



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony Re: Graduation Requirement Waiver

Curt Muraoka <curtmuraoka@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 6:59 PM

Position: Yes to waiver

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I strongly encourage you to waive graduation requirements for the remainder of SY2019-2020 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter. In the context of this global pandemic, business as usual must be set aside. These young adults are already facing the probable cancellation of traditional graduation ceremonies as an emotionally meaningful rite of passage. In addition to this special dispensation, I encourage the DOE to devise lasting and meaningful ways to offer public recognition to each and every graduate individually via full page ads, special sections in newspapers, on the DOE website, et cetera.

It occurred to me that our collective actions during these trying times may become primary source material for future historians. Regardless, what you do for the Class of 2020 will be remembered by them and their `ohana well into the future. I hope you will turn this difficult moment into a meaningful opportunity.

Sincerely,

Curtis Muraoka
Konawaena High School

Susan Pcola-Davis: GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

4/2/2020

A. STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL: Board Action on Department of Education waiver request to cancel federally required statewide standardized assessments for the 2019-2020 School Year, including Smarter Balanced Assessments ("SBA") for English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics, Hawaii State Science Assessments and Biology 1 end of course exams; Hawaii State Alternate Assessments; and the Kaiapuni Assessment Educational Outcomes (KĀ'EO)

B. STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL; WELL THOUGHT OUT

Board Action on Department request for waiver of Board Policy 102-15 High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for School Year 2019-2020

1. **STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL:** The Department requires flexibility in order to effectively meet the challenges of this unprecedented COVID-19 crisis to ensure the success of our students, particularly our approximately 10,000 seniors.

2. **STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL:** The recommended action will allow students to continue moving forward with their future plans for advancement in school and in their lives.

3. **STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL:** For the Class of 2020, a denial of this recommendation could jeopardize existing plans to attend college, join the military, or start careers as working professionals.

4. **STRONGLY SUPPORT APPROVAL, ACTION IS NOT PREMATURE AND IS WELL THOUGHT OUT:** The unique circumstances of COVID-19 requires the Department to prioritize the collective needs of our students, parents, professional staff and extended educational community to ensure the success of all public school students in achieving their educational goals. The Department remains committed to collaborating with all stakeholders to find innovative solutions in attaining this objective. Thus, the Department anticipates the overall reaction to this recommendation to be favorable.

Strongly Agree: The general consensus is that a waiver approval is a positive step forward in removing the unanticipated obstacles that may inhibit high school seniors from graduating on time.

4/2/2020

VI. Discussion Items

A. Presentation on March 19, 2020 letter of commitment regarding COVID-19 preparation and response from Department Superintendent Christina Kishimoto to Hawaii State Teachers Association Executive Director Wilbert Holck

1. On March 24, 2020, the Department announced school facilities ***will remain closed to students through April 30, 2020***, based on the latest guidance and information from health officials and elected leaders. A letter addressed to HDOE parents and guardians to be on the lookout regarding **online resources and instructional packets** from their child's school and teachers.

Comment: Due to the unknown duration of this pandemic, is the DOE pre planning putting into place the use of google classroom. This will be another learning curve for teachers and students. I fully believe this will stretch past the end of the school year. Parents would appreciate knowing the next step will be available **without delay**. I would add that you may have to consider some of the school year to be completed during the summer. Elementary school students cannot just go to the next grade without finishing the content knowledge to prepare them.

Comment: All of this is a form of Homeschooling. The DOE website has a page dedicated to homeschooling. Please consider a thorough review of its current contents in order for families to prepare for another option.

2. For the duration of March 23, 2020 through the end of COVID-19 related school closures, teachers shall not be required to remain at nor report to schools or worksites and shall ***perform teacher-initiated activities and planning and collaboration activities in alignment with a school's instructional plan***, from a remote location such as their home.

Comment: I would like to add that grade level teachers collaborate with each other. There needs to be a means for collaboration. In addition, the family will need a means of communication with the teacher.

3. If students are required to ***make up lost instructional days and time***, the Employer shall negotiate any changes to the current school calendar and/or teachers' workday/year with the HSTA.

Comment: This is a conundrum. All stakeholders need to be involved in the decision making. This includes parents and students.

4. Teachers without access to necessary resources to engage in work from a remote location, including but not limited to equipment, software and internet access shall be provided such access by the Employer or be held harmless.

Comment: If the homeroom teacher (elementary) is unable to remotely work, the student will need to be placed into another classroom.

Susan Pcola-Davis: GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

4/2/2020

4. Classroom teachers shall assess their students' essential educational needs in alignment with a school's instructional plan and ***determine the learning and enrichment activities needed for students*** for the duration of COVID-19- related school closures.

Comment:

Due to the individual nature of each student, although this could be done, I am confident that it will be done.

Classroom teachers shall have the freedom to ***use their professional training and judgment to determine the scope and method to be utilized in providing appropriate learning and enrichment activities*** in alignment with a school's instructional plan.

Comment: This plan can not work any other way.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony re 4/2/20 BOE agenda item V.B.

Ron Whitmore <rwhitmorejr@gmail.com>

Sun, Mar 29, 2020 at 12:19 PM

Reply-To: rwhitmorejr@gmail.com

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Name: Ron Whitmore, parent of Hilo High School senior

Meeting: April 2, 2020 BOE General Business Meeting

Agenda Item: V. Action Items, B. Board Action on Department request for waiver of Board Policy 102-15 High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for School Year 2019-2020

Position: Strongly Support

My son is a senior at Hilo High School. He is one quarter of one English credit away from fulfilling his graduation requirements. He is ready to move forward with future plans for work and college. However, he is unable to apply for many jobs or serve in the military without a high school diploma, nor will colleges enroll him until he graduates. Please allow high schools the flexibility to award diplomas to graduating seniors so that they can move on with their lives.

