr. Jeanne G. Prickett was another magnificent administrator at HSDB. She revamped a lot of things at HSDB such as the establishment of Academic Bowl team that compete with other Deaf and hard of hearing students from other Deaf and mainstreamed schools in the West Regional Academic Bowl competition, hosted by Gallaudet University Youth Programs, training for teachers and educational assistants through professional developments, and much more.

I remember when I started working here at HSDB with an interim principal, Christina Juan, and it was difficult for many students because they want to be able to communicate with the principal directly, but they have to wait for an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter to be present before they can talk with the principal on various topics, ranging from Student Body Government-related stuff to their own opinions about the school itself. It was also a burden for us the teachers because more than 50% of us are Deaf and we cannot communicate with the principal directly, thus holding many important issues back.

When Christina Juan announced about her departure, it puts a lot of us into the misery about who would be the next principal. It also puts a lot of students in misery and even few of them were arranging a protest on their own. They were arranging a protest because they did not want another principal with a lack of sign language. The misery endured through the whole summer until the announcement of Dr. Angel Ramos as our new principal, many of us were overjoyed because we finally got another administrator who could sign after

five years of dealing with the hearing principal through the communication via ASL interpreter.

That did last for few years until recently, on August 1, 2019, we were brought with a temporary principal, Kinau Gardner of Kāhala Elementary School. We were surprised about that, especially with no explanation coming from our complex area superintendent, Dr. Rochelle Mahoe.

I want to assure you that Dr. Angel Ramos has done tremendously for HSDB. One instance is that he aimed to push all of our students to graduate with diplomas, rather than to let them go with a certificate at end of their secondary education. He also invested in the expansion of our transition program to accommodate all of our high school students with college and career readiness. He also has lifted so many of the students' spirits when they see Dr. Angel Ramos, a Deaf individual, as their principal and it is of no surprise that he is also the role model for many of our students as well. With Dr. Angel Ramos in presence as our principal, it gives me the positive affirmation that HSDB is in the good hands. Our students' language acquisition and academic expertise have been thriving and I even have more students taking Pre-Calculus class with me. That did not happen during the time with Christina Juan's administration.

Please take this into the consideration for the future of our students. HSDB needs a principal that has extensive knowledge of Deaf education, complete empathy in Deaf culture, and unprecedented passion in improving the lives of our Deaf students.

Thank you.

Brian Nakamoto
honukahu@icloud.com

**
This email was scanned by the Cisco IronPort Email Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to spamreport@notes.k12.hi.us. This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection.

**

September 5, 2019

Hawai'i Board of Education

General Business Meeting

Catherine Payne, Chair

Brian De Lima, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair De Lima, and Members,

We would like to comment on item IV D (2) update on the development of a 10-year Board of Education and Department of Education Strategic Plan.

We are a group of equity in education advocates that represent the voices of Native Hawaiian, parent, disability, higher education, multilingual, social justice, and education reform communities, and are committed to advocate for students who have historically struggled in our public education system.

We look forward to seeing the HIDOE draft of the 2030 Promise plan and appreciate the inclusion of stakeholder feedback throughout this entire process. As we move into the discussion phase on aligning the plan with benchmarks and metrics, we would like to reiterate the message that we have provided in previous testimonies, that in order to track the progress of the Strategic Plan and provide guidance and clarity to schools and the community, the Department should take a ***balanced approach of including both quantitative and qualitative measures.***

We also hope to see the Department answer the following questions, which have been echoed by fellow community partners:

- 1) Moving into the new strategic plan, how does the Department plan to specifically address 2017-2020 Strategic Plan goals that have not been reached, including chronic absenteeism, the achievement gap, and foundational academic proficiency?

Relatedly, at the upcoming Data Retreat scheduled for November 7, 2019, will the Department provide the public with a comprehensive evaluation on the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan that includes an analysis of each indicator, lessons learned, and strategies needed to reach these goals? Ideally, this report would be produced in advance of the final approval of the 2030 Promise Plan and would guide the new plan.

- 2) For any benchmarks and indicators selected for the new strategic plan, will the Department disaggregate data to better show the performance of high-needs

students? This includes indicators such as college-going rate and dual credit attainment.

In addition to more transparency around disaggregated data, will the Department provide clarity on what specifically is being done to address the subgroup performance, whether or not there is progress, and why?

We have come together as signatories on this letter as organizations, identified by the organization name in parenthesis, and as individuals who are not representing affiliated organizations.

Mahalo,

Martha Guinan (SEAC)

Patricia Halagao

Gavin Thornton (Hawai'i Appleseed)

Cheri Nakamura (HE'E Coalition)

Paula Adams (Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance)

David Miyashiro (HawaiiKidsCAN)

William "Pila" Wilson

Deborah Zysman (Hawai'i Children's Action Network)