March 30, 2020

Board of Education
State of Hawaii
General Business Meeting
Virtual Meeting

Via Email to Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Re: Testimony of Common Cause Hawaii Commenting on Agenda Item III, Board
Action on temporary rules of operation to conduct virtual board meetings,
April 2, 2020 General Business Meeting

Dear Board of Education:

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. Transparency in government is key to a healthy and strong democracy. Common Cause Hawaii provides comments regarding the transparency of the April 2, 2020 General Business Meeting of the Board of Education (Board) and specifically Agenda Item III, Board Action on temporary rules of operation to conduct virtual board meetings.

The entire State is under a stay at home, work from home Third Supplemental Emergency Proclamation dated March 23, 2020, with certain exceptions, due to the COVID-19 crisis. Even the Thursday, April 2, 2020 General Business Meeting of the Board is to be conducted virtually.

By Supplemental Emergency Proclamation dated March 16, 2020, the open meetings law was suspended. "Boards[, however,] shall consider reasonable measures to allow public participation consistent with social distancing practices, such as providing notice of meetings, allowing submission of written testimony on agenda items, live streaming meetings, and posting minutes of meetings online." See Governor Ige's March 16, 2020 Supplemental Emergency Proclamation https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2003109-ATG_COVID-19-Supplementary-Proclamation-signed.pdf at pg. 3.

To the Board's credit, the April 2, 2020 Agenda, including Agenda Item III, specifically allows for written testimony to be submitted on agenda items, which will be posted on the Board website. Further, the April 2, 2020 Agenda appears to be limited to matters dealing with COVID-19.

Unfortunately, no oral testimony will be accepted at the April 2, 2020 General Business Meeting. The public will be able to observe the proceedings of the April 2, 2020 General

Business Meeting of the Board via video and audio means, and efforts will be made to accommodate the disability community by request.

According to Agenda Item III, Board Action on temporary rules of operation to conduct virtual board meetings, oral public testimony will not be accepted during virtual meetings because of the practical, logistical, and technological challenges and disruptions it presents. See http://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/GBM_2020-04-02_Action%20on%20temporary%20rules%20of%20operation.pdf at pg. 3 and attached Exhibit A at pg. 2. This is a specious argument. The Board is able to conduct meetings and interface virtually. The public should be allowed to participate remotely also. There are many proven technologies – Zoom, GoToMeeting, BlueJeans, etc. – which will permit the same remote access by the public.

While the public may be able to submit written testimony to the Board and view the live Board proceedings, this does not allow for true public participation in our democracy. Certain matters may arise during discussions between Board members at the April 2, 2020 General Business Meeting, which were not contemplated by a pre-written public testimony. This is why public oral participation at meetings is so vitally important. Public participation – interacting and having an exchange with our elected and government officials – is the cornerstone of our democracy.

True public participation is particularly necessary where the Board is dealing with our children and our children's future. The Board needs to hear directly – the passion and the urgency – in the children's voices and the voices of their loved ones. A written piece of paper will not adequately convey the message.

To be sure, the Board's Agenda Item III, Board Action on temporary rules of operation to conduct virtual board meetings, is a good start to preserving some of the spirit of the sunshine law that was hastily suspended by Governor Ige's March 16, 2020 Supplemental Emergency Proclamation.

Common Cause Hawaii requests that the public be allowed to participate via remote access and not just observe after providing written testimony. Technology exists to permit this. Democracy and transparency matter in these times of crisis.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director
Common Cause Hawaii





1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President

Osa Tui, Jr.
Vice President

Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

RE: AGENDA ITEM VI, A: Discussion Items: Presentation on March 19, 2020 letter of commitment regarding COVID-19 preparation and response from Department Superintendent Christina Kishimoto to Hawaii State Teachers Association Executive Director Wilbert Holck

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020
COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

HSTA supports cancelling all federally required standardized testing, supports flexibility around high school graduation requirements, and supports the letter of commitment from Superintendent Kishimoto to HSTA.

HSTA stands united with the HDOE, our school colleagues, including principals, cafeteria staff, custodians, educational assistants and others who are also doing their best to ensure students' needs are met during these difficult times.

We understand this time is difficult for families. More than 19,000 of our students have special needs; 3,000 are homeless; and many have families who do not speak English. Many students may not have access to mobile devices, computers, and the internet. Parents and guardians may be busy on the front lines of our state's COVID-19 response. This is why the Hawai'i State Teachers Association signed an agreement with the Hawai'i State Department of Education to ensure students will not be penalized if they cannot complete these activities while schools are closed.

Our teachers, along with HSTA, and HDOE, have created and are sharing creative remote learning enrichment opportunities, such as educational videos, online challenges, online learning programs, downloadable learning resources, and videoconferencing. These resources are designed to help families encourage learning at home, and provide a sense of normalcy and routine amid global uncertainty.

We also applaud the department's commitment to provide breakfast and lunch at dozens of public schools across the state during these closures. Our schools will reopen when it is safe—and when they do, educators in Hawai'i will welcome our keiki with open arms. Our teachers, librarians, counselors and other school staff miss you!

Aloha to our Hawaii's Department of Education,

This is a current senior who attends Moanalua High School, writing on behalf of the class of 2020. I would like to first express my sincere Mahalo's to all of you who are working so hard during this time of undesired circumstances. As we all are aware by now how far this pandemic has brought us, it is without a doubt that it has also brought us to unwanted situations regarding the class of 2020's graduation and their requirements. With that said I would like to make a suggestion on behalf of my peers who have also expressed a similar interest in the idea of either pass or fail.

I believe that although it may be in your folks' best interest to offer credit recovery or summer school options, it is quite unideal from a class of 2020 students' standpoint. First off, to proceed with the option of finishing and earning our credit with a letter grade through online learning is not quite adaptable for all. Being forced into a setting, not of our norm can be difficult to adjust to and create barriers for students to excel in their academics. The learning environment can also be found unideal for a handful of students who may find it difficult to learn without an immediate teacher's assistance. Not only is it unideal for these students, but we can also look at those students who may not have the necessity to equip online learning to the best capacity. However, I believe that online learning can be used to our advantage to at least justify and asses a student's passing or failure in his or her class.

Such options of summer school and credit recovery may sound like the best options for students to make up their missed learning, however, seniors cannot afford to spend our summers through this as a mandated requirement. As we exit high school and go into either post-secondary education, the military, or whatever it may be, we all need the time as individuals to fully prep ourselves for this transition. Furthermore, we are not certain and can not predict the future of our state with this ongoing pandemic. Since we can not be sure of how things will look, we should not opt for a route with uncertainty.

Moreover, the idea of pass or fail has been discussed through universities and has slowly been accepted as a solution (for example Duke University) for students put through online learning. With that said we highly suggest that you folks consider this as an option for the class of 2020 and voice our opinion.

Once again, on behalf of my peers, we appreciate each and one of your efforts and guidance in creating the best solution for our students.

Sincerely,

Class of 2020 Student



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Graduation requirements - COVID-19

Ted Hong <ted@tedhonglaw.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 8:29 AM

I am submitting testimony praising the Department and Board's decision to award "Participation Diplomas" to students who are Seniors. I also appreciate that other public school students will be given "Participation Advancements" to the next grade.

What I appreciate the most is that we, as taxpayers, get to fund the high six figures salaries of DOE administrators, bureaucrats, teachers and school staff so they can continue to do absolutely nothing from Mid-March through whenever they feel they want to actually go back to work.

Only in Hawaii can people continue to get paid for nothing, suffer no consequences and have the taxpayers pay for it all.

I thought of a new slogan for our State's public education system: Hawaii...education....mehhh...

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on this important topic.

Very truly yours,

Ted H. S. Hong
Attorney at Law

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No to graduation waiver

Darcy Wakayama to: testimony.boe 04/01/2020 11:38 AM

From: "Darcy Wakayama" <darcy.wakayama@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Position: NO to waiver

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I strongly encourage you to NOT waive graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter.

Justification:

- 3/4 of the school year has already been completed. Pass/Fail can be determined using various methods.
- Schools are ready to continue teaching virtually. Private schools and colleges are continuing to educate students. Why shouldn't public schools be held to the same standard.
- Parents should demand that teaching and learning continue. It is our job as educators. Why shortchange, waive requirements that can be met.
- If requirements are waived, what would our diploma stand for?

In summary, education needs to continue and the minimum 24 credit requirement should remain the standard.

Darcy Wakayama
Castle High School

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Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony for the Alteration of 2020 Graduation Requirements.

From: **Cade Taniyama** <ctaniyama20@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 8:05 AM
Subject: Testimony for the Alteration of 2020 Graduation Requirements.
To: boe_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us <boe_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us>

Aloha,

My name is Cade Taniyama, and I am a senior of Konawaena High School. I hope you and your families are all safe in this time of turmoil. I seek only to present my perspective, as a graduating senior that will be impacted by your choices, regarding the alteration of the requirements of high school seniors to graduate. I recognize that this is a decision being made to ensure the safety of students, teachers, and staff that exists on all campuses, but I believe that it should be equally important to consider the impact this will have on the vast number of college-seeking seniors. Should the requirements change to accompany the lack of school students can participate in, students may not meet the requirements of colleges they have worked immensely to get into. For some, this could mean having to commit extra time and resources to compensate the the credits they have already worked so hard for. A possible alternative to changing the requirements, is to consider the grade students have in their classes as on the last full quarter, and use their last three quarters to award credit, just as credit would be awarded for all four quarters. This alternative would view this years grades as trimesters, not quarters. This solution would reward students for the effort they have already commit to school, while allowing them to acquire the credits they've planned to earn this year for college! As a personal example, I need 2 credits I would be receiving this year to attend the college I intend on going to. If the high school graduation requirements change, and I don't receive the credits I have before I graduate, I will not be able to attend college this fall. As troubling as this may be, I recognize that the class of 2020 is a resilient bevy of students, and whatever is decided for out collective fates, we will be able to persevere, as we have with all the other shortcomings we've had to endure this year.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Cade Taniyama
Konawaena High School

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To: Members of the Hawaii State Board of Education

From: Terry George, President and CEO
Alex Harris, Vice President for Programs

We are unquestionably in a chaotic moment filled with tremendous stress. Variables change minute by minute. Most schools are struggling with how to effectively feed their disadvantaged students. They are worried about how to keep their staff safe. And everyone is figuring out how to implement learning programs outside the schoolhouse walls.

We know that lost instruction compounds over time. Missing 10 days of math class lowers the chance of graduating high school by 6 percentage points and enrolling in college by 5 points. Research even connects long term school closure with higher unemployment and lower earnings.

We have to find a way. This is an unprecedented and remarkable situation in modern American education, but despite that, schools must live up to the promise they make to students. And we have to act as a *system* not as a collection of schools if we are to avoid reinventing solutions over and over.

We have already lost the month of March; we likely will lose at least six months of potential learning through August.

The Harold K.L. Castle Foundation has spent the past twenty years mobilizing resources to combat Hawaii's educational achievement gap. This gap is wide and about to get far worse.

Locally, the gap with private schools will grow as they continue to educate, assess and grade. Nationally, the gap will grow with states like Massachusetts that insist on instruction and real learning for at least half the day.

There is no doubt that things will not be equitable for our students. But it is far better to try our very hardest to help as many students learn as much as possible than to have equity of nothing.

Put another way, **ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act should not prevent any school from offering quality educational programs through distance instruction.**

We urge the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education to set forth clear systemwide policies for just what is expected of teachers and educators. Staff in the Department's community engagement, policy and communications offices could not articulate any such effort. Let the following four principles guide you.

1. **Families and students need more than just optional enrichment activities- more structure is needed if we are to expect our students to continue their learning remotely.**

Communities are finding ways to procure or lend technology and create mobile hot spots. Dust off the DOE's old Future Ready 1:1 laptop plans. Miami Dade school district just distributed 60,000 laptops and trained 18,000 teachers. The very best instructional school leaders in Hawaii are setting schedules, articulating expectations for where students should be by the end of the school year, curating curricular resources and supporting teachers at every step along the way. But this is the exception not the norm.

Switch to pass/fail if need be. Use PBS like Los Angeles or Olelo. Long Beach has master teachers developing content for all. New York City set up hot spots in all public housing. But set a clear expectation for learning and rally the community towards that goal.

2. **Vulnerable students deserve more support, not less. Concerns about exacerbating the achievement gap should not be addressed by limiting opportunities for all students. We cannot eliminate the gap by lowering the bar.**

Special focus must be paid to the 48 percent of students that are eligible for free or reduced price lunch, the 10 percent that are special needs and the 9 percent that are English language learners.

We must figure out how to get books into the hands of every single student, still hold IEP team meetings for the most adversely impacted to determine how to mitigate learning loss, create communication plans for English learners and extend learning into the summertime for those at risk of falling behind.

3. **Teachers and administrators should communicate with students and their families every single week.**

Strong charter school networks like Success Academy expect teachers to call every student twice per day. While this may be unrealistic, we can and should expect that every parent hears from the school leader on a frequent basis and that teachers are regularly in contact with their students. This connection must be the basis of any subsequent learning and guidance.

4. **High school seniors deserve special consideration. While these are unprecedented times, we need to do more than graduate seniors early and then help the rest to recover credits. The public, the students, and their families need assurance that the seniors are ready for the next phase of their educational and career growth.**

We publicly mourn the expected loss of prom and graduation ceremony for the senior class of 2020. But what if we instead promised every single senior they can fulfil the terms of their personal

transition plan by enrolling in college, joining the military or securing a job? This is our chance to reinvent the senior year.

We can extend counselors to twelve-month employees so they can support those heading to four-year colleges and universities. We can find creative ways of directly admitting early college students that have proven they already belong to the University of Hawaii. And we can award credits for completing volunteer service and capstone exercises.

We know that organizations like the Center of Tomorrow's Leaders and the Chamber of Commerce are poised to rally scores of young professionals to support the senior class through this trying time. But we need a vision and direction.

The last emergency that we faced was the Puna lava flow. Every level of the Department rose to the occasion. An entirely new school emerged in a matter of days. It is that same creativity and community mobilization in the face of dire emergency that we once again need. Look at how food service has stepped up to deliver meals to thousands of students. We are certain the same can be true for delivering rich instruction and learning supports if we keep expectations high and unleash our collective ingenuity.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

NO to graduation requirements waiver

Katrina Souza <souzak@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 1:09 PM

Position: NO to waiver

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I strongly encourage you to NOT waive graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter.

Justification:

- 3/4 of the school year has already been completed. Pass/Fail can be determined using various methods.
- High school teachers need the leverage of grades to encourage students to continue their learning. Otherwise, students have no incentive to do anything.
- Schools are ready to continue teaching virtually. My high school has a Distance Learning Plan in place and we have been actively distributing Chromebooks to students who need it. Spectrum is offering free wifi for 60 days. We have also been following up with the few students we have not heard back from regarding their tech needs.
- Parents should demand that teaching and learning continue. It is our job as educators. Why waive requirements that can be met?
- It is insulting to me as an educator that the DOE has no confidence in my professional ability to offer students a chance to receive meaningful instruction and feedback.
- This is also a question of equity. We should give all public high school students the same access to quality education as private schools are offering their students. In this case, quality education means just that - NOT ENRICHMENT!
- If requirements are waived, what would our diploma stand for?

In summary, education needs to continue and the minimum 24 credit requirement should remain the standard.

Sincerely,
Katrina Souza
Aiea, HI



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

**Board Action on Department Request for Waiver of Board Policy 102-15
High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for School Year
2019-2020**

Ingrid Vasilescu <vasilescui@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 2:06 PM

YES

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Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

No Waiver for Graduation

Roberta Yamamoto <yamamotor@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 3:08 PM

Position: NO to waiver

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I strongly encourage you to NOT waive graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter.

Justification:

- 3/4 of the school year has already been completed. Pass/Fail can be determined using various methods.
- Schools are ready to continue teaching virtually. Private schools and colleges are continuing to educate students. Why shouldn't public schools be held to the same standard.
- Parents should demand that teaching and learning continue. It is our job as educators. Why shortchange, waive requirements that can be met.
- If requirements are waived, what would our diploma stand for?

In summary, education needs to continue and the minimum 24 credit requirement should remain the standard.

Mahalo,

Roberta Yamamoto
Castle High School

April 2, 2020

Hawaii 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 offer comments on Discussion Item A, Presentation on March 19, 2020 letter of commitment regarding COVID-19 preparation and response from Department Superintendent Christina Kishimoto to Hawaii State Teachers Association Executive Director Wilbert Holck.

We know these are challenging times for our broader community. We are incredibly grateful to Dr. Kishimoto and the hardworking staff across our public schools and the broader the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE) system to react to the immense disruption of COVID-19, and putting the health and safety of students, families, and educators first and foremost. While we recognize this situation is rapidly evolving, we offer the following policy suggestions as a pathway to resilience in the short and long term, and the community stands by to offer our support.

1) Equity: **“Equity” doesn’t mean we take learning to the lowest common denominator.** While some students may lack access to quality virtual or home learning opportunities, the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE) **shouldn’t restrict learning** opportunities for the rest of students who may have access. The DOE should serve the most students possible immediately and figure out creative hybrid solutions for the rest, including:

- Creative strategies to bridge the digital divide
 - Aid families to sign up for free 60-day connectivity (Hawaiian Telcom, Spectrum)
 - Convert school buses to mobile hotspots
 - Establish clear loan policy for district or school owned devices
 - Set up a donation fund through Public Schools of Hawaii Foundation
- Get books into every student’s hands
 - Ensure families have easy access to the Hawaii State Public Library
System’s Books By Mail and Online Resources offerings
- Minimize learning loss for students with IEPs
 - Convene IEP teams for the most adversely affected students to determine appropriate technology, aids, at-home support services, and accommodations, including use of secure DOE WebEx and conference call platforms

2) Continue academic instruction: Students deserve more than enrichment but less than the normal academic pacing of in-person school, using a reformed/modified light schedule that includes certain elements:

- Clear and understandable schedule

- Be asynchronous so students can learn at their own pace
- Offer time for reflection and connection
- Build on what is already being taught by extending the curriculum as well as the academic content expectations for the semester
- Offer real world high quality projects of significance to their community
- Have some consequence or incentive to maintain motivation
- Be able to access accelerated learning, such as early college, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate coursework
- Provide an office hours hotline for content coaching and support

3) Minimum standard for learning: The Hawaii State Board of Education (BOE) must provide a minimum hourly standard for student school work. This can be differentiated across grade levels and should establish a high bar of continued learning for all students.

4) Contact with families and students: Parents and guardians must be given a **road map for their child's success that includes daily and weekly assignments for their** children. Every student and family should be in contact with a teacher, counselor or administrator at least 3-5 times per week.

5) Eliminate duplication: Where DOE schools are creating academic materials, the DOE should encourage system-**wide “master teachers” to create a shared set of materials** for use across DOE schools, with other teachers serving in a coaching/support role. This will help increase alignment and minimize duplication of efforts.

6) Support for English Language Learners: Establish communication plans for English Language Learners. All official DOE communications and materials for parents must be offered with multilingual translations. Community organizations and volunteers may assist in the creation of these materials.

7) Two-way communication: The DOE must establish a mechanism for real-time two-way communication with the public and families for the purpose of information clarification and transparency. The DOE should also work with community partners to meet families where they are in terms of access to food and academic materials, including bringing those items directly to homes.

8) Data collection: The DOE must collect and report data showing how many students are actually partaking in academic and comprehensive services and offerings. A critical component of effective distance learning is monitoring and tracking student progress. The DOE should adopt a policy of no student unaccounted for during these uncertain times.

9) Flexibility for seniors: High school seniors deserve special consideration. We need to do more than **graduate ‘proficient’ seniors early and then help the rest to recover** credits.

- Prepare themselves for life after high school

- Chance to learn AVID skills
 - Summerbridge
 - Personalized text message support to remind of critical timelines
- Access to accelerated learning opportunities
- Counseling support in their personal transition plan
- Receive credit for volunteer hours
- Consider how to recognize credit from Common Core-aligned platforms such as Khan Academy

As resources, we recommend reviewing the following plan examples from Illinois and New Mexico:

- Illinois State Board of Education - Remote learning recommendations during COVID-19 emergency: <https://tinyurl.com/ILremotepplan>
- New Mexico Public Education Department - Implementation Guide for Your Continuous Learning Plan: <https://tinyurl.com/NMremotepplan>

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

David Miyashiro, HawaiiKidsCAN

Cheri Nakamura

Lillian Coltin

Rae Shih, American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii

Pila Wilson

Aisha Heredia, HawaiiKidsCAN

Makana and Kekoa McClellan, Palisades Elementary School Parents

Mary Ellen Silva, Hawaii public school grandparent

Teresa and Roger Shook, public school grandparents

Josh Reppun, @MLTSinHawaii

Alvin Sato

Deborah Zysman, Hawaii Children's Action Network

Jessica Yamauchi, Hawaii Public Health Institute

Dayevin Bunao

Leilani Kahoano, Caring for Hawaii Neonates

Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe, Sierra Club O'ahu Group

Sherry Menor-McNamara, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Karen Worthington, parent of high school junior at King Kekaulike

Emi Eno Orikasa, Hui No Ke Ola Pono

Jenna Tuss, Teacher on Oahu

Brooke Holderbaum, Educator and resident of Maui

Elizabeth Pa Nakea,
Pa Nakea Law Group
1644 Liholiho Street
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 308-2654
panakealaw@me.com

April 1, 2020

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:
testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Position: NO to waiver

Aloha Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

Over the past few weeks, we've watched as the COVID-19 pandemic has spread across the world. The reality for many of our 'ohana has been the closing of school buildings that have really turned our worlds upside down. With normal routines out the window, most of us are doing our best to just maintain our students' mental health and emotional well-being, on top of our own. Now, with school buildings closed for several weeks in Hawai'i, state agencies and districts are working around the clock to figure out what's next. This is especially relevant for this year's seniors, who are currently waiting to find out if they will be back in their buildings again or will be having distance learning online before graduation.

Reading, writing and math are essential life skills, and students must demonstrate a basic understanding of English/language arts and mathematics as part of the requirements for graduation. Castle High School's 24-credit framework was designed to be both rigorous and flexible. The 24-credit framework was designed to be both rigorous and flexible. Assessment requirements for graduation can be met in a number of ways. Castle High School provides multiple options for seniors to demonstrate that they have met standards across required content areas. Educators around the state are still hard at work, providing childcare, serving meals, and even more trying virtual distance learning for the first time. We're doing everything we can to make sure students who would have been eligible to graduate do, in fact, graduate. No one here wants to get in the way of a child graduating and moving on with his or her life. Students who have not yet met requirements, which may include some out-of school projects, can use the time away from school to finish that work. **We are challenged by what the alternative is, which is to provide education to no one and not do our best by everyone? Pragmatism dictates doing the best we can, knowing that the realities are what they are. It's going to be challenging to fully resolve everything, given that we're dealing with a situation with no precedent, but Castle High School has developed a distance learning plan to help our students succeed now in this 21st century, rather than choose not to educate our students.**

Hawai'i authorizes one regular high school diploma for all publicly funded students, including students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE).¹ They are entitled to FAPE until they either 1) graduate with a regular high school diploma, or 2) turn 21 years of age. A "regular high school diploma" means the student has met the state requirements for graduation with or without some accommodation. When considering whether a student should graduate with a regular high school diploma, what accommodations may be necessary for the student to successfully take the exit exams for graduation or whether a student should graduate via an IEP, the school district must take into account a number of factors. This decision making process must occur in the IEP team.

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), even if a student with an IEP has met state and local requirements for graduation, a district may not properly graduate the student if the district did not provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to that student. The courts have held that once the student completes the agreed upon graduation plan and the student is eligible to graduate, the school district is relieved of the obligation to provide FAPE. Neither the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or state law guarantees that every student with an IEP will graduate. Some students will not graduate for a variety of reasons, including students who are projected to graduate via an IEP; for example, the student may fail to complete the goals despite appropriate special education services; the student may age out or drop out of school. For the student who was expected to graduate with a regular diploma, the student may not have passed the exit assessment(s) or may not have completed the required coursework, or the student may drop out or change course and obtain a GED.

Yes, the IEP team can modify the graduation requirements; however, the district must keep ever present in its mind the opportunity to unintentionally discriminate in such a case. It must consider the criteria under which it is modifying curriculum or requirements to ensure that minority and majority students are treated the same with regard to modification.

Districts that choose to maintain local graduation requirements, may allow alternatives if social distancing and safety measures cannot be maintained and can provide seniors sufficient support in completing these requirements. **I strongly encourage you NOT to waive graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the upcoming 4th Quarter.**

I also join in the testimony of my English Department Chair, whose justification for NO WAIVER is included here:

- 3/4 of the school year has already been completed. Pass/Fail can be determined using various methods.
- High school teachers need the leverage of grades to encourage students to continue their learning. Otherwise, students have no incentive to do anything.
- Schools are ready to continue teaching virtually. My high school has a Distance Learning Plan in place and we have been actively distributing Chromebooks to students who need it. Spectrum is offering free wifi for 60 days. We have also been following up with the few students we have not heard back from regarding their tech needs.
- Parents should demand that teaching and learning continue. It is our job as educators. Why waive requirements that can be met?
- It is insulting to me as an educator that the DOE has no confidence in my professional ability to offer students a chance to receive meaningful instruction and feedback.
- This is also a question of equity. We should give all public high school students the same access to quality education as private schools are offering their students. In this case, quality education means just that - NOT ENRICHMENT!
- If requirements are waived, what would our diploma stand for?

Finally, education needs to continue and the minimum 24 credit requirement should remain the standard.

Me ka mana'o nui,
(sent via email)

Elizabeth Pa Nakea

Attorney at Law, Pa Nakea Law Group &
Special Education Teacher, Castle High School



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Senior graduation requirements

Kathy Sur <kaps@hawaii.rr.com>
Reply-To: kaps@hawaii.rr.com
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Apr 2, 2020 at 7:05 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

Is there a initiative to extend the school year? Depending on the length of this pandemic, should the students start school again on May 1, 2020, why not extend the school year to mid June? Yes teachers would work an extra month, but I am sure with a extension of summer, the teachers would do what is best for the students. Start the 2020/2021 school year after Labor day, and not have any intersession week in the fall of 2020. After the semester break, we go back to the calendar that we have followed for the past years. Asking for the BOE to drop the requirements so seniors can graduate "on time" does no justice for their ability to sustain their college preparatory classes as well as putting their academic prowess in a shortened stage.

What about athletics? Let the student athletes who most will never play a interscholastic sport again in their lives have the ability to play out a shortened season. The BOE needs to address how getting the school year extended, not cutting short the requirements of graduation.

Mahalo



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

April 2, 2020

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*
Dr. Patricia Sheehey, *Vice
Chair*
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Andrea Alexander
Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta
Ms. Virginia Beringer
Ms. Mary Brogan
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman
Ms. Annette Cooper
Mr. Mark Disher
Dr. Kurt Humphrey
Ms. Cathy Kahoochanohano
Ms. Tina King
Ms. Bernadette Lane
Ms. Kaili Murbach
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto
Ms. Kau'i Rezendes
Ms. Rosie Rowe
Dr. David Royer
Mr. James Street
Mr. Francis Taele
Mr. Steven Vannatta
Ms. Lisa Vegas
Ms. Jasmine Williams
Ms. Susan Wood

Ms. Annie Kalama, *liaison to
the Superintendent*
Dr. Bob Campbell, *liaison to
the military community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Catherine Payne, Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: V. B. Board Action on Department request for waiver of Board Policy
102-15 High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for
School Year 2019-2020

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,


The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) recognizes the unprecedented challenge the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on our public school students and educators, and we understand the rationale of waiving certain graduation requirements in order to enable this year's senior class to pursue higher education and careers without unnecessary delay and lost opportunities. At the same time, we are mindful of the unique support needs of students with disabilities, whether they are on track to graduate with a regular diploma or a certificate.

SEAC respectfully suggests that greater clarity is needed regarding the process schools will use to determine graduation options that ensure the rights of students with IEPs and 504 Plans are protected. Some of the questions that SEAC members have posed include:

1. What criteria will principals be using to determine graduation waivers for diploma track students with disabilities? Will the criteria be uniformly applied across the state?
2. Parents of children with disabilities have been given the assurance that when school resumes in its traditional manner, Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Section 504 teams will meet to determine any loss of skills as a result of the extended school closure and the student's need for compensatory education. Should school not resume this semester, what supports will be provided to better prepare the student for graduation?
3. If a student on a certificate track ages out during the closure period, will compensatory services be extended beyond age 22, if the IEP team determines that the student has lost skills as a result of the closure?

SEAC appreciates this opportunity to weigh in on the Department's request and offers our assistance in supporting students, families and schools.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair

*Mandated by the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act***



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony

Lauren Pokipala <pokipalal@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Apr 2, 2020 at 9:47 AM

Aloha, Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I am in **OPPOSITION** to the waiver for graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter.

As an educator & parent of children in the DOE system, I am concerned about this waiver because:

1. I want to continue the learning experiences for my students & would hope the same for my own children.
2. We already completed over half of the school year, & at the high school level we can definitely determine a pass or fail grade using various methods that our departments come up with.
3. At Castle High School, our tech team, & PLC's have been working hard to continue learning virtually because they have identified who needs a device, & informing them of the free WiFi service Spectrum is offering.
4. If requirements are waived, would there be any credibility for our diploma?

I am asking that you take these considerations into account when thinking about our students and families, and that education needs to continue and the minimum 24 credit requirement should remain the standard for the DOE. At our school, we are always looking at how we can make it work, & if it can't, we figure out a way to make it work for ALL. We just need to work together to make this happen! Mahalo nui for your time!



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Re: Graduation waiver

Gail Kumakura <kumakurag@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Apr 2, 2020 at 10:07 AM

Dear Honorable Catherine Payne, Members of the Board of Education:

My position on the graduation waiver is NO WAIVER.

Reasons:

- Schools have been preparing for virtual learning since the shutdown began. Our school has been checking on all students' access to online learning and I feel we are ready.
- Teachers are ready with alternative assessments so that students are able to show knowledge of standards.
- With only one quarter left in the school year, students have had opportunities to demonstrate knowledge of content that was provided up until this point. Teachers could focus on a few key content materials (via distance learning) to complete the course.
- With a waiver, does that mean that students will get "free" credits for all courses they are currently enrolled in? Not only for seniors, but are we saying that the underclassmen will get "free" credits for their current courses as well?
- With a waiver of required credits, will that mean that those in credit recovery courses need not complete those courses?
- Public schools should be able to keep up with private schools, which are continuing their education via distance learning.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,

Gail Kumakura
Castle High School



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Position: NO to waiver

Jennifer Makaiwi <makaiwij@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Apr 2, 2020 at 10:55 AM

Position: NO to waiver

Honorable Chair Payne, Vice-Chair Delima, and Esteemed Members:

I strongly encourage you to NOT waive graduation requirements for the remainder of the SY2019-20 for the Class of 2020 in the 4th Quarter.

I believe doing so will send a negative message to the students that there is no inherent value in their education and in the graduation requirements. Teachers already struggle to help students find value in content knowledge when students' are focused solely on completing assignments, working towards grades, and meeting requirements. In the eyes of many students, school isn't an opportunity to develop skills and gain knowledge, but an arbitrary system they need to "get through" to become trustworthy adults.

The following is a message I sent to my students online regarding the continuing of distance learning:

"Your teachers and the Castle admin are doing everything we can to help you guys get the best education possible, despite these current circumstances. I hope this will emphasize to you guys how important your high school education is. It would have been easy to just say school is done for the rest of the year, but no one wants you guys to miss out on every opportunity to learn. Companies, like Spectrum, are even providing FREE services so that each one of you can continue your education. That's how important this is, and that's how important you are."

I feel that by waiving the requirements for the remainder of the year, we are telling students that their education is only important if we say it is. Nothing should change the value of their education and their worthiness to receive that opportunity for education.

I also join in the testimony of my Castle High School colleagues, Katrina Souza, Lauren Pokipala, and Elizabeth Pa Nakea.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Makaiwi
Wahiawa, HI

To: Hawai'i Board of Education

From: Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i, Deborah Bond-Upson, Board Member on behalf of our Board

Re: April 2, 2020 General Board Meeting, Department of Education Covid 19 Response including Discussion Item on Supt. Letter to HSTA Exec. Director

Date: April 2, 2020

We appreciate the diligent and caring efforts of the Board of Education and the Department of Education. We wish to note that the Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i Board is concerned that not all children will benefit from opportunities to grow and learning while the schools are closed. We continue to receive communications from parent members from across the state.

We hope that:

1. All students and their families will have the connectivity and devices to be active in their learning. We are collecting information about this in our survey to determine these needs.
2. Families will be given clear information on how to get free or discounted Internet service and how to use free "hot spots." Providing Internet access can also include sending buses with hot spots to rural areas.
3. Computers and tablets will be gathered and delivered to families as needed.
4. Easy clear guidance will be offered online, by email and by mail describing the instructional services and resources the district provides.
5. Special education programs will be supported.
6. Teachers will be supported with needed professional development and technology to assist them with online instruction.
7. Families and students who do not have digital access or who do not wish to have digital access, will receive paper-based learning activities and phone contacts from their teachers.
8. The Hawai'i DOE will clarify how many times each week teachers will contact students in various grade level via phone, mail, or Internet. We believe that frequent contact is necessary to motivate and assist students and to maintain relationships with them.
9. The Hawai'i DOE will view this crisis as an opportunity to pilot project-based learning and authentic assessment of student work.

Deborah L. Kobayakawa
alohadebbk@yahoo.com
(808) 271-3887

April 2, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a Parent and Community Leader writing to express my concerns with the Board of Education's recommendation to waive the credit requirements for School Year 2019-2020 in awarding a diploma or certificate to graduating seniors, as requested by the Hawaii Department of Education, (HIDOE)

I believe that this decision is premature and that overall the HIDOE doesn't have a plan in place to address instruction for all public school students in Hawaii at this time due to the COVID-19 crisis. Time should be taken to reassess all information to ensure that alternative methods are provided to all students before making such a drastic decision. Our students should ALL be receiving some type of distance learning in the form of direct instruction from their teachers who are being paid right now.

As a former special education for the State of Hawaii, DOE, I feel that approving this recommendation will negatively impact Special Education students, 504 students and the "at risk" population. If we waive the graduation requirement at this time how do ensure that these students have their needs met and that the HIDOE is in compliance with both State and Federal Laws? Once a student receives a high school diploma they are considered no longer a student with a disability by definition in both Chapter 60 and IDEA. Therefore, they cannot receive compensatory or any other services from the public school.

How will Transition Services be addressed with students who have an IEP in this proposed recommendation? Some of our certificate track students will "age out" while our public schools are closed, what is the plan for them? As a mother of an adult son with disabilities who graduated from Castle High School with a certificate of completion, I can tell you that those Transition Services were one of the most valuable services he received, especially during his terminal year. He has been able to successfully maintain employment at the same job since exiting the DOE ten (10) years ago.

Lastly, I believe the language in item 2. RECOMMENDATION that states, "awarding a diploma or certificate to graduating seniors, based on approval from administration." needs further clarification. Does this mean that each High School Principal will have the authority on a case by case basis? Does it give the Principal the authority unilaterally with the entire senior class? As a parent this is disturbing. Not all students and/or parents or family members are well-liked by administrators. This is troubling to me.

I understand that the COVID-19 crisis is beyond anyone's control and that some measures need to be taken. However, since the entire world is being impacted, it is doubtful that only our graduating seniors will be impacted. All students across the U.S. are in the same situation. Colleges, careers, military service can all wait. We need to respond to this situation with a carefully laid out plan; not react. Our children deserve the education they have worked hard for all their lives.

I humbly ask that you consider my testimony in your final decision.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Kobayakawa
Parent & Community Leader



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Graduation requirements change

Peer Blichfeldt <peer_b@hotmail.com>

Thu, Apr 2, 2020 at 12:05 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Dear Board members,

Why can't the requirements be modified to allow for online classes?

The majority of seniors have access to a cell phone if they don't have a tablet or computer. Classes can be conducted online via Zoom or some other app right on the phone. Study materials and assignments can be submitted via email. Testing could be done by access to a secure web portal.

Private schools are conducting classes right now online. Why should public school students suffer?

Mahalo,

Peer Blichfeldt
(808) 429-7337

Sent from my iPhone

Aloha Chair Payne and Members:

Based on school closures related to natural disasters and COVID-19, many of us are struggling to stay in compliance with federal- and state-mandated timelines. We currently have 60 calendar days from the date informed consent is received to evaluate and determine initial eligibility for students who are suspected of having an educational disability. This timeline does not stop for school closures such as spring break, winter break, summer vacation, inclement weather days, or any other school closures related to natural disasters or our current global pandemic, COVID-19.

Given the extreme situation we are in, we are unable to stay within compliance of this mandate. When there is no way to determine when students will return to school and when these evaluations can take place, we need to ensure equity among all keiki who are currently under evaluation, and to relieve the burden of school districts and personnel. Has the Hawaii DOE considered updating the current guidance related to evaluation timelines?

The US DOE issued guidance noting, "If an evaluation of a student with a disability requires a face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens. Evaluations and re-evaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents. These same principles apply to similar activities conducted by appropriate personnel for a student with a disability who has a plan developed under Section 504, or who is being evaluated under Section 504."

Oklahoma and Texas require evaluations to be completed within 45 school days of obtaining consent. Georgia has a 60-calendar-day timeline, but the timeline stops when students are out of school for 5+ consecutive days, for any reason. Could the Hawaii DOE adopt this or similar guidance for our current situation? An update to the evaluation timeline would protect students and allow valid evaluations to be completed in a fair manner once students return to school. The Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists (HASP) strongly urges the Board of Education to consider this allowance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your consideration. Please view our National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) website for more information on guidance and support for all students: <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center>.

Respectfully Submitted:

The Hawaii Association of School Psychologists

April 2, 2020

TO: The Honorable Catherine Payne, Chairperson, Board of Education

FROM: William O R Stephenson, Registrar, Ka'u High & Pahala Elementary School

SUBJECT: Board Action on Department Request for Waiver of Board Policy 102-15 High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for School Year 2019-2020

Position: Oppose

I strongly urge the Board to reject the request by the DOE for a Waiver of Board Policy 102-5 High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for School Year 2019-2020. The request for a waiver of graduation requirements may resolve issues for the graduates of the class of 2020, but it does not address the larger problem that will impact all students in Hawaii DOE secondary schools.

Promotion from grade 6 to 12 is based on units or credits earned. In grades 6-8, students can be socially promoted to the next grade level, but they must earn a total of 15 units during those three grades to be promoted to grade 9. Promotion from grade 9 to 10 requires that students earn 5.0 credits. Promotion from grades 10 to 11 requires a total of 11.0 credits and from grade 11 to 12 requires a total of 17.0 credits.

Assuming the likelihood of the early cessation of the current school year, all students may be denied promotion to the next grade level, unless teachers are required to provide final grades for all students. The Superintendent allowed an extension for teachers to submit Quarter 3 grades till yesterday, 1 April. Schools are closed till at least 30 April with teachers offering remedial educational supports for students using remote learning opportunities, but no new material which would normally be part of the Quarter 4 curriculum. I find it highly unlikely that our students and teachers will be able to return to a normal classroom environment before the end of this summer to complete the normal curriculum and submittal of Quarter 4 and Final grades.

Instead of granting a waiver of graduation requirements for any one grade level, I urge the Board to consider instead a waiver of the Credit Regulations which required approximately 200 minutes per week for one year to earn 1.0 credit [old regulation 4530.1] for all students during this school year. This, and the eventual requirement for teachers to submit Final grades for all courses will allow all of our students to earn credits for the current school year and to move forward towards their eventual graduation in later years.

The Hawaii DOE transcript only shows the Final grade for all courses. Without that information, the transcripts for the classes of 2020 through 2023 will be incomplete and difficult for any future academic institution or employer to decipher, which is likely to cause problems for many of our students in years to come.

As a last, but highly important, reason to reject the DOE's request for a waiver of graduation requirements is the simple fact that some small number of our current senior class have just not done the work in one or more of their classes required for graduation. To grant them a gift diploma, without requiring any work at all is a serious degradation of the quality of Hawaii DOE graduates and a slap in the face of every senior who has struggled to pass all of their required courses.

CREDITS
REGULATIONS

1. One credit is awarded to each course meeting formally for approximately 200 minutes per week, and successfully completed by the student during the period of one year. However, satisfactory completion of the content of a course in a period of time either shorter or longer than that normally required may be permitted.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Support pay raise

Sarah Cirell <cirellssarah@gmail.com>
To: testimony_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us

Wed, Apr 8, 2020 at 9:18 AM

Aloha, I support a pay raise to our Kumu. Mahalo and aloha nui
Sarah Cirell

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 phishing-report@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.
